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PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF PAN-AFRICANISM: NKRUMAH AND THE CONCEPT OF AFRICAN UNITY

H. E. EIGUEDO-OKOEGUALE (PhD)
Department of History and Strategic Studies,
University of Lagos, Akoka, Yaba, Lagos, Nigeria.
Email: heiguedo@unilag.edu.ng

Abstract

This article interrogates Pan-Africanism and Kwame Nkrumah's contribution to the growth of African unity. It argues that Pan-Africanism was a global movement to unite Africans against racial oppression and exploitation associated with European hegemony. It emerged as a response to the inferior social status to which Africans in white dominated societies were consigned. The article also portrays Pan-Africanism as a political and cultural phenomenon that regards Africa, Africans and African descendants in the Diaspora as a single unit. Relying on available evidence, the article then argues that Pan-Africanism sought to regenerate and unify Africans by promoting a feeling of oneness among the people of the African world. It therefore establishes that Pan-Africanism became the instrument of African nationalism, solidarity and unity in the struggle against colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism. The study further argues that the greatest impediment to the realization of Nkrumah's dream of African unity was the issue of the newly acquired sovereignty by the African states. Indeed, the newly independent states of Africa viewed Nkrumah's dream of a "United States of Africa" with common planning, defence, diplomacy and foreign policy goals with great suspicion and even hostility. Finally, the article concludes that it was an admixture between the Casablanca Charter that needed supranational organization and the Monrovia Protocol that required a gradualist functional organization that gave birth to the Organization of African Unity in May 1963 in Addis-Ababa.

Keywords: Pan-Africanism, colonialism, imperialism, African-unity, neo-colonialism.

Introduction

There is no better time to evaluate the concept, principles, problems and prospects of Pan-Africanism than now. This is in view of the fact that the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) into African Union (AU) eighteen years ago, in the year 2002 had Pan-Africanism as its underpinning philosophy. Therefore, it is believed that if African peoples have a strong union, it will serve as a basis for mutual cooperation and development. Essentially, Pan-Africanism is a global movement to unite Africa and its people against racial oppression and exploitation associated with European hegemony. It started as an idea before it became concretized and later metamorphosed into a movement. It began not in the home land but in the diaspora. It grew out of a sense of racial exclusiveness. In fact, it developed through what has been described by scholars as a complicated Atlantic triangle of influences between the United States, Europe and Africa. (Legum 1962:14)

Furthermore, Pan-Africanism is a political and cultural phenomenon that regards Africa, Africans and African descendants abroad as a unit. It seeks to regenerate, and unify Africa thereby promoting a feeling of oneness among the people of the African world. (Esedebe1994:5) Therefore, Pan-Africanism is not a new concept neither is it a dwindling phenomenon. In 1900, the first Pan-Africanist Congress was held in London. It was principally sponsored by a Trinidadian, Barrister Sylvester Williams. It was in this conference that the idea and concept of Pan-Africanism was first introduced to W.E.B DuBois, who later became a leading figure of Pan-Africanism. During this period, virtually all the colonial powers were hostile to the movement and they did everything to discredit and even suppress it. (Tarikh 1978:6)From the diaspora point of view, Pan-Africanism refers to the different African movements of the descendants of African slaves in the United States and West Indies anchored on a Negro identity that flourished in the first half of the twentieth century.

Evolution and Growth of Pan-Africanism

Understandably, Pan-Africanism is the casting aside of subservience to foreign domination in all forms, and the confident assertion that African interests are paramount. Although the precise definition of Pan-Africanism tends to be elusive, there is unanimity among scholars that Pan-Africanism encapsulates the conscious attempts of black peoples all over the world to establish a united front that is aimed at combating the dehumanizing effects of slavery, racism, colonialism, and oppression of various kinds against all peoples of African descent (M'Bayo, 2004:23). The African Union (AU) takes a holistic view of the concept of Pan-Africanism when it established that:

