

Looking Backwards to Run Forward: A critical examination of the 60th Anniversary of the 1958 All-African People's Conference

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Abstract

This paper analyses the 1958 All-African People's Conference (AAPC) and the 60th anniversary celebration held in 2018. The article interrogates the history, resolutions, and outcomes of the two conferences to examine the unfinished business of liberation and transformation. The 1958 AAPC conference is one of the most famous Pan-African gatherings held on the African continent. Organised in Ghana at the behest of Kwame Nkrumah and the Convention Peoples Party, this conference significantly contributed to the movement for Pan-African unity and independence across the continent. In 2018, the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana, which is deemed one of the academic epicentres of Pan-African intellectual work on the continent, hosted, in collaboration with the Socialist Movement of Ghana (formerly Socialist Forum of Ghana), Third World Network Africa, Trade Union Congress of Ghana and Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, a 60th anniversary commemoration of the 1958 AAPC. The aim of this commemoration was to celebrate and interrogate the original conference and 21st century

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Pan-Africanism. This paper is informed by conference reports, official memoranda, newspaper articles, and my experience as a participant organiser and a Pan-African activist. It provides the reader with a resourceful and summative evaluation of the proceedings of both conferences and highlights contemporary challenges of the Pan-African Movement.

Keywords: Pan-Africanism, All-African People's Conference, Kwame Nkrumah, Institute of African Studies

Résumé

Cet article analyse la Conférence Panafricaine des Peuples de 1958 (AAPC) et la célébration du 60e anniversaire de celle-ci en 2018. L'article interroge l'histoire, les résolutions et les résultats des deux conférences afin d'examiner le travail inachevé de libération et de transformation. L'AAPC de 1958 est l'un des rassemblements panafricains les plus célèbres du continent africain. Organisée au Ghana à l'initiative de Kwame Nkrumah et du Convention People's Party, cette conférence a contribué de manière significative au mouvement pour l'unité et l'indépendance panafricaines sur le continent. En 2018, l'Institut des Etudes Africaines [Institute of African Studies] de l'Université du Ghana [University of Ghana], considéré comme l'un des épicycles académiques du travail intellectuel panafricain sur le Continent, a organisé, en collaboration avec le Socialist Movement of Ghana (anciennement Socialist Forum of Ghana), Third World Network Africa, Trade Union Congress of Ghana et Lincoln University, Pennsylvania, une commémoration du 60e anniversaire de l'AAPC de 1958. L'objectif de cette commémoration était de célébrer et d'interroger la conférence originale et le panafricanisme du 21e siècle. Ce document s'appuie sur des rapports de conférence, des mémorandums officiels, des articles de presse et sur l'expérience de la chercheuse en tant que participante, organisatrice et militante panafricaine. Il fournit au lecteur une évaluation utile et résumée des actes des deux conférences et met en lumière les défis contemporains du mouvement panafricain..

Mots clés: Panafricanisme, Conférence Panafricaine des Peuples, Kwame Nkrumah Institute of African Studies.

Introduction

The All-African People's Conference (AAPC) is the accumulation of decades of organised Pan-African activity that commenced with the 1900 Pan-African Conference held in London. The organised nature of the Pan-African Movement (PAM) continues to evolve between the 1900 conference and the 1958 AAPC.² Pan-Africanists, during this period, were tackling questions related to improved conditions for Africans under colonial rule and an end to racism in the African Diaspora. The PAM at the time included organisations that ripened the ground for Pan-Africanism to move to the African continent. The African Association was one such organisation that was founded in 1897 (Sherwood, 2012a) and transformed into the Pan-African Association (responsible for organising Pan-African conferences forthwith) at the Pan-African Conference of 1900. The Pan-African Association recommended that a Pan-African Congresses be held every two years, according to a letter written by W.E.B Du Bois to the permanent committee of the association in 1923 (Du Bois, 1923). However, due to global political events, the conference did not occur every two years.³ Nonetheless, during this time, other congresses were held that received less attention, such as the 1919 congress in Paris. Although the Pan-African Association did not have a long life, its formation set in motion a series of events that would transform the nature of the PAM.

Over the next several decades, Europe housed many Pan-African organisations. The West African Student Union (WASU), founded in 1925 (Adi, 2000), served as a space for West African students to consider ways to liberate their respective countries. The International African Friends of Abyssinia (IAFA), formed in 1934, and replaced by the International African Service Bureau (IASB), (Adi, 2012), served as forerunners to Pan-African institutions in Ghana. The West African National Secretariat, another critical institution, focused on the unification of West Africa through Pan-African work in Britain (Adi, 2000; Sherwood, 2012a).

Kwame Nkrumah joined George Padmore, W. E. B DuBois, and other vital Pan-Africanists in 1945 as organisers for the fifth Pan-African Congress (5th PAC) (Sherwood, 2012b). The hub of Pan-African activity was not only geographically

2 This statement does not negate Pan-African activity that occurred prior to the 1900 conference. The author contends that Pan-African activity occurred in Global Africa leading to this organized manifestation of Pan-Africanism.

3 Historical events such as the onslaught of colonialism across the continent, the repression of Pan-African socialists in the USA and World-War I may have impacted the ability of the Pan-African Congress to occur every two years.

rooted in Europe, but was also situated within organisations that were promoting Pan-African solutions to the problems of African people. These organisations and institutions, particularly the 5th PAC, catapulted Ghana into the centre of the PAM when Kwame Nkrumah returned home to the then Gold Coast from the US and the UK in 1948 (Valera, 2017; Sherwood, 2012a; Poe, 2003 and Adi, 2000). During this time, the PAM was also concerned with the global anti-imperialist internationalist movement, in particular the Afro-Asian Solidarity Movement. The Asian-African Conference (Bandung) held in Indonesia in 1955 called for the immediate end of colonialism in Africa and Asia. The Gold Coast (Ghana) sent a small delegation to the conference. The conference attempted to build anti-imperial bridges among African and Asian nations (Farid, 2016; Hongoh, 2016). This collaboration extended to the AAPC as the Afro-Asian Solidarity Organisation (a permanent institution to organise the conferences) based in Egypt are among the fraternal delegates.

The AAPC, a rallying point for freedom fighters, independent African governments, members of the African Diaspora, and anti-imperialists, is arguably the most groundbreaking Pan-African gathering held on the continent. The first AAPC held in 1958 was an extension of the Pan-African activity Kwame Nkrumah, and his comrades were engaging in ten plus years earlier. The likeness of the AAPC to the previous Pan-African Congresses and institutions demonstrates that the activity in Ghana was a continuation of the Pan-African organisations in Europe (Aliche, 2020). Kwame Nkrumah inherited the historical and contemporary legacy of Pan-Africanists during his period in Europe. His interactions with Pan-Africanists and Pan-African organisations sharpened his forward-looking view of Pan-Africanism and his practical interactions with future leaders of independent African nations and members of the Diaspora. (Poe, 2003; Biney, 2011).

