



The Economic Gerunds, Financial Infinitives & Social Imperatives of Fifty-Five Members of African Union (AU) as Nation-States of Africa

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ABSTRACT

The African Union (AU) was officially established in July 2002 in Durban, South Africa, subsequent to a resolution made in September 1999 by its predecessor, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), to establish a new continental organization to advance its efforts. All 55 African nations are recognized as Member States of the African Union. The AU's objective is to create an integrated, prosperous, and peaceful Africa, propelled by its own citizens and serving as a dynamic force in the global arena. The Agenda-2063, commonly referred to as the AU's collective vision and roadmap, was officially adopted by the AU Assembly in 2015, with the sum-aim of shared values and a common destiny.

In accordance with Article 3 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union (2000) and the Protocol to the Act (2003), the Union's primary objective is to expediting socio-economic integration across the continent. Additionally, the Union seeks to establish conditions that enable Africa to assume its rightful role in the global economy, promote sustainable development at the economic level, and integrate African economies via Regional Economic Communities (RECs) with relevant participation of women in the economic and socio sectors and lastly, to promote common policies on trade by African nations.

On the above economic tempo of the inward-looking Unity combined with outlook-philosophy of the AU, this Paper navigates toward capturing the Economic Gerunds, Financial Infinitives & Social Imperatives of Integration, Peace & Prosperity of 55 Nations of African Union (AU).

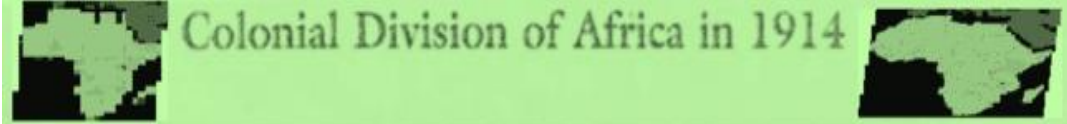
Keywords: African, Economic, Financial, Gerunds, Imperatives, Infinitives, Social, Union

1. EVERY RESEARCH HAS THE BEGINNING OF UNIQUE INDEX



2. INTRODUCTION

The AU is made up of the fifty-five Nation-States of Africa. The uniqueness of the name of Africa as a Continent unparalleled by rest of the Continents which are projecting their name-sake identification only without the credit of having an associated all-Nations-Union from within, like the AU when seen juxtaposed to the displayed colonial division of Africa in the year-1914 just below.



The image shows a map of Africa in 1914, divided into various colonial territories. The map is titled "Colonial Division of Africa in 1914" and is flanked by two small maps of Africa. Below the map is a table with three columns: "Colonial power", "Territories*", and "Sq. Miles".

Colonial power	Territories*	Sq. Miles
1 France	Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, French West Africa, French Congo, French Somaliland	4,086,950
2 Britain	Union of South Africa, Basutoland, Bechuanaland, Nyasaland, Rhodesia, British East Africa, Uganda, Zanzibar, Somaliland, Nigeria, Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Egypt, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan	3,701,411
3 Germany	East Africa, South-West Africa, Cameroon, Togoland	910,150
4 Belgium	Congo State	900,000
5 Portugal	Guinea, West Africa, East Africa	787,500
6 Italy	Eritrea, Italian Somaliland, Libya	600,000
7 Spain	Rio de Oro, Mini river Settlements	79,800
8 Independent states	Liberia, Ethiopia	393,000
Total		11,458,811

<Division of Africa Chart>

In the Africa Area Studies, colonialism is of great interest. At times, the same came to be known as colonial imperialism or racial discrimination as well as European colonialism in the African continent. The concept of racial superiority received great impetus from the institutions of colonialism. The traders had to find rationalization for business of their colonial masters who thought that the black people were an easy commodity and their masters exploited the opportunity into formation of institution of slavery with objectives of economic motives. The real motive was the economic gain which the Europeans were looking for. To derive the economic gain, they held on to the territories- otherwise called colonies. So, the European powers justified their colonial rule, saying that, as civilized people, it was their moral duty to uplift uncivilized African people.

France and Africa, through the French-assimilation policies for Africans in the 19th century and early 20th century had several implications against the British-indirect-policies for Africans which were not allowing the merger of British natives with the black-colored native Africans. France always tried to ensure that its colonies in Africa were ruled by the pro-French rulers from among the native Africans. The areas where the British rulers and French colonialists dominated are respectively designated as the 'Anglo-phone' and the 'Franco-phone' countries to deal with human beings, human nature, man's environment, human behavior, pressing human problems, social responsibility and to find facts relevant to the solution and promotion of social welfare through traditions, customs and values in which there was great subjectivity and less objectivity.

