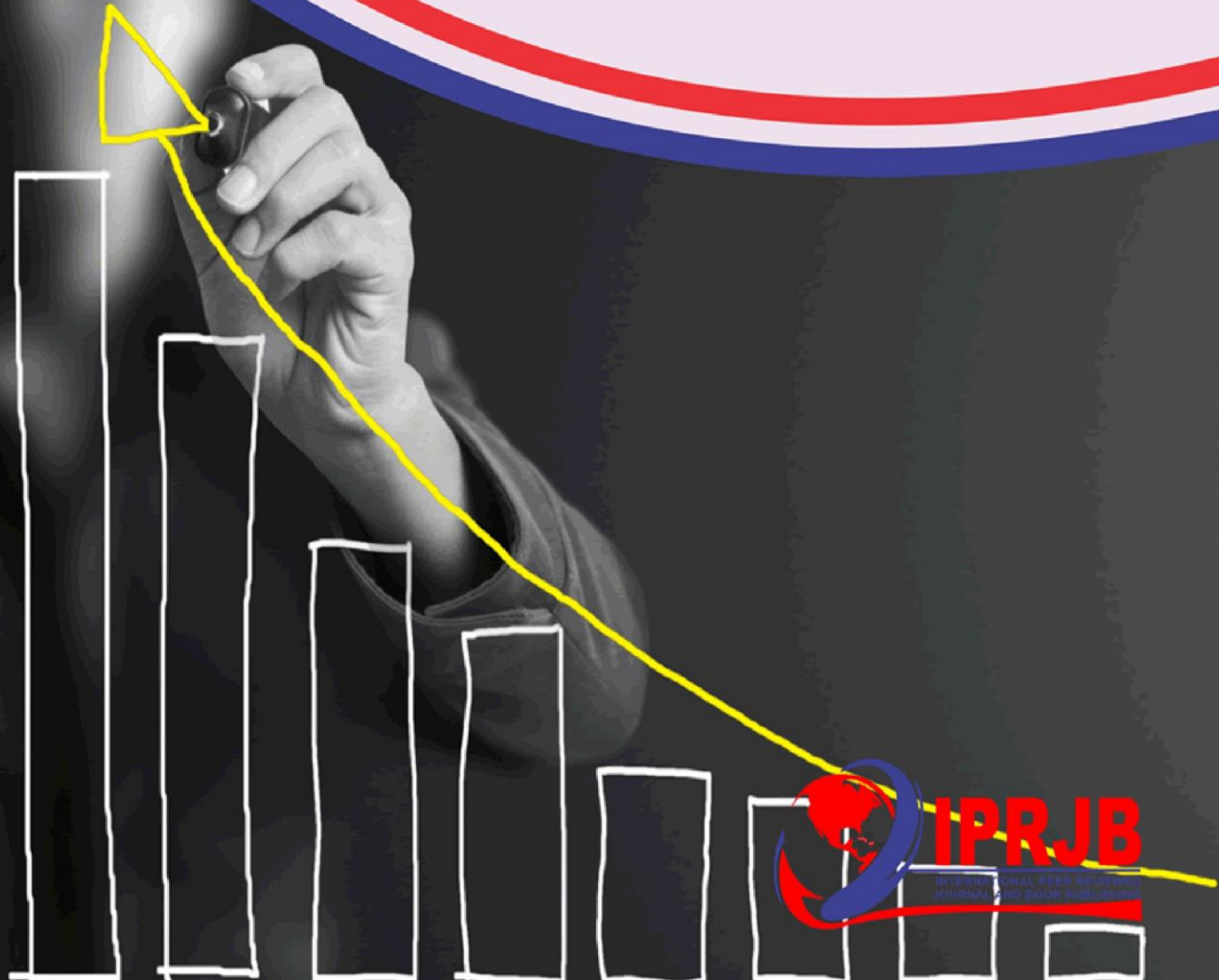


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**EXPANSION OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY VIS-À-VIS THE  
NYERERE THINKING TO AFRICAN UNITY**

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**Expansion of the East African Community Vis-À-  
Vis the Nyerere Thinking to African Unity**

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**Abstract**

**Purpose:** African Unity has had a long history since the 1960s when most African countries attained Independence. Two major views occurred in the form of moderates who preferred a gradual step towards African Unity and radicals who favored a now-now step towards Unity. The moderates' camp was led by Julius Nyerere of Tanzania while the radicals' camp was led by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. The competing views did not alienate Africans in the quest for unity. They only differed in the pace at which to attain African Unity but were all for Unity. The study examines how the competing views went on side by side and finally as situation come to indicate the moderate view is gaining the upper hand. History has vindicated the moderates as what is actually going on in the name of African Unity is the building of blocks in the form of Regional Economic Communities(RECs) through which African Unity is attained. Apart from touching the whole of Africa, an indicative example is chosen from the East African Community (EAC) as evidenced by the fast-tracking towards integration levels and also the pace at which foreign countries are vying to join the Community.

**Methodology:** The researcher engaged with interviewees in the cadres of political analysts and scientists and jotted down the ideas pertaining to the two views on African Unity. Literature about African Unity gave a useful touch to the problem in question. Lectures on African Unity compiled in the media like you tube provided another source not forgetting speeches through the same media from persons who were/are actually acquainted with both Nyerere and Nkrumah.

**Findings:** The outcome of opinions from interviewees, reading literature on African Unity, listening to lectures and speeches from the mass media depicted in general that the majority of Africans preferred a cautious gradual approach and that the process is especially evident in East Africa where cautious fast-tracking and new admissions are the norms hence indicative of Nyerere's thinking for a gradual approach towards African Unity.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy:** The achievements attained in the quest towards Unity so far are very much inclined on the block pattern of integration.

**Keywords:** *Unity, Radical, Gradual, Integration, Fast-Track*

## INTRODUCTION

The year 1960 has been termed as the ‘Year of Africa’. It was during that year that many African countries attained their political independence. Almost all of Africa was subjugated to colonization by European nations just after the 1884 Berlin Conference that partitioned the continent. European nations that scrambled for Africa include, the British, the Germans, the Spanish, the Portuguese, the French and to some extent the Italians. Liberia and Ethiopia are considered to have never been colonized, as put by Alistair Buddy Evans when writing for the Thought<sup>1</sup> in 2020. In the words of Evans, in the year 1960 alone, seventeen African countries declared independence.

