

U.S. Foreign Policy Towards Africa: Is It Ambiguous?

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Abstract: The United States (US) policy towards Africa has largely been influenced by two (2) major groups or actors; (i) the bureaucratic and (ii) evangelical Christian groups. Due to this synthesis of players in the US policy making process, the US-Africa policy almost appears vague or unclear save for the fact that it constricts on national security and economic interests of America. This article debates the importance of Africa to the US through their policy making process as well as unveiling the key influencers especially since the 9/11 terrorist attack on America.

Keywords: The United States (US), economic interests of America.

1. INTRODUCTION

Africa seems to have caught the world's attention but mostly that of the US due to national security and economic interests. And this has been seen through the increased military and security activities of the US on the continent, especially through the Bush and Obama administrations. Such initiatives tend to give Africa a significant role to the US. However, Professor Keller and Mr. Woodward share a different view; in that the US perceives Africa as Europe's responsibility due to the colonial ties. Messrs. Walle and Kieh support the latter ideology with the view that American policies toward the Africa are characterized by gradual changes of the policy and the bureaucratic politic. Olsen describes the US policy making process as irrational, bipartisan and open. According to the writer, these characteristics show the importance of evangelical Christian groups to the US-Africa policy and subsequently the ambiguity of the American policy towards Africa due to the synthesis of the actors and their end intentions.

Through these arguments, Olsen depicts that the US-Africa relations are guided by the principles of Neo-realism and lobbyism using classical examples for the cases of Somalia, Mali, Central African Republic (CAR) and South Sudan.

2. TERRORISM AND COUNTER TERRORISM

The war on terrorism in Africa did not start with 9/11 terror attack. It began in Sudan in the 1990s, where Osama Bin Laden, former leader of the Al-Qaeda Terror group organized an attack on the former Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak. In 1998 al-Qaeda cells blew up the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. In retaliation to these attacks, the US lodged an attack in Afghanistan and additionally bombed a chemical plant in Sudan, claiming that it was producing elements for chemical weapons for al-Qaeda (Hutchful, 2001). The terrorist acts in Europe such as the train attack in Spain in 2004 have been linked to Al-Qaeda cells in Morocco and Algeria, which interact with North African residents in Europe, yet both countries themselves have been victims of recent terrorist bomb attacks (Omar, 2000).

After the 9/11 attack the US' focus on Africa took new dimensions with a keen emphasis on terrorism. For the first time since the policy failure in 1993, the US deployed a sizeable contingent force dubbed the Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) in Djibouti. In addition, in 2003, President Bush announced \$100 million funding for counterterrorism initiatives for East Africa and the Horn of Africa. At the same time, the U.S European Command (EUCOM) spearheaded a series of training and military support operations in the Sahel region; the program later blossomed into the much larger Trans-Sahara Counter terrorism initiative that now involves both North African and Sahelian states (Salim, 2002).

Counterterrorism efforts in Africa were further reinforced in 2006 by the U.S Africa policy especially after the Islamic Court Movement took power in Somalia which led to the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia with the support of the U.S. This war has continued to date, and left Somalia completely blighted. In 2007, the Pentagon announced that it would establish a new unified Africa Command (AFRICOM) to bring together its varied programs on the continent – another sign of increased U.S focus on security matters in Africa (Williams, 2002).

Traditionally the War on Terror has been linked to international Terrorist groups such as Al-Qaeda and Al-Nusra. African states face other domestic security threats of equal or greater significance; there are several well-organized rebel groups operating in African states which have wreaked terrible havoc on African people and threaten national stability. Ironically, these rebel groups have not been classified as terrorist groups. They include various militia groups in Eastern Congo (DRC) the Niger delta of Nigeria and the Janjaweed militia in the Darfur region of Sudan (Muyangwa & Vogt, 2000).

In the same vein, there exist similar insurgencies in the continent such as the Lord's Resistance Army, the Army for Liberation of Rwanda, the obscure Afrikaner Boeremag in South Africa and with a host of Islamic groups who have been listed among the Terror groups in Africa. Clearly, Africa cannot ignore the threat of terrorism any more than can any other state in the world. African states have responded to this threat in different ways. In West Africa for instance, Sahelian states have welcomed American help in getting control over ungoverned spaces but still face unrest from within those territories (Mulikita, 2002).

