

THE SELFISH ASPECTS OF US FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA

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Abstract: The article was prepared by United States International University – Africa (USIU-A) students: Rono Chepng'eno Diana, Mogeni Paul, Alividza Joanne, King'ori Esther, Senewa Mercy and USIU-A lecturer Ngeno, Weldon KWA. We analyse how one sided are the US foreign policies to Africa. The article has various categories of the contact points at which the US has had with Africa starting with the first US contact with Africa prior to the Cold War Era; then a look at the Post-Cold War Policies ranging from aspects of the New World Order, then the Retreat from Africa, African Solutions to African Problems with regard to the US Military Policies and their Economic Policies, the US and Africa relations post- 9/11 and lastly a critical look at the most current Obama Policies on Africa in terms of the correlation of Good Governance and Democracy, AGOA, Development Assistance, Security and Strategic Policy, Counterterrorism, Peacekeeping and Energy Security.

Keywords: US, Africa, Foreign Policy, USIU-A, Ng'eno KWA.

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the U.S. foreign policy towards Africa in a bid to ascertain whether the policies have been good for Africa or not. In the analysis, the paper concludes that indeed most aspects of U.S. foreign policy in Africa have been in the interest of United States, not Africa. The paper commences the discussion by discussing the first contact of US with Africa. Then, discuss the post-cold war foreign policy waves namely the new world order, the retreat from Africa, African Solutions to African Problems era, and post 9/11 policies. Lastly, the recent Obama administration foreign policies in Africa in relation to governance, economy and security & energy.

2. FIRST US CONTACT WITH AFRICA

Historical records show that the first contact between America and Africa took place in 1619 when a Dutch ship sold twenty Africans into slavery in the British North American colonies. From then, the colonies eventually became part of a global slave-trading network [1]. This morphed into tens of millions of people, about 12 percent of the US population, claiming an African-American heritage.

Africa has been ignored by US foreign policy makers for a long time as the continent is only thought of after an event occurs. In fact, most Americans do not know much, if any, about Africa. History has several instances where US foreign policy towards Africa has been derided. It was in 1957 when Vice President Richard M. Nixon noted after twenty-two day tour in Africa that, "For too many years, Africa in the minds of many Americans has been regarded as a remote and mysterious continent which was the special province of big game hunters, explorers and motion picture makers." Nixon recommended that a special separate Bureau of African Affairs be created within the State Department. This came to be the following year.

Again in 1957, another US politician Senator John F. Kennedy scoffed at what he perceived as Washington's inability to come to terms with the question of colonialism and the growing forces of nationalism in Africa. "The only real question is whether these new nations will look West or East for sympathy, help and guidance in their effort to recapitulate, in a few

decades, the entire history of modern Europe and America,” he warned. He further added that, “we must embark on a bold and imaginative new program for the development of Africa.”

The two politicians from two sides of the political divide were offering prescriptions to America to elevate Africa to a position of importance within the policymaking establishment. While some changes came about in the US Africa policy during the 1950s, many still believe that there is low level of attention towards African issues. The US African policies have been reactive at best, and not proactive.

Despite historical and cultural ties between the US and Africa, there is still no consensus within the policymaking establishment over Africa’s importance to US national security interests. Africanists generally agree that US Africa policies from the founding of the Republic in 1789 to the present have been marked by indifference, at worst, or neglect, at best. Africa has been treated as a ‘backwater’ in official policymaking circles, compared to the time and resources allocated to other regions considered to be of greater concern.

Most of the recent US foreign policy towards Africa have been of humanitarian interests[2]. In June 2005, two famous rock musicians Bono and Bob Geldof put up a Live 8 concert in which two billion people around the world viewed in order to appeal for an end to poverty in Africa. This saw President George W. Bush join other G8 countries to declare that the United States would double its aid to Africa by 2010. Specific policy programs under Bush administration included:

- Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) – to increase US foreign aid worldwide by 50 percent by 2007
- President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)
- African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) – trade initiative
- Malaria initiative - \$1.2 billion
- Anti-terrorism programs since 9/11 – Combined Joint Task Force in Djibouti; the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI)

U.S. had committed itself to increase its foreign aid globally by 50 percent by the end of 2007. Africa was to benefit more as US foreign aid was to double in Africa by 2010. However, the MCA started very slowly and the Congress cut the president’s request for 2006 in half sabotaging the US prospect to double aid in Africa by 2010.

