THE AFRICAN UNION AND THE CHALLENGE OF BEING A STRONG, UNITED, RESILIENT AND INFLUENTIAL GLOBAL PLAYER AND PARTNER (AGENDA 2063, ASPIRATION SEVEN).

BY

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LEGON

JULY 2018
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of an original research conducted by me under the supervision of Dr. Juliana Appiah, and that apart from other works, which are duly acknowledged, no part of it has been submitted anywhere else for any purpose.

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DATE:................................ DATE:..................................
DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to first and foremost, the God Almighty for his guidance, wisdom and the strength to complete this research. Also to my devoted late Parents, Mr. James Bruce Kwame Osei and Mrs. Beatrice Osei whose assistance and counselling from infancy has brought me this far, not to forget my helpful siblings (Thomas Osei, Emmanuel Anane, Stella Osei, and George Yaw Osei) and also to my tireless Supervisor, Dr. Juliana Appiah. Finally, I dedicate this work to all my friends who have become a family, and in numerous ways, assisted me throughout this work when necessary.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEC – African Economic Community
APPER – Priority Programme for Economic Recovery
AU - African Union
CAM – Common African Market
CAADP – Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program
ECOWAS - Economic Community of West African States
EU – European Union
GDP – Gross Domestic Product
IRT - International Relations Theories
JAES – Joint African EU Strategy
LPA – Lagos Plan of Action
MDG - Millennium Development Goals
NEPAD – New Partnership for Africa’s Development
NGO – Governmental Organization
OAU – Organization of African Unity
RECs – Regional Economic Communities
UNDP – United Nations Development Programme
UN – United Nations
WTO – World Trade Organization
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ABSTRACT

The African Union, since its formation, from the days of the Organization of African Unity to its current form, has taken several steps to ensure total continental unity. The AU, has initiated commendable programs such as the Lagos Plan of Action, the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights drafted in 1981; Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPDR) in 1985, The Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (EAC), known as the Abuja Treaty, in 1991; The Sirte Declaration of 1999; The 2000 Solemn Declaration on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation of the African continent; the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) in 2000 and the latest being the adoption of Agenda, 2063. This study therefore aims at examining the relevance, challenges and the prospects of Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063 of the AU. The study adopts a qualitative research methodology that relies on both secondary and primary data, using interviews as instrument of data collection, where the views of both practitioners and professionals, such as diplomats, former presidents and former AU Chairpersons and others have been presented and analyzed. The study found out that, Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063, is very relevant especially to the socio-economic development of the African continent, as it has the potential of making Africa a united and an influential global player. However, despite the relevance of Aspiration Seven, the study found out that the challenges facing the African Union in its bid to realize the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063, are multifaceted and can be seen in the aspects of economic, political, socio-cultural and external factors. The study however revealed that the prospects of the Aspiration Seven are very bright, if the African Union would demonstrate the required commitment and zeal towards the realization of the Agenda 2063. The study concludes by indicating the possibility and the difficulty in achieving Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063 by the African Union. The study therefore gives various recommendations to the effect that, the African Union should put together a very strong economic team, who understand the African economic dynamics to offer valuable solutions to the African economic problem. The study recommends, among other things, that the African Union should put in place a very deterring sanction scheme that can help whip uncommitted member states into line for the realization of this important aspiration.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

Continents all over the world have decided to form unions not only to engineer development in their various countries, but also to have a collective goal, of developing regionally and continent-wise. It is this motivation that has encouraged countries in Europe, for instance, to form the European Union (EU). The EU has chalked some notable successes over the years prominently among this include the establishment of their currency known as the Euro, which has affected global economic dynamics. Among the effects of the establishment of the Euro includes aiding the exchange of goods and services, promoting inter/intra state trade among member countries. It is, therefore, in the same spirit, that African countries saw the need to come together and form the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 that was later transformed into the African Union (AU).

The African Union was established in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on the 26th of May 2001. It later came into being on 9th July, 2002 at a city in South Africa called Durban. (African Union, 2017). Currently, it consists of 55 African countries. The latest member state to rejoin the AU is Morocco in January 2017. Morocco joined the AU after withdrawing from the OAU initially in 1984. Their withdrawal was due to the AU accepting Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic as a member state. Until Morocco’s return to the AU, the AU consisted of all other African countries except Morocco. Burkina Faso and the Central African Republic have however been suspended from the Union due to the coup d'état and civil war that took place in both countries. The aim of the AU in totality is to spearhead wholesome integration and development of African countries on the global platform.
The African Union just like other similar unions across the world, since its formation has been confronted with a dossier of challenges ranging from issues such as lack of political commitment by member states, fear of loss of sovereignty, infrastructural challenges, and financial difficulties to other issues such as geographical challenges and other external challenges such as foreign interferences.\(^2\) This notwithstanding, there are quite a considerable number of successes that the Union has been cloaked with, which are worth noting. The Organization of African Unity was able to organize member states well in fighting for their independence from colonial in the early years of the decolonization process.\(^3\) The African Union later supported member states with military troops to curb political instability and other disturbances. Despite the above successes by the Union, it needs to ensure that it is more organized and strategized in order to contribute to the welfare of member states, as well as being in a good position, to play the role for which it was formed.\(^4\)

The AU has therefore set for itself several goals to achieve what would lead to the welfare of member states. Prominent among these goals coupled with aspirations of the African Union is the Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven. The Agenda 2063 is a framework designed with a strategy that seeks to unleash in Africa, a socio-economic transformation on the African continent within the next 50 years.\(^5\) It seeks to continue and induce the implementation of past and existing African initiatives. This is intended to accelerate in Africa, growth and sustainable development.\(^6\) This Agenda of the African Union, is in line with the general vision of the Union, which is to see “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the International arena”.\(^7\) The Aspiration Seven of this Agenda submit that by 2063, Africa would be seen as a “strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner”.\(^8\) It is very clear that the realization of this agenda and aspiration would mean that, the African
Union would rise above all the challenges it faces as a union and achieve its goals. It is, therefore, against this background that this study seeks to examine the challenges that the African Union faces vis-à-vis its ambition of realizing and achieving the Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven.

1.1 Problem Statement

The AU’s Agenda 2063 was launched in 2013, by the African Heads of State and Government. This agenda ambitiously envisioned an action plan, intended to drive Africa's change, development, and transformation for the next 50 years. The first objective of the AU according to the Constitutive Act, is the drive for unity and this has always influenced AU’s initiatives. It is on this vein that Agenda 2063 incorporated again, the drive for continental unity in Aspiration Seven, which seeks to achieve “an Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner”.

The question of how Africa can become influential as a global player and partner in the midst of the AU’s numerous challenges is mind boggling. Due to poverty, the AU continues to receive funds from foreign donors such as the European Union, the World Bank, USA, China just to mention a few, in other to operationalize most of its initiatives. Another challenge is the fact that Africa is known for the production of primary products, which are of less value making the continent reap relatively smaller gains in international trade. In terms of power politics, Africa is always at the periphery. Superpowers and intergovernmental organizations, such as the Bretton Woods institutions reserve the right to interfere in the affairs of African countries. Africa does not have any permanent member in the Security Council of the UN. Regardless of the rebranding of the OAU into the AU, the number one objective of the AU, that is, African unity, per the AU’s Constitutive Act, still remains unattainable. However, all of these challenges persist in the AU. The question
that begs to be answered is how feasible, is the realization of Aspiration Seven of the AU’s Agenda 2063?

There is no single panacea to Africa’s development, yet the assumption is that, if the AU will be resilient in achieving unity in Africa, to a large extent, the continent as a whole would progress as a global player and partner. It is, therefore, against this background that this study seeks to examine Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063, focusing on Africa’s quest for unity and becoming a global player. This study assesses the prospects of implementing Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063 amidst increased pressure for a holistic awakening to rebrand the future of the AU and adopt hopeful ideas for the 21st century in a globalized context. Finally, this research mainly assesses challenges that are usually identified with African developmental initiatives and how Africa can look into the future, by dealing with these challenges in order to achieve continental unity and the drive towards being a strong global partner and player.

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions are posed to help as a guide to achieve the research objectives set out for this study:

1. What is the relevance of the African Union’s Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven to Africa?

2. What are the challenges facing the African Union with regards to the realization of the Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven?

3. What are the successes of the African Union and the prospects in achieving the Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven?
1.3 Research Objectives
The overall objective of this study is to examine the challenges and prospects of the African Union with regards to the realization of Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven. Specifically, the study aims at achieving the objectives below:

1. To examine the relevance of the African Union’s Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven to Africa.
2. To examine the challenges of the African Union in achieving the Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven.
3. To explore the successes of the African Union and the prospects of Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven.

1.4 Scope of Study
This study is concerned with the African Union and its challenges with regards to the realization of Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven. The study also covers the history of the formation of the African Union as well as the processes and the events that led to the setting up of Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven. The study also covers the success and the prospects of the African Union, in achieving the Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven.

1.5 Hypothesis
It is hypothesized that, the African Union is faced with daunting challenges that if not solved, would make it impossible to realize Agenda 2063, Aspiration Seven within the specified time.

1.6 Rationale of the Study
The topic for this study is “The African Union and the Challenge of being a Strong, United, Resilient and Influential Global Player and partner (Agenda, 2063. Aspiration Seven)”, however, the study focuses on African unity and the quest for Africa to be a
global player. The rationale of this study is therefore based on the quest of Africa to become a global player since its early years of independence. The study recognizes the efforts that the African Union has been making over the years and still failed to catch the attention of the international community as one of the active global players. The study therefore finds it very imperative to examine the African Union and its quest of being a global player after more than fifty years of freedom from colonialism amidst the challenges in a globalized context, by specifically examining the Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063.

1.7 Justification of the Study

African countries have similar challenges with development, hence, the desire for a united Africa as a major basis to create a self-inclusive environment for the continent’s development. The African Union over the years has adopted and implemented several policies and programmes as well as resolutions such as the Lagos Plan for Action, the Abuja Treaty, Africa’s Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER), the Sirte Declaration, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and others, yet, there has not been any concrete success as far as seeing Africa as a united continent as well as a global player is concerned. Since the initial programmes have not chalked much success, this study examines what is new in this agenda that could make the difference. This study is, therefore, justified in the sense that, it examines the African Union and its quest to become a global player, by examining Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063. The study is also justified in the failures of previous efforts aimed at securing African unity and putting Africa in the limelight of global affairs. The study is also justified in its relevance, since it adds to the existing literature on the subject of unity in Africa, by delving into some of the reasons leading to why Africa’s influence has been stigmatized in the global arena. This research examines some perspectives held about the African continent and its
influence as a global partner and as well suggests some recommendations to curb these challenges. The study will also help the academic fraternity, state actors and other international agencies to ascertain better, the experiences and importance of the African continent in the rightful context in analyzing global issues.

1.8 Limitations of Study

The major limitation for this study was the availability of resource persons to interview, as well as having access to the few resource persons. Due to the caliber of people that constitute the target population for this study, it was very difficult to have a face to face interview with them due to their busy schedule. There is also the issue of available data from the various offices. However, though some of the challenges confronted by the researcher in the conduct of this research actually posed a hindrance to this research, serious and concerted efforts were made to ensure better responses and compliance from the respondents. Thus the aim of the researcher was satisfied.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

This study is essentially grounded in one of the Regional integration theories called, Neo Functionalism. Babarinde in his refereed paper titled “Analyzing the Proposed African Economic Community: Lessons from the Experience of the European Union” observes that, the theory of Regional Integration is captured into three main theoretical underpinnings, that is the Federalist theory, the Functionalist theory and Neo Functionalism. According to Babarinde, the Federalist theory advocates for a strategy of integration, which requires that member countries agree to share part of their political power. Another theoretical strategy under regional integration as indicated by Babarinde, is the Functionalist Strategy of Regional Integration, which is more or less an opposite of the federalist strategy. According to this theory, countries would only need to come to an
agreement to cooperate with one another just so they could achieve a common goal and would not need to share their political power or sovereignty with the mother union. The last one is the Neo-Functionalist strategy, which scholars described as a “hybrid of the two models”. This theoretic strategy simply criticizes the federalist and the functionalist strategies and proposed that the two theories combined to meet a common ground, hence the main theory for this study is Neo Functionalism. The common ground that justifies the appropriateness of Neo Functionalism for this study is that, with Neo Functionalism, governments are able to control the integration process. This integration process tends to highlight inclusiveness by empowering supranational actors, transnational corporations as well as interest groups which is also needed in the African Union.

