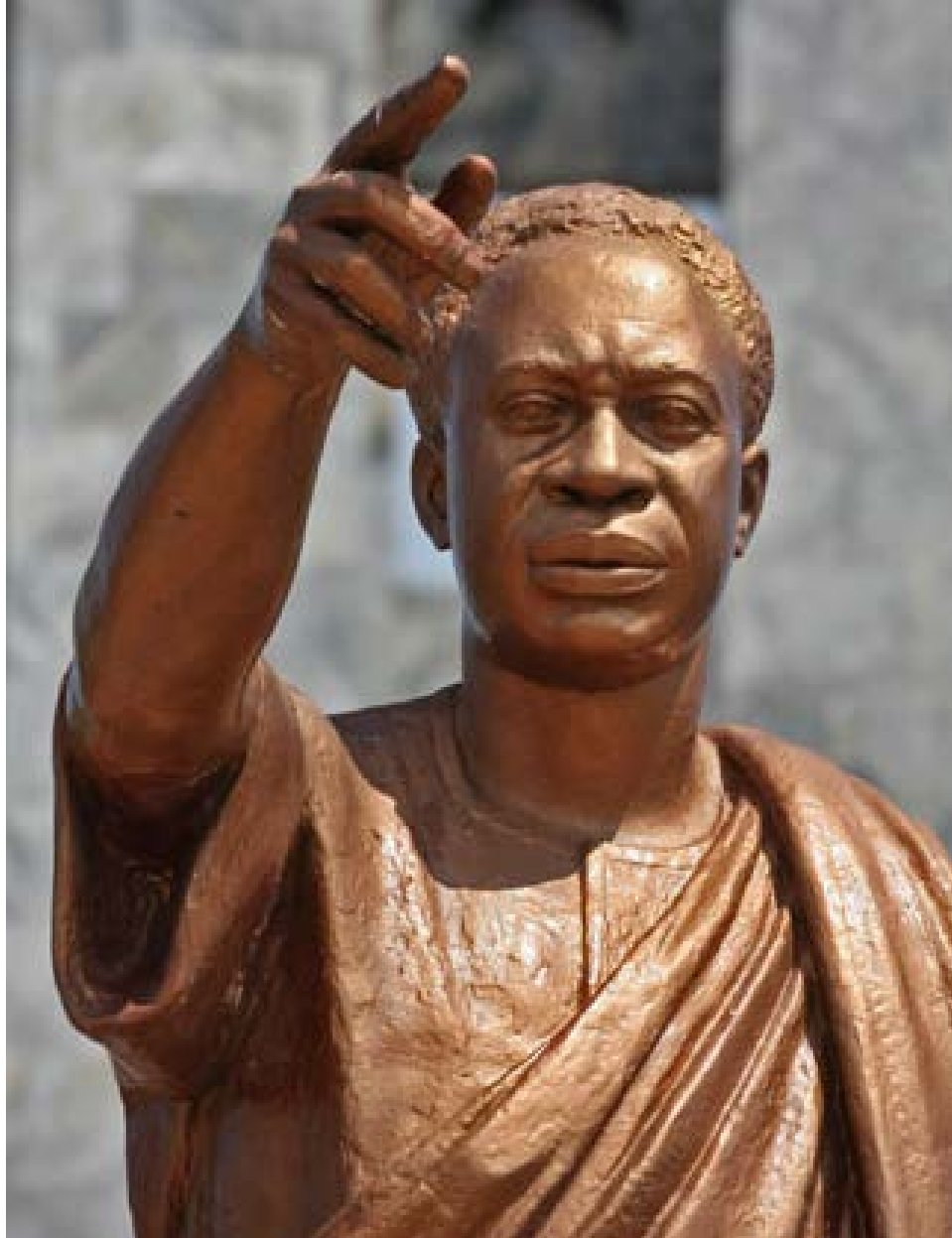


Retrospective Kwame Nkrumah: May 24, 1964 Africa Liberation Day Broadcast



Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum sculpture, Accra, Ghana

A few hours from now, we shall be celebrating "Africa Liberation Day," marking the first anniversary of the signing, in Addis Ababa, of the historic Charter of the Organization of African Unity. This celebration will also mark our re-dedication to the struggle for the total liberation and Unity of Africa.

