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STUDY GUIDE

African Union

It's time to be UNique!



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Welcome Letter

Fellow delegates,

We would like to welcome you to this committee, and it is our honor to serve as chairs of the African Union at PragueMUN 2019. Through this letter we would like to introduce to you this committee and we both hope that you will have an amazing time with us.

This year's simulation of the African Union will be debating on two topics which will both require determination and hard work, but of course without fun nothing can be achieved. Both topics are related to the most recent issues and disputes which are happening on the African continent.

This study guide has been composed for you to help you with your research and to give you a thorough overview of both topics. It always includes an introduction to the topic and a lot of examples so you can really have an opportunity to grasp the information as a diplomat representing an African nation. At the end of the paper you can always find key questions to be discussed upon, which we have suggested for you to make your research easier. You should not limit yourself to researching just this study guide, and please make further research through the attached links as it will help you to contribute to the committee as much as possible. Your opinion matters and each of your ideas can change the entire direction of the committee and final resolutions.

We as your chairpersons are honored to be part of the African Union and to take the position of leading the debates. We are here to help you as much as possible and therefore you can contact us in case of any questions or inquiries on au2018@praguemun.cz.

We are looking forward to meeting you all in Prague,

Albert Oliva and Taha Khursheed

Introduction to the African Union

On May 25, 1963 in Ethiopia, the 32 African countries that had achieved independence at that time, took the initiative to find the first Pan-African international organization, which was promoted as the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Its main aims were to free the continent from the remnants of the colonial and apartheid era, to achieve greater unity and solidarity between the nations and the peoples of Africa, and to promote peace, security and stability on the continent while spreading democratic principles and good governance. After incorporating 55 member states, the OAU was succeeded by today's known African Union, as issued in the Sirte Declaration in 1999. The new intergovernmental model expanded the objectives set by the OAU and summed up its goals in a vision to form "An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena."

Nowadays, AU is comprised of various bodies, among which the Assembly of the African Union is the supreme governing organ. The Assembly constitutes the top decision-making body of the Union and is composed by Heads of States and Governments of the AU members

The African Union has political bodies which are in charge of this Continental Union. These are:

- Pan-African Parliament
- Assembly of the African Union
- African Union Commission
- Court of Justice of the African Union
- Executive Council
- Peace and Security Council
- Permanent Representative Committee
- Economic, Social, and Cultural Council
- Specialized Technical Committee

Currently African Union is divided into eight most essential blocks

- a) Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)
- b) Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)
- c) Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)
- d) East African Community
- e) Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)
- f) Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
- g) Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)
- h) Southern African Development Community (SADC)

Objectives of the African Union are:

- To achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa;
- To defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States;
- To accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;
- To promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples;
- To encourage international cooperation, taking due account of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- To promote peace, security, and stability on the continent;
- To promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance;
- To promote and protect human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments;
- To establish the necessary conditions which enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations
- To promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies;
- To promote cooperation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples;
- To coordinate and harmonize the policies between the existing and future Regional Economic Communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union;
- To advance the development of the continent by promoting research in all fields, in particular in science and technology;
- To work with relevant international partners in the eradication of preventable diseases and the promotion of good health on the continent.

Topic A: Perspectives of Establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area

Introduction to the topic

Since early years of the African continent, all nations lacked economic stability and business leadership. Colonizing of majority of African countries hindered the independence of the culture and usage of raw materials. After, many countries have won their independence, programs, bilateral treaties and agreements between nations were not well structured, organized and lacked cooperation between the signed parties. In 2013 the UN Economic Commission for Africa recognized the on-going pervasiveness of the following problems:

- most African economies are driven by primary commodities with undeveloped manufacturing sectors;
- despite the above, agricultural productivity remains at a low 56% of the global average otherwise due to a lack of modern technology;
- due to an underdeveloped rural sector, massive rural-urban drifting is taking place, nonetheless the urban infrastructure is incapable of coping with such an influx of migrants leading to a proliferation of urban slums;
- birth and death rates are high (birth rate clearly highest, death rate tied with Europe – according to WHO (2013)) with high HIV prevalence;
- social protection programmes are underdeveloped and underfunded;

Africa has the world's highest proportion of poor persons, with a poverty rate of 47.5% (in 2008) based on the \$1.25/day benchmark.

