



H.E. SEKOU TOURE  
President of the Republic of Guinea

Address 12

---

*President Sekou Toure of Guinea believes that the Addis Ababa Conference presents a crucial opportunity for Heads of State and Government to fulfill the aspirations of the African people in their pursuit of continental unity. President Toure advocated for a continental organization founded on a Charter for a new United Africa. He called upon his fellow leaders to exert every effort to unify all Africans and establish the foundations for the institutions of United Africa, signaling the dawn of a new era of solidarity across the continent. He stressed the importance of making all necessary sacrifices to ensure the success of the Addis Ababa Conference, hoping it would be remembered by both current and future generations as the moment that sparked the rise of a united Africa, a continent that takes charge of its own destiny. This newly unified Africa has the potential to greatly enhance the continent's economic, social, and cultural progress.*

*Questions for consideration: What general and specific reasons does President Sekou Toure give for creating United Africa? to justify the necessity for African Unity? What must the foundations of African Unity have, according to President Toure? What specific reasons does President Sekou Toure give to justify combining Casablanca Charter and the Monrovia Charter into a unique African Charter? According To President Sekou Toure, what options, other than the failure of the Meeting, are necessary to created United Africa? How has the inherited colonial borders affected how independent African leaders think about their relationships to fellow heads of state and to their citizens? What detrimental effect does separated small inherited African nations have on the collective aspiration for unity? Why does President Sekou Toure mean when he says that "divided African states would have no opportunity to do other than sing the praises of liberty without being able to enjoy it, and hoping for a life of dignity and responsibility without ever fully attaining it"? What does it mean for a group of people or countries to be independent and united? If African leaders promised to eventually achieve unity, but they fail to achieve unity, what will they have proven to the world, to Sub-Saharan Africans and their posterity?*

---

## In Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1963

In the history of the African peoples — the living demonstration of vitality, the consequence of the multifarious activities of our societies that are constantly in search of freedom and happiness — this Conference of Heads of State and Governments will stand out as one of the affirmations of their common destiny; one of the solemn moment when they assert their existence and their joint and firm determination to put an end to the reign of arbitrary colonialism; to eliminate the causes and the illegitimate means of subordinating the people of Africa and the material and moral wealth of Africa to alien interests and inhuman ends. Addis Ababa becomes a moment in this history, a landmark with a date, a qualitative change in the African world. This moment that of the complete decolonization of Africa, of its men and of its economic, social, military, cultural, moral, and spiritual structures. This landmark is also that of an era of more intense creative activity, on the part of the African nations, more effective because more unified, aimed at achieving a more rapid advance through the full rehabilitation of their peoples, of their common civilization, of their human values and of their culture.

Ethiopians are great people, African people that have fought bravely for the independence of Africa, for the preservation of freedom and the normal exercise of the right of our peoples to guide their destiny with no foreign control or interference and to manage their own affair in full sovereignty. Because this African Conference being held in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa and Ethiopians have become still more closely linked with African history: they are henceforth in the midst of this unbroken course of events and the facts that they are consciously induced and guided by the peoples of the whole continent in a manner consonant with their understanding of affaire and their desire for progress. At Berlin in 1885 the European states with their anarchical economic development, motivated by an arbitrary feeling for power and for the horizontal expansion of a civilization, proceeded to divide Africa which was then regarded as a cake. But in May 1963 at Addis Ababa, city of freedom, the qualified representative, the authentic and worthy son of the African people met under the banner of their awareness of their common destiny and fidelity to their personality, and to the original character of their homeland, Africa - this time to undertake, legally and legitimately, the reunification of their States in a single and unique Charter. The Charter of their brotherhood, of their rights and interests to be defended and developed. The Charter of their solidarity henceforth indomitable, the Charter of freedom and peace, justice and progress in Africa.

The Conference of Addis Ababa will not restrict itself to the solution of the current problems of Africa: it is aware that Africa is part of the world, and it will rightly concern itself with all the international problems affecting directly or indirectly the conditions of life, security, peace, and progress of mankind.

#### SOME OF THE FOUNDATIONS OF AFRICAN UNITY

African Unity has become a profound aspiration common to all our peoples. The conditions for the rapid achievement of this aim have demanded the attention and mobilized massively the energies and abilities of our various states, our parties, our trade unions, our associations of intellectuals, of women, of young people and all the organization grouping serious — thinking men in Africa. African Unity has its convinced adherents and its determined adversaries. While constituting a decisive means of enabling the African peoples and states to speed up the movement of African emancipation, it forms at the same time a powerful anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist force, an instrument of combat for our peoples against the causes of their poverty and of their economic and social backwardness. Owing to the vast prospects for progress which will enable Africa to attain under rapid and effective conditions. African Unity is being resolutely opposed in various ways by all the powers and interest groups hostile to the total liberation of Africa, to the rational and dynamic organization of its economic and cultural resources, and to the intelligent participation of Africa, seeking with its sister continents in dignity, just solutions to international problems.

