

APPENDIX 5

Interview with Festus MOGAE, former President of Botswana (1998-2008)

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NC: So first of all Mr. President, I'd like to thank you on behalf of the Department of Political Science for taking time out of your schedule to participate in this study that's trying to rethink what motivates leaders in general, and specifically leaders in Africa; what motivates their behavior. And there's no one more qualified to speak on this than yourself, who is highly regarded and left office peacefully and voluntarily when the time came.

Mr. President to begin, in his autobiography, former President Quett Masire writes about his decision to offer you the position of Vice-Presidency: "He showed no inclination to seek the presidency at that time, and he was not known to be associated with either faction. I wasn't even sure whether he would accept the vice-presidency; and that, in my view, helped him make the best candidate"(90). Given this account, can you please explain what ultimately motivated you to accept the position of Vice-President that former President Quett Masire offered you in 1992 and then ultimately the President of the Republic in 1998? What were the factors encouraging you to serve and what were your apprehensions, if any?

FM: Well, my interest was not politics, but development. I had worked as a civil servant in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. So economic management was of interest to me. And I had assumed, I had always assumed that, maybe because both he, Masire, and Seretse had been pro-development and pro-democracy, I had taken political management for granted and so my role and duty to my country in the field of economic management and development issues were of interest to me, both nationally and internationally. And therefore, when I was offered the Vice-Presidency, I accepted because that gave me a chance to continue dealing with issues of interest to me. But as I say, and as he says, as he observes, I had always assumed that I could continue to do that, although it wasn't always obvious that I would have done it.

NC: One thing President Masire emphasizes is that he didn't think you were politically ambitious and therefore he felt that you would serve your time and leave.

FM: Yes.

NC: And he felt that there were other people within the party that may have tried to stay as long as possible. Was that your sense as well?

FM: Yes. When you work with people, there are colleagues whose inclinations you are aware of. Those who would be ambitious, but in a way that when it is time to leave they would leave. And others who you know, they would want to stay on. Not only that but

you know those who would kill for position. So, I agree that I was not interested in politics. I was not totally disinterested, but I wasn't going to seek political office. That's correct.

NC: Were you surprised when he offered you the Vice-Presidency?

FM: Not really. He had been my boss. I was his Cabinet Secretary for the 7 years before retiring and therefore I was very familiar with his thinking but also with the challenges that faced the country. But it was, yes, a pleasant surprise. Well, something had happened causing the Vice-Presidency to be vacant and I didn't think, I didn't consider myself a candidate, but when he offered it to me, yes I saw it as a chance to serve the country in that capacity.

NC: Mr. President, given their recent historical experience with traditional chieftainship, and I know chieftainship is very important in Botswana, is there any fundamental cultural difference between how African populations view their leaders and how Western populations view their leaders? Do the two different populations respect and admire different things in a leader, and, if so, is this at all changing with time?

FM: I don't know. I assume populations are affected by their past experiences. Yes, there is a cultural context, but regarding the question of whether Africans expect their leader to stay forever, I don't know. I don't know whether that is the case. I think that in the majority of cases people do want people to change, but those who are in power want to stay for...

NC: Usually a chief will stay their whole life.

FM: Yes. Just as the European kings in the past.

NC: Of course. And Botswana is interesting in that your founding President was, in fact, a chief, and his son is also a chief, now the current President. So does this reference to chieftainship and the idea that chiefs stay their whole lives, does it affect the view, not of experts, but of the majority of the population in some way.

FM: I am not aware of that. I just get the impression that the average citizen wants to benefit economically. Whoever seems to be offering jobs and security and advancement I suppose they would want him to stay, not because culturally they think a leader should stay on forever, but I think plain self-interest. I think when you are a President and you create jobs, they will elect you and reelect you.

NC: Very good. Mr. President, thinking back on your 10 years as President of Botswana, what presidential decision are you most proud of, and what decision, if any, would you now change in hindsight?

FM: It's the decision to confront HIV and AIDS head on, although in a way, the way I saw it I had no way out. I had to confront HIV and AIDS. But given the fact that there

was substantial stigma associated with it. There was so much ignorance and panic and even superstition and the attitude of the church, the attitude of traditional healers were not helpful. Yes, I am proud that I decided to take it on and make it my priority because it was in the logic of circumstance since of all the things we're doing and doing reasonably well, such as education and training, physical development of the infrastructure, and development of governmental institutions, strengthening of governmental institutions were going more or less well. In the health sector UNICEF and UNDP were getting accolades there in terms of human development indices, education and literacy, the education of the girl child, on the health side the question of infant mortality and mortality of under 5s, maternal mobility and mortality, things like that, and life expectancy were improving. And then comes AIDS. It cut across everything. Those positive indices begin to stagnate and deteriorate. And the way it was happening, it cut across everything. As it were, it wasn't worth doing anything unless you did something about AIDS. And therefore I decided that AIDS was the thing because when I said that we were threatened with extinction, I believed in it because people were dying by the hundreds and we are not a big population. In a country where everybody knows everybody else. So I decided that I would do whatever was possible in the circumstances. And that's what I did. Because of the stigma associated with it, a great many countries were reticent, leaders at that stage were reticent. I understood and appreciated why they were reticent about it because even the press, local and international, were not helpful. Everyone would say, "Hey! Is that... You are the man from the country which is seriously affected by HIV/AIDS. How many people are dying?" So on, so on. BBC would come and photograph our burials, and so on. Which basically was stigmatizing. And why would people want to volunteer to be subjected to that. As African leaders, we come here, we address for instance the Corporate Council on Africa. So from that time in the Corporate Council of Africa they would invite various leaders to come and talk about investment prospects in their countries. For me, it was only about AIDS.

NC: And you're an economist.

