

**Southern Regional Model United Nations XIX**  
**Promoting Partnerships for a Sustainable Future**

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Honorable delegates,

First allow me to tell you how honored I am to be serving as the Director for the African Union. My name is Jonathan Edman and I am a senior at Kennesaw State University majoring in history with a minor in peace studies. I am in my fourth year with the Kennesaw State University model program. This is my first experience working within the African Union framework, and I am very excited about it. The issues and challenges facing Africa are very important to me. In fact, I am planning on going to work with Doctors Without Borders shortly after graduating, and my first choice for deployment will be equatorial Africa.

The topics we have before us are challenging, but they are also very important:

- I. Examining the Challenges and Solutions of the African Debt Crisis
- II. For Future Generations: Further Defining the African Youth Charter
- III. Uniting Africa: Enhancing Partnerships that Create Regional Cohesiveness

There are many statesmen, scholars and public figures who believe that the resolution of the debt crisis on the continent is the single most important issue facing the world today. It is also a particularly contentious issue which will exercise both your research and diplomatic skills. The issues surrounding youth in Africa are myriad, from HIV/AIDS, to child soldiers, to dramatic unemployment, and sexual violence. These issues are particularly troubling because almost two-thirds of all Africans are under 25 and most are living in extreme poverty. The work of moving the African Youth Charter from promise to fact could have profound impact. Finally, the dream of African unity is almost 200 years old, but it has often been hijacked by forces such as the *real politick* of the Cold War, or the economic corruption of despotic leaders. But can a continent as large as diverse as Africa hope to find political unity, and what role do regional organizations play in building a unified continent?

In the overviews that follow Stephen and I have pointed out some of the key considerations within each topic, but this is, necessarily, a limited view, and should only be the very beginning of your research. I expect each of you to come to conference with a strong sense of the specific needs and concerns of your respective Member State with regards to each topic area. Further, I expect us to seek real and meaningful ways to address the issues at hand, and not to simply re-state the commitments that the Union, various regional bodies, or our individual Member States have previously made. Specifically because these topics are challenging, we will need to approach them with our minds open to new ideas and be willing to compromise where possible.

Each delegation is required to submit a position paper for consideration. It should be no longer than two pages in length (single-spaced) and demonstrate your country's position, policies and recommendations on each of the three topics. For more information regarding the position papers please visit the SRMUN website at <http://www.srmun.org>. Position papers must be submitted on-line via the SRMUN website and will be due by Midnight on October 24, 2008.

I also strongly suggest you review the United Nations Charter, the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the Southern Region Model United Nations rules, and the other relevant treaties and instruments, especially those referenced in the following background guides. If you have any questions or need clarification on any issues please feel free to contact me at [what email address?] Best of luck to you in your research, and I look forward to seeing you at conference!

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## History of the African Union

The foundation of the African Union (AU) can be traced back nearly a half century through numerous programs and initiatives established, all with the goal of working toward a united Africa and trying to improve the social and economic status of the continent. The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) implemented its charter in 1963.<sup>1</sup> The OAU aimed at politically uniting African states, coordinating efforts to improve the lives of African peoples, promote international participation, and harmonize members' various policies.<sup>2</sup> By 1979 the need to amend the *OAU Charter* to better equip it for the challenges of a changing world was apparent to its founders.<sup>3</sup> However, the Charter Review Committee failed to produce substantial amendments and a growing need for better efficiency and effectiveness of the OAU was clear.<sup>4</sup> After the *Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (AEC)* (1991) came into effect in 1994, the OAU was operating under the mandate of that treaty and that of the *OAU Charter*.<sup>5</sup> It became clear there was a need to integrate the political aspects of the OAU with the economic and development aspects from the Abuja treaty.<sup>6</sup> At the Fourth Extraordinary Session of the OAU held in Sirte, Libya on 9 September 1999, the *Sirte Declaration* called to "establish [the] African Union in conformity with the ultimate objectives of the [OAU] Charter... and the provisions of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community."<sup>7</sup> At the Lome Summit of the OAU on 11 July 2000, the Constitutive Act of the African Union was adopted which would combine the OAU and the AEC into a single organization.<sup>8</sup> In July of 2002, at the 38<sup>th</sup> OAU Summit and the first AU summit, the OAU was officially disbanded and the AU was established.<sup>9</sup>

The AU was established to "promote unity and peace among African nations, encourage democracy and good governance, and foster sustainable growth."<sup>10</sup> The vision of the AU is to "build an integrated Africa, a prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena" and to accomplish this, the African Union Commission set out these 7 missions: building the capacities of the Commission and its organs, institutions and offices of the AU, Member States, and Regional Economic Communities (REC); ensuring overall coherence of the programmes aimed at speeding up the integration process through harmonizing and rationalizing the RECs and integrating in the AU commission various incentives to accelerate integration; organize brainstorming and institute strategic watch tower on key issues affecting the future of the continent; assuming a dynamic information and advocacy role for Africa vis-à-vis the world; play a leadership role for promotion of peace, human security and good governance in the continent; stimulate economic, social and cultural development in the continent; and establish a standing follow-up/evaluation mechanism.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "OAU Charter." *African Union*. 19 May 2008 <[http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/text/OAU\\_Charter\\_1963.pdf](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/text/OAU_Charter_1963.pdf)>.

