The Principles of Democracy and Development: The Political and Philosophical Foundations of Development-Development in Africa

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Abstract : The political and societal orders face the awesome task of overcoming the difficulties which lead to growing tensions and conflicts in Africa. At the core of analysis is the question, how stable and adaptable are established democracies, new democracies, and political and societal actors? The idea of development-democracy as implying the strong linkage between economic development and political democracy appropriately describes the distinguishing characteristic of this new demand for democracy in Africa. The theoretical study examines the political and philosophical foundation of the idea of development-democracy and the arguments presented to support the need for its adoption in Africa today. This paper critically examines the polemic between the advocates of developmental dictatorship and developmental-democracy and argues for the adoption of the latter in Africa. The paper sets out to expose for the political and philosophical foundation of developmental democracy maintaining that only democracy can facilitate development. This argument is supported further by the claim that both democracy and development are two sides of the same coin in the sense that the two are both ethical concepts. The paper also maintained that the only way by which democracy is worthwhile is when it is developmental. Finally the paper affirms that since the two concepts of democracy and development are like the Siamese twins then the way out of Africa's present crisis of development is to wholeheartedly embrace democracy. It posits that when genuine democracy is adopted, genuine and sustainable development can then be attained.