There are a number of reasons why other continents do not have a single union like the African Union. These reasons include the different levels of development and economic integration among countries on different continents, the different historical and cultural backgrounds of countries on different continents, and the different political systems of countries on different continents. In a nutshell, the causative reasons include history, geography, culture, economics, and politics. However, there are some efforts underway to promote greater unity among other continents with different approaches to cooperation and integration.

3. AU'S 55-MEMBERSHIP FACT-CHECKER

Member State	Abbreviation	Date of joining the OAU or AU
People's Democratic Republic of Algeria	Algeria	25 May 1963
Republic of Angola	Angola	11 February 1975
Republic of Benin	Benin	25 May 1963
Republic of Botswana	Botswana	31 October 1966
Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso	25 May 1963
Republic of Burundi	Burundi	25 May 1963
Republic of Cabo Verde	Cabo Verde	18 July 1975
Republic of Cameroon	Cameroon	25 May 1963
Central African Republic	Central African Republic	25 May 1963
Republic of Chad	Chad	25 May 1963
Union of the Comoros	Comoros	18 July 1975
Republic of the Congo	Congo Republic	25 May 1963
Republic of Côte d'Ivoire	Côte d'Ivoire	25 May 1963
Democratic Republic of Congo	DR Congo	25 May 1963
Republic of Djibouti	Djibouti	27 June 1977
Arab Republic of Egypt	Egypt	25 May 1963
Republic of Equatorial Guinea	Equatorial Guinea	12 October 1968
State of Eritrea	Eritrea	24 May 1993
Kingdom of Eswatini	Eswatini	24 September 1968
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia	Ethiopia	25 May 1963
Gabonese Republic	Gabon	25 May 1963
Republic of the Gambia	Gambia	9 March 1965
Republic of Ghana	Ghana	25 May 1963
Republic of Guinea	Guinea	25 May 1963
Republic of Guinea-Bissau	Guinea-Bissau	19 November 1973

Republic of Kenya	Kenya	13 December 1963
Kingdom of Lesotho	Lesotho	31 October 1966
Republic of Liberia	Liberia	25 May 1963
Libya	Libya	25 May 1963
Republic of Madagascar	Madagascar	25 May 1963
Republic of Malawi	Malawi	13 July 1964

AU's 55-Membership Fact-Checker

Republic of Mali	Mali	25 May 1963
Islamic Republic of Mauritania	Mauritania	25 May 1963
Republic of Mauritius	Mauritius	August 1968
Kingdom of Morocco ²	Morocco	1963/31 January 2017
Republic of Mozambique	Mozambique	18 July 1975
Republic of Namibia	Namibia	June 1990

Republic of Niger	Niger	25 May 1963
Federal Republic of Nigeria	Nigeria	25 May 1963
Republic of Rwanda	Rwanda	25 May 1963
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic	Sahrawi Republic	22 February 1982
Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe	São Tomé and Príncipe	18 July 1975
Republic of Senegal	Senegal	25 May 1963
Republic of Seychelles	Seychelles	29 June 1976
Republic of Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone	25 May 1963
Federal Republic of Somalia	Somalia	25 May 1963
Republic of South Africa	South Africa	6 June 1994
Republic of South Sudan	South Sudan	27 July 2011
Republic of the Sudan	Sudan	25 May 1963
Togolese Republic	Togo	25 May 1963
Republic of Tunisia	Tunisia	25 May 1963
Republic of Uganda	Uganda	25 May 1963
United Republic of Tanzania	Tanzania	25 May 1963
Republic of Zambia	Zambia	16 December 1964
Republic of Zimbabwe	Zimbabwe	18 June 1980

< Above alphabetical three tabulations account for are 55-Members of AU >

4. AU'S STRATEGIC EXISTENCE

The African Union (AU) focuses on promoting unity and solidarity between its member states and increasing development in Africa. Certain salient features of its strategic existence highlighted below. The AU's large membership also has a number of practical benefits. For example, it gives the AU a larger pool of resources to draw from and it makes it more difficult for any one country to dominate the organization. Having a large and diverse membership also presents challenges for the AU like building consensus among 55 countries with different interests / priorities, ensuring timely responsiveness to the needs of all its member states. However, the benefits of having all 55 African countries as members of the AU far outweigh the challenges.