Despite the fact that these data come from 2013, all of them were tormenting majority of African Nations for the last one hundred years. Many of those were caused by only lack of cooperation between more economically developed countries and less economically developed countries. Majority of local and national markets suffered and that was the reason why African countries united into now what is called African Union. The initial thought of establishing a Continental Free Trade Area among African Nations within the African Union came in 1963 in Ethiopia.

On May 25, 1963 in Ethiopia, the 32 African countries that had achieved independence at that time, took the initiative to find the first Pan-African international organization, which was promoted as the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In 1999 this body has slightly changed its structure and changed its name to African Union. At the moment 55 countries are part of the African Union. In the beginning of 2018, 44 countries have signed Continental Free Trade Area Agreement with the aim of further strengthening the position of this body and moreover with the aim of aiding national economies in many countries in the African Union. The Agreement was implemented and raised with the idea of establishing a continental free trade area in entire Africa. It was endorsed during the 18th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in January 2012. Even though majority of countries agree with the terms of the agreement, one of the biggest economies in Africa, Nigeria, is hesitant to cooperate and to sign the Agreement.

Continental Free Trade Agreement

The Agreement was implemented and raised with the idea of establishing a continental free trade area in entire Africa. It was endorsed during the 18th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in January 2012. The main objective of the Continental Free Trade Agreement is to

- To establish a continental market for all goods and services in Africa
- Enable free and deliberate movement of business persons and investments
- Speeding up the process of establishing the Customs Union
- Expand intra-Africa Trade on the continent
- Create a more structured allocation of resources to areas where they are needed
- Mitigate intra-African Trade quarrels across Nations
- Improve lives of millions of members of African society and decrease the poverty status
- Create more job opportunities and job places

The reason why it was established is that African trade has significantly improved and increased in the last decade, nevertheless, in order to sustain and further improve the rise, it was important to create a certain structure that would all countries follow. The highest trade rise was achieved with industrial products. The African Continental Free Trade Area will lead the African structural transformation and will expand trade into different areas such as but not limited to agriculture.

Countries which have agreed to initial terms of the Continental Free Trade Agreement in March 2018



South Africa, Sierra Leone, Namibia, Lesotho and Burundi have signed the agreement later on during the 31st African Union Summit held in Nouakchott, Mauritania from 25th of June until 2nd of July.

Benin, Botswana, Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria, and Zambia did not sign the Agreement.

Issues with Continental Free Trade Agreement

Why did not Nigeria sign the Continental Free Trade Agreement?

Nigeria poses the biggest opposition to the Continental Free Trade Agreement from all 55 Nations of the African Union. Both the Manufacturing Association of Nigeria and Nigerian Labor Council are strongly against ratification of the agreement as they both do not agree with the 90% cut of tariffs on all manufactured and expedited goods.

They fear that the cut will increase the unemployment rate and undermine all local industries. In the past 100 years Nigerian economy has seriously improved as more working places were created and international market started to be more interested in food which were manufactured in Nigeria especially raw materials. Nigeria wants to rather establish a local market of raw materials in their own country rather than establishing a continental free trade area. This is a huge issue for the Agreement due to the fact that Nigeria is one of the biggest economies in the entire Africa and by not signing it, it cannot be ratified.

South Africa

South Africa signed the treaty much later than other nations of the African Union. It did not officially agree to the terms of the Agreement until the 31st African Union Summit which was held in Nouakchott, Mauritania from 25th of June until 2nd of July. South Africa blames this for lack of thorough negotiations as South African leaders clearly expressed the opinion, that the agreement was signed much earlier than it was supposed to be signed. South Africa was much more open to signing the agreement than Nigeria, however felt that more negotiation and discussion had to take place. Prior signing the agreement they were trying to assess all the positive and negative sides of the agreement as it was afraid that possible cutting of tariffs and enabling of free and deliberate movement of business persons and investments would threaten national interest.

Tariff revenue losses

Each country which signs the Continental Free Trade Agreement have to do 90% cut of tariffs on all manufactured and expedited goods. In the long-run, trade liberalization in the CFTA decreases trade costs and makes it possible for all consumers to get access to a much larger and more diverse variety of products at lower prices. Lower costs for imported raw commodities and intermediate inputs promotes the generation of regional value chains and international trade organizations. Trade liberalization also allows firms to get access to a big continental market. This is very beneficial is competitiveness of regional and international organizations and markets can increase efficiency, nevertheless the question which has to be asked, does not it undermine national interests of large economies if they decrease the tariffs. All of the nations which have not yet signed the agreement stated this as the biggest issue which has to be solved. Moreover the problem with the Tariff cuts is that it burning significant benefits in the long run but not in the short run. Change in the structure of markets can potentially lead to job losses and an decrease in capital. For the public sector, decreased tariff revenues are one of the most debated problems of the entire agreement in many less economically developed countries.