You will recall that the First Conference of Independent African States held in Accra in 1958 just one year after our independence, decided that the 15th of April will be "Africa Freedom Day." Now the Organization of African Unity has also decided that the anniversary of the signing of its Charter in May, 1963 shall be "Africa Liberation Day."

Africa Liberation Day therefore is now celebrated in all independent African States in remembrance of the epoch — making summit conference held last year in Addis Ababa when the Heads of Independent African States subscribed to the Charter of the Organization of African Unity.

In 1958, there were only eight independent African States. Today, there are 33. Very shortly, this number will rise to 35 with the independence of Malawi and Zambia. There are still some 17 African territories to be liberated including South Africa, not mentioning some 25 Islands. We must now redouble our efforts to accelerate the liberation of these remaining territories in Africa.

We in Ghana are proud of the contribution we have made, materially, physically and morally to the liberation struggle. We shall continue to do so, because of our conviction that our own freedom and independence must depend on the total liberation and unity of Africa. On this occasion therefore, we salute the gallant freedom fighters who, are actively engaged in the struggle for the liberation of territories in Africa not yet free and independent. We pay tribute to the memory of those who have fallen in the struggle.

I have spoken to you on many occasions about the tragedy in Angola and the other territories under Portuguese administration. Portugal continues to pursue a senseless and barbarous colonial war simply because it is haunted by the spectre of a past "Colonial Glory." Portugal refuses to accept the realities of the modern world and clings stubbornly to its inglorious colonial past. Portugal is an impoverished state hardly able to attend to the needs of its own population. It therefore uses a colonial war as a diversion of its people's minds from the sufferings at home. But Portugal can never win this war even with the support of powerful external forces. As a client state of the major NATO countries, Portugal has been able to obtain assistance from these countries to pursue its vicious policies in Angola, Mozambique and in other African territories under its domination. The ultimate responsibility for the continuance of this criminal and senseless colonial war, in which peaceful citizens including innocent children have been slaughtered, must rest at the door of the NATO countries.

In spite of the desperate stand of the Portuguese colonialists and their allies, the struggle for the total liberation of Africa continues with vigour. It is now time that we gave consideration to the means whereby the independence of the various liberated African States can be guaranteed.

As I have said time and time again, the salvation of Africa lies in Unity. Only a Union Government can safeguard the hard-won freedom of the various African States. Africa is rich, its resources are vast and yet African States are poor. It is the only in a Union Government that we can find the capital to develop the immense economic resources of Africa.

Only a unified economic planning for development can give Africa the — economic security essential for the prosperity and wellbeing of all its peoples. It is also quite clear that not a single African State can today defend herself effectively. Therefore many African States are forced to enter defence agreements with their former colonial master. Recent events in Gabon and elsewhere show clearly how these military Pacts can be used to subvert the independence and territorial integrity of African States. The only real and lasting solution is a defence arrangement for Africa on the basis of a unified military command.

We can go on to multiply the advantages of a Continental Union. Frontier problems disappear in a Continental Union. Irritating customs and other formalities cease to be barriers separating brother from brother. We can think of the great economic advantage of a common currency and a common market. But all these can only be brought about by common aims and ideals under an effective political direction which can come only through a Union Government.

That is why on the occasion of the first anniversary of Africa Liberation Day, we should centre our thoughts on the establishment of a Union Government for Africa.

There is no time to waste. The longer we wait, the stronger will be the hold on Africa by neo-colonialism and imperialism. A Union Government for Africa does not mean the loss of sovereignty by independent African States. A Union Government will rather strengthen the sovereignty of the individual states within the Union.

A year ago today saw the birth of the Organization of African Unity. Let us resolve on this first anniversary that the second meeting of the Heads of State of the Organization of African Unity in Cairo will see the birth of the Union Government of Africa.