FM: And I'm an economist. Yes. Therefore I appreciated why the others...that people were not ready to come forward. But on the other hand, it was like a festering wound, you keep quiet about it, it will just keep on growing. So that is one decision that I am very much proud of. The things that I would change, I don't know whether I would be able to change, was that in the mid-70s when revenues became available, plentiful, especially also in the 80s, in our endeavor to improve income distributions, fight poverty, generate income for the average person, we had a great many subsidy schemes. I think they were wasteful. They failed. And left a legacy of dependency on the part of our population. Now the pressure for it was so high, I don't know how I would resist it, but certainly I would resist it more. With hindsight I would resist it more than I did at the time. I always complain about it not being sustainable, could not be afforded, but had hoped that our people would respond in a way that they would become economically motivated, seize the opportunities to generate incomes for themselves. But in fact they didn't. They just became more and more and more dependent on government. And a lot of resources were wasted. And there was also a lot of petty cheating. Again, we kind of

connived at it because when you have hundreds of people involved, they got money, there was insufficient follow-up and monitoring. So it served no useful purpose. But of course it was politically popular, morally justifiable as it were. So that is one thing that I would change because, OK the money was wasted, several billion pula, which is also several billion dollars, because the exchange rate was not what it is...at that time it was about 1.6 whereas today it's about 7 pula to a dollar. It was about 1.6. Started with 1.2 to 1.6 pula per dollar because in the seventies the pula was about 20 cents higher than the dollar. So that is one thing I would change. Because not only did we waste resources, but it left the legacy of dependence: a lack of initiative on the part of people. And I'm afraid my successors are not escaping from that. They are tending to repeat the same mistake, calling it by different names. The new programs are given, but it's exactly the wasteful things which are populist and maybe well-intentioned, but do not make economic sense. Well, the experience shows that they didn't work.

NC: Wonderful. We have the same issues we debate in the United States, of course: subsidies. Mr. President, you stepped down from the Presidency in 2008 after 10 years in office even though you could have stayed longer, in fact you stepped down before you had finished your second full term. Can you please explain what motivated your decision to retire rather than continue on as President of the Republic, to fulfill that last year and a half?

FM: Well, two things. Actually, the correct thing is that I had to retire. In our constitution, we have term limits, but they are phased to allow the parliamentary system. In a parliamentary system you could have several elections during a five-year period. So the term limits said that you should not be President for more than 10 years. So I had to retire on the 10th annual anniversary of my first becoming President. That's one, in any case. But also I was tired. I think in all African countries there are rising expectations on the part of young people, well the population as a whole, including the Botswanan population, including, as I say, this unfortunate legacy of excessive dependence on government. So that even political competition in Botswana, people compete in terms of what they would do for the population, instead of discussing appropriate policies were people would make a living for themselves. Basically they are offering subsidies which are not affordable. And not only are they not viable and not sustainable, nowadays we don't even have the money to do it, and yet people are still offering and you try to say, "Well, that is nonsense." For instance, after South Africa became independent, they had this Black Empowerment program where as it turned out, a handful of people benefited, became multi-millionaires over night. That was very attractive with our people. They expected use to take charge of private business and donate it to them, the way it was virtually happening in South Africa. And one would have to say, "That is not viable." And in those days, of course, South Africa was popular in more ways than one. And everything they did was supposed to be right. And we would try to point that, "Hey, these people are starting, they are five years old, they are 10 years old. We are 30, 35." That's saying, "We are more mature. We know better." But they would say, "Who the hell are you?" So, you had... One felt that one had done his best, and one had been reasonably successful in the circumstances. And there was not much more that one could do that is as dramatic. And also I believed, rightly or wrongly, that I had perceived my

job coming at the time that it did, was my job was to consolidate democracy and good governance. I thought that I had expanded democratic institutions. I had, for instance, I think our newspapers had grown from about 4 to 10, including two weeklies. I had, of course, amended the constitution to increase the size of parliament from 40 to 65. We had... There had been rumblings about some of the minorities and so on and I had appointed a commission, a very representative commission, which had toured the country for 3 or 4 months consulting people on the issues there regarding our constitution. And when the commission had reported, I had produced a white paper, which many of my ministers were non-committal, especially from what were the major tribes or major ethnic communities. And I pioneered it. I saw it through cabinet. I saw it through parliament, nationally. I thought that was reasonably successful. It didn't please everybody. It couldn't. But I thought people were happy, the nation was more united after it than before. And so one of the things that I had hoped to do, of course, was to have built an international university of science and technology, which did not happen. That is one of my disappointments. So I thought that I had done reasonably well, holding the nation together and maintaining economic growth rates and consolidating our various institutions, the judiciary, the oversight organizations like [unknown word] General. We had established the ombudsman. We had set up the directorate on corruption and economic crime. I thought that the institutional infrastructure had been developed and complete and were likely to continue. We even established another institution called PPADB, I think it's Public Procurement and Asset Disposal Board, as an autonomous body to deal with things that belong to government, how they are disposed of, how assets are acquired by government, and so on, separate from the ministries and so on. And many of these have produced reports, which were submitted to parliament. And so yes, I thought I had consolidated democracy in that sense, a democracy of which I was a product, that I did not create but of which I was a product, and I think I had deepened and broadened it by creating some of those institutions and maturing and expanding those that I inherited. But all of them to which I had been a party to their formation as Vice-President and Chief Advisor to the President.

NC: Did you feel that peacefully stepping down would further consolidate the progress that you had...

FM: Yes. Yes. But also I was tired. I...

NC: President Ahmadou Toumani Touré of Mali, he mentioned this, "I'm so tired. I just want to go to the movies. Take a vacation."

FM: Yes.

NC: What kind of toll does 10 years as President of the Republic take on you?

FM: Hey! It takes a lot. One thing, I suppose I was still going to develop those things, but I developed blood pressure. I developed diabetes. That was during the Presidency.

NC: Do you feel that was from the stress or the pressure of being President?