Alluding to the aforesaid, France 24, an international news channel on 9 July 2020 reported that the events unfolding in and after 1960 saw many African nations gaining independence in a short span. This, according to the channel, was a manifestation of the pressure put on the colonial powers by Africans involved in the pro-independence movements. The Africans reminded the colonial powers of the promises they had made while securing African support for the war effort.

Precious Adesina<sup>2</sup> of the BBC in a report dated 24 August 2022 articulates that following independence a sense of excitement and cultural renaissance swept across many African countries. There was a sense of freedom and most people looked down the colonial past and wanted to be themselves, further articulates Adesina.

While there was a lot of decolonization between the 1950s and the 1970s, still some African countries remained under colonial subjugation. Decolonization would result in the countries assuming an active role in world politics. How then are the newly decolonized countries taking on their rightful places in world politics? Pan-Africanism heading towards the strengthening of the unity of Africa seemed an ultimate answer and influenced the politics of post-independence Africa.

Following African Independence, leaders emerged advocating for unity of the independent African states. To this end, B.F. Bankie and K.Mchombu<sup>3</sup> (2008) in their Book titled ‘*Pan-Africanism/ African nationalism : Strengthening African Unity and its Diaspora*’ write, ‘These leaders intended for a union between the Independent African states upon a recognition of their commonality which they point out to be ‘suppression under colonialism’. In that scenario, they conclude that the Pan –African thought was later to influence the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 and later the African Union (AU) in 2002.

### Thinking Strands for African Unity

That said, therefore, the vision for the future of Africa was shared and summarized in two constituent thoughts for African Unity that developed then. The OAU, a post-colonial Africa’s first continent wide association of independent states, was the brain child of the two constituents (elaborated below) generally accepted by newly-independent African leaders. As a matter of fact,

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<sup>1</sup> The Thought is the World Largest Educational Reserve based in the United States. Alistair Buddy Evans is a writer of Articles in the Thought on African History and Culture

<sup>2</sup> Precious Adesina is a journalist, public speaker and presenter at the BBC

<sup>3</sup> Banke and Mchombu: Authors of the Book Pan-Africanism/ African Nationalism : Strengthening the Unity of Africa published by the Red Sea Press in Asmara, Eritrea

the OAU was founded by 32 countries<sup>4</sup> on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It became operational on 13 September 1963 when the OAU charter<sup>5</sup>, the association's basic constitutional documents entered into force. The OAU was dissolved in 2002 and replaced by the AU.

A lot has been written on the constituents or schools of thought for African Unity. Interesting among many written works on the issue is that by Paul G. Adogah, Professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin. To Adogah, the process of decolonization in Africa that commenced in the 1950s witnessed the birth of many new states, inspired in part by the philosophy of Pan-Africanism where the states of Africa sought through a political collection initiative as a means of preserving and consolidating the ideals of African Unity.

In the aftermath, two rival groups emerged with differing views about how the goals for African unity could be best achieved. According to Adogah, the two groups, the Casablanca Group and the Monrovia group were respectively led by Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972) of Ghana and Emperor Haile Selassie (1892-1975) of Ethiopia initially. While the Casablanca Group backed a radical call for political integration and the creation of a supranational body, the Monrovia Group advocated a loose association of sovereign states that allowed political cooperation at intergovernmental level, informs Adogah. To this day, the later view has prevailed, enlightens Adogah. The OAU charter itself was therefore based on 'the sovereign equality of all member states'

One of the greatest proponents of the Monrovia thinking was Julius Kambarage Nyerere (1922-1999) of Tanzania. Nyerere strongly advocated a gradual approach of unification. In the words of Adogah, the Monrovia Group led by Nyerere of Tanzania believed an immediate unification of Africa in the 1960s was ideal but a steady approach with regional integration first followed by a continental unification was more practical. While Nkrumah wanted the United States of Africa now-now, Nyerere was the exact opposite. As far as Nyerere was concerned, Adogah puts it, 'any number of states uniting in any form-economically or politically, regionally or otherwise was for Nyerere a step forward'. After portraying the two schools on Africa's quest for unity, the Article observes Nyerere's thinking as it is affecting the process of African Unity in the case of the East African Community. Nyerere is from Tanzania, one of the original founder member countries of the community.

### **Crusaders of African Unity**

All in all the two camps were crusaders of African Unity. The *New African*, an English language monthly magazine based in London, dated 26 July 2017 quoting Nyerere's speech in Accra Ghana in 1997 elucidates. On Ghana's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence in 1997, Nyerere was one of the invitees at the occasion. When he took to the floor, the *New African* expounds, Nyerere confirmed Nkrumah made a famous declaration that Ghana's independence was meaningless unless the whole of Africa was liberated from colonial rule. Nyerere himself, the paper reports, had prior to the Independence of Tanganyika advocated that the East African countries (Uganda and Kenya) federate and then achieve independence as a single unit. To that effect, the paper further reports,

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<sup>4</sup> Article on Bibliography of the OAU and the AU dated 21 May 2008 [www.encyclopaedia.com](http://www.encyclopaedia.com)

<sup>5</sup> OAU Charter-Constitutive Act, Rules and Procedure

Nyerere had said publicly that he was willing to delay Tanganyika's independence that was set for 1961 in order to enable all the three countries to achieve their independence together as a single federal state. According to the paper, Nyerere made the suggestion because of the fear, as he later put it himself and proved correct by later events, that it would have been very difficult to unite the countries if they were let to achieve independence separately.

Chambi Chachage<sup>6</sup> well deliberates on the issue of unity as portrayed by Nkrumah and Nyerere in a Pambazuka<sup>7</sup> newsletter dated 9 April 2009. He reflects that the debate on how to unite African states has not changed significantly since Nkrumah and Nyerere locked horns in the 1960s. Exploring the latter's step by step approach to bringing African Unity in relation to the former's desire to 'fast-track' the creation of a United States of Africa, Chachage concludes that while the former's vision remains powerful, his approach is unrealistic even today. To that end, Chachage affirmed, "*I will feel with Nkrumah, yet I shall think with Nyerere*" because according to him, '*Africa must unite, albeit pragmatically*'. The two men Nyerere and Nkrumah, Chachage points out, had the same idea but differed on the tactic-they were all for unity but how that unity was to be brought about was the question.

Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim<sup>8</sup> in the article titled '*Mwalimu Nyerere and African Unity*' also reflects on Nyerere's life time legacy. Salim writes that Nyerere understood that African Unity could not be imposed but could rather be forged and only according to the free will of its constituent parts. Salim holds the position that today with the benefit of hind sight Nyerere has been vindicated by history. Salim recounts that Nyerere advocated a gradual evolutionary approach to creating the regional associations that would ultimately become the building bloc of the African Union. One in the approach, Salim recites, emerged first Africa's attempt at regional integration, the East African Community (then Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania). He further recites that Nyerere's foresight regarding Africa's unity is testified in the union consummated by then Tanganyika and Zanzibar in 1964. Indeed, '*Charity begins at home*' and '*If you point one of your fingers towards somebody, three of your fingers point towards you*'. Regarding the union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar, Salim had the following to say. '*The union has faced obstacles and there will continue to be obstacles, but the strong foundations built on the imperative need for the unity of Tanzanian people will prevail*'. After more than five decades, he concludes, the union remains an important example of resilience and visibility in uniting African people.

Paul G. Adogamh, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin in the article titled '*Pan-Africanism all afresh is the answer*' contends that Pan-Africanism the older vision of Africa was and still remains the struggle for unity and empowerment of Africans against oppression and exploitation, He maintains that the first generation of Pan-African movement leaders had believed that a united Africa was the only way to take the continent from one point to another regardless of the artificial demarcations by former colonialists. He reasons out that the only difference between the African noble statesmen was the time and how. As it turned out, he

<sup>6</sup> Chambi Chachage is an independent newspaper columnist and public policy researcher

<sup>7</sup> Pambazuka is an electronic newsletter published weekly in English, Portuguese and French by a not-for-profit organization Fahamu. Pambazuka has bases in Nairobi, Cape Town, Dakar and Oxford.

<sup>8</sup> Salim Ahmed Salim is Chairperson of the Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation and former Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)



maintains, Nyerere's gradual approach of African unification won the day when in 1963, the OAU was formed in Addis Ababa as this was the first attempt to make real the unification of Africa.

### **Manifestation of the Gradual Approach to African Unity**

The need for economic development in Africa outweighs any other urgency the continent may have. Gradual Pan-Africanism embedded a political ideology that meant to nurture Africa's vision.

From the dawn of an independence era, virtually all African countries have embraced regionalism. Making a discourse on the African Regional Integration Arrangements, Tefaye Dinka and Walter Kennes<sup>9</sup> in 2007 reasoned out in their discussion paper that there are more regional organizations in Africa than there are in any other continent today and that most African countries are members of more than one regional integration initiative. Dinka and Kennes uphold that the commitment to regionalize was part and parcel of the broader aspiration for continental integration, a vision that created the OAU in 1963. The two contend that the transformation of the OAU to the AU has strengthened the movement towards the goal of Pan-African political and economic union.

### **Gradual Approach for Even Larger Cooperation**

In addition to the regional initiatives within Africa, there have been proposals and actual negotiations aimed at establishing North-South integration arrangements between Africa and developed countries, uphold Dinka and Kennes, These include, the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) negotiated between a group of African countries and the European Union. Undoubtedly Nyerere thought the steady approach meant a process. He was a proponent of even larger cooperation. From 1987-1990, for instance, he served as chairperson of the South Commission, a commission of independent high level experts from the south set up by developing countries to review the South's development experience and make recommendations on development strategy for developing countries in the post-cold war era. He later became the first Chairperson of the Board of the South Centre<sup>10</sup>, an intergovernmental policy research organization of developing countries which succeeded the South Commission.

### **African Regional Integration Arrangements-an Overview**

Dinka and Kennes enlighten that most current active regional organizations in Africa were formed or established in two waves-the mid-1970s to the early 1980s and the first half of the 1990s. Rendering further information, Dinka and Kennes, explain that these waves were clearly influenced by practices adopted and initiatives taken by African countries as well as by events and developments in the rest of the world. Accordingly, they point out, the first wave is related to deliberate post-independence pursuit of integration by African policy makers matched with other events then taking place outside like what was seen with the European Community. The second wave is more focused on revitalizing and expanding the mandates of existing regional bodies rather than creating new groupings. This tallies with one of the arguments by Nyerere to support his

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<sup>9</sup> Tesfaye Dinka and Walter Kennes are experts at the European Centre for Development Policy Management

<sup>10</sup> The South Centre was established in 1995 and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland

gradual approach to African unity that reads ‘*The new generation of leaders should pick up the flickering torch, refuel it and carry it forward*’

**The table 1: African Regional Integration Initiatives Currently Recognized as Building Blocks of the AU**

Name	Acronym	Date Established	Focus
Arab Maghreb Union	AMU	1989	Economic and Political Union
Community of Sahel Saharan States	CENSAD	1998	Economic Union
Economic Commission of West African States	ECOWAS	1975	Economic cooperation
Economic Community of Central African States	ECCAS	1983	Political/Security
Southern African Development Community	SADC	1992	Sustainable Development
Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa	COMESA	1994	Sustained Economy
East African Community <sup>11</sup>	EAC	2000	Economic/Political cooperation

Source: *Global Civil Society*

Database: [www.uia.org](http://www.uia.org) : [www.uneca.org](http://www.uneca.org)

In West Africa, the most famous integration group is the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)<sup>12</sup>. ECOWAS comprises of 15 partner states located in West Africa. They include Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d’Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

In Central Africa, renowned groups include the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC).

In East Africa, bulging groups are the SADC, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the EAC.

In North Africa, prominent groups include the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and The Community of Sahel-Sahara States (CEN-SAD). AMU comprises of 5 member states namely Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. CEN-SAD comprises of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Central African Republic(CAR), Chad, the Comoros, Cote d’Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo and Tunisia.