<sup>2</sup> "Organization of African Unity (OAU) / African Union (AU)." 12 Feb. 2004. 14 May 2008 <<http://www.dfa.gov.za/foreign/Multilateral/africa/oau.htm>>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> "Sirte Declaration." *African Union*. 19 May 2008 <[http://www.africa-union.org/Docs\\_AUGovernment/decisions/Sirte\\_Declaration\\_1999.pdf](http://www.africa-union.org/Docs_AUGovernment/decisions/Sirte_Declaration_1999.pdf)>.

<sup>8</sup> "Organization of African Unity (OAU) / African Union (AU)." 12 Feb. 2004. 14 May 2008 <<http://www.dfa.gov.za/foreign/Multilateral/africa/oau.htm>>.

<sup>9</sup> Plan of the African Union Commission." *African Union*. 11 Apr. 2008 <<http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/Vision/Volume1.pdf>>.

<sup>10</sup> "Profile: African Union." *BBC News*. 4 Apr. 2008. 11 Apr. 2008 <[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country\\_profiles/3870303.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/3870303.stm)>.

<sup>11</sup> "Strategic Plan of the African Union Commission." *African Union*. 11 Apr. 2008 <<http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/Vision/Volume1.pdf>>.

The AU administers its programs from its headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.<sup>12</sup> Also, the AU is an intergovernmental organization participating in the United Nations system. The AU has a permanent observer in the UN whose responsibility is to “develop and maintain constructive and productive relationships between the African Union and United Nations institutions as well as promote a common view within the African group in International negotiations.”<sup>13</sup> The two international bodies cooperate on several fronts, including security, peacekeeping, development, and human rights. In 2007, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1769 authorizing a joint AU-UN peacekeeping force of 26,000 officers to deploy to the Western Darfur region of Sudan to help bring peace to the area.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, the UN Security Council authorized an extension of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) with resolution 1801 (2008) to take necessary measures for security and humanitarian assistance.<sup>15</sup> Many of the documents and programs established by the OAU continue under the AU. Some include those that focus on human rights such as the *African Charter on Human and People Rights* (1981), which led to the establishment of the African Human Rights Commission, and the *Grand Bay Declaration and Plan of Action on Human Rights* (1999). Another important document is the *Abuja Treaty to Establish the African Economic Commission* (1991) which is projected to create an African Common Market using Regional Economic Communities.<sup>16</sup> The AU has continued with these efforts to improve and develop the continent of Africa with decisions, declaration, and resolutions. During the Second Ordinary Session of the AU General Assembly, the Declaration on the Implementation of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) Environmental Action Plan was adopted continuing the efforts of the OAU to get this organization’s programs underway.<sup>17</sup> The AU also continuously receives updates from the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights on their enforcement of the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights.<sup>18</sup>

The member states of the African Union are:

ALGERIA, ANGOLA, BENIN, BOTSWANA, BURKINA FASO, BURUNDI, CAMEROUN, CAP VERT, CENTRAFRICAINE, COMORES, CONGO, RÉPUBLIQUE DÉMOCRATIQUE DU CONGO, CÔTE D’IVOIRE, DJIBOUTI, EGYPT, EQUATORIALE GUINEA, ERITREA, ETHIOPIA, GABON, GAMBIA, GHANA, GUINEA BISSAU, GUINEA, KENYA, LESOTHO, LIBERIA, LIBYA, MADAGASCAR, MALAWI, MALI, MAURITANIA, MAURITIUS, MOZAMBIQUE, NAMIBIA, NIGER, NIGERIA, RWANDA, RÉPUBLIQUE ARABE SAHRAOUIE DÉMOCRATIQUE, SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, SÉNÉGAL, SEYCHELLES, SIERRA LEONE, SOMALIA, SOUTH AFRICA, SUDAN, SWAZILAND, TANZANIA, TCHAD, TOGO, TUNISIE, UGANDA, ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE.

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<sup>12</sup> "African Union in a Nutshell." [African Union](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/au_in_a_nutshell_en.htm). 8 Apr. 2008 <[http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/au\\_in\\_a\\_nutshell\\_en.htm](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/au_in_a_nutshell_en.htm)>.