According to Ben Rosamond who wrote extensively on the European Integration, the origin of this theory can be traced to the end of the Second World War, where there was a proposition for the formation of the United States of Europe. According to Rosamond, this theory is best suited for situations where unity and consensus reaching is a big problem. This theory is appropriate for this study again because, the African Union indeed has a problem in reaching unity. The AU, has been accused of not having any strong legal backing and as a result, it is just a toothless bulldog that lacks the ability to bite any of the member states that proves to be stubborn. The federal theory under the regional integration theory provides the African Union with the political and the legal power over its members. This would definitely make the African Union very powerful enough to champion the implementation of the Agenda, 2063 and achieve all the aspirations, especially the Aspiration Seven. Though the Federalist strategy of the Regional Integration theory has been criticized for asking for too much from nation states, since they would be sharing part of the sovereignty and political power, it still remains a very good choice for Africa because it obviously has the potential of not only improving
the African identity, but it will also go a long way to integrate the continent for a strong and resilient political and military might.

1.10 Literature Review

There are a great number of scholars writing on the underdevelopment and poverty on the continent as well as the urgent need for African countries to come together and against poverty. According to the United Nations most of the least developed countries are in Africa. The level of underdevelopment in Africa keeps surging for the last quarter-century. Meanwhile, it has been declining in the rest of the developing world like Asia. The African Union is a regional integration body aimed at helping the continent of Africa to resolve challenges. Many scholars have also written a lot on the formation of the African Union and its related issues.

Sesay examines the formation of the African Union and pointed out certain issues that need attention, however, Sesay did not really tackle the challenges and achievements of the organization, especially on its first objective of attaining continental unity. According to Thom-Otuya, African integration is vital because it creates the environment for democracy in Africa. It strengthens peace-building processes and also increases its military power to secure the continent. Again, it speeds up the entire development processes, and boosts the survival of its member states in the community of nations. Even though, Thom-Otuya said little on what are the particular challenges the AU itself is facing in achieving integration and unity, his work hinted at the possible problems facing the African Union and recommended some possible means by which they can be addressed. Okhonmina, in his study makes recommendations as to how Africa could face the challenges of an increasingly competitive world. The recommendations are that, Africa needs to be resilient in modern times, be vital and create a united Africa that is poised to
resist influence from the Western countries. In his work, he stressed that “the drive for unity in Africa will remain problematic if Africa perceives the platform of a common alliance and desire it as an end in itself rather than a means to an end”. Succinctly, the African union has shown interest in the need for member states to join efforts in solving African problems with indigenous or home grown African solutions. It is very clear that African countries over the years have established several strategies aimed at integrating them further. These efforts have been cushioned with some institutions and organisations. For instance, the relation between the AU and its Regional Economic Communities (RECs), is solidified with protocols to establish a smooth working relation among them.

Salim in his work identifies that, one of the main reasons for which the African Union was established, is the desire to enforce unity among African states and the people of Africa. Similarly, when the implementation of the Abuja Treaty was moving slowly, the AU’s Constitutive Act was established to promote the whole integration process. It is, therefore, refreshing to see the African Union making very frantic efforts to alleviate poverty among its member countries. This notwithstanding, Reynolds, however, believes that the challenge of unity in the AU stays the same. It is indeed real, that continental unity is slow because, AU member states inherently refuse to drop the issue of ‘sovereignty worshiping. Meanwhile, it is these same leaders that are advocating for a ‘United States of Africa’. Africa’s status as a global player is delayed and the unity agenda is quite overdue, and this has been attributed to the existence of conflicts, increase in population growth, economic upheavals, diseases, political instability, poor governance, inefficient technocrats and corruption among others.

Maimela is of the view that, a strong institutional structure, leadership and social agency are the three major dimensional and analytical frameworks that has the potential to curb Africa’s predicaments. He goes further to add that, the European supremacy over the
African continent led to Africa’s destruction. Maimela advocates for an evolution in Africa, where the African continent will improve their competitiveness on the global scene. According to Malberg, African leaders are to blame for the bad political and economic governance in Africa. Maimela believes however, that indeed, some African countries suffered from colonialism, whilst other countries rather benefited from colonialism. However, all of these countries are in modern times, encrusted with poverty. So then, the justification that colonialism led Africa into poverty is weak per his view. This notion is seconded by Taylor, who also rejects the notion that, colonialism and other historical factors contributed to the plights of Africa. Taylor accused the elites in Africa as the cause of Africa’s woes. He also asserts that “neopatrimonialism” and “malgovernance” are also contributing factors that undermine the continent’s development.

According to Moshi, one of the problems facing the AU against establishing unity is the constant outbreak of wars and conflicts. In other to reduce insecurities that accrue from conflicts and wars and scourge the continent’s efforts towards developments, there must be some priority actions with short term benefits, like establishing an effective peace and security council. According to Moshi, if successes could be chalked from the projects of the AU, then it lies mainly in the hands of the head of states and governments of the member states. Head of states should be willing to share some amount of sovereignty in key areas of law making. There should be economic measures to guard financial and economic convergence. These concerns raised by Moshi are all attainable if there is unity in the African Union, which Moshi did not highlight. This study attempts to give recommendations as to how the AU shall curb its challenge of attaining unity.

The way forward in awakening the African status as an influential global partner and player has been suggested by different different scholars. Example, Ndikumana, posits that
Africa is wholly marginalized on the global scene; hence Africa needs to be integrated into the global economy in other to reap a reasonable amount of growth. This claim is also supported by basically two arguments raised from the works of Ng and Yeats. First and foremost, they believe that trade was essential to industrialization and growth, secondly, that low economic performance is as a result of high domestic trade barriers adopted by countries.

However, Africa especially Sub-Saharan Africa would have benefited from trade if it pursues less oppressive governance and trade liberalization. Just like other scholars believe, Africa is not developing because it has not well integrated into the global economy as far as international trade is concerned. This concept could work for some countries but what Ndikumana and Ng and Yeats, may have highlighted is the fact that, perhaps as this prescription may become globally appreciated, the prospect is that, the nature of global economic integration and trade is as a matter of fact, implemented by some sine qua non forces such as efficient communication, able source of power, technological advancement, just to mention but a few. These afore mentioned forces must also be backed by the political will from African countries, but in reality this political will is very low.

The onus lies in the hands of African countries, to exhibit readiness in participating on fair grounds, in international trade, exporting of human and capital resources, all in the quest to tap from global economic trade. African states ought to assess the benefits in participating in global trade as well as economic integration before any indulgence. This is necessary because, participating in the global economy is no more at the verge of force. Again, there are some fundamental forces that are influencing global economic integration, coupled with the assurance of moving the world towards a desirable economic development in future.
Again, Nwankwo, argues that Africa has predominantly being at the receiving end of global politics and that, this subjugation has fused into the continent’s internal and external politics. To him, the true state of affairs on the global scene is that, least developed countries have less influence on the global scene. As a result of this subordination, there is a conscious effort by the external forces to prevent Africa escaping from the vicious cycle of poverty (For mercantilist purposes). He goes further to state that, the traces of negative attitude of African leaders are traits inherited from their colonial masters. For Nwankwo, Africa needs to break their dependence on external sources to help run their governance. His advice is that, the solutions to end this dependence are all to be found within the continent of Africa. The submissions he puts across is that, African leaders must develop developmental schemes that better fits the African conditions rather than trying to accord with external developmental schemes that mostly do not fit into Africa’s conditions.

These arguments were also affirmed by Easterly, where he explained how the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are poorly and indiscriminately fashioned, as a standard to measure progress against poverty and deprivation. The way the MDGs were fashioned were such that, they were design to make Africa look worse than it really is. Furthermore, these submissions by Nwankwo are but an excuse, for most African leaders and writers to justify their current state of poverty. Perhaps, there must be a new era where Africa will realize the past accusations should remain in the past and that, it is about time that African countries put their differences aside and appreciate the beauty of their diversity and history by uniting as a continent. This continental unity was also possible from the European Coal and Steel community, now transitioned into the European Union, perhaps the most effective continental organization in this contemporary time. This
historical trajectory of the European Union do well to emphasize the strength in unity as a continent towards a particular goal, which this study seeks to advocates.

Nikwane also add to the argument of the place of Africa in global politics that, the African continent is ignored in International Relations (IR) as an academic discourse.\textsuperscript{47} She based her argument on power dynamics within the discipline to explain the relegation of the African continent, just as it is posited by the realist school of thought.\textsuperscript{48} This is a unique concern when it comes to Africa’s marginalization in the global context such that, it veer into a different mode of argument where Africa’s marginalization is also depicted in academia, unlike other arguments that are mostly African history related.\textsuperscript{49} However, it would have been prudent if she expatiated what entails in her context of power dynamics. She did not explain what constitutes her notion of power in international relations.

Writers like Mbeki and Hagen explained that there are no non international relations theories (IRT) because, among their numerous views discussed, ‘’ the Western IRT has discovered the right path to comprehend international relations so as to preclude the need for other voices’’.\textsuperscript{50} Some of the African perspective in response to this claim is that of Mbeki, he observed that:

\begin{quote}
Bringing Africa into IR cannot be simply a question of ‘add Africa and stir’, as the continent does not enter the discipline as a neutral object of study. Instead, it is already over determined and embedded within the politics and structure of values of the academe, which are in turn influenced in complex ways by changing geopolitics.\textsuperscript{51}
\end{quote}

He suggested that, ‘’an assemblage approach’’ in studying the African continent at the same time by laying emphasis on the continent’s politics and social interactions or makeup as both unique and global, is ideal.\textsuperscript{52} This holistic and mutual efforts, coined in his tone as ‘’an assemblage approach’’ is what this study aims to project as a recommendation for the African continent in achieving unity.
Ndikumana again asserts that, Africa is deeply relegated as a global player and for Africa to experience growth on the global scene it must pursue an agenda of integrating into the global economy. To him, slave trade and colonialism were means to integrate the continent into the global sphere in an exploitative way. In contemporary times, globalization is the process of integration which he describes as more gloomy. He stated that, globalization favours the developed countries and impoverishes less developed countries. This is partly because, western countries prescribes conditionality for Africans that are not even implemented in the western countries. Again he sees the constant migration of the able African youth labour into the developed countries as severe threats on African economies. From the above submissions raised by Ndikumana, there is a gap in highlighting those agents in Africa that serve as a link to perpetuate this repugnant exploitation in Africa by the western countries. These agents are the ‘’Comprados bourgeoisies’’ as called by the dependency theory advocates. They comprise of a small group of elites in the third world countries (less developed) that collaborates with the elites of the metropole (developed countries) to perpetuate the status quo for their selfish gains. This is simply through bribery and corruption in Africa that requires a radical move to be discarded as a continent that aspires to be a strong global partner.