Seemingly, the U.S has its own strategic reasons for fighting Islamic terrorists in the Sahel region, namely because (i) they pose a major threat to U.S business interests in the area; (ii) a threat to political stability in Africa; (iii) resulted in a tide of human tide of refugees; and most importantly generates revenue to the international terrorist structures of Al-Qaeda, Daesh and the myriad sub-groups in the Middle East as well as Africa. The US has offered military training, equipment, and Special Forces tasked with kill or capture of high profile targets (Carafano & Gardiner, 2003).

Human Trafficking:

In addition to the terrorist threat, a substantial increase in transnational crime occurred in the Sahel region. The Region is increasingly being used by criminal organizations as transition corridors for human trafficking towards the Middle East and Europe. According to several sources, members of the Tuareg tribes, AQIM, local politicians and members of the Malian government are in collusion with these organizations and profited from the illicit traffic of humans across the Sahara (Baimu, & Sturman, 2003).

An example of US fight against terrorism and human trafficking in the Sahel region is in Chad which is part of a vast trafficking network stretching to Mali, Algeria, and Libya bound for Europe. In addition to Boko Haram, the U.S is concerned about persistent instability across the Sahel and West African region as well as the proliferation of militias and armed groups in Mali, the Central African Republic and Niger. However, Washington's support for Chad's President Idriss Deby assumes U.S interests in the region are aligned with Chad's.

U.S policymakers should realize, however, that Chad has demonstrated a vested interest in promoting instability and empowering regional militias. In a nutshell, U.S is interested to bolder border security and help limit the movement of rebel groups, human traffickers and criminal networks (Aderinwale, 2001).

Economic dimensions behind US foreign policy towards Africa:

In 1997, Washington paid unprecedented attention to Africa and its continental rebirth. Both then-First Lady Hillary Clinton and then-Secretary of State Madeleine Albright toured the continent. President Clinton unveiled the "Partnership for Growth and Opportunity in Africa" to promote greater trade and investment in the region. The paper assumes that a scrutiny of the Economic interests and of the domestic actors involved in policymaking on Africa can contribute to establishing whether, and in that case why, Africa apparently has increased its significance to the United States (US). Scrutiny requires that foreign policy making on Africa is analyzed within the broad framework of the American political system that can be described as open, pluralistic and thus accessible to different types of influence. (Olsen, 2017) .

US Hyper-Engagement with Africa:

The number of African programs and initiatives has grown exponentially since the launch the White House strategy for sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) in June 2012. This includes projects related to agriculture, energy and trade as well as the US-Africa Summit. This is on top of the usual programs such as USAID and the emergency plan for AIDS relief. The Congress Task Force calls for the White House to promote economic relations more effectively, given the opportunities that Africa's renewal offers, not only to African nations and the United States, but also the larger global community as well. The Task Force's recommendations include: passing legislation to increase African access to U.S. markets; creating enterprise funds to mobilize greater U.S. private sector investment in Africa; establishing a U.S.-Africa Economic Forum and initiating plans for free-trade agreements with African countries or groups of countries; and designating a director for African affairs at the National Security Council to be responsible for African economic affairs and coordinating efforts under the "Partnership" program. The overall goal is to strengthen democratic institutions, spur economic growth, trade, and investment, advance and promote development. One clear objective is to diversify and increase trade relations between the U.S and Africa, particularly the exports from America to Africa. (Woodward, 2008)

The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA):

US-Africa trade was US\$73 billion in 2014, US\$38.1 billion being American exports and US\$34.6 billion in imports. From January-April 2015, the US exported US\$8.8 billion worth of goods to Africa and imported US\$8.3 billion. The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) was signed into law on May 18, 2000. This Act offers tangible incentives for African countries to continue their efforts in opening Africa's economy and build free markets. AGOA aims at reforming African countries with the most liberal access to the U.S. market available to any country or region with which the United States does not have a Free Trade Agreement. It supports U.S. business by encouraging reform of Africa's economic and commercial regimes, which will build stronger markets and more effective partners for U.S. firms. AGOA has expanded the list of products with eligible SSA countries may export to the United States subject to zero import duty under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). (Barnes, 2005)

While general GSP covers approximately 4,600 items, AGOA GSP applies to more than 6,400 items. AGOA can change the course of trade relations between Africa and the US for the long term, while helping millions of African families find opportunities to build prosperity, by providing improved access to U.S. technical expertise, credit, and markets. It also establishes a high-level dialogue on trade and investment and reinforces African reform efforts. Since its implementation, AGOA has encouraged substantial new investments, trade, and job creation in Africa. It has helped to promote SSA's integration into the multilateral trading system and a more active role in global trade negotiations. It has also contributed to economic and commercial reforms which make African countries more attractive commercial partners for U.S. companies. (Jones, 2015)

Oil:

Oil is the basis of industry and its supply is essential to the maintenance of an industrial or post-industrial economy, and by extension, that of a nation's civil and political society. The finite amount of this natural resource increases its value, both in fiscal terms and in its perceived worth. Oil has been of key interest to the US administration.

