

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

U.S. Foreign Policy Towards Africa: Commitment or Empty Rhetoric

by

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ABSTRACT

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The continent of Africa ranks in the bottom third of developing countries. It is a nation whose history is filled with eras of foreign dominance, both politically and economically. It is a nation that continuously finds itself engrossed in conflict, war, disease, poverty and a government overwrought with corruption. The United States has maintained a strategy of engagement in Africa since the end of the Cold War. Each change in the United States political administration brings about divergent approaches to developing a realistic foreign policy towards Africa, which has yet proven to be effective. Yet, with what has been invested, this continent, which is rich in minerals and petroleum, continues to struggle for existence. This study will demonstrate that the entire continent of Africa is of vital interest to the United States and that the current strategy of engagement lacks true commitment, and is filled with nothing more than empty rhetoric. Upon completion of this paper, recommendations are made in hopes that the United States develops its foreign policy towards Africa with more commitment than promise; and it can be developed and implemented to achieve a secure, stable and democratic Africa.

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U.S. FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA: COMMITMENT OR EMPTY RHETORIC

Interest in the continent of Africa seemingly increases or decreases with the change in the United States political administration. This continent has for decades tweaked the interest of such nations as the Soviet Union, France, China, Cuba and perhaps many more. Although it is a jigsaw puzzle of more than 50 countries, the African continent contains a potential market that could bring 600 million consumers to the global market place¹. The United States has retained the lead as one of the global powers in providing assistance to Africa. For over two decades however, instability and migration have retarded any potential for economic growth and investment.

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has pursued a distant relationship with Africa based on our foreign policy. Initially, the United States used the strategy of “containment” in an effort to prevent the spread of communism as the basis for U.S. interests in African affairs. Having accomplished this, the United States reverted back to that distant relationship, not visibly showing much interest in the continent's establishment of governments, economic development or other issues that plagued the continent.

With the fall of the Soviet Union and communism, another change in the United States strategy came as a result of the civil unrest, political and military corruption and various other social issues in Africa, which created serious challenges to stability in the region. This self-destructive behavior could have created the opportunity for other nations to intervene in African affairs. As a leading global power, the United States assumed the lead role in providing assistance to this nation. With Africa's current status as the most troubled and underdeveloped continent, and United States' sporadic involvement since the Post Cold War, one questions the United States' foreign policy towards Africa: Commitment or empty rhetoric? The foreign policy for Africa is an open issue that requires a thorough review. It is apparent that whatever the policy may be, it should be based on clear identification of U.S. interests in Africa and well-defined criteria for establishing priorities.

BACKGROUND

Poverty, debt, endemic disease and poor governance are critical issues affecting the future of Africa. Economic, strategic, political, and societal interests, intertwined within any one African country, are easily influenced by events across porous borders. Economic growth for the region has been sluggish—barely able to keep pace with an average population growth of 2.6%. As a consequence, 34 of the continent's countries now rank among the world's least developed nations, compared to only 27 in 1996.² Further sapping Africa's potential for development is a

large and growing HIV/AIDS population—some 25 million people or 70% of the 36 million infected worldwide. The linkage of poverty and terrorism only add urgency to the rising problem.³

Ideas of how best to develop Africa change frequently as the years pass. Parts of Africa are potentially rich and prosperous; others are poor and likely to remain so for many years. Some areas are inviting and accessible; others are forbidding and inaccessible.⁴ Although some conventional wisdom tends to dismiss Africa's importance for the U.S., each one of Africa's five regions is significant enough in terms of population, potential economic development, impact on global issues and even current trade ties, to warrant sustained policy attention. Circumstances on the continent are likely to compel a greater commitment of resources than U.S. policymakers currently contemplate. When the U.S. is greatly involved in Africa, they are more powerful and important; when the U.S. is less involved, their status diminishes.⁵

REGIONS OF AFRICA

Africa, like the United States, has a diverse population with a wide variety of interests, opinions, and prejudices. It is the world's second largest continent; more than three times the size of the United States. Africa contains more independent nations than any other continent. Africa has many distinct regions. However, the main regions are North Africa, West Africa, East Africa, Central Africa and Southern Africa.⁶ Each of the continent's regions has its own unique dynamics.

South Africa includes the countries of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.⁷ The nations of Angola, Mozambique and South Africa are leading this region in turmoil, major change and development. For example, Angola is about the size of New Mexico.⁸ Torn by civil war spanning over 19 years, it continues to struggle. Political instability fuels the unrest with contests for power and control raging between the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). The Lusaka Peace Accord was the instrument used to bring a permanent cease-fire to the hostilities. As part of the accord, over 62, 000 soldiers of the UNITA forces were disarmed and integrated into Angola's Forças Armadas de Angola (FAA), the united military of Angola. Despite these conflicts, Angola is ranked as the fourth largest petroleum market, with Chevron and Texaco having established businesses there.⁹ Then there's Mozambique, which is twice the size of California.¹⁰ It too has overcome the ravages of war and political turmoil caused by power hungry political factions. Now with a reputable government in place the country has made

important strides in economic recovery. With the assistance of the international community's foreign aid making up 60 % of its budget, Mozambique has reinvigorated its markets with exports of prawns, cotton, cashews and sugar. The sugar industry shows signs of new life with the major investment of six million dollars from the Sena Company. With this investment sugar processing plants reopened, creating jobs for the people of the country. In addition to the economic recovery there is the promise of Mozambique's military. Mozambique faced the same challenges, as did Angola, trying to find the happy medium between two warring factions. To a degree the country has found some success in forming a new unified army, Forças Armadas de Defesa de Moçambique (FADM) by using forces from the resistance organization, Resistência Nacional Moçambicana (RENAMO) and other citizens. Based on these accomplishments it is the belief of the international community that Mozambique can become the "show piece of capitalist development". The final country in the region that has shown great promise is South Africa. However, one can ill afford not to view South Africa's contribution to history with its era of apartheid and its continuous struggle to overcome the effects of white rule. South Africa is three times the size of California¹¹ whose demographics consists of blacks, whites, Indians and "coloured". With the election of Nelson Mandela as its president in 1994, the stage was set for a transformation of the country from one that was racially divided into that of a democracy. Under Mandela's leadership South Africa made significant gains politically, economically and militarily. Today, its reputation is not one known for apartheid but instead is considered by the United States and its allies as a potential anchor country for this region.