By subversion, lies, corruption, and pressures of all kinds, the enemies of African progress are directly influencing African life with the aim, if not of preventing the ultimate achievement of African Unity, at least of deferring it for as long as possible, that is why the foundations of African Unity ought to be known by all those who sincerely desire to work to bring a new Africa into being. Philosophically speaking, whether a man is black, white, yellow or red, he is the equal of every other man, obeying the same law of human development and having the same deep desire for a free and happy life, for security and continuous development. Since there is no spontaneous human propagation, one is forced to conclude that, from generation to generation and by virtue of the laws of multiplication of mankind, all men, whoever they are, are causally linked with all the other men on earth. Hence, the differences between men, between their abilities and potentialities, stem not from a difference in nature but solely from the difference that exists between human living conditions. For according to whether they are good or bad, man can develop physically, intellectually, and morally in continuous fashion, or else can remain deprived of all possibilities of full development. What is true of man is true for society. Since society is nothing more than the grouping together of persons acting within the context of certain communities, whether family, village, regional or national ones etc.

At that level, the level of human societies, we find again, though in more complex terms of course, the same economic, social, and cultural and political problems that condition the life of the individual. The

natural equality between men, steaming from the fundamental similarity of their basic behaviour, also sanctions the attitudes of societies towards natural phenomena and towards the human relationship established within them. If there are no superior men and inferior men, there cannot be some superior human societies and other inferior human societies. Equality of a nation is a consequence of human equality. No nation has a monopoly of human genius, intelligence or the physical capacity needed to improve the lot of mankind. All nations, whatever the color or the religion of their people, whatever the climate of the country they live in, whatever the size of their economy is a part of mankind. Human creative genius, the human faculty of understanding and the capacity for achievement will remain indistinguishably distributed among the nations and exercised by each of them. Yet efforts have been made to convince mankind that a natural inferiority characterized the African man and particularly the black man, in order to justify the shameful exploitation of a people by a people, the idea of a hierarchy of societies was created, the apex of which would consist of the European nations, and the base, called upon to bear inhuman burdens being the African nations, whose backwardness with regard to material resources was to be deliberately confused with an indication of their natural incapacity and inferiority.

Is not African Unity the means for the African peoples to ensure their presence not at the base of a pyramid built up through arbitrary action and injustice, but on an equal footing with the other peoples of all the other continent in the conduct of world affairs? In the course of their history, the African countries have all experienced foreign domination, which hampered the normal development of their civilization, of their personality and of their culture and also fostered the intensive exploitation of their wealth and of their peoples for the benefit of foreign interests. Hundreds of millions of men died in the colonial wars, in forced labour, slavery, deportation etc. Colonization broke up most of the solid foundations of national unity that had existed in Africa. The enslaved continent placed in conditions incompatible with a normal development for its people saw the role of those peoples reduced and perverted to such an extent as to be identified with that of beasts of burden or mere commodities or raw materials. Suitable when used for ensuring the happiness of a few usurpers in the other continents. By taking from us freedom and dignity, colonization deprived us of the potential flowering of our personality of the development, of our civilization, and our culture. Each of our people resisted colonial penetration and, later colonial exploitation and oppression. Each of our peoples fought and accepted all the essential sacrifices for regaining its freedom.

Today, most of the countries have been liberated and have built up states whose concerns are still the same. They have to eradicate from their present condition the consequence of foreign domination, the spirit of irresponsibility, the causes of social distress and to return to Africa, and for

Africa, all the structures and resource inherited from the colonial system, to provide a political and moral basis for the unifying action of their people so as to facilitate the reconstitution, on an objective, sound and efficient basis of states whose modern and dynamic action is to promote social and human progress and facilitate fraternal co-operation in Africa and internationally.

Is not the essential basis of the African Unity which is to be entrusted this growing awareness by our peoples of the identity of the destinies that they experienced in the past, that they have in the present and that they will necessarily have in the future? Thus, African Unity is an essential factor in the human worth of every African and in the political and economic advancement of every African nation. For indeed the indignity, incapacity, tutelage, and inferiority were for a people exploited and oppressed by another people, the consequences of its state of irresponsibility in the conduct of its own affairs.

