

Language and regional integration: foreign or African languages for the African union?

True to the Kiswahili adage that 'umoja ni nguvu' (unity is strength), it has become fashionable to seek strength in unity. This is evident, for instance, in the corporate world where different organisations are seeking mergers in order to face the ever-increasing challenges in business. The same has become true of nations in most parts of the world. They realise that it is very difficult for most of them to face the international world single-handedly. The developing nations, which have weak economies, need integration much more than the more developed nations, but unfortunately, it is the latter that have moved faster to reap the advantages of regional integration.

Africa is home to many of the very poor people in the world. As such, African leaders have a duty to take bold steps in an attempt to try and uplift the living standards of their people. This can be reached much faster not by relying on foreign aid that is more often than not pegged to very difficult conditions, but rather by striving together. There is an abundance of natural resources on the continent that require to be exploited for faster growth and economic development. This however cannot be reached unless the climate is conducive, and one way in which such a climate can be attained is by stronger and functional regional integration.