<sup>13</sup> "Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations, New York." 12 Apr. 2008 <[http://www.africa-union.org/Structure\\_of\\_the\\_Commission/Political%20Affairs/x/Permanent%20Observer%20Mission%20of%20the%20African%20Union%20to%20the%20United%20Nations.doc](http://www.africa-union.org/Structure_of_the_Commission/Political%20Affairs/x/Permanent%20Observer%20Mission%20of%20the%20African%20Union%20to%20the%20United%20Nations.doc)>

<sup>14</sup> "Security Council Authorizes Deployment of United Nations-African Union ‘Hybrid’ Peace Operation in Bid to Resolve Darfur Conflict." 31 July 2007. 12 Apr. 2008 <<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sc9089.doc.htm>>.

<sup>15</sup> "Security Council Extends Authorization of African Union Mission in Somalia Until 20 August, Unanimously Adopting Resolution 1801(2008)." 20 Feb. 2008. 12 Apr. 2008 <<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/sc9258.doc.htm>>

<sup>16</sup> "African Union in a Nutshell." [African Union](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/au_in_a_nutshell_en.htm). 8 Apr. 2008 <[http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/au\\_in\\_a\\_nutshell\\_en.htm](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/au_in_a_nutshell_en.htm)>.

<sup>17</sup> "Decisions and Declarations." 13 Apr. 2008 <[http://www.africa-union.org/Official\\_documents/Decisions\\_Declarations/offDecisions\\_&\\_Declarations.htm](http://www.africa-union.org/Official_documents/Decisions_Declarations/offDecisions_&_Declarations.htm)>

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

## Topic I. Examining the Challenges and Solutions of the African Debt Crisis

### *Introduction*

The problem of sovereign debt is not new to the international landscape. The international community recognized the extent of the danger when, in 1982, Mexico declared it could no longer service its debts and nearly went into default.<sup>19</sup> Since then there have been several international interventions aimed at preventing more large-scale defaults, culminating in the creation of a number of UN sponsored initiatives. These programs include the International Monetary Fund created in 1944, (IMF) World Bank's Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) established in 1996, and Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI) founded in 2005.<sup>20</sup> The effectiveness of these programs is critical to the African continent because, of the 42 countries identified as qualifying for HIPC status, 34 are African.<sup>21</sup>

These programs promised to significantly reduce or eliminate a country's debt to multilateral lenders, such as the World Bank and IMF, in exchange for substantive, and arguably invasive, modifications to the country's economic and social structure.<sup>22</sup> But these programs appear to be having little large-scale impact. At the start of 1996 the total external debt of African nations' was \$332.9 billion dollars and at the end of 2004 the total African debt was virtually unchanged at \$330 billion.<sup>23</sup> The latest figures from the World Bank have that number reduced to \$245 billion. While that is not an insignificant reduction, one must consider that up to 40 percent of the region's government spending is dedicated to debt repayment it is clear that more is needed.<sup>24</sup> Debt repayment in the region far outstrips government spending on health or education, not because the African nations are blind to these needs, but largely because the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) required by the World Bank and IMF in order to be eligible for debt relief or concessionary loans require austerity programs, demanding caps on governmental spending on these social services.<sup>25</sup> This makes these nations fully dependent upon external agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide health and educational services, especially in those countries ravaged by social

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<sup>19</sup> Nora Lustig. "Mexico in Crisis, the U.S. to the Rescue. The Financial Assistance Packages of 1982 and 1995." Brookings Institution. January 1997. [http://www.brookings.edu/articles/1997/01development\\_lustig.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/articles/1997/01development_lustig.aspx)

<sup>20</sup> Albert Espejo and Anna Unigovskaya. "Debt Relief Bringing Benefits to Africa." IMF Survey Magazine: Countries & Regions. 25 February, 2008. <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2008/CAR022508A.htm>

<sup>21</sup> "Progress in Receiving Debt Relief for the 42 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC)." Jubilee Research. December 2004. [http://www.jubileeresearch.org/hipc/progress\\_report/country.htm](http://www.jubileeresearch.org/hipc/progress_report/country.htm)

<sup>22</sup> "News & Broadcast – Debt Relief." The World Bank. April 2008  
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:20040942~menuPK:34480~pagePK:34370~theSitePK:4607,00.html>

<sup>23</sup> "DDP Quick Query." The World Bank.  
<http://ddp-ext.worldbank.org/ext/DDPQQ/member.do?method=getMembers&userid=1&queryId=135>

<sup>24</sup> "An MBendi Profile: Africa – Debt in Africa." MBendi Information Services, Cape Town, South Africa. 4 July, 2005  
<http://www.mbendi.co.za/land/af/p0060.htm>

<sup>25</sup> Anup Shah. "The Heavily In-debt Poor Countries Initiative is Not Working." Global Issues. August 30, 2001.  
<http://www.globalissues.org/TradeRelated/Debt/HIPC.asp>

problems which are eradicable, such as famine and malaria, or those which could be slowed or alleviated, such as the acquired immune deficiency (AIDs) epidemic.