The literature reviewed above contributes to this study because, it is very clear that the various scholars have actually tackled the place of African Union in Africa’s continental unity and global politics. The literature has also emphasized on Africa’s need to unite and become a strong global player. One thing that features prominently in all the literature reviewed above, is the very important gap of investigating the specific challenges that are confronting the African Union, especially in continental unity and global competitiveness, and also attempts to activate measures to achieve the theme stipulated by Agenda, 2063, Aspiration Seven. It is therefore this literature gap that this study seeks to fill. This study is
principally aimed at not only examining the role of the AU in fostering unity in Africa, the challenges it faces in this quest, the success stories of the AU in attaining unity, but the study is also aim at specifically exploring the main challenges that confront the African Union and how it relates to achieving the Agenda, 2063, Aspiration Seven.

1.11 Methodology and Sources of Information

This study uses both primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained from sampled respondents, using unstructured interviews as an instrument of data collection. Unstructured interviews were conducted for the primary data collection in other to probe further in the interview. A sample size of about twelve respondents was chosen because of their expertise in relation to the topic. A snowball approach was employed for a purposive sampling for individuals suggested by experts to respond to the interviews on this topic. Respondents included His Excellencies John Agyekum Kufuor and John Jerry Rawlings who are both former president of Ghana and former Chairmen of the AU, Prof. Kwame Boafo-Arthur, Dr Charles Amo Agyeman and Dr Rosina Foli, all of University of Ghana Political Science Department, Mr Sebastian Beliwine: Acting Director of African Relation Bureau of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration in Ghana and Ambassador Albert Yankey, Chief Director of Ghana’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Mr. Seth Osei Akoto, Acting Director of Crops Services at Ghana’s Ministry for Agriculture. Mr. Daniel Mensah, an Agric-Officer at Ghana’s Ministry for Agriculture, Dr. Yao Graham: Head of Third world Network Africa, Mr. Gmayi Nsuiban, Public Relation Officer at Ghana Museums and Monuments Board, Prof. Henry Wellington of University of Ghana Archaeology Department, were all consulted to tap their knowledge on this study. A qualitative research analysis was adopted for the content analysis which was basically narrative and interpretative. The Secondary sources for this study include published and unpublished literature, obtained from libraries, internet sources and other
sources such as academic journals. All the information obtained from these secondary sources are reviewed and analyzed accordingly.

1.12 Organization of the Study

This study is organized into four chapters;

1. Chapter one constitutes the introduction.

2. Chapter two is the road map to Agenda 2063.

3. Chapter three focuses on the challenges and prospects of the African Union in achieving Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063. This chapter responds to the research objectives.

4. Chapter four provides the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations to the study
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CHAPTER TWO
THE ROAD MAP TO AGENDA 2063

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a historical account of the efforts made in Africa towards uniting the continent as well as ensuring that Africa is resilient, strong and united in order to become recognizable global player in contemporary times. The chapter traces the circumstances that led to the adoption of the Agenda 2063 by the African Union, by first of all recognizing the fact that, there have been many efforts demonstrated by African leaders towards ensuring that the continent is seen as a global player over the years. These efforts comprised of various resolutions, declarations, agreements and formations of continental bodies with the aim of galvanizing unity in order to ensure economic and political development in Africa. The chapter therefore traces efforts such as the formation of the Organization of African Unity, the Lagos Plan for Action, the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights drafted in 1981; (Priority Programme for Economic Recovery :APPER) in 1985, which was formed to address the emerging crisis of the 1980s; The Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (EAC), known as the Abuja Treaty, in 1991; The Sirte Declaration of 1999; The 2000 Solemn Declaration on security, stability, development and cooperation of the African continent; The AU’s, New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) in 2000; and The AU Constitutive Act of 2001, forming the African Union in 2002, all leading to the promulgation of the Agenda 2063.
2.1 The Formation of the Organization of African Unity

At the eve of decolonization in Africa, various local anti-colonial alliances and groups as well as regional pressure groups began to spring up with the aim of resisting colonial rule and liberating their respective countries from colonial domination. Few of the African states actually got their political independence with the help of these pressure groups. However, many of the African states were yet to gain their independence from European imperialism. It was quiet obvious that Africans needed to be united if the continent wanted to liberate all African countries from colonial domination. There was therefore, the need for the formation of a continental body that could regulate and coordinate activities to make sure that the rest of Africa was liberated from colonial subjugation.¹ It was therefore against this background that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was formed on the 25th of May, 1963, in Addis Ababa, with thirty-two signatory governments.² In 1963, African countries that had newly gain independent joined the OAU by signing the Charter of the OAU in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This was a holistic effort, made by African states to release the continent from the bondage of colonialism. In the end, all of these efforts were meant to bring the people of Africa much closer together as a continent. An attempt to comprehend the key issues that led to the formation of the OAU is vital. This understanding will contribute to the reasons why the OAU failed in integrating Africa and achieving the developmental aspirations for which it was created.³

The objectives of the OAU among others were; to eradicate all forms of colonialism and white majority rule on the African continent; to coordinate and heighten the integration process of African states. This is because, integration is a means to achieve a desirable life for the African people. It also had the potential of strengthening the defense of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of African states. Again, this cooperation was a means to an end, where there was be progressive African development
efforts to free the continent from chronic underdevelopment. Indeed, the way forward for the eradication of underdevelopment in Africa is the promotion of economic development of the various member states of the AU.\(^4\) According to Kumar, the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), epitomized the demonstration of grave Pan-African concern to the security and unity of African people with the sole aim of securing African states.\(^5\) The coming into existence of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was just a perfect illustration and registration of African abhorrence and résistance to the external domination as well as an outstanding depiction of the fact that Africans can join hands and show strong commitment in realizing the “African solutions for African problems” mantra that was being sang by many African leaders at the time.\(^6\) There is therefore no disputing the outstanding reality that the Organization of African Unity had played a very significant role not only in the liberation of many African countries from colonial domination, but also in helping to ensure African unity and common identity as a continent.\(^7\)

However, it has been scholarly established that the OAU was not able to live up to expectation as far as putting the African continent into the limelight of global recognition and as equal players in international politics and economics. Contemporary scholars such as Abubakar, and Moller, have mentioned the fact that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was found to be very inefficient and insufficient in addressing the many and diverse challenges that confronted the continent especially when it came to ensuring that there was peace and security as well as unity and economic development in the continent as a whole as well as preventing internal conflicts within countries on the continent.\(^8\)

The main challenge that confronted the OAU was that, in spite of the fact that, African policy makers embraced the idea of African unity at the initial stages of the OAU, they lacked a continental consensus on how to attain it.\(^10\) The differences of view led to
institutional form where one group met in Casablanca in January 1961— that is the Casablanca Group and the other group, also met in Monrovia – known as the Monrovia Group to discuss their view on what should connote unity in Africa. Though the groups agreed on the idea of unity and the need for African states to act together as confederates, their differences were basically on how to approach the issue. The Casablanca Group for instance, proposed and established an African Consultative Assembly, for which every African state was to be present. However, the Monrovia group suggested an African social solidarity and identity engulfed with unified aspirations and actions. These were undoubtedly two different views towards the attainment of continental unity. This was one of the main challenges that impeded the OAU from its functions because, the division represented a large negative agreement. One of the main issues that remained key, in the agenda at the first Summit of African Heads of states in Addis Ababa, in 1963 was the issue of economic cooperation and integration. This discussion pended till the 1979 summit that was held in Monrovia. It was at this summit when the leaders intensely discussed and agreed on a consensus in a form a Common African Market (CAM).

2.2 The Lagos Plan of Action (LPA), in 1980

Another major effort that was made towards ensuring unity, togetherness and a common purpose in Africa after the summit in Monrovia in 1979 was the detailed discussion that evolved in 1980 at a Summit in Lagos, Nigeria, which later birthed a new African initiative called the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA). Patrick Kimunguyi, asserted that “the LPA provided a more streamlined framework of action towards the achievement of economic integration on the African continent.” African governments devoted themselves to advance economic and social development. Also, were the commitments, geared towards the integration of African economies just so they could promote African productivity and
self-sustained development of the continent. According to Mzukisi Qobo, this plan – The Lagos Plan of Action, envisaged that, through Regional Economic Communities, chronic challenges of poverty and underdevelopment would be eliminated.

According to the Lagos Plan of Action, under food and Agriculture, the plan advocated adopting the following measures:

1. Increase production in food crops, livestock and fisheries
2. Forest production
3. Agricultural Research
4. Agricultural extension services
5. Agricultural Services
6. Harnessing Agricultural resources
7. Implementation and monitoring of all proposed programs

Under industry, the plan advocated for the establishment of the following industries throughout Africa:

(i) ‘food and agro-industries’
(ii) ‘building industries’
(iii) ‘metallurgical industries’
(iv) ‘mechanical industries’
(v) ‘electrical and electronic industries’
(vi) ‘chemical industries’
(vii) ‘forest industries’
(viii) ‘energy industry’

The plan also advocated increasing development in both mineral and human resources with the aim of exporting African human resources to other parts of the globe,
development in transport and communication sector, investing in science and technology, increasing trade and finance, by establishing an African Monetary Fund, African Mutual Guarantee and Solidarity Fund and the strengthening of the African Development Bank. The LPA also drew some modalities for the implementation of the plan in every aspect of the measures adopted and incorporated into the plan.

However, the Lagos Plan of Action, did not see any dramatic success as African leaders have been accused by scholars such as Endalcachew Bayeh and Kumah of just paying lip service to African unity and not showing any practical efforts towards the executing of the LPA. While scholars such as Adebayor Adedeji, think that, some of the recommendations in the LPA have been fully implemented with others not fully implemented, others think otherwise. For instance, according to Adebayor, one remarkable aspect where there has been some considerable success operationalizing the LPA as in institution-building. Although the targets submitted in the Plan have not entirely been met due to financial challenges on the part of member states, yet, a reasonable number of the targets were achieved.

A number of scholars such as Cervenka, Zdenek Siradag, and Abdurrahim, have blamed the failure of African leaders to properly implement the Lagos Plan Action on the many challenges confronting the African Continent. According to these scholars, it is clear that the monumental challenges facing the African continent are the reasons why some of these effective efforts towards uniting Africa for a common purpose such as the Lagos Plan for Action, are not able to achieve their core objectives.

Other efforts towards African unity such as ‘’The African Charter on Human and People’s Rights drafted in 1981, Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPERS) in 1985’’, which was formed to address the rising crisis of the 1980s are also worthy of mentioning.
as far as efforts demonstrated by African leaders to ensure rapid socio-economic development of the African Continent as well as ensuring that Africa is a global player is concerned. However, it is clear that, all these efforts are not entirely sufficient in addressing the numerous socio-economic challenges that have bedeviled the African continent.

2.3 The Abuja Treaty of 1991

Again, as part of efforts to ensure that Africa is united and positioned for a common purpose of continental prosperity and development, in June 1991, the African Economic Community (AEC) was adopted, and what was meant to connote its component was adopted at the next summit in Abuja, Nigeria. This was not so different an initiative, but an updated and corrected edition of the Lagos Plan. This was a very important initiative as it painted a new epoch of reform within the OAU as an institution.

According to Kimunguyi, the Treaty of Abuja came along with a long process that had begun in Monrovia in 1979. He added that, it marked the initial functional reform that was purposely adopted to bring a considerable amount of change. This change was targeted in the dimension of the OAU’s quest to unleash economic cooperation and integration in Africa. The AEC was also a sign of devotion of African states and governments to adopt an economic structure in Africa. The AEC was established for coordinate and harmonize economic cooperation among the various RECs. It became effective since May 1994. Since then, the AEC has been operating closely with sub-regional groups. It has been working with the sub regional groups in search of ways towards achieving its aspirations. Some of the examples of these sub-regional groups in Africa include the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Economic Community of Central
African States and Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community.

