

BRICS and Pan-Africanism: Operational Convergence

Mr. Senny, the Secretary General of the Pan-African League-Umoja, read the following message to the conference. His speech was translated from French.

Dear Comrades,

In the name of our organization, the Pan-African League-Umoja, we would first like to thank our comrades of the Schiller Institute for organizing this meeting. And a most important meeting it is, coming at a time when financial imperialism, which is itself the direct and natural son of global imperialist geopolitics, is constantly organizing itself, and mutating into various tentacles, able to alienate all sectors of our societies.

We would like to express our thanks to the French party, Solidarité et Progrès, which honored us with this invitation to be among you here in Frankfurt. This invitation will allow us to make our fight known to the international anti-imperialist family. We in the Pan-African League-Umoja are convinced that, faced with well-coordinated, united imperialism, we cannot win if we are dispersed, isolated, and disorganized.

We will first briefly present the BRICS, and then Pan-Africanism, independently from that, which is our organization's ideology. We will then show the operational convergence needed, and even urgently, to curb the spread of imperialism wherever possible, in the hopes of defeating it some day.

The Historical Initiative of the BRICS

In addition to the extreme militarization of the world, imperialist geopolitics is based on control of the means of financing national economies. With that, it nullifies the inalienable rights of peoples to define their economic policies freely. The institutions of Bretton Woods, the Club of Paris, the Club of London, and others, are the visible instruments that serve to crush the peoples by violating their sovereignty.

Therefore, the Pan-African League-Umoja welcomes the initiative taken by the BRICS, on July 15, 2014 in Fortaleza, Brazil, to create one of the largest development banks in the world, so as to offer a real



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"The Pan-African League-Umoja is fighting to restore to Africa all the attributes of its sovereignty," against the financial imperialism of the IMF and World Bank," stated Mr. Senny.

development alternative to the World Bank and the IMF.

These five countries—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—have a total population of 3 billion people, which is about 3 out of 7 Earthlings. It is high time for them to raise their voice in a world which only heeds the balance of power.

Current events certainly cannot refute that. Indeed, how else can one understand the humiliation that the U.S. courts just imposed on a great country like Argentina, ordering it to pay the vulture funds colossal sums of money? \$1.3 billion to be exact.

We would just mention that Argentina has 41 million inhabitants, and its GDP in 2012 was nearly \$475 billion. The Pan-African League-Umoja, of course, supports the international solidarity movement of all progressive peoples with respect to the suffering Argentinians. This is nothing less than international financial looting.

The supreme humiliation of the Argentinian people underscores the importance of finding alternatives to the dominant financial system, such as the one the BRICS propose with the development bank.

What the BRICS are attempting to do to free themselves from the international diktat, is exactly what the Pan-African League-Umoja proposes for Africa. As everyone knows, international financial imperialism knows no borders, and [the nations of] Africa, more than any other, have suffered unspeakable harm from such deadly policies, under regimes that are often corrupted by an international financial oligarchy.

Pan-Africanism: Liberation and African Renaissance

Pan-Africanism, an ideology inspired by Africa's own specific history, has fundamentally opposed, for two centuries now, the imperialism that Africa has been a victim of, first through slavery, then colonization, and now, neo-colonialism.

For the Pan-African League-Umoja, in the tradition of the historical fathers of Pan-Africanism, the only way to end the imperialism that dominates the African world, is through political unity of the carved-up, weakened African territories that are the involuntary prey of imperialism and, because of that, subject to the influence of different powers, which takes away the sovereignty of the people.

The current imperialism, also called neo-colonialism, maintains the African world in a purely colonial economic structure, which forces it to remain an eternal provider of raw materials and a producer of single crops (monoculture) for export only, while it passively consumes imported manufactured products.

Financially, the Bretton Woods institutions, in complicity with the former colonizers, call the shots in the African world. Almost from the beginning of their construction, African states were prevented from developing, by a series of economic injunctions since the 1980s, forcing them to implement Structural Adjustment Plans imposed by the World Bank and the IMF.

The most blatant case was in 1994, when the IMF had France, the former colonizer of 14 countries of the franc zone, and the real owner of the African Financial Community Franc (FCFA), devalue that currency by 50%. The effects of that monetary blow were horrendous: A product imported from France which was worth 100 FCFA was suddenly, from one day to the next, worth 200. To make up for the 100 FCFA, twice as many of the usual products had to be sold. The purchasing power of the populations in those countries fell steeply and brutally, of course, with no compensatory measures, all the more as salaries had been blocked for some ten years, on IMF orders.

To top it all, the debt of those countries in foreign currency was doubled in FCFA. Thus, ten years of efforts to reimburse the debt by those countries under IMF Structural Adjustment Plans (freeze on hiring, downsizing of health and education budgets, salaries blocked) were simply wiped out.

Therefore, the Pan-African League-Umoja is fighting to restore to Africa all the attributes of its sovereignty. We are well aware of the fact that our political unity

cannot be consolidated unless we also have monetary sovereignty, as the only way to end the monetary repression which inflicts a heavy price on the population.

The initiative taken by the BRICS we term historical, as is their manifest determination to escape from the feudal claws of international financial imperialism.

The real question is whether we will be able to join forces to make our actions operational and successful?

Operational Convergence of Anti-Imperialist Forces

The originality of the Pan-African League-Umoja is that it has been a federalist political movement from the very beginning. It is meant to be established in all African countries—and is so already—with a view to waging political struggles until it can acquire political power.

Our mission is to help destroy the legitimacy of the dominators, and provide our dominated populations with the critical spirit, mobilization, and understanding needed for their own liberation.

For the issues raised by Pan-Africanism are highly political. Who could realize them better than the Pan-Africanists?

The territorial sections that represent the Pan-Afri-

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can League-Umoja in every African territory are fighting to assert power on the lowest levels (neighborhood, association, town hall, deputation). Our sections thus have a different role than that of conventional political parties. In each section, we take care of popular education to combat cultural alienation, and assist our populations in becoming masters of their fate through socioeconomic activities.

How can we, all together in the anti-imperialist family, concretely help all these activists who are doing excellent work with the populations?

Dear Comrades,

As this assembly well knows, imperialism cannot help alternative movements such as ours, which wants to destroy it. On the contrary, imperialism only produces the conditions for its own reproduction.

That is why we issue a call to our comrades of the BRICS to concretely help the alternative movements in countries under neo-colonialism, the natural son of financial imperialism, to come to power.

Conclusion:

The Pan-African League-Umoja is open to partnerships with all organizations and figures involved in the anti-imperialist fight. We invite the anti-imperialist family to work together on the basis on concrete projects to roll back the common adversary on each of our territories.

Thank you very much—*Umoja Ni Nguvu* [Unity Is Strength].