
Mr. Vice President, Secretary Rusk, Ambassador Diop, Your Excellencies, distinguished guests:

Three years ago yesterday the heads of your governments signed the Charter of the Organization of African Unity. It was a memorable day for your continent and for all the modern world into which Africa has emerged as an indispensable partner.

The charter signed on that day declares that "It is the inalienable right of all people to control their destiny," that "freedom, equality, justice and dignity are essential objectives... of the African peoples." It pledges to harness the natural and human resources of Africa for the total advancement of your peoples.

My country knows what those words mean. To us, as to you, they are not mere abstractions.

They are a living part of our experience as men and as nations.

They sum up the basic aspirations which your people and mine share in common: to secure the right of self-government, to build strong democratic institutions, and to improve the level of every citizen's well-being.

We have learned that these aspirations are indivisible. If it takes self-determination to become a free nation, it also takes a climate of regular growth to remain one. And that means the wise development of human and natural resources.

Whether nations are 5 years old or 190 years old, the striving for these goals never really ends. No nation ever completes the task of combining freedom with responsibility, liberty with order—and applying these principles, day after day, to our new problems.

Because these principles are embedded in the hearts of Africans and Americans alike, I have asked you to come here today to join me in commemorating the founding of the Organization of African Unity.

It is a good occasion to reaffirm a unity of purpose that transcends two continents.

I.

As your charter and as our Declaration of Independence set forth, we believe that governments must derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. This is the core of political freedom and the first principle of nation-building.

In the past 15 years, belief in self-determination has fired the swift momentum of Africa toward full participation in the community of nations. It has been a truly remarkable era in which more than 30 nations have emerged from colonialism to independence.

The road has not been traveled without difficulty. Its end is not even yet in sight. There have been ups and downs—and of course there will be more. But as one of our distinguished ambassadors has pointed out, "What matters most about new nations is not that they have growing pains but that they are in fact growing."
There is in Africa today an increasing awareness that government must represent the true will of its citizens. Across the continent the majority of people prefer self-government with peril to subservience with serenity.

This makes all the more repugnant the narrow-minded, outmoded policy which in some parts of Africa permits the few to rule at the expense of the many. The United States has learned from lamentable personal experience that domination of one race by another leads to waste and to injustice. Just as we are determined to remove the remnants of inequality from our midst, we are also with you—heart and soul—as you try to do the same.

We believe, as you do, that denial of a whole people's rights to shape their national future is morally wrong. We also know that it is politically and socially costly. A nation in the 20th century cannot expect to achieve order and sustain growth unless it moves—not just steadily but rapidly—in the direction of full political rights for all of its peoples.

It has taken us time to learn this lesson. But having learned it, we must not forget it. The Government of the United States cannot, therefore, condone the perpetuation of racial or political injustice anywhere in the world. We shall continue to provide our full share of assistance to refugees from social and political oppression.

As a basic part of our national tradition we support self-determination and an orderly transition to majority rule in every quarter of the globe. These principles have guided our American policy from India to the Philippines, from Vietnam to Pakistan. They guide our policy today toward Rhodesia.

We are giving every encouragement and support to the efforts of the United Kingdom and the United Nations to restore legitimate government in Rhodesia. Only when this is accomplished can steps be taken to open the full power and responsibility of nationhood to all the people of Rhodesia—not just 6 percent of them.

The disruptive effects of current sanctions fall heavily upon Zambia, adding a difficult burden to that young republic's efforts to strengthen its national life. I have informed President Kenneth Kaunda that we will work with him in trying to meet the economic pressures to which his country is being subjected.

The foreign policy of the United States is rooted in its life at home. We will not permit human rights to be restricted in our own country. And we will not support policies abroad which are based on the rule of minorities or the discredited notion that men are unequal before the law.

We will not live by a double standard—professing abroad what we do not practice at home, or venerating at home what we ignore abroad.

II.

Our dreams and our vision are of a time when men of all races will collaborate as members of the same community, working with one another because their security is inseparable, and also because it is right and because it is just.

This vision requires ever-increasing economic and social opportunity.

I know the enormous tasks that Africa faces in fulfilling its aspirations. I know how compelling is her need to apply modern science and technology to enrich the life of her people.
Much has been accomplished in the years since independence came to many members of your organization. You are proving what can be done when freedom and determination are joined with self-help and external assistance.

We have been particularly heartened by the impetus toward regional cooperation in Africa.

The world has now reached a stage where some of the most effective means of economic growth can best be achieved in large units commanding large resources and large markets. Most nation-states are too small, when acting alone, to assure the welfare of all of their people.

This does not mean the loss of hard-earned national independence. But it does mean that the accidents of national boundaries do not have to lead to hostility and conflict or serve as impossible obstacles to progress.

You have built new institutions to express a new sense of unity. Even as you grapple with the problems of early nationhood, you have sought out new possibilities of joint action—the OAU itself, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, and sub-regional groupings such as the Economic Community of Eastern Africa.

Growth in Africa must then follow the inspiration of African peoples. It must stem from the leadership of African governments. Assistance from others can provide the extra resources to help speed this growth.