> Pan-Africanism is an ideology and movement that encourages the solidarity of Africans worldwide. It is based on the belief that unity is vital to economic, social and political progress and aims to 'unify and uplift' people of African descent. The ideology asserts that the fates of all African peoples and countries are intertwined. At its core Pan-Africanism is a belief that African peoples, both on the continent and in the Diaspora, share not merely a common history, but a common destiny. (AU ECHO 2013:1)

Essentially, Pan-Africanism involves efforts to mobilize continental Africans against colonialism and racism. It provides the philosophical foundations and springboard for the unity of Africa through the African Union. It seeks to unite African descent and by so doing, it demonstrates the mutual bond that is believed to exist among black peoples regardless of their geographical location. Although, the African-American and the Afro-Caribbean Pan-Africanists often adopted contradictory positions that denied their universalist Pan-Africanist aspirations. Evidently, Pan-Africanism did not begin in Africa, the home land but it began in the diaspora. Indeed, it began in the United States, becoming articulate during the 18thcentury starting from the period of the declaration of independence in 1776.

Fundamentally, Pan-African thinking and movement developed through what has been described by scholars as a complicated Atlantic triangle of influences between the United States, Europe and Africa. It represents a reaction against the oppression of blacks and the racial doctrine that marked the era of abolitionism. Obviously, the term Pan-Africanism began to gain widespread usage at the turn of the twentieth century. It is often associated with Henry Sylvester Williams, a Trinidadian barrister who convened the first Pan-African conference to

protest against the expropriation of lands in the colonies, racial discrimination, and other problems affecting all peoples of African descent. Against this background, it found expression in the independent church movement in the United States and Africa particularly in resistance to European colonialism in Africa. The available evidence suggests that, 'Pan-Africanist' and 'Pan-Africanism' became popular expressions after the London Congress of 1900convened by the Afro-West Indies barrister Sylvester Williams. However, before this congress in 1900 there had been a feeling of Pan-Africanism especially in the United States, where the Afro-Americans, although freed suffered disabilities that reduced them to the status of inferior citizens. There is also no unanimity among scholars as to when Pan-Africanism began. Nevertheless, there is consensus among them that Pan-Africanism congresses were held in London in 1900, Paris 1919, London and Brussels 1921, London and Lisbon 1923, New York 1927, and 1945 in Manchester. (Nkrumah, 1970:31)

Despite the challenges that bedevilled Pan-Africanism, it began to grow in leaps and bounds such that it was able to accommodate the cleavages and rivalries between its adherents. Firstly, the rivalry between W.E.B. DuBois and Marcus Garvey. Whereas Garvey preached, "Blacks to Africa" to the Negro masses of the New world, DuBois fiercely resisted this idea by setting his dual objectives: regeneration of black people in the lands of their adoption and in association with a freed African continent. (Legum 1962:26) This bitter and prolonged controversy led to a cross-fertilization of ideas between the West Indies and the United States. These ideas were subsequently carried to Europe and back to Africa through Pan-African conferences and African students.

Furthermore, the United States provided a stimulating training ground for these black African students not only for formal education but also for constantly rising against racial discrimination, which made them more receptive to the ideas of Negro intellectuals and independent religious movement. Despite the hostile stance of the colonialists against the movement, it kept waxing strong such that between 1900 and 1945, six different congresses of Pan-Africanism were convened, across the continents of Europe and America. In 1919, Paris played host not only to the Versailles Peace Treaty but also to the Pan- African congress. This was a follow up to the London congress of 1900. Two years later, there was another Pan-African congress in both London Brussels. In 1923, there was another congress that was held simultaneously in London and Lisbon. By 1927, another Pan-African congress was held in New York. In all of these congresses, the need for greater participation of Africans in their welfare were the burning issues.

