

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: AN AFRICA AGENDA

CONFERENCE REPORT



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U.S. FOREIGN POLICY: AN AFRICA AGENDA

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Edited by William Minter



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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Willis Logan 1

AFRICA IN TRANSITION

His Excellency Salim Salim 2

SOME REFLECTIONS ON AFRICA AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

Ms. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf..... 7

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA: BUILDING DEMOCRACY THROUGH POPULAR PARTICIPATION

Dr. Makau wa Mutua 13

LUNCHEON REMARKS

Representative Harry Johnston (D-FL) 18

PROSPECTS FOR PEACE

President Olusegun Obasanjo 20

CLOSING REMARKS

Senator Paul Simon 24



INTRODUCTION

Willis H. Logan

Director

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Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

Against the backdrop of the end of the Cold War and the beginning of a new United States Administration, the Washington Office on Africa and the Africa Office of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. undertook the challenge of organizing a conference. This was done in an effort to more clearly identify critical issues in Africa; to hear African perspectives on those issues; and to reflect on the implications of those issues vis-a-vis U.S. foreign policy and the role we might play in helping to shape that policy.

The timing of the March 1993 conference was especially important because we wanted to get the Africa issues on the emerging agenda of a new Administration. In addition, we wanted to explore the new space for discussion of Africa issues that was created by the demise of the Cold War. That is to say that there was a perception that the Cold War had been very much an impediment to any open-ended discussion about African issues because the discussion by necessity had to take place in the context of the Cold War. With the end of the Cold War, new constructs for the discussion could be explored in an attempt to move beyond the episodic events that have all too often dominated previous discussion about U.S. policy towards Africa.

To set the context for the conference, all the major presentations for the conference were made by colleagues from Africa. This input was essential because it provided a context within which to think about our input to the formation of U.S. foreign policy towards Africa. The context emerges as an important element in trying to see what the task is of those of us in the United States who are supportive of Africa and her

cause. The task is not and should not be determined in terms of Africa's agenda alone. Rather, the task is to struggle to understand the agenda that Africa is building for itself and to identify and be supportive of those relevant points where that agenda *intersects* with U.S. foreign policy.

A careful reading of the conference documents contained in this report will confirm that there are many points where the Africa's agenda and U.S. foreign policy intersect. The task in the period ahead is to work to increase understanding of the Africa agenda and to strengthen support for that agenda in the context of U.S. foreign policy.



AFRICA IN TRANSITION

His Excellency Salim Salim
Secretary-General
Organization of African Unity

I want to begin by thanking the organizers of this conference for inviting me. It was encouraging to hear the new chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the House of Representatives and his pledge that Africa will continue to receive priority, at least in the House. I do sincerely hope that it will receive the priority of the entire Congress and of the new administration.

This meeting, for me, could not have come at a more appropriate time, for two principal reasons. On the one hand, we are in the process of marking the 30th anniversary of the formation of the Organization of African Unity. Now 30 years is not too long a time, but it is sufficient time for us to be able to reflect on the achievements, shortcomings, and the expectations of our continent. It has also come at the right time because there is in the United States a new administration.

I do not want to engage in exaggerated statements, but I would like to say that in our continent, there is a lot of expectation in the Clinton administration. Not since the days of John F. Kennedy has there been such an expectation in the continent, that the administration in the United States will try seriously to address itself to the concerns of Africa.

Let me start by saying that one clear achievement of our continent as we look a few years back is that one of the principal agendas of the Organization of African Unity has more or less been fulfilled. The agenda for decolonization, the struggle for freedom, the struggle against racism, the struggle against colonialism. Now this is no mean achievement, particularly when we remember that when the OAU was formed, we were 32 independent states. There were areas which were considered really an impregnable force of racism and colonialism.

I spent some eleven years of my life in the United Nations, and I remember the arguments and the debates we used to have to try and persuade people to understand the importance of ending colonialism in Southern Rhodesia, of ending Portugal's colonialism in the former Portuguese colonies. To say nothing of what were considered to be impossible tasks, namely Namibia and South Africa. And now Namibia is free and the Ambassador of Namibia is here with us. All the former Portuguese colonies are now free. And we even now dare to think in terms of a free South Africa, and we dare to do so not as idealists, but as realists.

Five or ten years ago, when you talked about the liberation of South Africa, of a South African democratic society, where a person will be judged not so much by the pigmentation of his skin, but by his or her contribution to society, you were more being idealistic not realistic. We were always talking in terms such as we hope we will see South Africa free in our lifetime. More often than not, it was a hope than a reality. But now as you know, and as Congressman Hamilton rightly pointed out, things are moving and moving quite fast in South Africa.

So we do expect that in the course of the next months or few years, we should see a democratic, non-racial South Africa. **I hope the new administration will make as one of its priorities to do everything possible to ensure that the process of change in South Africa is not derailed and not diverted.** In this respect I may pay tribute to the United States and especially to the House of Representatives and the Senate for the important decision that they took when they imposed sanctions on South Africa, a decision of course made possible also by the public opinion in this country who rallied around in support of the struggle in South Africa.

So Africa is generally now free of the misery and the scourge of colonialism. But the expectation of our people—



that freedom will bring with it prosperity, economic advancement, stability, security—in many ways has been frustrated. We have a number of problems in the continent now, both natural and man-made disasters.

The natural disasters, there is very little Africa can do about them. When there is an unprecedented drought as we have witnessed in Southern Africa, you can't blame the African leaders and the African governments for the irresponsibility of having a drought. When there is famine because of drought, you can't blame it on the African leaders.

But when there is civil strife, which now really is bleeding our people, bleeding our resources, these are what I would call man-made disasters. Clearly we have a responsibility to do what we can to put an end to that.

We are going through a very critical time, confronted with many challenges. Some of these challenges are the result of our own mistaken policies in the continent, some of these challenges are a result of factors beyond the control of the continent.

For example, I have repeatedly said, and it is a fact, that it is not true that Africans do not work hard, it is not true that our people for some reason are not conscientious or hard working. Our people work harder today, produce more, but get less for what they produce, due to the collapse of commodity prices. Everywhere I go I am told that the continent of Africa is not being marginalized, that there is sufficient interest in Africa, there is concern about Africa. But it is not true: the reality is different. Because of global changes, there is less flow of resources to the continent now.

In fact, in net terms, Africa is giving out more than it gets from the world community. External indebtedness is really a tremendous burden to whatever efforts that the African countries may be making in terms of overcoming economic difficulties. Now these issues are the shared responsibility of the international community. **There are issues which Africa must settle, must have its own responsibility. But there are issues for which the international community must also assume its responsibility.**

When we look at our continent today, we are faced with

what I call three principal challenges, and it is these challenges which I hope the new administration will look into as it look into Africa.

One challenge of course, is the challenge of uplifting the lot of our people, the improvement of the living conditions of our people. And this can be brought about partially by undertaking the necessary economic reforms which are now going on in Africa. Almost every African country today is engaged in one structural adjustment or another. Some of it as a result of the IMF/World Bank contribution, some of it internalized. We have to see to what extent the international community can support these efforts made by Africa in the field of economic reforms, in the field of structural adjustment.

At the same time, however, we recognize very clearly that it is really impossible to talk of meaningful economic development in our continent. It is impossible to talk of economic integration, which is now the goal of Africa, the establishment of African Economic Community which was agreed upon in Abuja, Nigeria, two years ago. These are all important items on our agenda. But none of this can really be accomplished in the situation which now prevails in the continent.

I am talking in terms of the instability, insecurity, I'm talking about the civil wars that are prevailing in our continent. And therefore, one of the most important priorities for Africa, in my opinion, is how to address ourselves to the issues of conflicts. How can Africa make a contribution first and foremost to prevent conflicts from happening, and when they do occur to take decisive actions to overcome them? So the question of conflict resolution, conflict prevention, conflict management, is the number one goal of the Organization of African Unity today. And whatever contribution the international community can do to help Africa's efforts in that direction would be useful.

At the same time, as you know, one of the most encouraging things happening in the continent now is the swing of democratization that is sweeping throughout the continent. Now, in my opinion, this is an irreversible process because it is not a process which is simply a result of the changes of the



international scene. It is a process which is a direct result of the struggle of our people for freedom. When our people fought against colonialism, when our people fought against racism, when our people are now fighting against apartheid, they fought in order to insure that they too took part in the process of governance.

They too took part, they had a stake in the development of their respective countries. So the yearning for democratization on the part of our people is a logical yearning, and it is a logical process. This process has of course taken different forms, of course it has a number of problems, and of course there can be no uniform application.

I wish to stress that where the principle of democratization, the principles of democracy are universal, and you cannot say there are principles applicable in Africa, and principles that are applicable in Europe, and principles that are applicable in the United States. The democratic principles are all universal. **The rule of law, the transparency of government, accountability of government, regular elections, these are universal principles.**

But their application must vary from one country to another. And it is very important to, when you talk about supporting the democratization process in Africa, it is very important not to take a quick fix approach to African problems. It is also very important not to simplify the problems.