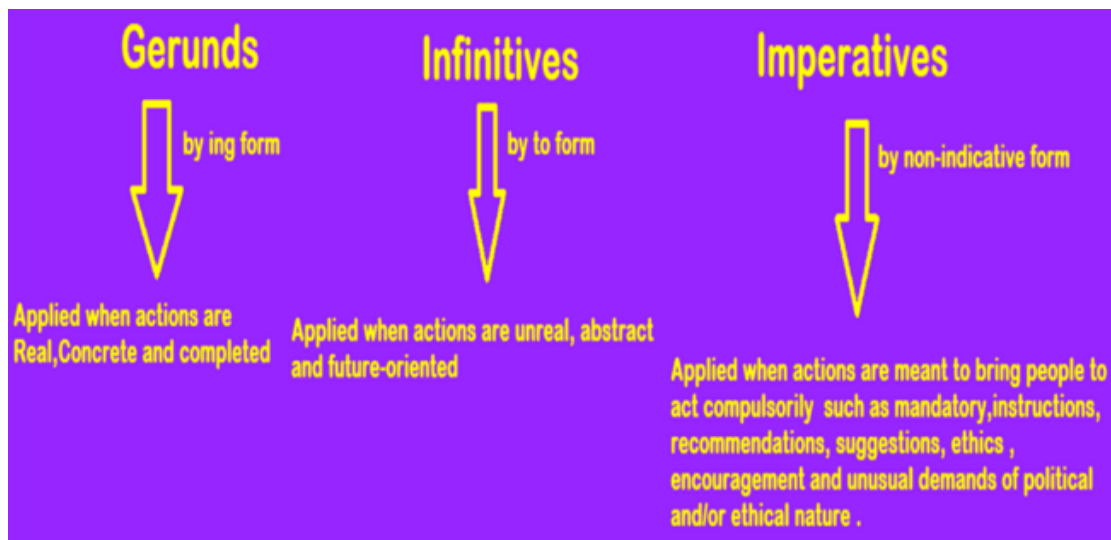
- **Promoting Integration:** The AU champions citizen inclusion and increased cooperation and integration of African states to promote Africa's growth.
- **African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA):** The ACFTA is the world's largest free trade area, bringing together 55 countries of the AU and eight Regional Economic Communities. It aims to create a single continental market, boost intra-Africa trade, and eliminate trade barriers, potentially lifting millions of people out of extreme poverty.
- **Development Financing:** The AU has been actively involved in innovative development financing initiatives to support Africa's economic growth. This includes mobilizing resources for infrastructure development, climate change adaptation, and youth and women's empowerment.
- **COVID-19 Pandemic Response:** Under the AU's leadership, initiatives such as the Africa Centers for Disease Control (Africa CDC) and the African Vaccine Acquisition Trust (AVAT) have been instrumental in combating the COVID-19 pandemic in Africa. The AU has worked to ensure widespread access to vaccines and strengthen Africa's response measures to future epidemics.
- **Regional Peace and Security:** The AU has made progress in peacekeeping efforts across the continent, establishing the African Standby Force (ASF) to address crises and manage conflicts. The AU has also taken steps to address acts of unconstitutional changes of government, promoting stability and security for economic development.
- **African Solidarity:** The African Union's 55-member structure, overall, is a reflection of the continent's diversity and its commitment to unity and solidarity. It is also a key strength of the AU, allowing it to play a leading role in promoting peace, security, development, and African culture and identity.
- **AU's Strategic Existence:** The AU's existence can be termed as the past-perfect-strategic, present-perfect-strategic as well as the future-perfect-strategic ones imbibing the thumb-rule of self-help is the best help in the geo-political world.