However, the Manchester congress of 1945 was exceptional. This is because, it was in this congress that they demanded for the first-time autonomy and independence for African states. Indeed, by 1945, Pan-Africanism had been embraced by many educated Africans who later led the nationalistic struggles in their respective colonies. The 1945 Pan-African congress in Manchester became an instrument of African nationalism as demonstrated by the resolutions and declarations adopted in the congress that was adopted. The declaration, which was drafted by its secretary, Kwame Nkrumah was addressed to the Queen of England and other world leaders. It read thus:

> We demand for Black Africa autonomy and independence so far and no further than it is possible in this One World for groups and peoples to rule themselves

> subject to inevitable world unity and federation. Also, we find the new spirit awakened by Pan-Africanism- a farewell to patience and to the acceptance of suffering, we are not ashamed to have been an age-long patient people. (Legum 1962:34)

Similarly, a memorial protesting against the many injustices suffered by Africans and their descendants in the British empire was received by Mr Joseph Chamberlain on behalf of the British Government. Thereafter, he wrote the following, "Her Majesty's Government will not overlook the interests and welfare of the native races" (AMCA, 1962:8). During this period, a notable contribution to African nationalism and Pan-Africanism was the "Back to Africa" movement of Marcus Garvey. Although there was a great rivalry between Marcus Garvey and W.E.B. Du Bois, Pan-Africanism was able to accommodate both of them. Garvey formed the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) a vehicle through which he preached "Back to Africa" to the Negro masses in the New World. Conversely, W.E.B. Du Bois fiercely resisted the idea of back to Africa. Rather he set his dual objectives: regeneration of black peoples in the lands of their adoption and in association with freed, independent African continent. Evidently, Pan-Africanism rests on colour consciousness. It is a recognition of the unique historical position of black peoples all over the world. Pan-Africanism became a vehicle for the struggle of black peoples to regain their pride, their strength and their independence.

In England, the first significant organization that emerged to enhance Pan-Africanism was the West African Students' Union (WASU). It was formed in August 1925 by a Nigerian law student Ladipo Solanke. It later had branches in West Africa that were referred to as fraternities, and they helped in propagating Pan-African ideals throughout West Africa. However, it was the Manchester Congress of 1945 that marked a turning point in the history of Pan-Africanism and Pan-African movement. It was in this congress that Pan-Africanism became an instrument of African nationalism as exemplified by the resolutions adopted at the end of the historic congress. Remarkably, the decisions of the congress shifted Pan-Africanists activities to the continent, where they organized political parties in a bid to end colonialism. One of such African leaders that played a significant role was Kwame Nkrumah, who after serving as a joint secretary in the Manchester Congress was soon invited by the United Gold Coast convention to become its General Secretary.

Biography of Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972)

Kwame Nkrumah was born on 21st September 1909 in Nkroful, Gold Coast, now Ghana. He was one of the most prominent and prolific Pan-Africanists of the 20th century. He was trained as a teacher at the Achimota College in Accra from 1927 to 1930. Thereafter, he worked as a teacher for the next five years, teaching in various schools across Ghana. (Eiguedo-Okoeguale 2009:36). However, from 1935 to 1947, he shuttled between the United States of America, and the United Kingdom for his higher education. First, he enrolled in Lincoln University in Pennsylvania, where he graduated in 1939 with a Bachelor of Arts. In 1942, he received a Bachelor of Sacred Theology. During this period, Kwame Nkrumah also earned a Master of Science in education from the University of Pennsylvania. In 1943, he obtained a Master of Arts in Philosophy. Thereafter, he taught Political Science at Lincoln and at the same time he was preaching at the black Presbyterian churches in Philadelphia and New York. During this period, he also privately devoted himself to study Marcus Garvey's books on

liberation of black African from colonial bondage. Indeed, he pointed out that while a student in the USA, he believed that of all the literature that he studied, the book that did more than any other to fire his enthusiasm was the Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey (Nkrumah 1973:85).

Furthermore, between 1945 and 1947, Kwame Nkrumah was a student in London. He studied at the London School of Economics and Political Science. During this period, he took an active part in the politics of the coloured and colonial peoples. He also identified himself with the Pan-African Congress – an organization that was concerned with the rights of African people and their struggle against colonialism. (Nkrumah 1968:76)The available evidence suggests that Nkrumah helped the Pan-African Federation to convene the sixth Pan-African Congress in Manchester, England in 1945.The resolution that he wrote, which was adopted by the Sixth Pan-African Congress was captioned, "Declaration to the Colonial Peoples of the World." Thereafter, he established the West African National Secretariat to work for the decolonization of Africa. The secretariat pledged itself to promote the concept of a West African Federation as an indispensable pedal for the ultimate achievement of a United States of Africa.