I would say there are two extremes, in looking at the democratic process in Africa: there are those who say whatever applies in Washington or in London or in Paris or Delhi must also apply in Dar es Salaam or in Lagos or in Abidjan or in Dakar. As if the situations in these areas do not differ. I think that is an oversimplification.

But there is another extreme. The extreme of using the specific problems of Africa, the ethnic problems, to say that because of tribalism democracy cannot flourish in Africa. That is also a cop-out as far as I am concerned. What you need is a balanced approach, what you need and what we are doing in the continent now are strenuous efforts at building democratic institutions.

I think our friends in the world, our friends who are

supportive of democratic process in Africa should concentrate more on strengthening democratic institutions, on strengthening the culture of democracy, the culture of human rights, the culture of tolerance in the continent rather than simply finding out how many political parties does a given country have. The mere existence of political parties, or for that matter the mere holding of elections, does not in itself translate into a existence of democratic society.

We are therefore faced with the challenge of economic development, the challenge of conflict resolution and the challenge of transition to democracy. These are three challenges which the Organization of African Unity is actively now involved in. There is no doubt in my mind that the primary responsibility for the development of Africa, the primary responsibility for resolutions of conflict, the primary responsibility for democratization in Africa must be that of the Africans. It can't be different.

At the same time since we live in a global village, and since we all talk about interdependence, and since we all talk about a new world order, the responsibility of the international community also, and of countries like the United States, which is the only superpower around in the world right now, is also clear. There is the responsibility to support the efforts being made by Africans in the various fields. Let me mention just one example: before a country has democratized in Africa, there is a lot of interest, a lot of concern by the world community, including the imposition of conditionalities to insure that there is a democratic setup, when are you going to hold elections, when are you going to do that and the other, which is fine.

But when the process of democratization has set in, the interest diminishes. And so you have situations where our people have great expectations, and what is happening? Whether it is in Benin or it is in Zambia or in other countries, there are great expectations because people feel now we have a democratic government, now we have a government which is accountable and responsible. They expect the result to be translated into betterment of their lives.

Then the problems begin. Then, whether it is a President Chiluba or someone else, they begin to perceive the



enormous economic difficulties that they have to face. And unfortunately, it is that time when world attention ceases to focus on those countries. One way of assisting the democratization process in Africa is really to support effectively the countries which are democratizing in our continent.

And another way is to support the reforms is by insuring that the conditions which are now prevailing in Africa are seen in a global context. In other words, **you cannot talk in terms of good governance in isolation from global governance. And there is no way that you can expect miracles to happen in the continent, as long as we continue to labor and work hard and we continue to sell our cotton or cocoa or sisal or tea or coffee at reduced prices.** So there is a need for some form of international democratization also. We have been talking about democratization in the individual countries in Africa, but also there is a need for international democratization.

I want to conclude by making two points. The Africa of 1963, when the OAU was formed, was an Africa at the period of the coldest days of the Cold War. And we all know that Africa has been one of the continents which has been a principal victim of the Cold War considerations by the great powers. The Africa of 1993 is an Africa where the Cold War has more or less ended.

Africa certainly rejoices at the end of the Cold War. Our hope and our expectation for the ending of the Cold War would be used as a challenge to the international community in terms of improving the lot of the world's population. That it would be used as an opportunity to fight against global poverty, it would be used as an opportunity to really show humanitarian concerns for the world, and Africa in particular.

My fear is that because Africa is no longer considered to be of Cold War geo-political importance, its problems will not be taken seriously.

And I want to leave you with my own reflections on Somalia. The Somali development is a classical case of what happens to a situation of lack of concern in a post-Cold War context.

Everybody saw the Somali crisis coming. We all talked about the tragedy that was unfolding in

Somalia. We all are to blame, that we allowed the tragedy to unfold there. But I want to say, we in the case of Africa are to blame not for not raising concerns. We are to blame for not being in a position to take decisive action.

But we talked, we squawked, we appealed. In January last year, when the situation in Somalia was just beginning to be more catastrophic, I came to the U.N., I saw the Secretary-General of the United Nations, we met with some of the permanent members of the Security Council, we made an appeal for intervention by the United Nations.

In every way, with the African group at the United Nations, we tried to get an involvement of the Security Council in a more meaningful way. And it took a lot of negotiations to get people to agree to the dispatch of 50 military observers to Somalia, five zero. Now we are very grateful that at the end of the day, the United States has taken the decision it has taken.

Personally I would have preferred that we did not have to have the Marines landing in Somalia. I would have preferred the situation did not develop the way it has developed. But since the situation developed in such a way that there was a need for decisive action, the efforts taken by the United States were really commendable.

But I am trying to say that **we should not wait until we see catastrophe has been completely made until we take action.** And I will put it to you that I do not believe that Somalia would have been allowed to degenerate the way it has degenerated had this happened in the days of the Cold War.

Now I am not saying therefore I am nostalgic for the Cold War. No. I'm only saying that we must show concern. I end up where I began: there is a new administration in town, there is a lot of expectation in our continent that things will be moving for the better.

We are asking for recognition that Africans themselves are trying to do something about their problems. But we are asking also that there be consideration and support on the part of the international community and especially on the part of the United States. Whether it is a question of democratization, or it is a question of economic reforms, or a question of



conflict resolution, or whether it is a question of fighting against natural disasters.

And on democratization it is very important that the United States which has pioneered this exercise must be seen to be taking a consistent position. We have a situation for example, in Angola, an election which everyone says was free and fair. Everybody was euphoric about the way the Angolan people conducted themselves. A party won, a party lost. I think it is the responsibility of the world community to send a clear message that we are supporting in word and in deed the process of democratization. That the verdict of the Angolan people is respected. So I do hope that the United States, in its action, will demonstrate this. I thank you.



SOME REFLECTIONS ON AFRICA AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

*Ms. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
Assistant Administrator and
Director, Regional Bureau for Africa
United Nations Development Program*

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to reflect with you on Africa's economic situation within the context of international economic realities. As is well known, the underlying causes of Africa's economic crisis are complex. They include such factors as the economic and social structures and policies of African countries, the political environment and governance, man-made and natural disasters (for example wars and droughts) and adverse international economic forces. Among the latter, the deteriorating trade, external debt and official aid situation in most African countries have jointly contributed to creating an environment that continues to constrain efforts aimed at economic recovery and sustainable development.

BACKGROUND OF THE AFRICAN SITUATION

Let me state, up front, that ill-advised economic management strategies partly contributed to perpetuating economic structures that rendered African economies vulnerable to external shocks at the beginning of the crises of the late seventies and early eighties. For, by the latter date, when adjustment began, most of these countries had overextended public enterprise sectors (Ghana, Madagascar, Mauritania, Zambia), or public infrastructural development commitments that weighed heavily on government budgets (Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Nigeria, Togo). Most had used state marketing monopolies, import licensing, steeply cascaded tariff structures, and direct price intervention to control external trade, generate revenue, and

protect import-substituting industries.

This combination of depressed incentives for foodcrop production, overdependence on a few exports, external trade policies distorted in favor of import-substituting industries, overextended public sector, and domestic price controls rendered African economies extremely vulnerable to external and natural shocks. On the eve of undertaking adjustment reforms, most of these countries were experiencing macroeconomic crises to which external and natural shocks substantially contributed.

The contribution of external factors to the macroeconomic disequilibria of the late seventies and early eighties is also of great significance. I refer to two of these: **the deteriorating terms of trade** (due to falling prices for African exports), and **rising interest rates** (which stayed in the double digits through most of the 1979-84 period after reaching a peak of 17 percent in 1981).

As I mentioned earlier, neglect of export diversification meant dependence on a single or a few export crops or minerals by most of these countries for foreign exchange. When this factor is combined with falling prices for these commodities (most of which are negotiated through international commodity agreements with developed countries), then the ripple effect of reduced export earnings on economic performance can be appreciated. This operates through worsening balance of payments, reduced import capacity and reduced investment.

Of the ten African countries surveyed in a 1991 World Bank study, for example, eight experienced pre-reform macroeconomic imbalances to which falling international prices substantially contributed. In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, prices of cocoa and coffee (which together account for 40 percent of export earnings), fell by a third during the 1977-80 period, leading to a current account deficit worth 17 percent of GDP in 1981. In Ghana, real export earnings (to which cocoa contributes 60 percent) fell by half between 1970 and 1982. In



Kenya, the purchasing power of coffee (in terms of dollar-priced manufactures) was nearly halved between 1978 and 1981 because of depressed prices and fluctuations in the value of the dollar.