FM: Those who know say that diabetes is a stress disease, and I believe it. I believe it. Because I tend to observe it. Once this has happened to me and so on, I see some Western leaders and I think, "Yeah, that was what was happening to me," and I am glad I stepped down. And the nation was generous with me. I was never a cattleman. Batswana generally are cattle people, but they donated 100... The people from the villages donated 170 cattle to me, about 120 sheep and goats, some horses and donkeys, ostriches. I thought, well... Of course that was post-factual. But basically no. I felt that I had done my best. There was not much more I could do.

NC: Now as you know sometimes in Africa just because there's two term limits doesn't mean the President necessarily has to step down. He can change the constitution and continue.

FM: Yes.

NC: Was there ever any talk in the circle to say, "Yeah, there's two term limits now, but President Masire had 18 years, not 10 years, and maybe it would be more fair if we take another 5, maybe 15 years?" And how did you respond to that suggestion?

FM: No, I couldn't respond in any other way other than negatively to a suggestion like that. I was associated with the term limits. In fact, at the risk of claiming too much, I was the source under Masire of the idea of term limits. And I wasn't thinking of Masire who was already ready to step down at anytime, but I was thinking of some of my rather colleagues who were very strong personalities who are still there, some of them. I originated it. I remember there are some colleagues who actually in parliament who argued, they said, with some plausibility, they said, "What is wrong. If it ain't broken, don't fix it. The day we don't want Masire, we'll vote him out. And any future President who does things we don't like, we'll vote him out, so we have our political system. Why term limits? There are no term limits in Britain," they said. They said, "We are a parliamentary system or a democracy." But I knew that some of these strong personalities could influence the situation and change the constitution and stay on and on and on and maneuver and make it impossible to throw them out. So although I knew that constitutional restraints are not an insurmountable obstacle to ambitious people wanting to do things or stay in power, but it slows them down. They will have to maneuver and think hard how they go around the constitutional restraint on their ability to do what they want at the expense of the public interest. So, the question of my staying longer than that was out. I think that even if we thought of... Even if one were to think of a third term, it would have to be somebody else. It couldn't be me. It couldn't be me. I was associated with the idea first of term limits, and secondly of two terms, so that supposing people who said, "Yes, yes. We accept that there should be term limits, but we think two terms are too short," as in fact I do with respect to some other countries, like Nigeria, it could never apply to me as the author of two term limits.

NC: Did you feel that your credibility was on the line?

FM: Yes, it would have been. Yes.

NC: That's wonderful. Mr. President, how did you personally feel in the days following your retirement from the Presidency? What were your thoughts and reflections at that time?

FM: Almost euphoria. I felt relieved. Something would happen and I would be asking, "What's happening? What has been decided? What's going to happen?" Whereas previously, if something happens, a school bus overturns, and people say, "What is the President saying? What has been done to save our children?" That sort of thing. The buck stops with you. Even when something happens and he is out of the country, they will say, "Look, our children are dying here. He is traveling abroad." As if you were in the country the buses wouldn't overturn [Laughter]. And so no, immediately after my retirement I was just preoccupied with the sense of relief, the freedom to go where I want and not to be accountable for every event that is taking place. I would be annoyed by certain things. That's alright. I would be annoyed by those even if I had been President, but then I would not be held accountable for those.

NC: Your predecessor President Masire, he gave almost the opposite answer, he said, "Well, after I retired I became more busy than I ever was as President." But did you have the opposite experience?

FM: Well no, you couldn't really be more busy than when you are President. But yes, I am very busy. Here I am. I am from Brazil. I left here. I spent three months at the Woodrow Wilson Institute here in the Ronald Reagan building at 1500 Pennsylvania Avenue and the institute is 103 Woodrow Wilson Circle. I left here, finished day on the 29th of October. But I actually left on the 2nd of November. Then I had to attend a meeting of the Club of Madrid in Spain on the 4th and 5th. By doing that I was unable to attend the Rhodes Trust of which I am a member at Oxford. And so then I went home. And then I had to go attend the Mo Ibrahim Index launch and symposium on African Economic Integration in Mauritius on the 19th, 20th, 21st. Then came back home and then of course I left on the 27th with Michel Sidibé, the executive director of UNAIDS to go and launch activities in Brazil on International Aids Day with Lula, who is, you know, making some of his final public appearances, on issues of HIV and AIDS and health generally. So I was booked to go from Botswana to São Paulo, Rio, Brasilia, back to Botswana, and then the next day back here. Fortunately, the World Bank said, "Alright, we will take you from Sao Paulo to here" for my lecture yesterday, so now I'm going home. Leaving today at 5 o'clock, hoping to get to Johannesburg 5pm tomorrow. And if we are able to get a seat on Air Botswana we'll reach Botswana. Otherwise we'll spend the night in Johannesburg and proceed the next morning. I will have to leave on the 12th to get to New York on the 13th to attend a board meeting of MasterCard Foundation on the 14th and then go home. So I'm pretty busy.

NC: Do you feel compelled to do all these things or do you feel it's very much voluntary and something you want to do?

FM: It's something I want to do, something I'm involved in. Well, basically two things. I have said that governance and economic management, including resource management, those are some of the problems that have plagued Africa and I'm interested in them. Therefore, I am interested in governance in Africa and governance in general, but in particular in Africa. I also remain convinced that as Africans, we have to do something about HIV and AIDS, HIV prevention. And there are certain specific actions that are needed to be done because, for instance, we have to scale up treatment. We have to continue to fight stigma. We have to treat people, but, above all, prevention. We have to take prevention measures including behavior change. Behavior change is perhaps the most cost effective, the most effective. And the weapon we have there is the leadership, the involvement of the top political leadership, but not just Presidents. Yes, Presidents first and foremost, but members of parliament, cabinet ministers, but even counselors, religious organizations, and traditional personalities, traditional set ups must be involved because in the long term we cannot treat ourselves out of this epidemic. Even if we were richer than we are, it is not sustainable in the long term. So what is sustainable is prevention. We have to fight the virus, but in order to do that we have to fight stigma, there has to be transparency, make it easier for people to come forward so they can be treated. Come forward so that if they are negative they can be encouraged to stay negative. And certainly, for instance, we have to prevent mother to child transmissions, so-called vertical transmission. We have achieved a great deal. For instance, as far as prevention of mother to child transmissions, the country that has done the least has improved it by 50%. Other who have done more, like Botswana, we have reduced it from an estimated 40% to 3%, and so it shows that it can be done. So all of our governments must aim for zero transmissions because we know it's doable and I feel it incumbent on me and others, the other colleagues who agree with me, like Kaunda, Mkapa, former President of Mozambique...