Most of the US aid to Africa over the past decades has been in emergency aid, rather than in the long-term investments that could lift Africa out of poverty. Investment in Africa’s agricultural development declined sharply during the 1990s, higher education programs were largely terminated in the same period, and infrastructure projects continue to be rare. Even with new initiatives aimed at humanitarian need (e.g., educational exchanges and safe drinking water), Africa often loses out to regions considered to be of greater strategic importance. President Bush’s clean water initiative in FY 2000 earmarked only \$1.4 million for Africa out of an \$80 million program, with the balance going to Afghanistan and the Middle East.

Support for HIV/AIDS programs, which grew substantially after President Bush’s \$15 billion initiative, has begun to slip. At the last meeting of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (hereafter the Global Fund), only half the required funds for the coming year were pledged.

3. POST-COLD WAR POLICIES

3.1 The New World Order:

The first transitional period reflected the euphoria of the immediate post-Cold War moment, in which a "New World Order," including positive U.S. engagement with a continent in which it perceived few significant national interests, seemed possible. In this period, the George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton administrations pursued similar strategies of positive, pro-active engagement. Political reform took centre stage in 1990, as the U.S., Britain and France each announced that future foreign assistance to Africa would be conditioned upon democratization (Lawson, 1999). The U.S. followed through on this pledge in the accompanying two years, slicing off help to long-lasting Cold War partners that opposed political liberalization (Zaire, Liberia and Sudan), and moving assets to nations effectively occupied with democratization (South Africa, Ethiopia, and Mozambique). The most visible monument to this euphoric moment was the 1992-1993 humanitarian intervention in Somalia.

On December 3, 1992, the U.N. Security Council, concluding that the situation in Somalia had become "intolerable," authorized the dispatch of military forces to ensure the distribution of humanitarian assistance in a land best by widespread starvation and suffering, thus saving the country from a complete breakdown of law and order. For the United Nations, and especially for the United States, which had taken a leading role in urging the intervention, this decision was almost unprecedented. Not since the 1840s, when Britain, France, and the United States dispatched cruisers to the west coast of Africa in order to hunt down slave ships, had the world seen a major military operation devoid of any strategic or economic benefit. Events in Somalia give force to the idea that humanitarian intervention in certain specific situations is demanded by the traditions and values to which the United States stands committed (Lewy, 1993). This sentiment, widespread in December 1992 as U.S. Marines landed on the beaches of Mogadishu, evaporated in the wake of the October 1993 firefight that left 18 U.S. Rangers dead.

3.2 Retreat from Africa:

The second transitional period in post-Cold War U.S. policy toward Africa began with the withdrawal from Somalia in early 1994. This was a period of disengagement driven by the "Somalia Syndrome." Reeling from the debacle in Somalia, and with the Rwandan genocide already unfolding, Clinton issued Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD 25), which sought to strictly limit future U.N. missions, and especially U.S. participation in them. It listed seven factors that American officials would consider before approving U.N. operations to be carried out by non-Americans, and six additional factors to be considered if U.S. forces were to participate. The turn away from the idealist vision of the immediate post-Cold War moment, which Bush called the "New World Order" and Clinton called "Assertive Multilateralism," could not have been more dramatic. The first two considerations in approving even U.N. operations that excluded U.S. participation were whether the operation would advance U.S. interests, and whether there was a clear threat to international peace and security. The disinterested humanitarian moment was over.

The first test of the new policy would be the genocide in Rwanda, already ongoing when PDD was released on May 3. It was clear that the U.S. would not be involved, and U.S. officials did whatever they could to see that the U.N. did not initiate a response that might draw the U.S. in later. Requests from General Romeo Dallaire, commander of U.N. forces in Rwanda to monitor implementation of the Abuja Accords ending the war between the government and the Rwandan Patriot Front, for reinforcements to pre-empt the genocide had already been declined and when the genocide began all U.N. forces were immediately withdrawn. While intervention in Rwanda could be rejected on most of the factors set out in PDD 25, there was the problem of the obligation to act against genocide under the Geneva Conventions. As a result, Clinton Administration officials danced around "the g word," refusing to refer to the Rwandan genocide as such until it had taken its course, and the lives of 800,000 people (Power, 2001). In the end, a very late U.N. approved intervention by France was the only response by the international community.

