Editorial: Internationalisation of Higher Education in the New Era of World (Dis)Order

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This special issue of the IJAHE is one of the outcomes of the Second Symposium of the Higher Education Forum for Africa, Asia and Latin America (HEFAALA) which took place in July 2019. One of the flagship initiatives of the International Network for Higher Education in Africa (INHEA), HEFAALA was launched in 2016 to promote mutually constructive and proactive academic and professional engagements in higher education (HE) between and among these three world regions. It aims to foster dialogue, advance research and promote favourable policies in HE in recognition of the enormous common challenges as well as potential and opportunities on the three continents.

Internationalisation of Higher Education in the New Era of World (Dis)Order

The social, economic, business and cultural linkages between Africa, Asia and Latin America have grown massively. On the economic front, which often attracts more attention globally, China has now displaced established and historical incumbents as Africa's major economic partner. India and South Korea are also hot on the heels of China in consolidating their positions (Teferra, 2017). Turkey and other Arab countries are also now increasingly involved in Africa on new and emerging economic and political fronts.

HEFAALA was established to enhance communication, research, dialogue and HE partnerships between South-South—or otherwise the peripheries and what Philip G. Altbach (1993) calls the giant peripheries. It also strives to engage the key players in what are called the Centres with like-minded institutions in what is typically described as South-South-North partnerships.

The Symposium, under the theme "Internationalization of Higher Education in the New Era of World (Dis)Order" was organised at a time when the world is grappling with, excited about and concerned with disruptive technologies; Artificial Intelligence; the Fourth Industrial Revolution; social media; genetic engineering; superbugs; food insecurity; climate

change; global warming; unilateralism; nationalism and so on—key issues of, and for, HE. The gravity as well as the complexity of critical global issues prompted the choice of the word "Dis(order)" in its title.

And yet, unilateralism is increasingly edging out multilateral principles and accords such as the Paris Climate Accord, and the North American Trade Agreement (NAFTA) which brought about major political upheavals as manifested in the Brexit tragi-comedy. These phenomena are increasingly emasculating the core principles governing globalisation, leaving many wondering if its key underpinning principles—such as the movement of people, finance and capital—will remain intact or even relevant to the world today and in the future.

While globalisation has been a subject of perennial criticism in the Global South, that critique has received increasingly vocal allies in the Global North in a way unimagined by its architects. It has also left many people deprived and disenfranchised in that part of the world, dismantling what Van de Werde (2017) calls the "Elite Cosmopolitan Project".

As globalisation has been increasingly seen to be shunned, and even rejected, the world over, some of the world's powerful leaders, who benefitted immensely from this phenomenon, also made ominous and disparaging remarks against multilateralism and global solidarity, followed by aggressive action. Previous British Prime Minster Theresa May is reported to have said in May 2016, "If you believe you are a citizen of the world, you are a citizen of nowhere." The infamous poster child of unilateralism who is draped in the "America First" motto, US president Donald Trump, is reported as declaring in 2017, "There is no global flag, no global currency, no global citizenship", escalating the New World (Dis)Order.

Internationalisation of HE has suffered from this development, resulting in a paradigm shift with consequences for student mobility, academic exchange, partnership schemes, and resource mobilisation. For instance, China now hosts more African students than any other country in the world. The same is true for some Asian countries. While the Chinese Confucius Institute is treated with some suspicion in the Global North (and is closing its operations in some countries), it is thriving in the Global South, where in countries such as Zimbabwe, the Chinese language is reported as mandatory in universities.

These new phenomena of internationalisation and other relevant ones are bound to expand further as China, India and others are vigorously pushing to build globally competitive HE institutions, as they are also pursuing more economic, financial and diplomatic ties, with the resultant effect of more partnerships and interactions between those in the Global South. While the spirit of internationalisation of HE is dimming in one part of the world, it appears to be brightening elsewhere.

Over a decade ago, I argued that African HE is probably the most internationalised HE system in the world—not by participation but by omission. As the weakest global HE system, it relies heavily on the discourses, paradigms, and parameters set by others, rendering it vulnerable to global whims and idiosyncrasies. African HE assumes the position of the most internationalised system by being the least internationally engaged (Teferra, 2008).

While this is the established reality for Africa, I would argue that, the same holds true for virtually all in the Global South where most of the development challenges are rampant. This calls for the need to steer the shifting paradigm to address these challenges, as articulated in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Africa Union's Agenda 2063 and its derivatives such as the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2016-2025) and the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA 2024), in deliberative, systematic and mutually beneficial partnerships in the true intent and spirit of internationalisation.