Such assistance is already underway. In the last 5 years aid from all external sources has amounted to over $8 billion. The United States of America has extended approximately 2 billion of that 8 billion.

But none of us can be content when we measure what is being done against what could be done.

We are anxious to work with you to fulfill your ambitions.

Working with others, we are prepared to help build with you a modern Africa.

I can think of many missions on which America and Africa can work together. First, to strengthen the regional economic activities that you have already begun.

My country has offered the African Development Bank technical assistance funds to finance surveys of project possibilities, and loan funds for capital projects. We are ready to assist regional economic communities through technical assistance and through the financing of capital projects. These will help to integrate the various economic regions of Africa.

Second, to increase the number of trained Africans.

We have been devoting a large part of our aid funds for Africa to education. This proportion will increase.

This year we are assisting in the development and the staffing of 24 colleges and universities. We are financing graduate and undergraduate training for over 2,000 African students in the United States. Altogether, almost 7,000 African students are studying with us now. We are helping some 40 secondary and vocational training institutions in Africa. We are aiding 21 teacher training institutions while also providing thousands of teachers, mostly through our Peace Corps.

But these efforts are not enough. One of the greatest needs is to overcome the frustration of many qualified students who are unable to obtain a higher education.

To help meet that problem, we propose;

—to assist your effort to make certain African universities regional centers of
training and professional excellence;
— to explore with your governments an African student program for deserving students to attend African universities.

Third, to develop effective communications systems for Africa.

Africa is an immense continent embracing 37 states with still more to emerge. Their communication links were formed in colonial times and tie them more to the outside world than to each other.

Africa's continental development needs a modern communications system to meet regional requirements.

The United States has already financed several capital projects for communication facilities. We have provided technical assistance to communication services in a number of countries. I have authorized new surveys looking to the widening of existing telecommunications.

Communication satellites offer a striking opportunity to make even greater advances. To use these satellites effectively, ground stations must be built to bridge the continent. They would provide the essential links between the satellite and the conventional networks.

The United States is prepared to assist in the building of these stations. We will examine the need for additional ground links to enable Africa to secure greater benefits from these satellites.

These immediate actions illustrate some of the opportunities for cooperative effort. Other possibilities deserve early study.

Africa's great distances require more modern road, rail, and air links. The continent's great lakes and rivers could provide an enormous internal transport network.

The development of regional power grids offers an exciting possibility for regional cooperation and for national growth.

Opportunities for investment are still largely untapped despite the fact that African countries have welcomed private enterprise.

Africa's farm production does not meet the nutritional needs of its fast-growing population.

African territories may need special help in training their people and in strengthening their institutions as they move toward self-government.

So we want to explore these and other ways to respond to African needs. I have instructed the Secretary of State and other American officials to review our own development policies and programs in Africa. We shall be seeking new ideas and advice from American scholars, businessmen, and experts concerned with Africa's problems. Our Ambassador to Ethiopia, Ed Korry, will be working full-time in the weeks ahead to follow through these initiatives. We wish to discuss these new cooperative approaches and ideas with African governments, as well as with other governments and international groups.

The United States wants to respond in any way that will be genuinely helpful—from the private American citizen to a combination of many nations, from a bilateral effort with a single African country to regional programs.

Above all, we wish to respond in ways that will be guided by the vision of Africa herself, so that the principles we share—the principles which underlie the OAU
Charter—come to life in conformity with the culture and the aspirations of the African peoples.

III.

It was once said of Americans that "With nothing are we so generous as advice...We prefer being with people we do things for to being with people who do things for us." But it is no longer a case of what we can do for or even with the people of Africa. We have come to recognize how much we have to learn from you.

As one of the great Africans—Dr. James Aggrey—wrote: "If you go to Africa expecting something from us, and give us a chance to do something for you, we will give you a surprise."

As we have deepened our relations with you, we have learned that Africa has never been as dark as our ignorance of it; that Africa is not one place and one people but a mosaic of places and peoples with different values and with different traditions; that the people of Africa want to decide for themselves the kind of nations they wish to build.

We have learned not only about you but we have learned about ourselves. We have learned more about our debt to Africa and about the roots of so many of our American cultural values and traditions.

The human enterprise of which we are all a part has grown through contacts between men of different tribes, different states, and different nations. Through those contacts we have learned new ideas, new insights into ourselves, new ways of looking at the universe of nature and—most importantly—new understanding of man's relation to his brothers. It is this knowledge that endures.

It is this deepening appreciation and respect for the diversity of the world—each man and nation in it—that increases the possibilities for peace and order.

Your Excellencies, I hope that during your stay in our country you will look in on the African programs at our universities, foundations, and institutes. These programs are to the mutual understanding we both seek.

In this connection, American publishers have produced hundreds of books about Africa in recent years. One of the most recent is this handsome volume on African art in American museums and in private collections.

This book was prepared for the U.S. Information Service in Africa and it will help increase the understanding and the appreciation of your rich cultural heritage.

I would like you to accept a personal copy of this book as a memento of our meeting here in the East Room at the White House today.

The Organization of African Unity has become an important organ for building that peace and order. On this third anniversary my countrymen join me in asking you to come here this afternoon, and join me in saluting you and the people that you so ably represent.

Thank you very much.