Concerns about insecurity in Africa, and the threat of being drawn into dealing with conflicts in which it had no interests, also dampened U.S. support for democratization in this period. The roots of genocide in Rwanda were deep, but among the immediate precipitating factors was external pressure to democratize (Kuperman, 1996). Political liberalization was associated with increased insecurity in several other countries in the mid-1990s, including in the Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville, and Lesotho, but most disconcertingly in Rwanda's neighbor Burundi, which was itself on the brink of civil war, and perhaps genocide, after its first democratically elected President was assassinated in a coup attempt in October 1993, just four months after his election.

When the democratic regime there was overturned in a successful coup in July 1996, which brought former President Major Pierre Buyoya back to power, the U.S. and other major powers supported the new government in the hope that Buyoya would be able to improve the security situation, even while East African countries attempted to impose sanctions against the nondemocratic government. Elsewhere in Africa, political and military elites had by this time figured out how to "comply" with U.S. demands for elections without threatening their grip on power. As a result, the modal regime in Africa in the mid-1990s was 'electoral authoritarian' (Diamond, 2002). The United States' was particularly friendly with a group of Presidents it referred to as a "new generation of African leaders," all of whom were seriously engaged in rebuilding collapsed state institutions, while generally rejecting the relevance of multiparty democracy to their circumstances. This policy of supporting stabilization over liberalization might have fared better had the new generation of African leaders not ended up at war with one another shortly thereafter.

U.S. assistance to Africa had been declining since the late 1980s, largely as a result of the virtual elimination of Security Assistance and Economic Support Funds to former Cold War allies (Copson, 2004). In 1995, Congress moved to restructure and significantly reduce U.S. foreign assistance programs. Many questioned the rationale for assisting Africa in the post-Cold War era, noting that three decades of aid had achieved little, either in terms of growth and democratization or promoting U.S. interests. Congressional supporters of aid to Africa rallied against the initiative and succeeded in pre-empting significant new cuts. Aid declined in 1996, but only marginally, as in previous years (Schraeder, Hok and Taylor, 1998).

3.3 African Solutions to African Problems:

A third period of post-Cold War U.S.-Africa relations began with the adoption of the rhetoric of "African Solutions to African Problems" in the first year of Clinton's second term in office. This was far from a serious reengagement, indeed some called it "virtual engagement," (Alden, 2000) but it did represent recognition that the U.S. could not afford complete disengagement from Africa. The lesson of Somalia, Rwanda, and Liberia taken together was that the U.S. could not engage directly, could not do nothing, and could not expect African forces to contain instability on their own. And so the search began for alternatives that would combine U.S. financial resources and African human resources for conflict resolution/peacekeeping, political reform, and economic development.

3.3.1 Military Policy:

In the face of a very real possibility in 1996 that Burundi would follow Rwanda over the brink, the Clinton Administration proposed the creation of an African Crisis Response Force (ACRF). The idea was to create a standing force of about 5000 African troops, trained and equipped by Western countries, which could be deployed rapidly for peacekeeping operations endorsed by the U.N. (Howe, 2001) Unveiled in October 1996, the proposal received a decidedly cool reaction from virtually all quarters. The plan seemed to represent an abdication of responsibility and a neo-imperial impulse simultaneously. Britain and France, both of which had ongoing military training programs with a number of African countries, were disinclined to follow the American lead, especially in a region in which they had extensive involvement and the U.S. had little. Regional powers South Africa and Nigeria, which the Clinton Administration had hoped would take a leadership role in ACRF, made it clear that they had no interest.

By the end of the year ACRF was undergoing a fundamental redefinition, from which emerged the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI). The idea of a standing rapid deployment force was gone, and ACRI became a bilateral training program, designed to improve the capabilities of national forces to participate in peacekeeping activities. South Africa and Nigeria remained cool, but other countries agreed to accept the training and equipment, beginning with Malawi, Senegal, and Uganda. ACRI provided training and equipment exclusively for peacekeeping, not peace-making. The U.S. was rightly concerned not to be perceived to be contributing, even inadvertently, to conflict. However, this cautious approach failed to mollify critics who were quick to point to cases where ACRI-provided equipment was being used against internal and external enemies, (Omach, 2000) and left ACRI open to the more fundamental criticism that training for peacekeeping in a region where interventions would almost always need to be of the peace-making type seriously limited ACRI's relevance (Howe, 2001). Others suggested that African militaries lack financing and logistics, not training, making any training program of limited usefulness.