It was also reported that deteriorating terms of trade (equivalent to a loss of one-tenth of gross domestic income between 1977 and 1979) started the balance-of-payments crisis in Malawi; while the fall in iron ore prices (on which Mauritania depends for 70 to 80 percent of its export earnings) led to a sharp deceleration in the growth of the economy. Of the remaining countries, Mauritius experienced a dwindling of the growth rate of sugar export earnings (from 10 to 5.7 percent) in the late seventies and early eighties, while softening world market phosphate and copper prices during the second half of the 1970s contributed to huge budgetary and balance-of-payments deficits for Togo and Zambia respectively.

The contribution of rising interest rates to the pre-reform crises in African countries was no less significant. The debt burden of rising interest rates of varying degrees of severity during the reference period has been reported for all ten countries in the study I referred to earlier. In Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, the combined effect of both external factors culminated in a foreign debt stock worth 35 percent of GDP by the beginning of 1981. Kenya's mounting external debt obligations were also partially attributed to rising world interest rates. Furthermore, 11 percent of the increase in Malawi's external debt stock was directly attributed to interest rate hikes between 1977 and 1979.

The combined effects of domestic policy and external factors on the African economies prior to the macroeconomic reforms is now well documented. For instance, during the crises of the late 1970s and early 1980s, real income per capita in most of these countries had fallen substantially below that at independence. Lack of foreign exchange due to persistent balance-of-payments problems led to frequent shortages and rationing of goods in the domestic market, particularly imported inputs and spare parts critical to domestic production and distribution.

In Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, GDP stagnated during the 1981-83 period and actually fell by 2.5 percent in 1983, inflation

averaged 13 percent per year and the current account deficit averaged 17 percent of GDP. In Ghana, where the economy virtually came to a halt, per capita income in 1982 was 30 percent lower than the 1970 level, real export earnings had fallen by 52 percent, inflation was running at over 44 percent per year, goods were rationed, and price controls were pervasive. In the more indebted countries, the stock of debt relative to GDP ranged from 50 percent (for Kenya) to over 200 percent (for Mauritania) and as high as 400 percent (for Zambia).

STABILIZATION AND ADJUSTMENT TO THE RESCUE

It was against this background that African countries embarked upon stabilization and adjustment programs since the early eighties, with the support of the Bretton Woods institutions. While **the jury is still out on whether the adjustment programs have been effective in putting the African economies on a sustainable growth path**, a few incontrovertible observations can be made.

These include **the so-called short-term cost of adjustment which has taken its toll on both consumption and investment**. In designing these programs, the demand-restraint conditions, expenditure-switching policies, and supply-inducing measures associated with the reforms were expected to improve the efficiency of resource use and stimulate the regeneration of the economies. However, while the demand-restraint policies, like pulling on a string, worked effectively to squeeze consumption and public investment, the supply-inducing measures were not effective in stimulating production and exports.

This is because, like pushing on a string, supply-inducing measures require other complementary actions in order to make an impact. As recent studies by the World Bank's Policy, Research and External Affairs Department indicate, the reform efforts of the 1980s have, on the whole, failed to generate adequate response from private investment. For local businesses, the restrictive monetary and credit policies of the adjustment programs raised the real cost of bank credit. The measures



aimed at reducing budget deficits also often meant reduced infrastructural investment by the public sector. But since such investments are necessary complements to private investment, the overall tendency was for private investment to fall as well.

Thus, when combined with the long gestation period for new agricultural investments in tree crops, institutional bottlenecks and depressed domestic demand, it becomes clear why the supply response to these reforms were weak, as far as domestic producers were concerned.

The only other source of private investment response would have been foreign direct investment. It is worth noting that, in parallel with the macroeconomic policy changes, many African governments have been putting in place far-reaching private sector development strategies. New investment codes have been drawn; the number of sectors previously reserved for nationals has been sharply reduced; screening procedures have been simplified and one-stop investment centers have been established; the relative equity share that foreigners are allowed to hold in enterprises has been raised; and tax holidays of up to ten years or more are now common. Examples from Ghana and Nigeria illustrate these observations. Yet still, **the foreign direct investment response has been, at best, hesitant and weak in Africa.**

For, according to a recent UN report, while the share of foreign direct investment in total world investment has been rising since 1970, about 85 percent of the foreign direct investment flows has occurred among industrialized countries. Although foreign direct investment flows to developing countries nearly doubled between the periods 1980-84 and 1985-89, the developing countries' share of foreign direct investment in total world investment has declined over the same period. Furthermore, the developing countries' share was highly concentrated, with ten countries—Argentina, Brazil, China, Colombia, Egypt, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Mexico, Singapore and Thailand—accounting for about 75 percent of the total throughout the 1980s.

In Africa, where the need is perhaps greatest, the trend has been dismal. According to the UN report mentioned earlier, the annual average flow of foreign direct investment to Africa over the 1985-89 period was \$2.6 billion. The corresponding figures

are \$6.0 billion for Latin America and the Caribbean; \$13.6 billion for East, South and South-East Asia; \$55.8 billion for North America and \$60.8 billion for Western Europe. Furthermore, of the 93 developing countries with populations over two million listed in the World Bank's *World Development Report 1992*, only 18 have attracted yearly foreign direct investment of eight dollars per capita or more during the 1986-90 period, all of them outside Africa. **Of the 23 Sub-Saharan African countries with more than 2 million people, ten had no foreign direct investment inflows and only six had inflows of more than two dollars per capita.**

THE NEXUS OF EXTERNAL FORCES CONSTRAINING RECOVERY IN AFRICA

Recovery and sustainable development in Africa requires both medium-and long-term strategies to create socio-economic environments within which private productive activities can be undertaken. Whether the time frame is the short, medium or long run, one type of input is critical for any adopted strategy, namely external resources. As most African countries do not have installed capacity to produce critical capital goods and spares, **foreign exchange will continue to be a binding constraint.** Adapted technological innovation is equally important. Adequate flows of foreign direct investment, properly channelled according to predetermined domestic priorities of each country, could make the external resource constraints a lot less binding. For it brings both foreign exchange and technology that can be adapted to country needs through innovation.

However, where, as is the case in Africa today, foreign direct investment flow of the appropriate calibre is either absent or inadequate, a country's own capacity to generate adequate foreign exchange for critical imports becomes the only means for lifting the foreign resource constraints to recovery and sustainable development. This can be supplemented by external aid. But the African experience during the 1980 decade shows that the countries' own net foreign



exchange resources and external aid flows were not adequate for critical inputs.

The countries' capacity to generate adequate net foreign exchange resources is linked to the external factors mentioned earlier.

First, depressed commodity prices and reduced export earnings contributed to adverse trade balances, balance of payment problems, and additions to external debt. Second, rising interest rates implied increased costs of servicing the quickly mounting external debts. Third, while adding to the stock of debt at any given point in time, the increasing cost of servicing the debt implied the diversion of substantial and rising proportions of export earnings from imports critical to supporting the supply response to the reforms. Thus, **for most of the second half of the eighties, African countries persistently suffered from net capital outflows.**

For instance, the 1992 issue of *African Development Indicators*, published by UNDP and the World Bank, shows that the stock of Africa's external debt rose from \$56.2 billion in 1980 to \$143.2 billion in 1989. While official debt was less than half of the total stock of debt in 1980, it was more than 60 percent of the stock in 1989. Meanwhile, according to a recent UNICEF publication, average debt service payments relative to export earnings rose from 11 percent in 1980 to nearly 28 percent in 1989, while net transfers from the IMF to Sub-Saharan Africa have been increasingly negative since 1985. Moreover, while official development assistance has increased in absolute terms, in per capita terms it has been declining.

I must add that there are wide variations in the dismal picture conveyed by these aggregate statistics. For instance, the debt service payments relative to exports range from a manageable 4 percent to 14.3 percent respectively in Botswana and Mauritius to clearly unmanageable proportions of 39 percent in Somalia, 40 percent in Sierra Leone and 52 percent in Sudan before these countries rescheduled or stopped servicing their debts unilaterally in 1988 and 1989. It is noteworthy that delays in payment of that portion of the debt which is in the form of trade credits can seriously hamper normal commercial relations, which are often vital in obtaining additional foreign exchange. Besides, for some

countries, the debt problem has also affected repayments to the IMF, the World Bank and the African Development Bank, the so-called 'preferred lenders'. By not servicing their debt obligations to these international institutions, countries automatically become ineligible for further credit from these institutions and lose access to Paris Club rescheduling, leaving them trapped in a vicious circle. What is the way out of this vicious circle?

SIX STRATEGIC ELEMENTS FOR AFRICA'S FUTURE

Let me propose an alternative scenario based on a six-point strategy for Africa's future and hazard some suggestions for actions in those areas relevant to this discussion, namely, a supportive external environment. This scenario envisages a series of short- and medium-term policies for sustainable long-term development. The major goal will be to achieve equitable, participatory and sustained improvement in economic and social well-being of the African people. The strategies should aim at the effective and full utilization of Africa's most abundant material and human resources.

