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SATELLITES

TV, RADIO, GPS, FACEBOOK, YAHOO.....etc all these inventions are a direct consequence of artificial satellites. Artificial satellites are electronic devices that orbit the earth from space and without them in our lives,our vision of the future would be much diminished. A lot can be said about these revolutionary devices but this essay will focus on how through communication applications Africa could be propelled in the future.

Africa is diverse in many ways, it boasts of different religions, cultures, landscapes and wildlife .We as Africans take pride in our diversity, however diversity is a current problem in Africa, in a social sense. Satellites would therefore act as an effective tool in tackling this problem by helping in bridging this gap in our social and economic discrepancies. This could be done through communication satellites which would create a platform, through direct satellite television and the internet, by which Africans would be exposed to the different cultures and religions within the continent. This would promote understand and fuel tolerance which would lead to improved social relations amongst the different ethnicities in Africa. Therefore another consequence of this action would be a reduction in the numerous ethnic clashes in African countries like Nigeria that plaguing the continent.

As if that were not enough, communication would be a very important link between African businesses and customers. Basically the success and failure of an enterprise heavily depend on its ability to communicate with its customers. Satellites would therefore further simplify this process if implemented by facilitating a speedy exchange of information between businesses and their customers. This would be possible through direct satellite TV and the internet. This would be very crucial for African Businesses because it would enable them to access customers within the continent and outside it. With a greater pool of customers to access, African entrepreneurs would have higher chances of attaining success thus improving Africa's struggling economy.

Furthermore Africa is a beautiful continent and it hosts of variety of attractions such as the Nile in Egypt to the ancient rock art on the shores of South Africa. Tourism is a lucrative industry and it can give a real boost to Africa's economy. But for this to happen, tourists need to be communicated with for them to be aware of the numerous features and attractions available on the continent. Therefore I believe communication satellites would play a key role in linking and thus giving exposure of Africa to the world. Programs would have to be introduced as well as websites on the internet like facebook and twitter, all with a purpose of informing tourists on what Africa has to offer.

Moreover the internet would prove to be environmentally friendly as it would reduce the use of paper print as African newspapers and magazines would be digitalized through internet mediums like blogs. This would also enable African media to generate sale other than paper print.

Sub-Saharan Africa lack behind the rest of the world when it comes to education. "Approximately 48% of the inhabitants of this region illiterate" according to a recent UNESCO report. Free primary education which is one of millennium goals set by African countries in 2000 has not been realized in such impoverished areas where families find it difficult to raise fees for their children to attend school. I therefore believe this problem could be solved amicably through the use of communication satellites. A live video stream could be used to broadcast in nearby centers equipped with computers with internet access would enable students to get a classroom experience for a more affordable price since internet access connection in general is a lot cheaper than paying fees. Even children in remote areas of Africa, where there are no schools would be able to be educated through such an initiative

Once more it has been noted that corrupt politicians and government officials are synonymous with a considerable number of African states. With the advent of social mediums like facebook, communication satellites would enable the masses through the internet unite and protest unfair practices by head of government and their officials. This we have seen work in the recent uprisings in North Africa in Egypt which began on facebook and led to a spread to the Arab world. Communication would further be used in Africa as a way of acquiring public opinion which affect African citizens. This would be

done through internet sites and would be valuable in Africa as it would lead to better governance.

With tones of information available in the internet it would be of utmost importance that a trust worth organization be responsible for its management. I propose an organization we could call is, the African Union Cyber Information Management Organization or AUCIMO could be tasked with the sole purpose. This would be accomplished by giving this organization the authority to shut down internet sites where it feels that information made available in such sites is being misused. It would have to also mandate the ban of direct satellite televisions stations from airing sensitive programming from communication satellites.

For all the suggestions mentioned above, a communication satellite would have to be launched in a suitable location for maximum coverage. It would have to utilize a geostationary orbit and ought to be based at an altitude of about 35,786 km. on the ground , Africans would be given satellite phones hence enabling communication in the remote areas of Africa like Sudan or Madagascar where natural disasters like cyclones destroy all forms of land communication. For this to happen, African governments would have to subsidize companies that would work towards ensuring that every African even in the most remote areas.

As a way of making health services more efficient in Africa, communication satellites would be used as a link between doctors and African patients. Through the internet, hospital would be able to set up websites thus enabling patients to send their symptoms before hand, thus helping doctors to prepare a quick diagnosis. This would be important since medicine would be made readily available before the patient arrives and further resulting in a reduction of time previously required for this. Another possible use of communication satellites in improving Africa's health sector would be that of enabling African patients to access medical programs on direct satellite television. This would lead to a significant decline in fatal cases related to medical ignorance.

In conclusion, I would say satellites are of utmost importance in ensuring the growth and development of Africa. I therefore believe they can play a major role in boosting

communication, media operations, tourism, the health sector, education and Africa's economy in general. For the reasons already mentioned, I strongly have faith that communication satellites application can be the key that will unlock Africa's prosperous future and raise the standard of our continent.

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