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on

**CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS ON
PEACE AND SECURITY IN AFRICA**

by

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F.R.G.S., F.K.A.S.

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, 2007

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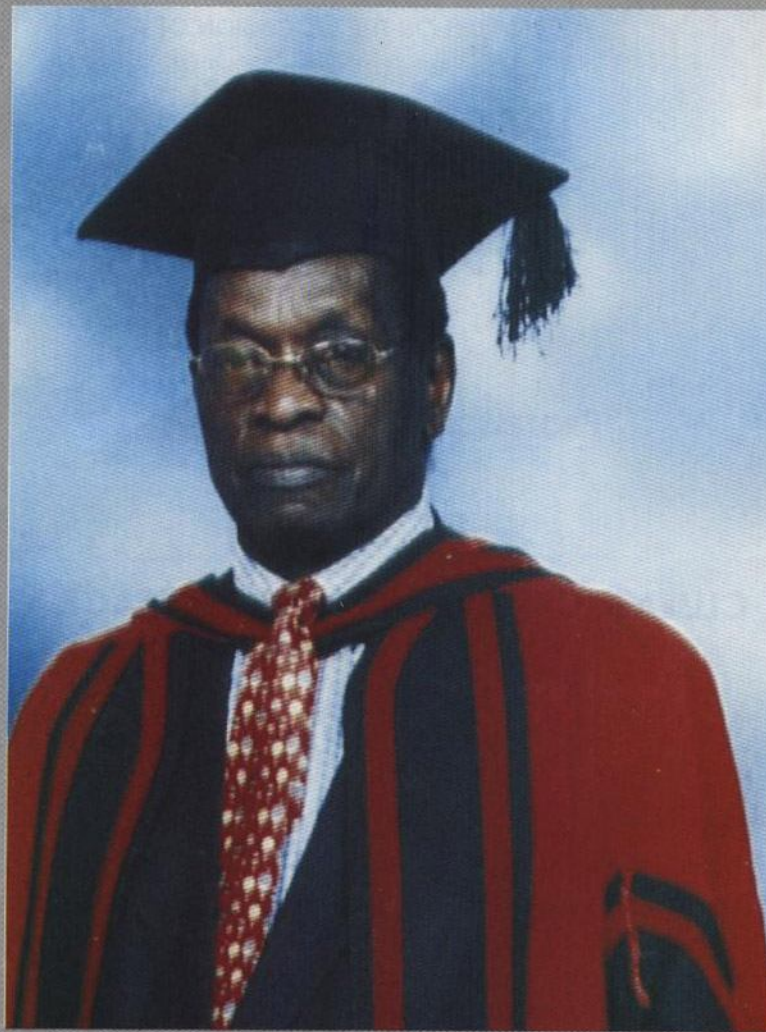
PROFESSOR RICHARD S. ODINGO

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SECURITY IN AFRICA**

This citation is in recognition of Professor Odingo as an African Scholar, and a 2007 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate (shared) through the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and for his own contribution to the global climate change debate generally, and in his capacity as IPCC Vice Chair for over ten years. The Nobel Peace Prize 2007 was awarded in two equal halves to the IPCC, and to Alexander (Al) Gore Jr., former Vice President of the USA for their contribution to the Science of Climate Change.

"We have come this far on the climate change debate"



Professor Richard Samson Odingo
B.A. (Hons) (London), PhD (Liverpool, UK)
F.R.G.S., F.K.A.S.
Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, 2007

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CITATION

This citation is in recognition of the contribution of Professor Richard Samson Odingo, a Professor of Geography in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Nairobi as an accomplished scholar who is equally recognized internationally as evidenced by his participation in the Nobel Peace Prize Award for the year 2007.

In October, 2007, the Nobel Peace Prize Committee awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and to Dr. Alexander (Al) Gore of the US, to honour scientific excellence and tireless efforts of 2,500 scientists, working under the leadership of the IPCC in convincing the world that global warming and climate change is a reality, and unequivocal, and that it is resulting from human activities. Both awardees of the Peace Prize were recognized for their contribution on how this change can be slowed down or reversed. Professor Odingo, who is one of the three Vice Chairs of IPCC, and who has been Vice Chair for over ten years, shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Mr. Al Gore, the former Vice President of the United States of America, for his role in raising concerns about global warming and climate change, particularly in the US. The Award was in recognition of the roles played by the IPCC and Al Gore in laying the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract that change.

