

Pan African Youth Union (PYU)

Written by NUEYS Admin

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Mission of PYU

The PYU works to support and reinforce the values and ideals of the African Union (AU), mainly the fostering of **Unity, Peace, Democracy, Sustained Development and African Integration.**

Objectives of PYU:

1. Strive to inform, mobilize and build capacity of youths in Africa to be active players in the economic, social, political as well as cultural development processes in the continent;
2. Champion and advance democratic development process in Africa that do not seek to undermine or reverse the democratic dividends that we have earned as a continent;
3. To ensure compliance and effective implementation of the Africa Youth Charter as well as other instruments developed by the African Union, particularly those in favor of youth;
4. To strive as the interlocutor of the Regional Economic Communities of the African Union Commission and the Agencies of the United Nations, as well as other partners, for issues related to African youth, mainly in the formation, implementation, monitoring and the evaluation of the national youth policies in Africa;

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5. To create synergy between African youth organizations in favor of the promotion, the popularization and the implementation of the African Youth Charter;

6. To strengthen and develop partnership with National, Regional and International NGOs and the African civil society as a whole in conformity with PYU principles;

7. To reinforce, diversify and consolidate international partnership and cooperation within the youth movement.

Brief History of the Pan African Youth Union (PYU)

Introduction

The Pan African Youth Movement (PYM), the predecessor of the Pan African Youth Union (PYU), was established on April 26, 1962 in Conakry, Guinea where it kept its head office until 1967, when it was transferred to Algiers, Algeria. The PYM was then composed of youth branches of political parties and mainly the youth branches of liberation movements. The PYM was instrumental in mobilizing young people in Africa to take part in the liberation struggle of Africa, a role it played so well. It was also adopted by the OAU to become a specialized agent until its eventual transformation to the AU. The events over the years with the eventual attainment of the independence of most African states, was marked by the end of apartheid in South Africa. With the advent of independence and the change of the political landscape in Africa through the introduction of multi-party states, the PYM slowly lost its relevance. There was therefore the need for an overhaul of the PYM, its mandate and its members to make them

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responsive to the needs of young people in post-colonial Africa. Due to the political processes taking place in Africa, the need to transform the PYM became dire and the process inevitable.

PYU between 2003 and 2008

The 1st Congress of the PYU was held in 2003, in Windhoek, Namibia that took the decision to transform the PYM to the PYU, with its members being National Youth Councils or similar youth coordinating structures in countries. The congress elected the following 17 countries into its Executive Committee: Algeria, Angola, Congo, D.R of Congo, the Central African Republic, Libya, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, Sahara, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The following were elected as members of the General Secretariat: Angola as Secretary General, Algeria, Namibia, Libya, Congo, Senegal and Tanzania.

The organization then was faced with financial challenges, and the need for it to be recognized as the continental linchpin for youth development. Despite the challenges, PYU conducted its operations successfully under these conditions.

In 2006, the African Union adopted the 1st of November, the day the PYU was transformed from PYM to PYU, as Africa Youth Day. This is a day which has gained prominence over the years on the African governments' calendar, being commemorated around the whole of Africa. Subsequently, the African Union Heads of States and Governments took a decision to have the PYU adopted as a recognized structure of the African Union, as was the PYM with the OAU. At

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this juncture, the African Union committed itself to the revitalization of the PYU, a process that is still going on. This was the state of PYU as it moved towards its 2

nd

Congress.

From the 2nd Congress to Now

The PYU held its 2nd Congress in 2008 in Congo Brazzaville, with the assistance of the African Union Commission and elected its new leadership. The 2nd Congress amended the Statutes and took the decision to enlarge the Bureau through the introduction of the Presidency and its Deputies. The coordination of PYU activities in the regions was entrusted to the Vice Presidents. Today the PYU is led by the President and the General Secretariat by the Secretary General. The following countries were elected into the Executive Committee: Nigeria as President; Algeria, Mali, South Africa, Ethiopia and Gabon as Vice-Presidents; Angola as Secretary General; Libya, Senegal, Sudan, Congo, Djibouti and Zimbabwe as Deputy Secretary Generals.

The Congress also took the decision to move the Headquarters of the PYU from Algiers, Algeria, where it had been for 42 years, to Khartoum, Sudan, in efforts of bringing a new impetus and strengthening the revitalization process of the PYU. Currently the PYU is the only focal point of the African Union on youth development. The delay in the transfer of the Headquarters has seen the organization underperform. Now the PYU has established itself in Khartoum, where it had its 3rd Congress from the 2nd to 5th of December 2011. No one can argue how relevant the PYU has become in the region and the need to have it being the collective voice through which young people in Africa speak.

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In the 3rd Congress, the following countries were elected into the Executive Committee: South Africa as President; Egypt, Namibia, Senegal, Gabon and Eritrea as Vice-Presidents; Mali as Secretary General; Libya, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Congo, South Sudan and Sudan as Deputy Secretary Generals.