

## **Regional Cooperation for Development: The African Union Experience**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The crisis of development plaguing African countries has resulted in increasing levels of socio-economic inequality, rising poverty, and unemployment, collapse of social welfare and deepening level of indebtedness, among others. This chapter interrogates the potentials of the African Union (AU) in resolving this crisis, nay engendering development across the continent within the framework of regional cooperation for development. Informed by the dependency theoretical position on regional cooperation for development which sees it as a mechanism to stimulate and consolidate autocentric development, the chapter examines the institutions and policies of the AU as a basis of determining the organization's capability to provide an alternative developmental direction for African countries. Furthermore, the concern with the infrastructural and institutional capacity of African States to maximally exploit the several and collective benefits derivable from regional cooperation is interrogated. The concluding premise of the chapter is that there is an urgent need to "rejig" the architecture of the AU to effectively reposition it as a mechanism to deliver on its mandate of engendering development for Africa.