

Banking in a futuristic United Africa

African leaders met recently in Accra for a three-day summit where they promoted the idea of a "Unitary Government for Africa".

Backing the idea up are none other than Libya's President Muammar Ghadaffi, Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe, Togo's government as well as Burkina Faso's government. Opposing the idea however are the bigger players in Africa including Nigeria's former President Olusegun Obasanjo as well South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki who are concerned at any initiative that would weaken their sovereignty or ability to act independently. Dr. Mandla Gantsho also brought up the subject in an interview and in his welcome speech during a recent workshop of the Regional Integration and Trade Department of the AfDB, attended by representatives from NEPAD, World Bank, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other partners.

According to Gantsho, the concept of a Unitary Government for Africa represents a vision of total unity for the people of Africa, living together in lasting peace, security and prosperity.

"African leaders have long been unanimous on the need for continental unity and they have also been in broad agreement that the ultimate objective, or the destination of the African Union, is the United States of Africa with a union government. We now have the African Union (the AU) as it is currently constituted, and we're saying, "Let's move to our final destination, which is, the United States of Africa". Perceptibly, to attain the US of Africa, there has to be a union government for Africa. Thus, the debate is not about the destination, but rather, how to get there with dispatch. Essentially, we're considering a number of road maps to guide us to the destination of total unity on the African continent," Gantsho explains.

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