### **History**

In order to meaningfully discuss the African debt crises it is important to have some understanding of the long history of the problem within the region. While much of western writing on the debt crises begins with the inflation and energy crises of the early 1970's, a credible argument has been raised that points to the earliest colonial periods. During this time a complex economy (including nascent manufacturing) on the continent was suppressed in favor of a commodity-based extraction economy as the real source of the current issue.<sup>26</sup> With colonization, the economic focus shifted almost exclusively to the production of cash crops and infrastructure development was limited to that which either increased production or decreased cost.<sup>27</sup>

Much of Africa was further restrained following the first wave of independence. During this time, minority-ruled client states, not only continued this economic exploitation, but accumulated bilateral debt, which are debts between two governments. This allowed for the region to finance development projects, as well as stability projects, such as militaries capable of suppressing the indigenous peoples.<sup>28</sup> For example, the countries of southern Africa borrowed approximately \$46 billion to maintain apartheid throughout the region.<sup>29</sup> To make matters worse, when these minority-rule governments finally ceded power to their indigenous rivals, the terms of independence usually included assumption of the "development debt" that had accumulated. In many instances that meant that fledgling states were brought into formal existence, carrying the weight of debts for military expenditures used to fight independence movements.<sup>30</sup> It has been estimated that some \$59 billion in debt was transferred to newly independent states in 1960 at a unilaterally imposed 14 percent interest rate.<sup>31</sup> It is important to note that such debt transfer is not only a characteristic of the distant past. In 1980, the outgoing government of Rhodesia handed the newly-independent Zimbabwe debts worth \$500 million.<sup>32</sup>

This was just the beginning of debt in the developing world. In the 1960's, the industrialized nations lent large amounts of money to developing countries to ensure their support in the Cold War. In the early 1970's the combined impacts of inflation in the western economies and the dramatic increase in oil prices imposed by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries OPEC brought a rush of "petro dollars" to western banks, depressing interest rates.<sup>33</sup> In desperation those same banks sought new lending markets to increase demand for money and bolster interest rates.<sup>34</sup> The African nations, with commodity-based economies sensitive to both energy costs and commodities

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<sup>26</sup> Alemayehu Geda Fole. "The Historical Origin of African Debt Crisis." *Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review*. January 2003. p. 71

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 73

<sup>28</sup> Joseph Hanlon. "Free Nelson Mandela – and all southern Africans – from the chains of debt." Jubilee Research. 7 April 1998. <http://www.jubileeresearch.org/analysis/reports/nelson1.htm>

<sup>29</sup> "Southern Africa: Apartheid Debt, 7/27/98." University of Pennsylvania African Studies Center. 27 July, 1998 [http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Urgent\\_Action/apic\\_72798.html](http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Urgent_Action/apic_72798.html)

<sup>30</sup> E/CN.4/Sub.2/2004/27. "Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights: Effects of Debt on Human Rights." United Nations Economic and Social Council

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

<sup>32</sup> Angus Selby. "Commercial Farmers and the State: Interest Group Politics and Land Reform in Zimbabwe." PhD Thesis, Oxford University. 2006, p. 150

<sup>33</sup> Robert Powell. "Debt Relief for Poor Countries." International Monetary Fund. December 2000. <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2000/12/powell.htm>

<sup>34</sup> "How It All Began." Jubilee USA Network. <http://www.jubileeuusa.org/resources/debt-resources/beginners-guide-to-debt/how-it-all-began.html>

price shocks, embraced these private lenders. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), between 1970 and 2002, African countries received \$540 billion in loans.<sup>35</sup>

There are two arguments that must be mentioned here, first, some argue that these funds were primarily used for appropriate infrastructure development and military expenditures.<sup>36</sup> However, there is also wide criticism of both the borrowing nations and the lenders, for the lack of controls placed on lending and the misuse of these funds through government corruption, the personal spending of despotic leaders, and capital flight.<sup>37</sup> In an attempt to start paying down these debts, many developing country borrowers followed the advice of their industrialized creditors and expanded their commodity and cash-crop production, rather than increasing their national income, which led to gluts in the commodities markets.<sup>38</sup> This lowered prices worldwide, decreased the producer's profits, and made it necessary for these countries to obtain ever larger cash infusions in order to keep making debt-service payments on the loans they had already acquired.<sup>39</sup>

With little income and many failed development projects, most debtor countries struggled to make even interest-only payments on these loans. At the same time, private creditors began to work to limit their exposure in loans to the developing world by either canceling the loans or selling them for below face dollar on the secondary market.<sup>40</sup> To prevent large-scale disruption of the credit market an informal group of creditors called the Paris Club was created. The Paris Club is largely made up of industrial nations.<sup>41</sup> It is important to note that the Paris Club has no legal basis. Though its members agree to abide by a set of rules and principles, there is no formal governance of the organization, nor is there any internal requirement for transparency. The Paris Club provided loan payment rescheduling as debtor countries' loan payments came due, a process known as "flow rescheduling".<sup>42</sup> In conjunction, the IMF and World Bank provided new loans to assist debtor countries, but this, of course, only added to the total debt of these developing countries. Also, this assistance rarely came without strings attached. Often developing nations were forced to adopt IMF and World Bank mandated SAPs ostensibly intended to open, correct, and liberalize the economies of the developing nations.<sup>43</sup>