<sup>11</sup> The former EAC was dissolved in 1977

<sup>12</sup> [www.ecowas.int](http://www.ecowas.int)

**Table 2: Member States in ECCAS, SADC and EAC<sup>13</sup>**

Member state	ECCAS	SADC	EAC
Angola	Yes	Yes	No
Burundi	Yes	No	Yes
Cameroon	Yes	No	No
CAR <sup>14</sup>	Yes	No	No
Chad	Yes	No	No
DRC <sup>15</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes
Equatorial Guinea	Yes	No	No
Gabon	Yes	No	No
Republic of Congo	Yes	No	No
Rwanda	Yes	No	Yes
Sao Tome and Principe	Yes	No	No

**Table 3: Member States in COMESA, SADC and EAC**

Member state	COMESA	SADC	EAC
Angola	No	Yes	No
Burundi	Yes	No	Yes
Botswana	No	Yes	No
Comoros	Yes	Yes	No
DRC	Yes	Yes	Yes
Djibouti	Yes	No	No
Egypt	Yes	No	No
Eritrea	Yes	No	No
Eswatini	Yes	Yes	No
Ethiopia	Yes	No	No
Kenya	Yes	No	Yes
Lesotho	No	Yes	No
Libya	Yes	No	No
Madagascar	Yes	Yes	No
Malawi	Yes	Yes	No
Mauritius	Yes	Yes	No
Mozambique	No	Yes	No
Namibia	No	Yes	No
Rwanda	Yes	No	Yes
Seychelles	Yes	Yes	No
South Sudan	Yes	No	Yes
South Africa	No	Yes	No
Sudan	Yes	No	No
Tanzania	No	Yes	Yes
Uganda	Yes	No	Yes
Zambia	Yes	Yes	No
Zimbabwe	Yes	Yes	No

There is an issue of overlapping membership where several states as can be seen to belong to two or more organizations. This is seen almost everywhere in African regional integration. A few countries have also made departures from organizations they once belonged to. For instance in

<sup>13</sup> Source: [www.eccas.int](http://www.eccas.int), [www.sadc.int](http://www.sadc.int), [www.eac.int](http://www.eac.int),

<sup>14</sup> Central African Republic

<sup>15</sup> Democratic Republic of the Congo



Eastern and Southern Africa, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Angola and Tanzania ended membership in COMESA. Despite the departures, there remains a sizeable overlap between COMESA and SADC. The following seven countries are members in both: DRC, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Eswatini, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Tanzania and DRC are members in both SADC and EAC. Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi and South Sudan are members in both COMESA and EAC. Rwanda is a member in COMESA, ECCAS and EAC while the DRC is a member in COMESA, SADC, ECCAS and EAC.

There is also some overlapping membership in the North African group. For instance Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia have membership in both AMU and CEN-SAD. The Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Libya, Mauritania and the Sudan have membership in COMESA and CEN-SAD

There are other important integration initiatives in Eastern and Southern Africa which operate at sub-regional level. The Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD)<sup>16</sup> established in 1980 is one. It focuses on food security, environmental issues and mediation of internal conflicts within and among its members (Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda). The Southern African Customs Union (SACU)<sup>17</sup> is another. It draws membership from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa. The five member states maintain a common external tariff, share customs revenues, coordinate policies and decision making on a wider range of trade issues.

### **Dilemmas in the Nyerere Advocated Pan-Africanism**

*Nyerere proponent of African Unity yet recognized secession...*

On 30 May 1967, Biafra, a southeastern province of Nigeria declared itself independent of Nigeria. Among the reasons for the secession include the fact that the more populous northern provinces of Nigeria were dominating the southern provinces and the presence of an ethnic and religious dimension. Nyerere, then President of Tanzania, supported the move by Biafra. South African History Online (SAHO) in the article titled “*Biafra, a Nigerian Province is recognized by Tanzania*” reports that on 13 April 1968, a statement by Mr. C.Y. Mgonja, then Minister of State (Foreign Affairs) of the United Republic of Tanzania formally recognized the secession<sup>18</sup>.

Mwakikagile<sup>19</sup> makes it clear that Nyerere was a staunch supporter of African Unity and lived up to his commitment to that Pan-African ideal. As a matter of fact, Mwakikagile elucidates that Nyerere was the first East African leader to call for the federation and even offered to delay the independence of Tanganyika in order for the three East African countries of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika to attain sovereignty status on the same day and form an East African Federation. Tanganyika’s independence was slated for 1961. Uganda and Kenya attained independence respectively in 1962 and 1963. Zanzibar attained independence in 1963. Not only that but Nyerere also engineered the union of two independent states Tanganyika and Zanzibar in 1964 which is

<sup>16</sup> [www.igad.int](http://www.igad.int), IGAD secretariat Djibouti

<sup>17</sup> [www.sacu.int](http://www.sacu.int), SACU secretariat Windhoek

<sup>18</sup> [www.sahistory.org.za](http://www.sahistory.org.za)

<sup>19</sup> Mwakikagile Godfrey is a prominent Tanzanian scholar and author specializing in African Studies

still the only one on the entire continent and which led to the creation of Tanzania, alludes Mwakikagile.

Yet, under Nyerere's leadership, Tanzania was the first African country to recognize the secessionist region of Eastern Nigeria as the independent Republic of Biafra, a move his critics denounced as ant-Pan Africanism by one of the strongest advocates of African Unity, articulates Mwakikagile. Other African countries that recognized Biafra include Zambia, Cote d'Ivoire and Gabon. Reflecting on the decision by Tanzania, Mwakikagile argues that Nyerere's decision to recognize Biafra, which the latter admitted, was made with great reluctance and based on moral grounds. Even though, critics of the Biafra secession drew parallels between Biafra and Katanga but by contrast, argues Mwakikagile, Katanga's secession was engineered by Western powers to secure their political and economic interests by detaching the mineral rich province from the rest of the Congo.