HEFAALA aims to navigate these emerging and complex continental and global developments in HE, interrogate the discourses and perspectives, and analyse and synthesise their implications for and significance to the Global South. INHEA, which hosts HEFAALA, has been tasked by the African Union Commission to steer the Higher Education Cluster of CESA in co-coordination with the Association of African Universities. A sustained effort will be made to integrate CESA's initiatives in shaping the dialogue and discourses in HE on the continent and beyond.

The Symposium

The Second Symposium was jointly organised by INHEA, the publisher of the IJAHE, and Saint Mary's University, one of the leading private HE institutions in Ethiopia. The event was organised in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the Association of African Universities, the Aviation Academy of Ethiopian Airlines, the Ethiopian Ministry of Science and Technology and the Center for International Higher Education, Boston College with financial support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Several organisations and institutions in Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Brazil, Mexico, Jordan, Japan, Germany, and the US, to name but a few, also supported their staff to attend the Symposium. The event attracted participants and presenters from the African Development Bank; the Association of Arab Universities; the British Council; DAAD; the European Union; German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ); International Center for Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE); the MasterCard Foundation; the Dutch Organization for Inter-

nationalization in Education (NUFFIC); the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA); United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA); and the World Bank. Others also participated virtually from Argentina, Chile and Columbia. Through the funding made possible by Carnegie and others, participants from Burundi, Egypt, Mozambique, Senegal, Uganda, Zambia, China, India and the US attended the event.

This Second Symposium in Ethiopia was a sequel to the first one under the theme "Continental Realities, International Imperatives" in Durban, South Africa in 2016. These themes were well featured, with a sharp focus on the three continents, particularly Africa.

The Second Symposium, which was held jointly with the 17th International Conference on Private Higher Education in Africa, kicked off with three parallel Master Class Workshops including University Leadership in Steering Internationalization in Higher Education: Roles, Responsibilities and Challenges; Advancing Research in Higher Education: Realities, Possibilities and Myths of Partnerships, Cooperation and Networking; and Building Capacity in Quantitative Research through International Cooperation and Partnerships, facilitated and presented by prominent experts from the three continents and beyond. The Symposium was enriched by two keynote addresses: *Internationalization of Higher Education: Global Realities and Perspectives* by Professor Hans de Wit, Director, Center for International Higher Education and *The Climax of Globalization: The Endurance of Internationalization*, by Dr Ebrima Sall, former Executive Secretary of CODESRIA, now Trust Africa, Dakar, Senegal.

The Symposium was designed as a series of round-table panel discussions where a number of key questions guided the respective themes with anticipated outcomes. This was systematically designed to ensure in-depth conversation and critical analysis to contribute to the dialogue, and shape emerging discourses and phenomena in the service of the respective stakeholders in HE and beyond.

The topics covered during the Symposium included Dialogue in the Internationalization of Higher Education: The Role of HEFAALA and the Significance of the Symposium; Key Trends and Developments in the Internationalization of Higher Education in the Global South: Asia, Africa, and Latin America; Advancing Research and Innovation in Higher Education through International Partnerships: What are the New Frontiers in the New Era of Global Development Politics?; Private Higher Education in the Realm of Internationalization: Old Challenges and New Realities in Institutional Partnerships, Cooperation and Competition; Technological Advances in Educational Delivery as Drivers of Internationalization of Higher Education; and Academics and University Leadership in Advancing Internationalization: Synergy, Coordination, and Discord.

Half-a-dozen doctoral students were also sponsored to attend the event through a HE project supported by the Finnish government which intends to advance research, pedagogy and policy in leadership and management in HE in Africa which the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) is part of. Some of these students had an opportunity to discuss their theses and research as well as network with intellectual leaders, policy makers and fellow students. These and other post-graduate students registered in institutions in South Africa, Ethiopia and Norway were given different roles in the Symposium and the conference, including paper presentations and report writing.

Outcome/Output
Some of the issues discussed at the Symposium, particularly the debate triggered by the first keynote speaker, Professor de Wit, on his definition of internationalisation (de Wit et al., 2015), were responsible for the more than half-a-dozen articles published by *University World News* and *International Higher Education*. The following list of articles published in *University World News* illustrates the extent of the debate and dialogues published so far:

i.   Defining internationalisation – Intention versus coercion, 23 August, 2019 (Damtew Teferra)
ii. We must end coercion in internationalisation in Africa, 7 September, 2019 (Hans de Wit)
iii. Internationalisation – The search for a definition continues. 21 September, 2019 (Damtew Teferra)
iv. Internationalisation – No such thing as a neutral definition. 2 October, 2019 (Hans de Wit)
v.   In practice, internationalisation fails to be intentional. 17 October, 2019 (Abebaw Yirga Adamu)
vi. Exploring emancipatory perspectives in internationalization. 14 November, 2019 (Teklu A. Bekele)
vii. Internationalisation of higher education is not neutral. 8 February, 2020 (Hanne Kirstine Adriansen)

Some of these articles were re-published on a number of institutional sites. Furthermore, half-a-dozen more papers appeared in *University World News* as a special issue, all contributed by participants in the Symposium.

