

Re-negotiating AU's free movement protocol: Towards an effective migration governance

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Abstract

Building on the *Lagos Plan of Action*, African leaders identified regional integration as the most sustainable approach to African socio-economic development. One of the pillars of regionalism has been the establishment of free trade and free movement protocols. Indeed, the success of free trade and unrestricted movement of capital is dependent on free human mobility. Thus in 2018, the African Union (AU) approved a protocol founded on the 2006 Migration framework for Africa and the 2016 launch of Africa's passport. The AU Free Movement Protocol established the African economic community relating to the free movement of people, right of residence, and rights of the establishment. While member states are obligated to harmonize their national policies, legal frameworks, and systems with this Protocol, cases of non-compliance have impeded the successful implementation of free mobility. In contravention to the Protocol and Global Compact for Migration, from the West to Southern Africa, several states continue to reinforce anti-immigration policies such as economic protectionism, extreme nationalism and xenophobia. The study interrogates the implementation of the Protocol, explores the status of free mobility in Africa, identifies the impediments to free migration, and proffers sustainable policy frameworks for effective migration governance in Africa.

Keywords: AU Free Movement Protocol, Migration Governance, Global Compact for Migration, Africa

Biography

Adeoye O. Akinola is Senior Lecturer and Head: Research and Teaching at the Institute for Pan-African Thought and Conversation (IPATC), University of Johannesburg, South Africa. He obtained a doctorate in political science from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. He was a Visiting Assistant Professor at the United Nations University for Peace (UPEACE) Africa Regional Programme in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He was a member of the UPEACE mission to Somalia and Somaliland in 2019, and co-editor of the IPATC's journal, *Pan-African Conversation: An International Journal*. He is the author and co-author of five books, including the edited volumes on, *The Political Economy of Xenophobia in Africa* (2018), and *Worlds Apart? Perspectives on Africa/EU Migration* (In Press). He specializes in *Globalization, African political economy, resource governance, migration, conflict, and peace studies*.