First, agricultural development must concentrate on small-scale farmers so that the benefits are broadly distributed. This calls for adequate rural infrastructure, including extension services, irrigation, transport and research relevant to small-scale farming and food crops, access to adequate credit and inputs and reasonable terms of trade between agriculture and nonagricultural sectors of the African economies. Where feasible, land reform should be undertaken to reduce large inequalities in land ownership.

Second, strong linkages between agricultural and nonagricultural activities must be forged. This will encourage the expansion of agricultural output to meet local demands and generate rural employment opportunities which raise rural incomes in a more equitable fashion, as has happened in some South-east Asian countries. For example small-scale, labor-intensive export-oriented, agro-processing, rural industries like fruit and vegetable canning, linked with



farming activities producing related raw materials such as pineapple and citrus fruits could both provide employment and incomes for the predominantly rural populations while at the same time generating foreign exchange. Demand for farm implement production associated with such labor-intensive agricultural production and their related repair activities will also be boosted. The mechanisms for achieving this include the development of a dynamic and egalitarian agricultural sector which provides demand for non-agricultural output. This also calls for the provision of such rural infrastructural facilities as electricity, telecommunications, roads, technology support and training for rural entrepreneurs and credit for small rural enterprises.

A third element in this scenario is an industrialization strategy focused on labor-intensive small and medium enterprises. This is because, for any given investment, labor-intensive production, by definition, generates more employment. When properly motivated, such industries will also produce appropriate goods, provide opportunities which are more accessible to local entrepreneurs, and will be more in tune with local technological capabilities than large-scale enterprises. The supporting policies will call for favorable terms for access to credit, foreign exchange, tax allowance infrastructural resources and other inputs for the development, transmission and adaptation of technology. It also calls for exchange rate policies that encourage labor-intensive exports.

A fourth element is the enhancement of human capabilities which is essential for efficient production. This requires the expansion of education and training, especially one that explicitly corrects gender biases against women, more resources for the social sectors, reforms that make these resources more efficient and relevant, decentralization and community participation. It also calls for support for local entrepreneurship development so that appropriate capabilities are developed. A critical requirement here is the strengthening of economic management capacities for integrating social concerns into policy design and policy advice.

As most Sub-Saharan African markets are too small for the exploitation of scale economies, a

fifth element of this scenario will call for strengthening intraregional linkages and collaborations.

This is especially important for industries where such economies of scale are significant for technological reasons. Policies in support of this include tariff reform, monetary arrangements and greater economic integration. This can be undertaken in tandem with export diversification, especially towards labor-intensive manufactures and high-value, nontraditional agricultural crops.

Finally, and most relevant to the discussion for this session of the Conference, this scenario calls for debt forgiveness, increased resource flows and improved commodity prices. Sustained growth needs adequate foreign exchange to support investment growth, adequate inputs and incentives for farmers, and essential inputs for social services. The overall development scenario I have just described is not feasible without sustained improvement in the foreign exchange situation of African countries in the 1990s.

CONCLUSION: THE ROLE OF THE UNITED STATES AND OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES IN FOSTERING RECOVERY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Given Africa's immediate and urgent needs, what can the United States and other developed nations do? I would propose that some radical debt relief measures be undertaken. I would also propose that U.S. businesses be offered additional incentives to invest in Africa.

Let me elaborate. The heavy debt burden severely constrains African countries' import capacities, and hence, the fulfillment of socio-economic infrastructural investments critical to the strategies outlined above. **My first proposal, therefore, would be a ten-year moratorium on**



Africa's external debt. Such a moratorium will have a major impact on the recovery and sustainable development process in Africa.

This is not asking for the impossible. Despite the imposing size of the external debt of African countries relative to their national incomes or export earnings, Africa's total external debt is relatively small compared to global financial resources. Consequently, a ten-year moratorium will not disrupt the international financial system. The negotiation of such a moratorium would depend heavily on the support of the U.S.

Negotiating a moratorium would need to take into consideration prevailing circumstances in participating African countries. Discussions of official debt reduction should be related to the import capacity of the countries and their ability to provide essential economic and social services to their populations. Debt relief measures should result in an immediate reduction of debt service payments and in an inflow of new resources. It would be critical to ensure that debt to multilateral organizations form an integral part of a debt reduction package. To this end, it would be necessary to merge the various official and unofficial forums for discussions on debt relief. Such a merger of debt relief forums will facilitate comprehensive discussions on relief and rescheduling. Creditor and debtor countries would evaluate long-term policies for sustainable growth with equity.

Following the presentation and examination of an economic and social action programme, bilateral donors should consider cancelling the debt owed to them by African countries. Such a programme could take the form of so-called 'development contracts', whereby creditor countries would guarantee debt relief and external support, while African countries would undertake to implement a long-term development package based on poverty alleviation and human development.

Moreover, since part of the debt has been contracted by accumulating arrears on trade credits valued at market interest rates (which rose persistently during the early eighties), the value of this part of the debt should be reduced through the application of concessional lending conditions of the International Development Association (IDA). This should

be applied retroactively to the beginning of the debt problem.

These are some of the ways in which the United States and the developed countries can support Africa on the debt issue. UNDP, for its part is equipped and willing to assist African countries develop the required programs and prepare the necessary documentation.

My second main proposal is the provision of incentives to U.S. businesses to invest in Africa. As a champion of free enterprise, the United States could play a lead role in fostering enabling environment for private enterprise development in Africa.

In particular, I would suggest the granting of tax credits to U.S. businesses in all sectors who will invest in African economies. Such investments could be based on the notion of Economic Enterprise Zones in African countries.

In recent years, many African countries have been developing export processing zones (EPZ). Incentives offered to investors in EPZ's have included duty-free entry of capital goods and raw materials, tax holidays on corporate profits and dividends, and free repatriation of capital and dividends. Mauritius has perhaps the most successful EPZ.

I am proposing that African governments declare certain regions within their countries economic enterprise zones. Investors in these regions will be offered additional incentives, such as those offered to EPZ investors. In addition to these incentives however, I am proposing that the United States help revolutionize the African economic environment by providing tax credits to businesses willing to invest in these zones.

As with my proposal on debt, UNDP stands ready to assist African countries in devising appropriate programs for the establishment and development of economic enterprise zones. We are totally committed to making technical assistance more supportive of socio-economic recovery and sustainable development in Africa.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to share these thoughts at this conference.



U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA

*Building Democracy Through
Popular Participation*

Dr. Makau wa Mutua

Projects Director

Harvard Law School Human Rights Program

The images of agony and defeat that greet the reader in the rare mornings that Africa is lucky to make the daily paper—or the television and radio program—have burned a unique silhouette of the continent in the minds of most Americans. These horrid pictures—of starving children, pestilence, drought, seemingly senseless rivalries and killings, and blood-thirsty despots—tell only one side of the story, that of victimization. But this face hides a continent full of hope and vitality. It is a continent teeming with reformers, entrepreneurs, peasants, thinkers, workers, and idealists; in a word, those who resist degradation and dehumanization. This is the other side, the ‘hidden’ face of Africa.

Unfortunately, it is the grim face that U.S. foreign policy has promoted and encouraged to date. Until two years ago when the Cold War officially ended, the United States treated Africa merely as one more puzzle in its epic struggle with the Soviet bloc. Americans and Soviets traded clients in the bazaar of the Cold War notwithstanding the brutality of the regimes in question. The legacy of this cynical and racist policy is partially responsible for the devastation, poverty, and intolerance that punctuate life from the shores of the Indian Ocean in South Africa to Algiers on the Mediterranean to Mombasa in Kenya to Monrovia in Liberia on the Atlantic. Now that the strictly geopolitical conditions which made this policy ‘necessary’ have ended, U.S. policy should be recast.

The change in policy should assist Africans to actualize the multiple promises of the current democratic upheaval and create economically viable and politically independent

democracies. **Skeptics and pessimists of a new posture should think of the benefits to the United States and the world that economic and political prosperity in Africa and increased global trade and security would make possible.** New avenues could open for the world to share in Africa’s rich historical and cultural heritage. There is an historic opportunity to forsake the deadly policies of the past by laying a new foundation for U.S.-Africa relations. The domestic reversal of the Clinton administration, a new role for government that seeks to undo the damage inflicted on Americans by the Reagan-Bush years, should be complemented with a bold and progressive shift in foreign policy to the underdeveloped world, and to Africa in particular.

In the past, U.S. policy towards Africa conceptually fell under the rubric of ‘Soviet containment’. Nothing else really counted. Today, the foreign policy establishment has concluded that the United States does not have any interests in Africa. But it has not articulated what the ‘no-policy policy’ should be. In this sense, U.S.-Africa relations are at a critical crossroads.

Some favor a reactive, uncoordinated, issue-by-issue approach in which the United States would publicly wring its hands about the continent’s tragedies while doing little in reality except the occasional ‘humanitarian’ response, such as Operation Restore Hope, in Somalia. Others, especially on the hard right, have argued that Africa is so marginal to U.S. interests that it should be abandoned altogether. This school feels that Africa should be left to the mercy of its former colonial rulers.