In the transition from the Clinton to the George W. Bush administration, ACRI evolved into the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program, which concentrates on "training the trainer," delivering programs designed to address the specific needs of the recipient country, and training for peace enforcement as well as peacekeeping. Between 1997 and 2005, the U.S. spent \$121 million to train 10,000 troops from nine countries (Benin, Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, and Senegal). In 2005 ACOTA became a constituent part of the Bush administration's multilateral five-year Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) program, which, with the support of the G-8, aims to train 75,000 peacekeepers, mostly in Africa, and foster an international transportation and logistics support system for peacekeepers (Serafino, 2006).

Beyond these initiatives, U.S. policy remained the same: diplomatic support for AU efforts to facilitate a negotiated settlement to the conflict, which began in early 2004, diplomatic and financial support (in the amount of \$150 million in its first two years) for the African Mission in Sudan (AMIS), which deployed in August 2004, and more recently stepped up pressure on the U.N. to deploy "a credible and effective international force." In short, the U.S. has largely avoided the criticism that followed from Rwanda, without being seriously engaged in taking direction action under the Geneva Convention. This position has been facilitated by the willingness of China and Russia to veto stronger U.N. action in the Security Council.

3.3.2 Economic Policy:

Although the rhetoric of "African Solutions to African Problems" is generally applied specifically to conflict resolution and peacekeeping issues, it captures the thrust of U.S. political and economic policies in Africa in this period as well. It should not be understood to mean that African's should be free to choose among potential solutions to their problems, but rather that Africans should shoulder more of the responsibility of implementing solutions that American officials tend to see as universal.

Both Presidents Bush and Clinton designated most African countries as AGOA eligible, including some of the most egregious violators of the principles on the eligibility list. For example, in 2006 Guinea is AGOA eligible despite being rated "not free" by Freedom House, and ranking as the most corrupt country in Africa in Transparency International's global corruption indices. Recognizing the political pressures involved in presidential certification of eligibility, the MCA makes a more serious effort to target resources to democratic regimes by determining eligibility based on 16 quantitative indicators, which measure the same qualities set out in the AGOA eligibility list. As a result, in 2006 37 African countries were AGOA eligible, but only 11 were MCA eligible.

As economic policy instruments, and therefore as political policy instruments, AGOA and MCA leave much to be desired. AGOA is the institutional embodiment of the "trade not aid" rhetoric of the mid- to late-1990s, in which American and African leaders, most notably Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, agreed that increased access to the American market would facilitate economic growth and development in Africa more effectively than had decades of foreign assistance. However, the provisions of AGOA included multiple protections for American producers who might be harmed, even marginally, by competition from Africa. Although the Office of the United States Trade

Representative has perennially celebrated the success of AGOA since its implementation in 2000, the reality provides little if any cause for celebration. Oil exports have always accounted for the majority of African exports to the U.S. under AGOA. While the U.S. has a clear interest in increasing its market share in African oil exports, the oil sector is unlikely to drive more broad based economic growth and development in Africa. As a result, much attention has been given to the boost in textile exports from Africa to the U.S. under AGOA, precisely because textiles were a critical niche market for Asian countries at the earliest stages of their economic transformations.

The Millennium Challenge Account is also a response to the ineffectiveness of traditional foreign assistance programs, as well as the institutional embodiment of the shift in "the Washington consensus" away from structural adjustment toward poverty reduction and recipient country 'ownership.' The MCA has been well received in principle, but was slow to begin actually committing funds, and partly as a result is currently funded well below initial stated intentions.[40] Eligible countries are encouraged to take ownership of their development agendas, identify problems and propose solutions, which the U.S. will then consider funding. At the end of 2006 25 countries were eligible for MCA funding, of which 11 were African, and MCA had actually signed Compacts with 9 countries, including four in Africa (Madagascar, Cape Verde, Benin, and Ghana). The amounts committed were in line with traditional levels of assistance, and the programs funded all reflected the new Washington consensus (Council on Foreign Relations, 2006).

