

# African Union (AU) In G20

## A Look At The G20's Latest Member

### Why In The News?

- The **African Union (AU)** Was Admitted As A New Member Of The G20 On Saturday (September 9), Barely **Three Months After India Floated The Idea** Of Including The Organisation.
- The Development Took Place At The Ongoing **18<sup>th</sup> G20 Heads Of State And Government Summit In New Delhi.**



### African Union (AU)

- The AU Is An Intergovernmental Organisation Of The **55 Member States** Located On The Continent Of Africa. Launched On **July 9, 2002**, The Grouping Is The Successor Of The **Organisation Of African Unity (OAU)**, Which Was Formed In 1963.
- The AU Seeks To Build "An Integrated, Prosperous And Peaceful Africa, Driven By Its Own Citizens".
- The AU's Secretariat, The African Union Commission, Is Based In **Addis Ababa**. Collectively The Group Has A Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Of **\$3 Trillion With Some 1.4 Billion People.**



## AFRICAN UNION

### Purpose Of AU

- The AU's Predecessor, OAU, Was Also An Intergovernmental Organisation And It Aimed To **Bring African Nations Together** And Resolve Common Issues Through **Collective Action**.
- Its Main Focus, However, Was To Help Liberate The Colonised Countries On The Continent. To Do So, OAU Mustered Diplomatic Support And Provided Logistical **Aid To Liberation Movements Across Africa**.
- OAU's Efforts Helped Numerous African Nations Gain Independence From Their European Colonists In The Following Years. But The Organisation Suffered From Major Shortcomings. **It Failed To Fillip Political And Economic Integration** Among Its Member Countries.
- Therefore, It Was Decided To Reform The OAU During The Mid-1990s, Which Ultimately Led To The Formation Of The AU. Notably, The Man Spearheading The Idea Of The AU Was The Libyan Dictator **Colonel Muammar Gaddafi**.



## Objectives Of AU

- Unlike The OAU, The AU Concentrates Its Energy And Resources On Achieving **Greater Unity And Solidarity** Between African Countries And Their People. It Seeks To Accelerate The Process Of **The Political And Socio-economic Integration** Of The Continent.
- Moreover, The AU Addresses The **Multifaceted Social, Economic And Political Problems** That The African Nations Have Been Facing. Its Key Objectives Also Include Promoting Peace, Stability, And Security Across The Region. Protecting And Promoting Human Rights Are Also Part Of The Agenda.

## Notable Achievements Of AU

- Many Of The **AU's Peacekeeping Missions** Have Helped Governments Tackle Terrorism Across Africa. AU's Interventions Have **Prevented Violence** In Countries Across African Continent.
- The Establishment Of The **African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA)**, Which Came Into Force In 2021, Is Yet Another Achievement Of The Organisation. With 54 Member Countries As Signatories, AFCFTA Is The **World's Largest New Free Trade Area** Since The Establishment Of The WTO In 1994.
- The AFCFTA Will Increase **Africa's Income By \$450 Billion** By 2035 And Increase **Intra African Exports By More Than 81%**, According To The World Bank Estimates.



## Shortcomings Of AU

- One Failure Of The AU Has Been **Its Inability To Thwart Coups In Africa**. Since The 1960s, The Continent Has Witnessed More Than 200 Coups The Most Recent Ones Took Place In Gabon And Niger.
- The Organisation Has Also Been Unable To Get Its Member Countries To Pay Their Annual Dues, Leaving It **Starved Of Funds**. As A Result, It Has To Depend On External Funding, Which Impacts Its Autonomy.

## Significance Of AU's Inclusion In G20

- The AU Now Has An Opportunity To Use Its G20 Permanent Seat To Craft A Win-win Pathway For The Entire World With An Uncompromising Demand To **Redesign The Global Trade, Finance, And Investment Architecture**.
- The Group's Inclusion Will Give **African Interests And Perspectives Voice And Visibility**.