The most cultivated, intelligent, and handsome man in the world would derive no advantage from those qualities if he belonged to a colonized society, to a people dispossessed and dominated by a foreign state which regarded its people as an object to be taxed and put to work unsparingly. That man would remain inferior despite his potentialities and abilities; he would still be under tutelage, an incomplete person because of being deprived of the essential basis of all human balance, freedom, and responsibility. National independence is for that man what African Unity is for each of our nations, and what soil fertility is for a tree. Indeed, none of our nations taken in isolation could validly represent Africa completely rehabilitate its people, African civilization, African culture, African humanism: in a word, the contribution of Africa to the life of mankind, demands of all the African peoples their intelligent awareness and their united action on the construction site of universal happiness. If they remained disunited, torn by conflicts, incapable of organizing themselves and of solving the fundamental problems of their continent, the African states would have no opportunity to do other than sing the praises of liberty without being able to enjoy it and hoping for a life of dignity and responsibility without ever fully attaining it.

The identity of the conditions of life that marked the past and which mark the present and will mark the future of the African peoples demands that the African states should coordinate their activities for the achievement of goals freely chosen by them in accordance with their joint desire for democratic progress and social justice. If African Unity can ensure to the African states a more harmonious balance and the participation of Africa in the construction of the world on just, egalitarian, and interdependent foundations, it will make a surer contribution to the institution and maintenance of real international equilibrium, an equilibrium which will promote justice and strengthen fraternity between nations. The enemies of African Unity aware of the appositeness of these moral, philosophical, and historical conceptions, of the legitimacy of our aspiration to this Unity are everywhere sowing the thought that such

an achievement would be impossible. They speak of the differences between the political and social systems of African States. They stress the diversity of our customs, the diversity of our economic and cultural wealth and, above all the diversity of our means of expression, and conclude therefrom, rather too hastily that African States are incapable of surmounting all these factors, which they describe as contradictory.

The Addis Ababa Conference must, resoundingly, give the lie to these predictions which aim only at deepening the division and even at making Africa incapable of effectively directing its destiny. I have the peoples of Europe, Asia and America who have constituted continental units, adopted the same customs, the same ways of life, the same political and economic system. Do they speak the same language? Are their economic systems the same? We don't think so. Their merit lies precisely in the political fact which has enabled them to transcend the diversity characterizing their political, economic, and social systems; by establishing larger and deeper human qualities, the conditions of political and economic and cultural life of their peoples will emerge from the pooling and harmonizing of their development efforts.

Discarding assimilation, attempting to ensure for and through ourselves the balanced and dynamic development of our peoples and the unending growth of their means of decent existence, our states must organize themselves logically and methodically. Since the objectives of emancipation chosen by our States are just, legitimate, and attainable. The quality of the new structures to be established is to promote, in a concrete manner, direct co-operation between our sister nations, good faith, the loyal and firm attitude of our government in applying these decisions the Conference will enable us to formulate and will constitute the factors of our general success in the common work undertaken on behalf of and for the benefit of our peoples.

Africa realizes that she is lagging in the economic, technical, and scientific fields and that this backwardness affects its social situation and cultural life. Our States, our political parties, our trade unions, our various organizations have already accomplished much but — and this we must recognize — they have often lacked the spirit of organization and method in the progressive accomplishment of the tasks essential to the achievement of the objectives set. The usefulness of our present debates will depend on the importance and efficiency of the organizations we shall establish to ensure the regular functioning of the new unitary edifice we wish to build.

The conference should elaborate and adopt a Charter, lay down its principles and its fundamental objectives and set up an executive secretariat responsible for coordinating the activities of our states. It would be harmful to African honour and to the success of our pan-African enterprises if the conference

confined itself to preparing motions, resolutions, or declarations without also clearly defining the practical means whereby they will succeed in suitable conditions. It is not enough to know and say what the African peoples want; henceforth we must achieve the objective of our states' options and bring about the success, through an effective organization and dynamic action, of the deep aspirations and just causes which our peoples defend.

The Casablanca Charter and the Monrovia Charter were attempts at African Unity and means of accelerating the historic process of Africa. These means must be merged into a single and unique Charter. The Charter of United Africa. This new Charter should, through its contents be consistent with the new exigencies of the development of the African continent. The Charter will constitute, through the community of purpose it will set for us, a framework, and a motive force for our national and international action in the service of our peoples. It will mark a turning point in the development of our continent and a common basis which will successfully end the movement for the decolonization of Africa and its human, economic and social realities.