Nyerere expressed Tanzania's position on Biafra in a statement by the Government of Tanzania on 13 April 1968, the day Tanzania recognized Biafra. The statement was later published in the daily tabloid belonging to the then ruling party, TANU<sup>20</sup>, the *Nationalist* whose editor was Benjamin William Mkaapa who later became President of Tanzania from 1995 to 2005, informs Mwakigagile. The statement read, *'Biafra has suffered rejection within their state. In the light of these circumstances, Tanzania feels obliged to recognize the setback of African Unity which occurred. Only by this act to recognize can we remain true to our conviction that the purpose of society and all political organizations, is the service of man'*

Mwakikagile further quotes Nyerere explaining Tanzania's position in Biafra in another statement which the former says was substantively the same as the preceding one but with other nuances to the central argument. The statement was published in a British Newspaper, *the Observer*, London, on 28 April 1968, adds Mwakikagile. It reads, *'Leaders of Tanzania have probably talked more about the need for African Unity than those of any other country. Giving formal recognition to even greater disunity in Africa was therefore a very difficult decision to make. The reluctance to do so was compounded by Tanzania's understanding of problems of unity which the country has had some experience with<sup>21</sup> and of the problems of Nigeria taking into consideration that Tanzania has had very good relations with the Federation of Nigeria. But unity can be based on the general consent of the people involved where the people feel that the state is theirs and that unity must be viable. Tanzania believes that unity is vital for the future of Africa but it must be a unity which serves the people and which is freely determined upon by the people'*.

### **Principle of Non-Interference**

One of the rules of the OAU then was the *'Principle of Non-interference in the internal affairs of another state'*. The OAU had no legal power to get involved in the internal conflicts on the continent and was largely inactive to that effect. It can be argued that during that period, the African continent witnessed massive human rights abuses including genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. In 1994, for instance, regional and international actors did not protect civilian populations against the 1994 Rwanda genocide. This prompted the United Nations to

<sup>20</sup> Tanganyika African National Union

<sup>21</sup> On 26 April 1964, then Tanganyika formally merged with Zanzibar to form the United Republic of Tanzania

unanimously adopt the principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P)<sup>22</sup>. The principle provides that states are primarily responsible to protect their population from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing and should assist each other in fulfilling this responsibility. It also entails that if the state fails to do so, the international community will respond, using peaceful means or if such means fail, through coercive action.

On the occasion of the commemoration of the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, former Secretary General (SG) of the OAU, Ambassador Said Djinnit<sup>23</sup> gave testimony on Salim's role in support of decolonization and changes at the then African apex political body. Djinnit articulates that soon after becoming the SG, Salim realized that as the decolonization period reached an end, a new agenda that could continue to bring together African countries and their peoples in addressing common challenges was needed. According to Djinnit, Salim believed that reflecting the principle of non-interference in internal affairs of member states should not mean remaining indifferent to the problems and suffering of African peoples affected by conflicts.

Reverting to Nyerere: It follows that Nyerere might have chosen to recognize as either a means of forcing the federal state into peace negotiations, argues Daniel Ijalaye<sup>24</sup>. In view of the above, who knows, perhaps Nyerere challenged the rules of the OAU (the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of another state) by recognizing the secession of Biafra from Nigeria.

### **Conflict between African Nationalism and Pan Africanism**

The *Blackpast*, an online reference centre in African-American History in its 2009 contribution '*Julius Nyerere: The Dilemma of the Pan-Africanist*' reports that Nyerere saw that there was a dilemma of the Pan-Africanist. The centre reports that when President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia became the first Chancellor of the University of Zambia in 1966, he invited Nyerere, also Chancellor of the then University of East Africa to attend and address the assembled audience. According to *Blackpast*, Nyerere used the occasion to describe the possible conflict between African nationalism and Pan Africanism. He said, '*Africa had achieved many things but had a long way from achieving the things that it was originally set out to achieve*'. In this case, the centre informs, Nyerere saw there was a danger to voluntarily surrender the Pan African dream. The question still to be answered, Nyerere is reported as saying, was whether to maintain internal separation after colonialism was defeated or an earlier provided boast-I am an African. As far as Nyerere is concerned, the paper further reports, the then organization of Africa into nation states meant that inevitably Africa drifted apart unless definite and deliberate counter-acting steps were taken. Nyerere further argued that *it was not impossible to achieve African unity through nationalism just as it was not impossible to various tribal associations to merge into one nationalist movement*. Nyerere recognized that the task was difficult but could be done if the determination was there! In as far as he was concerned; to talk of unity as if it would be a panacea of all ills was to walk naked into a den of hungry lions. Determination that unity shall come might

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<sup>22</sup> Global political commitment endorsed by member states of the United Nations in 2005

<sup>23</sup> Algerian Diplomat who served for 18 and a half years at the OAU and then the AU and who played key role in the transformation of the OAU to the AU

<sup>24</sup> Emeritus Professor of Law at the Obafemi Awolowo University in Nigeria

start with a psychological acceptance of its requirements, argues Nyerere. He concludes that while Africa is separate, advantage of differences can be taken and have unity in diversity.

### **Prospects of the United States of Africa**

The prospects for Africa as a country (in the case of the United States of Africa) should have a re-think. Borders currently existing in the African continent are alien and not alien. Though there were no fixed borders but they still existed in kind. There were families' households separated, clans living in certain areas (though they could mix), chiefdoms and tribes.

Ibrahim Anoba, an African political economy analyst with African Liberty argues that the United States of Africa may fail due to various reasons. He contends that since Africans have always been autonomous, it might make no sense to suggest that all adopt a unilateral administration pattern different from what they have known for thousands of years. He claims that Africa's society is too complex to work under a unitary system and again it makes no sense to suggest that they all adopt a unilateral administration pattern. It can be added just as a matter of comparison why is such an issue not tabled in the case of Asia (just to have the United States of Asia?). Even in the Americas, apart from the current United States of America, why does it not encompass Canada and Central American countries so to say? There are of course arguments for economic strengths where in most cases African countries in unison and in not more than one case gather for some economic cooperation issues with one economically developed nation (subject to debate whether worth it or not by Africa) say China (FOCAC)<sup>25</sup>, Japan (TICAD)<sup>26</sup>, Indonesia (IAF)<sup>27</sup> but the bottom line is that people do better when they are not forced into a coalition.

