The political climate in Washington will likely remain extremely difficult for Africa advocacy this year. Funding for aid, peacekeeping, and other US international obligations is sure to come under renewed attack in the second year of the 104th Congress. Many Congressional advocates for African issues, Republican and Democratic, are scheduled to retire at the end of the 1996 session, notably Senators Nancy Kassebaum (R-KS) and Paul Simon (D-IL). And it is very unlikely that international issues, much less Africa, will figure prominently in the 1996 election campaigns.

In general, therefore—short of a catastrophe on the scale of the Rwandan genocide in 1994—it will not be easy to attract high-level attention to African issues, even when they do not involve significant funding commitments. The one African issue that seems likely to stay in the spotlight is the campaign for sanctions to promote democracy in Nigeria—if the late-1995 momentum of grassroots involvement and media coverage is maintained.

Nevertheless, prospects are good for maintaining some level of constructive US involvement in strengthening ongoing ties with South Africa. Washington will also likely play a role in selected peacekeeping operations such as Angola and Liberia, in promoting debt relief for African countries, and in a number of aid initiatives. The extent of active US support for pro-democracy and human rights efforts in Nigeria and other countries, going beyond business-as-usual diplomacy, will depend above all on the level of public pressure and press attention.

Economies Grow, But So Does Debt Burden

Economic growth rates for Africa in 1995 and 1996 were projected to be in the 3 percent range, considerably higher than the 1.5 percent average of the early 1990s. But this still falls short of the rate necessary to keep pace with population growth, much less provide a basis for sustainable growth. Reductions in flows of external assistance, together with a still-mounting debt burden, pose additional obstacles. However, rising capital flows into South Africa and expectations of increased growth there and in several other countries somewhat offset these general trends.

A late 1995 report by the UN Conference on Trade and Development highlighted prospects for foreign investment in Africa, which it termed potentially the most profitable world region. But long-term economic difficulties and new burdens imposed by economic austerity programs mean most of the continent's people face a grim year of renewed hardships.

Proposals for further action on debt reduction, including the more than $35 billion Africa owes to international financial institutions, will be under consideration in 1996. Congress may also try to shape an agenda for improving Africa's trade prospects. But both initiatives will have to overcome apathy as well as substantive opposition to new proposals.

The prospects for economic advancement also

Continued on page 6

Printed on Recycled Paper
Jean Sindab

Jean Sindab, Executive Director of the Washington Office on Africa (WOA) from 1980 to 1985, died on January 8 in her Harlem home at age 51, after a year-long struggle against cancer. Her funeral was held on January 12 at Riverside Church in New York City. Since leaving WOA, Jean worked with the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches, consistently directing her work by her life-long commitment to justice for all people.

Jean led WOA during a period of decisive escalation of anti-apartheid efforts in the United States. Each of us who knew her during that period could add our own stories. They would only echo and affirm the message from her most recent colleagues (below). The message from Jean to us, we are totally confident, would be the refrain from countless others who have committed their lives to justice: “Don’t mourn; Organize!”

Tribute from the National Council of Churches Staff Colleagues

Living in a world whose rules and wars were set in motion by men, Jean Sindab was a woman devoted to finding another way. When she saw poverty and injustice it was her heart that compelled her to seek a better, different world. When she saw conflict she sought to find a route to meet the deepest needs and yearnings expressed in it.

As an African American she felt the outrage of racism and no person or institution escaped her passionate advocacy. She wanted to give and did give her life for her people. But it was as a woman that she knew in her deepest self the universality of God’s purposes and love. She never ceased to fall in love with the miracle of the spirit alive in the great diversity of people. She waited on the church and prayed for the opportunity to address its foolish trivialities and the posturing that prevents it from meeting the challenges of the day. She saw the error in the men she loved and served.

Jean Sindab’s vulnerability lay in her constant effort to respond to all those diverse forces and people in whom she could see the pain of life and division. She worked desperately to address warring factions. Sometimes her own warring and conflicted friends tore her apart. Her inner spirit, like Christ’s, yearned for the unity of peace and justice, but also for the transforming power of love in human relations. To honor her people, she knew, would mean justice for all.

We give thanks to the Creator whom Jean praised and worshipped for the gift of her life among us.
Growing Campaign for Sanctions against Nigerian Military

Since the Nigerian military regime hanged environmental and human rights leader Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight of his fellow activists on November 10, 1995 there has been an unprecedented wave of protest by thousands of organizations around the world. Saro-Wiwa, a leader of the Ogoni people in the Niger Delta, had led protests against Shell Oil, whose operations have contaminated the land in this oil-bearing region. Last year he was jailed and charged with instigating the murder of four Ogoni leaders. According to Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and other human rights organizations, the military tribunal that condemned him was marked by torture of witnesses and other abuses. Saro-Wiwa and his colleagues were executed despite appeals for clemency from many world leaders.