East Africa includes the countries of Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Republic of Tanzania, and Uganda.¹² Despite very different economic and political systems, Kenya and Tanzania have been among the continent's most stable countries. In Kenya, which is twice the size of Nevada a monumental political change occurred with recent election in December 2002 of its new president, Mwai Kibaki, of the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC).¹³ Kibaki's election signals the end of the repressive regime of the Kenya Africa National Union (KANU), which began under the late Jomo Kenyatta and will end with the outgoing President Daniel Arap Moi. During their 39-year reign, Kenya's progress was stymied by corruption, political factionalism fueled by ethnic rivalries, and economic decline. Kenya is a country economically reliant upon its agricultural production primarily, but also supplements its livelihood by exports of black tea and coffee commodities. Therefore, the challenges facing the newly elected leadership, amongst many other things in an effort to reinvigorate their economy, is to sustain their trade relationships with its neighbors, Uganda and Tanzania. The ties formed with these countries

have proven to be instrumental in developing the East African Community (EAC) into an organization liken to that of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Tanzania, which is as large as the state of Texas and most of New Mexico has fared much better than most countries politically.¹⁴ Tanzania has a multi-party government that has conducted two successful general elections for the presidency—one in October 1985 and again in 1995. It appears the country has overcome the political challenges. However, the most formidable task is to eliminate the corruption within the government and work to reduce the national debt, which is estimated at over 7 billion dollars. Having been accepted into the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) program this may well be the impetus needed to move them toward the road to success again. Uganda, on the other hand, has been one of the most conflict ridden.¹⁵ The conflicts in Burundi and the genocide in Rwanda have brought this region to the forefront of the international world with highlights of vast human suffering.

North Africa includes the countries of Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia and Western Sahara¹⁶. Because of its geographic location, it has always had close contact with Europe and the Middle East. According to one source, *Africa 2002*, Algeria is the second largest country in Africa by landmass. The Sudan is the largest country. Algeria has invested heavily in the development of its army, which gives them the status of being a leading military power in the region. For example, the government is busy working off a debt to Russia, a major arms provider to Algeria, which is estimated to be over 4 billion dollars. It is one of few nations in this region with a somewhat stable government, however, the conflict between the army and Islamists in Algeria is the struggle that continues to define the country's identity and future.¹⁷ A decade of terrorist violence has resulted in more than 100,000 deaths since 1991. Although the security situation in the country has improved, addressing the underlying issues that brought about the political turmoil of the 1990s remains the government's major task.¹⁸ In Libya, Colonel Moammar Gaddafi still reigns with just slightly less pomp and circumstance of the 1980s. However, his attempts at unifying 53 African nations into one state modeled after the United States in March 2001 met with some success in that 46 African countries actually signed a declaration giving birth to the African Union. Nonetheless, regardless of Gaddafi's intent, there still lies a cloud of mistrust and a loss of credibility surrounding him.

The relationship between the United States and Israel served as a stickpin for Egypt. A series of failures between Egypt and the United States was cause to widen the gap of an already tense relationship. For example, from 1948 onward, the burden of Egypt's criticism was the friendly U.S. attitude toward the new state of Israel.¹⁹ The key international relationship has been with the United States, backed for the time being by annual aid of over \$2 billion. The

relationship is set to continue, due to Egypt's leadership role in the region and its importance as an advocate of regional peace.

West Africa includes the countries of the Republic of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.²⁰ In Cote d' Ivoire corruption in the government coupled with over 60 ethnic groups has brought this country to the brink of civil war. However, the incumbent president, Laurent Gbagbo, convened a forum in 2001 addressing critical issues thus far saving the country from war. Nigeria is one of the chief producers of petroleum and petroleum products. Under military rule for most of its existence and experiencing 25 years of turbulence and corruption, at the heart of the controversies for this country is the balance of resources and power. Regional tensions are persistent in the oil rich area of the Niger Delta area. This area remains one of the poorest and least developed regions. Niger is ranked as the second poorest country in the world. Uranium was once its major export revenue, however, the demand for this mineral resource has diminished significantly seriously affecting the government revenues. Gold has been the alternative to ease the country's financial burden. Nevertheless, Niger remains profoundly poor.

Central Africa includes the countries of Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of Congo (Congo-Brazzaville), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome' and Principe, and Zaire.²¹ The Central Africa Republic (CAR) made an uneasy transition to democracy due to the influence of former President General Andre Kolingba and his sympathizers. They enjoyed great success in disrupting the implementation of a multiparty democratic system by current President Ange-Felix Patasse. There continues to be a struggle for stability and existence in establishing this new government. They face severe problems with an empty treasury, unpaid military and indebtedness. France for over 30 years has provided the largest amount of assistance both financially and militarily. However, without significant foreign assistance, this country could erupt into total chaos. The Republic of Congo might at last be on the path to stable, democratic rule following the dismantling of the old one-party regime in 1991 and the outbreak of severe civil violence in 1993.²² In contrast, Zaire was once considered the centerpiece of U.S. strategies in the region, but the Rwanda civil war and the fighting in Burundi triggered a flow of massive refugees to this country.²³ These refugees caused extensive hardship on the government and increased ethnic conflicts among the local populations.

This region by region review provides a great overview of the many resources and minerals the continent of Africa possesses—oil, gold, diamonds, uranium and much, much more. It also creates a grand picture of reality for those nations such as the United States,

Britain, France and other Western World Nations who view the continent's challenges from the position of outsiders looking in. They, too, must question themselves with regards to Africa—how is it that a continent can be so rich yet be so poor? One can also see the presence of similar trends, which exist from one region to the next; they are torn by stability in one country, while corruption and violence rages in a neighboring country. Yet it appears that the expectation of the international world is that the inhabitants of Africa, who have been left on their own to fend for themselves by their former colonial powers, can effectively govern themselves without having the slightest inkling of how to govern.

REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Many African countries view their continued existence as a critical situation, and thus have created regional organizations in a unified effort to bring stability to their respective regions. Sanctioned by the United Nations these organizations encourage economic development and make an excellent attempt at promoting regional stability. Because many African countries are small and have limited resources, they have pooled their resources together by becoming members of these organizations with the intent to strengthen their position in the free world. This effort can be viewed as an attempt to demonstrate their resolve for bringing stability to the region as a whole as opposed to attempting this feat individually. There are several regional organizations that have grown out of these alignments, namely the Organization of African States (OAS), the Africa Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) was formed on 25 May 1963. Its membership consisted of the 53 states that made up the continent of Africa at that time. According to its charter, the mission of the OAU encompassed such responsibilities as promoting unity and solidarity of African states; coordinating and intensifying their cooperation and efforts to achieve a better life for the peoples of Africa; eradicating all forms of colonialism from Africa; and coordinating and harmonizing member's political, diplomatic, economic, educational, cultural, health, welfare and defense policies.²⁴ The organization was responsible for bringing the war between Algeria and Morocco to an end. It also helped settle a border dispute between Kenya and Somalia. The OAU appeared to be the answer to some of the challenges facing the continent on the surface, but soon the realization came that the OAU had not only outlived its purpose but was in need of major reorganization in order to efficiently deal with the new challenges of a new era. Therefore, with a proposal by Colonel Moammar Gadhafi in 1999 to form a new organization, the African Union (AU), the Heads of African States made the decision

to transform the OAU to the AU at its final summit in July 2001. The Africa Union was inaugurated in Durban, South Africa on July 10, 2002. Since its inception, the AU has seen limited success. Encumbered with the hefty task of resolving major conflicts on the continent, unlike the United Nations or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), it lacks the “teeth” and resources necessary to build a reputation that would cause African states to abide by its resolutions.

In the Southern Region of Africa, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) is one of the leading organizations in this region, which is made up of 14 southern African countries. The SADC evolved from the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), which was established in 1980 to mobilize resources for national, interstate, and regional development, so that “front line” countries might reduce their dependence on South Africa. The treaty commits member states to evolve common political values, systems, and institutions and to promote and defend peace and security.²⁵

The lead organization in West Africa for conflict resolution and stability is the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). This is a regional group of 15 countries that was founded by treaty in May 1975. ECOWAS was conceived as a means toward economic integration and development intended to lead to the eventual establishment of an economic union in West Africa, enhancing economic stability and enhancing relations between member states.²⁶ To address the issue of regional conflict resolution, the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) evolved from ECOWAS. These teams are made up of military units or technical experts from ECOWAS member states. The ECOMOG has conducted military and peacekeeping operations in Liberia in 1997, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. Its most recent contributions have resulted in playing a key role in attempting to resolve the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire. While ECOMOG has been effective in containing the spread of war, it has not yet developed a successful model for preventing conflict within the region

In Central Africa, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) established the Council for Peace and Security (COPAX) in the region. Only in existence since 1999, the effectiveness of this organization is still being considered.

NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

At the conclusion of World War II, the United States developed and pursued a National Security Strategy of containment for the African continent. The major concern then was with the Soviet Union as a superpower and containing the spread of communism. From the United States perspective, this ideology could not be allowed to envelope the free world. Africa's

geographical location placed the continent in the heart of the trade routes. Unorganized and full of chaos the situation in Africa caused great concern for both the United States and the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was viewed as the nation that had the greatest influence in Africa, potentially occupying a position that could have uncontested control of major trade routes, and could place the rest of the free world at its mercy. For nearly four decades, U.S. policy toward Africa was shackled by the Cold War. From the end of World War II until late 1984, the United States interest in the continent fluctuated with the changing estimates of the threat posed by real or imagined Soviet gains. Geopolitics first began to influence U.S. policy toward Africa in the decade following World War II and geopolitical considerations determined Africa's place on the U.S. foreign policy agenda.²⁷ American policy makers defined their options narrowly; they seldom gave priority to initiatives that did not serve U.S. strategic interests.

During the late 1940's and 1950's, the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations were concerned primarily with ensuring that Western Europe became a stable bulwark against Soviet expansion. This preoccupation caused them to abandon the traditional role of the United States as an outspoken critic of colonial rule. Criticizing colonial rule would have weakened or offended allies in Lisbon, London and Paris. There was great fear that if colonialization came to a sudden end, that would lead to political disorder and provide an opportunity for communism to emerge and gain a strong foothold. The end of the Cold War was signaled by a move by the Soviet Union when Mikhail Gorbachev, Deputy Prime Minister of the Soviet Union announced that the Soviet Union will not be the one to start a new round of arms race.²⁸ This opened the door for the United States to develop a new relationship with Africa.

Several major events occurred during the period extending from the late 1950s to early 1960s that influenced policy towards Africa. Tunisia, Morocco, Sudan and Chad gained their independence; Guinea broke with France and the Algerian Revolution signaled the beginning of the end of the colonial era. During the Kennedy Administration in early 1960, American interest peaked. During his election campaign, Kennedy argued that we have lost ground in Africa because we have neglected and ignored the needs and aspirations of the African people.²⁹ After his election in 1960, President Kennedy energized his administration to take an aggressive policy towards Africa. He extended invitations to many African Heads of State to visit the United States in an attempt to show American resolve in assisting Africa. A steady stream of African Heads of State were welcomed in Washington: eleven in 1961, ten in 1962, and seven in 1963.³⁰

By the time Richard Nixon became President in 1969, he seemed to have forgotten his earlier exaggerated claim that Africa was a critical geopolitical testing ground.³¹ His

administration cited Africa as one of the greatest examples of the failure of the appeal of communism. Given this assessment Nixon and his advisors saw no reason for the United States to undertake any significant initiatives on the continent.³² The Nixon administration took on a policy of neglect based on two assumptions, as National Security Memorandum 39 of 1970 suggested, (1) the whites were there to stay; and (2) the Soviet Union would not interfere in the region.³³ However, the civil war in Angola changed the Nixon administration's position. This conflict re-involved both the Soviet Union and the United States in African affairs. Each superpower chose to back opposing political groups to support. The Soviet Union focused their support towards the Movimento De Libertacao (MPLA) while the United States supported two others, the Frente Nacional De Libertacao De Angola (FNLA) and the Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total De Angola (UNITA). This alignment caused the United States to begin to pay attention to the continent once again.