5. SCIENTIFIC JUSTIFICATION OF RESEARCH

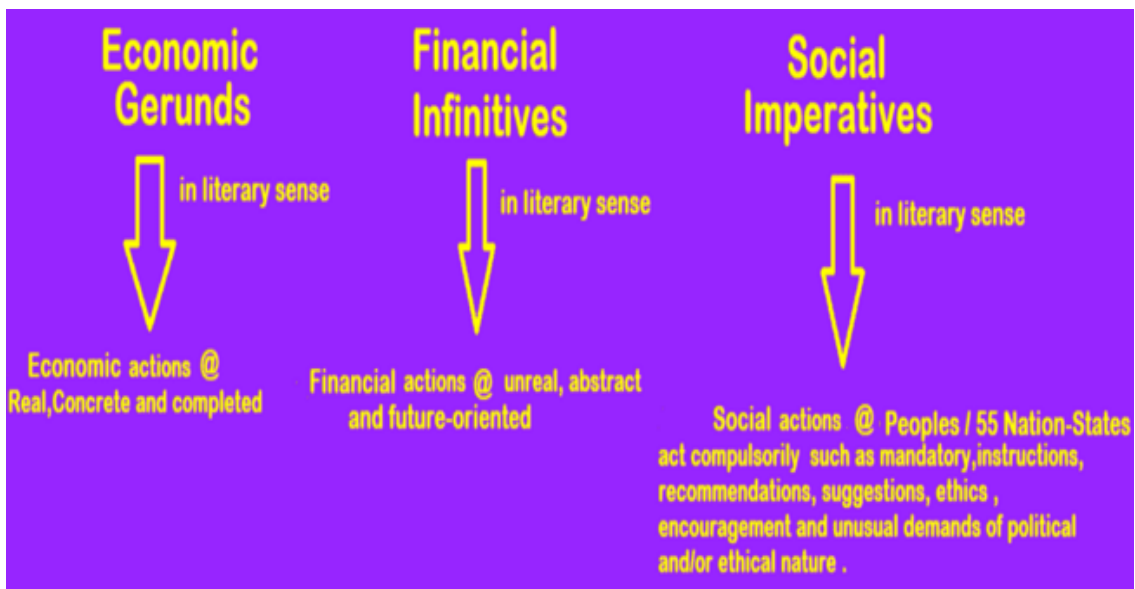
The Title of the Paper likely lets one reminded of his/her grammarian school teacher's words of Wren & Martin English Grammar Classes Book which is full of gerunds, infinitives and imperatives and how to make use of them grammatically correctly devoid of confusion. However, grammar aside, their literary usage in sentences conveying complete sense of their virtuosity as words in a non-grammatical-style, according to me, was omitted by many a class teacher during the weekly-time-table for the English Language periods whom I came across as a school and college boy. That flash back, now forced me to apply them in my research work in the African context of this Paper's focus on the Integration, Peace & Prosperity of 55 Nations of African Union (AU) and has come in handy to make explicitly simplest the post-colonial concerns of the AU vide the Economic Gerunds, Financial Infinitives & Social Imperatives.



<Fig: Cover-front of my English Grammar Book of Wren & Martin>



<Gerunds, Infinitives & Imperatives in grammar-sense>



<Economic Gerunds, Financial Infinitives & Social Imperatives in action-sense>

As seen above through the schematic diagrams, the significance of the grammarian's trio of Gerunds-Infinitives-Imperatives could be of research-relevance in their literary sense (non-grammatical) becoming the researcher's trio of Economic Gerunds-Financial Infinitives-Social Imperatives at work respectively but selectively chosen for the study of the African Union (AU). Hence, the title of this Paper set-up as the Economic Gerunds, Financial Infinitives & Social Imperatives of Fifty-five Members of African Union (AU) as Nation-States of Africa.

6. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

'Literature Review' is the art of looking into available studies on Africa to build a platform for obvious interests and all types of investigative purposes. It is already popularly known that a Historian's job is akin to that of a Detective's role in that both are fact-based with scientific objectivity for importance. Hence, following purview of easily available literary resources are author's preferred ones.

6.1 Grinker, R.R. and Steiner, C.B. (Ed) (1997). *Perspectives on Africa*.

"Africa - at one level, refers to an actual geological unity (the second largest continent after Asia) but at another level it refers to much more -the term "continent" implied something that holds or retains since Africa has been a powerful and fundamental force in world history long before the rise of European civilizations".

Leopold Sedar Senghor (1948) stresses that “the indigenous wisdom of African peoples and argues that beneath the superficial cultural idiosyncrasies that distinguish one society from another, Africans are united by a profound commonality which is expressed in their democratic social structures, their religions, their work practices, their arts and in the rhythm of African life itself”.

Terence Ranger (1983) maintains that “the 1870s 1880s and 1890s were the time of the European rush into Africa and were the time of a great flowering of European invented tradition –ecclesiastical, educational, military, republican and monarchical. In Africa, therefore, the whole apparatus of invented school and professional and regimental traditions became much more starkly a matter of command and control than it was within Europe itself. Deployed in Africa, however, the new traditions took on a peculiar character, distinguishing them from both their European and Asian Imperial forms. All this is part of the history of European ideas but it is so also very much part of the history of modern Africa.”

6.2 Saxena, S.C. (2001). *Africa Beyond 2000*

The future of Africa in the 21st century is a hotly debated issue: Africa and the Democratic Tradition, Africa and Political Stability, Good Governance and Development as Africa’s Majors among academic scholars including economists, political scientists and sociologists all over the world (Dr. S.C. Saxena, 2001).

6.3 Robertson, C. (2012). *The Fastest Billion: The Story behind Africa's Economic Revolution*

Africa will rule the 21st Century and has economic, social and political development given the geo-economic structure of the world and poised to grow along at a faster pace, due to its advantages in possessing vast natural resources, huge tracts of cultivable land and a population structure in which productive youth will outnumber the elderly or the very young.

