

CSB IAS ACADEMY

TOPIC OF THE DAY (DATE: 09.09.2023)

AFRICAN UNION INTO G-20

WHY IN NEWS?

Today, During the inaugural session of the two-day G20 Summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared that the **African Union (AU) had been granted permanent membership in the Group of 20.**

About African Union

- The African Union (AU) is an **intergovernmental organization** that works on increasing cooperation, stability, and development within the continent of Africa.
- The African union was announced in the **Sirte Declaration in Sirte, Libya, on 9 September 1999, calling for the establishment of the African Union.**
- The bloc was founded on 26 May 2001 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and launched on 9 July 2002 in Durban, South Africa.
- Headquarters - The organization is headquartered in **Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.**

Composition

- At its inception in 2002, the African Union consisted of 53 members.
- Two more members joined in the years that followed, bringing the total **to 55 countries.**

The African Union is made up of both **political and administrative bodies.**

- The Assembly of Heads of State and Government,
- Executive Council,
- Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC),
- Specialized Technical Committees (STCs),
- Peace and Security Council and The African Union Commission



Need and Rationale behind the inclusion of African union into G 20

- Enhances a just, fair, inclusive, and representative global architecture and governance.
- Supports the vision of giving a greater voice to countries from the **Global South, particularly African nations**
- The “Gap in African representation can weaken the G20’s credibility, traction, and representativeness.
- The push for AU’s **inclusion has received significant momentum after India hosted the 'Voice of the Global South Summit'. Major economies including the US, France, Japan, and China, have also backed the proposal.**
- As the world’s premier forum on international economic and other cooperation, the G20 has been deeply involved in shaping solutions to global challenges such as economic growth, climate change, energy transition, sustainable development, debt burdens, women’s empowerment, and the digital economy. With a seat at the main G20 table, Africa will, at last, have a direct say in all deliberations and decisions.

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G 20 Membership for African union Proposed by PM Modi

- The idea was floated in June this year, when Modi wrote to G20 leaders to propose that the African Union be given full membership at the Delhi Summit of G20. The idea germinated after the **'Voice of the Global South' summit in January this year**, in which most of the African continent's 55 countries had participated.
- The discussions were carried forward in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, which houses the headquarters of the African Union. So **far there was only one country from the entire African continent in the G20 – South Africa.**
- The move is a reflection of the intensity of New Delhi's engagement with Africa, which got a fillip when more than 40 Heads of State and Government came for the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit in October 2015

Highlights of Africa India Relations

- After India gained independence, it became **a leading voice in support of African decolonization at the United Nations.**
- Independent India helped the African countries with available resources under the banner of South-South cooperation.
- **In 1964**, India launched the **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC)** program to provide technical assistance through human resource development to other developing countries, with African countries being the greatest beneficiaries of it and the **Special Commonwealth African Assistance Programme (SCAAP).**
- India's economic engagement with Africa began intensifying in the early 2000s and **India is now Africa's third largest trade partner.**
- Under the **Africa Outreach initiative**, India has had visits to all African countries at Ministerial level. **Modi himself has visited at least 10 countries in Africa in the last nine years.**
- Indian investments in Africa have also grown rapidly in the last decade and the country is currently the seventh-largest investor in Africa
- India undertook two initiatives in association with the AU in its early years. **The Pan African E network Project (PANEP)** was implemented in **47 African countries and ran successfully for a decade beginning in 2009.**
- This visionary project was enunciated by former President APJ Abdul Kalam in 2004 and a committee of the African Union Commission (AUC) and India led its formulation and implementation.

Recent Developments

- India's first high-level visit to Africa for 2022 saw the following developments:

Both sides signed three MOUs:

1. MoU on cooperation in Youth Affairs
2. Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP)
3. Visa waiver Agreement for diplomats/officials

Conclusion - India with this move of including the African Union in the G20 grouping, India has pitched itself as a leader of the developing and underdeveloped countries. This is also in sync with India's aspiration for permanent membership of the UNSC, for **which India is keen to garner support from Africa that has 55 votes.**