In March 1995, the Nigerian military government imprisoned former Nigerian head of state General Olusegun Obasanjo and others for an alleged coup plot. It has also detained numerous human rights activists. In 1993, its predecessor, also a military regime, annulled the June 12, 1993 presidential election before the counted results had been announced officially. Chief Moshood Abiola, the reported winner, was arrested for treason on June 12, 1994 after declaring himself president. Obasanjo and Abiola are still in detention, along with other alleged coup plotters, Ogoni activists, trade unionists, human rights activists, and other opponents of the government.

While the United States and other governments have criticized the Nigerian military regime, cut off aid, restricted arms sales, and imposed visa restrictions on Nigerian officials, they have until now relied on “quiet diplomacy” rather than turning to stronger sanctions. In the wake of the execution of Saro-Wiwa and his colleagues, President Nelson Mandela of South Africa, who had also invested his prestige in quiet diplomacy, supported suspension of Nigeria from the Commonwealth and called for oil sanctions. The call for oil sanctions has been endorsed by a wide range of individuals and organizations, including Nobel Prize winners Wole Soyinka and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Human Rights Watch, AFL-CIO, Greenpeace, the Sierra Club, TransAfrica, the Washington Office on Africa, and many other Nigerian and international groups.

Bills introduced both in the Senate (S. 1419) by Sen. Nancy Kassebaum (R-KS) and in the House of Representatives (H.R. 2697) by Rep. Donald Payne (D-NJ) fall short of comprehensive sanctions. But they do include new measures that go beyond the Administration’s actions to date, including a ban on all new US investment in Nigeria and a freeze on the personal assets of top officials of the Nigerian regime.

With support building in Congress and from a wide range of groups (see the letter to President Clinton, page 4), passing such measures this year is possible. But the resistance from oil companies and from the Nigerian government’s well-financed public relations campaign is already formidable. There are also many potential supporters of sanctions who still question stronger action either because they believe the military’s promises of reform or because they misunderstand the campaign as an attack on Nigerians rather than on the abusive military regime.
An Open Letter to President Clinton and Members of Congress

December 27, 1995

On November 10, we were all shocked by the executions of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the eight other Ogoni activists in Nigeria. Since that time, despite worldwide condemnation, the military government of General Sani Abacha has remained unbending in the face of internal and international protest. While we appreciate and applaud the efforts taken by the Clinton Administration and individual Members of Congress to isolate the Nigerian government, the situation demands more clear and forceful action.

Many prominent Nigerians who have stood up against human rights abuses and environmental degradation remain in prison awaiting dire fates, while the Nigerian people continue to live in fear. The multinational oil companies, in particular Royal Dutch Shell, continue their business as usual at the expense of the environment, human rights, community stability, and democracy in Nigeria. Oil is central to the Nigerian regime, accounting for over 90 percent of its exports. Oil wealth gives General Abacha the means to remain intransigent and to continue his reign of terror.

We, the undersigned, representing the millions of Americans in the human rights, African-American, labor, church, progressive investment, socially responsible business, and environmental communities, urgently call on you to institute sanctions targeted at the Nigerian oil economy, up to and including a ban on new investments, a ban on US exports targeted at replacement parts for the energy sector, and an oil embargo.

The United States has a special moral responsibility for the continuing oppression and pollution in Nigeria. We consume more than 40 percent of Nigeria’s oil and we are Nigeria’s largest customer of oil. However, Nigerian oil imports make up only a fraction of total US oil consumption. Eight percent of our imports, which is only 3.5 percent of our total oil consumption, comes from Nigeria. It is both economically possible and morally imperative that we stop the consumption of the oil that fuels the current regime.

President Nelson Mandela of South Africa has called for a multilateral oil embargo. We urge you to support that call through any number of avenues, including support for Senate Bill 1419, the Nigerian Democracy Act sponsored by Senators Kassebaum, Leahy, Feingold, Simon, Pell and Jeffords. Further, we urge you to take the lead internationally to see that an oil embargo is agreed to multilaterally.

These sanctions should remain in effect until the Nigerian government releases political prisoners, repeals repressive laws, adopts a six-month timetable for transition to a freely elected civilian government, and guarantees freedom of all communities affected by oil operations to address environmental concerns and to seek redress for environmental damage.

