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P. O. Box 20153, New York, NY 10011 Tel 212.620.4080

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For Immediate Release

**KNOW THE BEGINNING WELL
An Inside Journey Through Five Decades
of African Development**

By K.Y. Amoako

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Contact: Jane Wesman

212-620-4080

jane@wesmanpr.com

or

Andrea J. Stein

212-620-4080

andrea@wesmanpr.com

KNOW THE BEGINNING WELL “is a compelling story of leadership and dedication, and a must read for every development professional, young or old.”

--Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of Liberia

“K.Y. Amoako’s book is part insightful memoir, part historical review. It gives the reader a front-row seat to Africa’s development journey. Despite the challenges still faced by countries on the road to transformation, one is left with a sense of optimism that Africa will make it.”

-- Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, former Coordinating Minister for the Economy of Nigeria

“This book will inspire many as it inspired me.”

-- James D. Wolfensohn, former President of the World Bank

**New Book by the President of the
African Center for Economic Transformation
Draws on Five Decades of History and Experience
to Explore the Challenge of African Development**

**K.Y. AMOAKO GOES BEHIND THE SCENES OF AFRICA’S
LONG JOURNEY TOWARD A BETTER FUTURE**

With its abundant resources, booming youth population, and growing attractiveness to industry and investors, Africa is positioned to undergo dynamic change in the decades ahead – and realize the potential that has eluded it for so long. But how does the continent get there from here? In his new book, **KNOW THE BEGINNING WELL: An Inside Journey Through Five Decades of African Development** (Africa World Press; 2020), K.Y. Amoako, President of the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), offers a unique, personal, and in-depth look at post-colonial Africa, exploring its ups and downs and suggesting what it will take for the continent to turn the corner once and for all.

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“The title of this book derives from a favorite African proverb: ‘If you know the beginning well, the end shall not trouble you,’ Amoako writes. It is only by knowing as much as possible about the past that one can plan for the future, breaking unproductive patterns and benefiting from the lessons learned. “I’ve written this book to apply that approach to what I know best: African development,” he continues.

KNOW THE BEGINNING WELL examines the key policies, people, and institutions that have shaped Africa’s recent history and will continue to shape its future, through Amoako’s own story – from his childhood in Ghana through his thirty-year career at the World Bank and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to his founding of ACET as a policy institute to promote transformative growth. Amoako goes behind the scenes of efforts to affect change and elevate the African voice at the highest levels of global development policy – with all the aspirations, setbacks, and successes that are entailed.

In his rich and readable book, the author addresses such key questions as:

- How can African nations diversify and industrialize their economies to create better jobs and attract more investment?
- What will it take to move beyond foreign aid and finance sustainable development?
- How did Africa’s “ownership” agenda take root – and flourish?
- What can we learn from the successes – and failures – of groundbreaking initiatives such as NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism?
- How did the World Bank’s approach to Africa evolve from the days of colonial-era, conditional lending to more productive, collaborative partnerships?
- How did the UN’s Economic Commission for Africa become a stronger voice for Africa?
- Why is a productive partnership between the public and the private sector the key ingredient to successful economic transformation?

- What are the moral and economic imperatives for closing Africa’s gender gap?
- Above all, what are the characteristics and qualities of transformative leadership?

Ultimately, Amoako offers a hopeful vision of a continent transformed, offering bold ideas to address the policy and institutional hurdles that have long hampered Africa’s social and economic growth.

In his Foreword, the late Kofi Annan wrote, “the lessons in this book have the potential to change the way people view Africa and international development. As such, I believe it offers great benefits to anyone with . . . a hand in realizing Africa’s sustainable and more prosperous future.” K.Y. Amoako’s hope is that **KNOW THE BEGINNING WELL** will indeed start a critical conversation about how Africa can finally fulfill its potential for its own citizens and for its role in the global economy.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

K.Y. AMOAKO is the President of the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), which he founded in 2008 in Ghana. He spent the first two decades of his career at the World Bank. From 1995 to 2005, he served as the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) at the rank of UN Under-Secretary-General. In addition to a degree from the University of Ghana, he holds a PhD in Economics from the University of California, Berkeley.