3.4 The U.S. and Africa Post-9/11:

Longer-term U.S. engagement with Africa is likely to be defined in terms of the perceived increase in U.S. interests in the region as a result of international terrorism, increased dependence on African oil, and the dramatic engagement of China with the continent in recent years. Although the September 2002 National Security Strategy (NSS) asserts that " America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones," the implications of this for Africa appear relatively modest. With respect to the threat of international terrorism, the NSS pledges to work with European allies to "help strengthen Africa's fragile states, help build indigenous capability to secure porous borders, and help build up the law enforcement and intelligence infrastructure to deny havens for terrorists" (Power, 2001).

In practice, this policy has taken two distinct forms: the deployment of the Combined Joint Task Force—Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) in December 2002, and the Pan-Sahel Initiative/Trans-Sahel Counter Terrorism Initiative, which also began in late 2002. CJTF-HOA, staffed by about 1500 troops, has the mission of "detecting, disrupting and ultimately defeating transnational terrorist groups operating in the region—denying safe havens, external support and material assistance for transnational terrorism in the region." Initially, it was driven by concerns that terrorists fleeing from Afghanistan would be attracted to the 'vast ungoverned spaces' of the Horn of Africa. When such a mass influx failed to materialize, and the local terrorist threat proved to be relatively limited, CJTF-HOA began giving greater emphasis to its role in preventing terrorism by providing humanitarian assistance and waging a hearts and minds campaign.

The resources devoted to both efforts are far below what would be required to achieve the stated goals of strengthening states in general, and their policing and intelligence capabilities in particular. Furthermore, the fact that these state/border strengthening initiatives stretch across the continent, essentially tracing the boundary between Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa, which is much more integrated with the Middle East, suggests that the underlying goal is to insulate Africa from threats to U.S. interests emanating from elsewhere, rather than to engage Africa itself. Beyond this specific counterterrorism strategy, the NSS sets out three interlocking strategies for Africa: giving "focused attention" to anchor states such as South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, and Ethiopia, coordinating with European allies and international institutions for constructive conflict mediation and peace operations, and strengthening Africa's capable reforming states and sub-regional organizations as the primary means of addressing transnational threats, which adds up essentially to more 'African solutions to African problems.'

Aside from the concern with terrorism, Africa's oil has become an increasing attraction to the United States. In May 2001 the Cheney report warned that the U.S. would grow increasingly dependent upon foreign oil in the years to come and recommended that as a matter of policy the Bush Administration work to increase production and export of oil from regions other than the Middle East, noting that Latin America and West Africa were likely to be the fastest growing sources of future U.S. oil imports. Africa supplies about 15% of U.S. oil imports, but with African production growing at twice the global rate, it could be supplying the U.S. with as much energy as the Middle East within a decade. Three months later, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Walter Kansteiner declared that African oil "has become a national strategic interest." This statement is particularly noteworthy in that it uses the language of the Carter Doctrine in the Middle East, in which President Carter went on to declare that the U.S. would intervene by any means necessary to protect its national interest in Middle Eastern oil. The Council on Foreign Relations Task Force on U.S. policy in Africa has criticized it for failing "to make a geopolitical shift to pay sufficient attention to West Africa's energy rich Gulf of Guinea," while others see a neo-imperial push unfolding in the sub region (Volman, 2003).

4. OBAMA POLICIES

4.1 Good Governance and Democracy:

President Obama's trip to Ghana and speech in Accra on July 11, 2009, early in his first term, was expected to set the tone for the approach that the Obama Administration planned to take towards working with Africa. The speech highlighted numerous overarching themes of his vision for U.S. policy in Africa, including the importance of good governance and of African leaders taking the responsibility for positive changes. He reaffirmed his view of African countries as significant partners. Governance was also a theme for Secretary Clinton's stop in Liberia. Liberia is now used as an example of a country that ousted a warlord leader and democratically elected a new one, though grave socio-economic challenges remain. President Bush's action in Liberia, sending 100 marines to nearby its coasts, is credited with helping oust the warlord leader Taylor, is seen as one of his positive accomplishments in Africa. The Obama Administration has made it clear that it is aiming to maintain good relations with countries such as these that work towards more effective government (White, 2010).