In 1947, Nkrumah was invited to serve as the General Secretary to the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), a party that had just been formed with the sole aim of "Self-government in the shortest possible time." This invitation to serve as secretary to the UGCC marked a watershed in his life. Firstly, it signified his journey into big-time politics and secondly, the beginning of his quest for African liberation and unity. More importantly, Nkrumah quickened the pace of liberation and decolonization in Africa by inflaming the revolutionary spirits of many African youths who embarked on revolutions in many other parts of Africa.

Indeed, the return of Nkrumah to the Gold Coast signified an awakening of national consciousness in the four British West African territories. It also marked the beginning of the end of colonialism in Africa. This explains why he immediately embarked on tours of all West African states with the sole aim of bringing African territories together. In fact, Nkrumah claimed that when he arrived West Africa in 1947, it was with the aim of using the Gold Coast as a starting point for African independence and unity (Nkrumah 1961:172).

However, on 12th June 1949, there was a split in the United Gold Coast Convention when Kwame Nkrumah founded the Convention People's Party, (CPP) with the sole aim and purpose of achieving "Self-government now. From its inception, the CPP declared in its constitution that it would seek to establish fraternal relations with, and offer guidance and support to all nationalists, democratic and socialist movements in Africa. Evidently, Nkrumah was the first African leader to attract international fame and recognition as a Pan-Africanist. He was truly a symbol of unity for blacks and people of colour all over the world.

In 1951, his party, the CPP participated in the general election and won with a landslide victory while Nkrumah the founder and its leader was in prison. With this victory, the party demanded his release from jail. With their request granted, the CPP formed a government and by 21stMarch 1952, Nkrumah was appointed as the Prime Minister of Ghana. (Nkrumah 1968:99)As the Prime Minister, he led his country into independence on 6th March 1957.At independence, Nkrumah told his people that the independence of Ghana was meaningless unless it was linked with the total liberation of the African continent (Nkrumah 1963:136).

Thereafter, he announced plans fora new constitution which made Ghana a Republic. Therefore, on 19th, 23rdand 27th April 1960, a presidential election plebiscite on the constitution was rectified by the people of Ghana. The available evidence suggests that, Kwame Nkrumah was unanimously elected as the first President of the Republic of Ghana in 1960. His administration lasted until 1966 when his government was forcefully ousted by the military. As the president of Ghana, he worked for African solidarity and unity. His philosophies led to the formation of the Organization of African Unity, (OAU) in May 1963 by the representatives of 30 states out of the 32 independent African countries. Clearly, the establishment of the OAU marked an important epoch in the history of Pan-Africanism.
However, in February 1966, Kwame Nkrumah's government was over thrown by a section of the Ghanaian Army in a coup d'état. He fled to Guinea, where he was welcomed by the people and government of Guinea under Sekou Touré. He lived in Conakry, the capital of Guinea until August 1971, when he became ill and was diagnosed of prostate cancer. Then he flew to Rumania for treatment. Sadly, he died in exile on 17th April, 1972 while receiving treatment in Bucharest, Romania at the age of 63 years. This was six years after his government was overthrown. He was a prolific writer, who had published a great number of scholarly books and articles.

