Book Symposium Introduction: Energy Poverty and Access Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Role of Regionalism

By:

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I am proud to present this book symposium on my book titled, Energy Poverty and Access Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa: The role of Regionalism (Palgrave, 2019). With the increasing role of regionalism and globalism, this book discusses the various energy challenges in Africa, and how these can be addressed through regional cooperation.

Energy is central to addressing the major global challenges of the twenty-first century, including poverty, climate change, famine, and environmental degradation, to mention but a few. This is due to the fact that energy is not only essential for the provision of basic social services such as education and health care services, but it is also essential for industrialisation and the general economic development. Even though Africa is home to massive energy

resources, including both renewables and fossil fuels, the region is also home to over 600 million people who lack access to modern energy such as electricity. Given the common energy challenges experienced in SSA including inadequate and unreliable electricity supply, and heavy reliance on inefficient forms of energy such as traditional biomass—this book advocates for regional cooperation in addressing these energy challenges.

What is regionalism and why is it important in the development of the African energy sector? Basically, regionalism is defined as the expression of a common sense of identity and purpose combined with the creation and implementation of institutions that express an identity and shape collective action within a geographical region. In this book, regionalism is defined in the context of international relations and is discussed as one of the three constituents of the international commercial system—the other two being multilateralism and unilateralism. With this definition in mind, the book explores the regional cooperation mechanisms in the development of both renewables and fossil fuels in SSA. Additionally, through the lens of regionalism, the book explores regional energy infrastructure developments in Africa and efforts to harmonise energy laws and regulations at the regional level.

This symposium is an opportunity to understand the contents of the book from different perspectives. Accordingly, several energy experts have offered their unique perspectives on various aspects of the book. Mr. Denis Gyeyir is the Africa Program Officer at the Natural Resources Governance Institute based in Ghana; Mr. Michael Uche Ukponu is a Senior Associate at the Law Partners (Barristers & Solicitors), a firm located in Abuja, Nigeria; Ms. Leezola R. Zongwe is a Business Law Consultant in Namibia. She is also an LL.M Candidate in Mineral and Petroleum Extraction and Use at the University of Cape Town. Lastly, Mr. Télio Murrure is a Lawyer & Consultant at SAL & Caldeira Advogados, Lda based in Mozambique. The symposium will close with final remarks from myself.

Contributors

Leezola R. Zongwe: Review I: Energy Poverty and Access Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Role of Regionalism

Denis Gyeyir: Review II: Energy Poverty and Access Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Role of Regionalism

Michael Uche Ukponu: Review III: Energy Poverty and Access Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Role of Regionalism

Télio Murrure: Review IV: Energy Poverty and Access Challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Role of Regionalism

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