Ratio between benefits for larger and smaller countries in AU

One of the biggest challenges of the establishment of Continental Free Trade Area are the capture welfare benefits of only few countries in the African Union. The benefits of countries with strong economies would surpass the one of smaller countries by a large margin. Many

countries and members of the African Union lack high degree of market competitiveness and supply capacity of raw materials which could benefit other countries in the Continental Free Trade Zone. This is further supported by that fact that presently only seven African countries account for about 60 per cent of total intra-merchandise exports while the majority account for the remaining 40 per cent. In other words, this means that these seven countries are in charge of the economy of the entire continent to a large extent.

Recent Economic Situation in Africa

Strongest African economies by GDP: Algeria; Angola; Egypt; Ethiopia; Kenya; Nigeria; Morocco; South Africa; Sudan; Tanzania.

Growing African economies: Central African Republic; Democratic Republic of Congo; Djibouti; Ethiopia; Ghana; Ivory Coast; Kenya; Mozambique; Rwanda; Senegal; Sierra Leone; Tanzania; Uganda.

Decelerating or declining African economies: Angola; Equatorial Guinea; Libya; Mali; Nigeria; South Africa; Sudan; Tunisia.

Land-locked African countries: Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Partner countries in trade: United States of America (through AGOA); countries of the European Union (through EPA).

Organizations for the welfare of poor African communities: Africare; Aid for Africa; The Red Cross; UNICEF.

Development Corridors within African Union

Key drivers and strategies of regional integration for the CFTA can include the formation of development corridors in Africa. Development corridors are established when government of countries in a certain geographic region target public and private investments in order to create a group of cooperating national and international firms with the aim of improving infrastructure and sustainable development of a certain country. Moreover these corridors help in decreasing the unemployment within a certain region. Establishment of such corridors has been one of the most successful aims and plans of the Continental Free Trade Area. An example of a well-functioning corridor is a Maputo Corridor, which connects together provinces in South Africa with Maputo which the capital city of Mozambique. This corridor strengthens the trade of raw materials within this region and moreover it aids a fair distribution of investments into national firms. The aim of the Continental Free Trade Area is to establish and interconnect various provinces all across Africa in peaceful and beneficial corridors.

An example of a newly established development corridor is a Liberian connection of markets. After the end of deadly civil war in Liberia in 2003, local government which was elected by free and democratic election in 2006 aimed to make a national development Corridor within the Liberian provinces. The government of Liberia made investments into the mining industry and financially supported the existing local trade markets within cities. Nevertheless, it has not supported the infrastructure within regions to make the corridor successful such as building

roads, power plants, and bridges. These had to be constructed by local and private investors. After a throughout analysis the international economic community has found three effects of this mentioned administration:

1. The evidence suggests that natural resource concessions improve local economic growth;
2. Mining concessions have a positive effect on local economic growth;
3. U.S concessions do not have a discernible effect on local economic growth, but Chinese concessions do.

Possible Solutions

The matter of an immediate action is necessary to solve this issue. In order to agree on all terms of the Continental Free Trade Area it is necessary that all nations clearly outline their goals which they would like to achieve through signing this agreement. It is very important that all countries add more clauses to the agreement which would not only secure advantages for richer economies but also for less economically developed countries. A possible way how to achieve that is to establish more development corridors within countries but also across African continent. Through these corridors government can equally allocate money to different development branches. In order to diminish the tensions between various blocks in Africa, key rules for international and national markets should be set. By this, the African Union will ensure that every country has equal opportunities a none is favored. Last but not least, it is recommended to outline the effects of the Continental Free Trade Agreement on smaller national businesses as this was the key issue of Nigerian government.

Conclusion

African Union cannot risk any more disagreements over the Continental Free Trade Area due to the fact that it could have disastrous effect on the economy of the entire continent. Disputes between different countries and cultures has affected African Union since its beginning, however the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area can diminish or at least mute these disagreements. Therefore, it is vital that all nations work together in order to establish clauses for the agreement which would be accepted by all nations which are part of the African Union.

