

Africa Liberation Day at 53: Pentagon and CIA Continue to Destabilize Continent

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Today the African Union faces formidable development and security challenges

May 25, 2016 marks the 53rd anniversary of the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now known as the African Union (AU) since 2002.

The holiday commonly known as Africa Day or Africa Liberation Day, comes during a period of increasing interference from the Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

At a summit in 1963 held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at least 32 African heads-of-state gathered to form the OAU in efforts to foster the rapid decolonization of the continent and to move towards greater cooperation among the various governments. From the onset the OAU encompassed diverse and conflicting views on how Africa should move towards unity.

Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the-then president of the Republic of Ghana and founder of the ruling Convention People's Party (CPP), called for the immediate formation of a continental government with integrated military, economic and social systems. Nkrumah believed that if Africa did not unite imperialists would reverse the minimal gains made by the national liberation movements and political parties.

Other more moderate and conservative states represented in the so-called Monrovia and Brazzaville Groups advocated a more gradualist approach. Others even within the progressive forces did not embody the militant commitment to unification and socialism as Nkrumah and Guinean leader President Ahmed Sekou Toure, who along with Modibo Kieta of Mali had formed the Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union in 1960.

Nkrumah stressed at the founding OAU Summit that "On this continent, it has not taken us long to discover that the struggle against colonialism does not end with the attainment of national independence. Independence is only the prelude to a new and more involved struggle for the right to conduct our own economic and social affairs; to construct our society according to our aspirations, unhampered by crushing and humiliating neo-colonialist controls and interference." (May 24, 1963)

He went on saying "From the start we have been threatened with frustration where rapid change is imperative and with instability where sustained effort and ordered rule are indispensable. No sporadic act or pious resolution can resolve our present problems. Nothing will be of avail, except the united act of a united Africa. We have already reached the stage where we must unite or sink into that condition which has made Latin America the unwilling and distressed prey of imperialism after one-and-a-half centuries of political independence."

Nkrumah was overthrown three years later at the aegis of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the U.S. State Department and other imperialist entities. His ideas nonetheless are still relevant today in light of the growing militaristic and intelligence penetration of the African continent.

Some Examples of Imperialist Militarism Today: The DRC and Mercenary Interests

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) a leading opposition figure was exposed for having hired mercenaries from the U.S. to provide security for his campaign.

Moise Katumbi, a former governor of Katanga Province, who is now a presidential candidate has faced allegations that he hired mercenaries to assist him in the bid to become leader of the mineral-rich state in Central Africa. On May 9, Katumbi was questioned by the authorities in DRC when he denied the accusations.

Reuters press agency said “The enquiry could lead to charges that carry a prison term and could also tie Katumbi in legal knots that could derail his campaign to succeed President Joseph Kabila at elections scheduled November. Many Congolese people say Katumbi is the strongest opposition candidate to succeed Kabila, given his personal wealth and popularity as the former governor of Congo’s main copper-producing region. He also owns a soccer team.”

Senegal Signs Defense Pact With Pentagon

The Senegalese government in West Africa has signed a military agreement with the Pentagon giving Washington full access to the country.

Dakar participated in the Flintlock military exercises that are conducted annually by the Pentagon working in conjunction with other African and European states. The U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) coordinates these military maneuvers along with similar operations in various regions of the continent.

Relations between Senegal and neighboring Gambia have been strained for years. The U.S. escalation of military cooperation and economic assistance to Senegal are only fueling tensions in the region.

An article in Reuters reported “The Defense Cooperation agreement ‘will facilitate the continued presence of the U.S. military in Senegal,’ said Senegal’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Mankeur Ndiaye. The agreement ‘will also help to enhance security cooperation and further strengthen defense relations to face common security challenges in the region.’” (May 2)

War Threatened in Western Sahara

In the Western Sahara, Africa last colony, there are threats of war from Morocco, a close ally of the U.S. Morocco occupies Western Sahara in contravention of the official policy of both the AU and the United Nations. (AllAfrica.com, April 29)

Western Sahara is a former Spanish colony where Morocco took administrative control in the 1970s. A resistance movement known as the Polisario Front grew out of the demand for full national independence.

After years of fighting a ceasefire agreement between Morocco and Polisario prompted the establishment of MINURSO in 1991, formally recognized as a United Nations mission. The UN will vote once again on whether to extend the mandate of MINURSO. The UN mandate provided for an internationally-monitored referendum in which the people of Western Sahara could choose whether to pursue independence from or integration with Morocco. This promised referendum has not been held.

The AU maintains official recognition of the Western Sahara people which caused the Kingdom of Morocco to withdraw from the regional organization. Western Sahara has phosphates and other minerals making it a source of potential wealth in northwest Africa.

CIA Trains Children as Spies in Somalia

The imperialist-backed government in Somalia, where the CIA has a field station, the agency is providing training to children as spies who target members of Al-Shabaab in the ongoing counter-insurgency campaigns in the Horn of Africa. These training programs are carried out through the Somalia National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) which works closely with the CIA.

Western imperialist states such as the U.S. and those within the European Union (EU) fund and train the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) deploying 22,000 troops that work alongside the Somalia National Army.

Sputnik News reported on April 7 that, "In an interview with The Washington Post, the boys said that the country's National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA) had been using them as 'finger-pointers'. They would be sent to dangerous neighborhoods where al-Shabaab insurgents were hiding and told to point out their former comrades. On many occasions their faces were not covered, although the agents concealed their own. It's scary because you know everyone can see you working with them. The children were used on other missions to collect intelligence and sometimes told to wear NISA uniforms. According to the boys, they were threatened if they refused to cooperate, and their parents didn't know where they were."

Africa Must Unite Against Imperialism

Only an upsurge from the left and anti-imperialist forces can fulfill the visions of a true united Africa in line with the work of Nkrumah, Gaddafi and other revolutionary leaders. The worsening economic crisis due to the decline in commodity prices and western sponsored destabilization is reversing the advances made in regard to growth and development over the last decade.

Africa Liberation Day remains a vehicle to propagate the genuine liberation and unification of the continent under a socialist system. ALD demonstrations have been held annually in various cities across the North America since 1972.

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