NC: President Chissano.

FM: Chissano. Other personalities like Desmond Tutu, Justice Cameron of the Constitutional Court of South Africa, and Miriam Were, Specioza former Vice-President in Uganda, urge us to continue saying to our leaders that we're not yet out of the bush. If we lower our guards now, all that has been achieved will be undone. Prevalence rates will be up again. What we have to do is be fighting against new infections. In 2000, in Abuja, Nigeria the African Heads of State agreed to no more new infections by 2015. Later in 2001, there was a SADC similar declaration in Lesotho by the SADC Heads of State that what we want to say is look, "Although new infections have also been reduced very substantially, on the aggregate by 25%, but they are still taking place and they are not affordable, we cannot afford it. And so we have to be doing more. Unless we do more, not only will there continue to be new infections by 2015, in fact, they will be higher in number and all that we have achieved will be lost. All our resources and all the resources of those who helped us would have been in vain. OK, lives would have been extended and so on, but we will be back to square one. And so, that's why therefore I agreed to be a member of two global commissions: the Commission on HIV and the Law, with representatives from America, Europe, Asia, Africa. I'm one of the three Africans in that commission. The other one, the Commission on Prevention. These are global

commissions on HIV and I belong to both because I think that HIV remains a big challenge to sub-Saharan Africa with the heaviest burden, of course, in Southern Africa. But I want to say to my colleagues in West Africa and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, even where prevalence rates are low that they can't afford to ignore it, because if they do, in no time it will be more. Like, for instance, if we take Nigeria, I think prevalence rates there are 1%, but then it's 1% of what, I don't know whether it's 120 or 140 million. So that's a lot of people living with the virus with a tremendous capacity to spread it over time. Like, in South Africa, South Africa has among the southern African countries has the lowest prevalence rates, but because of its population that lowest prevalence rate translates into 5.7 million people living with the virus and therefore nobody can afford to be complacent about AIDS. And certainly my strong feeling is that in sub-Saharan Africa we can't afford to be because we can't afford the loss of the population and we can't afford to treat it on a sustainable basis in the long term. And therefore, we have to continue the fight against the virus and use our best endeavors to do everything in our power to affect and achieve prevention. So anything to do with AIDS, I feel it is my duty to continue to be involved with. The next thing is governance. A lot of the negative things about us, even failure to grow, revolve around governance: bad governance. I mean aspects about which you have been questioning me, they are just aspects of bad governance, including, of course, people who just want to stay on forever. Of course, there is a correlation between Presidents who stay forever. Many of these people start very well. If you look, you will find that the first two to three terms, they have done wonderful things, done a lot of improvements of the lives of their people and develop the country, economic growth rates and so on. But when they want to stay on beyond that, then things begin to change, their judgment becomes clouded by self-preservation, wanting to stay in power. Then from there on it's down, down, down, down. You find that they begin to interfere with the constitution, with the electoral act, with the press freedom, with every aspect, less transparency, and so on. So I think that the African populations should begin to see that good leaders are good. They should elect good leaders, but that they shouldn't allow them to stay for too long because if they do then good men become bad men. A number of historical figures in recent history who would have been national icons are not just because they overstayed their welcome. When they stay too long they begin to lose their vision. They begin to betray their mission. They begin to mistake their personal interests for the national interests, etc., etc. And they adopt desperate and dictatorial measures to make them stay in power. They begin to see a conspiracy behind every bush and every dissenting voice. Every dissenting opinion, they see as a rebellion against themselves. But they don't start like that. That's why I know it's not cultural, it's just human greed. And in Africa, maybe partly because of the Cold War, it was possible to do that and therefore people are tempted to do it because they find it has been done in several cases with impunity.

NC: Those Presidents that do try to stay on indefinitely, what is it that you think motivates them? Some people will say it's the access to economic resources that come as President. Some will say it's this feeling of greatness and importance that they get as President. What do you think is the motivation to stay?

FM: I don't know which it is, but it is an element of both. In some case it's because people want to control economic resources, others, there are people who love power, we know that. I mean even colleagues in a university, you know, there are people for whom it matters that he is head of this or head of the other. So I don't know which is the greater motivation. I had assumed that maybe in Africa the lack of opportunities of great wealth means that either there are those people who stay in power because they love power per se, and those who elsewhere would have pursued the accumulation of wealth. In Africa, they see staying in power as the equivalent, as the only way of being in control of resources. I mean here in the United States, there are those who are intellectually inclined who would pursue learning and so on, and there are opportunities for that. So you can succeed in that and become famous as an academic. Or there are those that want to follow politics. They have their choice. And those who just want to amass wealth, and they do. So perhaps the limited options available to Africans may be one of the factors that cause people to want to stay. Although, I would say that it is reasonable to see people wanting to become famous through politics as a result of inadequate opportunities elsewhere in the economy. But I don't see how it can be a justification for wanting to stay forever because after all when people become wealthy you see that some of here then become reasonable, they donate to public causes and so on. So I would say yes, both motives, both factors are present, but I wouldn't say which one is greater.

NC: You said something very interesting. You felt that some Presidents in some countries, they could have been heroes and icons and that what tarnishes their image is that they stay too long.

FM: Yes.

NC: Can you talk about the costs that when a President tries to stay too long and forces himself on the population. Certainly he has the benefits of staying in office, but what's the cost that he endures?