The Energy Policy Commission led by Vice President Dick Cheney in 2001 recommended increasing oil imports from West Africa as an insurance policy against overdependence on Middle East oil. President Bush reiterated this in his 2006 State of the Union Address, by announcing plans "to replace more than 75% of the U.S. oil imports from the Middle East by 2025." (Volman, 2003)

Petroleum is abundant in Africa and in some regions, has very special incentives for western investments. Oil off the west coast of Africa has less of a threat of insurrection and local instability which hampers drilling efforts. This is because most oil drilling takes place off-shore. Additionally, African oil, especially West African oil has the added benefit of having shorter transport routes to US refineries. Without the need to transport it through politically sensitive or militarily vulnerable routes. This makes African oil very attractive to US oil interests. West Africa presents a prime location for heavy US investment. (Laney, 2007)

The success of the 1973 embargo by the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) nations indicated to the West that politics and oil, in the Middle East at least, were inextricably linked. The warning against dependence on

“foreign powers that do not always have America’s interests at heart” was noted and subsequent developments in the region served to further underline the need for diversification of supply. The move toward Africa as a source of oil, “will not only reduce dependence on Middle Eastern oil but will reduce the leverage that Middle Eastern oil-producing nations exercise on the global economy. (Abramovici, 2004)

Competition from China for Africa’s Oil:

China has recognized Africa as a key source of mineral wealth and has agreements with the government of Sudan to provide oil through its block 7 and block 4 concessions. China has recognized the need to secure oil for its future and its oil needs increase with its growing economic might. There has been a dramatic shift in trade balance thanks, in part, to increased US shell gas production which has reduced oil imports from the African continent. The slowdown in US oil imports means China’s trade with the continent has flown past America. China-Africa trade at US\$222 billion in 2014 is now three times greater than US-Africa trade. (Shelley, 2005)

AFRICOM ties with U.S Foreign Aid:

Most of the states that welcomed the idea of African Command (AFRICOM) enjoyed high levels of foreign aid yet they are on average at lower levels of development. This goes to show the effectiveness of aid and the American ideology as an instrument of political leverage. The pattern between aid-dependency levels and initial responses to AFRICOM suggests that African politics remain embedded within broader economic relationships. Their different levels of reactions towards AFRICOM demonstrates how aid dependence and assistance from new sources of American aid specifically brought about varying responses even within sub-regions; e.g. Botswana and South Africa. Botswana was led by realists who did not cut links with Britain but also forged close links with the US as part of the development process and as a strategy to prevent absorption by South Africa in the 1960s. (Levan, 2010)

The US has a priority in the defense strategic guidance for, maintaining global access to and throughout the continent to facilitate global trade. Further one-half of the Straits of Gibraltar is in Africa and therefore this becomes an important element in access to global trade and therefore facilitating this is a critical role played by AFRICOM. The Gulf of Guinea is becoming increasingly important for the US in terms of economic standpoint. Therefore, it is critical to maintain global access that is adequate in promoting global trade. Africa is a place that has two key strategic checkpoints, in the Bab el-Mandeb and the Straits of Gibraltar as indicated by (Pigeau, 2000).

The Bretton Woods Institutions (World Bank and International Monetary Fund):

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank were both created at an international conference convened in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, United States in July 1944 with the aim of establishing a framework for economic cooperation and development that would lead to a more stable and prosperous global economy. While this goal remains central to both institutions, their work is constantly evolving in response to new economic developments and challenges. The World Bank, an international financial institution that provides loans to countries for capital programs has the goal of poverty reduction, promotion of foreign investment and international trade and to the facilitation of capital investment. The president of the World Bank is, traditionally, an American. The World Bank and the IMF headquarters are both based in Washington, D.C., and work closely with each other. The U.S also has the highest voting power at the World Bank, currently at 15.85%. and is also the biggest Donor to the World Bank. (Ismi, 2004)

The World Bank has been on the forefront in spearheading the implementation of specific projects for example building of schools and health centers, fighting disease, protecting the environment and providing water and electricity more so in the African nations. The IMF promotes international monetary cooperation and provides policy advice and capacity development support to help countries in Africa build and maintain strong economies. The IMF also facilitates loans and helps countries design policy programs to solve balance of payments problems when sufficient financing on affordable terms cannot be obtained to meet net international payments (Keller, 2013)