The 1958 AAPC had two main objectives: the total liberation and unification of Africa and the independence of the African continent from foreign domination (All-African People's Conference. All African People's Conference leaflet, 1958). The AAPC (1958) provided an opportunity for Pan-Africanists to meet on the continent and build collaborations across space and time to advance the PAM. It allowed them to concretise the thoughts, ideas and principles of the PAM as a complement to the raging independence movement. These ideas saturated the minds of many of the participants at this historic conference and dominated the speeches. It seemed plausible that a unified Africa would come to fruition in their lifetime. Nkrumah's speech at the conference reinforced his

commitment to the Pan-African project. He said, “This mid-twentieth century is Africa’s. This decade is the decade of African independence. Forward then to independence – to independence now – tomorrow, the United States of Africa…” (Nyumbani (2007). The Pan-African nature of the conference and the establishment of the Bureau of African Affairs cemented Ghana as a strategic base for leading the Pan-African charge on the continent (Poe, 2003; Grilli, 2018). The Bureau of African Affairs was the main organ responsible for researching, coordinating, and promoting Pan-Africanism (Ahlman, 2012). The bureau was also tasked with planning and executing the All-African Conference Series and liaising with freedom fighters who had not achieved independence, as well as governments of independent African nations, scholars, activists, and anti-imperialist organisations, particularly those that embraced Socialism.

The 60th anniversary of the AAPC (1958) was celebrated globally throughout 2018. In Ghana, there were two commemorations held in December on the University of Ghana campus. One of the commemorations was organised by the Nkrumah Pan-African Centre (KNAC) and the Pan-African Federalist Movement, while the other was hosted jointly by the University of Ghana’s Institute of African Studies (IAS), Lincoln University (PA), the Trade Union Congress (TUC) of Ghana, the Socialist Forum of Ghana (Socialist Movement Ghana), and Third World Network Africa. This paper will focus on the commemoration hosted by the Institute of African Studies and partners from December 5–8, 2018. The holistic and Pan-African make-up of the institutions planning this conference and the positionality of the author are the primary reasons why this conference is the centre of this paper. The 60th anniversary commemoration held by IAS replicated the original format of the 1958 conference, with a contemporary approach to examining the PAM and the challenges and Pan-African prospects that affect Global Africa today. My role in the 60th anniversary celebration as the convenor of the conference secretariat ensured that I was intimately involved in all components of the conference. This insider knowledge informed my analysis of the resolutions of the 1958 and 2018 conferences. Additionally, my activism and participation in the PAM undergirded my interrogation of the resolutions of the 1958 conference and statement of issues and recommendations of the 2018 conference. My political and academic experience brings a depth of experience and knowledge to the analysis that positions the paper at the crossroads between the academy and Pan-African activism. To accommodate the positionality of the author the project employed an auto-methodological approach to examining primary and secondary source materials.

This article analyses the outputs of the 1958 AAPC and 2018 60th anniversary conference – specifically, the resolutions of the 1958 conference and the statement of issues and recommendations of the 2018 anniversary conference. The essay incorporates primary and secondary data from the conferences, including memos, reports, speeches, and plenary presentations, to examine the auxiliary conditions that impact the 1958 and 2018 conferences. This essay contributes to research and debates about the impact of the AAPC as an institution on the global PAM. The article has four main interconnected sections. The introduction is followed by a section that examines the conceptual and methodological considerations. The third section focuses on the 1958 All-African People's Conference; the fourth tackles the 2018 All-African People's Conference anniversary; and the final section interrogates the way forward for Pan-Africanism and includes a conclusion.

Conceptual And Methodological Considerations

Conceptually this project leans on three inter-related concepts, namely national liberation, Africa-nation, and decolonisation to interrogate the impact of the 1958 AAPC and the 2018 60th anniversary of the AAPC. These three concepts are part of the resolutions, statement of issues, and recommendations of the 1958 AAPC and the 2018 60th anniversary celebration. The concept of national liberation stems from the African liberation movement in which African nations fought for their liberation against colonialism. This paper adopts Amilcar Cabral's definition of national liberation in his text *National Liberation and Culture* (1974); he identifies its objective thus:

The objective of national liberation is, therefore, to reclaim the right, usurped by imperialist domination, namely: the liberation of the process of development of national productive forces. Therefore, national liberation takes place when, and only when, national productive forces are completely free of all kinds of foreign domination (Cabral, 1974, p. 39).

Cabral's concept of national liberation extends beyond political independence but incorporates the independence of the economy, particularly the productive forces. This concept is being used because of the revolutionary nature of national liberation. The 1958 AAPC and its 2018 60th Anniversary were founded on the need to revolutionise the African liberation movement and PAM.

Muchie (2004) contends that the African–nation is the key to African unity and liberation. Muchie argues, “We propose the thesis that efforts to free and unite Africa should integrate the idea of the African with the idea of making the Africa–nation; both with Pan–Africanism and African Renaissance” (Muchie, 2004, p. 148). African–nation does not explicitly identify a United States of Africa or an integrated States of Africa. However, this paper embraces the idea of a United States of Africa when referring to African–nation. This concept is not a new concept; it is repackaged from the calls for African unity by Kwame Nkrumah, Sékou Touré, Julius Nyerere and other influential Pan–Africanists, and transcends debates about colonial borders and individual African states’ sovereignty. This concept grounds the analysis of this paper as it interrogates the resolutions and statement of issues and recommendations of these historic conferences.

The final concept, decolonisation, has roots in the anti–colonial struggle in Global Africa. Decolonisation in this article refers to the complete de–linking of Global Africa from slavery, colonialism, and neo–colonialism physically, spiritually, politically, and economically. Decolonisation is a concept that, as Ogba Adejoh and Okpanachi Idoko assert, is and has been intertwined with Pan–Africanism. They contend that organisation contributed to the loss of African values, shared ideals, and customs (Sylvester & Anthony, 2014). The decolonisation movement includes efforts to combat this loss through the philosophical and practical decolonial activities of Frantz Fanon of Algeria, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Sékou Touré of Guinea, and Gamal Nassar of Egypt. These three concepts weave in and out of the resolutions of the 1958 AAPC and the 60th anniversary of the AAPC in 2018.

