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**INTEGRATION AS FACTOR OF AFRICAN RENAISSANCE
(Item proposed by the Republic of Togo)**

INTEGRATION AS A FACTOR OF AFRICAN RENAISSANCE

1. At the 9th Ordinary Session of the Assembly held in Accra, Ghana, from 1 to 3 July 2007, which focused on the Great Debate on the Union Government, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union adopted the Accra Declaration on the Union Government [**Assembly/AU/Decl.2(IX)**]. On that occasion, they expressed their conviction that, «**the ultimate objective of the African Union is the United States of Africa with a Union Government as envisaged by the founding fathers of the Organization of African Unity**». They also expressed their belief in the need for common responses to the major challenges of globalization and to boost the regional integration process through an effective continental mechanism.

2. In that regard, they agreed to accelerate the economic and political integration of the African continent and acknowledged the importance of involving the African peoples as well as the African Diaspora.

3. Since then, the implementation of the Declaration has led to the crystallization of viewpoints on the modalities for the realization of integration, which is recognized by all as essential, in other words, an indispensable means of promoting the socio-economic development, peace, security and the welfare of the African peoples.

4. The African peoples, for the benefit of whom all the strategies have been designed at the highest levels, live in the constant anguish of seeing their Continent, their dear Africa, sinking into poverty, in spite of its untold wealth of natural resources.

5. The African peoples are therefore anxiously awaiting the realization of their aspirations, namely, among other things:

- free movement of goods, people and services;
- the right of citizens from a Member State of a Regional Economic Community (REC) to settle in the territory of any of the other Member States;
- the advent of fair and equitable international trade for their products.

6. These are the day-to-day expectations of most Africans, which lead to them to harbour doubts as to the actual hopes for the achievement of the integration project, a key element for the development of Africa, a renewed Africa and the African Renaissance.

7. In order to rectify the failures recorded to date after more than fifty years of independence in African countries, it is important to instill new impetus into more rigorous implementation of continental and regional integration policies, designed within the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the African Union (AU), sustained by strict coordination and monitoring of initiatives and programmes.

8. It was to that end that an International Symposium was organized by "Pax Africana" under the High Patronage of the President of the Republic of Togo, His Excellency Mr. Faure Essozimna GNASSINGBE, on the theme: "**Integration as a Factor of African Renaissance**". The Symposium was attended by eminent African personalities from political, economic and academic circles, the civil society, the business world and the Diaspora, as well as representatives of a few RECs and the African Union.

9. Former Heads of State of Nigeria, South Africa and Ghana, namely, their Excellencies, Olusegun Obasanjo, Thabo Mbeki and John Jerry Rawlings also attended the Symposium.

10. During their deliberations, participants noted with regret that the RECs and NEPAD do not adequately and efficiently play their role, and that the integration process towards which they should be working is hindered by a multiplicity of regional and sub-regional institutions with overlapping roles. Participants also acknowledged that in order to achieve real continental integration, Africa must adopt a new, bolder and more realistic approach, with greater involvement of the African peoples, in the broadest sense, who are the primary stakeholders of regional and continental integration, and should therefore be key players in the process.

11. At the end of their deliberations, participants adopted the Declaration attached hereto, in which they made recommendations to Member States, the Secretariats of RECs, the AU Commission, economic players, Civil Society Organizations and the Diaspora, requesting that they redouble efforts to speed up the Continent's integration process with a view to advancing its development and renaissance, in order for Africa to assert itself in the concert of nations.

DECLARATION



paxafricana

PAN-AFRICAN FORUM FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

THEME: "INTEGRATION AS A FACTOR OF AFRICAN RENAISSANCE"

FINAL DECLARATION

Lomé, 19 May 2011

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More than fifty years after African States gained international sovereignty, the Continent remains the least stable politically and the least economically developed continent. A myriad of conflicts and crises are retarding its development and marginalizing it in the concert of nations.

Various initiatives and actions embarked upon to promote the Continent's unity and socio-economic growth with a view to meeting the needs of the people have clearly not succeeded.

Despite its considerable natural resource reserves, Africa has not been able to develop its economic and human potentials in order to assert itself in the global arena. Consequently, the different attempts at regional and continental political integration have not contributed to furthering African Renaissance.

In the face of the changes that mark the world with the creation of huge political and economic groupings, African integration has become an imperative more than ever before.

In order to reposition the Continent on the international scene and considering the current global stakes, PAX AFRICANA organized in Lomé, from 17 to 19 May 2011, an International Symposium focusing on the theme: **“Integration as a Factor of African Renaissance”**.

His Excellency Faure Essozimna GNASSINGBE, President of the Republic of Togo, chaired the Symposium's opening ceremony, in the presence of former Heads of State, namely: that of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Olusegun OBASANJO, South Africa, His Excellency Thabo MBEKI, and of Ghana, His Excellency John Jerry RAWLINGS.