FM: The cost is the cost to the nation. It's the cost to the country. The quality of management will deteriorate. The political freedom is reduced. The freedom of choice of the people is interfered with. It's denied because normally some of the things that they do, they interfere with the electoral system, they tend to use state institutions to disadvantage rivals or to suppress opinions against themselves. That constitutes a gross misallocation of scarce resources which would otherwise be used for development and also it denies the country of access to some of the other available alternative thinking in dealing with the problems of the country. That's in general. And the West, of course, they use force. There are bad situations, you know. If we take, to be safer, let me take the older ones. Take Sekou Touré, which is an independence generation African leader. He was a hero. Not only of the people of Guinea, but also of Africa, but also of the world. How he stood on principle against France, said "No, thank you. We want to be independent. We want to be assisted, but want to manage or mismanage our own affairs." And he mobilized the people and they became self-reliant. But then he stayed on and on and then he began attacking his very collaborators, imprisoning them and so on. And then from there on it was just, he became a murderer in fact as a result of

staying for too long. And it happened with President Banda. He was ultimately, in what he called heaven, declared himself President for Life, all those things. He was a good man, a very strong leader, did do very well, he was disciplined. But he had his record, he had the progress his country has made, because then people started disappearing. Others were imprisoned and so on. So the quality of government deteriorates because now the leader becomes preoccupied with people whom he sees as wanting to unseat him. He's no longer judging anybody in terms of how many people will benefit, what impact it will have on growth, on the health of the nation, on the educational system, or on food production. It is in terms of is he for or against me. Whereas in the beginning it is not like that. They come with a program which they achieve to a lesser or greater extent, and they achieve progress. But then they arrest when they stay on forever. Those things go wrong in a big way.

NC: Can you talk about the costs also maybe to their personal reputation or their historical legacy.

FM: Yeah, well that one is the first to go, obviously. That one is obvious. And I don't mind it because it is a self-inflicted loss. What I have been trying to describe is the harm he then inflicts on the country, inflicts on the people. I didn't mention the loss of reputation and so on because basically that is a self-inflicted wound. They lose their good reputation. And it occurs to me, I say, "What a pity." Here's a good leader, who did the right thing, who stood up and did this for his people, and took his country from this stage to that higher stage, and then if he had left at that stage his reputation would have been impacted. The progress the country had made would probably have continued because I take... One of things that when leaders stay on forever, they make it difficult to be succeeded peacefully and so on. Take two good men who were not dictators. One is Houphouët-Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire. The other is Sedar Senghor. They were both highly educated, polished Africans who were Africans and therefore also French citizens. They both had been junior ministers in the French government and they led their respective countries. They were highly regarded and so on. Sedar Senghor went on, but then he retired and was succeeded by somebody else who continued where Senghor left off. Ultimately, that person was succeeded by somebody else. Now, of course an opposition leader has won. He's making his own impact in his own way. But basically, life is continuing on and therefore Senegal remains a democracy. Houphouët-Boigny, on the other hand, he was treated very well, but he stayed on and on and on and died in office. Now there is confusion. Had he retired and facilitated his own succession in his own lifetime, I'm sure his succession would have been smoother. It would have been smoother. And some of the things that have erupted would have been contained. And so I blame him for it. So that even when he himself was a good man. Well, of course, nobody's perfect. There are certain things he did which were not in the best interests of the country, but he provided stability and so on. But the important thing is we don't want stability and economic growth for the life of so and so, just like private companies prepare perpetual succession, countries have perpetual succession. This is really a raise. A leader who comes in must himself sum a raise of governing the country towards higher and higher levels of development, rather than he should stay there until he dies and he doesn't give a damn what happens after him.sa

NC: Do you think some Presidents appreciate history and long-term effects more than others?

FM: I think so, but I don't know how many do. I don't know how many do, but I think some do, yes, know that posterity will judge them. But when you are ruling, of course, you are preoccupied with the present and in a way one would say, "After all you are elected only for 5 years." It is what you can achieve within those 5 years or the next 5 years and so on. But nevertheless, you are concerned about sustainability. You don't want to do something today, which you know will not exist tomorrow.

NC: Wonderful. Mr. President, in your opinion, are there any consistent personal or biographical differences that separate those Heads of State that peacefully retire from office and those that try to stay on forever? Is there anything in their personal history or in their individual qualities that can kind of distinguish the Sekou Tourés from the Nyereres, so to speak?

FM: No, I don't think so. Let's say, I don't know. The correct answer is I don't know. There may well be. I just find it's personal traits. Some people are just better able to resist temptation than others because I think some people... I don't know whether they come to power intending to stay forever. I just assume that they come to power and they enjoy it and they don't want to leave. That is why, amongst other things, I've been advocating generous pension retirements. That's in the hope that in the event some may be staying forever for economic reasons, one thought that one could mitigate that by assuring their safety and assuring their well-being. I still do. I still believe that there should be generous retirement pensions. Any generous retirement pension is much cheaper than the harm that is normally done to the country as a whole by a President who stays on for too long.

[BREAK]

NC: Mr. President, leaders today in Africa are actually statistically more likely to step down than their predecessors were in previous generations. Should we conclude that leaders today don't want to stay in power as much as their predecessors did, or should we conclude that leaders today do want to stay in power as much as their predecessors, but that society is now putting so much pressure on them to step down that staying in power is no longer as much of a viable option? Has the actual motivations of leaders shifted?