Anoba observes that another issue of contention would be the language barrier. Africa is endowed with local or area languages apart from the languages the continent has had to inherit from the colonialists. In this case one mentions Anglophone, Francophone, Luzophone, and Arabophone (?) and at the same time many Universities in Africa are trying it out with Confucius. There have been contentions here and there that alien languages somehow contributed to demean African identity. In such a scenario, a common language would be needed, but which? If English, French or any other language is rejected as belittling identity, it is not expected to be guilty of the same.

What is the picture in other parts of the world? If two or three countries had to unite to one, the most likelihood would be Sweden, Denmark and Finland and even Norway? Or it would have been the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia. Have dreams of a South Asian Union (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka) led to fruition? Has Pakistan and India buried their differences? The Central Asian countries famously known as 'the stan countries' have many similar things. With the exception of Tajikistan, Pakistan and Afghanistan, the rest- Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan are all Turkic. Turkic languages are spoken in them. The culture and languages in the aforementioned countries are similar and the countries are ethnically compatible. Going back to Africa, Kiswahili, a language with origins in East Africa, has of late gained popularity globally and evolved into Africa's most internationally recognized language. It is among the 10 most widely spoken languages and the first African language to be feted by the

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<sup>25</sup> Forum on China Africa Cooperation

<sup>26</sup> Tokyo International Conference on African Development

<sup>27</sup> Indonesia Africa Forum

United Nations<sup>28</sup>. It has been said that Kiswahili can be accepted but it would require an extraordinary amount of effort.

The issue of different economic values is another contributing factor that would have led to the failure of the United States of Africa. Anoba articulates that no traditional African society was the same in approach to commerce and trade. For instance, centrally planned economies in Africa have not met their original aims. In countries like India or China (which are equally larger units), the system may have worked because of the somehow homogeneity of values among their peoples, he concludes.

In view of the aforementioned, a conclusion can be drawn that what Africa needs to work for is for countries to allow more autonomy for local governments like states or countries to prioritize multinational cooperation on a regional level e.g. ECOWAS, SADC, EAC, COMESA etc. Multinational organizations at regional level will decide forms to cooperate.

### **Strength in Diversity**

Development expansion and globalization are not all about countries but also institutional capacity to be more accommodative to a heterogeneous working environment. Cultural diversity influence how institutions form. Ernest Harsch (2002) in the article titled '*Making Africa Integration a reality*' points out that though African unity has long been cherished but has been an elusive goal. He continues to say that current renewed impetus to establish clear economic and political ties among the continent's numerous countries and based on a heightened appreciation of the need for regional integration together with a clear understanding of the reasons for past failures was the right approach to unity. According to him, for many ordinary Africans, the things that divide them are less important than what unites them. He alludes that to an understanding that they are all Africans and that they have common interests in promoting the closest possible economic and human ties across international boundaries. In that case, he says, at many levels of society in Africa people are actively seeking to engage more ties with each other. For some such links exist. For many others they still lie in the future. That, he states, is a proof of the fact that African integration does not only come from the top.

### **Integration Must Accelerate**

At a time of heightened International competitions, Africa regional integration must accelerate so that the continent can respond even more effectively to a globalizing world. Abdel Aziz Bouteflika, President of Algeria for two decades (1999-2019) once argued that advantages for integration were numerous insisting wider regional markets, reduction of costs in developing essential infrastructure, re-enforcing the attractiveness of economies and reducing risks. Bouteflika says that apart from the OAU established in 1963, many other institutions have over the years been established in Africa's different regions. However, for the most part they did little to increase trade or other interactions among African countries. He further points out that a number of external and domestic factors impeded African integration but there have been some improvements giving grounds to cautious optimism for Africans to learn from past initiatives.

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<sup>28</sup> The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization(UNESCO)at its 41<sup>st</sup> member states session in Paris on 23 Nov.2021 designated 7 July each as Kiswahili Day



Adebayo Olukoshi, Executive Director of the Dakar headquartered Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) contends that integration cannot be achieved by relying strictly on political initiatives or focusing narrowly on economic dynamics. “*We can never hope to separate political and economic imperative*”, he notes. Africa’s political and economic integration are ‘inextricably interlinked’ involving democratization of African regional organizations, he maintains.

The East African community has been established and re-established i.e. it has faced the rise, the fall and the rise. The Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE)<sup>29</sup> puts it this way, ‘Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, the founder member states of the East African Community, have a long history of integration dating back to the original East African Community of 1917 and 1967 which collapsed in 1977. Regional integration efforts were revived in 1999 with the signing of the Treaty for the establishment of the East African Community which came into force in 2000. The community has made commendable achievements since 1999 and *is now considered as an example of successful regional integration*. Arthur Binomugisha and Sebastian Rwengabo, Ugandan Political Scientists and Independent Consultants presenting a paper titled, ‘*The promise and efficiency of the East African Community*’ during ACODE policy briefing in 2016, had this to say, ‘Most of the successes of the East African Community are rooted in the community’s strong history that predates any regional intergovernmental organization in the world by the 1960s and the political will that galvanized the technical efforts around regional integration programs since the signing of the 1999 Treaty. Chief among those, they assert, include institutional building, socio-economic progress and a common voice in continental and international fora.

### **Appreciation of the Achievements**

In most cases, given the old trends, the achievements would have been thought to have remained less well appreciated by the East African citizens. This has not exactly been the case in as far as the East African Community is concerned. As old African adages put it, ‘*You cannot teach an old dog hunting tricks*’ and ‘*An old monkey has dodged many arrows*’. East Africa must have learnt a lot in as far as its history is concerned. The times when EAC organs and institutions such as the summit, ministerial and secretarial councils, the secretariat’s relevant committees, expert groups, the East African Court of Justice (EACJ) and the like remained top level elite institutions seem to have gone. Avenues for people’s interactions including private sector fora (like business councils, chambers of commerce and trade); professional association meetings, inter-university gatherings, sports and many others have now resonated to include the majority of East Africans. With an increased investment in education in East Africa, citizens are now knowledgeable and aware of what transpires within and among East African member states. The tabling of national budgets concurrently before parliaments especially by Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda and the increased urge to the keen follow-up of election processes are a few among many that stand to elucidate. Being witnessed of late, among others, are engagement between partner states in open discussions, consultations, investigations of previous experiences within the EAC with a view to alternatives and the like. That has done away with citizens’ difficulty in associating with the activities going on in the community.