Methodologically, this is a qualitative study that uses historical and insider research methods to examine primary and secondary source materials. The historical method will be employed through the examination of the available primary source materials of the 1958 AAPC and the 2018 anniversary conference. Insider research will be employed to account for the inner knowledge and association of the author with the 2018 60th anniversary and the Institute of African Studies. Greene defines insider research as “that which is conducted within a social group, organization or culture of which the researcher is also a member” (2014, p. 1). This methodological approach was chosen because of the role of the author in the planning of the 60th anniversary of the All–African Peoples Conference. As a member of the planning committee, and convenor of the Conference secretariat, I have both firsthand knowledge of the scope of the conference and the themes the conference sought to address. Insider researchers share identity, language, and organisational culture and provides

access to people and resources more difficult to obtain (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). Additionally, the author identifies as a Pan-Africanist and is using this experience to identify the most pressing issues and recommendations presented by the 2018 commemoration. The primary source materials represent memos, official records, and resolutions of the 1958 AAPC and information from the Bureau of African Affairs. The primary data bank for the 60th anniversary stems from the 60th anniversary background, issues, and recommendations of the 60th anniversary and video recordings of the plenary sessions of the 2018 commemoration.

The 1958 All-African Peoples Conference

The AAPC held in 1958 in Accra (December 8–13), Ghana, was attended by 300 participants who represented liberation movements, independent governments, and members of the PAM. Anti-imperialist friends, comrades and observers were also present, although they may not have represented an African country or liberation struggle (Varela, 2017). The theme for the conference was *Hands off Africa! Africa Must Be Free*.

The conference was promoted to potential delegates using a brochure that identified potential participants, the conference theme, objectives, and aims. The leaflet outlined four critical areas that the conference would develop as the strategy and tactics of the “African Non-Violent Revolution” (All-African People's Leaflet, 1958). The four critical areas cited were:

- (1) Colonialism and Imperialism;
- (2) Racialism and Discriminatory Laws and Practices;
- (3) Tribalism and Religious Separatism; and
- (4) The position of Chieftaincy under Colonial Rule and a Free Democratic Society.

The mass character of the conference was underscored in the leaflet. It highlights that participants would include representatives from the following institutions:

- African states at the non-governmental level
- Nationalists
- Trade union activists
- Women's and youth groups (All-African People's Leaflet, 1958).

The AAPC marked the first time the Diaspora was invited to a Pan-African conference held on the continent. Delegates at the conference generally represented political parties fighting for independence and anti-imperialist

movements. There were diverse delegates who had varying experiences with and responses to colonialism. Several delegations from selected nations were represented by more than one political institution. For example, the group from Sierra Leone had members of the People's Party and the Progressive Party (Daily Graphic, 1958a). The Nigerian delegation was composed of eight different entities, including the Action Group, All-Nigeria Trade Union Federation, Dynamic Party, Dynamic Party (East Branch), National Council of Nigeria & Cameroons, Northern Element Progressive Party, Zikist National Vanguard, and the Northern Elements Progressive Party (Daily Graphic, 1958a). A five-person delegation arrived at the AAPC from Ethiopia with a donation of four hundred pounds from Emperor Haile Selassie. The delegation was headed by Mr. G. Mekasha (Daily Graphic, 1958b). Paramount Chief Undi, Mr. Nkumbula, and Chief Shakunbula represented Northern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) at the AAPC. Some of the records did not identify the type of positions or what organisation they represented. Tunisia sent a six-person delegation of which two women, Mrs. Ferida Cherif and Mrs. Stein Benghazi, were listed as members (Daily Graphic, 1958b). Sending women to the AAPC was a bold and revolutionary act as women were generally heavily underrepresented in such gatherings.

Patrice Lumumba's attendance at the conference and his delivery of a powerful address accentuating the peculiar political situation in the Congo and the importance of African unity reinforces the theme of "Hands Off Africa and African Unity". He stated;

This historical conference, which puts us in contact with experienced political figures from all the African countries and from all over the world, reveals one thing to us: despite the boundaries that separate us, despite our ethnic differences, we have the same awareness, the same soul plunged day and night in anguish, the same anxious desire to make this African continent a free and happy continent that has rid itself of unrest and of fear and of any sort of colonialist domination (Lumumba, Sartre, and Van Lierde, 1972, p. 58).

Members of the African Diaspora were also present at the meeting; however, most were fraternal delegates or observers. These members did not have the right to vote as official delegates but observed the proceedings. The

official registry recorded Mr. Horace Bond,⁴ Mrs. Paul Robeson,⁵ and Mrs. Shirley Graham DuBois⁶ of the United States as fraternal delegates. The invitation to and attendance by the African Diaspora at the AAPC signified a move to embrace global Pan-Africanism. This showed the Diaspora that they had a role in developing the continent and the Pan-African vision immediately after independence. The conference roster also included members of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Movement. Yang Shuo⁷ represented the Afro-Asian Solidarity Council. The presence of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Council conveys solidarity between Africa and Asia and ties to internationalism. The Society of African Culture based in Paris and the Afro-Asian Secretariat from the United Arab Republic were among the organisations present (AAPC Bulletin, ACC, no. 848, 1958). Official delegates represented 30 countries across Africa with 62 political parties, associations, trade unions, and movements.

Kwame Nkrumah's opening remarks charged delegates to prioritise the liberation and unity of Africa. He contended that unity was needed for African nations to obtain complete independence. He specified four stages the continent needed to pass through to achieve political and economic independence: "(1) the attainment of freedom and independence; (2) the consolidation of that freedom and independence; (3) the creation of unity and community between free African states; (4) the economic and social reconstruction of Africa" (Nyumbani (2007)). According to Nkrumah, these stages were necessary for African nations to gain and maintain independence. In 1958, most African nations were not independent, which made Nkrumah's four stages of economic and political independence particularly significant. The AAPC aimed to develop a more extensive network of independent nations to build the PAM. The tone of the meeting shifted between Pan-African jubilation and confronting the long road ahead for Africa. W.E.B DuBois's address, read by Shirley Graham DuBois, provides a sober history of his life and the evolution of the Pan-African Congresses as a precursor to the first Pan-African conference hosted in Africa. He concluded his speech with a futurist rally call, "Africa, awake!

4 Horace Bond is a person of African descent born in the United States. He was also a graduate of Lincoln University, PA and a social activist.

5 Mrs. Paul Robeson is the wife of Paul Robeson but, more significantly, she was an active member of the Sojourners for Truth and many other movements of the period.