FM: Yes. I think there is an element of both. I think people are now exposed on their own even before the pressure is applied. They kind of are aware of the times in which they are living and how there is generally an expectation. There is now experience to look back upon and see that there are leaders who have governed well and those who have governed not so well. I assume that we African presidents are now aware of colleagues whom we should consider successful and others whom we should consider not so successful. And therefore, I think maybe now more than ever before, people, African leaders, it must cross their mind as to how they will be thought of, continentally and

globally, and therefore, there are some who therefore feel or are convinced that it is a good thing to rule and get out. But I think it is also true that African civil society has changed and become more sophisticated and more demanding in their expectations of leadership, more distinguishing between right and wrong, and more aware and conscious of their rights and therefore putting pressure on leaders to retire even when, in other words, even when they're not necessarily demanding that he should retire. The demand for performance, the demand for good governance is a sufficient incentive for people to feel that, "Well, I don't want to be answerable forever and forever." Yes. So I think there is an element of both, but certainly the more significant one is the pressures that have become implied by African civil society. I am chairperson of an organization, an NGO called CODA, Coalition for Dialogue on Africa. And one of our objectives is to empower African civil society to make them support other organizations for good governance. For instance, a demand in transparency, a demand to know more what their leaders are doing. For instance, there is a question of resource management, management of natural resources. That's where alleged corruption, alleged incidents of corruption have happened, it's in connection with the utilization of natural resources. Therefore, we in CODA support all the other organizations. We support, for instance, Transparency International. We support the Extractive Industries Transparency International. I am proud of and associated with a group of intellectuals who produced the kind of guideline they call it the Resource Charter. So when they launched it in Norway, I was able to travel from Boston, where I was spending time, to Norway via Iceland to take part in that launch and now I preach it. It is something that I think African civil society organizations should get a hold of that Charter because it gives the guidelines of what people should do: transparently negotiate with investors. Offer the investors legitimate incentives, but at the same time also demand and get a fair return for the nation in the value of the resource. And then leaders or governments must discuss within their nations' national institutions, such as Parliament and otherwise, what the national priorities are to which the revenues derived from the utilization of natural resources should be put. That way there will be less corruption when the people know what is to be expected from the investment and how this is going to be used. Of course, they won't necessarily agree on every item, but on the whole that's what happened in Botswana. We agreed what the national priorities are. And in a desert country, in a semi-arid country, of course water development was very, very important. Education and training in a country where there are only 40 graduates at the time of independence was an obvious priority. And the physical infrastructure, connecting the various communities, and so on. And I think that each nation can do the equivalent of that in a broad way. But above all transparency is very important. That's why for instance in CODA we also endorse organizations like Publish What You Pay that will apply pressure on the companies to publish what they pay so that if bribes are demanded they can publish them. If they don't publish them then they are part of the corruption because it takes two to tango. So, that's what we stand for. We wish to empower African civil society to demand more, to hold their leaders to account. And that's the thing that can be done sustainably for the future.

NC: What do you say to those Heads of State that say that the imposition of term limits is kind of an imposition of Western values that you're losing the traditional African values.

FM: No, it's not true because Western society has evolved. Precisely because we were colonized people, we know the history of individual European countries, where they have come from. The only thing that I see the difference is that you are a couple centuries ahead, but a lot of the things we are doing have been in England, have been in France, have been in Germany, and so on. After all most of Europe as it is today was created during the 19th century, you know when Germany, Prussia became more dominant and so on and defeated France and united the Reich German states to become the modern Reich and so on. We know the history of France. We know the history of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, history of Russia, and so on. You see the same weaknesses and the same strengths, the role of leaders and so on, good leaders and bad leaders, and leaders who then betray themselves, betray their own causes, even our fathers the popes [laughing] over the centuries. And so I don't think there is anything peculiarly, inherently African. I think it's the level of development at which we are. And I think that unfortunately when we became, liberal opinion in the world, where everybody felt that, "Ruling other countries against their will was bad and independence must be granted." It is a pity that soon, or even as that was happening, the Cold War developed. I think that the history of Africa would probably have been different if there was not the Cold War where therefore we Africans were judged in terms of are you pro-West or pro-East and so on. And on both sides the developed countries supported leaders, bad or good, and however bad, on the basis of that they are on their side and not on the other side. Now that has been removed and that is why now. And in spite of all the gross mismanagement that has taken place, there are many more millions of Africans that are educated than was the case 40 years ago or 50 years ago when the first African governments became independent. And of course, technological advances have taken place in the world. I grew up in a family where there was no telephone. Now people even in the bush have cell phones. And it's funny. There are parts of the bush where there is no network and there are parts of the bush where there is network. When you are driving, you can stop and check whether there is network and there isn't. You drive another mile, you stop, yeah there is network. You can communicate and report back to your family, "Yeah, I've reached such and such a stage," or report where you are going in many parts of Africa. As a result African youth in particular are aware of what is happening in the rest of the world and they have the same aspirations as other people. And so I agree with you that there is a greater pressure for accountability with these people. And the fact that generally, we all know what is happening in each others' countries. I mean right now I'm worried and ashamed about what just happened in Ivory Coast. The same feeling I had when it happened in Kenya because those are also countries that really were coming up and coming up, and what I consider, not just mistakes, but greed of the leaders, "it's either me or nothing" attitude. It's a great pity. It's a great pity, but I'm saying African civil society is becoming more critical or expects more from leaders. They, like everybody else, they want the governments to create jobs for them. They want better education, better health. They want better physical transportation and better nutrition.

NC: The effect of the Cold War, which you bring up, is very significant and it's discussed in Political Science a great deal actually. What isn't told is this domestic story

that you're highlighting. Are these both happening at the same time, you have the end of the Cold War and you have this dynamic domestic change in expectations of leaders?

FM: Yes. I think they kind of are autonomous. But they impact on each other, but it's an autonomous development.

NC: So the domestic process wasn't inspired by the end of the Cold War? It was something that was building anyway?

FM: Yes. No. I think the end of the Cold War... Even if the Cold War was still there, it seems to me with knowledge and the technological advances that have taken place, with all countries having televisions, with all the development of cell phones, with all the other modern, what do you call it, ICTs, internet and so on, it was going to cut across those things. It would have been adversely impacted, yes, because there would have been a greater effort at blocking these and blocking the other, but we know that information did escape during the Cold War, it is escaping now, and therefore the trend toward more sophisticated and the need for holding, or African populations wanted to hold their leaders more accountable would have been happening, but it would take place at a lower pace than it is now. And therefore I think the freer international atmosphere is, of course, more conducive to the development of African civil society opinion that is more critically evaluative of the performance of leaders than was the case in the past.