6.4 Cheru, F. (2008). *Africa's Development in the 21st Century: Reshaping the Research Agenda*

As Africa enters the 21st century, it faces mounting challenges as well as new opportunities. Unlike in the 1980s and the 1990s, however, the conditions for Africa’s sustained growth and development are more favorable today than ever before. As a result of economic reforms, the overall growth has been in excess of 4.5 percent annually since the mid-1990s. There is greater consensus among Africans now than at any previous time on what needs to be done to accelerate growth, reduce poverty and promote sustainable development. The positive response of Africa’s international partners enhances the prospects for sustaining the progress. Africa is also benefiting from a commodity boom and increased investment in infrastructure and the extractive industry sector.

6.5 Zuma, J. (2015). *The Rise of Africa in the Twenty-First Century*

It is a fillip in discussing the rise of Africa, Jacob Zuma being the President of South Africa himself writes as the head of the government that much has been said about the rise of Africa in the twenty-first century and as home to seven of the 10 fastest growing economies in the world, the continent has in the past few years received a slew of attention from investors, commentators, developers and philosophers alike.

6.6 Lust, E.M. and Ndegwa, S.N (2012). *Governing Africa's Changing Societies: Dynamics of Reform*

What is the cumulative impact of the immense social, economic, and political changes that Africa has undergone in recent decades? What opportunities do those changes present to improve the lives of the continent’s citizens? Countering the prevailing mood of pessimism in the face of disappointed expectations, the authors of *Governing Africa’s Changing Societies* demonstrate the significance of even incomplete reforms in the areas of competitive elections and democratization, gender relations, property rights, the public sector, and privatization, among others. In the aggregate, their work reveals how seemingly small or sluggish changes are accumulating to fundamentally, and positively, transform Africa’s governance environment.

6.7 Tim, K. (2013). *Business, Politics, and the State in Africa Challenging the Orthodoxies on Growth and Transformation.*

In recent years Africa appears to have turned a corner economically. It is posting increased growth rates and is no longer the world’s slowest growing region. This book goes behind the headlines to examine the conditions necessary not just for growth in Africa but for a wider business and economic transformation.

6.8 Khapoya, V.B. (1994). *The African Experience*

The African Experience is a masterpiece written by a passionate African scholar, His Excellency Vincent B. Khapoya. This book is a must-read for any student of Africa. Khapoya deftly integrates the particular and the general to present a compelling scholarly view of Africa’s past and present in this Book which is pro-researching endlessly on the two largest colonial powers in Africa, namely France and the Great Britain.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & METHOD

- The methodological approach adopted for the study is Descriptions balanced with analytical exploration into required information from secondary research reports, websites and journals focused mostly on facts & data.
- The method is, for such a globally popular establishment like the AU of uniqueness for itself, by itself and of itself, the 'default method of default settings' in research circumference fixed by the Title of the Paper keeping the AU at the center of the circumference.

8. ECONOMIC GERUNDS OF THE AU

The African Continental Free Trade Area is one of the flagship projects under Agenda 2063 of the African Union for sustainable and inclusive growth vide socio-economic development, gender equality and structural transformation of the State Parties. The AU undertakes future research to assess the domestic income distribution effects of the African Continental Free Trade Area to help support those who may benefit less laying stress on Africa's people-driven potential for many a global-level field-players as partners in economy-driven performance. The economic gerunds of the African Union of 55-strong-membership within domestic Africa and outside Africa include:

- Promoting economic integration and cooperation among African countries
- Boosting intra-African trade
- Improving connectivity through infrastructure development
- Supporting sustainable development at the economic, social, and cultural levels
- Raising the living standards of African peoples
- Coordinating and harmonizing policies between member states
- Accelerating progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- Reducing or eliminating economic and social marginalization
- Supporting member states to adopt policies on inclusive growth
- Harmonizing standards, developing guidelines and frameworks, and facilitating their implementation in the fields of transport, tourism, postal sector, renewable energy, fossil fuel, and building a harmonized framework for the African Information society
- Attracting foreign investment
- Promoting technology transfer
- Developing human capital
- Promoting regional economic blocs
- Negotiating trade agreements with other countries and regions
- Advocating for Africa's interests on international economic stages
- Common aviation policy and a common energy policy.

Let us know separately what is called the Africa-domestic economic gerunds and Africa-outside economic gerunds as follows.