USAID Economic Growth and Trade Relations and Development in Africa:

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was established in 1961 with the sole purpose of creating a foreign assistance organization that could administer long range economic and social development assistance efforts. USAID serves three key and overlapping roles in its foreign policy. Development assistance programs are designed chiefly to foster sustainable broad-based economic growth, good governance, and social welfare in developing

countries. Where once they served as a counterpoint to communism, these programs are generally viewed as instrumental in building trade partners and future allies, preventing breeding grounds for terrorists, addressing a range of common international concerns, and exercising U.S. leadership abroad. USAID is providing support in Kenya in line with its vision 2030 goals. One of the major areas include increasing agricultural productivity and increase income for farmers, ensuring better access to energy and clean water, building resilient communities, enhancing business environment to encourage investments and assisting famers to get financing. (Himmelgreen, et al., 2010)

In West Africa USAID is spearheading advancement in economic growth including trade and investment, energy, agriculture, natural resources management, and climate change). USAID West Africa's development hypothesis is that, if West African systems of non-violent conflict management are strengthened, if broad-based economic growth and resilience are advanced through regional partners, and if the utilization of quality health services is increased in West Africa, then social and economic well-being will be advanced by West Africans. The Support Objective will help achieve the goal by supporting USAID's own capacity to deliver development programming in the region.

Through the East Africa Trade and Investment Hub, USAID helps raise incomes by removing barriers to trade and reducing the cost of doing business. It achieves this by supporting increased regional integration, reducing the time and cost of transit, increasing trade in agriculture with a focus on staple foods and supporting increased U.S.-Africa Trade under the AGOA. Targeted value chains include coffee, cotton, textiles, apparel, staple foods and horticulture. In East Africa, USAID has developed a model to integrate into its trade programs the objectives of U.S. Feed the Future, the U.S. Government's global hunger and food security initiative (Eirienne, 2009)

Political dimensions of US foreign policy in Africa:

Twelve percent (12%) of US population originated from Africa with a sharp increase in the number of immigrants from the continent between the 1990s and early 2000s as stated by Former US Ambassador Dane F. Smith, Jr. during his speech at the University of California in 2008. (University of California Television, 2008) Amb. Smith adds that the US gets significant amounts of oil from Africa as well as imports originating from the continent.

The economic ties to the continent, though not quite strong, have lead the US in being keen on the political atmosphere that is present on the continent. A profitable market for the US is one that is liberal and allows free markets. Liberal markets and a globalized way of thinking can only thrive in a democratic space on which Capitalist proponents such as the US firmly believe. In Michael Mandelbaum's words, "The key to establishing a working democracy, and in particular the institutions of liberty, has been the free-market economy. The institutions, skills, and values needed to operate a free-market economy are those that, in the political sphere, constitute democracy." (Mandelbaum, 2007)

When the political system breaks down, all of US interests are compromised. It deters economic development, destroys peace and opens the avenues of great power intrigue. (Smith, 1972) The political dimensions of US Foreign Policy in Africa will be analyzed in three main categories, Instability versus Governance, Civil Strife and Western Ideology.

3. INSTABILITY VERSUS GOVERNANCE

Since the attainment of independence and after the colonial era, many African nations have been riddled with political instability, civil unrest and execution of coup D'état. The possibility of Africans running their country peacefully and successfully as the freedom fighters imagined for their descendants seems far out of reach. This has been the narrative that the world media has maintained when they cover news stories in Africa. African nations commonly known to be politically unstable or the lack of "good" governance are Somalia, DRC, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Angola among others. (Takeuchi, 2007)

The continent is riddled with endemic disease outbreaks, war, political upheavals, civil unrest, all manner of societal disturbance and a lapse in functional ruling systems. These are all signs of failing nations and a continent under siege. It begs the question, is this chaos internally or externally fueled? This question was attempted by an unnamed student who published his paper on the UK Essays website on the excerpt below:

Political instability in Africa may be obliged much of its reason to internal factors, though the interpenetration of internal and external aspect especially geo-political and economic comfort of the international community always plays a major role in undermining the very procedure and society that are expected to care for democracy and to inspire a sense of stability for community development in Africa. (UKEssays, 2013)

The student's perspective as presented on the paper looks at factors within the political systems of African nations that creates instability. The student's perspective is void of the strong possibility that the conditions of a nation can be because of other powerful state actors and their need to maintain an international system that favors them more than other states. This resonates with the World System's Theory which was developed by sociologist Immanuel Wallerstein. According to the theorist, the world economic system is suggested to benefit some countries while it is exploitative to others. (Wallerstein, 1974)

Dependency Theory looks at how low-income countries of the global South region, known as peripheral countries, are economically subordinate to the advantage of high-income countries of the First World or North, also known as core countries. This mirrors a Marxist view of the international world system that workers and peasants are subordinate and exploited by capital-owning classes, the bourgeoisie. (Callinicos, 2004) The United States is a core country and considering the Dependency Theory, one would question the true intentions behind US involvement in African affairs.