The Abuja Treaty to a very large extent did achieve most of its objectives, as it was able to ensure the establishment of the African Economic Community, however, it is obvious, that the Abuja Treaty, is not sufficient to ensure that all Africa countries come together to integrate their economies in the areas of trade and general economic development. There are still several trade barriers and restrictions which pose serious challenges to economic integration and by extension, continental unity and development in Africa.23

2.4 The Sirte Declaration of 1999

African leaders demonstrated another notable effort towards continental unity, on the 9th of September 1999. This happened at the fourth Extraordinary Session of the OAU Assembly of African Heads of State and Government, organized at Sirte, in Libya. The Organization of African Unity adopted a new resolution to undertake certain actions that would be crucial to the economic growth of the African continent. It was resolved at the Sirte Declaration that the following actions should be taken:

- “The establishment of the African Union (AU)”
- “Speed up the implementation of the provisions of the Abuja Treaty, to create an African Economic Community, African Central Bank”
- “Establishment of African Monetary Union”
- “Establishment of African Court of Justice”
- “Establishment of Pan-African Parliament, with the Parliament to be established by 2000”
• ‘‘Prepare a Constitutive Act of the African Union that can be ratified by 31 December 2000 and become effective the following year’’

• ‘‘Give President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria and President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa a mandate to negotiate for the cancellation of the African indebtedness’’

• ‘‘Convene an African Ministerial Conference on security, stability, development and co-operation’’

To a very large extent the Sirte Declaration of 1999 actually achieved almost all of its objectives. However, some of the dates given for the achievement were not met. After the Sirte Declaration was a summit at Lomé, Togo in 2000. It was during this summit that the Constitutive Act of the African Union was fledged. It also here that the plan on how to operationalize African Union was established. In Durban on 9 July 2002, the initial session of the Assembly of the African Union was held. The Pan-African Parliament’s inaugural session was also held in March 2004. However, there was still the need to take other equally important steps towards the realization of African Unity.

2.5 The African Union and NEPAD

African leaders, realizing of the failures of the Organization of African Unity, proposed at the Sirte Declaration of 1999, at the fourth session of the OAU, the formation of a new continental body with a new direction of fostering unity among African countries as well as ensuring economic and social development of the continent. This new continental body was given the name, - African Union (AU). Scholars such as Kimunguyi observed that the failure of the OAU to integrate and unite Africa and the challenges of globalization and marginalization of Africa merely re-activated the call and desire for integration and unity
by transforming the OAU to AU in 2002. As part of giving the African Union a new mandate and direction that was different from the OAU, the African Union adopted a comprehension programme with the name – New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD).

At this juncture, it is also prudent to briefly examine the developmental goals for which NEPAD was adopted. NEPAD had a vision of fundamental policy and governance reforms in African. This was a means to bring about significant development aid from the multilateral and bilateral donors. NEPAD gained an affirmation by African governments. This affirmation translates that, these governments had a role to avert underdevelopment and work towards sustainable development. It established a threshold of about seven percent annual economic growth as an objective towards that end. All these objectives of NEPAD were aimed at ensuring that, Africa becomes a very active global player as far as economic development is concerned.

However, despite the adoption of NEPAD by the African Union, Africa still records daunting developmental drawbacks. Economic growth “is still far below what is needed to meet the millennium development goal (MDG) of reducing poverty by half by the year 2015.” Most states in sub-Saharan Africa for instance, the level of adult literacy “stands well below the developing–country average”. AIDS is taking lives and this negatively affects life expectancy of many Africans. Clearly, Africa is still yet to achieve its long time aim of being recognized as an important global player.

According to United Nations Development Programme UNDP (2011)’s paper on the African Union – one of the main challenges facing the AU is the fact that there are about 54 sovereign states in Africa with a diverse of economic, social policies and languages at different levels.
Ordinarily, each African state has four states as neighbours. Again, 15 African countries are landlocked on the average. Economic integration would translate into small economic units, as they will gain from the scale created by unified markets. Economic integration also seeks to improve resilience by leveraging on comparative advantages to respond to individual vulnerabilities. It is factual that African states trade very little among themselves. This scanty trade among African states could be as a result of geographical balkanization. By 2009, intra-African trade was 10 percent. This is comparatively small with other regions such as North America (22 percent) and Asia (50 percent).

There are several reasons contributing to this meager share of intra-African trade. In accordance with the objectives of the AU, is to avert some of the contributing factors to the undesirable intra African trade. As part of the contributing factors to this challenge in Africa has been a colonial trade system fashioned to take away resources from Africa to Europe. Africa also faces lower diversified economies that produce almost same products. There are also several pending old trade policy reforms. Africa also faces poor intra-African infrastructure network. Last but not the least is a limited access to finance and regional payment mechanisms.

Alemayehu Geda and Haile Kibret identified Poor Private Sector Participation in the integration processes as a very serious challenge for the AU. To the extent that implementation of the objectives and vision of the AU needs a mutual comprehension including both the public and private sector. This also requires a strong believe, and assurance in the private sector to deliver. This will require an active involvement of the private sector more especially and the general public at large on crucial developmental initiatives. This part of the regional integration process in Africa has been tagged as one of the major deficiencies of the initiative. Country level studies in SADC and COMES depicts that, the involvement of the private sector is handicapped by lack of government
resources to aid full participation. Also, when some resource is secured, the participation is limited at the level of the chamber of commerce officials. Moreover, lack of sufficient knowledge to utilize existing information at the level of private sector associations is also noted as great challenge. In an attempt to avert this will require establishing specific government structures. These structures would be tasked to promoting and administering economic integration at a country level (as some countries – Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ghana, and Nigeria and few others have done). This would not only depict devotion of these countries but also improve the efficiency of operationalizing these policies.

Despite all these impressive attempts towards Regional Integration in Africa through the formation of the OAU, the LPA, the APPER, the Abuja Treaty, the Sirte Declaration, the African Union and NEPAD, scholars such as Jaime de Melo and Yvonne Tsikata, indicated that critical issues such as the continent’s size, countries’ sizes, remoteness, uneven distribution of natural resources, and associated rents continue to hinder the set objectives of AU. These critical issues were not conceived in the evaluations of the initial wave of attempts in uniting Africa and enhancing economic growth. Meanwhile the diagnosis of Africa’s lower performance was changing from a discussion of external versus internal challenges towards African continent. It is in this context that “effective regional integration plan, with the aim of uniting all African countries together for a common purpose, has a major role to play in helping African countries address these and other common concerns in the 21st century”. In the light of this, the African Union, in 2013 adopted yet another bold and commendable resolution to implement what it called the - Agenda 2063, with seven aspirations.
2.6 Agenda 2063 of the African Union

As usual, due to the desire of African leaders to respond to contemporary challenges confronting the African continent, coupled with failure of previous policies to achieve certain specific objectives of the African Union, Africa’s political leadership, acknowledging the need for a more positive outlook and to overcome the challenges of the 21st century, in May 2013 rededicated itself to the continent’s socio-economic and political transformation.43 The 21st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU therefore requested the elaboration of a 50-year framework, namely Agenda 2063, founded on the AU vision of “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena.”44 This agenda came very timely when the AU was celebrating the 50 years of the OAU-AU. Agenda 2063 framework was adopted at the 24th Summit of the AU in January 2015. The Framework document is organized into three parts and presented in six chapters as follows:

Part one is “The Vision”, which contains the context, challenges and opportunities for achieving Agenda 2063.45 This constitutes Chapters one to three. Chapter one situates Agenda 2063 in the historical context of Pan Africanism. It also situates African Renaissance and the struggle for self-determination and economic independence.46 Chapter two contains “The Vision and African Aspirations” for 2063 which portrays a detailed picture of where Africa would like to be in 2063 when the continent will be celebrating the centenary of the founding of the OAU. Comprehensive Situational Analysis, as contained in Chapter three, examines the trends, challenges and opportunities in the political, economic, social and cultural fields and highlights key issues to be addressed.47
Part two contains “The Transformation Framework” outlining the Agenda 2063 goals, priority areas, targets and indicative strategies contained in Chapter four while Chapter five presents the critical success factors, risks and mitigating strategies. Chapter five also entails global megatrends likely to impact Africa’s future.  

Finally, part three “Making it Happen” involves implementation, monitoring and evaluation arrangements. It further expatiates financing, communication strategy and capacity for implementation. This is contained in the sixth and final chapter.

African heads of state and government committed themselves to eight key priority areas: “African identity and renaissance, the continued struggle against colonialism and the right to self-determination, continental integration, social and economic development and transformation, peace and security, democratic governance, determining Africa’s destiny, and fostering Africa’s place in the world.” Out of these eight key priority areas came the seven aspirations as contained in Agenda 2063. The seven aspirations are:

1. “A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development”
2. “An integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa’s renaissance”
4. “A peaceful and secure Africa”
5. “An Africa with strong cultural identity, common heritage, values, and ethics”
6. “An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children”.
7. Africa as a strong, united, and influential global player and partner
The aspirations reflect the desire of Africans for prosperity and well-being. It further looks at unity and integration, for a continent whose citizens are free. It incorporates expanded horizons with freedom from conflict and improved human security, for a passionate identity, culture and values, as well as a resilient and influential player on the global stage. This will mean Africa will be making equal and respected contributions to human progress and welfare.52

The objective of Agenda 2063 is to boost Africa’s growth trajectory over the next 50 years, benefiting from lessons learnt over the last 50 years. Agenda 2063 is described as “a global strategy to optimize use of Africa’s resources for the benefits of all Africans”53 and as “an approach to how the continent should effectively learn from lessons of the past, build on the progress now underway and strategically exploit all possible opportunities available in the immediate and medium term, so as to ensure positive socioeconomic transformation within the next 50 years.”54 As both a vision and an action plan, Agenda 2063 vehemently calls for Africa’s “positive socioeconomic transformation.” Agenda 2063’s vision is comprehensive, entailing issues of identity and self-determination. It also looks at political independence, and socio-economic development in a globalized context.55 A major success factor for Agenda 2063 will demand the involvement of multiple stakeholder groups at all stages. This also requires a result-based approach with measurable objectives. These objectives ought to cover the right set of African values in line with the African Renaissance. Again the objectives must suggest the transformation of attitudes, values, and mind sets.56

According to Arowolo, AU Agenda 2063 was envisioned as a driving force for the transformation of Africa by Africans and African institutions.57 He posits that Agenda 2063 seeks to serve as a platform on which Africa will launch its development agenda and
secondly “inspire African countries to continue emphasizing the themes of solidarity and collaboration that helped the continent emerge from colonial domination.”

Bujra argue that Agenda 2063, unlike other policies has a more detailed plan that consist of specific targets, goals and priorities as spelt out in the various aspirations. He posits that, there are challenging goals but they are as well achievable and relevant to the needs of Africa. DeGhetto et al argue that, the main purpose of Agenda 2063 is to secure three ideals. These three ideals are unity, prosperity and peace for all citizens of Africa.

According to the African Union Commission, Agenda 2063 is a product of the “Constitutive Act, the AU vision and the 50th Anniversary solemn declaration.” It seeks to enhance development on the grounds. The Agenda 2063 is expected to unite and integrate Africans to realise their full potential. This is believed to be the panacea through which Africa can be strong, resilient and powerful global player. This study is therefore concerned with the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063 which is aimed at ensuring that Africa is seen “as a strong, united, and influential global player and partner”.
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CHAPTER THREE

CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF THE AFRICAN UNION IN ACHIEVING ASPIRATION SEVEN OF AGENDA 2063

3.0 Introduction

This chapter generally responds to the research questions and addresses the research objectives of the study. The chapter presents and analyzes all the views and opinions obtained from the interviews conducted on the topic under study, as well as secondary data from the literature obtained on the topic under study. Apart from explaining the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063, as well as examining its relevance, the chapter also discusses the challenges and prospects of achieving Agenda 2063 by the African Union.

