

Leadership through service
A leader serves!

Ladies and Gentlemen

Gentlemen,

Distinguished guests,

It is an honour to stand here before this august assembly to share with you a topical subject that is particularly close to my heart: leadership through service.

Indeed, through daily contact with my contemporaries over the past thirty-five years, I have learned that to be a leader, one must be at the service of others.

From André Malraux who said that "to command is to serve" to Robert K GREENLEAF who was the first to develop the theory, leadership by service is the management method of the present and future centuries.

Therefore, I only understand the notion of leadership if it is associated with the notion of service.

According to GREENLEAF, the specific characteristics of servant leadership are: listening, empathy, self-awareness and the desire to create a healthy working environment, all of which our beloved continent sorely needs to ensure its political, economic and social growth.

Indeed, I firmly believe that when our leaders know how to lead by example, encourage, help people to develop and empower themselves, our African countries will be able to achieve full growth.

Steve COVEY said: "Management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success. Leadership determines whether the ladder is set on the right wall.

I say that service leadership is determining and showing how to put the ladder on the right wall... Together.

At this point, essential parameters that are very often neglected by our African governments come into play, which are the notions of community, inclusion and proximity.

I want to establish an irreversible assumption that it is difficult to serve people without being close to them.

And John C. Maxwell has the same approach when he says that "Leaders must be close enough to relate to others, but far enough ahead to motivate them."

In practical terms, in an ever-changing Africa, a servant leader must understand that to lead, it is not enough to lead people by pointing to a place and telling them to go there, but to lead them by going there with them.

In other words, it is not about managing and leading from a distance, but about getting your hands dirty; about helping others to serve; about setting an example by taking into account the opinions of others, all in accordance with our pan-African values.

Because yes, in our country, it is not enough to lead by example, but to lead by good example.

When you succeed in integrating this and making it your life principle, you become an African leader worthy of the name;

A servant leader capable of lifting our continent to the top of the world;

Long live Africa and long live Pan-Africanism!

I thank you.