The US involvement with African affairs has always been viewed suspiciously and with just cause. One country that knows firsthand how US influences the fate of a nation is the troubled DRC. Writer Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja asserts that the US involvement with Congo's destiny goes over a century. He states that since the days of the Berlin Conference of 1884-85, the Scramble of Africa saw Belgian ruler King Leopold II take the Congo Basin. The US was the first country to recognize the King's claims over the territory. (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2011)

Georges continues to state that US's support to Belgium over its occupation of the Congo Basin territories was rewarded with a stake at the lucrative natural resources and ironically, the Congo mines provided the US uranium which was used in the manufacturing of the first atomic weapons, the infamous Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs. In the wake of the Cold war, Georges states that the US, in collaboration with Belgium, had to get rid of Congo's first premier, Patrice Lumumba, who was keen on attaining independence for his people and the right of self-governance, which included managing its resources independently. (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2011)

Georges states that they used all manner of political sabotage to frustrate Lumumba including using the United Nations Secretariat to buy the support of Lumumba's Congolese rivals and hired killers. David Robarge in his article writes, "From 1960 to 1968, CIA conducted a series of fast-paced, multifaceted covert action (CIA) operations in the newly independent Republic of the Congo (the DRC today) to stabilize the government and minimize communist influence in a strategically vital, resource-rich location in Central Africa. According to David, this endeavor cost the US almost \$12 million which is almost \$90 million today. (Robarge, 2014)

US investment in Congo affairs seemed to have paid off for on June 30, 1960, Lumumba was assassinated and thereafter, Congo was ripe for the taking. In their article, Emmanuel Gerard and Bruce Kuklick believe though CIA and State Department intelligence portrayed Lumumba as a Pan-Africanist and nationalist who was neutral to the Cold War positions, agency heads and President Eisenhower disregarded the intelligence reports. (Gerard & Kuklick, 2015)

Civil Strife:

Africa found a friend in Communist nations whom the US was perceived as an enemy. This caused a subliminal power struggle over which political ideologies the young African nations should adopt. The US, not wanting to be perceived as pro-apartheid, Congress enacted the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 and proceeded to impose economic sanctions against South Africa to force the end of the Apartheid regime. The European Community and Japan had also joined in on the sanctions while Switzerland declined to impose the sanctions. (Hefti & Staehelin-Witt, 2013)

Writer Robert S. Smith states that the US engagement with Africa is narrowed down to six interests which are not uniformly applicable to all countries and sub-regions, but they provide the framework in looking at the continent in its entirety. He adds that the US made considerable efforts to avoid confronting Communist powers that influential in Africa such as the Soviet Union and China except when its bilateral relations in the continent was in jeopardy. In his words, one such interest is, "The Avoidance of Great Power Rivalry, Dominance, or Conflict on the Continent." (Smith, 1972)

Aside from politically "meddling" with Congo politics, the US also stands accused for meddling in political affairs in other African nations. According to a news article by BBC, the 1966 military coup that ousted Ghana's first President, Kwame Nkrumah was suspected to have the US involved in it. This suspicion was given more credence when former CIA intelligence officer John Stockwell wrote a book in 1978 titled "In Search of Enemies" and in the book, there's an

admission that CIA in Ghana got involved with the coup and its operatives were given “unofficial credit for the eventual coup”. (BBC, 2016)

The same BBC article goes on to state that Mr. Stockwell, oversaw CIA's covert operations in Angola in 1975. Mr. Stockwell wrote in his book that Washington decided to oppose the MPLA (People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola), as it was seen as closer to the Soviet Union, and support the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) and Unita (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) instead, even though all three had help from communist countries. (BBC, 2016) The support included arming and training FNLA and Unita which fueled the civil war which lasted for over 27yrs (1975-2002) and took the lives of half a million soldiers and civilians.