Our country should not tolerate the continued abuses in Nigeria. We must take strong action to prevent the ongoing violence in Nigeria against the voices calling for democracy and environmental justice.

Sincerely,

86 Concerned Organizations
(signatories on next page)
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<th>Signatories to Open Letter to President Clinton and Members of Congress</th>
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<td>American Consumer Insurance Agency, Inc.</td>
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<td>Association of Concerned Africa Scholars</td>
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<td>Bread for the World</td>
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<td>Center for Constitutional Rights</td>
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<td>Center for Economic and Social Rights</td>
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<td>Chicago Coalition for a Democratic Nigeria</td>
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<td>Civil Liberties Organisation (Nigeria)</td>
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<td>Friends Committee on National Legislation</td>
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<td>Friends of the Earth</td>
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<td>Graham Contracting, Inc.</td>
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<td>International Human Rights Law Group</td>
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<td>International Federation for the Protection of the Rights of Minorities</td>
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<td>International Rivers Network</td>
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<td>International Roundtable on Nigeria</td>
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<td>International Union of Electronic, Electrical, Salaried, Machine and Furniture Workers</td>
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<td>Mother Jones</td>
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<td>Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People</td>
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<td>Nigerian Democratic Awareness Committee</td>
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<td>Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers Union</td>
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<td>Organization of Nigerians in the Americas</td>
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<td>Progressive Alliance for the Restoration of Nigeria</td>
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<td>Rainforest Action Network</td>
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<td>Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights</td>
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<td>Service Employees International Union</td>
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<td>Seventh Generation</td>
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<td>Sierra Club</td>
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<td>Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund</td>
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<td>Social and Environmental Rights Action Centre (Nigeria)</td>
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<td>Stonyfield Farm, Inc.</td>
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<td>Student Environmental Action Network</td>
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<td>TransAfrica</td>
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<td>United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America</td>
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<td>United Church of Christ</td>
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<td>United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society</td>
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<td>Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization</td>
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<td>Until There's A Cure Foundation</td>
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depend fundamentally on resolving and averting violent conflicts and on building and strengthening democratic institutions. In terms of security, the most intractable and devastating conflict in 1996, as in 1995, is likely to be the war in southern Sudan. The Angolan peace settlement remains fragile while in Rwanda and Burundi, re-occurring incidents of mass violence are an ever-present danger. The struggle for democracy against the military regime in Nigeria is likely to be the most prominent African issue in 1996. Meanwhile, human rights activists and pro-democracy groups also face serious repression in a number of other countries.

Countries and Issues
Following are brief highlights of specific areas and issues on which US involvement may make a difference this year.

Conflict (Sudan and other countries): War continues in southern Sudan, where hundreds of thousands of civilians are caught in conflict between the brutally repressive Sudanese government and the Sudan People’s Liberation Army, which has gained military ground in recent months. The international community is engaged in relief efforts, but efforts at mediation have stalled. Regime opponents in the north and south have called for increased international pressure against the Khartoum regime.

While on a smaller scale than in Sudan, ongoing or sporadic violent conflict or insecurity characterizes a number of other countries, including Algeria, Sierra Leone, Zaire, Somalia, the Tuareg area in northern Niger, and KwaZulu/Natal province in South Africa.

Peace agreements (Angola and Liberia): Early in the year observers were hopeful that implementation of the agreements in both countries would move ahead in 1996, while acknowledging that renewed conflict is a constant threat. The peace process took on positive momentum in Angola in the first quarter, despite fears of new delays and obstacles ahead. In Liberia violence exploded in early April, and without major new international involvement, escalating violence and a massive humanitarian crisis seemed the most likely outcome.

Prevention of wider conflict (Rwanda and Burundi): The situation in these two countries continues to be tense and potentially explosive. Some 1.8 million Rwandan refugees remain outside Rwanda, mainly in Zaire, where officials of the former Rwandan refugees remain outside Rwanda, mainly in Zaire, where officials of the former Rwandan government responsible for the 1994 genocide still hold sway over their army and most civilians. Delays in prosecutions for the genocide, and threats that the refugees might voluntarily return or be forcibly returned, are among factors making a new escalation of violence possible. In Burundi, ethnic violence will likely continue—and possibly escalate—despite international mediators’ efforts to maintain a delicate coalition between the predominantly Tutsi military and an elected multi-ethnic government.

Democratization (Nigeria and other countries): The campaign for democracy in Nigeria gained new international prominence in late 1995 after the Nigerian military regime executed environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight of his colleagues. Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth, and support for oil and other sanctions came from a wide range of groups around the world. Bills were introduced in the US Congress which fell short of oil sanctions, but did include bans on new investment and a freeze on personal assets of top Nigerian officials. Governments were slow to move on more substantive measures, which were vigorously opposed by oil companies. The sanctions campaign will likely continue to grow in 1996, but it remains to be seen whether it can overcome excuses for inaction by governments.