3.1 Aspiration Seven of the AU Agenda 2063 and its Relevance

Aspiration Seven is one of the seven aspirations of the Agenda 2063, proposed by the African Union, at its 50th anniversary celebration of the OAU, which seeks to make Africa “a strong, united and influential global player and Partner”. There is a lot of relevance for this aspiration, as it is aimed at elevating Africa’s position in the global governance system. This seeks to improve Africa’s relation with the United Nation’s Security Council, financial institutions and global commons such as outer space. At the same time, it seeks to improve Africa’s partnerships and refocusing them more strategically to respond to African priorities. This will unleash growth and transformation, whiles ensuring that the continent has the right strategies to finance its own development and reducing aid dependency.¹

Secondly, Aspiration Seven hopes to fully make Africa adopt the capacity to finance her own development. The priority areas for aspirations seven are the African capital markets
and Fiscal systems more importantly. It also looks at public sector revenue, development assistants and partnership.\textsuperscript{2} In an attempt to achieve Aspiration Seven, African cultural identity, values and ethics will be promoted and strengthened by 2063. African people will also be devoted to a sense of their fundamental cultural unity.\textsuperscript{3} The AU document on Agenda 2063 seeks to use Pan-Africanism as the tool to make Africa a global power. The document further states that, “by 2063, the fruits of the values and ideals of Pan Africanism will be manifest everywhere on the continent and beyond. The goal of the unity of the African people and people of African descent will be attained by 2025, and then Africa will focus on becoming a very influential global player.”\textsuperscript{4}

Again, one significant aspect of the Aspiration Seven lies in the fact that, it would ensure global peace and security. In fact, the argument put forward by proponents of Agenda 2063 in relation to Aspiration Seven is that, Africa by 2063 “will assume its rightful place in assuring global peace and security through its permanent seats on the UN Security Council with all the privileges of permanent membership category, and with a deepened south-south cooperation based on a Common African Foreign Policy. There will be a strengthened African presence in other multilateral platforms such as the IMF and World Bank, as well as on those relating to global and regional security.”\textsuperscript{5}

In addition to this, it is hoped that the African Union will have improved its institutional capacities. This also has the potential to imbue commitments in Africans through increased resource collection and allocation to the work of the organs of the Union. When institutions are strengthened, the Union will readopt the political initiative and realise an improved share in world economy and trade. Aspiration Seven is a lofty idea that will take serious commitments from members of the African union in order for it to be a success.\textsuperscript{6}
However, just as the other previous commendable programs of the African Union, the Aspiration Seven and all the aspirations of the Agenda 2063 of the African Union would have to swim through a pool of monumental challenges before they can be achieved. In other words, there are a lot of challenges confronting the African Union in realizing its aim of becoming a global player in a very competitive world. These challenges though are not entirely new, but have assumed new twists and dynamism as far as the 21st century is concerned. This mean that, Africa would have to defeat or at least significantly combat these challenges before it can dream of achieving its aspiration of becoming a global player.

3.2 Challenges of the African Union in Meeting Aspiration Seven

It is clear that the 7th aspiration of Agenda 2063 is full of lofty ideals which need committed members of the union to become a success. There is no denying of the fact that the African’s quest to become an influential global player, by commanding respect and recognition in the international fora is faced with a lot of challenges. Scholars such as Marauping, argue that, the challenging global phenomenon relating to global commodities, impacts negatively on the economic growth of individual African countries and the collective progress of the African union. He posits that “extreme climatic conditions in the form of prolonged severe drought and destructive floods adversely affected most of Africa.” He further states that, strengthening of some major currencies exacerbated external indebtedness and generated inflationary pressures in a number of African countries. He conclude by arguing that all these emerging challenges of Agenda 2063 which was originally meant to guide development over the next fifty years is now turning out to be a timely vessel for Africa to navigate complex global dynamics. It is therefore necessary for the African Union to stand up and combat most of its pressing, if not all of its challenges in order to realize its dream of being regarded as an important global player.
This section of the study therefore examines some of the challenges that may hinder the achievement of Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063. The challenges facing the African Union in these respects are both internal and external. But they are categorized in this chapter as political, economic and social, for the sake of convenience and clarity.

3.2.1 Economic Challenges of the Aspiration Seven

Economically, it is highly undisputable that, for the African Union to become an influential global player by 2063, it would have to be economically strong. This means that, the African Union would have to defeat its serious economic challenges that this area is currently facing.

In an interview with Dr. Yao Graham, he bemoaned the fact that Africa is not economically united enough to befit the status of a global player especially in the midst of major global players such as the United Nations, the European Union, World Trade Organization, USA, China, Great & or G7. Dr. Graham stated that:

*In the argument as to how Africa can be a strong global player, will mean a look at how Africa can collectively be a part of these powerful global players. So that, Africa seeks to be head to head with these global powers per aspiration 7 of Agenda 2063. When issues with the international political economy or global economic markets are negotiated holistically by other countries coming together as a union, Africa is seen mostly representing in single states. Africa needs to have a strong Continental Trade Agreement, with a common external tariffs, custom union, rules in negotiation deals as mechanism to face the drive of being a strong global player.*

Dr. Graham’s views are in tandem with the views of scholars such as Marauping, and Asante. For instance, Marauping, observed that, the current global market structure of which Africa is mainly a supplier of raw materials and an importer of finished goods will pose serious challenges to its economic fortunes and revenue generation. This will in turn affect member state’s ability to pay their dues to the African Union which is already in dire need of financial power. Majority of the member states of the African Union still rely
heavily on Europe and America as well as Asia in order to finance their national budgets. There are other related economic challenges such as poor inter and intra state trade within the African Union, as result of trade restriction and poor economic policies and programs that can deliver the continent from the conundrum of economic crisis. For instance, Asante argued that, “the present fragmentation and small African markets emanates from the specific political and economic conditions in which the continent found itself at independence.”12 Many of the states in Africa are small in size and in population and this in turn meant that, there were going to be small markets and economies thereby translating into poor income generations.

Domestic production for such small markets in Africa ends up with relatively high cost. In the absence of a larger market “that could be created by measures of economic integration, it is impossible to see how the economies of these small countries could be developed and diversified.”13 Asante further argued that, “trade and services becomes a feature of the regional integration model when the stage of the common market is reached, yet to date services have received very little attention in formal African integration arrangements”.14

These are definitely very serious economic challenge that the African Union must overcome, as far as its aspiration to become an influential global player by 2063 is concerned.

Again, the economic challenge as well as similar issues has also been raised by Prof. Kwame Boafo-Arthur, who indicated in an interview with him that:

*It isn’t new news that Africa is mostly marginalized when it comes to Africa’s role as a global partner because, what African countries bring to the table when they go for negotiations. Africans must negotiate from a position of strength and not negotiate from a position of weakness. Almost all African countries are depended on foreign hand-outs, especially for budgetary support, and this translates to why Africa has no voice in global negotiations. Africa should rebrand their national initiatives with domestic funding and not be scared of funding their own projects and initiatives.*
Africa needs to add creativity to finding domestic funds and not perceive it as not possible to do. This may include positive and efficient management of national resources, so we can cut certain dependency traits, and fulfil certain peripheral issues that can be done domestically without going cup in hand.15

This clearly falls in line with the argument put forth by scholars such as Fabrizio Carmignani and Abdur Chowdhury, that “between 1960 and 2008, Sub-Saharan Africa had been characterized by a weak growth performance and a high and persistent dependence on natural resources”. The two scholars described how during this period, per capita Gross Domestic Product in Africa grew at “an average annual rate of 0.74%” the lowest across the globe. Sub-Saharan African economic growth achievements are not encouraging. In the year 2003, sixteen countries recorded an average economic growth rate of three percent, sixteen countries achieved growth of 3-5% and eighteen countries more than 5%. The meaning of this statistics meant that, with the per capita growth rate being between 0-2% per annum, there is limited improvement in poverty reduction.16

Africa’s export sector has also continued to decline, as the continent still rely heavily on the exportation of raw materials. For instance, it has been reported by Fabrizio Carmignani and Abdur Chowdhury, that, for over 50 years after independence, “the ratio of natural resource exports to total merchandise exports in Sub-Saharan Africa has only marginally declined from an initial 77% to the current 65.1%. The organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development argues that, economic reliance on very few export commodities, that is, primary commodities represents more than 80% of Africa’s total exports in recent years. Such high dependence on commodities creates severe constraints on growth due to commodity price volatility, a factor which is external to these countries and beyond.17 On average, only about 10% to 12% of African trade takes place amongst African nations.18 In agriculture, not much has been achieved in the setting up of sub-regional food security systems. Much has also not been achieved in African Food Relief
Support Scheme, which is intended to help member countries in times of food shortage. Less attention is given to emerging sustainability threats and this is dangerous because, it intend cripples almost every aspect of the continents development, examples being food security, health, industrialization and many among others.

The impacts of the economic challenge on achieving unity and being a strong global partner in Africa can be felt in the payment of dues by AU member states. According to Moshi, some member states are unable to pay their AU dues, some are unable to make complete payments, thus leaving debt.\textsuperscript{19} Again, the AU is indebted because it accrued huge debt from the OAU right from the beginning. The continuous indebtedness and financial crisis in the AU makes it very challenging, if not impossible, to productively increase its strength so as to act not only effectively, but most efficiently.\textsuperscript{20} To fund its activities, the AU has for some time now depended heavily on external sources of funding as a result of this deficiency. This hinder the continent as far as Aspiration Seven of the AU Agenda 2063 is concerned.\textsuperscript{21}

This directly counteracts the role of the union, more specifically in the area of its relationship with external bodies.\textsuperscript{22} This explains why most of the AU’s initiatives are funded by external donors especial in the peace and security architecture. This is a challenge because; it will cripple the AU as it continues to depend on external donors for a sensitive sector of the continent like security. Also, our quest to become a strong global player becomes weakened because; this creates room for donors to instruct AU on how their resources should be used.

\textbf{3.2.2 Political Challenges of Aspiration Seven}

Some of the challenges confronting the achievement of Aspiration Seven of the AU’s Agenda 2063, are politically inclined. Ranging from lack of full political commitment, to fear of loss of sovereignty and bad politics in terms of weak institutions and policies. For
instance, in an interview with Dr Rosina Foli, she indicated the fact that, in the early years of independence, the African continent was a very active player due to the able and strong political commitment portrayed by leaders like Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania. According to Dr. Rosina Foli:

Comparatively, Africa has had global influence in history (about 50 years ago) especially in the era of Dr Kwame Nkurumah and Nyeyere than contemporary times. Africa’s continental unity is being a mirage, partly because of the increase difference in the thinking of what constitutes African politics among various member states in the AU and this has affected the continents negotiation power on the international scene. Unlike African leaders in history, leaders now have myopic view of continental unity towards a strong global player and there is also, low selflessness among our leaders now, which all together pose as a threat to our strength as a global partner. In as much as Africa thrives to be resilient as a global player, certain policies, institutions, or structures that are brought outside of Africa should be redefined to fit better in the context of Africa and not accept it, just as it is, all in the name of being globally competitive. Democracy for instance in Africa is going through stages and it is getting better, but could be rebranded to fit in the context of Africa.23

Her argument is in line with scholars such as Lanre olu-Adeyemi and Bonnie Ayodele, who see lack of political commitment on the part of African political leaders as a serious challenge to achieving a very solid continental unity, especially one that would put Africa on the global map as a major international player.24

Also, an interview with Dr. Charles Amo Agyemang, reveals that, weak institutions and weak policies as well as selfishness among the leadership of Africa pose a major threat to the Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063 of the Africa, Union. According to him:

Another challenge of this aspiration is weak institutions in the AU, the weak security apparatus of the AU; where all they can do is to issue a communique making ‘the barking of AU somewhat louder than its bite’. There is also the fear of smaller states with less resources benefitting more than their counterparts in the AU, this is making economic unification very difficult. Unless Africa begin to have selfless leaders who regardless of how much they have, volunteer to lead the unity drive and pull along other small states, economic unity is going to be hard. Africa needs to stop over emphasizing on its woes and look forward on its potentials 25
Weak institutions has led to weak policies towards internal crisis in Africa. This poses a huge threat to the continent’s development, as Africa is unable to achieve substantive improvement and unity as a result of the prevalence of unending threats to humanity. The rise of conflicts in Africa is posing a threat against the continent’s efforts towards human security. Most of these conflicts are as a result of diminishing resources partly because of high population and emergence of anthropocene, poverty, inequality, unemployment and bad governance among others. Countries like Nigeria, Liberia, Chad, Niger, Congo, Uganda, Sudan Burundi, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Rwanda and Cote d’Ivoire have history of conflicts in Africa in this regard. However, for some countries like Ghana which is considered peaceful, still has tags of inter-tribal and inter-ethnic conflicts.