Economic Gerunds	
Domestic Africa	Outside Africa
1. Promoting economic integration and cooperation among African member states	Negotiating trade agreements with other countries and regions
2. Accelerating intra-African trade	Attracting foreign investment
3. Improving infrastructure connectivity	Mobilizing development assistance
4. Boosting industrialization and economic diversification	Promoting African interests in international fora
5. Creating jobs to promoting inclusive growth	Partnering with other international organizations to address global challenges
6. Developing the agricultural sector and ensuring food security	Promoting Scientific technology transfers
7. Promoting sustainable development and environmental protection	African Information Centers & Cooperative Societies

<Chart for Economic Gerunds>

8.1 Typical examples of how these economic gerunds are being implemented

Example One:

Promoting economic integration and cooperation among African countries: The African Union has established a number of continental institutions and frameworks to promote economic integration and cooperation, such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

Example Two:

Boosting intra-African trade: The African Union is working to reduce trade barriers and improve infrastructure to boost intra-African trade. For example, the AfCFTA is expected to eliminate 90% of tariffs on goods traded within Africa.

Example Three:

Improving connectivity through infrastructure development: The African Union is investing in infrastructure development, such as roads, railways, and ports, to improve connectivity across the continent. The Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) is a continental initiative to develop a network of infrastructure projects that will support regional integration and economic development.

Example Four:

Supporting sustainable development at the economic, social, and cultural levels: The African Union is working to support sustainable development at the economic, social, and cultural levels through a number of initiatives, such as the Agenda-2063: The Africa We Want and the African Green Revolution.

Example Five:

Raising the living standards of African peoples: The African Union is working to raise the living standards of African peoples through a number of initiatives, such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP).

Example Six:

Coordinating and harmonizing policies between member states: The African Union is coordinating and harmonizing policies between member states in a number of areas, such as trade, investment, and financial regulation. African Union has developed a common investment code and a common financial market.

Example Seven:

Accelerating progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): The African Union is working to accelerate progress towards achievement of the MDGs through a number of initiatives, such as the Millennium Development Goals Africa Steering Group (MDG-ASG).

Example Eight:

Reducing or eliminating economic and social marginalization: The African Union is working to reduce or eliminate economic and social marginalization through a number of initiatives, such as the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI) and the African Youth Charter.

Example Nine:

Supporting member states to adopt policies on inclusive growth: The African Union is supporting member states to adopt policies on inclusive growth through a number of initiatives, such as the African Green Revolution and the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF).

Example Ten:

Attracting foreign investment: The African Union is working to attract foreign investment to Africa through a number of initiatives, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Investment Promotion Agency (AIPA).

Example Eleven:

Promoting technology transfer: The African Union is promoting technology transfer to Africa through a number of initiatives, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Technology Policy Centre (ATPC).

Example Twelve:

Developing human capital: The African Union is developing human capital in Africa through a number of initiatives, such as the African Union Commission on Education, Science.

9. FINANCIAL INFINITIVES

The AU mobilizes resources for the implementation of Agenda 2063, the AU's vision for a prosperous and peaceful Africa. Through the many financial initiatives, the AU has undertaken to support the progress of Africa. By mobilizing resources, investing in key sectors, and promoting economic

integration, the AU is working to create a more prosperous and peaceful future for the continent. The AU has set a number of ambitious goals for itself, including eradicating poverty, ensuring peace and security, and promoting sustainable development. While there is still much work to be done, the progress that has been made in recent years is significant.

Here is a list of financial infinitives at the behest of the African Union of 55-strong-membership for progress of Africa ever since its inception:

- ❖ To invest in infrastructure development, such as roads, railways, and ports.
- ❖ To finance education and healthcare programs.
- ❖ To promote intra-African trade and investment.
- ❖ To support the development of small and medium-sized enterprises.
- ❖ To provide social safety nets for the poor and vulnerable.
- ❖ To reduce poverty and inequality.
- ❖ To create jobs and economic opportunities for all.
- ❖ To ensure sustainable development.
- ❖ To combat climate change.
- ❖ To promote peace and security.
- ❖ To strengthen democracy and good governance.
- ❖ To advance Africa's global influence
- ❖ These are just a few examples, and the specific financial needs of Africa are constantly evolving.

However, these infinitives provide a general overview of the areas where the African Union is seeking to mobilize resources in order to achieve its development goals.

Here are some specific examples of how the African Union is using financial infinitives to achieve its goals:

The African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) is investing in infrastructure development projects across Africa, such as the Trans-African Highway and the Inga Dam.