Meanwhile, in many other countries, notably Zaire and Kenya, the pro-democracy momentum of the early 1990s has been difficult to maintain in the face of both repression and other ploys by incumbent regimes. An official electoral commission in Zaire is engaged in preparing for elections, perhaps in 1997. But non-governmental groups as well as opposition spokespersons have charged that there is little chance of truly democratic elections while human rights abuses continue. Meanwhile, President Mobutu Sese Seko continues to maintain his preeminent position, taking advantage of division among his opponents and
the leverage given him by the presence in Eastern Zaire of some 1.5 million refugees from Rwanda and Burundi.

In some countries that have recently held elections (for example, Ethiopia and Côte d'Ivoire), serious questions have been raised about the fairness of those polls. International donors, including the United States, have shown far more consistency in pressing for free-market economic policies than they have in demanding respect for human rights and political participation by diverse social groups.

**South Africa and the continent:** In 1996 South Africa is likely to confront increasing disagreements among labor, business, and different political forces over how to craft social and economic policies that address the legacies of apartheid inequality. The Truth Commission, headed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, will begin its controversial work of investigating human rights abuses in the apartheid era. Conflict between the African National Congress and the Inkatha Freedom Party may escalate in KwaZulu-Natal, particularly around the local government elections now scheduled for May. Meanwhile, South Africa will be forced to deal with the challenge of identifying appropriate roles for itself on wider African issues, such as Nigeria. In doing so, it must avoid the twin dangers of narrow isolationism and condescending paternalism toward other African states. Like the US outside the continent, South Africa neither can nor should attempt to resolve every crisis. Its stance on key issues, regardless, will be closely watched by African countries and outside powers alike.

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**NCC General Secretary Joan Campbell Statement on Liberia**

The People of Liberia have suffered through six years of civil strife that has resulted in the death of more than 150,000 of its citizens and the displacement of more than half of its two million population. The infrastructure of the country has been destroyed and life in Liberia has been stripped of all normalcy.

The civil strife in Liberia is perpetuated by “factions” and individuals who offer no discernable ideological, political, social or economic agenda for Liberia.

Despite the efforts of the United Nations and others to promote a peace process, the present situation in Liberia is one of anarchy.

Given the rich history of the relationship between the people of the United States and the people of Liberia, we share the agony of the Liberian people as they go through this difficult period, an agony that must be brought to an end as soon as possible.

To that end, we call upon our churches to pray earnestly for peace in Liberia. We call upon the United States Government to use the full influence of its diplomatic capability in support of peace in Liberia, which should include substantial resources in support of regional peacekeeping and peace initiatives and the efforts of the United Nations. We call upon the United Nations to continue its peacekeeping operations in Liberia and to ensure the provision of special protection for women and children, the most vulnerable civilians in situations of war. Finally, we urge the international community to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Liberia.

*The Rev. Dr. Joan Brown Campbell  
General Secretary  
National Council of the  
Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.*
LEGISLATIVE UPDATE
Select Legislation Relating to Africa

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC LEGISLATION

ANGOLA
S.Res. 121
Sponsor Sen. Feingold (D-WI)
Urges the Government of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) to strengthen their commitment to the Lusaka Protocol process and affirms that the US will hold both parties responsible for abiding by such. Calls on the international community to actively support national reconciliation, landmine removal, economic development, and democratization in Angola.
STATUS: Passed Senate on 05/17/95

CAMEROON
H.Con.Res. 93
Sponsor: Rep. Engel (D-NY)
Introduced: 08/04/95
Cosponsors: 0
Urges Cameroonian government to further democratization in Cameroon and address cessation of human rights abuses and violence, and urges the Administration to promote this.
STATUS: Pending in House Africa Subcommittee.

KENYA
H.Con.Res. 135
Sponsor: Rep. Porter (R-IL)
Introduced: 01/25/96
Cosponsors: 13
Calls for reduction/suspension of US military and economic assistance to Kenya unless the Kenyan government makes substantial progress with regard to its civil liberties and human rights record.
STATUS: Seeking co-sponsors.

MAURITANIA
H.R. 550
Sponsor: Rep. Zimmer (R-NJ)
Introduced: 01/17/95
Cosponsors: 3
Prohibits economic or military assistance or arms transfers to the government of Mauritania unless the President certifies to Congress that such government has taken action to eliminate chattel slavery, including the enactment of anti-slavery laws that provide appropriate punishment to violators.
STATUS: Pending in House Africa Subcommittee.