The phase of conflicts in Africa includes both civil wars and interstate wars. It is very crucial to note the unpleasant fact that, there has been the use of women and children in the operationalization of such wars and this has been very disturbing. These are children are mostly termed as “child-soldiers”. A huge number of these child soldiers recruitment has taken place in countries like Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Burundi, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan and so on, where most often these children are recruited as soldiers through force. A worst offender of this crime is Sierra Leone, where mostly kids of below nine years were recruited as rebels by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) forces in 1999. The records has it that, huge number of civilians were killed, whist other victims were disabled. Also, a lot of women were victims of rape not only by adults but also by these child soldiers. Though the African Union has not been adamant about these issues and has spent huge sum of money in managing these conflicts, it has not been able to fulfill a desirable peace because of the intransigent positions used by most of these groups in the conflict.
The continent of Africa still suffers from violence caused by tribal, ethnic and religious groups. The AU, which has the power to intervene in such threats, has not been able to manage these tensions under desirable control. Example of such threats are those that happened in South Sudan and also, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Adding to the above mentioned examples of threats include threats by terrorists groups like Al-Shabab, Boko Haram, the Lord’s Resistance Army, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and so on. In all, the African Union has been lambasted for acting very slowly in intervening in of such conflicts in Africa. Especially, in Central African Republic, the AU’s effort was considered as a failure. This failure could partly be as a result of the limited resources of the African Standby Force as at 2010.

Furthermore, anthropocene denotes the current geological epoch, viewed as a period which describes human activities that pose as dominant effects on climate and the environment at large. This is a major contributor to the adverse changes in weather patterns across the globe. As population increases natural resources keep diminishing and this has a major threat on humanity. Pressures from anthropocene is said to cause for instance water wars, and it is pathetic to note that, there are water war spots already in Africa in areas like Ethiopia, Egypt, Angola, Namibia as well as Sudan which is documented a full scale war that is based on water stress in contemporary times. In fact, water resources are under high pressure from the activities of man. It is vital that, African heads do make prudent policies that will focus on securing quantity and quality water sources for domestic and industrial use in other to eliminate the spark of any future water related conflicts thereof. This is because, water in Africa is growing less and so far as human beings continue to live, this is, and this shall continue to become a major threat in future if climate change policies are not domesticated in the national policies of AU member states national policies. African states are still exposed to insecurities against its peace, not only from elections, but now
with poor managements of resource sustainability. As such, there should be political awakening for a united defense and security mechanisms in response to any future conflict that may threaten the peace of Africa. It is, therefore clear that, Aspiration Seven of the Agenda, 2063, will only be achieved if all these issues in the political arena of African countries are solved or addressed, so as to make Africa an influential global player.

3.2.3 Socio-Cultural Challenges of Aspiration Seven

The issue of identity crisis in Africa transcends the African cultural entity that is so much divided along colonial and ethnic terms. This division is portrayed along the lines of colonization exemplified by France, Britain, and Portugal. Africans perceived themselves as different with such different colonial backgrounds. Socio-cultural divisions on such lines makes it rather difficult to achieve a cooperative African culture. Another socio-cultural integration challenge is how the continent is made up of diverse ethnic groupings. This is indeed problematic because, for continental unity to prevail, it should be devoid of people identifying massively or more with their ethnic backgrounds rather than as Africans.

There are a lot of socio-cultural challenges that might impede the realization of Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063. These challenges are in the areas of language barrier, poor transportation network, lack of common identity and others. Though, this Agenda intend employing Pan-Africanism as a part of the techniques in achieving this aspiration, there is so much contestations with regards to Pan-Africanism itself in this generation. Whiles some scholars assume the Pan-Africanist movement and ideology has outlived its usefulness, others assume it is still relevant in this era. Pan-Africanism seeks to restore the identity of Africans; meanwhile, what constitutes the African identity itself is in a dilemma. The African brand is mainly of the African culture, yet, heritage and cultural issues are relegated and tainted with archaism. Meanwhile, as a continent that has scarce
sources of income, culture and heritage, if well branded could accrue much income for economic growth. In an interview with Mr. Gmayi Nsuiban Williams, he indicated that culturally, the major challenge in obtaining unity in Africa is the lack of interest in upholding the heritage of the African continent. He stated that:

*Challenges of Cultural Unity in Africa include the fact that, Africa expresses abysmal interest in heritage issues and heritage institutions in Africa. African also faces what is known as identity crisis, where as a continent, we do not know what exactly our identity is. Who is an African, is slowly fading out and as such we are unable to even leverage on our heritage. Africa has a unique cultural component with the potential of making Africa a strong global player but the challenge is how to leverage on the available cultural potentials.*

This position supports strongly the views of scholars such as Muchie, who observed strongly that the prevalence in cultural division contributes to the challenges to develop a dynamic and unified African culture, posing a serious challenge to the achievement of Aspiration Seven.

Another important social challenge in the quest for the African union to meet Aspiration even is in the area of infrastructural development, especially in the transportation sector.

According to scholars such as Hartzenberg, “Shipping a car from Japan to Abidjan costs US$1500 (including insurance); shipping that same car from Addis Ababa to Abidjan would cost US$5000.” Many transport systems with road, air, and rail networks remain highly unconnected in Africa. However, there is cost inefficiency and low level of competition in air transport in Africa more specifically. This is partly because of weak regulatory policies in air transports in Africa. The high cost and undependability of “transport services contribute to a high-cost business environment in which firms are forced to keep higher levels of inventories, which means that cost-saving management systems of just in time production cannot be used.” This situation has resulted in Africa
attracting less than two percent (2%) of global Foreign Direct Investment. This obviously is a threat directly or indirectly to investment in Africa, especially in tourism and hospitality. Africa’s culture in terms of cuisine, music, clothing and many others could be well branded in a globally competitive manner, but are retrogressed with infrastructural deficiencies such as poor transportation and energy.

Clearly, this means that, for Africa to become an influential global player in a very sophisticated world in contemporary times, the continent would have to overcome its infrastructural deficit and rapidly develop its transportation and communication sectors to meet global standards so as to be able to effectively compete with its global rivals, such as the EU.

3.2.4 Other Challenges Impeding the Achievement of Aspiration Seven

There are other serious challenges that confront the African Union, making it very difficult for it to properly position itself for the realization of Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063.

For instance, in an interview with His Excellency Former President John Agyekum Kuffuor – Former Chairman of the African Union and Former President of the Republic of Ghana, mentioned among other things, the fact that many African countries are still in close contact with their former colonial masters and depend so much on them for their survival that, it is very difficult for them to independently take collective decisions with their fellow African countries, which would lead to the realization of Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063.

According to him:

*It is not all African states that have been able to break from the umbilical cord of their colonial masters and this has brought about conflict of interest. African countries are battling with continental, domestic and colonial interests in their respective governance. Most African countries trade and seek supports from their colonial masters in a more robust manner. For some governments, their entire survival depends on colonial*
master’s supports, making this aspiration hard to be implemented as a continent.\textsuperscript{31}

The view of former president John Agyekum Kuffour has been supported sufficiently by the literature, especially in the works of scholars such as Adeniran, Adebusuyi, Asante S.K.B, Hanink, Dean and Henry Owusu. For example, Adeniran Adebusuyi, in analyzing some of the challenges facing the Economic Community of West Africa, complained about the fact that, African countries are still divided in the lines of Anglophone and Francophone factions, which is an explicit reflection of their ties with former colonial masters.\textsuperscript{32} This actually hampers Africa’s desire to collectively work towards the realization of Agenda 2063, especially the Aspiration Seven.

Interestingly, the views of former President John Kuffour were supported and almost repeated by Sabastian Beliwine, the Acting Director of the African Bureau – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration), who during an interview with him, also bemoaned the strong ties that still exist between some African countries and their former colonial masters to the extent that, it is very difficult for them to throw their weight fully behind the success of the African Union. According to Mr. Beliwine:

\textit{Most African countries though independent, are still not self-reliant and are still relying on their colonial masters to operationalize most of their developmental policies and as such, their colonial masters are able to influence them than the AU. This has led to domination over the sovereignties of African countries by European countries, which creates little room for African states to look inward in Africa, in building on our competitiveness as a global player. This has made attaining one voice as a continent very challenging eg the ACP EU post Cotonou agreement will expire in 2020 and there is a need to restructure the agreement, the gaps now among the views of the various sub regions in Africa is not of a united voice (the North Africa, South Africa, ECOWAS, all have their different arrangements with the EU, meanwhile the EU is requiring a common African position} \textsuperscript{33}

The opinion of Mr. Beliwine, is also in line with scholars like Hanink, Dean and Henry Owusu, who wrote on the opportunities and challenges facing ECOWAS in promoting
trade among its member states, and pointed out the fact that, one major challenge still facing regional unity in Africa is the unregulated relationship between African countries and their colonial masters.\textsuperscript{34}

Again, in an interview with Ambassador Albert Yankey, the Chief Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, he also mentioned a lot of issues that confront the African Union in its bid to become an influential global player. Mr. Yankey believes that the challenges are multifaceted with the main ones being, funding, the attitude of African leaders wanting to be in power forever and constitutional differences among African countries.

According to him:

\textit{Some of the challenges in Africa that inspired the adoption of this aspiration could be unemployment, conflicts, xenophobia etc. Implementing such initiatives requires a second look at funding, scanning the political environment in Africa, our constitutional differences, such that some African countries are trying to massage their constitutions to go for extra terms though it is not democratic. Instances to this effect include, Compaore had to be looted out, the Togo crisis, the president of Cote d’Ivoire Alassane Ouattara trying to go for a third term, the Gambian crisis all depicts the insurgencies with tempering constitutional demands on elections. The weight of the AU’s Legal instruments, the AU’s power to apply sanctions must be strengthened such that with AU, unconstitutional change of government renders a member state strictly suspended like the case of Egypt.}\textsuperscript{35}

This clearly, is a call for the application of sanctions to defiant members of the African Union who commit acts that would be very detrimental to the general progress of the African Union.

It also represents a strong expression of the desire to strengthen the judicial wing of the African Union and cloth it with more powers in such a way that it would be able to effectively control the behaviour of member states, so that the realization of Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063 would be a reality.
3.3 Successes of the African Union

The birth of the AU saw the organization engaging the international community on ways to minimize conflict in the region's hotbeds such as Sudan. Post-election violence is an undesirable menace that incessantly bedevils the continent, and in some cases the AU has played a major role in resolving things. The role of the AU in resolving post-election violence in Kenya and Ivory Coast is something that is worth mentioning. The AU has the authority through decisions of its Peace and Security Council to intervene in member states to promote peace and protect democracy, including deploying military force in situations in which genocide and crimes against humanity are being committed.