Kwame Nkrumah and the Growth of Pan-Africanism

Essentially, the Pan-Africanist movement emerged as a spiritual and cultural movement for the emancipation of the black race. It was dedicated to the issues of decolonization and independence for African nations as well as fostering unity among black people all over the world. Indeed, Pan-Africanism encourages the solidarity of African peoples with the belief that unity is crucial to political, social and economic development of all African peoples. Pan-Africanism maintains that all blacks are intertwined socially and psychologically, and that they share not just a common history but also a common destiny. Pan-Africanism was first used by black Americans and people of West Indies in the early 19th century (Legum 1962:46). Understandably, some of the chief proponents of Pan-Africanism such as W.E.B. Du Bois, George Padmore, Marcus Garvey, Julius Nyerere and Kwame Nkrumah, have each advocated a distinct and variant form of socialism. Over the years, Pan-Africanism has promoted the liberation and unification of Africa and Africans. At the sixth Pan-African Conference in Manchester, England, 1945, two great men, who later became African Presidents in their various states, Jomo Kenyatta and Kwame Nkrumah were in attendance. After Ghana's independence on 6th March 1957, Nkrumah worked with others to organize the first intergovernmental conference on Pan-Africanism. The was held in Accra, the capital of Ghana, in 1958with Patrice Lumumba as the keynote speaker.

Furthermore, Kwame Nkrumah was a prolific writer who contributed immensely to the growth of Pan-Africanism through his numerous works. For instance, in one of his books, *Africa Must Unite* (1963), he argues that the colonial subjects were the true bearer of the white man's burden. That all the colonialists were rapacious hence they all subverted the need of the subjects' lands to their own demands, circumscribed human rights and liberties, repressed, despoiled, degraded and oppressed. He argues further that no single part of Africa can be safe or free to develop fully and independently while any other part remained unliberated, or while Africa's vast economic resources continued to be exploited by imperialists and neo-colonialists. In fact, he maintained that there was no meaning to Ghana's independence unless it was linked with the total liberation of the African continent. (Nkrumah

1963:142) He also established that it was only when full political unity had been achieved that the triumphant end of Pan-African struggle and African liberation would have been achieved. Therefore, upon the achievement of political independence, he made a clarion call to all African leaders of his generation to form a continental government for Africa. He argued that a common political basis would lead to the integration of African policies in economic planning, defence, foreign and diplomatic relations. He also argues that the basis for political action would not infringe on the essential sovereignty of African states. Finally, he argues that the forces that unite Africa are intrinsic and greater than the super-imposed boundaries that keep Africans apart.

In another work, *Neo-Colonialism- The Last Stage of Imperialism* (1965), he made a vivid exposition of the workings of international monopoly capitalism in Africa. According to him, this was to show the meaningless of political freedom without economic independence, and to demonstrate the urgent need for the unification of Africa, as well as a socialist transformation of the society. Indeed, Nkrumah saw imperialism as a doctrine directed to the political and economic domination, made emphatic in the contemporary world by the dominance industrial capital of the world. He drew attention to the activities in different parts of Africa of the Peace Corps, the US information services, and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) as well as the World Bank and IMF. Evidently, this elicited a reaction from the US State Department that considered the book as, "anti-American in tone" though it was neo-colonialist practices that Nkrumah attacked in the book.

Moreover, in his book titled, *Class Struggle in Africa* (1970), Nkrumah advocates that Africans should rise and wage a struggle against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism and indeed all the force that is and abet mass exploitation and alienation. He believed that with adequate ideological direction, active involvement of the masses and relentless struggle, an authentic revolution that will lead to the effective and proper destruction of capitalism and the transformation of the society would be achieved. He further demonstrated his confidence in the potency of the socialist education as a tool for re-orienting the people towards the progressive path. He equally established that the African revolution is an integral part of the world's socialist revolution, and just as the class struggle is basic to world revolutionary processes, so also was it fundamental to the struggle of the workers and peasants of Africa.

In like manner, he established that the class divisions in modern African society became blurred to some extent during the pre-independence period, when it appeared there was national unity and everyone joined forces to evict the colonial powers. He pointed out that the fallacy of this belief was made manifest immediately after independence when class cleavages re-appeared. He therefore opines that the African bourgeoisie that thrived under colonialism was the same class that continued to benefit under the post-independence neo-colonial period. He then argued that in Africa the socialist revolutionary struggle must be based on the peasantry and rural proletariat who form the overwhelming majority of the population.

Efforts towards African Unity

Significantly, the Pan-African political movement came home in 1958. The formal launching of the Pan-African movement was quite historic. Except for South Africa, all eight independent states met in Accra in April 1958 for the first conference of independent African states. Nkrumah believed that Pan-Africanism had to be reactivated on the shores of Africa.