In 1996, in response to international pressure to alleviate the debt-burden of the poorest countries, the IMF and the World Bank presented the HIPC. This represented the first time that the Global North had made any proposal, including debt relief from multilateral lenders like the IMF and the World Bank. The Global North-South is a division based socio-economic and political factors that exists between developed countries, known as "the North",

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<sup>35</sup> "New UNCTAD Study Makes Case For African Debt Write-off." United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. April 30, 2004. <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Webflyer.asp?docID=5459&intItemID=2068&lang=1>

<sup>36</sup> Alemayehu Geda Fole. "The Historical Origin of African Debt Crisis." *Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review*. January 2003, p. 74-77

<sup>37</sup> David Ricksecker. "What is the HIPC Initiative?" The University of Iowa Center for International Finance and Development. [http://www.uiowa.edu/ifdebook/faq/faq\\_docs/HIPC.shtml](http://www.uiowa.edu/ifdebook/faq/faq_docs/HIPC.shtml)

<sup>38</sup> "How It All Began." Jubilee USA Network. <http://www.jubileeusa.org/resources/debt-resources/beginners-guide-to-debt/how-it-all-began.html>

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

<sup>40</sup> Robert Powell. "Debt Relief for Poor Countries." International Monetary Fund. December 2000. <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2000/12/powell.htm>

<sup>41</sup> "Factsheet - A Guide to Committees, Groups, And Clubs." International Monetary Fund. April 2008. <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2000/12/powell.htm>

<sup>14</sup> Robert Powell. "Debt Relief for Poor Countries." International Monetary Fund. December 2000. <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2000/12/powell.htm>

<sup>43</sup> "How It All Began." Jubilee USA Network. <http://www.jubileeusa.org/resources/debt-resources/beginners-guide-to-debt/how-it-all-began.html>

and least developed countries, or "the South."<sup>44</sup> The HIPC was also groundbreaking in that it set a definition for unsustainable debt as being a ratio of debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) between 150 percent and 250 percent depending upon the country's export to GDP ratio and revenue performance in excess of GDP.<sup>45</sup> The Initiative was improved in 1999 after a comprehensive review of International Development Association (IDA), which also included the work of public consultations. The outcomes for the HIPC Initiative included lowering the debt-burden thresholds, allowing a larger group of countries to qualify for debt relief.<sup>46</sup>

### ***HIPC and MDRI Processes***

The HIPC and MDRI processes require a basic understanding of each to address the economic landscape of Africa. First, it should be noted that, as indicated by the use of the word "processes", these programs are highly procedural, meaning that debt relief under them is not achieved in a single step, but rather that each initiative requires the debtor country to engage in a series of steps in order to have their debt reduced.<sup>47</sup> As HIPC Initiative process was modified in 1999, to allow interim debt relief immediately upon reaching the decision point, they worked to ensure that economic resources freed from debt service were used to support efforts to reduce poverty.<sup>48</sup> Those program modifications are included work within the IMF and the Paris Club.

As specified by the World Bank<sup>49</sup>, in order for a country to be eligible for HIPC, a country enters a multi-year process period during which it must either meet or be working on several qualifying criteria. The country must be facing unsustainable debt after full application of "traditional relief mechanisms," such as a bilateral debt restructuring through the Paris Club.<sup>50</sup> . In this sense "traditional relief mechanisms" refer to any of the Paris Club sets terms of the mid 1980's to mid 1990's. Known as the Toronto, London, and Naples terms, these agreements either delayed payments, rescheduled payments, or decreased the Net Present Value (NPV) of loans (or some combination of the above).<sup>51</sup> This is to say that the country must first have attempted to negotiate debt restructuring, primarily with its private and bilateral lenders at below-market rates, under concessionary terms. The point of this qualification was to ensure that the HIPC initiative should not be the first step a country takes toward trying to alleviate its debt problems.

The country must be eligible only for "highly concessional assistance," which is a loan extended at terms that are below market rates or at that is offered at some discount based upon a ratio of the face value of the loan and the sum of debt service payments of the loan.<sup>52</sup> This comes from the IDA and the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth

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<sup>44</sup> "Contrasts in Development." S-Cool.

[http://www.scool.co.uk/topic\\_quicklearn.asp?loc=ql&topic\\_id=13&quicklearn\\_id=1&subject\\_id=20&ebt=151&ebn=&ebs=&ebl=&elc=4](http://www.scool.co.uk/topic_quicklearn.asp?loc=ql&topic_id=13&quicklearn_id=1&subject_id=20&ebt=151&ebn=&ebs=&ebl=&elc=4)

<sup>45</sup> "Tracking HIPC : What is HIPC." Jubilee Research. [http://www.jubileeresearch.org/hipc/what\\_is\\_hipc.htm](http://www.jubileeresearch.org/hipc/what_is_hipc.htm)

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> "Flow Chart: Steps of the HIPC Initiative." World Bank.