NC: Wonderful. Mr. President, this will tie this directly into Political Science, what we've been discussing here. You are an economist by education and therefore very well understand the economist utilization of profit maximization as a way to explain economic behavior, you assume that everyone is trying to maximize their profit. Correspondingly, in Political Science we've sort of developed this utilization of something called tenure maximization in order to explain leaders' behavior. That's an assumption that the primary and universal goal of leaders is to stay in power, that's what motivates them so we can make theories about their behavior based on this underlying motivation that we assume everybody has. Of course, there are always exceptions to any general assumption, as you would be in this case, you didn't try to stay longer than the 10 years. Nevertheless, do you believe that this rational-choice assumption of tenure maximization that we use in Political Science is the best general assumption available to political scientists to theorize about leadership behavior, or do you believe that maybe there is a better and more useful way to think about the motivations of leaders in Africa, whether it be reputation or just a different alternative approach?

FM: I am not an academic to have objectively analyzed and critically evaluated the behavior of people in terms of that motivation. I would have thought that the equivalent of the profit motive would be the attainment of power to impact or cause development in a particular way. But I would agree that maybe some people their aspiration is to stay in power. Well, it has been proven that we have witnessed that phenomenon. But I would have thought that in terms of having a long term impact as a leader, including fame for yourself, including a legacy, you could do it with, it's not necessary to have permanent tenure. It's a question of doing it and succeeding and then you will still be remembered

in a positive way, you would leave a trail. I believe somebody said “walk not where the trodden path leads, but walk where there is no path and leave a trail.” And so if you take it from there, I would have thought that the thing to do would be for a leader to aspire to have a legacy, a positive legacy, not necessarily... I would say reputation maximization, at least in my case, I would want to maximize my reputation as a leader rather than maximize my tenure per se, so that even if I were to rule for a very short time, but achieve a number of significant positive things which would yield me reputation, I would be satisfied. So I am not able to pass a judgment whether it is one thing or the other because tenure maximization would appear to be saying that tenure in itself, and maybe what is associated with tenure, such as being powerful or in command, is an end in itself and nothing else. Cause then you would want to maximize it. In other words, it would appear to discount legacy and reputation if all what the leader wants is to stay in power for as long as possible. Yes, he would be a powerful leader for the rest of his tenure, but then reputation and legacy are not guaranteed. And so is it a valid, rational behavior? I don't know. I would have thought most people want to have reputation, want to have a legacy, even professors. They write books. They don't want to be famous just for being a professor there. They want when they shall have left, they even get bored sometimes and leave and go do something else. But they write textbooks, they write articles in learned magazines and who would think of them not only as a professor of Head of that Chair or the other, but what they did during that tenure.

NC: Good. And that's part of the challenge of this project. When you assume that someone wants to stay forever, that that's what motivates leaders, especially in Africa, then if you look at a Mandela and a Mugabe, only Mugabe makes sense. Mandela makes no sense, we dismiss him, he's irrational, right? And so the challenge of this project is to come up with a theory that can explain both Mugabe and Mandela within the same theory.

FM: You might have to refine the concept of tenure itself. Does tenure simply mean the actual tenure, the number of terms or length of terms, is that enough for tenure? Or the definition of tenure, is it more you define it to include reputation and legacy. I don't know.

NC: President Kufuor very much agreed with you. He felt maximization was get in, do your 10 years, do the best you can, and get out, and for him that was maximizing the opportunity that being the Head of State presents.

FM: Yes. As I said, for me reputation and legacy, that's what I hope I could have irrespective of whether I served 10 years or 15 or 5, like Mandela.

NC: Wonderful. So we discussed the Cold War here. Mr. President, how would you like to personally be remembered by domestic and international historians in the future, and did you take the historical implications of important decisions into account when making them, or were you more concerned with the immediate effects of your decisions?

FM: Obviously, I've already answered that. I've already said that I think that reputation and legacy I attach more importance to reputation, to a positive reputation, reputation I mean fame rather than notoriety. I would like people to think I was a good guy, even now I like you to think I'm a nice guy, loved as well as Masire, and a legacy. I wish the things that were my dreams, the establishment of democracy in my country, the development of sustainable institutions where people, leaders can come and go, they make their contribution, be remembered. I admire you here. I notice that you know money, you have your various presidents. You are living, you have statues and memorials and so on from your various presidents. And I hope that my nation in later, perhaps when we are integrated, the nations of Africa, into bigger units than they are now would do that. Because I agree with people. I don't know whether it was Churchill or somebody else who said that a democracy... I don't know whether he said it's the worst or whatever, but it's sustainable. I can't remember now, my memory's not as good as it used to be. But basically the good thing about democracy is that it's sustainable. You do things, it can be repeated because different leaders will come and go, make their contribution. The performance will vary. The performance will vary. Some will do very well, others very little, but it will go on. Whereas with any other form of governance, it's dependent on the individual. You can have a benevolent dictator who can achieve much during his dictatorship, but then the other dictator is going to achieve the exact opposite and undo everything. And so on. So we have had a communist system in Russia and eastern Europe. It did do well. After all it is agreed that the end of the 19th century, especially at the beginning of the 20th, Russia was the most primitive of the European powers, compared to Germany, Britain, and France, and so on. But communism took place and a lot of bad things happened, but on the positive side they built a beautiful metro in Moscow, I've never been there, I've been told the metro stations there are palatial. But above all they are a super nuclear power. Under that system they became a super power under that system. That shows that even under a repressive system, certain positive achievements can be made. They went to the moon first, I remember.

NC: No, they went to space first, and the US went to the moon first.

FM: Yeah. OK.

NC: But they went to space first, yeah.

FM: OK, they were in space first. But the system was bad, but it could achieve more. Now what I'm saying is the good thing with a democracy, why it should be preferred is that first it saves an individual all those bad things. It's not perfect, but it saved people. And over time, maybe sometimes slowly, but it's more sustainable. Therefore it has to be preferred, and I aspire to be remembered as someone who tried to broaden and deepen democracy in his country and do certain things and took difficult decisions from time to time, which of course were imperatives of the time, but I know that they would have an impact afterwards.