The conference was attended by African leaders from Ethiopia, Liberia, Libya, morocco, Tunisia, Sudan, Egypt and Ghana- the host country. The attendance in the conference demonstrated that neither religion nor the Sahara could constitute a barrier between the Arabs and other Africans in the face of political will. At the end of congress, all participating countries agreed to coordinate their economic planning and encourage inter-African state trade. They also agreed to have educational exchanges, cultural and scientific information, and to enhance communication between African states.

Remarkably, this congress committed the independent African states direct involvement in securing the emancipation and freedom of the continent. Against this background, they declared war on colonialism. The mood of the times was clearly demonstrated by Nkrumah while declaring the conference open, when he said;

> This is a memorable gathering. It is the first time in history that representatives of independent sovereign states in Africa are meeting together with the aim of forging closer links of friendship, brotherhood, cooperation and solidarity between them (Nkrumah 1968:125).

He went further to remind the delegates that Africa had for too long been a victim of foreign domination and urged Africans to settle their problems by themselves. Concluding his address to the delegates, he said:

> Today, we are one. If in the past the Sahara divided us, now it unites us. And an injury to one is an injury to all of us. From this conference must go out a new message: Hands off Africa! Africa must be free (Nkrumah 1968:129).

At the end of the conference, it could be seen clearly that the African leaders had set a precedence by asserting and proclaiming unity among themselves coupled with their solidarity with other dependent peoples of the continent who were yet to attain independence. Therefore, the congress set up a permanent machinery for coordinating all matters of concern to the African states. The conference also demonstrated that Pan-Africanism had emerged from the realm of idealism into the realm of practical politics. It also confirmed that there were African leaders who were determined not only to see Africa free but also united (Ajala 1988:39).

The fact that only a few territories in Africa had attained independence limited the number of participants in the conference for the independent African states in April 1958. Thus, for Pan-Africanism to have a wider base in Africa, there was the need to bring African peoples in both the independent and dependent territories together. It was the recognition of this fact that led to the convening of the "All African Peoples Conference in December 1958 in Accra, Ghana. The congress provided a forum for all African political parties and trade unions from Cairo in the north to Cape Town in the south. This conference was very significant not only because it was attended by so many African political parties but because it made quite a lot of remarkable resolution among which was the "Proclamation of a Commonwealth of Free African States" as the ultimate objective of African nations.

Remarkably, the first crucial attempt towards African political union was taken in November 1958. This was when Ghana and Guinea united to form a nucleus for a union of African states. In May 1959, Guinea and Ghana solemnly agreed to seal the Ghana/Guinea union and issued the Conakry Declaration (Eiguedo-Okoeguale 2009:42). Obviously, this declaration envisaged the Ghana/Guinea union as the beginning of a union of independent African states. Nkrumah pointed out that the issues of neo-colonialism and the objectives of African governments were diametrically opposed to one another. He also established that whereas the strength of African countries depended on their unity, the strength of neo-colonialism depended conversely on their disunity. In his view, a united socialist Africa remains a necessary precondition for the realization of the "African Dream".

In a bid to solve the crisis that followed the Ghana/Guinea Union, President Tubman of Liberia organized a conference at Sanniquellie, a small village in Liberia, where they produced the "Sanniquellie Declaration" of 1959. This declaration formulated six principles for the achievement of the community of independent African states.

The Problems of Pan-Africanism

The problems that bedeviled Pan-Africanism from the 1960s were mainly around the personality of Nkrumah. Indeed, between 1959 and 1960, some ugly political developments occurred in Africa that did not augur well for continued Pan-Africanism. These developments equally slowed down the pace of African unity. In May 1959, Ghana and Guinea agreed to form the Ghana/Guinea Union that was meant to be the nucleus of a union of West African states. The union was vehemently opposed and criticized by other African leaders. The first shot came from Nigeria when Chief Enahoro declared the union as "unacceptable" (Ajala 1988:43) Similarly, Nnamdi Azikiwe addressed a press conference in the United states where he made it abundantly clear that certain practical steps would be taken before African unity could be achieved. He added that if for many years certain peoples have fought for sovereignty, it was most unlikely that they surrender that sovereignty to a nebulous organization simply because of the need to work together. This simply demonstrated that he was not in favour of a supranational organization to achieve African unity. Indeed, this was one of the problems faced by the quest for African unity.