But there are some—in the human rights movement, within the political left, and some sectors of the African-American community—who argue that the United States should assist Africans in their quest for democratic government and economic viability. I support the broad objectives of the last group.



Today, Africans are expressing the most historic demands for political liberalization since decolonization three decades ago. This democratic upheaval seeks to reverse decades, and in some cases, centuries of unspeakable human rights abuses, repressive government, and economic deprivation and destitution. It culminates a decades-long struggle for economic and political transformation, with the essential thrust of containing state despotism through the introduction of accountable, elected governments. But these promises will be shattered unless they are embraced and internalized by broad sectors of society and supported internationally by other measures.

The evolution of home-grown notions of democratic governance and public accountability, anchored by the incipient civil society, is the basis on which the cycle of repression and underdevelopment may be snapped. **American policy-makers cannot, nor should they, export democracy to Africa; they cannot save Africa or retail their notions of democracy to the continent. But they can play a role supportive of the nascent democratic movement.**

One of the basic problems in Africa has been the success of both the colonial and post-colonial state in quashing civil society (all non-governmental, citizen groups, professional and producer associations which expect to influence or should expect to influence public policy), the countervailing force that could resist state repression and limit its power. The pro-democracy movements seek to contain and tame state power by expanding the sphere of independent political activity. Like the human rights movement, the pro-democracy movements seeks to develop a political society with certain basic features. These are (a) constitutional and legislative regimes outlining the limits of state power and its peaceful devolution; (b) the creation of centers of gravity within the non-governmental sector with the ability to contain state power and its ability to terrorize the populace; (c) the development of a vibrant civil society capable of accepting and mediating diverse social conflicts; (d) and finally, most important, the laying of the foundation for broad and mass participation of the people,

especially the rural poor, in political life.

Conceptually, these movements base themselves on the mobilizing and empowering strength of the language and discourse of rights. Numerically, the leadership of the movement is drawn from the 'middle classes'—lawyers, journalists, academics, veteran oppositionists—hence the agenda of liberalism. At present, they constitute the only social force capable of demanding a new social contract between the state and its citizens. **The reformers have attacked the omnipotence of the party-state by focussing on a core set of rights—the right to assembly and association, the right to the freedom of expression, the right to be free from torture, arbitrary arrest and incommunicado detention, the right to personal security, and the right to due process.**

The limited ability of the liberal agenda and its politics to radically transform society is loudly advertised in the crises of poverty, homelessness, urban decay, crime, sexism, and racism evident even in the most developed Western countries, including the United States. The 'middle classes' (urbanized, educated elites) that lead the pro-democracy movements could themselves become obstacles to entrenching and deepening democracy, especially in the rural countryside. They could resist fundamental reforms aimed at creating conditions for the emancipation of the peasant, the freeing of the worker, and the eradication of the patriarchy that oppresses women.

After they attain certain political rights—the rights to expression, association, and political participation—these movements may give little, if any attention to basic economic and social rights. They might even seek to crush opposing views. The dangers of narrow and naive agendas looms large. There is the risk of equating democratization with the introduction of free markets, multipartyism, and periodic elections, as has been the case in East/Central Europe and the republics of the former Soviet Union. There is the danger of not giving sufficient thought to dismantling repressive state structures in the rural countryside and the creation of conditions for community empowerment.

Even with these limitations, the pro-democracy



movements, and the civil society they seek to create, or expand, are the basis of genuine democratization, and will help in the attainment of broad democratic rights. The mythologies about the omnipotence of state power and despotism have tumbled like decks of cards these last few years. I remember how Zairians could not be seen speaking with me in 1989 because I was on a human rights fact-finding mission. A year later, the pro-democracy movement together with changed international conditions had forced President Mobutu Sese Seko to announce reforms. For the first time, the press openly attacked and ridiculed him; he has never recovered. President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya, once a deity, is now a mere mortal. The aura of invincibility has been shattered. It is these embers, these flickers of hope, that the United States policy should fan.

U.S. policy should assist Africa to deepen the reach of this democratic renaissance. To do so, it must stop privileging the state over civil society in its multifaceted dealings with Africa. **In cases where fledgling democratic governments have arisen, the United States should work with both the state and civil society to promote the notions of limited government and public accountability.** In its relationship with the state, the United States should find ways to creatively lighten the debt burden which threatens to overcome all efforts at economic reconstruction—one way might be conditioning debt relief to sustained periods of democratic rule, together with easily identifiable criteria for democratic governance.

To strengthen civil society, U.S. governmental and non-governmental agencies should facilitate educational and cultural exchanges between private, grassroots organizations in Africa and the United States. These would include women's organizations, producer cooperatives, community development programs, which should be supported directly without state intervention. The United States should seek to de-emphasize its links with elite groups and seek to balance its support for urban, elite-based, professional associations like bar associations, media organizations, and other propertied groups with support for grassroots organizations.

In cases where intransigent despots continue in power, such as Zaire, Malawi, or the Sudan, policy-makers should work exclusively with whatever fragments of civil society exist. All assistance should be channelled through private, voluntary non-governmental organizations which are not controlled or connected to the state or any of its agencies. The United States should publicly and materially distance itself from dictators like President Mobutu of Zaire who for a long time quashed opposition to his rule by embellishing the public perception that Washington supported him and condoned his repressive behavior.

In Kenya, the 'activist' American ambassador Smith Hempstone had since 1989 spoken out openly and frequently against government attacks on civil society. He publicly supported calls by lawyers, the clergy, sections of the press, and veteran opposition politicians, that President Moi dismantle the party-state and legalize opposition parties. Occasional public protests by the State Department in Washington against the arrest, detention or harassment of government critics emboldened outspoken sectors of the civil society and rallied opposition to the Moi regime in Nairobi. This visible American support for political liberalization energized critics and demoralized the Moi regime, America's traditional ally in the region. The final straw came in November 1991 when the United States and other Western donors suspended aid pending economic and political reforms. A week later a humbled President Moi allowed opposition parties to register.

The personal crusade by Smith Hempstone would have been unnecessary had Washington outlined a clear U.S.-Africa pro-democracy stance. In the event, Kenyans who could not challenge the government without dire consequences accepted his attacks on the state because he voiced their collective anger. To avoid a 'tutoring' ambassador in the future, the State Department should institutionalize in policy its opposition to any state's departure from the rule of law and the rights to association, assembly, and speech. These rights, after all, form an integral part of the duty of states under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and if they are signatories, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.



In Africa, the erosion of the all-powerful state is driven by the desire of broad sections to contain its power. In many cases, entrenched bureaucrats, ill-gotten property interests, and raw political and coercive power have violently resisted the winds of change. Abandoned by their Cold War benefactors, the most intransigent have made 'last stands', often leading their countries to national disintegration. On the continent, Liberia, Somalia, Zaire, Rwanda, Mozambique, and Angola fit the 'basket case' description. Kenya, Sudan, South Africa, and Malawi are not too far behind. They, too, could collapse soon unless preventive measures are taken.

In countries torn by civil strife and war, U.S. diplomacy and policy should focus primarily on working with local and regional structures to engage the disputing/warring parties in national reconciliation and conflict resolution. The Clinton administration could, for example, appoint a special envoy whose task it will be to assemble a group of African and international personalities to study each of the conflict areas and work with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and local leaders to put together peace-making processes. Perhaps such a task could be coordinated by the Carter Center of Emory University.

In the case of Angola, the administration should take the important step of recognizing the futility of war and the legitimacy of the MPLA government which defeated the UNITA movement in free and fair elections in September 1992. President Clinton should reverse the Reagan-Bush support for UNITA, the barbaric rebel movement that has slaughtered hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians since Jonas Savimbi, its egotistical leader, launched the civil war in 1975. Full backing for the MPLA should help bring Savimbi to the negotiating table.

In Liberia, the United States should support the efforts of the West African states to flush out Charles Taylor and subject him to a process of national reconciliation. European allies could significantly help the process by ending all trade with him. A weakened and isolated Taylor should be able to recognize the authority of the Sawyer interim government in Monrovia and agree to internationally supervised elections. In

Rwanda and Mozambique regional peace-making efforts could be strengthened. In Zaire, where the economy has completely collapsed, measures to freeze President Mobutu's wealth, estimated in billions of dollars, and stashed away mostly in Swiss banks, should persuade him to hand over power to Etienne Tshisekedi wa Mulumba, the prime minister who in 1992 was chosen by the High Council of the Republic, the interim parliament attempting to restore democracy.

