the Sudanese capital. Receiving quality secondary education, the young Ibrahim was able to attend the University of Alexandria, where he studied Electrical Engineering (Auletta, 2011; ONE, 2013). Having earned his Bachelors Degree, he went on to receive his Masters in Electrical Engineering at the University of Bradford (England) and his Ph.D. in Mobile Communications from the University of Birmingham (England) (The Ibrahim Foundation, 2013).

During his studies at the aforementioned schools, friends and professors interviewed by *New Yorker* and *Forbes* magazines declare that Dr. Ibrahim identified himself as a leftist, though he steered away from both traditional Eastern Communism and Western Socialism. Rather, Dr. Ibrahim's ideology, according to these secondary accounts, was significantly progressive, but just shy of the traditional cadres of philosophical socialism. To make this clear, Dr. Ibrahim stated in a recent interview with *New Yorker* staff writer Ken Auletta that he supported any progressive policy promoting productivity and well-being within a democratic society, but nothing further left than that (Auletta, 2011).

The above referenced line of thought is parallel to Dr. Ibrahim's ingenuity regarding his own philanthropic efforts. After a long stay in academia, and several leading jobs within European mobile-communication corporations, Dr. Ibrahim founded Celtel International in 1998 (ONE, 2013; Forbes Editorial Staff, 2013). With the mission of building significant cell-tower ranges throughout the African Continent, Celtel rose to be one of Africa's most successful corporations, and by 2005 covered over one-third of the African populace. More important, however, was the fact that Celtel, resulting from the prior stated success, began to invest $750,000,000 a year into the continent (Auletta, 2011; ONE, 2013).

In 2005, Dr. Ibrahim sold his company for $3,400,000,000, making him the first African-born, self-made billionaire (Forbes Editorial Staff, 2013). Despite his economic successes, Dr. Ibrahim never abandoned the ideological and political concerns of his academic youth. Thus, Dr. Ibrahim easily returned to his ethos of old after selling Celtel; and, using the money earned from his philanthropic efforts, he established the Ibrahim Foundation in 2006 (The Ibrahim Foundation, 2013; Auletta, 2011). With the

stated mission to "focus on the critical importance of leadership and governance in Africa"; this non-profit organization aims to "provide tools to support advancements in leadership and governance," as well as to encourage meaningful change on the African Continent (The Ibrahim Foundation, 2013).

This meaningful change, however, is dependent upon Dr. Ibrahim's own liberal and progressive views, which can be summarized in two general doctrines. First, that governance in Africa should be democratic, transparent, and non-corrupt. This claim is supported not only by several verbal statements made by Dr. Ibrahim, but also by aspects within the Ibrahim Foundation itself (The Ibrahim Foundation, 2013; ONE, 2013). Such evidence includes the "Corruption Index," which analyzes government corruption in African states in a manner similar to the Freedom Index. Secondly, Dr. Ibrahim does not believe in excuses. Although he recognizes, *prima facie*, that African leaders have it tough, this in and of itself is not enough of a justification for despotic rule. In accordance with this rationale, Dr. Ibrahim pushes for personal responsibility and governmental accountability in the realm of African government. This is emphasized by Dr. Ibrahim's views on the "colonial excuse." During a speech Dr. Ibrahim gave to the University of Alexandria in 2011, he declared that "we [Africans] cannot blame the colonists for our [present problems]" (Auletta, 2011).

The Ibrahim Prize and Selection Board

With the aforementioned ideologies firmly in mind, Dr. Ibrahim created the Ibrahim Prize for African Leadership and Achievement in 2007. The Ibrahim Prize is the world's most lucrative award provided to a single individual; an awardee receives $5,000,000 paid over a period of ten years, and a $200,000 grant annually for the remainder of his/her life (Auletta, 2011; British Broadcasting Corporation, 2013). The prize has only been awarded two times over the past seven years (excepting the one honorary membership awarded to President Nelson Mandela in 2007). Not only is this award singular in its monetary significance, it is distinctive from other annual, world-renowned awards in that it has opted out of selecting a recipient most years. Unique from the *Nobel Prizes*,