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTDEBTDEPT/Resources/review-HIPCProcess.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> "HIPC History." World Bank. <http://go.worldbank.org/ZQ79VCHC00>

<sup>49</sup> "Steps of the HIPC Initiative." World Bank. <http://go.worldbank.org/76G2TJJO30>

<sup>50</sup> Ibid

<sup>51</sup> Christina Daseking and Robert Powell. "From Toronto Terms to the HIPC Initiative: A Brief History of Debt Relief for Low-Income Countries." IMF. October 1999. pp. 14-25

<sup>52</sup> "Balance of Payments Statistics Issues Paper #29: Concessional Debt." IMF Committee on Balance of Payments Statistics, Balance of Payments Technical Expert Group (BOPTTEG). October 2004. p. 2

Facility.<sup>53</sup> In other words, the candidate country is no longer capable of obtaining both private lending due to relative poverty, the volume of outstanding debt, or because of defaults.<sup>54</sup>

The country must have established a history of economic reform and macroeconomic stability.<sup>55</sup> The “traditional relief mechanisms” provided through the Paris Club usually required substantive modifications to the economic and fiscal policies of the borrowing nation.<sup>56</sup> Frequently, governments were required to implement austerity programs through actions such as cutting subsidies, reducing government spending, and devaluing currency.<sup>57</sup> This requirement indicates that the applicant country should have a history of implementing these policies, as well as for maintaining them for an extended period of time following application under the HIPC Initiative.<sup>58</sup>

The country must have also developed a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper describing how their macroeconomic, structural, and social policies will promote growth and reduce poverty. This report must be completed in participation with a broad base of the country’s civil society.<sup>59</sup> This requirement is one of the additions through the MDRI program. Finally, the country must have cleared any outstanding arrears.<sup>60</sup> In other words, it must have renegotiated or be current in all of its debt-service payments.

After these eligibility requirements have been met, or sufficient progress has been made toward meeting them<sup>61</sup> the Executive boards of the IMF and IDA must formally decide upon the country’s eligibility for debt relief. If the country is deemed to be HIPC eligible, it is said to have reached the “decision point.” At this point the lenders decide what debts are eligible for reduction to bring the country’s total debt to sustainable levels, and the country can begin to receive some debt aid on a provisional basis. This is primarily in the form of interim relief on its debt service falling due.<sup>62</sup> Following the decision point, the country must maintain macroeconomic stability and continue to meet performance targets for IMF and IDA supported programs. If after at least one year the country is still meeting these criteria it can reach its “completion point” and lenders are expected to provide the full agreed-upon debt relief.<sup>63</sup> It is worth noting that, for what would seem to be a straight-forward accounting exercise, there are a number of subjective measurements involved in this process all of which are being assessed by the creditors only.<sup>64</sup>

The MDRI, which was proposed by the Group of 8 (G8) in 2005, goes a step beyond the HIPC Initiative. It calls upon three multi-lateral lenders, the IMF, the IDA, and the African Development Fund, to cancel all of the outstanding debt claims they hold on those countries, which either have reached or will reach the completion point

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<sup>53</sup> “Steps of the HIPC Initiative.” World Bank. <http://go.worldbank.org/76G2TJJO30>

<sup>54</sup> “IDA – How IDA Resources are Allocated.” World Bank. June 2008.  
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/IDA/0,,contentMDK:20052347~menuPK:2607525~pagePK:51236175~piPK:437394~theSitePK:73154,00.html>

<sup>55</sup> “Steps of the HIPC Initiative.” World Bank

<sup>56</sup> “How It All Began.” Jubilee USA Network.  
<http://www.jubileeusa.org/resources/debt-resources/beginners-guide-to-debt/how-it-all-began.html>

<sup>57</sup> Ibid

<sup>58</sup> “Steps of the HIPC Initiative.” World Bank

<sup>59</sup> “Factsheet – Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative.” IMF. March 2008.  
<http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/hipc.htm>

<sup>60</sup> “Steps of the HIPC Initiative.” World Bank

<sup>61</sup> “Factsheet – Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative.” IMF

<sup>62</sup> Ibid

<sup>63</sup> Ibid

<sup>64</sup> Brendan Martin. “The Challenge of the New Washington Consensus”. Bretton Woods Project. Update 16. April 2000.



