

Editorial: A New Day for African Geography

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It is with excitement and trepidation that we take the helm of the *African Geographical Review* (AGR). We are buoyed, however, by the fact that this is such an interesting time to be working in African geography, both in terms of the changes occurring on the continent and the academic and institutional landscape. Over our collective four-year term, we hope the AGR will provide a vehicle for geographers to provide insight on Africa's enduring dilemmas as well as its important contemporary questions. Herewith, a summary of some of the key issues and events that have caught our eye over the past six months.

At the time this issue was going to press in July 2007, the African Union (AU) had recently concluded its ninth ordinary session in Accra, Ghana. One of the most interesting developments at this meeting was a debate about creating a United States of Africa. This proposal was pushed by a so-called radical camp led by Libya, and greeted more skeptically by a gradualist camp led by South Africa. Even though this was reminiscent of the debate between the Casablanca and Monrovia groups after independence in the 1960s, in the end, a compromise was brokered with the AU agreeing to take six months to study the timing and implications of this proposal. Some have argued that Libya and Senegal's strong support for a US of Africa reflects the limited sphere of influence of many Sahelian and Saharan states in the current African geopolitical alignment (as reflected in NEPAD) that is dominated by large states such as South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt (Kornegay 2007). While some may question Libyan President Muamar Gaddafi's credibility as a pan-Africanist (given the lack of democracy in his own country), we must give the man credit for pushing African leaders to further consider continental integration and governance. While political scientists and economists will surely come out of the woodwork to comment on this idea, should not economic, development and political geographers also be contributing to the public debate on this interesting proposal?

In June 2007, the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon publicly argued that climate change was playing a role in the ethnic conflict in