LSE and Africa
LSE, as part of the University of London, was in the vanguard of the great army of men and women across the world who responded to the call to isolate the apartheid regime. They insisted that human rights are the rights of all people everywhere. I feel greatly honoured to have an honorary degree from the University of London. Today brings an opportunity to thank LSE in person and with all humility for the part it played in that tribute to the South African people for their achievement in turning from conflict to the peaceful pursuit of a better life for all.

For many South Africans, LSE also meant the opportunity for learning that apartheid denied them in their own country. Those who were students are now working in all sectors of our society, leaders of a nation, leading a bright and common future. We continue to draw upon you for training and knowledge in fields that are critical to the development of our country. May your practical solidarity and our partnership long continue. Your invitation to me to reflect with you on the challenges facing Africa speaks of your continuing commitment to our shared goals and I thank you most sincerely.

Nelson Mandela speaking at LSE, 2000
LSE has its very foundation in 1895 when deeply involved with Africa. Its roots are firmly anchored in the four years before the outbreak of the Boer War, the year LSE was founded. It caught up in this debate for the first time, with many of the students and some staff belonging to the anti-imperialist colonial line.

In the inter-war period scholars such as Professors Charles Seligman and E. A. Westermarck found in Africa a focus for progressive thinking on World War that LSE came into its own. But it was not until after the Second World War that LSE came of age. It has been unusually cosmopolitan with many of the students and some staff belonging to the anti-imperialist colonial line.

In 1915 the distinguished US commentator (and later senator) Henry L. Cabot Lodge, who was a member of the School's governing body, wrote ‘Africa in our present and future impact’ and in 1922, with Alfred Wauchope of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, he published the first book on AIDS in Africa. In its present and future impact and in 2002, with Alan Whitehead of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, he published the first book on AIDS in Africa.

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The part played by LSE in the anti-apartheid struggle, a theme so thoroughly analysed by Nelson Mandela on his visit to the School in 2000, flowed out of this long tradition of progressive and anti-imperialist thinking. Without any history of engagement in research before that time: colonial, the School came of age after the end of the shame from the struggle for freedom and independence, and was able to play an institutional part in these changes of which it remains very proud.

Professor Tom Barnett is a professional research fellow in the Department of Social Policy at LSE. He is currently studying how to fit large scale cities such as the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In 2003 he was awarded the Royal Anthropological Institute Lucy McMail Medal in recognition of his contribution to practical anthropology. In 1980, he co-authored the first book on AIDS in Africa: “Africa in its present and future impact” and in 2002, with Alan Whitehead of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, he published the first book on AIDS in Africa. In its present and future impact and in 2002, with Alan Whitehead of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, he published the first book on AIDS in Africa.

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Engagements today

Professor Henrietta Moore is professor of social anthropology and director of the Culture and Globalisation Programme at LSE for the Study of Global Governance. She has a continuing long term engagement with Africa. Professor Moore’s research programme has focused on livelihood strategies, social transformation and symbolic systems. She is one of the leading theorists of gender in social anthropology, and her work has developed a distinctive approach to the analysis of the intersections of material and symbolic gender systems, embodiment and performance, and gender and sexuality. Professor Moore has been appointed to the William Wyse Chair of Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, commencing October 2009.

LSE has a range of scholarly working on southern Africa.

Dr Jonathan Leape has been director of the Centre for Research into Economic Systems and Finance in southern Africa at the University of Cambridge, Professor Moore has been appointed to the position. He has written extensively on the role of textual authority within Christianity, but he has also written on ritual, language and material culture, spirit possession, conversion, and religious history.

Dr Deborah James is a specialist in the anthropology of southern Africa. Much of her fieldwork has been conducted in Mumpainwina and the northern province of their urban hinterland the Waierbrander. Her most recent book is Gaining Ground? ‘Rights’ and ‘Property’ in South African land reform.

Dr Jason Sumich recently completed a PhD in the Department of Media and Communication at LSE. His fieldwork was carried out in Maputo. Mozambique from 2002-04 and investigated the historical development of local and national social representations of a Mozambican elite that is closely associated with Frelimo (Mozambican Liberation Front), the ruling party since independence in 1975. He is currently a post-doctoral researcher with the Africa States Research Centre working on Maputo since 2005.

Dr Chaloka Beyani is a senior lecturer in law at LSE. His research interests include the field of international law and human rights, gender, as well as social and political aspects of the laws of armed conflict, the movement of persons and populations, the collapse of state authority, and democracy and constitutionalism. He has acted as legal advisor, consultant, and expert to bodies including the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the World Health Organisation, the United Nations Population Fund, and the African Union.

Dr Linja Manyozo, is a lecturer in media, communication and development in the Department of Media and Communication at LSE. Her research, conducted largely in South Africa, centres on questions of voice, participation and authority of communities in development policy formulation and innovation.

Dr Joseph Karanja has been a post-doctoral researcher with the Crisis States Research Centre working on Kenya since 2009. He has worked on the political adaptation strategy.

Dr Beza Mahari is a research fellow at the Africa Centre for Strategic Studies at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. His work focuses on security policy and on the research and teaching at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, with policy-makers and with the media.

Engagements today

Partnerships today

LSE has close academic links with African institutions, including Makerere University in Uganda, Aga Khan University in Tanzania, and the University of Cape Town, University of Natal – Kwazulu-Natal and Pretoria in South Africa. From individual research links, through to departmental collaborations and research agreements, these networks are tending mutually beneficial collaborations for knowledge transfer and capacity building.

Future engagements

LSE is keen on deepening and broadening this historical and current academic engagement with Africa, and has been done through the decades and on the research and teaching at LSE. In developing the African aspects of an existing international strategy, LSE will provide further institutional support to research networks and centres. This will also support our capacity to engage with Africa and provide a focus for those currently working in the area. These networks will provide further institutional support to individuals and organisations that are necessary to improve the real changes that are needed to improve the circumstances. LSE wants to be part of this generation, something that the 21st century will have done so well in the past.

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