



PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



THE AFRICAN AGENDA

AFRICA DAY CELEBRATIONS 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

On 25 May 1963, Africa made history with the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the precursor to the African Union (AU). Africa Day is intended to celebrate and acknowledge the successes of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU - now the AU) while reflecting upon the common challenges that the continent faces in a global environment.

2. AFRICA AND THE CENTRE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S FOREIGN POLICY

The White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy: The Diplomacy of Ubuntu emphasises that the African continent is the centre of South Africa's foreign policy. The African Agenda serves as a point of departure in South Africa's engagement with the international community. The African Agenda is premised on the belief that South Africa cannot prosper in isolation in relation to the rest of the continent. In addition, South Africa can only flourish if it engages with the continent on principles of equity, mutual benefit and peaceful co-operation.¹

The African Agenda is further based on the understanding that socio-economic development cannot take place without peace and stability, as these constitute the necessary conditions for sustainable socio-economic development and a stable political environment. In line with the above, the concept of "African Renaissance" calls for South Africa to engage its partners in Africa and the developing world with a purpose to confront the marginalization of Africa, and to ensure that Africa remains in its rightful place among the countries of the world.²

South Africa's commitment to promoting the objectives of the Continent centres on the need to bring about democracy, peace, development and mutually beneficial relations among the countries of Africa. South Africa's objectives for the Continent include the resolution of conflict and the building of a culture in which socio-economic development can thrive.³

3. AGENDA 2063: SEEKING A PROSPEROUS FUTURE FOR THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

On the 25th of May 1963, leaders of 30 of the 32 independent African states signed a founding charter of the then Organisation of African Unity in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. To mark this day, the African Union (AU) celebrates what is now referred to as "Africa Day" on an annual basis.

In addition to celebrating Africa Day, the African continent has developed an important policy framework that will define the future that the African continent seeks to achieve. Specifically, in the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union assembled to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the OAU/AU⁴. Africa's political leadership while acknowledging past successes and challenges, rededicated itself to the continent's development and pledged their commitment to make progress in eight key areas:

- African Identity and Renaissance,
- The struggle against colonialism and the right to self-determination of people still under colonial rule,
- Integration Agenda,
- Agenda for Social and Economic Development,
- Agenda for Peace and Security,

¹ Parliament of the Republic of South Africa International Relations Strategy (4th Parliament).

² Ibid.

³ International Relations and Cooperation (2010)

⁴ 21st Ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, at Addis Ababa, 26 May 2013

- Democratic Governance,
- Determining Africa's Destiny, and
- Africa's place in the world⁵

They further pledged to integrate these ideals and goals in a Continental Agenda 2063, through a people-driven process for the realization of the vision of the AU for an integrated, people-centred, prosperous Africa, at peace with itself. The objective of the Agenda is to develop Africa's growth trajectory for the next 50 years benefitting from lessons learnt over the last 50 years. The Agenda has been developed within the context of the Union's 50th Anniversary celebrations and will be people-centred while embracing and continuing with the ideals of Pan Africanism.

Agenda 2063 is critical to the achievement of the political objective of an African Renaissance. It is underpinned by the AU Vision, as provided for in its Strategic Plan, Agenda 2063, to build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, an Africa driven and managed by its own citizen and representing a dynamic force in the international arena".⁶

The core values of Agenda 2063 are embodied in its seven aspirational pillars, which are:

- A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development;
- An Integrated Continent, politically united, based on the ideals of Pan Africanism;
- An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for Human Rights, Justice and the Rule of Law;
- A peaceful and secure Africa;
- An Africa with strong cultural values and ethics;
- An Africa where development is people-driven, relying particularly on the potential of women and youth; and
- Africa as a strong and influential global player and partner.⁷

4. CELEBRATING AFRICA DAY 2025: A PARLIAMENTARY PERSPECTIVE

The Parliament of the Republic of South Africa recognises the importance of ensuring that future generations have a profound understanding of the African continent and its development since the early conceptions of the African Union. The African Agenda can thrive with Parliaments acting as a focal point driving a national developmental vision. It can also strengthen dialogue and public participation, driving national policy processes and at the same time provide oversight over implementation. Africa Day serves as a reminder of the vision of a prosperous and united Africa and gives Parliamentarians the impetus to further drive the African Agenda.

5. REFERENCES

Ubuntu Diplomacy: White Paper on South Africa's Foreign Policy

21st Ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, at Addis Ababa, 26 May 2013

Speech by Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Mrs Nkoane-Mashabane to the Special Joint Sitting of Parliament debating Agenda 2063, Cape Town, 31 October 2014

⁵ African Union, (2014)

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Speech by Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Mrs Nkoane-Mashabane to the Special Joint Sitting of Parliament debating Agenda 2063, Cape Town, 31 October 2014



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