Vote for Africa in 1992!

In this election year, congressional observers expect a fairly inactive session on Africa-related issues. With the recession forcing politicians to stress the home front, the only foreign affairs topics attracting much attention are high-profile issues such as relations with the former Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, informed grassroots advocates coupled with the seniority and expertise of some of Africa’s friends in Congress are assets that can make a difference. When there is no proposed legislation, Members of Congress can still force a critical look at administration policies by hearings and public statements.

1992 will be a critical transition year for many African countries. The U.S. role will have a decisive effect in many cases. But even the Members of Congress who are concerned about Africa will only act energetically if they are hearing from their constituencies.

Despite the difficulties in focusing attention on Africa, there are also new opportunities. The end of the Cold War has provided the possibility of looking at issues in new ways. The moves away from the old apartheid order in South Africa and the resurgence of grassroots demands for human rights and democracy throughout the continent, represent victories, albeit yet incomplete. And in the new context those concerned about justice and sustainable development on the African continent can sometimes gain support from unlikely sources—witness the bipartisan congressional criticism of Mobutu which has included even conservative Republicans.

All of the seats in the House of Representatives, as well as 35 senate seats are up for election this year (see page 4 for list). Both incumbents and new candidates need to hear questions about Africa policy.

In this issue of the Washington Notes on Africa, we present a checklist of issues that need to be raised, and a listing of legislation of Africa pending as of the beginning of the congressional session. We also urge you to consult last Spring’s issue to identify key congressional actors on Africa, and our special Fall issue on Apartheid’s Legacy & Southern Africa in the ’90s for a more extensive round-up of southern African issues.

SOUTH AFRICA

Formal negotiations for a new constitution in South Africa began in December 1991, with the opening of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa). But the de Klerk regime is still working to maintain effective veto power for whites under a new constitution, and has tolerated covert violence against opponents. The extent of pressure this year in favor of full democracy will be decisive in determining South Africa’s future for years to come.

The Bush administration prematurely lifted sanctions July 1991 eliminating the single-most important external lever against the apartheid regime. But several key sanctions remain in effect, namely bans on:

- U.S. support for the extension of International Monetary Fund credit facilities to “any country engaging in apartheid;
- Export-Import Bank financing for trade with South Africa;
- all exports to the South African police and military;
- arms trade with South Africa; and cooperation or intelligence-sharing between U.S. and S.A. intelligence agencies.

In addition, many state and local governments have imposed their own restrictions on transactions with companies doing business in South Africa.

The Commonwealth has endorsed the African National Congress (ANC) demand that remaining sanctions not be lifted until a new constitution is negotiated. But it is likely that the Bush administration will seek to encourage the South African regime in 1992 by lifting or modifying additional federal sanctions, or by encouraging state and local governments to do so. Congressional voices will be a critical component in making clear the need for continuing pressure for ending the violence and establishing a non-racial democracy in South Africa.

Congressional attitudes will also be reflected in aid packages for groups inside South Africa. Anti-apartheid groups are concerned that this aid not reinforce...
government institutions, nor tilt against pro-democracy forces in the transition process. A questionable precedent was set last year when the U.S. proceeded with $2.5 million in aid to Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha despite revelations that the organization was funded by the South African government and collaborating with the government in ongoing violence.

ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE

In Angola, a cease-fire has been negotiated and multi-party elections are scheduled for sometime between September and November 1992. So far the cease-fire is holding, despite some delays in regroupment of troops and the merger of the government and UNITA armies into a new non-partisan national army. The U.S. is supporting the cease-fire and relief operations, and President Bush told Angolan President dos Santos the U.S. would not take sides in the election.

However, the U.S. continues to covertly fund UNITA with an estimated $20 million. The covert funding reinforces suspicions that the U.S. is still pursuing the agenda of installing UNITA in power.

While the funds have already been approved by Congress, it is vital that voices be raised to demand that the U.S. play a truly neutral role in Angola. Given both administration and media bias in favor of UNITA, close monitoring is needed to ensure that the elections are truly free and fair, and that the U.S. supports reconstruction and democracy rather than promoting the fortunes of one political party. In order to make such monitoring possible, the covert aid program should be made public.

Although the U.S. has not been directly involved in supporting the continuing terror war by RENAMO in Mozambique, the U.S. is an influential party by virtue of its aid to the Mozambican government and by its ties to the countries where RENAMO still gets its outside backing—South Africa, Malawi, and Kenya, as well as right-wing groups in Europe and in the U.S. With RENAMO still balking at signing a cease-fire and participating in multi-party elections, there is an urgent need for serious pressure on RENAMO and its backers.