Professor Odingo's contribution to climate change research and debate spans more than three decades, most of it through his position as Vice Chair of IPCC since 1988 to-date. He admits that his training as a geographer enabled him to balance arguments in many heated debates on global warming and climate change – a major global environmental issue. Due to the work of IPCC, global warming and climate change is now a well proven fact and reality with convincing, readily available scientific data to satisfy skeptics, politicians and industrialists, among others. Of even greater

importance is the likelihood that climate change impacts will bring damage to global economies, in particular to those in the developing parts of the world such as Africa, unless urgent corrective action are taken by governments.

As the Vice Chair of IPCC, Professor Odingo has been responsible for supervising research and reports of assessments on all aspects of climate change including but not limited to: science of climate change; impacts and adaptations to climate change; mitigation of climate change on a global scale; application of climate information to all aspects of planning; global and regional drought studies; and application of remote sensing and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). In addition, Professor Odingo's has been a much sought after voice on many international issues.

Professor Odingo was born on March 7, 1935 in Nyakach, Nyabondo, the then Central Nyanza in Western Kenya. His early childhood was one of determined struggle and achievement.

Education

From 1944 to 1947, Professor Odingo studied at Nyakach Primary School and continued at Nyang'ori Junior Secondary School (1948-1950) with encouragement from his late father who was able to appreciate the importance of education and who also saw some germ of potential in the young Odingo. Recognizing his inability to pay fees, beyond 1950, a generous uncle offered to pay part of his fees, but Odingo was consequently awarded a scholarship to study at the Government African Secondary School, Kakamega, from 1951 to 1954, and was thus enabled to complete his secondary school education.

As a result of his constant outstanding academic performance and continuous hard work, Professor Odingo passed the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate with Grade I, and was admitted for studies at Makerere University College, where he sat for the London University Examinations, and in 1957 he was selected to

study for the BA Honours Programme offered at Makerere by London University. Young Odingo was awarded the **Archer-Sturrock Prize** for being the best student in the London University Preliminary Examinations at Makerere. Between 1957 and 1960, he was invited to join the BA Honours Programme in Geography at the prestigious Makerere University College, Kampala, Uganda. He completed his Honours Degree studies in 1960, and was awarded a Kenya Government Scholarship to study in Britain for an advanced degree programme.

In Makerere, Professor David Wasawo was his role model, Professor Kenneth Baker his mentor, while Professor Francis Ojany was his classmate during the BA Honours studies. The late Professor Simeon Hongo Ominde, who taught him at Makerere, was one of his most valued sources of inspiration.

Between 1960 and 1963, Professor Odingo continued with his postgraduate studies at the renowned University of Liverpool. He initially registered for a master's degree course, which he was later exempted from, and he was upgraded to the PhD Programme. This was because his field research work on "*Aspects of Agricultural Geography of the Kenya Highlands*" was so impressive in content and methodology for a master's degree and his Professors recommended that instead he be upgraded to try the PhD. As a result, Professor Odingo obtained his degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Agricultural Geography in June 1963. His excellent academic performance in a record time of three years was announced on the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). A month later, in July 1963, Professor Odingo was offered the job of Lecturer in Geography at Makerere University College. This event marked a significant highpoint in his outstanding career.

University Teaching

Professor Odingo has very extensive teaching experience in Kenya and overseas at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. From 1963 to 1965 he taught at Makerere University College before

moving to University College, Nairobi, in September 1965. He was appointed Senior Lecturer in the Department of Geography, University of Nairobi in 1969, Associate Professor in 1975 and Professor of Geography in 1987. In 1969-70 Professor Odingo was awarded a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship. The Fellowship enabled him to have a short visiting position at University College, London before he proceeded to the Food Research Institute of Stanford University, California where he taught and carried out research work for a semester. In subsequent years he had other Visiting Scholar appointments at University College, London and at universities in Japan.

Professor Odingo has continued to provide excellent leadership within the department and the wider university community, occupying a number of functional positions as Chairman of Department and Dean of the Faculty of Arts. He has also served as the Senior Programme Officer and later Officer-In-Charge, Natural Resources Programme, United Nations University in Tokyo, Japan, from 1979 to 1981 while on leave of absence. His varied experience and international exposure have enriched his teaching and research at the University. During his stay at the UNU in Japan he initiated the Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (INRA).