The United States was more active in Africa from the mid 1970s through the mid 1980s than any time in its history. Despite widely varying ideological predispositions, the administrations from Truman to Reagan determined their African priorities largely by geopolitical considerations. To their credit, each administration, to include the Nixon administration, provided the required assistance to develop their defenses in thwarting the efforts of communism. However, United States assistance did very little in assisting Africa to develop into a state capable of governing itself or promoting its global significance to the rest of the free world.

CURRENT NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY

To clearly define what the U.S foreign policy is towards Africa today, it is necessary to consult the National Security Strategy (NSS) published by both the Clinton and Bush administrations. The Clinton administration required attaining three goals through a strategy of engagement. Those goals were: enhancing security at home and abroad, promoting prosperity, and promoting democracy and human rights. Specifically, the Clinton policy stated to accomplish these three goals in an ever-shrinking world, we have to develop a series of policies, now recognized as the elements of our strategy for engagement.³⁴ The strategy further defines these elements in the following statement as "elements of engagement—adapting alliances; encouraging the reorientation of other states, including former adversaries; encouraging democratization, open markets, free trade, and sustainable development; preventing conflict; countering potential regional aggressors; confronting new threats; and

steering international peace and stability operations—define the blueprint for a strategy of engagement³⁵.

The Clinton foreign policy strategy approach to Africa considered only two major countries, North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa. The policy stated that the United States has an interest in the stability and prosperity of North Africa, however the policy did not specify the level of intensity for U.S. interest.³⁶ Its intent was on building better relations, encouraging democratic development and economic reform with specific countries within that region—Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria. Libya was a concern due to its continued support of terrorism. Left unchecked, terrorism could pose a threat not only to United States national security, but to the region as well. For Sub-Saharan Africa, the strategy's immediate objective was to increase the number of capable states in Africa, that is, nations that can define the challenges they face, manage their resources to effectively address those challenges, and build stability and peace within their borders and their sub-regions.³⁷ President Clinton made a historic eleven-country trip to Africa in March 1998. With this visit came much verbal commitment for Africa on behalf of his administration. The trip to Africa was the most extensive tour of the continent by a United States President and the first since the Carter era. President Clinton's message was one of development through trade and investment, market liberalization, and integration into the global economy. But despite Clinton's visit, the United States still failed to formulate a coherent policy with respect to Africa and with the departure of the administration, the legacy of the Clinton administration was more symbolic than tangible.

The United States foreign policy towards Africa during the Clinton administration's second year in office was significantly affected by three events: the genocide in Rwanda in April 1994, the White House-hosted Conference on Africa in June 1994, and the Republican Party election victory in November 1994. Together these three events revealed a shift in United States foreign policy towards Africa. The first glimpse of change arose as a result of the United States not supporting the United Nations (UN) request for military support for Rwanda. The decision not to respond was cloaked by the embarrassment from events of the failed military operations in Somalia. From this came the infamous Presidential Decision Directive-25, which in summary, disallowed any American involvement in UN-sponsored peace operations. Although the United States National Security Strategy espouses a policy of engagement especially for the protection of human rights violations, the United States failed to respond to the crisis in Rwanda. Meanwhile, the United States State Department continued to profess its faith in the highly improbable possibility of organizing democratic elections in Zaire.³⁸

The second hint of change came with the hastily organized conference on Africa which “brought over 200 high-ranking administration officials and a variety of governmental and non-governmental representatives involved in African affairs together.”³⁹ The significance of this conference for the Clinton Administration was to gain consensus from the advocates of African affairs who had become extremely vocal with their discontent for United States post Cold War policies. The African advocates saw this movement by the administration as successful in that they had managed to gain the attention of the president and his cabinet when the conference was held.

The final indication of change came with the United States elections of November 1994, which gave the Republican Party control over both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Critical to this gain in political control was the profound influence that was waged in terms of using foreign aid as a tool of United States foreign policy towards Africa. The traditional predilection of conservative Republicans to oppose foreign aid, combined with Africa’s low priority compared to other global regions of greater perceived interest at the level of the White House, reinforced a post-Cold War trend of reducing U.S. foreign aid commitments to Africa.⁴⁰ In short, although the Republican-dominated Congress supported the Clinton Administration’s verbal commitment, on the surface Congress demonstrated their resolve by not providing the funds via foreign aid to Africa. On the one hand, the Conference on Africa was an attempt, however feeble, to show that the United States remained committed to a more proactive approach to dealing with African issues. By contrast, the lack of support for Rwanda served to highlight the Clinton administration reluctance to become involved in conflicts in Africa.

The current Bush administration’s 2002 National Security Strategy asserts that engagement is the way ahead. However, the strategic approach is one of a “strategy based on a distinctly American internationalism that reflects the union of our values and our national interests...our goals on the path to progress are clear: political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states, and respect for human dignity.”⁴¹ The strategy also notes that “in an increasingly interconnected world, regional crisis can strain our alliances, rekindle rivalries among major powers, and create horrifying affronts to human dignity. When violence erupts and states falter, the United States will work with friends and partners to alleviate suffering and restore stability.”⁴² The concluding statement in the National Security Strategy provides an overall assessment, which acknowledges that Africa’s great size requires a security strategy that focuses on bilateral engagement and builds coalitions of the willing.⁴³ This is a challenge to the European community to assist, along with the United States, this struggling

nation. For the Bush administration, however, the rhetoric continues. While campaigning for the presidency, candidate Bush stated, "Africa didn't fit into national strategic interests". However, once installed, Secretary of State Colin Powell, upon making his third trip to Africa, made it clear that not only was it his personal commitment, but he spoke as well for the commitment of the Bush administration's commitment to Africa. These statements are in strong contrast to one another.