If, hopefully, a cease-fire is signed, it is likely that RENAMO will be seeking backing in the U.S. for the election campaign, hoping that its past of atrocities and as a tool of South African special forces will be forgotten. Congressional monitoring of this danger, as well as support for post-war reconstruction, will be essential.

ZAIRE

Mobutu Sese Seko, long-time U.S. protege, has presided over the country's economic decline and his own personal transformation into reportedly one of the world's richest men. Over the past year he has been strongly challenged by pro-democracy protesters and virtually abandoned by most of his outside backers. Despite a wide coalition of opposition groups demanding his resignation and a representative national conference to chart a new political structure for the country, he has held onto power.

The Bush administration has hesitated to demand Mobutu's retirement, but instead has insisted on compromise between Mobutu and the opposition. Both the opposition and independent observers regard this strategy as a recipe for increasing chaos, since Mobutu's compromises again and again turn out to be new maneuvers to avoid democracy.

Bipartisan congressional opposition to Mobutu and the administration position has been surprisingly strong, with Senators Kassebaum (R-KS), Wofford (D-PA) and Kennedy (D-MA) taking the lead on a non-binding resolution calling for change. A similar resolution has already passed the House of Representatives.

1992 is a critical year for the 36 million people of Zaire. If pressure on and
from Congress is sustained, it could shift administration policy in favor of Mobutu's unconditional removal from power and support to enable a democratically chosen government to alleviate the desperate economic situation left by Mobutu.

OTHER MAJOR CONFLICT ZONES

Past U.S. involvement in other major conflict or immediate post-conflict zones in Africa gives a special responsibility for high-priority U.S. attention. These include:

- Western Sahara: A referendum is scheduled for 1992, in which Saharans will choose between independence and incorporation into Morocco. The U.S. has supported Morocco in this war since the mid-1970s. Both the referendum and subsequent implementation call for careful monitoring.
- Liberia: Liberia is returning to peace after two years of devastating conflict. Despite the U.S. special relationship with Liberia, and U.S. support of the Doe dictatorship which led to the crisis, Liberians feel neglect from Washington. The issues include not only U.S. support for reconstruction, but U.S. policy which has been restrictive in admitting Liberian refugees.
- Kenya: President Moi has moved reluctantly to accept the principle of multi-party democracy, under pressure from aid donors including the U.S. But the situation in this close U.S. ally, which is also implicated in support for RENAMO in Mozambique, still calls for close monitoring. Critics of the administration oppose continued U.S. military aid to the Moi regime.
- Horn of Africa: Famine still threatens millions in this region of Africa. There is now peace in Ethiopia and Eritrea. But the two countries face massive problems in reconstruction and in finding productive employment for demobilized troops. In Somalia the overthrow of Siad Barre, a tyrant formerly supported by the U.S., has been followed by disintegration in internecine warfare; international and bilateral agencies have not succeeded in delivering even basic relief. In Sudan the war in the south and human rights abuses by the Khartoum government continue unabated.

The Horn of Africa Recovery Act, promoted by Bread for the World and other groups, lays out constructive criteria for U.S. participation in peace-making, relief and development linked to grassroots groups. Although the Act failed to pass in 1991, it continues on the agenda for 1992.

FAIR SHARE FOR AFRICA

The total U.S. aid budget for Fiscal Year 1992 consists of $13.7 billion. $5.3 billion, almost half, goes to two countries: Israel and Egypt. All of sub-Saharan Africa receives $800 million in development aid, with an additional $130 million in food assistance. That comes out to about $600 per capita for Israel, $43 per capita for Egypt, and $1.64 per capita for sub-Saharan Africa. The disproportion between need and allocation is grossly inequitable.

The House of Representatives has passed a 1992 Appropriations Bill that calls for $1 billion dollars to sub-Saharan Africa. Senate action on the Appropriations Bill is not scheduled until March. The House and Senate Sub-committees on Africa, the offices responsible for drafting most Africa-related legislation, will also begin discussing 1993 aid levels next spring. But it is possible that aid may again be approved under a Continuing Resolution at existing levels, and that in practice Africa funds will be transferred to other areas of the world.

