

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 234

Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and commending its successor, the African Union.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 23, 2013

Ms. BASS (for herself and Mr. HONDA) submitted the following resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and commending its successor, the African Union.

Whereas on May 25, 1963, 32 newly independent African countries signed the Charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to promote unity, solidarity, and political and economic cooperation among themselves, and to defend member states' sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence;

Whereas upon its inception, the OAU embraced the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including freedom of association, free expression, and political participation;

Whereas such efforts to encourage African unity, advance human rights, and promote economic development on the

continent were undermined by regional conflicts, military coups, and civil wars, as well as large foreign debts, increasing trade imbalances, food insecurity, and inequity;

Whereas a decision declaring the establishment of the African Union (AU) as a successor organization to the OAU to promote democratic principles and institutions, encourage economic growth, and develop new tools for the collective promotion of regional stability was adopted in Sirte, Libya, on March 1, 2001, and March 2, 2001;

Whereas the vision of the African Union is that of “An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena”;

Whereas the African Union expresses commitment to the essential values of transparency and accountability, and promotes democratic processes across the continent of Africa;

Whereas the African Union departed from the OAU’s abiding doctrine of nonintervention in the internal affairs of member states in favor of a new policy establishing the right of the AU to intervene in the affairs of a member state under grave circumstances, including with respect to war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity;

Whereas the African Union continues to build more robust African regional institutions in order to address the myriad challenges facing the continent, and has established an African peace and security architecture, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development, a strategic framework for regional socioeconomic development, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program, and

the African Peer Review Mechanism, which seeks to help advance good governance, among other institutions;

Whereas the African Union has contributed to regional peace and security by mobilizing peacekeeping or intervention forces to protect civilians or support political mediation missions, and peace-building processes in Burundi, Comoros, Sudan, Somalia, and Mali;

Whereas efforts to end conflicts on the continent of Africa, which continue to destabilize states, undermine democracy, stifle economic growth and investment, and rob young Africans of the opportunity for an education and a better life, are a key United States objective;

Whereas it is critical to the interests of the United States that the African Union be well-resourced and capable of effectively addressing current conflicts and preventing future ones, advancing socioeconomic development and economic growth, and consolidating democracy and good governance;

Whereas the United States Government demonstrated its strong commitment to working closely with the AU by establishing a Mission to the African Union in 2006;

Whereas on August 3, 2010, the United States and the African Union signed a \$5,800,000 multi-year assistance agreement to achieve common policy objectives in the areas of peace and security, economic development, regional integration, health and social welfare, and good governance on the African continent;

Whereas on June 14, 2012, President Obama announced a United States Strategy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa, which calls on the United States to deepen its partnership with African countries and regional organizations by

supporting efforts to advance accountable, democratic governance, and adherence to human rights norms and the rule of law, particularly by supporting the African Union African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance and other multilateral standards;

Whereas key goals also supported by the African Union include fostering peace and security, spurring economic growth, trade, and investment; and promoting opportunity and development;

Whereas on February 1, 2013, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the United States and the African Union to cement cooperation on peace and security; democracy, and governance, economic growth, trade, and investment, and promotion of opportunity and development;

Whereas the African Union serves as a preeminent dialogue and policy-making forum for African leaders seeking to advance a wide-range of regional political, security, social, and economic objectives, including sub-regional integration, and is a key interlocutor for and representative of the people of Africa in international political and policy forums, including the United Nations; and

Whereas close relations between the United States the African Union mutually benefit the people of the United States and Africa and the political, security, economic, and social relations that link them: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
- 2 (1) extends warm congratulations to the former
- 3 member states of the Organization of African Unity

1 on the 50th year anniversary of its founding, in par-
2 ticular its original 32 member states;

3 (2) commends member states of the African
4 Union for their strong and determined joint efforts
5 to promote democratic societies, sustainable develop-
6 ment, and sound economic practices, and peace, se-
7 curity, and stability on the continent;

8 (3) urges President Barack Obama to continue
9 to strongly support efforts to advance and strength-
10 en United States-African Union cooperation, includ-
11 ing through United States programs to help build
12 the capacities of the African Union;

13 (4) encourages President Barack Obama to ex-
14 pedite and expand United States efforts to achieve
15 the goals and objectives of his United States Strat-
16 egy Toward Sub-Saharan Africa; and

17 (5) emphasizes the rule of law, good govern-
18 ance, respect for human rights, and open markets
19 and equitable socioeconomic growth and development
20 as key pillars for long-term stability and security on
21 the continent of and United States engagement with
22 Africa.

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