AFRICA'S AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE

REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE TO THE U.S.

Each region of Africa is significant to the United States and other nations in many respects as the seemingly endless surplus of minerals and various resources draws to them other nations, which have a great demand for these resources. However, the United States national interests in the continent as a whole are largely economic and geopolitical. The economic priorities include retaining access to certain minerals. The geopolitical priorities are to deter or counter hegemonic intrusions by the Soviets or their surrogates into African countries and regions historically linked to the west, and to cement "special relationships" with governments willing to provide access to ports and other facilities supportive of global U.S. military outreach.⁴⁴ Although the Soviet Union no longer poses the threat of spreading communism, the United States interests remain geopolitical and economic.

On a much smaller scale we must consider other areas, though less visible, that have significant importance for United States involvement in Africa. A close examination of specific areas such as social, economic, political and global perspectives, reveals that not only do these areas relate back to the intent of the National Security Strategy but also drives the rationale for developing and implementing current foreign policy. Like a puzzle, each area has a connection to the other and without addressing each area as a whole Africa cannot achieve the prominence that it or the United States desires.

SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

In the Bush National Security Strategy, the following statement proclaims that in Africa, promise and opportunity sit side by side with disease, war and desperate poverty. The National Security Strategy further asserts these conditions in Africa strike at the very "core value" of the United States. This statement of acknowledgement, however, does very little to combat such issues as HIV/AIDS and poverty levels of this vast continent. During the 14th International Aids Conference held in Barcelona, Spain, Cable News Network (CNN) reported an alarming

statistic: “the number of people infected with HIV in Russia, India, China, Ethiopia, and Nigeria could more than triple by the year 2010, far exceeding the number in Central and Southern Africa. Between 25 million and 27 million people are infected with HIV in Central and Southern Africa alone”.⁴⁵ The significance of this issue is that of the countries listed, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Central and South Africa are strategically significant to the United States. For example, Nigeria is an important source of oil, gas and minerals for the United States. If the intent of the United States is to use these countries or other stable countries as anchors in their regions, the threat of HIV/AIDS poses a great threat to Africa’s ability to provide a work force to maintain the infrastructure needed to continue the upward progress of the continent. If the life expectancy rate is just over thirty years old and there is not a health care system in place capable of providing medical treatment for those affected, then it stands to reason that the work force will be reduced to such levels that Africa will not be capable of competing in any market. Even though HIV/AIDS is a social issue, ultimately it will become an economic issue soon.

The response by the United States has been to provide funding to Africa to provide the medical assistance needed to combat the HIV/AIDS problem, more specifically targeting pregnant females infected with the virus. For example, in Fiscal Year 2002, the United States provided \$988 million for global HIV/Aids assistance--a 36% increase from Fiscal Year 2001 and for Fiscal Year 2003, President Bush proposed \$1.1 billion--a 13% increase in funding from the previous year.⁴⁶ During his State of the Union Address on 28 January 2003, President Bush announced a new initiative aimed at providing more relief to HIV/AIDS ridden countries in Africa and the Caribbean. His initiative, the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, calls for Congress to commit \$15 billion dollars over the next five years to help turn the tide in combating the HIV/AIDS epidemic to the most afflicted countries in Africa and the Caribbean. As a precondition of the initiative, the president indicated that he would create a position for a special coordinator at the Department of State to ensure that the funds can be accounted for as a means to measure the effectiveness of the initiative in the future.

ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE

United States foreign policy demonstrates that the nation’s interest lies only in countries that are perceived as having something the United States can capitalize. Other less developed countries do not appear attractive enough, or in other words, lack a stable environment to warrant consideration. This may account for the shift in the foreign policy strategy that suggests, “trade for aid” as the new direction. What this term implies is that instead of providing foreign aid to Africa, trade is the mechanism used to assist in funding African development.

Trade is the oldest of the different areas of economic interaction.⁴⁷ Africa accounts for only about 4 per cent of the total value of imports and exports in international trade, but plays a major role in the continent's economy.⁴⁸ Trade with Africa--\$22.5 billion in 1997—constitutes less than 2% of overall U.S. foreign trade. Petroleum products, mostly from Nigeria, Angola, and Gabon, account for two-thirds of U.S. imports from Africa.⁴⁹

With the end of the Cold War, total United States aid (military, economic, and disaster assistance) to Africa has been halved from more than \$2 billion in 1985 to just over \$1 billion in 1997. Ethiopia, South Africa, Rwanda, Uganda, Mozambique, and Ghana have become the top recipients of U.S. aid to Sub-Sahara Africa.⁵⁰ Food aid and humanitarian assistance has fluctuated in response to specific needs; development assistance to the region declined steadily from \$826 million in 1991 to a low of \$541 million in 1996.

With the exception of a few African countries, South Africa seems to have cornered the market for trade and investments with the United States. After the elimination of apartheid in 1991, the United States renewed its trade with South Africa. This new trade relationship was the focal point of the Clinton administration. An important regional dimension of foreign policy is to ensure that South Africa's economy is "closely knitted" to those of other South African community (SADC) countries, thereby enhancing the rise of regional markets that would be more attractive to U.S. investors.⁵¹ All foreign observers agree that South Africa constitutes the richest future American market.⁵² This is the reason that the United States, France, and other great powers have focused their economic sights on South Africa since the beginning of the 1990s.