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<sup>29</sup> ACODE is an independent public policy research advocacy link based in Uganda

### **Debate on Moderates' Vs Radicals' Struggle for African Unity**

The difference of opinion between Nyerere and Nkrumah formed the moderate and radicals camps respectively. The two stalwarts were in agreement that Africa needed to unite but disagreed on how fast this unity would be achieved. Edward Mansfield and Etel Solingen (2010) inform that the OAU had a balanced role in directing the future of regional integration. Accordingly, Mansfield and Solingen further inform that it was fortunate enough that the disagreement neither degenerated into interstate rifts or animosities between groups of states nor hampered the prospects of continental cooperation. The OAU, they also inform, resolved the difference by agreeing to integrate within regions as a step towards continental integration-This was exactly Nyerere's position. The regions would be subsumed within the continental OAU, almost tending towards Nkrumah's position. In this case, a middle ground of seemingly competing partners was reached. Following the resolution of the debate, post-1963 Africa witnessed the emergence of regional economic communities (RECs) notably SADC, ECOWAS, ECCAS, IGAD and EAC. All the RECs work at the level of intergovernmental cooperation under the AU umbrella.

The EAC, through close and peaceful relations among African states views itself together with other Regional Economic Communities (RECs) under the AU as successive stages in the realization of proposed economic and political union. The pursuit is consistent with Pan-African interests of the founding fathers notably Nyerere and Nkrumah who concurred on the unity of Africa but disagreed on the speed and method.

### **EAC vis-à-vis the Pace of Fast-Track and New Member Admission**

#### **Fast-Track**

The East African Community is a regional intergovernmental organization of 7 partner states: the Republic of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Rwanda, the Republic of South Sudan, the Republic of Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. According to the EAC Secretariat, the community is home to an estimated 283.7 million citizens of which 30% is urban population. The work of the EAC is guided by the Treaty which established the Community. The treaty was signed on 30 November 1999 and entered into force on 7 July 2000 following its ratification by the original partner states: Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The Republic of Burundi and the Republic of Rwanda acceded to the EAC Treaty on 18 June 2007 and became full members of the Community with effect from 1 July 2007. The Republic of South Sudan acceded to the Treaty on 15 April 2016 and became a full member on 15 August 2016. The Community's newest member, the Democratic Republic of the Congo acceded to the Treaty on 8 April 2022 and became a full member on 11 July 2022.

As one of the fastest growing regional economic blocs in the world, the EAC is widening and deepening on cooperation among the partner states in various political, economic and social spheres, notes the Community's secretariat. The whole issue of widening and deepening is based on fast-tracking and expanding of membership.

#### **EAC Fast-track**

The issue of fast-tracking in the East African Community aims at attaining a political federation of East Africa. Juma Mwapachu, Secretary General of the EAC from 2006 to 2011 clarifies that

fast-tracking the federation emphasizes on Customs Union, Common Market, Single Currency and finally a political federation.

The original partner states in the Community have had a long history of collaboration with ups and downs. The Community established in 1967 collapsed in 1977. The experiences of the collapse have not prevented the current situation which is fundamentally different from that of nearly 3 decades ago. Assessing the feasibility of an East African political federation when reporting for the CHR Michelsen Institute, a think tank in Norway, Thomas Nzuoki Kibua and Anne Tostenson in 2005 maintain that the thrust of a new East African Treaty to cooperate reflects changing trends of political and economic reforms. They uphold that the integration process has progressed considerably and major achievements noted. They point out that since the conclusion of the customs protocol that entered into force in 2005, in many other fields the rate of progress have also been impressive, albeit variable.

Kibua and Tostenson elucidate that essentially there are two approaches visible to East African regional integration. One is associated with the late President of Ghana Kwame Nkrumah who considered paramount political institutions as useful vehicles for bringing about integration in other spheres. At the other extreme, they expound, is the functionalist approach whereby regional integration is promoted piecemeal through gradual steps to building a web of functional relations in trade, investments, infrastructure, culture and the like. In this building block approach, the political infrastructure, such as political federation would be considered the logical culmination of the integration process from below.

In view of the aforementioned, Kibua and Tostenson observe that the two different strands of thinking appear to be alive in East Africa today, although the faith in building blocks takes the upper hand (the Nyerere strand of thinking). Finally, they report that from the interviews they engaged in, interviewees without exception subscribed to the gradual building block approach and favored starting with measures that would build legitimacy from below by removing existing impediments to regional integration.

Deliberating on the issue of fast-tracking the Community, Kennedy Karanja in his article titled *Fast Tracking the East African Federation* that was published by Young World Federation in Norway in 2021, goes back to the root of the idea of an East African Political Federation. He says that the three countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda were at one time administered as one unit under the East African Common Services. When granting independence to the three countries, the British, then colonial master expected the countries would eventually integrate into one political union as had earlier happened to Tanganyika and Zanzibar to form Tanzania. Elaborating, he says that the concept of a political federation of East Africa emerged in the 1960s and that the idea took shape in 1967 when the EAC, a confederate government was formed by the Republics of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The countries hoped to use the community as a launching pad towards deeper political, economic and socio-cultural integration. Contrary to the expectations, there was a gradual erosion of political goodwill among the Heads of State of the three countries. The Community then collapsed in 1977 to be later revived by the ratification of the treaty of the EAC in 1999 and it is still going strong in 2022.