Key questions

- How can the terms of the Agreement be beneficial for all 55 Nations of the African Union?
- What measures and negotiations have to take place to work with Nigeria on mutual consent?
- How can the Continental Free Trade Area Agreement be improved in order to incorporate National interests of all member states of the African Union?

- How will the African Union succeed in accomplishing all goals set by the Continental Free Trade Agreement?
- Short-run benefits of the Agreement. Delegates of the African Union are expected to outline the overall benefits of the treaty and especially deal with the short-run structural hanger of national markets.

Further reading

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Topic B: Addressing Gender Inequality in Accordance with Agenda 2063

After introducing the African Union and detailing the first topic we move towards the second topic: “Addressing Gender inequality in Accordance with Agenda 2063.” Gender equality is defined as “the state in which access to rights or opportunities is unaffected by gender”.

In spite of strong proof exhibiting the importance of women’s empowerment to diminishing poverty, promoting development and addressing the world’s challenges, gender equality remains an unfulfilled promise in most African countries. On one hand, fifteen African states rank in the top 30 among world classification for women’s participation in national parliaments. But on the contrary, The seven lowest ranked countries in terms of gender equality according to the Gender Inequality Index (GII) are from Africa.

Such a foreword could seem as a pessimistic one, not giving many hopes for the future development; however, the situation is not as hopeless as it may look. The African countries have made great strides to redress the gender imbalances. However, a lot more still needs to be done to combat the issue of gender inequality.

Gender Inequality in Africa

Gender inequality remains an important challenge for the African Union as it has hampered the bright economic prospects of Africa. African countries have displayed their commitment in eradicating gender inequality by adopting a number of global and regional legal frameworks, including the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA), the Maputo Protocol and UN Resolution 1325. Gender inequality does not make sense at any level, by marginalizing we deny ourselves the opportunity to lift millions of African women, men and children from poverty, not to mention a chance to realize our vision of a just and fair Africa.

The root cause of gender inequality in the majority of Africa is due to a wide array of societal beliefs influenced by culture and traditions.

Firstly, a societal belief prevalent in African countries is that women’s role in society should be limited to look after children and house. Women are considered less competitive, less capable or more distracted by family life than men to be considered for jobs. Sons are expected to be the breadwinners and daughters are expected to do household work. In households where money is limited, families choose to educate sons instead of daughters. These beliefs have created a system where women are financially dependent on men.

Secondly, extreme poverty in many African countries prevent women from having access to education. Either the lower classes cannot afford education or the closest school to some families is miles away and children will have to walk very long distances, and often in dangerous climates, to get to school.

Thirdly, Violence against women is a very grave issue often overlooked by many African countries. Sexual violence against women is used as a strategy or a weapon of war during armed conflicts in Africa. It is often condoned or even encouraged by the authorities[1]. For example on 5 April 2014, 276 female students were kidnapped from a secondary school in Chibok,

Nigeria. Boko Haram, a radical terrorist organization based in northeast Nigeria had claimed the responsibility of the kidnapping. Violation of women's rights in armed conflicts is a very important problem for which the African Union needs to find solutions to and eliminate immediately.

The African Union accounts for the many areas when creating the African Gender Scorecard for each of the AU states, these should be taken into account during the discussion of possible solutions:

Employment: Africa like most of the other continents faces a big wage gap. There is enough evidence to show that African women are pivotal to its economy, in particular agriculture. Unfortunately, women work in these sectors with minimal pay and difficult working conditions.

Education: Education is a fundamental human right. Unfortunately, girls in Africa are routinely denied access to education due to socio-cultural norms which gives preference to men's education as discussed before. Raising awareness in the continent have already contributed to progress in women's education. But a lot has to be done.

Women In Politics: More than 20 African countries have already implemented a women quota in parliament (local government), ranging from 15-50%, Women in Africa have fair opportunities to campaign as they're receiving training to be effective candidates. On the other hand, there is a need of internal regulation in political parties to promote gender sensitivity and women's leadership.

Africa runs the risk of missing the UN SDGs and Agenda 2063 deadlines if women's rights aren't secured. Those would be missed opportunities in terms of Africa's socioeconomic transformation.

Access to Land & Credit: Access to land is one of the most important issues in increasing agricultural productivity in Africa. The ramifications of not having clear ownership rights are many including food insecurity, ineligibility to apply for loans and credit.

