

Pan-African Parliament and State of the African Diaspora Unite for a Shared Vision of Global African Empowerment

Nov 16, 2024



The Pan African Parliament and the State of the African Diaspora (SOAD) have taken a landmark step toward fostering collaboration by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This historic agreement, signed at the Pan African Parliament Headquarters in Midrand, South Africa, underscores their shared commitment to uniting the African continent and its Diaspora under the principles of peace, development, and unity.

Reflecting on the significance of this partnership, H.E. Chief Fortune Charumbira, President of the Pan-African Parliament, expressed optimism about the collaboration, stating: *"We are looking forward to a progressive working relationship for the betterment of the livelihoods of Africans across the globe. It is high time that Africans everywhere come together for a better cause."*

Dr. Louis-Georges Tin, Prime Minister of the State of the African Diaspora, highlighted the historical nature of the event, calling it: *"A truly historic moment that bridges the African continent with its diaspora in unprecedented ways."*

The six regions of the African Union

06/02/2017

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With the return of Morocco decided on 30 January 2017, all African states are now members of the African Union. The 55 members are grouped into five geographic regions (North, South, West, East and Central). The diaspora was constituted as the sixth region in 2003 to encourage the participation of people of African origin living outside the continent. West Africa is, with its 15 members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) the region with the largest number of countries. It is also the most populous region, with an estimated 350 million people in 2015. Nigeria counts for more than half of West Africa's population. It is expected to become the world's third most populous country by 2050, following China and India. The African Union recognizes eight regional economic communities (UMA, COMESA, CEN-SAD, EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, IGAD and SADC). They are closely integrated with the African Union's work and serve as its building blocks. Despite many challenges, ECOWAS is among the best-performing economic communities on the continent.

The 6th Region of Africa From the Diaspora to the Sixth Region

WITHIN THE AFRICAN UNION, THERE ARE 6 REGIONS: NORTH AFRICA, WEST AFRICA, CENTRAL AFRICA, EAST AFRICA, SOUTHERN AFRICA, PLUS ONE LAST REGION, THE "SIXTH REGION", WHICH CONSTITUTES THE AFRICAN DIASPORA.

The political, economic and cultural importance of this Diaspora is increasingly recognized. It contributes greatly to the development of Africa and this is why the African Union has symbolically included the Diaspora in its organisation.

This "Sixth Region" exists in the constitution of the African Union.

In 2003, at the end of the AU Summit, the Heads of State declared (14 (XVIII) add. :

"The African Union (...) decides to recognize the African Diaspora as an effective entity contributing to economic and social development of the continent."