In crafting a regional reconciliation strategy, the mistakes of Operation Restore Hope, the American military expedition in Somalia, should be avoided. In the waning days of his presidency, George Bush dispatched some 30,000 troops ostensibly to secure relief supply lines. Prior to the mission, television screens across the land were inundated with the grotesque images of starving Somali children. Those images manipulated human emotion and drove the administration to act hastily, and, despite the United Nations umbrella, unilaterally. In the event, the mission of the military intervention, which drew ridicule in Europe for its Hollywood drama, was never properly defined. It has so far failed to initiate a political process of reconciliation to the crisis because it has not utilized existing social clan structures. Instead, daily confrontations have left scores of Somalis dead. **Military interventions, even where they are truly multilateral, must be carefully planned and coordinated with local structures of authority.**

In Kenya, political paralysis, high rates of inflation, and insecurity have become the order of the day since the Moi government stole an election in December 1992. A national crisis, which might lead to civil war, is brewing. In South Africa, progress towards majority rule/power sharing schemes has proceeded in starts and fits against the backdrop of extrajudicial executions and mass killings. In Sudan, a catastrophe of historic proportions looms large as the Arab-dominated government attempts to strangle the African south and defeat rebel forces. These countries could spin out of control if one or other party thinks that there is no cost to violating human rights. The United States should continue to withhold aid while insisting that President Moi work with the



opposition to draw a new constitutional and legislative regime as the basis for fresh elections. In Sudan as in South Africa, the differing and warring parties should be encouraged to work out constitutional schemes for majority rule while protecting the legitimate rights of minority groups.

Ultimately U.S. policy towards Africa should aim at supporting local initiatives, both governmental and non-governmental, that have the potential for creating democratic regimes and self-sustaining economies. Past debts should be forgiven in whole or in part, and conditioned on easily identifiable criteria for democratization and fiscal responsibility. While it would be foolish to expect America to solve Africa's problems, it would be absurdly irresponsible not to formulate policies that could, at little expense to the United States, advance the process of political liberalization and prevent Somali-like disasters.

It is the primary responsibility of Africans to free themselves from the bonds of despotism and poverty. But the international community can make that journey easier. Reformed U.S. policy could give Africa a timely shot in the arm.



LUNCHEON REMARKS

**Representative Harry Johnston (D-FL)
Chairman, Subcommittee on Africa
House Foreign Affairs Committee**

Thank you very much for inviting me here today to address today's luncheon. The Washington Office of Africa has long been in the forefront of education efforts on African issues. I particularly commend WOA for their exemplary role in helping to end the racist Apartheid system. This afternoon I would like to express my support of WOA and its continuance in the excellent work on issues critical for Africa.

In the post Cold-War era, Africa faces the very real threat of marginalization, with growing attention being paid to the former Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries. The end of the Cold-War should actually signify not only the termination of an anachronistic U.S. policy, but also the exciting development of a new foreign policy concept. As the new chairman of the House Subcommittee on Africa, I will be a staunch advocate of a more inclusive, assertive U.S. policy, that recognizes the need to give a higher priority to the critical interdependence between the United States and Africa. I will do my best to make sure that the 600 million people in over 50 countries in Africa are not erased from America's foreign policy map. I will push for a vibrant United States policy towards Africa, based upon a modified new world order that recognizes the importance of expanding markets, human rights, democracy, sustainable development and conflict resolution.

As we move closer to the 21st century, the challenges facing Africa will continue to be enormous and difficult. The prospects for success appear dim at this juncture in the face of devastating natural disasters and senseless civil wars. Before crops can be planted, food distributed, children immunized or trade agreements signed, there must be peace and stability in Africa. Without peace

and stability, Africa will not be able to move forward in its efforts to democratize and economically prosper.

Resolution of conflicts, therefore, must be a key component of African political and economic reform. It is unfortunate that after three decades of independence, Africa remains politically unstable and largely at war with itself. After a short period of relative peace, Angola has fallen into another round of bloody civil war, while Zaire totters on the verge of collapse. Over 300,000 Somalis died due to civil war and man-made famine in just under 24 months, and crisis looms in many other African countries. In this regard, **a key component to United States policy towards Africa must be support for regional and international conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peace enforcement measures.**

As you all know, with the end of the Cold War, the United Nations has assumed a key role in conflict resolution in Africa and in other countries around the world. For the United Nations to fulfill its mandate, the United States must provide leadership to bolster the United Nations, so it can adequately address crisis points such as Angola, Somalia, Zaire and Liberia. Moreover, **for the United Nations to be effective, and carry out its mission, it must be sufficiently funded, and the United States must pay our share.**

Within the African continent, the United States must recognize the significance of indigenous African organizations as important players in solving their own regional problems. While the United States must help, Africa's leadership role is critical. As the Organization of African Unity celebrates its 30th anniversary, it would be fitting for the OAU to revamp its bureaucracy and redefine its mission. The OAU could play important roles, if its members empower it. I'll repeat this, it could play a very important role, if its members empower it to deal with Africa's growing and increasingly complex problems. This may require amending the OAU's charter.

Regional organizations, such as ECOMOG, must also be



supported politically and financially if they are to succeed in their mission. In addition, there are times when the United States, by itself, should act. In Angola for instance, we should immediately recognize the government. **It is high time that we unequivocally tell Mr. Savimbi that enough is enough.** He is an example of someone who rolled the dice and lost, and all he had to do was come to Washington in December and see a change in administration and see how democracy works. Because if democracy is going to work, some side is going to lose and some side is going to win.

And so too with Mr. Mobutu. The United States should make it clear that his time is over.

We should focus our efforts on pushing Mobutu out into exile, as we did with Duvalier in Haiti. The United States should actively arrange Mobutu's departure.

Turning to development issues, the challenges that lie ahead for Africa are enormous but not insurmountable. Years of natural disaster and relentless civil wars have virtually destroyed Africa's infrastructure, ruining its economy and its environment. Economic mismanagement, rampant official corruption, trade and investment losses and the mixed results of structural adjustment have left tragic legacies. The standard of living for many Africans remains stagnant or worse, millions of Africans have been made refugees or internally displaced due to civil war and disasters.

The continent's massive debt burden continues to strain the weak economies of many countries. Africa's debt rose from \$56 billion in 1980 to over \$173 billion in 1990. In fact Africa's debt grew to over 110 percent of its Gross Domestic Product in 1990. And although Africa's debt may seem small compared to that of Latin America, the African debt burden is far more devastating because of the continent's weak economic base. A number of debt relief initiatives have not been able to resolve Africa's debt troubles. More needs to be done, and I intend to make this a priority.

Development without democracy, however, is unlikely to succeed. Fortunately for Africa, widespread political changes have taken hold during the last few years. Over two dozen countries have held or are in the process of holding multi-

party elections in 1992 and 1993. A number of presidents-for-life and long-time dictators have been ousted from power. Yet despite Africa's move towards more pluralistic systems, political conditions in many African countries remain unstable and the future is uncertain.

In fact the movement towards genuine democratic change in many African countries has stalled in the face of growing political anarchy.

Africans must closely examine this current political trend if Africa is to succeed in its attempt to democratize. Recent experience suggests that multi-party elections do not necessarily lead to open and tolerant societies. A representative legislature; a free press; civilian control of the military, I will repeat that, civilian control of the military; and an independent judiciary are all essential to a working democracy.

We must take a broad flexible view of what democracy means in the African context. And we must encourage the nations of Africa to develop a full range of democratic institutions. It is important to point out that a number of success stories in Africa. Most notably, Benin, Cape Verde, Namibia, Zambia, and South Africa show promising developments towards democracy.

The United States must support Africa's move towards a pluralistic system. We should encourage real reform towards a more open and tolerant Africa. Indeed, there must be a linkage between democracy and U.S. foreign aid. **I intend to promote a proactive and aggressive democracy agenda for Africa** and I hope you will also do your part in encouraging real change in Africa.

Within Congress, my subcommittee will stress the importance of peacekeeping, sustainable development, and democratization. We can work towards these goals by forging a preventive approach to peacekeeping that may have avoided debacles such as Angola, Zaire, Liberia, and Somalia. I will work hard to promote such a policy. However, for this to happen, revitalized foreign aid legislation is a must. This coming foreign aid bill provides the Subcommittee on Africa with a historic opportunity to make a difference and an opportunity that I fully intend to seize. Thank you very much.



PROSPECTS FOR PEACE

Olusegun Obasanjo

Former President of Nigeria

Chairman, Africa Leadership Forum

What I want to do for the little time we have left is to emphasize the interrelationship between economic development and growth, democracy and security and stability. Almost everybody who has spoken so far today, starting from His Excellency Salim Ahmed Salim through to the lunchtime keynote address, has made this inextricable interconnection. Peace is a precondition for democracy, and for economic development and the welfare and well-being of our people.

Let me quote from the report of the OAU Secretary General, which he gave to the council of ministers only last month in Addis Ababa: "Conflicts have for long been a problem with us. We have accepted to deal with them at various points in time. We have witnessed dramatic deterioration in the situation in the continent. The shocking image of walking human skeletons in Somalia too vividly come to mind and may never be completely erased from my memory. Africa watched in apparent helplessness while the carnage went on there."