In addition to speeches given to support government reforms in numerous countries, the position of the Obama Administration towards ongoing governance reforms can be observed in its recent relations with Kenya. Governance in Kenya has received attention from the U.S. government and media in recent years, due to both the disputed elections in 2007 and the threat of Somali rebels taking advantage of Kenyan corruption to operate within Kenyan borders. The U.S. Administration realizes that it has limited power to control the corruption in Kenya, and it is considering different options to influence officials toward reforms. Secretary Clinton has also expressed the U.S.'s strong desire to see the implementation of the election reforms that were negotiated after the 2007 elections. To encourage the agreed upon reforms, the U.S. sent letters to 15 Kenyan officials warning against blocking election reforms and threatening travel bans on individuals and their families who tried to impede reforms. Although these letters angered some Kenyan officials, they represented a concrete statement that the U.S. was serious about seeing changes implemented.

In relation to dictatorial regimes that are also important to U.S. energy or security, it is unlikely that President Obama will drastically change U.S. policy. Mr. Obama has publicly recognized that "our security interests will sometimes require that we work with regimes with which we have fundamental disagreements" The changes in President Obama's policy on democratization and human rights are more evident when his other foreign policy decisions are also examined. One

important aspect of Mr. Obama's strategy to support democracy abroad has been to try to change the image of the U.S. as a hypocrite on issues of human rights, through measures such as ending torture and attempting to close Guantanamo Bay. The Obama Administration has put less emphasis on spreading democracy, which was a top priority for the Bush Administration, and a greater emphasis on good governance as well as how the U.S. can be a positive example of a democratic state. Though these issues illustrate that President Obama is committed to improving the image of the U.S. as a positive example of a democracy in the world, it remains to be seen if he will take strong measures in Africa to pressure certain dictatorial regimes to reform, especially when energy and security interests are at stake.

4.2 Economic Policy:

4.2.1 AGOA:

The Obama Administration supports the goals of AGOA, but has recognized that adjustments must be made for African countries to further benefit from the Act. Though the Obama administration also supports lowering trade barriers, Secretary Clinton spent less time reminding of the benefits of market liberalization and more time focusing on how to improve and diversify trade under AGOA. President Bush and Secretary Rice noted that African imports to the U.S. had grown under AGOA, but did not emphasize that this was mostly due to oil exports. The AGOA and forum was in the news during early August of 2009 when Secretary Clinton began her trip to Africa at the 8th AGOA forum in Nairobi, Kenya.

During this speech, as well as at numerous other meetings with African business leaders, Ms. Clinton emphasized the Administration's goal that African countries diversify the products that they export and take advantage of the list of 6,999 items that can be sent to the U.S. duty-free. Ms. Clinton has also emphasized that infrastructure development is important. As an example of U.S. policy in this area, she pointed to aviation infrastructure, an area in which the U.S. government is aiding the governments of Liberia, Angola, and Kenya to improve their airport functionality and security.⁶ Her speech indicated that the Obama Administration is conscious of some of the fundamental problems preventing development of African exports, such as weak infrastructure.

4.2.2 Development Assistance:

One key aspect of U.S. policy foreign in many African states is the nature of development assistance. The issue of development aid in Africa, and throughout the developing world, is one that President Obama highlighted during his campaign. Although there is certainly room for Mr. Obama to make foreign aid more of a priority for his administration, a number of key initiatives which Mr. Obama can continue to build on were launched during the Bush Administration.

President Obama made ambitious promises regarding foreign aid, and these promises have come under increased scrutiny due to the current economic pressures that might encourage the government to scale back international aid programs. His primary pledge was to double foreign assistance spending to \$50 billion by 2012. Many of the development aid programs concern certain African countries, although Mr. Obama did not make specific pledges regarding specific African countries or regions. He did, however, indicate that he planned to increase funding for certain programs and to create other entirely new initiatives. The budget proposal submitted by the White House did include substantial increases in development aid spending that suggest that the Administration is still committed to its promises.

Many areas of international aid saw an increase in funding under Mr. Obama's proposed budget. One of these increases came in the agriculture sector, an area that the Obama Administration has placed a new emphasis on as part of the growth of developing economies, and more specifically African economies. Funding for agriculture related aid was doubled under Obama's budget proposal. The proposal also included increased funding for numerous health initiatives, such as those to combat malaria, bilateral HIV/AIDS and TB aid, and Neglected Tropical Diseases. This proposal drew some criticism from health advocates due to the planned U.S. contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, which would see no increase in funding under this proposal.