6 Mrs. Shirley Graham DuBois is a Pan-African socialist who was a playwright and wrote a significant play titled "Tom Tom" challenging slavery and colonialism. She also was an international figure who was the first Director of Television in Ghana during the first republic.

7 Yang Shuo represented the Afro-Asian Solidarity Movement based in Egypt.

Put on the beautiful robes of Pan-African socialism” (DuBois, 1958, p. 5). The conference chair, Tom Mboya of Kenya, voted in by delegates, symbolised Pan-Africanism. In an interview, he reverberated the Pan-African spirit that echoed throughout the conference halls. He remarked,

This is the first conference of all-African political and Trade Union leaders to ever be held in Africa. The purpose of it is to try to get all these leaders to come together and discuss African problems. With a view of course to find out means and ways to collectively trying to fight against things like imperialism and colonialism, racialism, tribalism and of course questions of boundaries between states (Adeyinka, 2022).

The format of the conference included plenary sessions tackling high-level questions of unity and liberation and smaller committees that engaged in the intellectual work of the conference. The committees focused on five key themes, (1) imperialism and colonialism; (2) frontiers and federation; (3) racialism; (4) tribalism and traditional institutions; and (5) establishment of a permanent organisation (International Organization, 1962, p. 430). The conference was organised through a committee structure where delegates were divided into groups to work on the resolutions. The names of these committees are difficult to unearth due to a loss of records. These broad resolutions would serve as the basis for the liberation struggle as delegates returned home. The conference committee developed a pamphlet to outline resolutions and how they could be implemented across Africa.

Sixtieth Anniversary Of The All-African People’s Conference

In the 60 years since the 1958 AAPC, the economic and political landscape in Global Africa has been significantly transformed. Five decades of economic organization, global financial crises, the fall of the Soviet Union and the rise of the unipolar world has impacted the political landscape. These global events influenced African countries’ economies and political systems and interrupted African nations from engaging Pan-African organisation activity. Additionally, the disappointments with independence, the rise of concepts like good governance and how they are employed, and multi-party constitutional rule and its limitations have also impacted the PAM. It is with this backdrop that the 60th Anniversary of the AAPC was organised by the IAS at the University of Ghana, Socialist Forum of Ghana (now Socialist Movement of Ghana), Third World Network Africa, Trades Union Congress of Ghana, and Lincoln University

(Pennsylvania). The Lincoln University delegation represented the President of the University and included four faculty and two students. This Pan-African conference and cultural celebration occurred from December 5 to 8, 2018, at the University of Ghana Conference facility and the Kwame Nkrumah Complex – Institute of African Studies. The conference served two purposes: the first and most immediate was to commemorate and celebrate the 1958 AAPC. The second was to gather Pan-African academics, activists, community members, and students to converge to examine the most pressing questions facing Global Africa in the 21st century.

Since its inception, the IAS has been one of the centres of Pan-African academic and activist activity in Ghana and Global Africa. The IAS is well-placed to convene key Pan-African stakeholders because of its central role in researching, teaching, and advocating for Pan-Africanism (Allman, 2013, Adomako Ampofo, 2016). Dr. Kwame Nkrumah formally opened the IAS in 1963 and challenged faculty and staff to take seriously its role as a liberatory institution whose responsibility was to advance Pan-Africanism and Internationalism. In his opening address, which has come to be known as “The African Genius”, he states;

And in Ghana the fact that we are committed to the construction of a socialist society makes it especially necessary that this Institute of African Studies should work closely with the people – and should be constantly improving upon its methods for serving the needs of the people of Ghana, of Africa and of the world. Teachers and students in our universities should clearly understand this (Nkrumah, 1964, p. 7).

This charge from Kwame Nkrumah revivates through the research, teaching, and community engagement of the IAS. The theme for the conference, “*Revisiting the 1958 All-African People's Conference – The Unfinished Business of Liberation and Transformation*”, called for a historic review of the 1958 conference and a forward-looking engagement of Global Africa's liberation and transformation. The AAPC secretariat invited participants from Global Africa, some of whom represented political, economic, and academic institutions⁸ and

8 Some of the organisations that participants were affiliated with and members of include: The All-African People's Revolutionary Party, African Studies Association of Africa, Lake Chad Basin Commission, the Orature Collective, Mwalimu Nyerere Foundation, Network for Women's Rights in Ghana, PANAFEST Foundation, Convention People's Party, Economic League, and many more. The Pan-African Women's Organization was not officially invited to the conference; however, the conference promoted African feminism through the participation of key African feminists

ensured that women played a leading role in each of the plenary sessions. Women were central in the 60th anniversary of the AAPC in planning, debates, speakers, and participants. Participants of the conference consisted of individuals representing 34 countries across Global Africa and all six regions of the African Union. Participants hailed from Algeria, Belgium, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Egypt, Ghana, Haiti, India, Japan, Namibia, Tanzania and St. Lucia (Tsikata, 2018). The conference was organised around six sub-themes to engage the current conjuncture in Global Africa and renew our collective commitment to Pan-Africanism. The themes, (1) Peoples of Africa; (2) Neo-Colonialism & Imperialism; (3) African Union and *Agenda 2063*; (4) Emancipation of Women; (5) Reparations and Restorative Justice; and (6) Global Warming anchored the conference theoretically and practically.

The central institutions of the conference were seven plenary sessions (based on the six sub-themes), 120-panel presentations, sub-committees that tackled the key conference themes, and an issues and recommendations committee. The seven plenaries focused on (1) Being Youth in Africa Today; (2) The Youth, Transformation and African Futures; (3) Neoliberalism: Africa's Economies and the Living Conditions of Africans; (4) Ending Imperialist Domination and Transforming Africa's Economies; (5) Pan-African Epistemologies for Knowledge Production; (6) Building a New Politics for Substantive Democracy and Security; and (7) Where do we go from here: The Future of Pan-Africanism⁹.

The conference published a list of issues and recommendations (IAR) which can be found on the IAS website¹⁰, corresponding to the six sub-themes. All six IAR are comprehensive and merit a thorough examination. This paper investigates four of the six IAR. These IAR were chosen due to their close alignment with the resolutions of the 1958 AAPC and their representation of contemporary issues facing Global Africa. They correspond with the three resolutions reviewed from the 1958 AAPC and one forward-looking issue and recommendation. The four main issues and recommendations that this paper will examine are:

1. On Pan-Africanism Today, Tomorrow and Building a New Politics of Substantive Democracy and Security
2. On Pan-African Epistemologies for Knowledge Production

9 The conference programme for the 60th Anniversary of the All-African People's Conference can be accessed here: <https://ias.ug.edu.gh/content/conference-programme>

10 Statement of Issues and Recommendations: https://ias.ug.edu.gh/sites/ias.ug.edu.gh/files/AAPC%202018-Issues%20%26%20Recommendations_Feb%202019_.pdf

3. Ending Imperialist Domination and Transforming Africa's Economies
4. On Restorative and Reparative Justice (AAPC Statement of Issues and Recommendations, 2018).