NIGERIA
H.R. 2697
Introduced: 11/30/95
Cosponsors: 59
Imposes economic sanctions against Nigeria to promote democracy and human rights there. No assistance to government; opposition to loans; prohibits air transportation between Nigeria and US; no defense articles, services, or licenses sold, financed, or issued; visa ban for Nigerian leadership and their families; no EXIM, OPIC, or TDA financing or activities for Nigeria; no new investments; Nigerian leadership assets freeze; suspension from international sports including Olympics '96; reprioritize foreign assistance resources and funding for democracy building and rule of law assistance. Requires Presidential report after three months evaluating Nigerian progress toward democracy, civilian rule, and respect for internationally recognized human rights and bi-annually thereafter.
STATUS: Seeking co-sponsors.

RWANDA
S.Amdt. 2081
Amends S.1026
Sponsor Sen. Specter (R-PA)
To provide authority for the surrender of fugitives and the provision of international tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda.
STATUS: Agreed to in Senate by a voice vote on 08/04/95

GENERAL LEGISLATION RELATING TO AFRICA

FY96 FOREIGN AID
H.R. 889
Sponsor: Rep. Livingston (R-LA)
 Relating to Africa: Rescinds funds made available to the President for contribution to the International Development Association, the Development Assistance Fund, and the African Development Fund.
STATUS: Enacted as Public Law 104-6; signed on 04/10/95.

H.R. 1868
Sponsor: Rep. Callahan (R-AL)
Concerns investment and economic assistance, bilateral, multilateral and military assistance. [See 'US/Africa Assistance Falls,' page 10]
STATUS: Enacted as Public Law 104-107; signed on 02/12/96.

IMMIGRATION
H.R. 2202
Sponsor: Rep. L. Smith (R-TX)
Introduced: 08/04/95
Cosponsors: 131
A bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to improve deterrence of illegal immigration to the US by increasing...
## Legislation Needing Our Immediate Attention:

**Legislation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislation</th>
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| Nigeria sanctions bills  
S. 1419 - Sponsor Sen. N. Kassebaum (R-KS) | Calls and letters to President Clinton and Members of Congress seeking co-sponsors for both House and Senate sanctions bills, and seeking stronger actions, especially an oil embargo, to promote human rights and democracy in Nigeria. |
| Kenya Human Rights resolution  

## Legislation Passed by the 104th Congress:

**Public Law 104-107**, signed 02/12/96 (Legislative History: H.R. 1868) Foreign Aid Appropriations FY96 [see “US/ Africa Assistance Falls,” page 10]

**Public Law 104-6**, signed 04/10/95 (Legislative History: H.R. 889) Rescinds unspent funds for Africa in FY95 appropriations.

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**border patrol and investigative personnel,**

by increasing penalties for alien smuggling and for document fraud, by reforming
eclusion and deportation law and procedures, by improving the verification
system for eligibility for employment, and
through other measures, to reform the
legal immigration system and facilitate
legal entries into the United States, and for
other purposes. [See “African Refugee
Admissions Stable,” page 12.]

**STATUS:** Amended to remove clauses
dealing with legal immigration; passed
House (as amended) on 03/21/96

**LANDMINES**

S.940  
Sponsor: Sen. Leahy (D-VT)  
Introduced: 06/16/95  
Cosponsors: 45  
Concerns the elimination of anti-personnel
landmines. Prohibits selling, licensing for
export, or transferring any defense article to
a country selling, licensing, or exporting
anti-personnel landmines. Allows prohibition
to be waived by President in emergency.

**STATUS:** Pending in Committee on
Foreign Relations

H.R.1876  
Sponsor: Rep. Evans (D-IL)  
Introduced: 06/16/96  
Cosponsors: 61  
Corresponding version to S.940 (above).

**STATUS:** Pending in Committees on

**National Security and International
Relations**

S.Amdt. 2415  
Amends: S.1087  
Sponsor: Sen. Glenn (D-OH)  
To increase funds for training and
activities relating to the abolition of
landmines for humanitarian purposes and
reduce funds for Department of Defense.

**STATUS:** Agreed to in Senate by a voice
vote on 08/10/95

**UNITED NATIONS**

S.5  
Sponsor: Sen. Dole (R-KS)  
Introduced: 01/04/95  
Cosponsors: 14  
Proposes limitations on US involvement in
UN peacekeeping operations and funding.
Repeals War Powers Resolution.

