

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 155

Concerning the formation of the African Union.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 20, 2003

Mr. MEEKS of New York (for himself, Mr. FATTAH, and Mr. PAYNE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

RESOLUTION

Concerning the formation of the African Union.

Whereas upon the conclusion of World War II, the United Nations Charter committed all colonial powers to develop full self-governance and free political institutions in the territories under their control;

Whereas on May 25, 1963, 32 newly independent African states signed the Charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to promote African solidarity and intensify efforts to improve living standards;

Whereas some of Africa's first democratically elected Presidents such as Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, envisioned Africa's future as a "United States of Africa";

Whereas such efforts to promote solidarity and stability on the continent were undermined by regional conflicts, mili-

tary coups, and civil wars, many of which were exacerbated by the Cold War and a general policy of noninterference and respect for territorial integrity in their relations with other member states;

Whereas the OAU's efforts to promote peace, stability, and prosperity were further stymied by internal and external structural constraints on addressing the human, political, social, and economic legacies of colonialism;

Whereas economic growth and sustainable socioeconomic development in sub-Saharan African countries remain constrained by monumental foreign debts, increasing trade imbalances, and Africa's inability to benefit from greater amounts of international capital and trade flows;

Whereas in May of 1994, the ratification of the OAU's Abuja Treaty provided for the African Economic Community to be set up through a gradual process, which would be achieved by coordination, harmonization, and progressive integration of the activities of existing and future regional economic communities;

Whereas the United States enacted several initiatives to improve United States economic relations with sub-Saharan Africa, including the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which offers trade and other economic benefits to sub-Saharan African countries which meet certain criteria;

Whereas on September 9, 1999, the OAU drafted the Constitutive Act of the African Union, establishing the legal basis of the African Union;

Whereas the 2000 OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government Summit in Lomé, Togo adopted the Constitutive Act of the African Union;

Whereas a decision declaring the establishment of the African Union, based on the unanimous will of member states, was adopted by the 5th Extraordinary OAU Summit held in Sirte, Libya on March 1–2, 2001;

Whereas the African Union was created as a successor organization to the OAU to further encourage economic growth and accelerated integration into the global economy;

Whereas the objectives of the African Union as stipulated in the Constitutive Act are the following: to achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa; to defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of its member states; to accelerate the political and socioeconomic integration of the continent; to promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples; to encourage international cooperation, taking due account of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; to promote peace, security, and stability on the African continent; to promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation, and good governance; to promote and protect human rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments; to establish the necessary conditions which enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations; to promote sustainable development at the economic, social, and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies; to promote cooperation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples; to coordinate and harmonize the policies between the ex-

isting and future regional economic communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union; to advance the development of the continent by promoting research in all fields, in particular in science and technology; and to work with relevant international partners in the eradication of preventable diseases and the promotion of good health on the continent;

Whereas South African President Thabo Mbeki was selected as chairman of the newly formed African Union;

Whereas the African Union has declared that it will abandon the OAU's policy of nonintervention into the internal affairs of member states in favor of a new policy of intervention in cases of genocide, war crimes, or gross violations of human rights;

Whereas the African Union will create various organs, including an African Central Bank, an African Investment Bank, a Commission at least half of the members of which will be African women, a peacekeeping force, a security council, and a Pan African Parliament to develop and implement the new policies of the African Union; and

Whereas the African Union has declared that the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) will be the continent's plan for economic development: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
- 2 resentatives that—
- 3 (1) member states of the newly formed African
- 4 Union should be commended for their efforts in cre-
- 5 ating an organization dedicated to establishing
- 6 democratic societies and promoting socioeconomic

1 development through regional integration and eco-
2 nomic policy reforms;

3 (2) the President should encourage domestic
4 and international support of the African Union and
5 the implementation of the New Partnership for Afri-
6 can Development (NEPAD) plan that fully involves
7 Africa's civil societies;

8 (3) the President should encourage both foreign
9 and domestic private investment, broad based eco-
10 nomic growth, and socioeconomic development in Af-
11 rica; and

12 (4) the United States should continue to estab-
13 lish and carry out economic governance and initia-
14 tives that strengthen transparent public-private part-
15 nerships to support the building of the necessary re-
16 gional and national institutions for developing effi-
17 cient and competitive markets in Africa.

