

Foreword

It gives me great pleasure, as the third Balfour African President-in-Residence at the African Presidential Archives and Research Center at Boston University (APARC), to contribute to the *African Leaders State of Africa Report 2004*.

I wish to commend the African Presidential Archives and Research Center and in particular its dedicated director, Ambassador Charles R. Stith, for this excellent initiative. I have no doubt that this year's report, just like the two earlier editions, will shed more light on current issues pertaining to Africa and create a better understanding of this continent. Such a mission is of utmost relevance at the present time, since, as I have personally noticed on many occasions, surprisingly little is known of Africa in the United States.

But more important, the *African Leaders State of Africa Report*, which highlights the efforts made by many African countries to shift to democracy and a free-market economy, will certainly serve as an effective tool to clear up numerous misconceptions and to dispel existing doubts about Africa's genuine commitment to good governance—responsibility, accountability, and transparency—and to moving down the path of sustainable development through pragmatic and carefully prepared economic policies.

It is only when a true image of Africa is projected to the outside world that this long-neglected continent can take its rightful place and play a meaningful and fruitful role in today's globalized environment. That is why organizations like the African Presidential Archives and Research Center and a host of others that are striving in the same direction must pursue with added determination and vigor their mission of promoting friendship and a wider measure of cooperation between the peoples of Africa and the rest of the world. In this task, the support of the Balfour African President-in-Residence program and former African leaders with their wealth of wisdom and experience will, I hope, not be lacking.



I would be failing in my duty were I not to pay a deserving tribute to the Lloyd G. Balfour Foundation for its generous grant to APARC, which enables this organization to carry out its highly important mission.

Finally, I am pleased to convey my best wishes to APARC in its future endeavors, which will most certainly have a considerable and positive impact on the future of our continent—Africa.

Karl Auguste Offmann
Former President of Mauritius
Balfour African President-in-Residence
African Presidential Archives and
Research Center
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