**STATUS:** Pending in Committee on Foreign
Relations

H.R. 7  
(D-LA)  
Introduced: 01/04/95  
Cosponsors: 138  
Imposes limitations on funding for UN
peacekeeping and on placement of US
troops abroad under the aegis of the UN.

**STATUS:** Measure passed House (as
amended) on 02/16/95

**TORTURE**

S.1058  
Sponsor: Sen. Wellstone (D-MN)  
Introduced: 07/21/95  
Cosponsors: 10  
Provides asylum and protection to those
under threat of torture. Authorizes grants
and appropriations to aid torture victims
both domestically and internationally.

**STATUS:** Pending in Committee on the
Judiciary

For more information on any of these bills,
please contact the office of the Member
sponsoring the bill. The Washington
address for all Senators is: US Senate,
Washington, DC 20510. For all
Representatives it is: US House of
Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515.
All Members of Congress can be reached
through the Capitol switchboard at 202-
224-3121. For President Clinton, send
letters to The President, The White House,
Washington, DC 20500. To monitor active
legislation via the World Wide Web:
http://thomas.loc.gov/
US/Africa Assistance Falls; Additional Cuts Expected

After bruising battles over the Fiscal Year 1996 (FY96) budget and appropriations processes, the end result for Africa was a series of deep cuts and losses of earmarked status (i.e., separately specified budget allocations). In the final Foreign Operations Appropriations Conference Report for FY96, three specific changes have severe implications for US/African relations, damaging prospects for sustainable development and peace and justice initiatives:

- the loss of the separate allocation for the Development Fund for Africa (DFA) combined with an overall reduction in funds for programs in Africa
- the 33 percent cut in funds to the African Development Foundation (ADF)
- the nearly 50% cut in US funds committed to the International Development Association (IDA), the low-interest arm of the World Bank.

The DFA, created by Congress in 1987, is designed to "help the poor majority of men and women...to participate in a process of long-term development through economic growth that is equitable, participatory, environmentally sustainable, and self-reliant." Even critics of USAID's performance in Africa point to the DFA policy guidance as an important advance which should be maintained and thoughtfully implemented. Additionally, the separate allocation protects Africa funding from being raided by other interests within the various foreign policy agencies or USAID itself.

The ADF is the only US government agency mandated to make small grants directly to grassroots African groups. It is also the only agency required to hire only African staff for its country offices. The small size and grassroots focus allows ADF to administer small grants, ranging from $20,000 - 250,000 and to operate in ways less suited to the larger USAID bureaucracy. Recent cuts have already forced the ADF to reduce its Washington staff from 48 to 30. In Africa six offices have been closed, leaving only 12 active country offices.

Despite its critical assessment of World Bank policies, the Washington Office on Africa (WOA) worked with other groups to maintain funding for IDA, an arm of the World Bank, and the largest single source of development capital for Africa. This work was in direct response to a call for support for IDA from a coalition of African Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Their critique of the World Bank recommends major reforms while recognizing the essential need for IDA infrastructure development loans in many of the poorest African countries. These loans are virtually interest-free, carry extended repayment periods and support a variety of sectors including transportation, energy, and agriculture, as well as the much criticized World Bank/IMF structural adjustment programs. They request reversing the mix (currently about 60% adjustment and infrastructure and 40% human development) and greater emphasis on its mandate of poverty alleviation. The US contributes 20% of IDA's resources, and Africa receives up to 40% of IDA loans. [The complete text of the African NGO critique is available at http://www.igc.org/apic/index.shtml.]

FY 1996 Appropriations

After a three month delay, the FY 1996 Foreign Operations Appropriations Conference Report, which includes the 1996 assistance levels for the accounts and agencies described above, was passed in late January 1996. The Report was attached to the Continuing Resolution which keeps the government open during the budget impasse.

In the Report, four previously separate accounts were pooled into a new Development Assistance Fund (DAF).

In an effort to afford some protection for Africa aid, Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) succeeded in inserting language which recommends that the administration allocate a proportion of aid from the new DAF that is equal to the 1995 proportion of assistance which Sub-Saharan Africa received. In a March
21, 1996 briefing with representatives of Africa-related organizations, USAID Administrator J. Brian Atwood announced an allocation of $675 million for African development assistance, reassured participants that the funds would be protected from raiding, and indicated that DFA policy guidance would be followed.

