

The 50 Years Struggle of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU): A Search for a Developmental Paradigm in Africa?

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ABSTRACT The year 2013 marks the centenary since the formation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) on 25 May 1963.¹ While the 50th anniversary of the OAU is a cause for celebration in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), the body's birthplace and home of its successor, the African Union (AU), the occasion prompted much reflection amongst historians and political scientists alike. The study attempts to scrutinise the history of the OAU in the 50 year struggle for African unity. Furthermore, study interrogates the historical impact of the OAU in its endeavors to bring political stability on the African continent. In this study the challenges and successes of the OAU in a 50 year period are highlighted in view of the current socio-political problems as experienced by the African continent. In this 50 year period, it became clear that this organisations primary aim of uniting all African countries was elusive and imaginary. Furthermore, it is argued in this study that the development paradigm that the OAU envisaged became difficult to be realised. On the basis of the findings of this study, recommendations are made on how this organisation can continue promoting cooperation amongst the African countries rather than unity.