The above issues and recommendations highlight contemporary matters that Pan-African academics and activists are tackling in the 21st century. They demonstrate the evolution of the PAM and the issues that African people have been facing globally despite the victories of the independence era. Technological advances, extractive economies, environmental concerns and global racial capitalism all impact Africa and African people globally. Horace Campbell, the fourth occupant of the Kwame Nkrumah Chair in African Studies at the University of Ghana, outlined the essence of these four issues and recommendations in his fiery closing speech. He said;

The conference provided a mandate to deliberate on contemporary imperialism, neoliberalism, global Africa, Pan-Africanism, the emancipation of woman, reparative and restorative justice, and global warming. In every discussion, it became absolutely clear that none of the tasks could be fulfilled outside of the context of the unification and emancipation of the African peoples at home and abroad (Campbell, 2018).

Looking Backwards To Run Forward

This section draws connections between the 1958 AAPC and the 2018 60th anniversary. The two conferences occurred in different centuries with unique markers based on the global geo-politics of the respective period. The sixty years that separated the two conferences witnessed monumental historical and political changes on the continent. Most notable is the political independence of most African nations (Western Sahara remains the exception), the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity (now African Union), several Pan-African Congresses, the creation of regional economic and political blocs in Africa, a decrease in the number of socialist and communist nations, and the end of the Cold War. These global political and economic manifestations impacted the issues that each conference tackled. The political landscape in Africa over the period impacted the resolutions at the 1958 AAPC and 2018 60th anniversary.

1958 All-African Peoples Conference: Selected Resolutions

Imperialism and colonialism

The resolution on imperialism and colonialism begins with defining the two types of colonial projects and characteristics of colonialism in Africa. According to the resolution, *Indirect rule* is categorised as “territories where indigenous Africans are dominated by foreigners who have their seats of authority in foreign lands.” *Settler colonialism* is defined as “those where indigenous Africans are dominated and oppressed by foreigners who have settled permanently in Africa and who regard the position of Africa under their sway...” (University of California Press, 1959, p. 43). The resolution highlighted the human rights violations that were occurring on the continent. With a particular focus on racialism, the resolution contended that subjection of one race by another is unacceptable and violates fundamental human rights. African people’s economic, political, and social oppression was indicated as central to colonialism and imperialism. The resolution strongly condemned the “militarization of Africans and the use of African soldiers in a nefarious global game against their brethren” (University of California Press, 1959, p. 43). The importance of human rights appeared in the resolution, focusing on freedom of speech, association, movement, worship, and the freedom to live full lives. The most significant section of the resolution demanded “that independent African states should pursue in their international policy principles which will expedite and accelerate the Independence and sovereignty of all dependent and colonial African Territories” (University of California Press, 1959, p. 44).

Frontiers, Boundaries, and Federation

This resolution addresses the impact of frontiers and boundaries on the unification of African people across the continent. The first preambular clause sets the tone for the remainder of the resolution. It proclaims that:

Whereas the great mass of African peoples are animated by a desire for unity; Whereas the unity of Africa will be vital to the independence of its component units and essential to the security and general well-being of African peoples...” (University of California Press, 1959, p. 45).

This declaration proclaims that of African people believe in African unity. This is especially noteworthy considering the ideological divide between African leaders that emerged over a few short years after the AAPC. The AAPC recognised the importance of African people being at the forefront of

the struggle for Pan-Africanism. The resolution's language supports African unity being driven from the larger African masses and not driven by an elite group of vanguard Pan-Africanists. The building of a Commonwealth of Free African States was a focal point of speeches, particularly that of Kwame Nkrumah, Tom Mboya, and Patrice Lumumba. The resolution called for existing independent African states to organise groups based on geography, economic interdependence, and cultural and linguistic similarities (University of California Press, 1959). These groupings would hasten the liberation of African states and the continent's unification. The resolution stressed that only independent and free states should collaborate with other independent states and must not engage with colonial states. The question of regional groupings being permanent structures was addressed it stated:

WHEREAS regional federation or groups should be regarded as a means to amend and should not be prejudicial to the ultimate objective of a Pan-African Commonwealth by hardening as separate entities and thereby impeding progress towards a continental Commonwealth... (University of California Press, 1959, p. 45).

The immediate abandonment of artificial barriers and frontiers drawn by colonialists and the need to embrace continental unity closed the resolution.

Racialism and Discriminatory Laws and Practices

The resolution on Racialism and Discriminatory laws practiced had a particular focus on settler colonialism. The resolution violently opposed colonialism in general but identified the rather egregious examples of settler colonialism in the Union of South Africa, the Rhodesias (Zambia and Zimbabwe), and Nyasaland (Malawi). It demanded the immediate withdrawal of colonial governments and the independence of nations under the yoke of settler colonialism. The resolution condemned the act of settler colonialism as a violation of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights established ten years earlier. Little had changed in these "territories" since the declaration was born, and the international community's silence on this gross oversight was a focus of the resolution.

Additionally, the resolution addressed the deficiency of educational facilities, racial segregation, forced labour, minority rule, and land grabbing by colonialists (University of California Press, 1959, p. 41). The resolution demanded that all African countries that supplied labour to South Africa withdraw and withhold workers for use in their country's development. It provides practical ways of supporting liberation struggles beyond individual borders. It contends

that (1) African states should have no diplomatic relations with any country that has race discrimination; (2) April 15th should be established as Africa Day as a rally point for freedom; (3) The permanent Secretariat will create a bureau of information to serve as the nucleus of information on liberation movements; and (4) Independent states should form an “African Legion” (University of California Press, 1959, p. 42). These recommendations focused on intensifying the pressure on settler colonial states. This resolution also calls on the British Government to end the state of emergency in Kenya and release all political prisoners.

The 1958 resolutions of the AAPC addressed national and continental issues facing African people. The call for liberation and unification grounded the resolutions and the conference. The resolutions provided a futuristic understanding of the need for African unity and the immediate need for freedom in countries still under the yoke of colonialism. The resolutions are comprehensive and representative of the tenor of the conference and the period in which Ghana served as a strategic base for Pan-African activity.