Again, one success of the AU is its Peer Review Mechanism. The AU’s unique voluntary ‘Peer Review Mechanism’ by which individual member states agree to be assessed by a team of experts drawn from other states is designed to encourage democracy and good governance. AU observer missions are now sent as a matter of routine to cover elections in all member states, in accordance with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (2007). Indeed the AU has numerous challenges in its quest to build African unity. However, to an extent it has been quite evolving in fostering integration and unity in Africa, thus making substantive efforts to eliminate insurgencies, terrorism and tensions on the continent. It has also elevated and fortified democracy on the continent of Africa. For instance, structures have been put in place to curb corruption and strengthened accountability and transparency amongst African leaders. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is one of the frameworks that the African Union has established to evaluate member states in aspects of their progress and downfalls in a wide array of governance. In other to make sure the APRM survives, African political leaders are expected to indulge themselves voluntarily in APRM for public evaluation. The the UN Security Council has applauded the AU in its conscious efforts to curb and eliminate
undemocratic practices in Africa. Again, the AU is expected to be a union that is economically, socially and politically self-reliant with strong structures adopted to achieve continental unity in Africa.

Furthermore, in the area of peace-keeping missions, the African Union has choked some successes; The AU has actually stretched itself in pursuit of peace. In Somalia, the AU’s deployment mission co-ordinates more than 20 000 troops from various countries. In the case of Somalia, the African Union Mission to Somalia, or AMISOM, has made remarkable progress against the radical Islamist group al Shabaab, which it has managed to expel from numerous cities that were under its control, but have not yet been able to end the terrorist threat.

As facts stood in January 2017, the AU Commission provided (and still provides) strategic, political, technical, and planning support to operations authorized by the Peace and Security Council and carried out by regional coalitions of Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), or Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RMs). Such support included (and still includes): The Regional Cooperation Initiative against the Lord’s Resistance Army (RCI-LRA) and the operation against Boko Haram undertaken by the Lake Chad Basin Commission and Benin- the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF).

Again, one outstanding success is the African Union’s relationship with international development partners to foster economic development in the continent. The AU now pays more attention to international development cooperation and relationship with international partners than has hitherto been the case. This is most obvious in the case of China’s ever growing presence in Africa, which the AU appears to regard as a positive factor. The headquarters of the AU is now housed in a magnificent multi-million dollar complex in
Addis Ababa that has been provided by the China as a “gift to Africa”. Africa’s traditional partners in the West tend to view its relationship with China with some concern and skepticism regarding motive and outcome.  

All these efforts, coupled with other notable achievements, constitute the success stories of the African Union since its formation. There are still a lot of hope that the African Union would cloak a lot of successes in the coming years, especially of the fact that, the Agenda 2063 and its accompanying aspirations that have been adopted as well as the glaring prospects of achieving these aspirations.

3.4 Prospects of African Union achieving Aspiration Seven

Despite the numerous challenges facing the African Union, the fact that there are several prospects of achieving the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda, 2063, cannot be disputed. The African continent is blessed with a lot of resources both human and mineral, in such a way that it cannot be ignored in global space. Scholars like Geert Laporte and James Mackie, have described how the African continent through the African union as a pan-African institution, has come out in the back of confronting diverse global and continental challenges since the start of the new millennium to unite Africa in the complexity of big tasks, and “heavy and ambitious agenda that includes, amongst others, peace and security, trade liberalization, food security, the sustainable use of natural resources and energy, climate change and migration”. Therefore, taking a critical look at various aspects such as, the economy, socio-cultural environment, political and others, it is clear that the prospects of the African Union, becoming an influential player in the international scene are very bright and promising.
3.4.1 Economic Prospects of Achieving Aspiration Seven

According to Criss Coons, Economic development in Africa has risen dramatically in recent years. However, the Africa’s huge economic potential has not yet been fully utilized.

According to him, for about a past decade, Africa has been counted part of six of the 10 fastest-growing economies in the world including China, UK, Japan and others. According to the International Monetary Fund, 2014 report, the region of Africa is on track to grow rapidly and the World Bank has noted that Africa could be “on the brink of an economic takeoff, much like China was 30 years ago and India 20 years ago.” From 2001 to 2011 there has been a growth in exports of over 200 percent as well as a growth in imports of 250 percent in Africa. This indicates how trade between Africa and the entire world has tripled in the last decade. All these are very positive signs that, the economic prospects of Africa are bright, and this is very critical in the realization of Aspiration Seven, of Agenda 2063.

In an interview with Mr Seth Osei –Akoto, the Acting Director of Crops services of the ministry of Food and Agriculture, he indicated clearly that:

*Ensuring Africa as a strong global player will mean identifying a domestic source of income in Africa by leveraging on our comparative advantages like agriculture. He added that, African countries do not only have to accept wholly the technologies and its knowhow from external source all in an attempt to improve our agriculture. This is because of Africa’s geographical differences from the west. There is lots of time; these technologies borrowed do not better fit in the African system. Borrowing everything about agriculture into Africa has the tendency of collapsing local markets but rather, Africa must build on the agricultural components and potentials in Africa to suit the African market. Technologies should be built for instance, to suit the geography of Africa, and this will elevate Africa from our depending syndrome on raw agriculture products.*
This means that, the agricultural sector still remains a very promising sector for Africa’s economic development which is also very crucial to the achievement of Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063 of the African Union.

Again, in an interview with Mr. Daniel Mensah, a Senior Agriculture Officer at Crops Services of the Ministry of Food And Agriculture, Ghana, he decried the fact that Agriculture is said to employ about 65 percent of the African population yet, the continent is not a strong global partner in farm produce in general. However, he was highly optimistic that, in as much as Africa desires to be a strong global player, the continent should factor in strongly, and how to elevate its production as far as agriculture is concerned.

According to him:

*This could be done through transforming our land tenure systems, creating market opportunities for farm produce, implementing climate change policies, coordination and strengthening of agricultural institutions and many among others. Other agricultural development initiatives like the CAADP has been able to improve on variety development, food processing, increase in the use of technology in farming and so on. However, there are more to be done in adopting market led approach to contribute to the African economy. In responding to partnership between African countries to other countries to develop the Agricultural sector, emphasis should be based on leveraging on qualities that Africa lacks and base the partnership on how to build on the potentials that lies in Africa, other than bringing into, what could be gained domestically. Some of the challenges that the agriculture sector in Africa face includes stigma to local produce, poor marketing, low production level, cost of products, funding, resources to translate agricultural knowledge into something tangible. African leaders must commit and prioritize the agriculture sector to unleash its potentials into the African Economy, to contribute to our global competitiveness in terms of agriculture.*

This obviously shows that the prospects of the AU in achieving the Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063 are very rooted in the improvement of the Agricultural sector in Africa. This is possible when the African continent is able to produce a lot of food that can feed its teeming population and remain surplus for exportation after adding value to many of its
agricultural products. Hence the prospects of realizing Aspiration Seven of agenda, 2063 remain bright.

3.4.2 Socio-Cultural Prospects of AU in Achieving Aspiration Seven

There are a lot of prospects for achieving cultural unification in Africa, as Africans can adopt one language such as Swahili, as the official African language for business and communications so as to be outstanding like the Arab nations. What connotes the identity of Africa could be further economically be rebranded for developments. Africa has got one of the world’s unique cultures in terms of both tangible and intangible aspects of our lives. This could be well packaged for foreign investments. Unity ones again needs to be strengthened in this sector to establish a dynamic and diverse social integration that attracts the world for more economic gains. In an interview with professor Ing. H.N.A. Wellington on the socio-cultural integration of African he stated that:

*I believe that the potential of Africa to positively influence the socio-cultural scenarios in the world can be found in diverse ways like:

- Traditional African sense of the family, and community to avert the negative impact of the human society and the consequences of IT and technological advancement, which are leading to making the world inhuman.
- African position against gayism is crucial to the survival of the human race on earth and decisions on such sensitive issues needs to be tackled with what is really African in such issues, taking into consideration modern global trends that are relevant to the African culture, yet not archaic against humanity.
- African drum culture – the colourfulness and glory of especially the kente cloth has been worn in the UN General Assembly auditorium. This is even at the moment where very little has been done with African fashion branding. Cultures and heritage shouldn’t be left out in attempts of tapping into the resources of Africa towards global competitiveness.*

All of these among others go a long way to validate the fact that, there are a lot of prospects for achieving cultural unification of the African continent.
3.4.3 Other Prospects of Achieving Aspiration Seven

There are other factors apart from the aforementioned areas, which go a long way to indicate the extent to which the prospects of the African Union, achieving the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063 are bright and promising. These factors include the external partnerships and relations that the African Union is building with the outside world, so as to effectively galvanize its influence in the global space. According to Geert Laporte and James Mackie, “in addition to engaging in major internal reforms, the AU governance institutions are seeking to broaden and deepen their relations with the international community”.\textsuperscript{42} The two scholars described how in recent years, “traditional AU partners such as the European Union (EU) have placed a great deal of emphasis on renewing and strengthening the partnership and on supporting AU capacities and institutions”.\textsuperscript{43} Programs such as the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) shows interest on the part of both Unions to establish uniquely, a new type of partnership. It is clear that, since this is going to be long-term initiative for continent-to-continent partnership, the JAES, in connection with other EU and European Commission support programmes, is endowed with numerous potentials of being a channel for strengthening the AU’s institutional structure. This is very positive especially in the realization of Aspiration Seven of agenda, 2063.

Again, in an interview with Former President Jerry John Rawlings, he indicated the fact that, the prospects of the Aspiration Seven are very green, but the African union needs to sit up and implement very pragmatic policies to that effect.

\textit{Until we build stronger regional bodies to move into an industrial zone to be able to export the more and develop our economies, we will still be under these external influences and this aspiration will forever be a dream. Also, as individual countries what is our policy in the framework of this agenda? For instance, when it comes to food security, gender equality, environmental security and climate change issues there should be that
consciousness to inculcate into our domestic policies, such global concerns which affect Africa too. The prospects of this aspiration are very green but until individual countries and various stakeholders perceive this agenda as a bible or the golden principle in all decentralized areas of member states, it will be hard to achieve this aspiration.\textsuperscript{44}

In fact, this has been confirmed by the literature when scholars like, Geert Laporte and James Mackie, have also indicated how in Africa’s drive to pose as an influential in the global space, the AU is no longer going to lay all of its hopes unto European supports. According to them, factors such as “the election of President Obama in the USA and the emergence of new global players such as Brazil, Russia, India, and China are affecting the traditionally privileged African relationship with the EU”.\textsuperscript{45} They observed interestingly, that “in only a short period of time, China has become Africa's third biggest commercial partner and investor”.\textsuperscript{46} It is therefore undisputable, that the rise in the level of options for Africa, has renewed the self-confidence of African leaders and the AU as a whole. Both old and new partners of Africa seem to show the desire to play dominant roles in Africa and to help strengthen the capacities of the AU institutions. Therefore, the onus lies on the AU to be rational in dealing with its partners. The African Union is therefore concerned with the issue of how to ensure that, traditional and new partners holistically support in promoting peace and stability in Africa. This should be coupled with interest in food security, good governance and proactive management of natural resources and infrastructure so as to unleash greater prosperity for Africa. This does not only demonstrate the extent to which the African Union is making significant progress in partnering with the relevant global players, so as to make a point in the international fora, but it also goes a long way to indicate the extent to which the prospects of achieving Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063, are very bright and promising.
3.5 Conclusion

It is clear, that, despite the many challenges that the African Union is facing, such as, poor economic development and growth, geographical fragmentations, poor infrastructural growth, lack of political commitment and fear of loss of sovereignty, cultural issues such as language barrier and divided identity, high population growth and more, it is undoubtedly obvious that the prospects of realizing Africa’s quest to become a strong global player are very bright. For instance, Asante succinctly puts these impediments as those emanating from national and regional levels emphasizing among other things,

“the lack of commitment of African ruling classes to regionalism is as a strategy to development: the equally lack of adequate and viable institutions; the meagre financial resources; inadequate staffing both qualitatively and quantitatively; and finally, the limited role of the private sector and interests groups all constitute major issues that the African Union must deal with.”