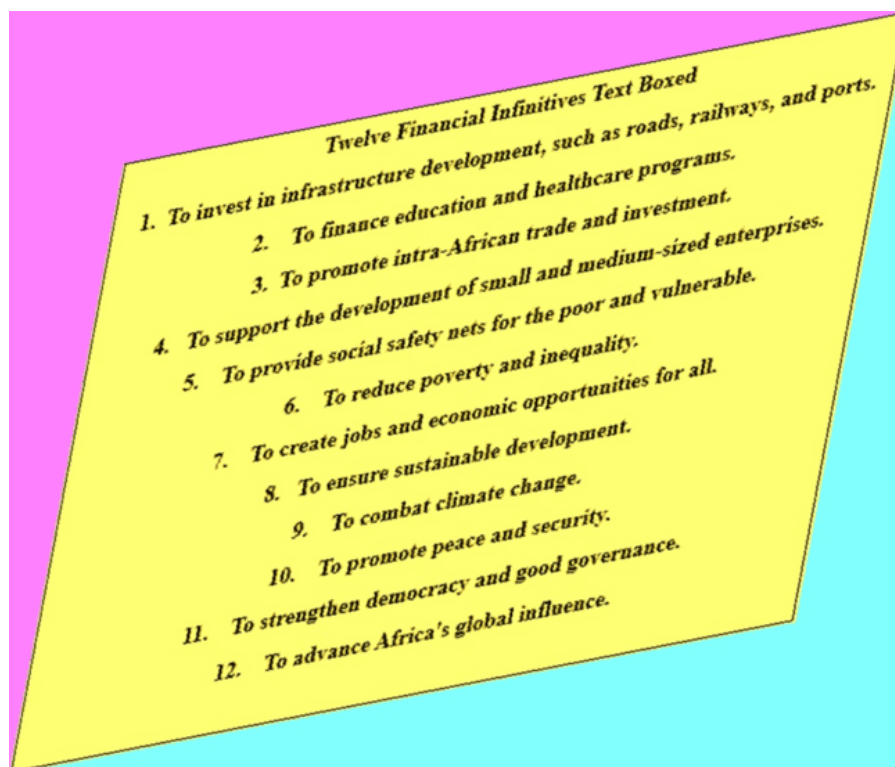
The African Development Bank is financing education and healthcare programs in African countries, such as the Girls Education Initiative and the Health Systems Strengthening Program.

The African Union Trade Centre is promoting intra-African trade and investment through initiatives such as the African Continental Free Trade Agreement.

The African Guarantee Fund is supporting the development of small and medium-sized enterprises by providing loan guarantees to banks.

The African Union Commission is providing social safety nets for the poor and vulnerable through programs such as the Pan-African Disaster Risk Reduction Fund and the African Social Security Fund.

The African Union is also working to mobilize financial resources from a variety of sources, including member states, development partners, and the private sector. The goal is to ensure that Africa has the resources it needs to achieve its development goals and create a better future for all its citizens



<Text Box for Financial Infinitives>

Some specific financial innovations that the AU has undertaken include:

- The African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA), which is the world's largest single market with a combined GDP of over \$3 trillion.
- The African Monetary Fund (AMF), which is designed to promote regional financial stability and integration.
- The African Central Bank (ACB), which is working towards the establishment of a single African currency.
- The African Investment Bank (AIB), which provides financing for development projects across Africa.
- The African Development Bank (ADB), which is the continent's leading development finance institution.

The AU is also working to improve its financial management and accountability. This includes measures such as:

- Implementation of the Kigali Decision on Financing the Union, which aims to reduce dependence on external donors and increase financial autonomy.
- Establishment of a Reserve Fund to provide a financial buffer for shocks.
- Strengthening oversight and accountability mechanisms to ensure that resources are used effectively and efficiently.

The African Union is a young organization, but it has already made significant progress in improving the lives of Africans.

10. AU'S SOCIOLOGICAL IMPERATIVES

The sociological imperatives of the African Union having 55-strong-members within the African Continent are numerous and complex. The African Union has made significant investments in healthcare, and this has led to an increase in life expectancy from 49 years in 2000 to 62 years in 2019. The African Union has also set a goal of achieving universal health coverage by 2030. The child mortality rate in Africa declining from 142 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 76 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2021, as estimated by the World Bank.

Some of the most important include:

- **Promoting unity and solidarity among African nations:** The AU was founded in 2002 with the goal of creating a "united and solid Africa" based on the principles of democracy, human rights, good governance, and sustainable development. Having all 55 African countries as members of the AU is essential to achieving this goal.
- **Encouraging cooperation and integration:** The AU provides a forum for African countries to cooperate and integrate on a wide range of issues, including trade, investment, infrastructure, security, and social development. A 55-member AU maximizes the potential for cooperation and integration across the continent.