of the HIPC process.<sup>65</sup> Unlike the HIPC Initiative, the decision about MDRI relief for a country is handled independently by each creditor, and such decisions can vary in coverage and implementation.<sup>66</sup> For instance, IMF policy required modification of the original G8 proposal in order to be consistent with its own principles of uniformity of treatment with regards to the use of IMF resources.<sup>67</sup> There are also significant limitations to MDRI relief. First, the MDRI process does not include bilateral or private debt claims.<sup>68</sup> Second, it must be funded so that it does not undermine the integrity of the multilateral lenders, or their capacity to provide further financial support to low-income countries.<sup>69</sup>

### ***Critiques of HIPC and MDRI***

Despite the triumphant review of these debt relief programs, there are several important criticisms that need to be considered. These are aimed not only at what the HIPC and MDRI programs are, and what they claim to do, but also at what they completely fail to address. The first set of these criticisms are structural, dealing with essential flaws in the ways the HIPC program is designed. The HIPC process is dramatically slow. When the program was launched in 1996 it was estimated that between 32 and 38 countries were eligible for HIPC relief; however, by the middle of 2004 only 13 countries had reached the completion point, 11 were still shy of the decision point, and only 14 had reached the decision point.<sup>70</sup> Today according to the HIPC, 29 HIPC countries have reached their decision points, with 18 at the completion point.<sup>71</sup> By the end of 2004 only seven countries' debts had actually been reduced to what the program defines as "sustainable" levels.<sup>72</sup>

The second criticism is that the HIPC figures for sustainable debt are unrealistic. Even the significantly lowered 150 percent debt to exports ratio (from the 1999 program's original 250 percent) could only be maintained with export and GDP growth rates that the IMF later realized were unrealistic.<sup>73</sup> This criticism is particularly poignant because in 2002 almost half of the countries in the HIPC process would still have debt-to-export ratios above 150 percent,<sup>74</sup> and in 2006 six of the eight countries who had reached the completion point were in danger of falling back below the "sustainable debt" threshold.<sup>75</sup>

Another set of criticisms point to the ways that the HIPC and MDRI programs fail to adequately address the problem of sovereign debt in its entirety. One of the most important regards the issue of "haircuts".<sup>76</sup> In this sense, a haircut is the loss in value a creditor faces on a forgiven loan. Within the HIPC and MDRI structures there is supposed to

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<sup>65</sup> "The Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI)." IMF. March 2008.  
<http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/mdri.htm>

<sup>66</sup> Ibid

<sup>67</sup> Ibid

<sup>68</sup> Ibid

<sup>69</sup> Ibid

<sup>70</sup> Yan Sun. "External Debt Sustainability in HIPC Completion Point Countries." IMF. September 2004

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> "Fool's Gold: The Case for 100percent Multilateral Debt Cancellation for the Poorest Countries." ActionAid International, CAFOD, And Oxfam International. October 2004. p. 2

<sup>73</sup> "Technical Workshop on Macroeconomic Analytical Issues in Taking the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) Approach Forward." IMF. April 2003. <http://www.imf.org/external/np/res/seminars/2003/tw/tw.htm>

<sup>74</sup> "Tracking HIPC: What is HIPC." Jubilee Research. [http://www.jubileeresearch.org/hipc/what\\_is\\_hipc.htm](http://www.jubileeresearch.org/hipc/what_is_hipc.htm)

<sup>75</sup> "IEG Reach." World Bank Independent Evaluation Group. April 2006.  
[http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/oed/oeddoelib.nsf/DocUNIDViewForJavaSearch/1281A57029D89D6D8525714D00588441/\\$file/hipc\\_reach.pdf](http://lnweb18.worldbank.org/oed/oeddoelib.nsf/DocUNIDViewForJavaSearch/1281A57029D89D6D8525714D00588441/$file/hipc_reach.pdf)

<sup>76</sup> Tracking HIPC: What is HIPC." Jubilee Research

be an equalization of the haircut amongst the various lenders, but this principle is being ignored or violated.<sup>77</sup> This creates a problem because some lenders will choose not to cooperate in a debt reduction plan in the hopes that they will wind up in a better position to collect their outstanding debts after other lenders have taken a loss and the borrowing country has an improved debt to revenue ratio.<sup>78</sup> This effect has already been seen with regards, not only to private lenders, but also with the IMF and World Bank, who have, following specific bilateral debt forgiveness packages, recalculated downward the percentage of debt they were willing to relieve under the HIPC program.<sup>79</sup> This also raises the issue of vulture funds, companies who have purchased other private lenders packages at reduced prices who then refuse to participate in debt relief efforts and attempt to force debtor countries to pay face value on those loans.<sup>80</sup> Unfortunately, there is no part of the HIPC or MDRI initiatives to prevent this kind of predatory debt collection, in fact vulture funds can effectively derail debt restructuring because their claims can take precedence.<sup>81</sup> Campaigns to stop such practices suggest that international law should provide for bankruptcy protection for countries similar to that for individuals in most industrialized countries, a proposal known as Sovereign Debt Restructuring Mechanism (SDRM).<sup>82</sup>