2018 60th Anniversary Of The AAPC: Issues And Recommendations

Pan Africanism Today, Tomorrow and Building a New Politics of Substantive Democracy and Security

The foundation of this IAR is rooted in the belief that decolonisation is incomplete. This IAR challenged the claims that Global Africa is independent and contended that the European and American hegemonic construct governs Global Africa. With a specific focus on the impact of economic systems, the IAR contends that weak economies and political systems affect nations’ ability to advance democracy, security, and autonomy. The statement asserted that the unification and liberation of Africa is thwarted by the state of African national economies propelled by these Euro-American hegemonic paradigms. The lack of political parties with a Pan-African orientation and national borders that embrace a colonial tradition is a significant barrier to achieving Pan-Africanism (Institute of African Studies-UG, 2019). This issue recognised that official Pan-African organisations such as the African Union are not effectively reflecting Global Pan-African aspirations.

The recommendations for this section focus on an immediate end to all forms of colonial rule of African people. The conference immediately calls for the Moroccan government to withdraw from Western Sahara. The statement of issues and recommendations highlights the need for inclusive democracy in Africa, including equity and fairness for all in Global Africa (Africa and African

descendants outside of Africa). The statement contends that inclusive democracy is key to developing democratic economies. This democracy must be inclusive of Pan-African ideals. The replacement of the dominant elite political class with formations representing cultural workers, peasants, farmers, youth, labour, and traders was accentuated as an option to achieve inclusive democracy (Institute of African Studies-UG, 2019). The recommendation calls for the widening and deepening of the relationship across Global Africa using African languages on social media, development, and control of technology and media outlets. Support for global movements like #BlackLivesMatter on the continent and globally was underscored as particularly significant.

On Pan-African Epistemologies for Knowledge Production

Epistemology is defined in this IAR as *how we know what we know*. The power of knowledge and knowledge production as a political project is emphasised as key to developing Pan-African epistemologies. According to the IAR, “knowledge products” can be manipulated to meet the objectives of their manufacturer. “Their collective intellectual capabilities have been undermined to facilitate subjugation and marginalization” (Institute of African Studies-UG, 2019, p. 3). This suppression occurs in formal education institutions in Global Africa, as reported by the plenary on Pan-African epistemologies. The issue contends that contemporary African higher education institutions are not conducive to addressing Africa's pressing needs. The African intelligentsia is complicit in elevating Western and colonial knowledge over African-based knowledge. Neo-colonial education is juxtaposed by the Dakar School, the Dar es Salaam School, and the Ibadan School,¹¹ which were considered liberated spaces during the initial phases of independence in Africa (Campbell, 1991; Thioub, 2007). Today the IAS is considered to be what Kwame Nkrumah identified as a liberated zone (Nkrumah, 1968) inside the academy in the 21st century.

The creation of Pan-African institutions independent from neo-colonial educational institutions is a primary recommendation of this IAR. There was a focus on the necessity of embracing decolonised and liberatory knowledge and self-knowledge. Recognising that many Pan-Africanists must operate in neo-colonial higher education institutions, it was suggested that there must be a union between academic scholarship and Pan-African activism. In addition, to calls to bridge the gap between Pan-African academics and community activists, the IAR recommended the development of a curriculum (the level was

11 The Dakar School, Ibadan School, and the Dar es Salaam School were institutions of higher education that were pivotal immediately after independence. These spaces engaged in developing African intellectuals and ideas that would challenge the contemporary research and thinking on Africa, African people, and intellectualism in Africa.

not specified but one could assume this was for all education levels) to expand the Pan-African personality. This curriculum would have the bandwidth to be employed in formal and non-formal systems. The development of (an) African languages (s) that can be used universally across the continent to communicate was a focus of this recommendation (Institute of African Studies–UG, 2019). Pan-African knowledge producers were tasked with engaging policymakers to influence African-centred scholarship and general Pan-African policies. This recommendation suggested that the AAPC should be organised every two years henceforth. Unfortunately, this was not realised due to the global COVID-19 pandemic and its disruption of academic and activist gatherings.

On Ending Imperialist Domination and Transforming Africa's Economies

This IAR issue on ending imperialist domination and transforming Africa's economies outlines the key economic challenges facing the African continent in the 21st century. The most significant challenge to Africa's economies according to the IAR is that they are “structurally dependent on the production and export of raw material commodities which feed industrial production, job creation and incomes in other economies” (Institute of African Studies–UG, 2019, p. 4). The issue discusses the fact that African foreign investors are protected and supported by African state actors. The issue contends that the most important internal sectors across Africa are dominated by Western transnational capital. The IAR suggests that Africa's ruling elites are, “largely comfortable overseeing realities within which there is widespread unemployment, a crisis of livelihoods in rural areas, and urbanization amidst deindustrialization” (Institute of African Studies–UG, 2019, p. 4). The issue highlights the impact of increased precarious working conditions that impact the livelihoods of workers who are part of the “informal” economy. High unemployment, coupled with a larger percentage of youth who have never had a relationship with formal employment, further crippled the living conditions in many African countries (Institute of African Studies–UG, 2019).

The recommendations for this section highlight the importance of stemming and returning the illicit outflows of capital from Africa. This recommendation suggests that African states must be redesigned to facilitate the self-reliance and self-sufficiency of African states and people (Institute of African Studies–UG, 2019, p. 4). This includes the redesign of the banking sectors to ensure that they are people centric and focus on financial cooperatives such as credit unions as a model to house the people's resources. On the educational front, the issue suggests that “Global Africans develop and disseminate analysis that

promotes the understanding that neoliberalism and the neoliberal economic system are anti-people, anti-solidarity, anti-collective, and bolstered by the expansion of debt and numerous debt cycles” (Institute of African Studies-UG, 2019, p. 4). Lastly, this issue recommends that Global Africans confront the power that foreign states, financial capital, and transnational corporations (TNCs) have over African economies. This recommendation outlines the steps that African nations must use to shed their economic colonial legacies. It contends that African nations must take their economies in their own hands to chart a new economic path for Global Africans.