Another ugly incident that worked against Pan-Africanism was suspicion of Ghana's real intention by her neighbours. Obviously, other African leaders viewed Nkrumah's idea of political unity with all seriousness. They believed that Nkrumah's real intention was to eclipse other states and assume the leadership of the supranational organization as the Head of states. This partly explains why they viewed all Nkrumah's activities with suspicion. In fact, Nigeria and other British colonies in west Africa believed that rather than campaign for African unity, Nkrumah was taking steps to break up the British West African boundaries. Also, there was a growing awareness in Nigeria that some dissidents were receiving training in Ghana.

Moreover, most West African states viewed Ghana with suspicion if not hostility. For instance, in January 1960, Houphouet-Boigny publicly warned Nkrumah to desist from intervention in neighbour's affairs, since it was believed that Ghana armed and aided the dissident Sanwi Movement in southern Ivory Coast, now Cote d' Ivoire. Also beginning in October 1959 until Togo's independence, Ghana intensified its campaigns to annex Togo. Indeed, by the middle of 1960, most French-speaking African states had come to the conclusion that Ghana was

financing subversive activities against their elected governments. Although, these allegations could not be substantiated, the perception beclouded their judgements, which were often negative towards Ghana, the champion of the cause of African unity.

Furthermore, the issue of the concept of sovereignty was a crucial factor that hindered the actualization of Nkrumah's dream of a United States of Africa. Indeed, international integration refers to the process by which supranational institutions replace national ones. It is the gradual shifting of sovereignty upward from state to regional structures. This partly explains why Joshua Goldstein pointed out that the ultimate expression of integration is the merger of several states into a single state. (Goldstein 2008:407) Against this background, the newly independent states of Africa were not willing to cede part of their sovereignty to a supranational organization. Nkrumah was not oblivious of this problem. That was why he maintained that in the early flush of independence, some of the new African states were jealous of their sovereignty and tended to exaggerate their separatism in a historical period that demanded Africa's unity so that their independence may be safeguarded (Nkrumah 1968:132).

Establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)

Essentially, the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU); now African Union (AU) by Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere and other African leaders in May1963 was a milestone in the quest for African solidarity and unity. Thereafter, the OAU became the most important Pan-Africanist vehicle for enhancing African solidarity and unity. To be sure, the OAU emerged as a culmination of efforts by Africans and peoples of African descent to save Africa from the yoke of colonialism, imperialism, racial prejudice and discrimination, exploitation and to bring all African peoples together. This was sequel to the emergence of three legal documents that spelt out different approaches to African unity. These three documents were The Protocol of the African Charter and the Charter of the Union of African States, both emanating from the Casablanca group. The third was the Lagos charter, approved by the Monrovia group. (Ajala 1988:36) Whereas, the signatories of the Casablanca group's African Charter and its protocols wanted political integration of African states/supranational organization, the Monrovia Charter wanted only brotherly cooperation between African states, which is just a functional organization.

Moreover, prior to the meeting of African Heads of States and Governments in Addis-Ababa between 23rd and 25thMay 1963, African foreign Ministers had met in Addis-Ababa to deliberate on the agenda for the Heads of States meeting. After several deliberations, the congress agreed on an agenda but disagreed on the issue of African unity. (Legum 1968:170) Therefore, they decided to postpone the meeting until all available charters and other documents have been collated by the provisional secretariat for onward transmission to all member states. Their comments and recommendations were expected to be submitted before another congress of the Foreign Ministers that was slated for December 1963 in Dakar.

