

SUMMIT  
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ADDRESS DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
CHAD TO THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE OF INDEPENDENT AFRICAN  
STATES, HELD AT ADDIS ABABA FROM 22 TO 25 MAY 1963

The Chad delegation is happy to be in Ethiopia, historic land of Africa. It wishes, first and foremost, on its own behalf and on behalf of the people of Chad, to express its thanks for the warm and brotherly welcome given it by His Imperial Majesty, HAILE SELASSIE I, and by His people. To the Ethiopian people it conveys fraternal greetings from the people of Chad.

The foundations of African Unity must be laid at Addis Ababa. On this occasion, in coming to the Ethiopian capital, we are happy, and we intend, to make our modest contribution to the search for a possible solution.

The importance of this conference escapes no one; it is an event of primary importance in the history of Africa because:

- African Unity means all the forces of the continent united for the total liberation of the continent;
- African Unity means the pooling of all our economic resources for our material well-being;
- African Unity is also the restitution of all moral and cultural values.

By virtue of its geographic position, CHAD is a crossroad between black and white Africa; it is also a crossroad between East and West Africa. It is one of the African States where peoples of many different religions, races and tongues live together and cast their destiny in a single mould.

CHAD which, since its accession to international sovereignty, has taken part in all conferences of independent countries, commends and lends effective support to the efforts of a great number of its sister countries to secure African Unity and peace in the world.

The time has come, at Addis Ababa, for a brotherly confrontation of our points of view, for, as has already been said, this is the first time in the history of the world that so many Africans leaders are meeting.

In the opinion of the people of Chad and its Government, a society capable of withstanding the tests of time can only be built on foundations of friendship and fraternity. In CHAD, and generally in Africa, the word "brother" is not limitative.

It goes without saying that there are today many speculators hoping for the failure of our meeting. To that end, it gives them pleasure to draw attention to our present political, economic and, above all, linguistic differences. Their sole purpose is to maintain the present cleavage of the African continent and in this way to continue the savage exploitation of each of our peoples who, God knows, are so poor and so wanting.

It is up to us, then, responsible politicians, to understand the situation and foil any manoeuvre liable to retard our continent's progress towards its complete liberation and towards its happiness. In reality, these manoeuvres are in vain. They will last only for a certain time, for we have good reasons for believing in the possibility of achieving African Unity.

There is no much sense in building Africa in sovereign States, independent of each other, for we know that it is from our union, and from it alone, that we shall draw sufficient strength to assert ourselves in the world. The main thing, for us, is to determine, carefully and realistically, the lines on which this future union of our States can be built. In other words, the question whether the structure of our future organization of African States should be unitary, federal or confederal must be examined very carefully, that is to say, without precipitance.

Moreover, the present division of the African continent into French-speaking and English-speaking groups is but insignificant and superficial in the sense that it does not apply to the majority of our people. If we are at all unanimous in furthering the development of the new independent Africa in the way of democracy it is in terms of the masses that we must reason. And the great majority of our people have remained very African, very original, with none of the varnish of French, English, or any other culture. Whether they come from French or English areas of influence they are characterized only by poverty, destitution, ignorance and misery and, hence, by the unanimous desire for learning or education, the desire to open themselves to the outside world. There is in this general aspiration of African people the leaven necessary to the building of our unitary structures. There is, moreover, nothing fundamentally unchangeable in the language barriers: it is merely a question of generations and of reforming educational programmes.

The work to be done with respect to the economic development of our continent is even greater and more arduous than the political work. The reconversion of present economic structures into horizontal inter-African structures is the sine qua non of our self-assertion in the world. The establishment of a free trade area, of a development bank, of a single currency all contain very varied and complex aspects which, we hope, will, starting from our conference, find elements for a permanent and effective solution.



There is no doubt that decolonization must be total in 20th century Africa. To achieve this a concerted action of the Heads of State is necessary, because effective. More than ever the African and Malagasy States must co-ordinate their efforts.

May we be allowed, with respect to decolonization, to draw your attention to one fact. Although our countries have gained their political independence, mental decolonization remains to be won. We are convinced that the mental decolonization of our people will enable us to resolve some of the difficulties which oppose us to each other.

The Chad delegation is as firmly opposed to devouring or annexationist tendencies and ambitions as it is in favour of African Unity. We think that the Unity we seek will be founded on the policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of sovereign countries. We shall have the opportunity, during our discussions, to explain and state explicitly our ideas on this matter.

To dispel all misunderstanding, we wish to reiterate that our delegation is quite ready to make its contribution, however modest it may be, to the achievement of African Unity. We are firmly convinced that the general principles of this Unity which we desire will become evident here.

By way of conclusion, we can state that these general principles are already taking shape following the excellent speeches made at the resturum of this Conference since yesterday.

Politically, it is inconceivable to think of an organization, the leadership of which would fall either to one person or to one country; it is a question about all of seeing how, practically, it would be possible for our various States to concert or co-ordinate our options, both to promote the liberation of countries still colonized and to harmonize our foreign policy.

Economically, the fact that we are producers of raw materials and tributaries of industrialized countries imposes on us the imperative duty of establishing specialized inter-African organizations which will enable us to present a common front to the outside world.

Culturally, we must quickly adapt educational programmes and speed us the establishment and development of our educational institutions at all levels.

In all these fields, the articulation of the various organizations whose purpose is to facilitate rapprochement and union must be studied straight away. We must therefore make provision for other meetings at all levels -

specialists, diplomats, Heads of State, - so as to find the agreement which will give birth to a joint organization of African States, the name of which matters little.

Thank you!