



May 25, 2022.

African Liberation Day 25 May 2022

On African Liberation Day 2022, the Socialist Movement of Ghana salutes all Africans (continental and Diasporan) and the movements engaged in political, social, cultural struggle for continental liberation, unity, prosperity, and socialism as envisioned by the founders of modern Africa.

African Liberation Day, originally “African Freedom Day”, was first declared in April 1958 at the first Congress of Independent African states hosted by Kwame Nkrumah, then Prime Minister of a newly independent Ghana in fulfilment of his March 6, 1957, pledge that Ghana’s independence would support the total liberation of the African continent (in turn a statement of the agenda set at the 1945 Manchester Pan-African conference). The meeting involved only seven African governments (Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia) and several liberation movements from Cameroon and Guinea Bissau. Despite its size, the meeting was significant as the first such meeting held in “liberated territory”.

Participants rededicated themselves to end foreign domination of our continent. They designated a day to “...mark each year the onward progress of the liberation movement, and to symbolise the determination of the people of Africa to free themselves from foreign domination and exploitation”. Five years later, on 25 May 1963, 30 independent African States met to establish the Organisation of African Unity. That day has since been celebrated as Africa Liberation Day - an occasion to reflect on and advance the Pan-African Project and its twin pillars of anti-colonial liberation and continental unity. Today we reflect on our progress.

Anti-colonial liberation: In 2022, Africa’s struggle to free itself from colonialism remains unfinished. The Saharawi people still suffer colonial exploitation and repression by the Kingdom of Morocco which seized control of their country after the Saharawi drove imperial Spain out of western Sahara in 1975. For the last 45 years the Saharawi people have been betrayed by the “international community” and many of Africa’s neo-colonial “leaders”. They are now committed to resuming armed struggle for their freedom. The Polisario front is an important front line in a wider struggle to halt the penetration of imperialist and apartheid Israeli economic and political penetration of the West African sub-region. We condemn the injustice of the Moroccan monarchy and call on all pan-Africanists to redouble their material and moral support for the Saharawi people. We salute the many principled pan-Africanist Moroccans that resist Moroccan colonialism as an integral part of their own the democratic struggles.

Unification: To assess our progress on this front it is first necessary to restate the context of our struggles and the character of our goals.

Firstly, we must understand that pan Africanism is a struggle against imperialism – a powerful global system of capitalist exploitation that for centuries has brainwashed, plundered, enslaved, balkanised, colonised, militarised, and corrupted Africa for the benefit of a tiny global elite addicted to wasteful competition and private accumulation and willing to destroy billions of lives in pursuit of “more”. The Pan-Africanist movement is about defeating imperialism in Africa and enabling a liberated and united Africa to contribute fully to the liberation of the entire world. For example a united Africa must support the sovereignty and security of Cuba, Venezuela, Palestine, [list] in their confrontation with US imperialism and insist on the elimination of bullying and violence in international relations.



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Secondly, we must also understand that Imperialism though objectively in long-term decline is not defeated. It remains extremely powerful and increasingly reckless (e.g. current sabre-rattling in Europe and Asia). We will not defeat it if we continue to confront it as tiny countries and movements rather than presenting it with a unified front. Imperialism will continue to confuse, dilute, fragment, co-opt and even exploit growing African consciousness and evolving Continental and Regional institutions to tighten its grip on Africa.

We must reject the various “pan-African” schemes that reduce the AU and our RECs to gatherings of neo-colonial lackies serving imperialism (and not Africa!) and seeking only personal droppings from the imperial table. We must continue to reject any “pan-African” agendas (like NEPAD) that exclude anti-imperialism. We must reject any suggestion that the political phase of struggle is over and that the task of Continental institutions is to enable international capital to move in, around, and out of our continent without hindrance or to integrate African states more firmly into the “international” community and its values and geopolitical priorities in return for “security guarantees” and policing services. We must specifically reject any notion of observer status for apartheid Israel within any continental assembly. This is the antithesis of Pan-Africanism. It is continental neo-colonisation by a globalised imperialism.

Our task is to create democratic and popular continental planning, economic, trade, international, security and cultural institutions that promote effective continental sovereignty; that enable the emergence of a new economic paradigm within which continental citizens collectively control and develop our resources for our own equitable development; that enable trade and investment relations with the rest of the world that deliver our socioeconomic aspirations by complementing rather than supplanting our own development priorities; that gives Africa a strong independent voice in international affairs; that guarantees human and institutional security against all external threats and allows us to resolve our internal contradictions as sisters; and that enables us to pursue democratic social relations that protect our many diverse identities and allows us to grow in tolerance and cohesion.

Our task is continental unity – a single African community and African State that subsumes all our current neo-colonies and their institutions. One Africa! Nothing less. And in 2022, this task is far from complete. This is what Africa’s youth must dedicate themselves to pursuing relentlessly in the 21st century. It is their only chance of a future. We must think and act strategically like Africans in the way that Kwame Nkrumah and our founding fathers did. While we continue to struggle for transformation in our neo-colonial states we must strategically build popular movements that transcend our neo-colonial borders. We must learn to be Africans first and Ghanaians etc second. We must develop the capacity and strategies to engage our continental and regional institutions, support them, and hold them accountable to a continental vision.

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