- **Promoting peace and security:** The AU plays a leading role in promoting peace and security in Africa through its conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms, peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions, and support for regional security organizations. Having all 55 African countries as members of the AU strengthens the AU's ability to respond to peace and security challenges across the continent as members give the AU a greater mandate and capacity to respond to crises.
- **Promoting sustainable development:** The AU is committed to promoting sustainable development in Africa. A 55-member AU allows the AU to draw on the resources and expertise of all African countries to achieve this goal.
- **Promoting African culture and identity:** The AU is also committed to promoting African culture and identity. A 55-member AU allows the AU to celebrate the diversity of African culture while also promoting a sense of shared African identity.
- The AU has played a key role in mediating conflicts and promoting peace and security in Africa. For example, the AU intervened in Somalia in 2007 to help stabilize the country and combat terrorism.
- The AU has also been a strong advocate for African interests on the international stage. For example, the AU has played a key role in the negotiations on climate change and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- **Multilateralism:** The AU's 55 member states represent a diverse range of political and economic systems. This diversity can be seen as a challenge, but it also gives the AU a unique voice in global affairs. The AU can use its large membership to promote multilateralism and to advocate for the interests of Africa on the world stage.
- **Pan-Africanism:** The AU is founded on the principle of Pan-Africanism, which is the belief that all Africans share a common identity and destiny. Having all 55 African countries as members of the AU is a way to reinforce this sense of unity and solidarity.
- **Diversity:** Africa is a continent with a vast array of ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity. Having 55 member states allows the AU to represent the full range of African voices and perspectives.
- **Development:** The AU is committed to promoting sustainable development and economic growth across Africa. Having all 55 countries working together towards these goals can help to accelerate progress.
- Having all 55 countries as members gives the AU a greater mandate and capacity to respond to crises.
- **Democracy and human rights:** The AU is committed to promoting democracy and human rights in Africa. Having all 55 countries as members provides a forum for dialogue and cooperation on these issues.

In addition to these sociological imperatives, having 55 member states also gives the AU greater political and economic clout on the global stage. This can be beneficial for Africa as a whole in terms of trade, investment, and development assistance. Here are some specific examples of how the AU's 55-strong membership has helped to advance its goals:

- The AU's Pan-African Free Trade Area (ACFTA) agreement, which was signed by 54 of the AU's 55 member states in 2018, is the world's largest free trade area. It is expected to boost intra-African trade by 52% by 2022, and create 30 million jobs by 2035.
- The AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) has played a leading role in mediating conflicts and deploying peacekeeping troops across Africa. For example, the PSC intervened in the civil war in Somalia in 2007, and has deployed peacekeeping missions to the Central African Republic, Mali, and Sudan.
- The AU's African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance has helped to promote democracy and human rights across Africa. For example, the Charter has been used to pressure governments to hold free and fair elections, and to respect the rights of their citizens.
- The AU has played a key role in mediating conflicts and promoting peace and security in Africa. For example, the AU intervened in Somalia in 2007 to help stabilize the country and combat terrorism.
- The AU has also been a strong advocate for African interests on the international stage. For example, the AU has played a key role in the negotiations on climate change and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- In addition to these sociological imperatives, the AU's large membership also has a number of practical benefits. For example, it gives the AU a larger pool of resources to draw from and it makes it more difficult for any one country to dominate the organization.

Overall, the AU's 55-strong membership is a reflection of the continent's diversity and its commitment to unity and solidarity. It gives the AU a unique platform to address the challenges facing Africa and to promote peace, security, development, and prosperity.

10. CONCLUSION

At a continental level, the AU is the first of its kind. There is no second example that could be hailed as equivalent to the AU in stature. Not only the AU is second to none but also without the AU, Africans could not have had that status-label of continental-citizens, i.e., Africans.

There are a number of reasons why other continents do not have a single union like the African Union. One reason is the different levels of development and economic integration among countries on different continents. The African Union was formed in 2001 to promote economic and political cooperation among African countries. However, there are significant differences in the levels of development and economic integration among African countries. This makes it difficult to achieve the same level of integration as the European Union, for example, where there is a high level of economic integration and a common currency.

Another reason is the different historical and cultural backgrounds of countries on different continents. The African Union was formed as a successor to the Organization of African Unity, which was founded in 1963. The Organization of African Unity was formed to promote African unity and solidarity in the face of colonialism and apartheid. However, there is a great deal of diversity among African countries in terms of their history, culture, and language. This diversity can make it difficult to achieve the same level of integration as the European Union, for example, where there is a shared cultural heritage.

Finally, the different political systems of countries on different continents can also make it difficult to achieve a single union. The African Union is made up of 55 member states, each with its own political system. This diversity can make it difficult to reach consensus on important issues. For example, some African countries are democracies, while others are dictatorships. This can make it difficult to agree on a common set of values and principles for the union.

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