Also in attendance were Mr. Maxwell NKWEZALAMBA, African Union Commissioner for Economic Affairs, representing the Chairperson of the African Union Commission; Mrs. Beneta Joko TARR of the Department of Economic Affairs, Peace and Security of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), representing the President of ECOWAS Commission; Mr. Souleymane CISSE, President of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) Commission; and many other eminent African personalities from political, economic and academic circles as well as representatives of the Civil Society.

The deliberations of the Symposium provided an opportunity for the personalities to carry out an in-depth analysis of the implementation of the integration policies adopted since over three decades at pan-African level and at the level of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

It was acknowledged that the set goals had not been attained due to lack of boldness and political will.

In this regard, participants noted with regret that the “Monrovia Declaration of Commitment of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity”, the Lagos Plan of Action and Final Act, the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community and the Constitutive Act of the African Union have not paved the way for the achievement of the Continent’s economic and political integration.

What thus emerged was that the lack of robust political commitment, a commitment leading to a minimum abandonment of sovereignty by States thereby boosting the RECs, did not foster the formation of a nucleus rallying point and a single decision hub, which would have allowed Africa to take its destiny into its own hands.

The proliferation of sub-regional institutions which overlap also constitute an impediment to integration.

Free movement of persons and goods continues to be jeopardized by various physical and non-physical barriers, particularly the requirement for visas to travel from one country to another.

In the absence of a common currency, there should be possibility of making convertible in African economic spaces national currencies, which are not only attributes of sovereignty but also essential elements of the integration process.

It is generally agreed that to move towards veritable continental integration, Africa should adopt a new, more audacious and more realistic approach, with increased involvement of the African peoples who are the primary stakeholders of sub-regional and continental integration, and should therefore play their role as key actors.

It is increasingly becoming obvious that the development of the African continent requires comprehensive structuring of the private sector which should be considered as the principal lever for the growth, development and economic emergence of the States.

Africa should provide guidance for, and assist with, the emergence of a new generation of entrepreneurs who are, above all, in contact with the African Diaspora.

The competent deployment of science and technology in the daily life of citizens should be geared towards the realization of the ***African Ideal*** aimed at building a civilization on foundations that are solid and suited to our environment. This ideal presupposes that Africa should unite and develop, if it is to experience a new Golden Age.

In light of the aforesaid, the participants:

1. Declare that economic and political integration is an imperative rather than an option for Africa to achieve the African Renaissance;
2. Urgently invite African States to abolish visa requirements and lift all other obstacles to the free movement of persons and goods within the African space;

3. Also invite African States to establish an Observatory of Free Movement of Persons and Goods;
4. Urge African States to take the necessary measures to popularize the concepts of pan-Africanism and African integration, as well as the initiatives deployed in this regard to promote the effective ownership of these concepts by all segments of African populations;
5. Recommend the introduction of classical humanities courses on Africa and its cultural values in schools and universities, as well as the establishment of pan-African centres of excellence for teaching and research;
6. Recommend that African States speed up the process for creation of a single African currency, by first ensuring the convertibility of existing currencies;
7. Recommend that the private sector be made the principal springboard of the Continent's integration and development, and stimulate the advent of an African network of entrepreneurs and the Diaspora, the promotion of young entrepreneurs and the establishment of an African Diaspora World Council;
8. Invite African States to build integration on endogenous financial resources, it being understood that external aid should come only as a supplement rather than the main source of funding for African economies;
9. Call upon African States to carry out a painstaking rationalization of the Regional Economic Communities and an in-depth evaluation of regional groupings with a view to eliminating redundancy, overlapping, dual membership, etc., all of which lead to wastage of efforts and resources and seriously impede progress towards African integration;
10. Also call upon African States to venture off the beaten track they have been treading since independence, and take a qualitative leap forward by coming together in a Federation or a Confederation based on the Regional Economic Communities to which they belong;
11. Urge Member States of the Regional Economic Communities to establish a High-Level Committee of Experts to conduct an in-depth study of the issue of federation or confederation;
12. Invite the African Union Commission and the Secretariats of African Regional Economic Communities to examine this issue, in collaboration with Pax Africana and other African Civil Society Organizations;

In the final analysis, the issue at stake is that Africans should get their own back on history by repositioning themselves in a strategy that makes a clean break with past

mistakes and thus take up the challenge of development. To achieve this, it would be needful to advance towards the emergence of “consciencism”, which would lead up to the establishment of an African Renaissance Movement.

At the end of the deliberations, the Symposium participants addressed to the President of the Republic of Togo, His Excellency Faure Essozimna GNASSINGBE, their profound gratitude for having chaired the opening ceremony and for his invaluable support.

They also expressed their sincere congratulations to His Excellency Edem KODJO, President of Pax Africana, for having initiated and organized the Symposium on a theme of such relevance for the future of the African continent, which brought together many African luminaries in Lomé.

Done in Lomé, on 19 May 2011

The Symposium Participants

2011-01-23

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