



Here at home, Africa Day presents an opportunity for South Africans to reconnect and recommit themselves in support of government interventions to develop a better Africa and a better world. The commemoration of Africa Day highlights South Africa's contributory role and participation in the continent's agenda.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Africa Day is observed as a Public Holiday in six (6) countries: Ghana, Mali, Namibia, Zambia, Lesotho and Zimbabwe.
- The AU is comprised of 55 member states, after South Sudan joined in 2011.
- Morocco re-joined the AU in 2017, after it left the OAU 33 years ago.
- The AU has headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia but its legislative arm, the Pan African Parliament, is in Midrand, South Africa.

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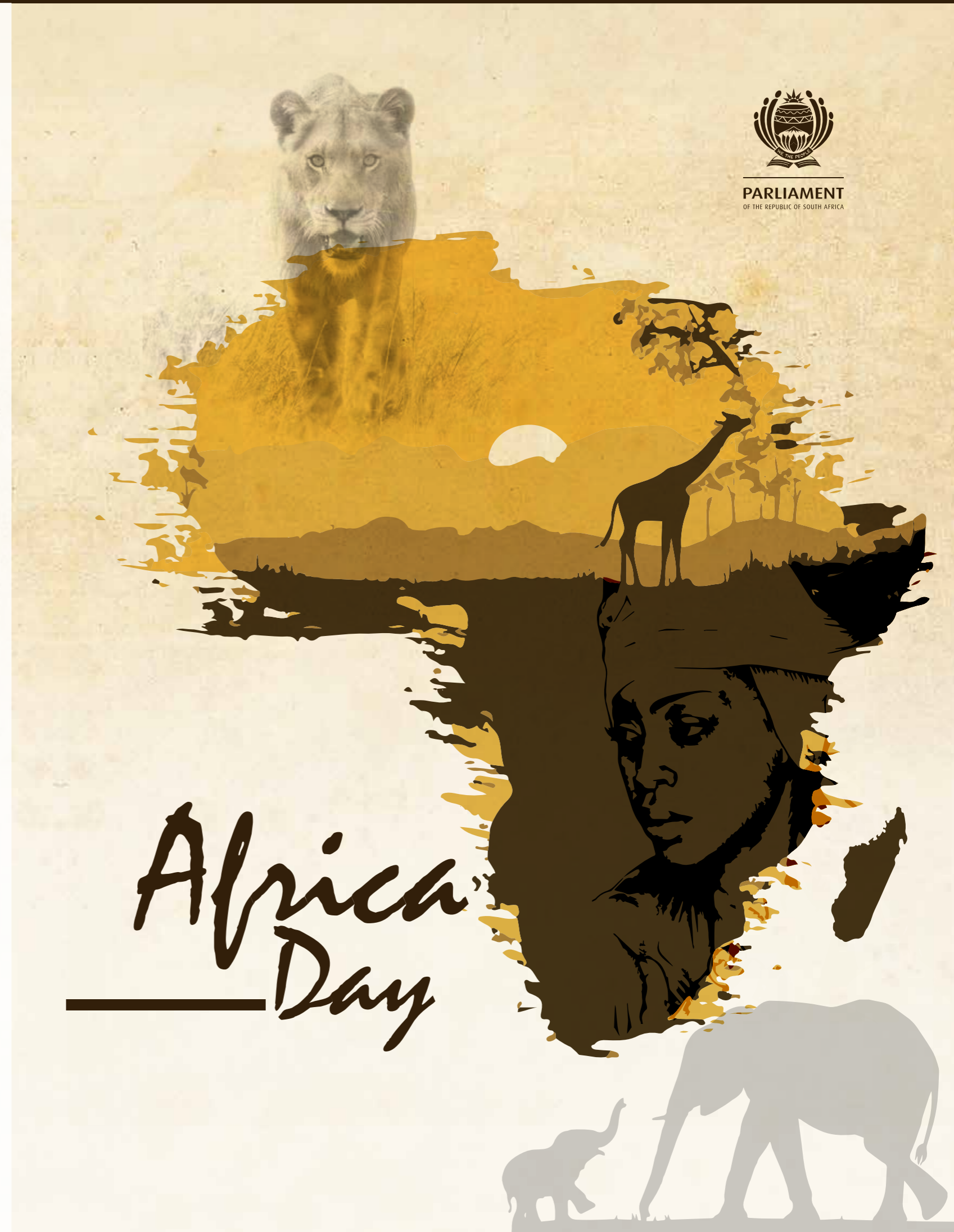
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PARLIAMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Africa
Day





WHAT IS AFRICA DAY?

Africa Day is the annual commemoration of the foundation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) on May 25, 1963. On this historic day, thirty-two (32) African countries met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to form the organisation. Today, Africa Day is celebrated in various countries on the African continent, as well as around the world.

It is a day during which Africa's unity, shared history and identity occupy pride of place. Africa Day serves as a platform to acknowledge the achievements of the continent and recognise Africa's culture and heritage.

AFRICA DAY AND THE AFRICAN UNION

The founding of the Organisation for African Unity gave birth to the formation of the African Union (AU) in 2002.

The transformation of OAU to the AU was motivated by the desire to accelerate the process of integration in the continent and to enable Africa to play its rightful role in the global economy, while addressing its socio-economic and political problems.

The African Union is a continental body that seeks to move Africans towards a common goal of unity. As part of its core business, the AU is also engaged in peace - keeping efforts, mediation and electoral assistance, amongst others.



The ideal of unity is clearly emphasised even in the AU Flag, with this motto: **“A united and strong Africa”**. In addition to this, the green colour on the flag symbolises African hopes and aspiration to unity.

Africa Day is therefore used as a time to reflect on the challenges Africa still faces and the positive milestones achieved. These challenges have been adequately recognised by the AU, hence the establishment of the **New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)**. This organ seeks to address Africa's development through the promotion of democracy, human rights, accountability, transparency and participatory governance.



Another recent and noteworthy continental achievement is the signing of the **African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA)**, the largest free trade agreement since the creation of the World Trade Organisation. African leaders signed the Kigali Declaration on the establishment of this trade agreement at the 10th Extraordinary Summit of the Assembly of the African Union in Kigali, Rwanda, on 21 March 2018.

The goal is to create a single continental market for goods and services, with free movement of business people.

In order for the continent to have a common vision, the African Union developed a roadmap called **Agenda 2063**, which will guide the Africa towards integration, prosperity and peace.

HOW IS AFRICA DAY CELEBRATED?

The following activities occur on the day:

- Activities that focus on African arts and crafts, dance, poetry, music and fashion.
- Debates on topical issues affecting the continent like xenophobia
- Workshops and exhibitions
- Sports activities like soccer matches

AFRICA DAY AND THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Parliament supports the AU's initiatives for peaceful interventions in conflicts across the continent. In keeping with the republic's foreign policy, the South African Parliament engages proactively with parliaments of countries where South Africa has been involved in efforts to build peace.

The Parliament of the Republic of South Africa participates in several African organisations, including the legislative arm of the AU, the Pan African Parliament (PAP) and the Southern African Developing Community Parliamentary Forum (SADC PF). As part of Africa Day celebrations, Parliament convenes on the day and debate issues that have a bias towards Africa's social, economic and political challenges.