However, this proposal was rejected by African leaders on May 23rd 1963 when thirty-two African Heads of state and Government assembled in African Hall in Addis-Ababa, hosted by Emperor Haile Selassie, where they agreed on a compromise formula for achieving African unity. These keynotes of compromise and unity that guided the proceedings were emphasized in Emperor Selassie's welcome address when he said,

> It was the duty and privilege of the delegates to awaken the slumbering giant of Africa, not to the nationalism of Europe of the nineteenth century, not to regional consciousness, but to the vision of a single African brotherhood bending its united efforts towards the achievement of a greater and nobler goal (Esedebe 1994:192).

He further warned that while they agreed that the ultimate destiny of Africa rests on political union, they must also recognize that the obstacles to its achievement were numerous and formidable. However, undaunted by the Emperor's position, Kwame Nkrumah gave his address on 24th May 1963 where he urged the Heads of Governments to embrace a union. In his words,

> Your excellencies, colleagues, brothers and friends, I am happy to be here in Addis-Ababa on this most historic occasion. I bring with me the hopes and fraternal greetings of the Government and peoples of Ghana. Our objective is African Union now. There is no time to waste, we must unite now or perish. I am confident that by our concerted effort and determination we shall lay here the foundations for a continental union of African states (Nkrumah 1973:234).

Interestingly, all the African leaders who attended the conference spoke in the same vein. They all agreed on the establishment of a continental organization. However, in the course of their speeches the different perceptions on the concept of African unity became a subtle political duel between President Kwame Nkrumah and Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa of Nigeria. Speaking further on the concept of African union, Nkrumah called on African leaders to unite without necessarily sacrificing their sovereignties. He also established that they could forge a political union based on finance, defence, foreign affairs and diplomacy, a common citizenry, an African currency and an African monetary zone and an African Central Bank. He believed that Africa must unite so as to achieve the full liberation of the continent.

At the end of the conference, there was a unanimous adoption of the charter for an all African organization. This was the most realistic strategy since Nkrumah's model was perceived as premature. Therefore, a compromised charter that fell short of Nkrumah's Pan-African vision was adopted following a closed-door session. This was subsequently ratified by the participating governments. Against this background, a permanent body was launched, The Organization of African Unity, with the following aims:

1. To promote the unity and solidarity of the African states.
2. To coordinate and intensify their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa.
3. To defend their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence.
4. To eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa.
5. To promote international cooperation, having due regard to the charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
6.

To achieve these aims, the member states pledge to harmonize their policies especially in the areas of diplomacy, economies- including transportation and communications, education and culture, as well as health, nutrition, science and technology, defence and security. However,

irrespective of the recognition of the need to defend the territorial integrity of African states the charter failed to provide for a Pan-African Army. Having agreed on the purposes of the new organization, the founding fathers equally consented to its principles.

Conclusion

This article examined Pan-Africanism and Nkrumah's concept of African unity. It established that pan-Africanism provided the philosophical foundations and springboard for the unity of Africa through the Organization of African Unity now, African Union. It succinctly explored the biography of Kwame Nkrumah and his contribution to the growth of African nationalism that led to the struggle for independence. At Ghana's independence in 1957, he informed his compatriots that Ghana's independence was incomplete so long as any other part of Africa was still under colonial domination. Therefore, upon the independence of other African states he invited them to share his dream of a United States of Africa. However, rather than accepting Nkrumah's invitation, most African leaders of his time viewed Nkrumah's dream of African solidarity and unity with great suspicion.

There was also the issue of the traditional ideological cleavages between the Casablanca group, Monrovia group and the Brazzaville twelve. Against this background, the idea of African unity, as a supranational organization with an African High Command and common currency became unattainable. However, a compromise was agreed in May 1963, when the various African leaders agreed to and signed the charter establishing the Organization of African unity in the African Hall at Ethiopian's capital Addis-Ababa. Today, the name Nkrumah, elicits a mixed reaction from scholars. While some are of the view that Nkrumah was ambitious, desiring a "United States of Africa" where he would have been the Head of State, others believe that he was far-sighted in the face of contemporary international relations, particularly after the Maastricht Treaty in 1991 that turned Europe from "Europe of States" to a "State of Europe".

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