Other Sources of Support

While the above avenues constitute the most embattled sources of aid to Africa, they are not the only sources of support. Other accounts from which Africa receives US support include several categories of food aid, ranging from donated US surplus food to food sold to countries able to pay low-interest loans. Yet another group of accounts includes refugee and relief assistance, assistance for other multilateral institutions including the World Bank, and various United Nations Programs (for example UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme). Most of these accounts, particularly relief and UNICEF, were not targeted for major reductions for FY96. The protection of those accounts appears to be a result of the US government’s paradoxical approach to priority-setting under the new conservative Congressional leadership. This approach promotes the allocation of funds for emergency relief while de-emphasizing long-term development initiatives that are aimed at promoting self-sufficiency and enhancing a developing country’s ability to address emergency situations through greater overall self-reliance.

FY97: Africa Aid

Activists are once again gearing up for what is expected to be an equally difficult fight over the FY97 appropriations. One such coalition, in which WOA is an active participant, is Faith Action for People-Centered Development Policy, a working group of religious and faith-based organizations and coalitions with experience in development, human rights, humanitarian relief, and foreign policy. Faith Action hopes to build on the religious community’s work in 1994 on foreign aid reform and last year’s efforts to defend foreign aid funding while advocating continued reform in policies and agencies, and while articulating a renewed vision of ethical US engagement in the post-Cold War world.

There are many other important reasons for continued aid to Africa. Atwood frequently describes Africa as an emerging market important to the future financial interests of the US. Groups like the Constituency for Africa, an African American network of concerned groups and individuals, also emphasize the commercial...
The State Department has announced that up to 7,000 African refugees will be allowed to resettle in the United States during fiscal year 1996, but refugee advocacy groups say action is needed to prevent future cuts.

Of an estimated global refugee population of 16 million people, 6 million—more than one third—are African. The US currently admits fewer than 90,000 refugees annually under the US Refugee Resettlement Program. Admission ceilings are set each year by a presidential determination, prepared by the State Department's Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), in consultation with Congress, other Executive agencies, and non-governmental organizations.

Places are allocated on the basis of applicants' regions of origin. Traditionally, the largest number have been reserved for Southeast Asian refugees, but recently a growing number of Bosnians are being resettled.

The ceiling for African refugees has always been low. During the early 1990s, pressure from advocacy groups, together with the increased visibility of a number of regional conflicts in Africa, prompted a gradual expansion of the number of resettlement visas allocated to Africans annually from 2,000 in 1989 to 7,000 in 1993. Initially, the number of individuals actually resettled grew with the rising ceiling, peaking at 6,969 admissions in 1993.

Lately, however, the number of admissions has declined. Last year, only 4,779 African refugees were resettled in the US, less than 70 percent of the maximum number permitted. But the number of admissions is expected to rise again this year. In the first quarter of fiscal year 1996 (October-December 1995), 867 African refugees settled in the US, and a further 4,700 are now preparing for departure.

Although there will be no reduction in the ceiling for African refugee admission this year, Ralston Deffenbaugh of the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service warns that it may become increasingly difficult to defend this ceiling in the future. The annual figure is typically established with specific refugee populations in mind. One of the factors which contributed to the maintenance of the existing ceiling through the end of fiscal year 1996 was the PRM's identification of a particular group—the Benadir, a Somali minority who fled to neighboring Kenya—as eligible for resettlement.

In spite of the large number of Africans still being displaced, the US government and international agencies have been slow to identify specific populations in need of resettlement. This is, in part, a logistical problem: in areas where the US does not have a refugee processing post, candidates for resettlement must take the initiative to identify themselves to US embassy personnel or United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) staff. The sheer scale of displacement is a factor, too.

"Faced with the enormous numbers of refugees in Africa, US refugee coordinators and UNHCR representatives become 'frozen,'" Deffenbaugh explains. "How do you select 7,000 people out of 6 million? All too often the answer is: don't take anyone."

But the attitudes of US officials also hinder greater responsiveness. Jana Mason of Immigration and Refugee Services of America observes that, in spite of the end of the Cold War, "There has been an inability [on the part of policymakers] to recognize that there are so many different types of persecution. Refugees are not just fleeing communism." She adds that even when refugee communities are identified, US officials often assume that they will find it easier to integrate into a new society if they are resettled somewhere in Africa.

Meanwhile, conservatives in Congress have launched a general assault on immigration. H.R. 2202, introduced by Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX) and S. 1394, introduced by Sen. Alan Simpson (R-WY), both coupled measures intended to control illegal immigration with deep cuts in legal immigration. The House approved H.R. 2202 on March 21, 1996, but only after remov-
ing language which would have capped legal immigration. The Senate is unlikely to restore these provisions this year, but if hostility to immigrants continues to build, resettlement ceilings will remain in jeopardy.