To become a global power means that African Union must have a strong economic leverage in the world of commerce and can therefore be an influential global player and partner. And the prospects are very promising; there is more hope that the African continent would become a very resilient, strong and influential global player in the near future.
Endnotes

1 Africa Union, “Agenda 2063, the Africa we want.” 2nd edition. 2014
2 ibid
3 ibid
4 ibid
5 ibid
6 ibid
8 ibid, p. 3
9 ibid
10 ibid, p. 4
11 An Interview with Dr. Yao Graham
13 ibid
15 An Interview with Prof. Kwame Boafo-Arthur
18 ibid
20 ibid
21 ibid
23 An Interview with Dr. Rosina Foli
25 An Interview with Dr Charles Amo Agyemang
26 An Interview with Mr. Gmayi Nsuiban Williams
28 Hartzenberg, T. Op cit.
31 An Interview with Former President John Agyekum Kuffour – former chairman of the African Union and former president of the republic of Ghana.
33 An Interview with Mr. Sebastian Beliwine, the Acting Director of the African Bureau – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration,
35 An Interview with Ambassador Albert Yankey, the chief director of Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration
36 ibid
Chris Coons: Embracing Africa’s Economic Potential Recommendations for Strengthening Trade Relationships Between the United States and Sub-saharan AFRICA. March 7, 2013

38 Ibid
39 An Interview with Mr. Seth Osei Akoto
40 An Interview with Mr. Daniel Mensah
42 Ibid
43 An interview with Former president Jerry John Rawlings, former president of the republic of Ghana
CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of all the findings of the study and the conclusion as well. The chapter also demonstrates the extent to which the hypothesis of the study has been confirmed or proven otherwise. The chapter first of all presents brief findings with regards to the meaning and scope of Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063 as set out by the African Union. The chapter also summarizes briefly the findings of the study with regards to the relevance of the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063, as set out by the African Union.

The chapter also makes clear the findings of the study with regards to major challenges confronting the African Union in its bid to realize or achieve Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063 of the African Union. The chapter also indicates the findings of the study with regards to the prospects of the African Union in achieving the Aspiration Seven of the.

This section of the study also makes various deductions and conclusions generally on the topic under study, especially with regards to the quest of the African Union to become an influential global player. The chapter does this by vividly stating the various research findings that can be drawn from all the information, data and new knowledge gotten from the research. The chapter therefore demonstrates the extent to which the research objectives have been met and the research questions answered. The chapter then ends by not only proffering certain recommendations which in the view of the researcher, are worth adopting, but it also ends by pointing out the areas of the topic under study that deserves further research in any future research.
4.1 Summary of Findings

This research was conducted on the African Union and its quest of becoming a global player. The study specifically examined Agenda 2063 program of the African Union with a special focus on Aspiration Seven of the agenda. The study was designed with the goal of not only obtaining relevant insight of Agenda 2063 of the African Union, but also to critically examine some of the impediments on the way of the African Union in its bid to achieve Aspiration Seven of the agenda. The research recognizes the importance of the African Union being recognized by the international community as an influential global player. The study therefore reviewed relevant literature on challenges and prospects of the African Union in obtaining continental unity in all facets of things. As a result of the realization of the fact that there is a limited body of existing knowledge on the subject under study, revealed in the literature review, the study found it imperative to conduct interviews that would not only add new knowledge to the limited body of literature as far as Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063 is concerned, but would also serve as a the primary data from which this study could make logical and comprehensive deductions and conclusions, giving credibility to the research.

As a guide to conducting this research, some research objectives were set out in the beginning of this study, plus their corresponding research questions which served as a guide to the researcher. Some of the specific research objectives that this study aimed at achieving include; to examine the relevance of Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063; to look at the challenges confronting the African Union in achieving the Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063, and to assess the prospects of the African Union in achieving Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063. Various specific and general findings were made in respect to each of the above stated research objectives.
In respect of the first objective, which was to examine the relevance of Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063, the study found out that, Aspiration Seven aims at improving Africa’s place in the international system for as it seeks to make Africa, a strong, resilient, united and an influential global player. This is very relevant in the since that, it would put Africa in the global map of world powers of non-state actors, which Africa badly needs for proper negotiation power in all dimensions of its dealings with the international community. The study also found out that, Aspiration Seven is very relevant in the sense that, its focus areas include, African capital markets, fiscal systems, revenue mobilization, African cultural identity and other significant priorities which are very critical in the socio-economic development of the African continent. The study also found the relevance of Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063, to be in the fact that, if realized, it would strengthen Africa’s presence in multilateral institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, the WTO, the UN and others, especially gaining a seat in the UN Security Council, which would go a long way to ensure that there is sustenance of peace and security on the volatile continent of Africa. To a very large extent, this objective has therefore been met.

With respect to the second objective which was to take a critical look at the challenges facing the African Union in achieving Aspiration Seven of Agenda, 2063, the study found out that, the challenges confronting the African Union on this issue are multi-faced and can be categorized into economic, political and socio-cultural aspects. Economically, the study found out that, Africa lacks the economic muscle to compete with its rivals such as the EU in terms of trade, strong currency, development, production of goods and services, exportations, GDP and per capita income. This would make it very difficult for the African Union to achieve its aim of becoming an influential global player as contained in Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063, as it is clear, that, for the African Union to be able to achieve Aspiration Seven, it would have to effectively overcome its economic woes.
Politically, the study found out that, unlike the first crop of African leaders, there is a challenge of lack of political will and commitment on the part of current African political leaders, with regards to the general integration process of the African continent. The study also found out that, closely related to this issue is the fear of loss of sovereignty by many African states, as they are afraid that, ceding part of their political power to a supranational regional body like the African Union would make them lose sovereignty. This clearly explains the reasons why the African union is still struggling to have an effective political unification all these years. It is also clear that for the African union to realize the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063, it would have to actually, defeat this political challenges confronting it, which are also the panacea of poor and weak policies and institutions in the continent.

Socio-culturally, the study found out that, the challenges facing the African Union are not only in the areas of language barriers, divided identity, geographical divisions and poor climatic conditions, but it is also in the area of lack of interest on the part of Africans to uphold the cultural heritage left behind by the African ancestors. Closely related to this challenge is the huge infrastructural deficit in the African continent especially in the communication and transportation sectors in Africa. All these challenges are not only making it very difficult for the African continent to fairly and effectively compete with its international rivals, but it also makes it very difficult for the African Union to achieve Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063. Holistically, the study found out that, the challenges that are facing the African Union are multifaceted and the Union would have to overcome them in order to realize the Aspiration Seven of the agenda, 2063, and this indicates the extent to which this particular research objective has been met.
In respect of the third objective which was to assess the prospects of the African Union in achieving the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063, the study found out that, despite the many problems that are facing the African Union, the prospects of realizing the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063, are very bright. The study also found out that, these prospects can also be categorized into economic, political and socio-cultural.

Economically, the study found out that, there is hope of a booming economic growth in Africa as many of the economies in Africa are doing well, as well acknowledged by international financial institutions like the international Monetary Fund as well as the World Bank. The study also revealed that, the natural resources both human and mineral that the African continent is endowed with, can be harnessed and put into proper use which has a high potential of enhancing the export sector of the continent, making it economic viable and strong. Hence it would be in a better position in achieving the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063. The study also found out that, Africa can make very good use of its large fertile lands in the form of increasing investments in the agricultural sector, with the aim of adding value to the raw materials for export, which is also very crucial in competing with big economies, thus enhancing its position of realizing the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063.

Politically, the study revealed that, the leadership of the African union has started establishing very significant contacts and partnership with other global players such as China and Japan, Russia and others, apart from the EU and the United States. This does not only make African chances in realizing its bid to become an influential global player, but it also demonstrates the extent to which the achievement of Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063 is possible.
Socio-culturally, the study revealed that, the prospects of the African continent achieving cultural unity is very bright, as the current crop of African leaders needs to invest heavily in the area of cultural heritage and tourism to meet economic standards. Also, socio-cultural development ought to include teaching of the African identity and local dialects in schools. It is also possible that, languages such as Swahili can be adopted by the African continent as the official African language, which would uniquely identify the African and distinguish the African continent from any other continent. The infrastructural development in Africa is key to realizing the full potentials of African culture and heritage. This sector is also developing to an extent, as many African countries such as Ghana, Nigeria and Rwanda are committed to reviving the rail ways sectors. This clear shows that the prospects of achieving the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063 are very promising, as far as the socio-cultural aspect of the African Continent is concerned. To the extent that there are several prospects of the African union in achieving the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063, this objective has therefore been met.

In summary, to the extent that, the African Union is occupied with a lot of challenges that may impede its quest of becoming an influential global player, as contained in the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063. This is coupled with the fact that, the prospects of the African Union in achieving the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063 are very bright and promising. The study found out that, the challenges confronting the African Union, do not overweigh and overwhelm the prospects of the African Union in realizing the Aspiration Seven of the agenda, 2063. That is if, Africa will have the foresight in the challenges that are likely to impede this aspiration and eliminates them, this aspiration has potential of coming into reality. The hypothesis of this study has therefore be approved on this condition.
4.2 Conclusion

It is worth concluding, that, despite the numerous challenges that the African Union confront as a Pan-African institution, especially with regards to the realization of its quest to become a strong, resilient, united and an influential global player, the prospects of the AU in achieving the Aspiration Seven of the agenda, 2063 are very bright. It is also worth concluding that, the African Union’s ambition of becoming a global player in the Aspiration Seven of Agenda 2063 is indeed a laudable one, that if achieved would go a long way to help the African continent. In a nutshell, the point must be made that, though it is not impossible for the African Union to achieve the Aspiration Seven of the Agenda 2063, it is going to be very difficult for the African Union, since it would have to rise up above these multifaceted challenges in order to effectively realize its ambition of becoming an influential global player. Therefore, if Africa will be united, the continent needs to be stronger internally and internationally. A united continent will make it very hard for Africa and entirely, the people of Africa to be undermined and marginalized. This will also translate into the growth of the efficiency of the decisions and opinions Africa embarks on and enforces a globally competitive place for Africa.

4.3 Recommendations

Firstly, it is recommended that, the African Union develops a very strong economic team that is well versed in the economies of the African countries and can be in a very good position to professionally recommend very appropriate economic programs, modules and policy reforms so as to help them build resilient economies that would purge them from economic quagmire many of them are in now.
Secondly, the African Union must put in place very deterring sanction scheme that can be applied to countries which do not want to show full commitment to the realization of Agenda 2063, so as to obtain full commitment of member states.

Thirdly, there should be a common policy on international relations especially between Africa and other continents so as to prevent situations of worshiping former colonial masters and entering into agreements with them which are very detrimental to the continental unity ambition.

Finally, the African Union should strive to build a common cultural identity that would be accepted by all member states, so as to provide a unique identity for the African people that would distinguish the continent from other continents of the world.

4.4 Areas for Further Research

Having perused some of the available literatures and the data collected on the topic under study, the researcher is convinced that, the following areas need further studies.

1. The Impact of political commitment of African leaders on the achievement of Agenda 2063.
2. How do external challenges/forces impede on the African Union from realizing the Agenda 2063?
3. How can African countries leverage on the Paris climate change agreement to be a strong global partner?
4. How can Africa’s governance, institutional initiatives and policies be fortified to well manage the emerging sustainability challenges facing the continent?
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An Interview with Former President John Jerry Rawlings – former chairman of the African Union and former president of the republic of Ghana

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