NC: It's interesting, observing the presidents that do try to stay on, it's not that they're void of the idea of historical legacy, it's that they rephrase it, instead of "I'm going to

have development and consolidate democracy,” it’s “I’m going to fight Western imperialism. I’m going to fight neo-colonialism. I’m going to stand up to all these pressures.” Did you get that sense too, that they also have a sense of historical legacy, but they value something much different?

FM: But I don’t think fighting imperialism or fighting external influence, it is necessary, it is a condition that you must stay forever because you could convince people to continue that. When we say legacy, we mean legacy where people think that what...you leave a legacy, you leave something that people would want to emulate. And therefore if it’s independence from Western influence, if you do it right then they will continue from wanting independence from either external influence or Western influence. I mean like now here in the United States and in the West in general, you are preoccupied about China. Almost neurotic about it. People will ask me, "What do you think about the Chinese?" When I have time, I talk. But when I don’t have time I say, “I think they are Chinese.” The fact of the matter is that they announce, "What do you think is the impact of the Chinese on corruption in Africa?" And I say, "The Chinese did not create corruption in Africa. There has been corruption. And if it was created by anybody, it was the Africans and those with whom they were associated, which was the West." So from us it’s not a question of how do we react to, from my point of view, how do we react to China or to Russia or to the United States? The rules of engagement must be the same. My assumption is that anybody who comes to Africa, they come to Africa for their own benefit. Like we Africans, we come here to the United States not because we necessarily love you, but because of what we can get out of it. And so I think that countries or individual investors go to Africa have a legitimate desire to benefit themselves. Now as Africans, we are part of the world. We have to welcome everybody and we have to try and maximize the benefits to ourselves out of any contact we make with outsiders, whether it’s China or the United States, whether it’s Australia or Denmark. We have got to negotiate the deal, manage our affairs, sell our products to the highest bidder, to the extent possible, that’s what we should do.

NC: Good. Mr. President, you’ve experienced the relations of current-former Presidents from both possible perspectives, you’ve been President and had a former President there, and now you’re a former President and I’m sure you have a relationship with Ian Khama. As you know, sometimes these relationships can be amicable and sometimes they can be extremely adversarial. Based on your experiences and intellect, what principles do you feel should guide this relationship between a current and former President, and how important are these principles in affecting the likelihood of leaders to step down from power in the first place?

FM: I think when you have democracy, there will be legitimate, legal safeguards for former Presidents not to be prosecuted, for former Presidents not to unduly frustrate their successors in the performance of their duties. Otherwise the rest is a matter of personal relationships. As you say in some cases the relationship will be very amicable and beneficial maybe to both, including to the nation as a whole. But of course it can be very amicable and still hurtful if one corrupt leader connives the corruption of his successor. Therefore what one can prescribe, what it should be or one could say what should

happen, is that there should be laws governing the relationship, not proscribing how they should behave but making sure that whoever is President has adequate power at his disposal to do what he's supposed to do and basically the other man has retired. He has had his turn, but of course he remains a citizen with a vote, with a voice, he should be free to express his views like all other citizens, only he's no longer citizen number one. Yes.

NC: Good. Mr. President, in 2008 you were announced as the winner of the very prestigious Mo Ibrahim Foundation Prize for Achievement in African Leadership. What was your reaction upon learning of your selection above all the other possible candidates for the award? What was your reaction learning of your selection as the winner?

FM: Uh, elated disbelief. I was elated. Also when I say disbelief, first you are told, then you say, "Yes, thank you." About 24 hours, 36 hours later you, I suppose the seed has been planted, you keep on turning it in your mind, and then you become excited later, maybe a week later as it sinks and it has been confirmed, and you read in the papers and on television. Yes, you begin to be very happy. But first, you are not expecting it, at least I wasn't expecting it. I didn't know much about the prize in the continent. I didn't know about Mo Ibrahim and the prize committee and what you call. But if you are told you have won the Pulitzer I suppose, you can't be... It's not like having won when you have bet on something because you are expecting to win or lose. But in this case you have retired, you are going about your business, somebody on their own affair has made a judgment about you and they think they like you and they therefore give you an award. So when you are told, yes it's good news, but it doesn't sink in immediately, it's only about a couple of weeks later.

NC: OK, this is the last question. This is also about the prize. So beyond the accolades that are associated with such a grand prize, do you feel that going towards the future the Mo Ibrahim Foundation Prize for Achievement in African Leadership and similar measures can actually affect the behavior of current leaders on the African continent in their consciousness knowing that this prize exists and maybe it will have a positive effect on them?

FM: Yes. I talked earlier about modern African civil society of today tending to hold their leaders to greater account than was the case in the past. I think the Mo Ibrahim... I think it's a question of carrot and stick. I think the Mo Ibrahim prize will have the effect to serve as an incentive for some of the presidents, but some of civil society demanding of the presidents to behave in a way that they could win the prize. It's about good governance, and therefore it tends to give civil society a greater right to say that there is a thing called good governance and if you are a good leader if you govern as well other people would also approve of you. You could even win a prize. It's going to be... It's the accumulative impact of various things: greater familiarity with what is happening in the rest of the world, civil society or African populations becoming more sophisticated, knowing more of their rights, and the prize causes people to talk about it then talk about good governance. Whatever their attitude is, it causes African journalists, African society to talk about good governance. So it's a contributory effect. Yes, I think it will

have a desirable impact, not in isolation, but as part of changes that are taking place gradually of everybody feeling that all countries feel that they are entitled to good governance on the part of their leaders.

NC: Wonderful. Mr. President, once again on behalf of the Department of Political Science at Yale University we'd like to thank you for your participation and I can say that this has been a fantastic contribution, both intellectually and academically to the project that we are building here...