Another interesting facet of this relationship between the United States and South Africa is the use of the U.S. Ambassador as an advocate for trade to enhance the posture of U.S. businesses. Using this approach benefited the targeted country as well as the United States. For example, in 1994, the U.S. Ambassador for South Africa, Howard Jeter, was used in this capacity as advocate in convincing Owens-Corning to open a pipe subsidiary plant in Gaborone, Botswana. The end result was collateral contact with the foreign government and the creation of jobs both in South Africa and the United States. One cannot over look the contributions of South Africa in that it is the most highly industrialized country in Africa. It produces nearly two-fifths of the continents manufactured goods.⁵³ South Africa's factories turn out a wide range of products, including automobiles, chemicals, clothing, processed foods, iron and steel. It is obvious that much time and energy has been devoted to the development of South Africa but their success has not come without great assistance from the western world. If the record

books were open could the same be said of those countries that remain at the top of the list of underdeveloped countries?

POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Cold War superpower rivalry caused many of Africa's conflicts. The Soviet Union and the United States courted newly independent African nations to convince them to support their efforts. The results of U.S. and Soviet courtship, as well as the influence of other nations, created undemocratic authoritarian, corrupt and oppressive governments⁵⁴ The end of the Cold War signaled an end to the superpower rivalry. However, Africa was left to fend for itself. The Cold War ended years of superpower backing politically, financially and militarily. The United States no longer needed to coddle African leaders for their allegiance. Russia no longer had the means to provide assistance⁵⁵ The nature of politics in many African countries rests in capturing and maintaining that political power. The desire for power is also a key source of conflict across the African continent. Insufficient accountability of leaders, lack of transparency in regimes, inadequate checks and balances, non-adherence to the rule of law, absence of peaceful means to change or replace leadership or lack of respect for human rights all entail strong, and in most cases, dictatorial political control.⁵⁶ The United States, Russia, France and other non-African nations have not been successful in affecting political measures to reduce or eliminate these practices by the leading rulers of sub-regions or major regions.

In the 1990s, Africa appeared to undergo a democratic awakening. Between 1990 and 1995, 38 of the then 47 countries of Sub Saharan Africa held competitive, multi-party national elections. Open elections were also conducted in 38 of 47 countries. Twenty-five states have made progress towards democracy and it appears reforms are taking root. However, it may be action in appearance only. The same corruption that marred the political system and its leaders remain in place. The most valid reason for attempting to make the transition to democracy is to continue to receive foreign aid. Within many African nations there is still a high level of mistrust for even the elected officials.⁵⁷

GLOBAL SIGNIFICANCE.

Africa's significance to the free world crosses a spectrum of three areas: geographic, political, and economic. Geographically, Africa plays host to key trade routes that encompass the straits of Gibraltar, Mediterranean Sea and the Gulf of Aden. For the United States, travel through these routes are critical when providing a naval response to a crisis or saves valuable time for merchants when shipping exports to trade markets in the free world. Denial of access to these routes could prove to be a major obstacle for the United States. Politically, access to

the continent and its territorial waters assures our allies that the United States maintains a capable presence to support them when needed. Economically, estimates of Africa's resources on the whole are tentative. Not enough prospecting for resources under the ground has taken place, but it is already fair to say that Africa has 96 per cent of the non-communist world's diamonds, 60 per cent of its gold, 42 per cent of its cobalt, 34 per cent of its bauxite and 28 per cent of its uranium.⁵⁸ Since the 1970s, the United States has been importing 98 per cent of its manganese from abroad, nearly half of which has been from Africa. The western world, including the United States, interest in Africa's oil also significantly increased, partly in proportion to the political uncertainties surrounding the Middle Eastern suppliers. For the time being, America's dependence on Nigerian oil continues to be critical. It appears that the market for trade and investment is rich with opportunity for U.S business as well as for Africa. With investment comes the opportunity to reduce Africa's unemployment rates. However rich the continent may be there still looms the major challenge of the impact of HIV/AIDS on the economy.

U.S INTERESTS IN AFRICA: VITAL OR PERIPHERAL

INTEREST DEFINED

Before identifying what U.S. interests are in Africa, one must first determine what is meant when using this term "national interest" as it relates to United States foreign policy. The term national interest has been applied by statesmen, scholars, and military planners since the middle ages to the foreign policy and national security goals of nation-states.⁵⁹ Under the constitution of the United States, it is the responsibility of the President to determine what the U.S. national interests are and what resources are necessary to achieve them. When U.S interests are clearly defined, these interests drive the actions of the U.S. abroad. For the purpose of this study, national interests fall into four categories: Survival, Major, Vital and Peripheral.⁶⁰ The model being used was prescribed by Donald E. Nuechterlein in his article "Defining U.S. National Interests: An Analytical Framework".⁶¹

Survival interest exists when there is an imminent, credible threat of massive destruction to the homeland if an enemy state's demands are not countered quickly. Such crises are easy to recognize because they are dramatic and involve an armed attack, or threat of attack, by one country on another's home territory.⁶² **Major** interests involve issues and trends, whether they are economic, political, or ideological, that can be negotiated with an adversary.⁶³ An interest is **vital** when the highest policymakers in a sovereign state conclude

that the issue at stake is so fundamental to the political, economic, and social well-being of their country that it should not be comprised—even if this conclusion results in the use of economic and military sanctions.⁶⁴ And finally, a **peripheral** interest “is one that does not seriously affect the well-being of the United States as a whole, even though it may be detrimental to the private interests of Americans conducting business abroad”. When the categories of interests have been defined, security of the homeland, economic well-being and promotion of values, they in turn determine the level of intensity for which the United States will pursue their interest via developing foreign policy. By its own definition, the Bush National Security Strategy determined that Africa is of **vital** interest to the United States, thus giving a sound reason to apply the necessary resources to assist Africa.

U.S INITIATIVES

With the arrival of a new political administration from the post Cold War to the present, each took office bring with them an asundry of initiatives and programs aimed at addressing Africa's plight. However, based on the history records, it is clear that U.S interests in Africa continues to ebb and flow today as much as it has in the past.

BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS

Before 1950, the U.S. had formulated no distinct policy for the African continent like its traditional policies toward other continents: the Open policy in China and the Far East, the Monroe Doctrine, and Good Neighbor policy toward Latin America.⁶⁵ In 1955, western officials learned that the Soviet Union had agreed to supply President Gamel Abdel Nasser of Egypt with arms via Czechoslovakia. This conjuncture of events turned Africa into an open field for superpower competition. In a report to President Dwight Eisenhower following a visit to Africa in 1957, the first by a senior American official since the end of World War II, Vice President Richard Nixon predicted, “the course of Africa's development...could prove to be the decisive factor in the conflict between the forces of freedom and international communism. To meet this challenge, Nixon recommended the creation of a separate Bureau of African Affairs in the State Department.⁶⁶ With the establishment of such a bureau in 1958 and the commissioning of a series of National Security policy reviews, the U.S. began to organize itself to compete with Soviet Union for the political loyalty of Africa's newly emerging states. Since the Department of State's Bureau of African Affairs was created in 1958, nine individuals have held the position of Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs.⁶⁷ These periods of personnel turbulence have not subsided. In fact, Secretary of State Colin L. Powell, in his testimony before the Senate Committee on Appropriations on 6 March 2003, he testified that the State Department would

continue to hire 399 more foreign affairs personnel to assist in carrying out the nations foreign policy. He indicated that with these new hires he will align the personnel with the diplomatic workload. This is an indication that perhaps due to personnel shortages the State Department can not be effective in the performance of its diplomatic responsibilities; an issue duties, which may reveal the rationale behind the Bureau of African Affairs ability to develop effective foreign policy for Africa.

Africa has been the subject of many initiatives, some very successful and others unsuccessful. Looking at Africa through the American political system, it must be viewed from the perspective of "End, Ways and Means". This facilitates a clearer understanding of the tools used to accomplish the administration's engagement strategy. The U.S. **Ends** for Africa though not strategic, remain highly important. They are grounded in historical linkages between the continent and America's 36 million African Americans. They reside in Africa's supply of more than 15 % of America's petroleum requirements. The ends emanate from U.S. values and goals that continue to be central to global U.S. Foreign policy: democracy and respect for human rights; alleviation of human suffering; strengthening of market economies within an expanding global economic community; and combating the transnational security threats posed by crime, terrorism, money laundering, narcotics trafficking, and global infectious diseases.⁶⁸

The **Ways** in which United States foreign policy addresses these broad responsibilities is first, to work to achieve regional stability and the promotion of democracy. To achieve this, it is necessary to conduct free elections and install a government elected by the people. This is a strategy referred to as self-governance. One initiative designed to provide incentives by attempting self-governance is the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Assistant Secretary Walter Kansteiner, Assistant Secretary for African Affairs summed up the purpose of NEPAD in his address to the Foreign Press center in New York on 16 September, 2002. "We do think there's a difference with NEPAD, in the sense that at the core of NEPAD's theology, is a notion that good governance is not only expected, but good governance is going to be required of African governments. And the implementing component of that is the neighbors, other African states are going to expect their colleagues to have good governance and practice good governance".⁶⁹ This supports the U.S's strategy for using developed countries in Africa to assume the responsibility of leading the effort to secure the stability of the region. Once stability is accomplished, then it is feasible to pursue the promotion of democracy.

Finally, the **Means** for accomplishing the strategy is through the promotion of prosperity through economic reforms. The key to this process is perceived through the opening of trade markets to Africa. The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) is the proposed tool to

opening the free trade market. Former President Clinton signed this Act into law on 18 May 2000. It offered incentives for African countries to continue their efforts to open their economies and build free markets. President Bush signed amendments to this Act making it law on 6 August, 2002. The AGOA provides reforming African countries with the most liberal access to the U.S. market available to any country or region that the U.S. does not have a free trade agreement.

Another significant effort was the signing of the Trade Promotion Authority by President Bush on 6 August 2002. By signing this Act, the trade markets were opened even wider with the understanding that the agreements they had previously negotiated would not be subject to renegotiation. Finally, the introduction of the Millennium Challenge Account is yet another tool used by the present administration to not only assist Africa but other developing countries. The goal is to reward sound policy decisions that support economic growth and reduce poverty. The president pledged an increase of the U.S. core assistance by 50 % over the next 3 years; this represents a major commitment of dollars to be combined with other initiatives that have been implemented in assistance to Africa. The criteria for access to this fund is linked to the same criteria used by NEPAD. However, with all that has been said and done, it still remains to be seen if any of these initiative work or is it empty rhetoric? According to the presentation given by Brigadier General John N. Musonda, Military Advisor, and Republic of Zambia Mission to the United Nations on 12 October 2002, African states still lack the capacity and resources to address all of the problems that may arise.

FOREIGN AID ASSISTANCE

Almost every African nation depends to some extent on foreign aid. Such aid consists of grants of money, loans, and technical assistance in such areas as agriculture, education, and health. Africa has been the recipient of aid from the United States as well as other countries such as France and Britain. The United States is a leading contributor. Foreign aid has helped African countries establish industries, improve agricultural productivity, and build houses, roads, and schools. Foreign aid also has provided African countries with food and supplies in times of drought and other natural disasters. Egypt receives more foreign aid than any other country in Africa. Other African countries that receive large amounts of foreign aid include Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Sudan, and Tanzania.⁷⁰

American funds have by no means been distributed equally across the continent; certain countries such as Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Nigeria, and Ghana have benefited far more than others.⁷¹ The United States has shown a propensity for providing aid to Africa since the end of

the Cold War, however, the issue is not solely what aid has been provided, but rather how much aid has been and will continue to be provided. Foreign aid has not always been wholly beneficial. Many loans call for high interest payments. As a result, several countries receiving aid are finding it extremely difficult to repay the loans. Currently debt service payments claim 80% of Africa's foreign exchange earnings.⁷²

SECURITY COOPERATION

The Bush National Security Strategy calls for the formation of the “coalition of the willing” to engage in “cooperative security arrangements.” This assertion gives way to implementing what is termed security cooperation. This program is a main component of United States foreign policy. The Department of State is the lead agency responsible for developing the foreign policy that provides the guidance to combatant commanders to incorporate various activities into their strategy for their respective theaters. Security cooperation consists of a group of programs authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Arms Export Control Act of 1976 which allows the United States to provide defense articles, military training, and other defense-related services, by grant, loan, credit, or cash sales in the furtherance of national policies and objectives.⁷³