AID FOR JUST AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Development aid to Africa is supervised by the State Department's Agency for International Development (USAID). Under current criteria for the Development Fund for Africa, aid should be configured to:

- promote sustained economic growth, encourage private sector development, promote individual initiatives, and help to reduce the role of central governments in areas more appropriate for the private sector.
- take into account the local-level perspectives of the rural and urban poor, including women, during the planning process.
- promote provisions to protect vulnerable groups, especially poor, isolated and female farmers, the urban poor and children.
- increase agricultural production in ways which protect and restore the natural resource base.

In 1991 hearings, Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Herman Cohen stressed that aid for Africa is based on criteria of democracy, economic reform, and "responsible participation in world events." Aid critics are concerned that in many cases such criteria may be used in practice to support U.S. clients rather than to promote human rights, popular participation and genuine sustainable development. They are also concerned that aid programs pressuring privatization and U.S. institutional models as panaceas for Africa's problems will be insensitive to African grassroots concerns and ignore the need to invest in Africa's human resources.

The need for independent monitoring by Congress and outside groups of the actual impact of U.S. aid and other economic policies on African development is urgent. For without this even greatly expanded budgets are unlikely to bring net benefits for grassroots Africans.
Campaign '92

Senators Up for Re-Election in 1992

Brock ADAMS .......... D-Washington
Christopher (Kit) BOND .... R-Missouri
John B. BREAX .......... D-Louisiana
Dale BUMPERS .......... D-Arkansas
Dan COATS .............. R-Indiana
Kent CONRAD .......... D-North Dakota
Alan CRANSTON .......... D-California
Alfonse M. D'AMATO .... R-New York
Thomas A. DASCHLE-D-South Dakota
Alan J. DIXON ............. D-Illinois
Christopher J. DODD ..D-Connecticut
Bob DOLE ................. R-Kansas
Wendell H. FORD .......... D-Kentucky
Wyche FOWLER, Jr .. D-Georgia
Jake GARN ................. R-Utah
John GLENN ............. D-Ohio
Bob GRAHAM ............. D-Florida
Charles F. GRASSELY ............ R-Iowa
Ernest HOLLINGS .... D-South Carolina
Daniel K. INOUYE ..... D-Hawaii
Robert W. KASTEN, Jr .. R-Wisconsin
Patrick J. LEAHY ........ D-Vermont
John McCAIN ............. R-Arizona
Barbara A. MIKULSKI ...... D-Maryland
Frank MURKOWSKI .......... R-Alaska
Don NICKLES .......... R-Oklahoma
Bob PACKWOOD .......... R-Oregon
Harry REID .......... D-Nevada
Warren RUDMAN .. R-New Hampshire
Terry SANFORD ..... D-North Carolina
John SEYMOUR .......... R-California
Richard SHELBY .......... D-Alabama
Arlen SPECTER .. R-Pennsylvania
Steve SYMMS .......... R-Idaho
Timothy E. WIRTH ........ D-Colorado

Questions for Incumbents and New Candidates

1. Do you support keeping existing sanctions on the white-minority South African government until there is agreement on a new democratic non-racial constitution?
2. Do you oppose any aid to South Africa that goes to groups linked to the South African government in promoting violence?
3. Do you support an end to covert U.S. involvement in Angola, limiting any U.S. aid to open non-partisan support for relief, development and truly free and fair elections?
4. Do you support active U.S. encouragement for Mobutu Sese Seko to leave Zaire, and for formation of a new democratic government by a sovereign national conference?
5. Do you support a “fair share for Africa” in . . .
   a. U.S. diplomatic and material support for international peacemaking in crises such as Liberia and Somalia?
   b. U.S. aid for relief in humanitarian crises such as Liberia, the Horn of Africa, Zaire, Angola and Mozambique?
   c. U.S. policy on international debt relief?
   d. U.S. aid for just and sustainable development?
6. Do you support the Horn of Africa Recovery and Food Security Act?
7. Do you oppose “conditionalities” that require African governments to make drastic cuts in expenditures for basic health and education for the rural and urban poor?

Africa Pending Legislation — 1992

ANGOLA: S. 1456 (Sen. Roth). Amends the Internal Revenue Code to restore foreign aid credits for taxes paid or accrued to Angola, unless the Secretary of State certifies that the Peace Accords for Angola are not being implemented. Referred to Senate Finance Committee in July 1991.

HORN OF AFRICA: The Horn of Africa Recovery and Food Security Act of 1991 was incorporated into the foreign aid authorization bills. In the likely event they are not enacted early this year, Bread for the World will be urging Representatives Bereuter and Wheat and Senators Kassebaum and Simon to reintroduce the measure as free-standing legislation. For more information call Bread for the World (202-2690-0200).