4.3 Security and Strategic Policy:

4.3.1 Security, Counterterrorism and Peace Keeping:

One of the more controversial recent U.S. military policies towards Africa was the establishment of the U. S. Africa Command (Africom), announced under the Bush Administration in February of 2007. Before the existence of this command, military responsibility for Africa was divided between the headquarters for Europe, the Middle East, and the

Pacific. Africom established its headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany, and continued to use the already existent U.S. military presence based at Camp Lemonier in Djibouti. Africom's staff is projected to be 1,300 people, half of whom will be civilians (by September 1, 2009, 1,200 personnel had been assigned). According to its mission statement, Africom along with its partners "conducts sustained security engagement through military-to-military programs, military-sponsored activities, and other military operations as directed to promote a stable and secure African environment in support of U.S. foreign policy."

Although according to Africom the aim of the command is not to establish large troop bases or "take a leading role in African security matters," the command has been met with much criticism and was not embraced by many of the African leaders. One of the largest campaigns against Africom, called Resist Africom, claims that the true mission of the command is to counter terrorism in Africa, secure oil resources in Africa, and counter China's increasing investment and involvement on the continent. Some critics fear that increased military presence in Africa will further incite anti-Americanism, or that it will lead to more instability due to the increased provision of arms. Another fear is the militarization of too many government and civilian functions. Many of the activities in which U.S. soldiers will be running under Africom, such as giving out vaccination or food, could be carried out instead by civilian organizations.

Both through Africom and other joint tasks, the U.S. military often aims to build international cooperation and support for its activities in Africa. The U.S. actively cooperates with French operations in Africa, many of which are focused on training and located in West and Central Africa. Efforts to cooperate with other states involved in African capacity building were evident under both the Bush and continue to grow as part of the Obama Administration's focus on international cooperation.

A further security policy test for the Obama Administration has been maritime security, notably insecurity and piracy in the Gulf of Aden and the Gulf of Guinea. Numerous measures to respond to piracy were already being developed when President Obama took office, such as the establishment of the international Combined Task Force 151 (CTF 151) to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia. This task force developed from the Combined Task Force 150, which now focuses on other security operations in the Horn of Africa region, leaving the response to piracy to CTF 151. President Obama's policy towards piracy was tested in April 2009 when an American captain was taken hostage aboard a Somali pirate ship. His response to allow U.S. Navy Seals to shoot the pirates indicated that he was willing to authorize military involvement at times, though it did not illustrate what his policy on the larger issue of maritime security in the region would be. The Obama Administration has emphasized working with international partners and organizations, such as the UN and CTF 151, to increase maritime security. The response to piracy in the gulf of Guinea has generally come in the form of naval training and assistance to African states in the region. The U.S. participates in the African Partnership Station (APS) along with participants from Africa, Europe and South America. The APS operates both military and non-military activities related to improving African maritime security.²⁰ The military's policy under the Obama Administration on maritime security off the coast of Africa has been relatively consistent with that of the Bush Administration, and President Obama has continually reaffirmed his commitment to working internationally and supporting regional efforts on these issues.

The increased focus on Africa that Mr. Obama promised during his campaign is evident in the realm of security due to his continued and increased funding for numerous military and civilian security projects. The type of attention that President Obama has given to Africa, however, could not be characterized as a complete departure from the foreign policy of his predecessor. Some changes in policy, particularly on a global security level, do exist; the Obama Administration has supported negotiations on a global arms trade treaty that would affect Africa and the ease of procuring weapons on the continent, while Bush policy had instead supported national controls. Mr. Obama's continued funding of Africom is an example of an important policy area in which Obama policy does not differ greatly from Bush policy. Most changes in the security area have been characterized by shifts of emphasis rather than the creation or the dismantling of entire programs. Though Obama has tried to emphasize that Africom is not looking to open further bases in Africa and militarize the continent, many sceptics remain and will be looking for evidence to refute this claim. Increased funding for peacekeeping operations and military-to-military training corresponds with the foreign policy vision that Mr. Obama outlined during his campaign. However, effective results of these initiatives depend on a complicated set of factors, and the Obama Administration will have to commit to addressing non-military needs of certain weak states to prevent further instability.