Refugee advocacy groups are urging US officials to be more imaginative in their use of resettlement and more active in identifying eligible groups. Concerned individuals and organizations can help by promoting public awareness of African refugees, particularly of recently displaced or less visible groups. Letters to Members of Congress and to the State Department are also vital; while refugee admission ceilings for certain regions are vigorously defended by outspoken constituencies, resettlement opportunities for Africans are perpetually threatened by the common Washington misconception that few voters care about Africa. Write to your Members of Congress at the addresses provided in the Legislative Update on pages 8-9 and to Phyllis E. Oakley, the Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees, and Migration, Room 5824, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520.

Africa Assistance Falls

Continued from page 11

and financial benefits of ties to Africa.

WOA and other groups underscore issues of US citizen and government accountability: “It is imperative that people... work to expose and change the policies and practices within our own economic and government institutions that perpetuate the exploitation and marginalization of Africa.” [See Christian Witness for Africa advocacy resource packet described on page 16.] WOA staff also joined in sponsoring African Americans for Aid to Africa (A-4), an ad-hoc coalition that examined the race-based nature of attempts to cut Africa aid and to decimate US domestic social spending that disproportionately effects poor people and people of color in this country.

“There has been an inability [on the part of policymakers] to recognize that there are so many different types of persecution. Refugees are not just fleeing communism.”

FY97 Budget Timeline

April 15: House and Senate Budget Committees’ deadline to produce a joint fiscal year 1997 budget. This deadline was not met.

May: Appropriators move the 13 annual spending bills, and can start bringing bills to the floor after May 15 even if there is no final budget. House-Senate fiscal year 1997 budget resolution may appear before the Memorial Day recess, which starts May 24.

June: Deadline for the House to finish work on all 13 bills is June 28, the beginning of the July 4th recess.

August: Summer recess and presidential nominating conventions.

September: House and Senate return September 4. By midnight September 30th they should have produced all fiscal 1997 spending bills and if necessary a reconciliation bill in conference committee.

October 1: Fiscal year 1997 begins. Beyond this date a temporary continuing resolution for funds to keep the government operating becomes necessary.

October 4: House and Senate target adjournment date.

November 5: Election Day.

Constituency-Building and Mobilization: Keys to Advocacy on African Issues

REMEMBER
The movement to end white-minority rule and apartheid in southern Africa mobilized an unprecedented constituency for Africa in the United States and around the world. International solidarity with struggles for self-determination and political transformation helped Africans to achieve real success in the establishment of new governments, the adoption of democratic constitutions, the exploration of new patterns of government, and the creation of fresh opportunities for millions of people. But these countries still face many problems in meeting the needs of all their citizens and healing divisions caused by decades of violence and strife.

REBUILD
The anti-apartheid campaign had the advantage of a highly focussed objective: freeing southern Africa from white-minority rule and ending the scourge of apartheid. In the post-Cold War era, the issues before the Africa advocacy community are more numerous and more complex, and the terrain has expanded to all nations of Africa. The bilateral and multilateral policy agendas have grown accordingly. [See “Legislative Update,” pages 8-9].

Americans and other members of the international community who are committed to progressive social change must demand a new public policy agenda—one motivated not by obsolete military/security analysis and narrow national self-interest but by a commitment to investing in people, making peace, and building justice everywhere for a secure future for all. Struggles for peace; human rights; self-reliant and environmentally-viable economic and human development; participatory, transparent, and accountable governance; security from violence; and access to basic human needs are struggles shared in varying degrees by poor people and people of color in both the US and Africa.

Polling data confirms Americans’ support for non-military foreign assistance that helps poor people to help themselves by promoting disaster relief, development, peace-making, and justice. Currently, the conservative majority of the 104th Congress claims that there is no American constituency for Africa—certainly none in the home districts that elected them—and no compelling national interest for US involvement in Africa. Few Members of Congress take the time to become familiar with the concerns of African people and the relationships between the US and Africa. Others are simply disinterested, an alarming reality given their power to shape US policy and to determine levels of foreign assistance.

The spring 1995 African American Institute survey of Congress concluded that there is “a strong, positive relationship between Members and constituent interest and contact.” They need to hear from their constituents—repeatedly. Get to know them. Let them know who we are, as voters and concerned citizens. Hold them accountable for their statements, actions, and votes on matters that concern Africa. If they are not supporters of people-centered development and peace and justice initiatives, we must use our networking, our knowledge, and our votes either to educate them or to replace them this November.
Rapid Response Network for Africa

☐ YES! I want to let Congress and the Administration know I care about Africa and US policy. Sign me up for the Rapid Response Network! The most reliable way to reach me is:

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