PART I. FROM THE PAN-AFRICANIST MOVEMENT TO THE AFRICAN UNION
CHAPTER 1.
BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF STEPS TO AFRICAN UNITY

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1. Introduction

Pan-Africanism has its pedigree, its advocates and its organizational achievements. The purpose of this paper is not a rigorously scientific review of Africa’s march towards unity, which is more of a dream than reality at present. That would be beyond my scope. Instead, I shall attempt a modest review of some of the most significant milestones of the making of Africa, which was originally inspired by a visionary pan-African doctrine, advocated from time to time, to this day, by impatient proponents of unity.

This making of Africa occurred through the establishment of regional and sub-regional groupings, the result of a pragmatic forging of loose links into a continental organization established in 1963 and reformed in 1999 into a more integrated structure. In this regard, it can be noted that Africa has formed a remarkable number of regional and sub-regional bodies, some stillborn, others active only on the sidelines, while others have distinguished themselves by laudable efficiency.

A brief historical overview as defined above would benefit from an introductory look at the ideas of African intellectuals and statesmen who have etched on the collective memory of their peoples their passion for the integration and institutionalised union of the continent.