On Restorative and Reparative Justice

Restorative and reparative justice (IAR) focuses on reparations as central to Global Africa's development. Reparations in this context is not a call for financial compensation but speaks to the dignity of Africa and African people. The section is based on the assertion that “we cannot wait for external reparations before we repair ourselves and our environment” (Institute of African Studies-UG, 2019, p.6). This recommendation called for a new paradigm to examine the global economy beyond 1492 and to engage African history for lessons for reparative justice. The 2011 U.N. Conference Against Racism was referenced as a pivotal moment in the fight against slavery (Zaki, 2011). Slavery is a crime against humanity; however, most African states do not incorporate slavery as a crime into their international policies. The recommendation calls for the creation of a global education programme focusing on reparations and restorative justice. It also calls on the AAPC@60 to “organize to secure recognition of the historic ecological debt and reparations owed to Africa's people for slavery and colonial plunder” (Institute of African Studies-UG, 2019, p.6). The recommendation encourages Africa, Caribbean nations, and other-African majority nations to participate in self-reparations. Self-reparations include, but are not limited to, resource and land reclamation and restoration, return of lost populations (return of people of African descent to the continent, knowledge by African people and African agency), and removal of colonial legacies (images, nationalism of African assets in the name of working people, and correction of legal frameworks).

Global African solidarity foregrounds this section of the recommendations, with a particular focus on developing tangible connections between Caribbean communities (CARICOM) and African states. There was also a call for African nations to support CARICOM'S ten-point¹² plan and the Global Africa Congress'

12 For more information about the about CARICOM's Ten-point plan visit-<https://caricomreparations.org/caricom/>

twelve-point plan. Finally, this recommendation strongly condemns the occupation of Palestine and calls for all African people to support the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign against the State of Israel until the state recognises the social and political rights of the Palestinian people (Institute of African Studies–UG, 2019).

Looking Backwards To Run Forward

The 1958 AAPC was a pivotal conference for African independence. Two short years after the conference, over one-third of the continent had gained independence. The 1958 conference promoted liberation, unity, and African agency to those present and those in conversation with the conference. The 1958 conference resolutions targeted broadly the eradication of any form of colonial control on the continent, including settler colonialism and an immediate need for African unity. Interestingly, the 2018 60th anniversary of the AAPC's focus was like the 1958 conference in that the strands tackled issues of neo-colonialism and African unity. Both conferences promoted African agency as pivotal components of the PAM. The African-nation served as the centre of both conferences. In 1958, questions of the African-nation arose in the resolutions and speeches calling for the independence of African nations to correspond with African unity. In essence, one African oppressed or colonised was the problem of all African people and nations. The 2018 60th anniversary called on the African-nation to centre the contemporary issues facing African people globally in the PAM. An assessment of these two conferences reveals that there were issues that remained relevant for the 2018 conference and further, that there were areas where there was still the unfinished business of liberation and transformation.

Unfinished Business of the Pan-African Movement

The 1958 AAPC conference resolutions and the 2018 60th anniversary issues and recommendations overlap primarily on the question of imperialism and colonialism. These topics were raised through debates, discussions, resolutions, and issues and recommendations. In 1958, AAPC resolutions focused on the impact of imperialism and colonialism on Africa. The geopolitical moment necessitated the conference's focus on the liberation and unification of African nations and the eradication of racialism. The 60th anniversary issue and recommendation *On Ending Imperialist Domination and Transforming African Economies and Building a New Politics of Substantive Democracy and Security* focused on the effects of imperialism and neo-colonialism economically, politically, and socially. The recommendation and issues highlight

the impact these systems have on the everyday lives of African people globally. The question of human rights emerged in both the 1958 and 2018 conferences. The 1958 and 2018 conferences incorporated the importance of human rights as a vital component of African people's liberation. In 1958, the resolutions contend that the very nature of colonialism is a human rights violation. This theme was picked up again in the 2018 conference in calls for international recognition of human rights violations in Africa and the Global South with a particular focus on Western Sahara and Palestine.

The 2018 conference advanced its view on African political systems and contends that they are rooted in a Euro-American hegemonic construct. These economic models promote neo-liberal policies that demonstrate a departure from indirect and direct colonial rule to imperial domination. The plenary on Ending Imperialist Domination and Transforming Africa's Economies tackles questions of economic imperialism, including land and ocean grabbing, exploitation of natural resources, and its impact on Africa's development. This panel raises critical questions about the impact of global capitalism and provides solutions for African nations and people as they develop alternative economic models. Dr. Yao Graham, the coordinator of Third World Network Africa, raises critical questions about economic sovereignty and the ownership of natural resources in communities across the continent. Dr. Adotey Bing-Pappoe, a professor of International Business, suggests that cooperatives can combat the imperialist domination of economic governance in Global Africa¹³ (Bing-Pappoe, 2018).

Frontiers, Boundaries, and Federation emerges in both conferences with an emphasis on eliminating colonial (neo-colonial) borders. Borders during the immediate post-colonial era became a fiercely contested concept and practical exercise. Some leaders adopted the domestication approach of solidifying their borders, which expanded their national territory (Khadiagala, 2010). This approach further cements colonial borders, which plague African nations today. The 2018 commemoration concentrated on the impact of embracing inherited colonial borders as a threat to Pan-Africanism and the decolonisation project. The influence of colonial borders on the political and economic well-being across the continent has been a topic of debate since independence. Adotey defines the border as an imaginary line that borderland residents do not acknowledge and, simultaneously, a political tool used by colonialists and the political elite (Adotey, 2021). The 2018 conference did not have a plenary session or keynote

13 Yao Graham is the Coordinator of Third World Network Africa, which is a Pan-African research and advocacy organisation that works on economic and social equity within Africa. ([TWNAFRICA— to Deliver a Better World!](#)). Dr. Addotey Bing-Pappoe is a Professor at the University of Greenwich.

address dedicated to frontiers and federations; nevertheless, several speakers, panelists, and cultural performances referred to the dangers of enforcing and embracing colonial inherited borders. The cross section of discussions and debates on the question of eradicating colonial borders in the 2018 conference (physical and mental) speaks to the central place that borders play in the political and economic challenges faced by Global Africa. Economic sovereignty is only possible by addressing the barriers inherited from colonial borders.

Settler colonialism and occupation based on racialism features in the 1958 resolutions and the Issues and Recommendations of 2018. The resolutions for the 1958 conference include the immediate withdrawal of settlers in Southern Africa and the total liberation of the people of Azania, South Africa. The 2018 IAR concentrated on freeing Palestine, Western Sahara, and West Papua New Guinea. Interestingly, the 2018 commemoration lacked content on Palestine; however, the occupation of Palestine was included in the IAR. This inclusion may be credited to the political orientation of the key organisers of the conference. The 1958 conference was silent on the occupation of Palestine despite the attendance of several representatives from the Afro-Asian Solidarity Movement. This is even more curious since, only seven years later, Ghana hosted the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference in 1965 in Winneba (Dai, 1965; Goddeeris, 2022).