### **The Third Eye of the Process of Fast-Track**

The East African, a local daily tabloid based in Kenya reports that in 2017, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) feared that the integration of East African economies may have been built on a quick sand and called for a pause to lay a stronger foundations for its stability. The paper, covering the visit of the IMF Managing Director Christine Lagarde to Uganda, quotes Lagarde as saying that fissures in the bloc over certain economic agreements, the single tourist visa, non-tariff barriers on movement of people, goods and capital were signs that the building blocks were not firmly in place. The paper further quotes Lagarde, who comes from the European Union and whose country is part of the Eurozone, as saying, *'I would certainly stress that making haste slowly is probably the best way to go and consolidate one step at a time to make sure that the steps you have taken are actually solid, sustainable and will take you to the next level'*. The paper reports that Lagarde urged the East African Community to focus on consolidating integration gains achieved in infrastructure, the Customs Union and the Common Market while going on slow on monetary union and federation projects.

While the EAC has achieved major milestones on integration projects like the Customs Union, the Common Market, the East African Legislative Assembly, the Court of Justice and others, the existence of differences in some issues increasingly threaten the bloc's future. For instance, Kenya and Rwanda were at loggerheads with Tanzania, Uganda and Burundi on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU). The standoff caused the Heads of States summit to be postponed twice. Again, in June 2019 Presidents of Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda met in Entebbe, Uganda in what came to be referred as the 'Coalition of the Willing' that is East African States that are committed to fast-tracking the integration process. The feeling between the 3 Member countries present at the meeting was that the other two were dragging their feet on matters of integration. However, while article 7(1) of the EAC Protocol allows member states to enter bilateral or trilateral agreements, it is a must that issues under consideration for implementation under the arrangement are carefully discussed and agreed upon by all member countries. The pursuit of integration must take into account that countries also have different interests. That does not mean that there should be a roll back on the progress.

### **Bloc Expansion**

This year (2022), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) joined the EAC as its seventh member. The British Broadcasting Corporation in one of its news bulletins says that the gesture massively extends the territory of the trade bloc giving it access to the Atlantic Ocean and greatly increasing the numbers of French speakers in what began as a club of former British colonies. In theory, the BBC, further comments that the EAC countries could gain access to West Africa and the Atlantic Ocean through the DRC.

Analysts welcome the move but fear the bloc is expanding too fast. Just eleven days after the DRC ratified the EAC Treaty on July 11, 2022 the bloc's leaders agreed to fast-track the verification of Somalia's application to join the community, the *Independent*, a local Kenyan tabloid dated 3 September 2022 reports. Under the East African Treaty, the criteria for admission of new countries into the Community include: adherence to universally acceptable principles of good governance, democracy, the rule of law and observance of human rights. Other criteria include: potential

contribution to the strengthening of integration within the East African region, *geographical proximity to and inter-dependence between the foreign country and the EAC partner states*, the establishment and maintenance of a market driven economy and social and economic policies being compatible with those of the Community. Some countries kick off several of the mentioned criteria.

### Possible Expansion

Immediate former Kenyan President, Uhuru Kenyatta, then Chairperson of the EAC, proposed expanding the East African Community to include Central, North and Southern African states. The former President was officiating at the Moyale One Stop Border Post between Kenya and Ethiopia in June 2021. Furthermore, the *East African*, a weekly tabloid published in Kenya by the Nations Media Group in one of its commentaries after the DRC has acceded to the East African Treaty, shared opinions on the possibility for expanding the Community. The narrative by the *East African* reads as hereunder:

**Table 4: Narrative by East Africa on Expanding the EAC Community**

SN	Country	Aspiration to Join the Community
1	Angola	Close historical involvement in the DRC politics with focus on peace and security. Angola leads the Luanda process for stability in Eastern DRC under the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region(ICGLR) with EAC partners Uganda and Rwanda
2	Central African Republic	East African Partner states Burundi, Rwanda, DRC, Rwanda and Tanzania have been involved in the peacekeeping mission in the Central African Republic
3	Congo Brazzaville	The Republic of Congo or Congo Brazzaville enjoys historical, political, economic and cultural ties with the DRC. It is involved under the ICGLR in the peace and stability efforts in the DRC together with Angola, Rwanda and Uganda
4	Ethiopia	Immediate former President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta and current Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed expressed commitment in regional integration when opening on stop border post in Moyale in 2021.
5	Malawi	In 2010 Tanzania officially expressed interest in inviting Malawi to join the EAC according to then Malawi Foreign Minister, Etta Banda
6	Mozambique	Mozambique shares cultural and historical ties with EAC partner states. There is a significant Kiswahili speaking population in the country. East African partner states have sent forces to counter insurgency in Northern Mozambique
7	Somalia	In 2022, Mogadishu rekindled its decades old desire to join the EAC and Arusha(headquarters of the EAC) has not completely slammed the door on Somalia's face
8	Sudan	The Sudan applied to join the EAC in 2011 but by then it lacked a direct border with the EAC and allegedly discriminating acts toward black Africans and its record of human rights violation
9	Zambia	In 2010 Tanzania officially expressed interest in inviting Zambia to join the EAC. In the 1960s, Zambia had applied to join the EAC. During a state visit to Kenya on 15 June 2022 President Hichilema of Zambia mentioned to President Kenyatta, then Chairperson to the EAC that Zambia was interested in joining an East African Consortium for negotiating trade agreements in oil and agricultural sectors



Analysts say that the EAC is not yet mature for further expansion because it is already not working optimally for its members despite commitments on paper.

### **Conclusion**

African Unity has since the 1960s shaped the political and economic affairs of the continent. With a surge in African countries attaining independence beginning the early 1960s, a quest for African Unity was inevitable. The increased urge to unity led to two contending opinions towards unity—rapid and gradual. The differing opinions hardened into moderates and radicals led respectively by Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana. The disagreement was on how fast the unity would be achieved. It never degenerated into interstate rifts or hamper prospects for continued cooperation. The moderate strand, however, has won the upper hand elsewhere in Africa and in East Africa it is widely observed in the fast-tracking of existing levels of integration and the hunt by foreign countries to join the East African Community. Politicians and political analysts on African Unity continue with a view that African Unity is still relevant. They continue to harbor the view that Africa must unite to enhance the continent's weight in global affairs but also to meet the needs of its people. A number of external and internal factors that impeded African integration have created cautious optimism towards integration. The unrelenting passion for unity at a cautious note seems to inspire the way forward. While African Unity is important, it is irrelevant if it is superimposed. Africa is destined to gain even more if it came to a realization for unity in diversity.

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