As a spinoff of the Symposium a book chapter by this author entitled "From 'Dumb' Decolonization to 'Smart' Internationalization: A Requisite Transition" was published in *Intelligent Internationalization: The Shape of Things to Come,* edited by Kara Godwin and Hans de Wit and published by Brill Publishers.

The Symposium also contributed to the realisation of an edited book *The Bloomsbury Handbook of the Internationalization of Higher Education in the*

Global South by Thondhlana Juliet, Garwe Evelyn C., Hans de Wit, Jocelyne Gacel-Avila, Futao Huang and Wondwosen Tamrat (2021, Forthcoming), published by Bloomsbury.

The Special Issue

This special issue is published as an output of the Second HEFAALA Symposium, with contributions by a number of HE experts from Africa, Asia and Latin Americawho attended the event. The topics include:

i. **The Climax of Globalisation: The Endurance of Internationalisation**

This article is a revised and updated version of the keynote address delivered by Ebrima Sall at the Second HEFAALA Symposium noted earlier. He argues that the rapid global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, that has posed one of the most formidable challenges to globalisation and internationalisation, was made possible precisely because of the advanced stage of development that globalisation had reached. Building on an account of his long professional journey, he dwells on three issues: the contradictory trends in globalisation as relevant to internationalisation, Trumpism and the deepening neoliberal globalisation, and networks and institutions in promoting internationalisation in the Global South. He posits that what is going on with Trumpism and Brexit is a re-negotiation of the terms of engagement in an attempt to reposition and re-assert the hegemony of certain players in the global economy. Joining the ongoing dialogue on the essence of internationalisation, Sall posits that it has not always been, and will not always be 'intentional'. He concludes that internationalisation should be harnessed to bring about a more equitable form of globalisation.

ii. **Internationalisation in Higher Education, a Western Paradigm or a Global and Inclusive Concept?**

Hans de Wit, who delivered the other keynote address, argues that internationalisation of HE is still mainly considered in terms of a westernised, largely Anglo-Saxon, and predominantly English-speaking paradigm. Citing the updated definition of internationalisation reconfigured with his colleague, he advocates for inclusive international and intercultural learning for all, which is more conscious and cognizant of diverse contexts, agendas and perspectives in the world. In reformulating the new definition, which replaced what he describes as "the neutral working definition" of a "normative nature", he defends the inclusion of "intention", intimating that internationalisation cannot be a goal in itself but a means to enhance quality

education for all students and staff in the service of the public good. In adding the word "intention", which has been the subject of ongoing dialogue with Teferra (including in this issue), he advocates for planned, purposeful and inclusive internationalisation.

iii. **The Disjuncture Between Private Higher Education and Internationalisation**

Wondwosen Tamrat examines the nature of private HE institutions and how their inherent characteristics can impinge on their efforts in internationalisation. He posits that private HE institutions in general have strong motivations for internationalising as compared to their public counterparts. He adds that, arguably, no other group of institutions might benefit more than the private HE sector. Tamrat asserts that private HE institutions could be active players in the international arena through careful identification of their niche despite their current handicaps and weaknesses when compared with their more established public counterparts. Affirming that institutional engagement in internationalisation is mediated by a variety of factors, Tamrat reckons that favourable government policies towards these institutions could contribute to enhancing internationalisation. He concludes that private institutions' effective engagement at the global level can only come about through a thorough examination of themselves, their identity, capacity and unique features.

iv. **The Credit System and Harmonisation of Higher Education in Ethiopia: Practices and Challenges**

Abebaw Yirga analyses the implementation of the credit system and its contribution to the harmonisation of HE in Ethiopia. He undertook a study on what are called first-generation universities, including the national flagship university, to showcase practices in the implementation of a credit system at national and institutional level, respectively. He argues that the inclusion of first-generation universities, especially the flagship, is on account of the fact that the second, third and fourth generation universities and other national institutions generally follow others in isomorphic formation. Yirga observes that the development of a harmonised academic policy and modular curricula, and the introduction of the new credit system, the ECTS, could contribute to the process of harmonising the country's HE sector. He identifies a number of factors that hindered the harmonisation process, through effective implementation of the ECTS, including issues relating to study hours, credit allocation, credit conversion, the grading system, and recognition of achievements, among others. He recommends the

development of a national policy directive for the credit system across the sector without regard to institutional ownership, programme level and mode of delivery.