Africa falls under the military purview of the United States European Command (USEUCOM). One of several activities used by USEUCOM to comply with policy guidance under the auspices of security cooperation is the highly touted program African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI). The goal of ACRI is to develop a set of eight to ten commonly trained, commonly equipped and interoperable African battalions trained to perform peacekeeping and/or humanitarian operations within the region.⁷⁴ African states must request training under this program and participation is voluntary. Initially fifteen African states signed up for the program. The effectiveness of ACRI remains questionable. According to a report submitted by the Congressional Presentation for Foreign Operations in 1999 there were four indicators of success to assess the effectiveness of ACRI: (1) new program participants complete training cycle and begin sustainment training; (2) donor participation institutionalized, and working in close cooperation with the United Nation Director of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and OAU; (3) increased donor contribution efforts to enhance African peacekeeping capabilities beyond the permanent three nations; and (4) follow-on ACRI training funds, battalions, and equipment stores intact and properly maintained.⁷⁵ Of the indicators used to determine success or failure, ACRI was rated as having success in two out of four possible indicators. The most glaring failure indicated ACRI-trained units did not maintain a standing battalion ready to

deploy on short notice to a conflict. In fact, the report specifically stated ACRI battalions exist on paper only...to be organized only for ACRI training or for possible future peacekeeping operations.⁷⁶

During the Clinton administration, ACRI underwent many transitions before congressional support could be obtained to continue the program. Congress eventually conceded however not without imposing a major change to the type of training ACRI provided. Specifically, ACRI was limited to providing traditional peacekeeping training only, rather than the more robust peace enforcement training that was obviously needed for most African conflicts.⁷⁷

Compounding the problem was the issue of funding. ACRI was initially funded in its first year with 7 million dollars. The ensuing years, it received in excess of 15 million dollars. Eventually it received its highest funding at 20 million dollars. Of the countries that requested the training under ACRI, Kenya, Angola, and Nigeria were ruled out due to their political turmoil and human rights violations; Ethiopia, Uganda, and Rwanda could not participate because of their continuous interstate wars; South Africa bowed out because they were not consulted initially when the concept of ACRI was introduced and they believed that it was not clear under whose command and control their forces would come under. As a result, smaller, less capable forces were the recipients of ACRI assistance.⁷⁸

The United States did not enter into the ACRI program alone; Britain and France accompanied them. All three signed the African Peacekeeping Training Agreement on 22 May 1997. By comparison, Britain and France's program was more robust than the United States. For example, Britain invested their assets in providing for academic training in staff colleges located in Ghana and Zimbabwe in addition to participating in various peacekeeping exercises. France, on the other hand, calling their peacekeeping initiative *Renforcement des Capacites de Africaines de Maintien de la Paix (RECAMP)*, invested the equivalent of 30 million U.S. dollars when it was funded in 1998.⁷⁹ This funding included the cost to train over 1500 African military personnel in French and African schools; prepositioning vehicles and equipment in Senegal, Gabon and Djibouti in the event of an outbreak; and they conducted three major exercises involving eight African countries.

One might ask what the United States has to show for its expenditures as compared to Britain and France? It is apparent that the United States has invested more funds and personnel for training but not to the depths that Britain and France have. The African Crisis Response Initiative, now known as the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) Program, has the potential to create the forces necessary to respond to any crisis in the African region if the commitment is equal to the funding. Incidentally, funding for ACOTA for

fiscal year 2003 was \$10 million dollars compared to funding for ACRI reached \$20 million dollars. Less money means fewer resources and less resources means less training. Once the United States combines commitment with funding then and only then can Africa be expected to provide the forces necessary to resolve those crises internal to the continent.

RECOMMENDATION

Without the development of a foreign policy that addresses the challenges facing Africa and continued support by the United States with foreign assistance, Africa will find itself falling further into the abyss. Therefore, the United States, if it remains true to its National Security Strategy, should only pursue one course of action for Africa, which is to increase foreign aid and security cooperation. Increasing foreign aid and security cooperation, provides an opportunity for the United States and her European allies to provide more than verbal commitments to the African cause. Given the current state of Africa, what it needs is more support and less rhetoric.

The United States interests stated precisely in the National Security Strategy, directly apply to Africa: political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states, and respect for human dignity. What is not present is the United States commitment, which is determined by indicating a specific level of intensity, to seriously work towards providing assistance to Africa in their efforts in becoming a people capable of self-governance. To achieve the desired end state a foreign policy should be developed that will encompass the whole African continent instead of affecting one that only provides for assistance to those nations and/ or countries that have a resource the United States needs.

CONCLUSIONS

The United States foreign policy towards Africa has changed as political administrations changed. Based on an administration's policy for this continent, foreign assistance for this country has shown the same peaks and valleys in developmental assistance provided. A continued decline in foreign assistance will have devastating effects on the continent as it continues to struggle for existence in an environment filled with disease, corruption, tribal rivalries, civil unrest and terrorism. The United States has a vital interest at stake in the survival of this country. Without total commitment by our political system, combined with foreign aid assistance, the future of this continent is not promising. The United States must increase the current foreign aid and security cooperation assistance provided to the continent of Africa as a whole and not use the piece meal approach.

If the United States leads the way in developing a foreign policy that addresses Africa's specific challenges, and if the policy includes the foreign assistance necessary to truly meet

development goals, what will Africa look like? All major countries will have established a government free of corruption based on the conduct of free elections by the people rather than military coups or dictatorships; a democracy which embraces the welfare of its peoples through economic growths and development and capable of governing; sub-regional organizations that are trained and educated in conflict resolution that has achieved the respect of its members to act as the mediator to quickly and fairly resolve disputes; a continent that recognizes that it has a place in the free world and exercises its status with the prestige as other global powers. That is the Africa that all global powers should seek.

WORD COUNT = 10,042

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