The situation in Liberia and Angola also evoke feelings of sorrow, revulsion and anger in every African: sorrow because of the death and misery and anger because of the apparent helplessness of Africa. And the tensions in Togo and Zaire have added to the feelings of despair and fury. This morning when he was talking to us, he of course mentioned Sudan, which he didn't mention in this report. He mentioned Rwanda, which he also did not mention in this report. And he mentioned Mozambique and South Africa, which have been noted repeatedly in our discussions today.

He also emphasized that as far as the OAU was con-

cerned, and one may say as far as the international community was concerned, until very recently they were concerned with interstate conflicts and wars rather than intrastate disputes, conflicts and violence. But it is interesting to note that over the past eight years or thereabout the number of major conflicts in Africa has remained constant at about a dozen. I regard a major conflict as one which has involved the loss of life of up to 1,000 people. Only in very few cases out of these twelve have we had interstate conflicts. They have been mainly intrastate conflicts.

On the 7th of February this year, *the New York Times* published a list of 48 existing and potential violent conflicts. Out of the 48, nineteen are new conflicts which have erupted between 1992 and now. Ten of the new entrants into today's unattractive club are from Africa, including the sporadic outbreak in my own country Nigeria.

Destabilization of peace in Africa is fundamentally caused by the issue of identity. This root cause of conflict in Africa is also present in all other regions of the world. It is often exacerbated by human greed, injustice, lack of equity, domination and oppression. But in Africa, these situations are even made worse by the endemic poverty and external influence of the Cold War years.

As we have heard here this morning, **the Cold War has been declared over. But the hot wars and battles emanating from the Cold War or exacerbated by it are still being waged in Africa,** the continent that had been a victim of the Cold War in a special sort of way. The expectation that the end of the Cold War will bring eternal peace to Africa is becoming illusory. Of course one can argue that maybe we were expecting too much, too soon.

It is unlikely that the issue of basic identity will be eliminated from any nation except with the most heinous crime of genocide which today is elegantly masked under the term of ethnic cleansing in parts of Europe. In any case,



diversity normally enriches a nation. But the issues which exacerbate division and lead to conflict and lack of peace can be tamed, controlled, curtailed and managed. And the instruments in terms of access to arms and armament can be limited with reduction and elimination of military weapons.

There are four broad issues that must be addressed if we are to talk of promoting lasting peace in Africa. These are: redirecting the mind, the concept of sovereignty, redefinition of security and institutionalization of democracy.

In my opinion, the mind must be the first object to attack if there are to be enhanced prospects for peace in Africa. The value and ethical orientation of leaders and followers in Africa will have to be essentially redirected or changed. **The traditional values of love and brotherhood, hospitality, communalism have been gradually eroded to the point of non-recognition or non-existence in some communities.**

Some people have said that there is no morality or ethics in politics. I disagree violently. Because to take ethics and morality away from any human interaction is to make man no better than an animal. So have the ethical considerations of justice, reciprocity and equity disappeared from some African communities. The pull and push of demands and scarcity of resources have fed man's natural inclination and penchant for greed to turn us from our brother's keeper to our brother's hunter. We must restore values of cooperation, we must cultivate them and we must inculcate them at the school level. We must teach them and we must make them part of our living experience.

A concept of sovereignty in an interdependent world must not be seen in terms of absolute sovereignty of each state as in the past, but in terms of cooperation and collaboration of states for the overall interests of all. What is the value and meaning of sovereignty for a state that cannot feed its citizens? Sovereignty without responsibility, particularly responsibility to the citizens of a nation, is meaningless.

There must be a vision of national security which is broader than the conventional narrow focus on military or

strategic security. Welfare must condition security rather than warfare. Many of the dangers to African security and survival, population environment, poverty, disease, and drugs cannot be dealt with through armaments, neither can they be dealt with successfully unilaterally by one nation.

The increasing awareness of the limitation of the nation-state to provide security for its citizens alone by itself, the awareness of peace as the foundation of all wholesome, human interaction, and the concept of security as including the welfare and well-being of individuals to participate in the political economic and social life of the nation, unfettered, will enhance peace in Africa. Security, I must state, must be seen to include food security and personal security, as hunger is a major catalyst of conflict.

After inadequate performance of other forms of government since independence, democracy is now being seen almost throughout Africa as a worthy form of government. It has the intrinsic value of seeking the consent of the governed. Yet, I want to say here that once the principles are accepted, which are universal, **whatever form our democratic practice takes, if it fails to deliver in enhancing the living standard and condition of the people, socially and economically, people will soon start to doubt why they should embrace democracy.** The fact that our people in Africa today embrace democracy is because other forms of government have failed to provide their needs in terms of economic and social needs.

Now where are the prospects in effective conflict prevention and conflict resolution? Let me quote the UN Secretary General's agenda for peace: "Preventive diplomacy is action to prevent disputes arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts, and to limit the spread of the later when they do occur." On our continent, how do we manage preventive resolution of conflict, and what are the instruments there now that need to be improved upon, or that are not there and have to be provided?

In Africa, it has become evidently necessary that we evolve at the local, community and national levels a core of mediators, respectable and



respected, responsible and influential, who can anticipate potential conflict, sniff these potentially volatile situations and who can take the initiative to snuff out these conflicts before they escalate into major violent outbursts.

Let me give an example in this regard. Not too long ago, after the election in Cameroon, we heard that things were really boiling up. Using the auspices of the Africa Leadership Forum, of which I am the Chairman, I wrote to Archbishop Desmond Tutu through the instrumentality of the All African Council of Churches. He went in and spoke to the president and he spoke to the opposition groups. He was able to throw oil on the troubled waters.

I do not say that has stopped the likelihood of conflict emanating from the election, but at least it held it up until something more permanent can be done. Maybe if this had not taken place, the situation in Cameroon would have taken a turn for the worse.

In effect this core of mediators must hold themselves ready and willing to step into potentially explosive situations and evolve ways that can allow boiled tension to subside. In achieving all this at the regional level, we must have the means to be effective. In some cases, we can be really effective only with the support of the international community.

Take the example of Chad. The OAU tried to intervene in Chad, but because of the lack of resources, the peacemaking and peacekeeping forces were even overrun by one of the sides and the OAU troops had to pull out almost in disgrace. This was due essentially to inadequate resources to back up the OAU action.

Resolution of conflict also requires advancing the process of the ongoing pro-democracy movement. The essential task in this regard is that of Africans themselves, and they have begun, but they are still a long way off. Through internal agitations and external pressures, some changes are taking place and we must recognize this in Africa, to enhance the prospects for peace. Yet more needs to be done and more can be done.

The pace of the democratization process which seemed to be on the increase two years ago, is now levelling out or stalling. Africa needs greater

external pressure to maintain the momentum. A number of suggestions have been made in this respect, including the one made by Congressman Johnston. But I will suggest that maybe there is now need for a task force to be established by the new administration. This task force should be comprised of people in the State Department, Commerce, Treasury, Defense and other relevant departments. Taking up the issue of Africa seriously, working with the House Committee and the Senate Committee, it should define specifics of what needs to be done.

For instance, take the point made about Zaire. Before you can attach the fortune of a leader you must know where he has put the fortune. And knowing where he has put the fortune requires a task force of the type I talk about to be able to work with other countries. It is no use for the United States to act alone. If we want to be effective, we must act in concert, in concert with European countries, in concert with other countries in North America, maybe even with countries in the third world, Latin American countries, maybe even countries in Africa.

Now this is very important because the United States of America's liberal heritage makes it incumbent on her to encourage the defense of human liberty and fundamental human rights everywhere in the world. But more importantly, there is the fact that twelve percent of the population of the world live in Africa. If we are going to talk of expansion of world trade, if you make twelve percent of the population of the world able to participate effectively in world trade, in economic activities of the world, you are increasing them by that percentage.

That is better than what may happen if Africa is consigned to the heap of marginalization. We will have no doubt migration from Africa in addition to the problem of humanitarian intervention. That precedent has now been laid, and we may have more Somalias. Why can't we take preventive action instead of sending Marines, which will be more costly both in terms of lives and in terms of money?

Democracy and poverty are strange bed-fellows. The democratization process in the short run may exacerbate dispute and conflict. Let me suggest that **in areas where**



there has been conflict, we should not expect that elections alone will bring about the cessation of conflict. There must be determined efforts for confidence building and reconciliation, up to the ballot and beyond the ballot. I have had occasion in the past to say that for us, democracy of winner takes all is really antithesis to our culture. And when you talk of loyal opposition, in most African languages, the word for opposition is the word for enemy. You don't have a loyal enemy.

We have in the past used consensus. There is no reason why, particularly in situations where there have been conflicts, even if there is an election to determine the relative strength of the parties, that initially there should not be a government of unity, a government of reconciliation, a government where nobody feels he has lost it all and nobody feels he has won it all.