v. Strategic Profiles of the International Dimension in Universities in Uganda

Based on case studies of three private and three public universities in Uganda, Ronald Bisaso and Florence Nakamaya explore the strategic profiling of internationalisation in these institutions. Underpinned by a conceptual framework on universities' internationalisation trajectories, they illustrate an emergent and deliberate strategy framed in temporal variation and manifested in disparate projections of activities. The authors generated themes, described as profiles, from the strategy documents of the institutions and identified six profiles in the context of the international dimension including: vision/mission, shared/core values, student enrolment, staff and student exchange, partnerships and collaboration, and management structure. They note that these institutions 'mentioned' internationalisation in strategic documents and emphasised the need to attract and enrol international students as a key form of the international dimension. They advise that universities proffer more systematised mechanisms for innovatively embedding the international dimension, use benchmarked cases in teaching, produce contextually relevant knowledge and deploy corresponding management capacity to the level of internationalisation. They also recommend increased focus on harnessing the profiles of internationalisation in teaching and learning, research and community engagement based on the universities' niches and capacities.

vi. The Drive and Nature of Internationalisation of Higher Education in Zambia

This article notes that Zambian scholarship on HE lacks critical analyses of internationalisation at different levels of the system as well as theoretical and empirical studies on internationalisation of HE. Based on a study conducted to establish the nature and drive of internationalisation in Zambian HE institutions, it covers six public and private HE institutions in the country. Gift Masaiti and Nelly Mwale observe that internationalisation is driven largely by economic, academic and social and cultural motives. Acknowledging the limited scope of internationalisation in the Zambian context, they observed that it is characterised by student and staff mobility, teaching and learning, and research collaboration. They single out meagre financing as a serious hurdle to internationalisation of HE in Zambia.

vii. Internationalisation and Cross Border Mobility in Indian Higher Education

At the end of the Cold War, political returns on foreign aid diminished. N. V. Varghese holds that many countries came to recognise trade as a more development-friendly alternative to aid. He argues that, internationalisation of HE also shifted from aid related cooperation agreements to market-mediated cross-border trade arrangements within the framework of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). Examining the changing face of internationalisation of HE with a focus on India, he posits that while internationalisation and cross-border mobility are largely mediated by market processes and economic rationality, the Indian government's initiatives to internationalise HE are motivated by diplomatic capital in the global arena. He further argues that the objective of internationalisation is to attract more students to the country and to develop it as an education hub. Varghese states that changes to visa regulations and curricula are imperative to make the country more attractive to the global market. He emphasises that India needs to focus not only on internationalisation abroad but also at home.

viii. Internationalisation of Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean: In Need of Robust Policies

Jocelyne Gacel-Ávila notes the paucity of systematic studies on internationalisation of HE in Latin America and the Caribbean, while acknowledging that more extensive studies of this issue have been conducted by those outside the region. The article notes that, while some progress has been made in the past two decades, internationalisation remains marginalised as a central function of HE in teaching and research, as well as curriculum content. Based on data and findings garnered from different national, regional and international studies, she posits that, the region's primary form of internationalisation is student mobility and that the numbers are relatively small compared to other regions. She also observes that other strategies such as internationalisation at home are largely underdeveloped. Gacel-Ávila concludes that, the internationalisation process needs to be consolidated and strengthened, particularly in terms of public policy at national and regional level.

ix. The Irrelevance of the Re-Configured Definition of Internationalisation to the Global South: Intention Versus Coercion

Damtew Teferra emphatically argues that the new definition of internationalisation as reconfigured by de Wit et al. (2015), which

embraced 'intentionality' as its key component, is out-of-step with the reality of the phenomenon. He maintains that contemporary ontological manifestations of the terminology have been appreciably misrepresented, if not wholly distorted, mainly driven by a passionate, albeit sincere, desire to advance certain 'good' intentions, while disregarding others, in the process creating dissonance between epistemological reality and a paradigmatic trajectory. Countering de Wit et al.'s latest argument, Teferra asserts that the term is neither normative nor descriptive, as de Wit argues (elsewhere), but rather prescriptive and coercive. Teferra holds that intentions are as broad and dynamic as they are subtle and complex and further argues that even 'good' intentions could only be subjective and presumed worthy by a certain sector of society tempered with temporal and spatial realities. He concludes that the essence of a definition thus need not be about therapeutic advocacy, nor should it be a restorative discourse, however benevolent or unanimous.

Acknowledgments

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