Over the years, Professor Odingo has supervised many Master of Science and Master of Arts students and over fifteen PhDs. In fact, he has mentored most of the current academic staff in the various departments of geography in the country. Some of his former students include Professor Lucia Omondi (former Principal, College of Education and Distance Studies, University of Nairobi); Professor David Mungai (University of Nairobi); Professor Olewe Nyunya (former Director IDIS); Professor Elias Ayiamba (Chairman, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Nairobi); Professor John Oucho (Warwick University, UK); Professor Justus Mwanje (Kenyatta University); Professor Benea Omondi (Moi University); Professor Enos Njeru (Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Nairobi); Prof. George

Krhoda (former Permanent Secretary and Associate Professor, University of Nairobi); and Honourable Chris Obure (Minister for Roads), among others.

Research Experience

Professor Odingo's main areas of research, teaching and postgraduate supervision encompass a broad range of disciplines indicating his understanding of geography as well as his professional universality. They have included: Agricultural Geography; Climatology; Environmental Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems (GIS); Geography of Natural Resources; and studies on drought and desertification; agriculture and rural development and multipurpose river basin development.

He has and continues to carry out extensive and unmatched scholarly research in many of the areas of knowledge highlighted above. He has been involved in multi-disciplinary research on the Kano Plains, jointly with the British Medical Research Foundation and funded by the National Research Foundation in the US. Between 1973 and 1974, his research on rural institutions in Kenya was funded by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). His classical research on the "*White Highlands in Kenya and Resettlement after Independence*" remains a monument for unraveling the land question in the Rift Valley. For years he served as FAO consultant on many issues including the establishment of Remote Sensing Centres in Africa.

In addition, Professor Odingo has been a visiting scholar at the Food Research Institute at Stanford University College (1969-1970); Director of SIDA and World Bank funded Kamburu-Gitaru Environmental Impact Assessment Project (1975-1977); Coordinator of the International Federation of Institutes of Advanced Study (IFIAS) project on "Drought and Man" (1976-1977); and Senior Advisor to the Executive Director of UNEP on desertification, drought and its effects (1980-1985).

Much of Professor Odingo's research has been published in books, chapters in books and over one hundred articles in scientific journals world-wide. Among his well-known publications are (•) *The Clean Development Mechanism: A Framework for the Development of Sustainable Projects in Africa*; (•) *Agriculture in the White Highlands of Kenya*; (•) *Health and Diseases in Kenya*, a book edited jointly with Dr. L. Vogel and others; (•) *An African Dam*, published as Ecological Bulletin No.29 of the Swedish Natural Research Council; (•) *Equity and Social Considerations Related to Climate Change*, an IPCC publication edited by Prof. Odingo in 1994. Some of his voluminous contributions to academic knowledge, skills and applications to sustainable development in Kenya, Africa and the rest of the world can be observed from the wide ranging bibliography included in this citation, spanning 45 years of research (1961 to 2006).

Contribution

Professor Odingo is an academician for all seasons. At the national level, he has contributed ably to critical issues such as the question of "land". He has continued to emphasize the need for a settlement policy to advance the land issue. He has also handled the human aspects of drought and dealt with governance issues on water resource conflicts. He has made a notable contribution through consultancies with national and regional bodies such as the Economic Commission of Africa, IDRC, FAO, UNDP and the World Bank among others. He has been a member of the International Advisory Board on Sustainable Development attached to the US Department of Energy (1996-2001) and a review editor to many books and journals on topics of peace, security, disease and food security, all impacted by climate change. For ten years, Professor Odingo has been the National Chair of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Climate Change Activities in Kenya.

In 1973 Professor Odingo was invited to a Nobel workshop on "Building of Dams and Schistosomiasis" in Stockholm. At that

time, he did not think he would ever get a Nobel Prize. *“Dream and your dreams will come true”*. Out of this workshop, he got a research grant from SIDA and published his work as a research bulletin. As a scientist, Professor Odingo says *“one must always speak the truth and people will then seek you out.”*



At the university level, Professor Odingo has provided a firm and loyal support to the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, offering sincere, valuable advice and guidance in major committees. He has been instrumental in designing dynamic, market-driven academic programmes in the department, assessment of scholarly research work and drafting the Departmental Strategic Plan of 2005-2010. Most important, Professor Odingo was involved in the establishment of the now successful Population Studies and Research Institute at the University of Nairobi. His ready availability has been a real asset to the Chairman of department and colleagues.

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