Health: Africa suffers from gender inequality in health due to a multiple of reasons including the emphasis on women's childbearing roles resulting in early and excessive childbearing and societal discrimination against female children in health and general care.



The Approach of the African Union

The African Union is surely aware of the dangers that the issue of gender inequality imposes on African states and their people which in fact is demonstrated by the official documents, statements, establishment of specialized bodies and other actions of the African Union aimed at the fight against gender inequality. Although the purpose is very clear and one may even say commendable, there is a considerable space for improvement as will be shown in the text below.

Firstly, AU adopted the African gender policy in 2009 with the purpose “To establish a clear vision and make commitments to guide the process of gender mainstreaming and women empowerment to influence policies, procedures and practices which will accelerate the achievement of gender equality, gender justice, non-discrimination and fundamental human rights in Africa.”[2] This gender policy has undeniably large scope and ambitious goal but concrete measures have been not taken by member states yet.

The African Union has also measured gender equality in each of its member states in the latest gender profile for each member states on 28 August 2018. The AU highlights the progress and challenges as a case study for each country [3],

The African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights highlights AU’s commitment to gender equality. Some of the landmark decisions which highlight AU’s leadership in Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality include:

- Declaration of promotion of gender equality as a major goal of AU.
- The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) which was adopted in July 2004 summit.
- Location of the gender machinery in the Office of the Chairperson of the Commission- in order to ensure that promotion of gender equality is carried out by member states. [2]

Addressing Gender Inequality in Accordance with Agenda 2063

The Agenda 2063 clearly states in its Aspiration 6 that it aspires for “An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential offered by African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children ”. A subclause of this is “Full gender equality in all spheres of life” with priority areas in women and girl empowerment and Violence and discrimination against women and girls.[4]

Those aspirations surely provide a platform for combating gender inequality; however, they do specify neither the direction nor the means leading towards reaching those goals. Unquestionably, there is a lot of work to be done at the level of individual African states; nevertheless, in order to be more effective, the delegates should focus on the solutions at the level of African Union, at the international level.

Possible Solutions to end Gender Inequality:

- Creation of specialized bodies to combat gender inequality.
- Joint programmes and projects to educate public about gender equality.
- Improving the scope of existing documents such as the African gender policy.
- Provide incentives to organizations that hire more women and work towards reducing wage gaps.
- Set a fixed quota of seats in parliaments of All AU Nations to guarantee better representation of women in politics.

The delegates should also bear in mind that the successful solution is not necessarily the most difficult or the most complex one.

Violence Against Women (VAW)

VAW is prevalent in many 14 African countries with prevalence rate ranging between 30-54%. These countries include Malawi, Zambia, Kenya, São Tomé and Príncipe, Sierra Leone, Mali, Gabon, Mozambique, Tanzania, Congo Democratic Republic, Uganda, Cameroon and Zimbabwe and Equatorial Guinea [X] Measures to reduce this should be discussed and debated upon.

The cause of VAW is undoubtedly gender inequality and women's subordination. VAW affects everyone in the community and not just the women. A country's socio-economic development prospects are severely threatened by this.



There are different forms of VAW as shown below, delegates are advised to study them to get a better understand the gravity of the matter.

The problem is that a few countries with high VAW rates have already national laws in place which penalizes crimes against women. Clearly, these are not implemented properly and are not enough to combat VAW. Therefore, the situation calls for member states to come up with appropriate measures and to regulate laws that prevent and punish VAW. Awareness programs also need to be carried out to make women aware of their rights.

This situation calls for member States to adopt appropriate measures to enforce laws that prevent and punish VAW. In addition, they need to invest in accurate statistics on the prevalence, cost and impact of VAW on women and girls, their communities and their development prospects.

Key questions

- How can girls have more accessible, safer, and longer-lasting opportunities to attend school and have job opportunities?
- How can gender discrimination against women be eradicated in workplaces?
- In what ways can AU nations cooperate to bring an end to Violence against women (VAW)?

- What measures should be taken in order to ensure the successful implementation of the existing Agenda 2063 strategy to combat gender inequality?
- In what ways can the perceived roles of women be changed to reflect gender equal roles?
- How can AU nations cooperate in the field of combating gender inequality and by sharing good practices?
- How can women be better represented in government positions?
- In what ways can property rights be modified as to combat the gender disparity?
- What are the ways to provide efficient protection for women and prevention of sexual violence in times of armed conflict?

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