Business of the 21st Century Pan-African Movement

The contemporary decolonisation debate is centred around academics, economists and Pan-African activists. These debates began during the anti-colonial movement and have been more prominent at various moments in the last sixty years. These prime actors in the movement for the decolonisation of the continent are concentrated in intellectual and activist spaces, while the political elite in Africa generally embrace methodological and theoretical direction from the Global North (American and European models of governance). This divide between the intellectual and activist spaces and the cohort of African leaders occupying government positions limits the possibility of decolonisation occurring in the 21st century.

The 2018 60th anniversary of the AAPC offered Pan-African institutions, organisations, and individuals the opportunity to dream about a future where African people could embrace their agency and manage their own affairs. The issues and recommendations are both reflective of the impact of colonialism and neo-colonialism on Global Africa and are forward- and inward-looking. The IAR on restorative and reparative justice featured in 2018 as a vital element of the PAM. Participants debated the necessity of addressing reparations,

restorative justice, and World Racism in a neo-colonial Global Africa. Debates raised at the World Conference Against Racism (WACR) supported the importance of having an All-African dialogue on reparations. The IAR boldly stated, "African, Caribbean and African majority states in other parts of Global Africa should engage in self-reparation..." (AACP 2018 Statement of Issues and Recommendations, 2019, p.7). Turning inward is part of the call by organisations such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which has a ten-point plan for reparations and restoration (McKeown, 2021). Concentrating on internal reparations allows Global African people to exercise agency in their redemption and liberation. This recommendation focuses on exploiting internal African resources as the basis for Africa's liberation and unification. Universal African citizenship and the free movement of African labour across Global Africa are at the core of this recommendation. This recommendation is quite similar to the 1958 resolution on frontiers, boundaries and federation. The movement of African people across Global Africa for labour has the potential to reduce unemployment, address forced migration, strengthen economies, and increase internal trade. The top-down approach of Pan-African activity across the continent that prevailed since the original conference has not been as successful as initially envisaged (Ayittey, 2010). This can be attributed to historical and political events, including the divide between the African leaders that held varying views on African unity.¹⁴ The relationship between African states and former colonisers particularly embracing capitalism and Western democracy sidelined debates about Pan-Africanism.

The 2018 recommendations focused on the role of women and youth in Africa's transformation. The recommendation titled *Youth, Workers, Progressive Women, and Africa's Transformation* included tackling issues faced by women, LGBTQI+ persons and African workers. The 2018 commemoration intentionally invited youth, students, activists, scholars, and the community as the main actors of the conference. Two of the seven plenaries focused on youth, and the opening plenary invited panelists to address the theme Being Youth in Africa Today.¹⁵ Over 300 people attended the opening plenary with representatives from

14 The African independence era produced African leaders who embraced Pan-African unity immediately and those who preferred to have national independence as the priority. The Casablanca Bloc promoted an immediate unified Africa and was endorsed by the leaders of Morocco, Egypt, Libya, Ghana, Guinea, and Mali, while the Monrovia Bloc, which included Liberia, Nigeria and most of Francophone Africa promoted an approach to African unity that privileged independence at the national level over continental unity.

15 The programme and conference website for the AAPC @ 2018 can be found here: <https://ias.ug.edu.gh/>

from across Global Africa, including a large contingent of youth who traveled from Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Burkina Fâso.

There was a particular focus on African workers losing their rights to decent work and quality of life (Institute of African Studies–UG, 2019, p.7). The loss of decent work impacts the daily lives of Africans globally. With a focus on the lives of African people, the organisers embrace mass-based Pan-Africanism. Decent work as a manifestation of a Pan-African vision emerged strongly in the statement of issues and recommendations. Debates on decent work are occurring across Global Africa, for example, Atitsogbe et al. (2021) examine the psychological impact of the lack of decent work on Togolese primary school teachers (Atitsogbe et al., 2021). They contend that decent work is necessary for individual and collective development with a particular focus on primary school teachers. The recommendations of the 2018 conference suggest that focusing on decent work was a priority of the AAPC.

Many of the presentations underscored the failures of Pan-African bodies such as the African Union, ECOWAS, and other regional groupings across Global Africa. Lastly, a bottom-up approach to building Pan-African institutions and the global movement was emphasised in this final resolution. The lessons gleaned from the 1958 AAPC strengthened the composition, structure, and issues raised and debated at the 2018 60th anniversary conference. The similarities speak to the continued nature of struggle against imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism. The 2018 60th anniversary renewed the primary questions raised at the 1958 conference. With a focus on new and old challenges the 2018 commemoration provides contemporary Pan-African scholars and activists with a diverse and multi-faceted blueprint that also includes varying opinions for the struggle for Pan-Africanism in the 21st century.

CONCLUSION

This essay examines the contributions and outcomes of the 1958 AAPC and the 60th anniversary of the AAPC celebrated in Accra, Ghana. The significant contributions of the 1958 AAPC and 2018 anniversary cannot be discussed or debated outside of the larger Pan-African project. During the 1958 conference, Africa was mired in a fight for independence and liberation from colonial regimes. Delegates and fraternal delegates represented political parties, liberation struggles, and anti-colonial organisations. The call for immediate independence and liberation was at the core of speeches, committees, and resolutions. Resolutions were wide sweeping and focused on the immediate issue of independence and Pan-Africanism as short and long-term strategies for Africa. The 2018 commemoration boasted a diverse gathering of Pan-Africanists representing students, academics, activists, labour leaders, and the community. The format of the conference mirrored that of the original 1958 conference but embraced a 21st-century reality. The plenaries, themes, and committees addressed the history of the PAM, including the 1958 conference, and sought to imagine a new Pan-African world. The sixty years that separated the 1958 and 2018 conferences showed promise of transformation and, sadly, a re-emergence of colonialism (neo-colonialism). The effects of neo-colonialism and imperialism were addressed throughout most plenaries and sessions.

The opening and closing sessions in the 2018 commemoration raised questions about the impact of imperialism and neo-colonialism on Global Africa's development. The 2018 commemoration addressed vital issues relevant in the 21st century, such as reparations and restorative justice, climate change, and recognition of women, the LGBTQI+ community, and persons displaced from decent work. The 2018 IAR suggests that Pan-Africanism must be driven by mass-based organisations that embody Pan-Africanism. The state apparatus in its current state is no longer a viable institution to lead this charge. The 2018 commemoration hosted by the University of Ghana's Institute of African Studies, Lincoln University, the TUC of Ghana, the Socialist Forum of Ghana (Socialist Movement Ghana), and Third World Network Africa will undoubtedly be discussed and debated in the years to come.

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