

Abstract

This article examines the venture of the African Union (AU) into diasporic diplomacy. It inspects the context in which this was done, and the thrust of its diplomacy in the diaspora. It identifies four crucial diasporic communities with which states and organisations like the AU must interact if they wish to have proper and functional diasporic diplomacy. These are the African Diaspora abroad (i.e. outside Africa), which consists of the historical and the contemporary diaspora, intra-African diasporas in the continent, and the diasporas of other regions in Africa. It is argued that the African diaspora abroad consists of the historical diaspora, and the contemporary diaspora. The article makes the case that the AU should concentrate its diaspora diplomacy on the historical diaspora, since concentrating on the contemporary African diaspora abroad pits it against member states which are also practicing diasporic diplomacy. Instead, it is suggested that the AU should play a facilitative role and also engage these other diasporas in the service of African diplomacy.