Africa for the Africans is Africa reconstructed on authentically African bases by the thinking people of Africa for the liberty and physical and moral well-being of the African masses. African Unity will not be built around one man, nor around one nation, nor around one religion but around this Charter which itself will be a just and dynamic, rational, and realistic programme. African Unity should not signify that the institution of our states become standardized or become the extension of any foreign economic, ideological, or military block. African Unity will grow a little every day from now on; it will be a continuous creation, an irreversible work which will bind together all future generations to the generation which laid the foundation stone of Unity at Addis Ababa. Everything that can be done at Addis Ababa should be done for the future will bring us new and certainly more complex problems. As regards of African representation in the United Nations and its specialized agencies, it will suffice to point out that the world context of the San Francisco Conference is long since outdated, that the idea of the Great Powers which prevailed in 1945 no longer holds in our time so that it is necessary to revise the United Nations Charter, to place it on a just basis, recognizing our continent's right to the place it deserves. It only remains for Africa to coordinate its action at the United Nations to stimulate its effectiveness. In the economic sector more than anywhere else Africa has paid too dearly to ensure the happiness of other continents. We must only envisage the necessary coordination of our means and then the improvement of our relations with the rest of the world on the unitary basis, the establishment of an African Common Market, or of African economic groupings should be the concern of our States whose complementarity cannot be denied. The establishment of an African Development Bank will be the cornerstone of this economic organization.

In short, an economic conference at continental level would precede the big world —level meeting whose purpose is to define the bases of international economic cooperation, at which Africa will no longer attend as the poor relation but quite to the contrary, as a power with an inestimable potential which it could contribute to humanity's common heritage. To rebuild our culture, which contains a thousand and one virtues, and to enable Africa to play its part in scientific cooperation should lead us to draw up a concrete, complete programme of general and technical education.

In this spirit the Conference should unanimously support the excellent suggestion of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor concerning the establishment of an African universities, whose chief mission would be to collect, develop and disseminate the authentic elements of African culture. In so far as decolonization is concerned, we must finish with declarations of intention and effectively free those parts of Africa which are still under domination by our own means: political and diplomatic, and economic boycott of the backward colonial powers.

Finally, it is essential that this Conference lays down a deadline for foreign domination in Africa, after which date our armed forces should intervene directly in the legitimate defense of the African continent against aggressors. Similarly, the Conference should establish a national liberation fund and we formally propose that each independent African State contributes 1% of its national budget to the fund at the beginning of every financial year.

*The Conference should send a delegation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs:*

- a) to the United Nations Secretary General the conclusions of this Conference with regard to decolonization;
- b) to request that the Security Council be convened to consider with a view to finding urgent solutions;
- c) the report of the Committee on decolonization relating to the African territories still under Portuguese domination;
- d) the report of the United Nations Committee on the apartheid policy of South Africa.

At the end of his masterly Statement, which had the great merit of clearly outlining the context of the African Charter to which we all aspire, His Majesty the Emperor HAILE SELASSIE wondered whether history would remember the Conference of Addis Ababa by its success or by its failure? The reply to that question depends solely on the thirty-one Heads of State assembled in this hall. For our part, the only reply required by the categorical mandate which the Guinean people has given us is both very simple and very clear:

We must do all we can to accept all sacrifices whatever they may be, to ensure that the Addis Ababa Conference leads to a completely successful result, so that it may be remembered by all our



peoples today and by future generations as having marked the birth of a new Africa, an Africa for ever United and henceforth the master of its fate. For this reason, we invite our brother African Heads of State present at this Conference to give a solemn pledge here that they will not leave Addis Ababa without having given Africa an organization in keeping with our peoples' hopes, an organization defined in a Charter and guided by a permanent Secretariat.

African history, the destiny of our peoples is being played out day by day. The life of a man is counted in decades; the life of Africa is endless. The path that Africa must take has no limit, each generation receives from the past a heritage that it is in duty bound to hand on, enriched in its turn. There is no doubt that our generation will count among its assets the decisions which are to be made by the Conference and the sum of intelligence, devotion and sacrifices, and the value of an unconditional commitment which it will undertake to do honour to Africa, so as to make her happy and strong, to rehabilitate her by giving her back her freedom, her unity and the key to the democratic progress of her peoples!

For peace and international friendship and co-operation.

For the progress of Africa.

Long live African unity!