4.3.2 Energy Security:

As global competition for energy rises and new energy discoveries are made and infrastructure built in Africa, this continent has become increasingly important to U.S. energy security. In light of recent evolutions in geopolitical realities, such as growing energy demand from emerging economies such as China and India and the U.S. desire to decrease its oil

dependency on unpredictable Middle Eastern countries, attention has shifted to Africa as an energy supplier. In 2008, African oil accounted for 24% of U.S. oil imports, and in 2007 19% of U.S. African oil imports were from sub-Saharan Africa.²¹ Africa is also a substantial supplier of natural gas. Keeping up relationships with top energy-resource exporting countries in Africa has long been a top priority for U.S. administrations and continues to be one today. Some African producers of oil are relatively stable and taking further measures to secure them is not necessary. There are a number of more uncertain states however, as well as oil producing states whose governments should be pressured to reform. Another important aspect of energy security strategy as it relates to Africa and the rest of the world is efforts by the U.S. government to decrease dependence on foreign oil.

The largest source of U.S. oil imports in Africa is Nigeria, providing 8% of U.S. petroleum imports, a country whose security is unsure. Experts have warned of growing security threats in the region including guerrilla movements and extremist. Although some have pointed out the possibility of U.S. programs emerging to support maritime security off the coast of Nigeria, any further military action could have negative consequences and enflame anti-Americanism. The Bush Administration seemed to have recognized this and refrained from using the military to ensure security of oil supplies. The new administration has continued this policy, and has continued to provide aid to Nigeria in a number of areas, including governance and military capacity building, and supports the reform program outlined by the Nigerian president; extensive changes in strategy towards Nigeria have not been announced.

The Obama Administration has already made some efforts to keep strong relationships with oil-exporting African countries, such as visits by Secretary Clinton to Nigeria and Angola on her trip to Africa in August. In Nigeria, Ms. Clinton held a town-hall style meeting on the subject of good governance and transparency, a subject that is one of the foundations of the Obama vision for Africa as well as an important aspect of securing and better using Nigeria's energy resources for both Nigeria and the U.S. The Obama Administration has recognized some of the challenges that still face energy-resource rich African countries. In an effort to support responsible management of the oil revenues, the U.S. contributed \$6 million to the World Bank's Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI). During the Bush Administration, the U.S. only contributed to the EITI when forced to do so by a congressional earmark in 2007.²² The Secretaries of State under Bush also visited both Angola and Nigeria, though Secretary Powell's visit to Angola in 2002 focused primarily on the peace process at the time.

The Obama Administration has also made a number of investments in alternative energy that will eventually lower some U.S. dependency on foreign oil sources, although it is hard to say how this will specifically affect oil imports from Africa. The Obama Administration has thus far invested \$80 billion in clean energy, increased fuel economy standards for the first time in a decade, and established a program to lease federal waters to generate energy from wind, currents, and other sources. The Bush Administration also took steps to reduce dependence on foreign oil, but included more focus on sources such as ethanol and nuclear. One key divergence between the two administrations' approaches was the Bush Administration's refusal to increase vehicle fuel economy standards, which it feared would result in U.S. auto job losses and the production of unsafe vehicles. Overall, the Obama administration has not dealt with oil producing countries in a drastically different fashion, and greater differences can be noted in energy dependence and environmental measures.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Africa has always been marginal to U.S. interests and policies in the world. However, U.S. Africa relations may be approaching a critical juncture. U.S. policy could evolve toward engaging Africa on its own terms for mutual benefit, or it could settle back into the Cold War mould, treating Africa as a humanitarian ward of the international community and so many pawns in global geopolitical struggles. History, even very recent history, suggests that the latter is the far more likely course. Heady rhetoric about the role of Africa in the war on terrorism has amounted to very little actual change in the U.S. approach to Africa over the last five years. The excitement generated by the possibility of using African oil to reduce dependence on less politically reliable sources, is driven not least by the fact that much of Africa's oil reserve lies offshore, where it can be exploited with minimal involvement in what happens on land. And the China challenge might well be met as the Soviet challenge was, with renewed efforts to carve out a sphere of influence as an end in itself. The currents of history and bureaucratic inertia will continue to push in this direction. Only sustained and energetic leadership at the highest levels can overcome the drift and steer a new course.

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