Let me mention three lessons that I think must be learned:

- (1) While multiparty democracy is to be encouraged, multi-army presence at the national level is counter-productive and destructive to democracy.
- (2) Confidence building and reconciliation must be continuous.
- (3) The presence of international observers does not necessarily lead to the acceptance of the legitimacy of the results, if all parties do not play according to the rules, and especially if the international community is not ready to enforce observance of the agreed terms of settlement and negotiations.

And let me say a word about the international observers and monitoring teams. Some years ago a friend of mine was in my car and we were driving and we saw a house in Nigeria. A small house, and he said to me just casually, he was a former politician, he said in the political days there would be at least 50 people living in that house. I said, "What are you talking about, that's a two-bedroom house." He said "yes." He said, "election rigging starts from registration." Now if registration

is over and one week before elections you send a team of election monitors, rigging has already been carried out. And your team of observers and monitors are only confirming what had been perpetrated.

I think we have to really work out how these observer teams should work, so that they do not go out and confirm the malpractices that have been carried out, election malpractices take place mainly in rural areas where 75 percent - 80 percent of our people in Africa live and where electoral observer teams and monitoring teams may not even go because they have no access.

Now I want to end on the note on which I began. And that is the interconnection of economic upliftment, conflict management, and democratization. I believe that for us in Africa they have to go hand in hand. We must devise means for this. It is this awareness that led in May 1991 to some of us coming for a meeting in Kampala Uganda, which led to the Kampala document. This brings together our ideas on an African framework, a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation. (This document is reproduced in *Africa's Problems ... African Alternatives*).

We are trying to advance this process through the Organization of African Unity. And we hope the United States also will lend its support.

There are those who say that Africa should be written off, because of too many problems man-made and natural. I think they are wrong, I believe they are wrong because in history many people have found their feet when and where they were about to be written off, and have been able to be active and important members of the world.

I believe that will be the situation in Africa. We have to. But we will not make it if we are left alone on our own device, or it will take us much too long to make it. If we work with the international community on the basis of partnership in the economic area, in conflict management, and in promoting democracy, we stand a better chance of making it. And not only making it, but also demarginalizing ourselves and making a very useful and substantive contribution to the world in which we live. Thank you.



CLOSING REMARKS

Senator Paul Simon

Chairman

Senate Subcommittee on Africa

I thank all of you. Let me just very briefly outline a few points.

There is obviously much good news in Africa and that sometimes gets overshadowed. The good news is that democracy really is taking hold; and African nations are facing up to problems like population problems and other things.

But there is unfortunately a great deal that needs to be done. If I were to have a graph in front of you and have each continent on there in terms of standard of living, each continent would be going up gradually with one exception, and that's Africa. The problems are very severe. In the last 20 years the population has gone up 50 percent, the food production has gone down 20 percent. You don't need to be a grand economist to understand that spells problems.

We pay attention to the emergencies, the critical emergencies, like Somalia. I have never seen anything like I saw in Somalia and I hope I never see anything like that again. But problems that are not that graphic, not that dramatic, are not being paid attention to as they should be. And we need that attention.

Angola, incidentally, is one where I hope we can get our government to recognize the government. If that had been done right after the election, I don't think we would have civil war in Angola today.

But rather than going through issues country by country, let me talk about why our general response has not been what it should be. There is a very practical, political reason for that.

First, let me give you the macro picture on economic foreign aid. After World War II, under the Marshall Plan, we spent 2.9 percent of our GNP, in helping the poor beyond our

borders. Today, our average real income in this country, that's inflation-adjusted, believe it or not, is two and a half times what it was right after World War II. We have become much wealthier. Even the poor among us basically are wealthier. But we are spending only one-fifth of 1 percent of our GNP to help the poor beyond our borders.

Now why the difference? Well, after World War II, your Senators and your members of the House went back to their home states and home districts, and the Schmidts said, "What are you doing to help my relatives in Germany? The Zaconellis said, "What are you doing to help my relatives in Italy?" And so forth. And there was political mileage in helping the poor beyond our borders.

Now, the poor live in places like Bangladesh and Sudan. And when I go back to Illinois, no one asks me, "What are you doing to help my relatives in Bangladesh? What are you doing to help my relatives in Sudan?" So the political sex appeal of foreign assistance has diminished fairly dramatically.

In addition, after World War two, as Africa became independent, there was a kind of unwritten understanding that the colonial powers would take care of their former colonies, in terms of foreign aid, with rare exceptions. And Liberia kind of became our colony for historic reasons, but we just didn't do what we should. Overall our response was very meager.

When Jimmy Carter came in, thanks to Andy Young's leadership, it moved up some. And I'm also pleased to say in the last three years we've been able to creep it up a little bit more. But it is not what it should be.

Now why is it not what it should be? Again, let me talk practical politics here. **When I go back to Illinois and I go into the Jewish community, I hear about Israel.** When I go into the Lithuanian community, I hear about Lithuania. When I go into the Polish community, I hear about Poland. **When I go into the African-American community, rarely do I get questions about Africa.** This



is for reasons I understand, partly because the roots were severed during slavery

I have been lobbying all the State Department officials when they come through, Warren Christopher and the others. And I tell them they ought to do more in terms of Africa.

But I mentioned to [Deputy Secretary of State] Cliff Wharton, whom I've known since we were students believe it or not, way, way back when. I said to Cliff Wharton, "You probably don't know where your family was from in Africa." And he said "No." And that's true for those of you who are African Americans in this crowd, with rare exceptions, that is true. It is compounded obviously by the economic problems that are so pressing on minority communities within the United States.

Saying that and just leaving it there isn't enough. **What we frankly have to do is to re-establish ties. And not just with Africa as some kind of amorphous giant, but country by country.** And what I am really looking for is some person, really just one person, with great organization skills, who has that spark, who may work for one of your organizations, and who can use that organization's ability to move ahead.

What I think we need is to say to colleges and universities, "You establish sister-city or sister-country or whatever want to call it. I would use the term adopt, but it is a little paternalistic to say adopt. For example, I am on the board of trustees of a small Lutheran college. I have been able to get that college to bring in students from Namibia. This small college in Nebraska I think has more Namibian students than any other school in the United States.

What we need are colleges and universities that adopt or establish some kind of collegial relationship with a country so that there is a special feeling of responsibility.

And I want the historically black colleges and universities to do it. But frankly just as Jews alone shouldn't be interested in Israel, or Greeks alone interested in Greece, so African-Americans alone shouldn't be interested in Africa. This is an area of need and all of us ought to be responding.

So many things need to be done, but we need to build

up a lobbying force, a constituency, if you will for Chad. I can't remember anybody ever talking to me about Chad for example. And you go down the list of African countries. I would like to see churches or whatever to say we're going to establish a relationship with Chad, or with Botswana—you name the country.

Then we start building up a constituency. When the foreign aid bill is up, there's going to be someone who is going to be contacting Senator Leahy who is from Vermont, and Senator Feinstein from California, saying, "We have to make sure we have enough aid in here for Chad" or whatever the country is. We need to build a constituent base in this country, that frankly isn't there. And then we can move on some of the other problems that exist.

And there is no question that we have huge problems. I hope we can start shifting from the military expenditure over to the more humanitarian expenditure.

The great enemy of the world today is not world communism, I think just about everybody can agree on that, it is instability. And instability comes from people being hungry, not having jobs, not sensing hope for the future. We have to work on that.

We have to face problems in this country, like the problem of the deficit, which is a huge imposition on developing nations. It is one of the things that some of us on the quote liberal side haven't faced up to. It's why I am a sponsor for the Constitutional amendment for a balanced budget.

I got a call from the director of the IMF, asking me to have breakfast with him. They had a \$12 billion guarantee, and I thought it was about that. But he wanted to talk about our fiscal problems. He said, "What you're doing with your deficit is forcing interest rates up around the world, you are doing more harm through your deficit than through all of your foreign aid contributions combined by far."

We have to face up to these problems. **For us to be spending literally less money in foreign aid than Japan, half our population, doesn't make sense.** To be spending less in percentage terms in GNP than any of the Western European nations, doesn't make sense.



We have to help people. We are in this thing together. When I was in Somalia and saw this little boy, I asked his mother how old he was, you know he is like those pictures you saw. And she said, "He is six years old." He was smaller than my three-year-old granddaughter. And you could see his heart beating through those ribs of his. And I asked her how she happened to be there, this was in the town of Odur. She said, "We lived about 12 kilometers away, we heard they had food here, and so we walked in and two of my children died along the way."

And I see that little boy, and I doubt that he is alive today. And then I see little kids who were so weak they can't brush the flies away from their eyes.

And I don't know how their future ties in with the future of my little grandchild, but I instinctively know that it does. And you know it too. We have to be doing better, and the place where the needs are special today is in Africa. I applaud what you're doing, we just need you to do more.