On the BBC article, another example of US involvement in African politics was US backing rebel Hissene Habre's attempts and eventual success in overthrowing the Chadian President Goukouni Oueddei in 1982. CIA chief-of-station, U.S. defense attaché, Col. David G. Foulds and US ambassador to Chad, Richard Bogosian convened a meeting to see how they could help their ally Habre carry out the takeover. (Bronner, 2014) Habre was a US ally against their enemy Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi and his expansionist plans of which were seemingly anti-US.

Their support to Habre is reported to have extended during the duration of his brutal rule. (BBC, 2016) Such was the public and celebrated level of support and confidence the Reagan administration had Habre that he met with President Reagan in Washington DC in 1987 and in Reagan's words, “We welcome President Habre to Washington as the leader of a nation that has recently beaten back the violent aggression of an outlaw state.” (Peters & Woolley, 1987) News reports earlier this year, reported that the same acclaimed leader was convicted for war crimes, crimes against humanity and rape and is facing a life sentence after a body created by Senegal and the African Union, Extraordinary African Chambers found him guilty of the same. (Agence France Presse, 2017)

4. WESTERN IDEOLOGY

The US has predominantly been on a charm offensive against African leaders who were being enticed by the Communist wave during 1947-1991 Cold War era. This was an attempt by the US to “contain Communism” which had already gained ground in about six African countries which were Somalia, Angola, Benin, Congo-Brazzaville, Ethiopia and Mozambique. This was a time when many of the African States had recently attained independence from their colonial masters or were in the brink of attaining it. The geopolitical tension was between the Soviet Union and its satellite states and the US, together with its allies. (Price, 1988)

The reason Communism was seemingly appealing to the Africans was because Communist countries from other continents were partners in their struggle for independence. Cuba, for example, sent soldiers, doctors and teachers to aid the new African nations begin their post-colonial journey. Cuba is known to have supported South Africans' fight against Apartheid and South Africa's former president, the late Nelson Mandela, did not hide his kinship with them. (Grabendorff, 1980)

During a Special Edition of ABC New nightline, former TV host Ted Koppel hosted Mandela in a town meeting in the summer of 1990 held at the Aaron Davis Hall in the City College of New York in New York City. One of the attendees, Ken Adelman from the Institute of Contemporary Studies questioned his alliances with Yasser Arafat and Gaddafi and Fidel Castro despite numerous reports of human rights abuses against them. (Gee, 2014)

His response to the attendee was that his party was not going to blindly break their ties with allies who have supported their struggle against Apartheid. (Gee, 2014) The town meeting had other questions for Mandela that seemingly questioned his aggressive resistance against the South African government and the conversation diverted away from the oppressive governance system.

In the 1960s, French Guinea's first African leader, Sekou Touré, was a fierce nationalist and an anti-imperialist who openly criticized US association with colonial powers, Great Britain and France who were slow in giving African colonies their much-demanded independence. (History.com Staff, 2009) However, Smith defends US position during the wave of African independence, stating that it was careful not to advocate for violent means to attain self-determination and that it can be achieved through peaceful means. (Smith, 1972)

According to History.com, Touré was also critical of US reluctance in openly condemning the Apartheid regime of South Africa. This led Guinea to economic and trade agreements as well as aid and military assistance from the Soviet Union.

However, Guinea was not fully committed to the Communist ways and would sometimes be agreeable with the United States. (History.com Staff, 2009)

According to History.com, it was during the Kennedy administration that Guinea's first President, Touré, refused to accommodate Soviet aircraft wishing to refuel on their way to Cuba during the missile crisis of 1962. He then allowed Soviet and Cuban aircraft to use Guinea's airfields during the Angolan civil war in 1975, and later reversed his position by revoking the privileges in 1977 and moving closer to France and the United States. (History.com Staff, 2009)

5. CONCLUSION

There has been controversy over U.S-Africa relations and the U.S foreign policy towards Africa, what and how the U.S foreign policy works, to answer this question theoretically Neo-classical realism is one among one of the theories. Another theory that can be used to explain this can be interdependence theory and geopolitics.

Geopolitics can be used as a theoretical framework especially relating to the fact that there is a growing threat of U.S presence in Africa with the rise of China in trade and other activities in Africa. U.S sees China as a threat hence it must consider China's growth in Africa when implementing China Africa policy. It is to state that U.S even before U.S held an Africa summit and implement forums and programs to foster relationship with Africa, China has for long started FOCAC which is a forum for China Africa relations. This alone depicts Chinese threat and China as a key factor that influence U.S Africa relations.

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