Critics also point out that, at its best, the HIPC and MDRI programs will only relieve less than 30 percent of the total debt of HIPC countries.<sup>83</sup> While this figure is significant, it will still leave many African nations using up to 15 percent of their revenues for debt-service payments to bilateral and private lenders, far more than they currently spend on basic services such as education and health care.<sup>84</sup> They also point out that many of the wealthiest countries intend to substitute aid money with debt relief funding, meaning that even after the debt payments are gone there will still be no money to invest in programs to address the profound social issues these countries face.<sup>85</sup>

There are also critiques pointing to the very nature of the international organizations that have been driving this particular form of debt relief. While the Paris Club, the World Bank, and the IMF insist that lending countries open their markets and conform to a certain degree of transparency none of these organizations operate under the same principles. Perhaps most famously, this very criticism has been sounded from Joseph Stiglitz, a former Chief Economist and Vice President of the World Bank.<sup>86</sup> Stiglitz remarked,

“We need an international "bankruptcy" court, with no vested national interest, to deal with debt restructuring and relief, and to ensure a fair sharing of the burdens this would create. The United Nations could devise a set of principles; a rule of law; that would guide the court as it assessed the validity of contracts made with, and debts incurred by, outlaw regimes. Loans to

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid

<sup>78</sup> Ibid

<sup>79</sup> Romily Greenhill and Ann Pettifor. “Rogue Creditors, including Iraq and Taiwan, threaten HIPC.” Jubilee Research. October 2002. [http://www.jubileeresearch.org/hipc/hipc\\_news/creditors011002.htm](http://www.jubileeresearch.org/hipc/hipc_news/creditors011002.htm)

<sup>80</sup> “Vulture Funds in More Depth.” Jubilee Debt Campaign. p. 3  
<http://www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/Vulture20funds20in20more20depth+2974.twl>

<sup>81</sup> Kenneth Fukuda. “FAQ: What is a Vulture Fund?” University of Iowa Center for International Finance and Development. May 2008. <http://www.uiowa.edu/ifdebook/faq/Vulture.shtml>

<sup>82</sup> Ibid

<sup>83</sup> “Reality Check: the Need for Deeper Debt Cancellation.” Global Issues. April 2001  
<http://www.globalissues.org/TradeRelated/Debt/ExternalArticles/RealityCheck.asp>

<sup>84</sup> “Africa Action Statement on 100percent Debt Cancellation for Africa.” 23 September, 2005. <http://www.africaaction.org/newsroom/index.php?op=read&documentid=1411&type=15&issues=2>

<sup>85</sup> “The World is Still Waiting: Broken G8 promises are Costing Millions of Lives..” Oxfam International. May 2007. p. 7-8  
[http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/debt\\_aid/downloads/bp103\\_g8.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/debt_aid/downloads/bp103_g8.pdf)

<sup>86</sup> “Reality Check: the Need for Deeper Debt Cancellation.” Global Issues. April 2001. <http://www.globalissues.org/TradeRelated/Debt/ExternalArticles/RealityCheck.asp>

build schools might be permitted, and the debt obligation, accordingly, would not be treated as odious; loans to buy arms might not be permitted.”<sup>87</sup>

Further, while the HIPC countries are required to develop strategies with a broad-base of their society, (tacit democratization) the IMF and World Bank are in no way held to the same standards.<sup>88</sup> It has been alleged that there is very little consistency in how countries are evaluated through the HIPC process, and that in many cases the arbitrary demands of a bureaucrat can hold a country hostage, forcing many countries to negotiate matters of internal policy with its lenders and circumventing a government’s responsibility to its people.<sup>89</sup>

Finally, critics of the HIPC/MDRI initiatives point out that the World Bank has been dismissing the issue of odious debt.<sup>90</sup> Odious debt is traditionally defined as any debt which was entered into by a regime or leader without the will of the people, and for purposes of oppressing the people, and where the creditor was aware of those conditions.<sup>91</sup> It is important to note that odious debt must be distinguished from illegitimate debt, which is debt for money that was used by the regime or leader in ways that were not in the interest of the people of the country, but not necessarily in hostile actions against them.<sup>92</sup> Certainly both odious and illegitimate debt is an issue for many if not all HIPC countries, but it is an issue that the international creditors shy away from addressing substantively.<sup>93</sup> While the essential principle of odious debt is internationally recognized and the idea of odious debt is routinely denounced very little has been done to formally define the term, much less to implement a means for discharging odious debt or to expose what percentage of world-wide sovereign debt should be classified as odious and relieved immediately. In Sub-Saharan Africa this issue is particularly important as several countries have inherited the debt of colonial or despotic regimes, such as Zaire, Nigeria, and perhaps most notably, South Africa.<sup>94</sup> There was little question that the Apartheid regime of South Africa was oppressing the majority of the population while it was in power, or that there was a clear break in governance between the fall of the Apartheid and the popularly-elected African National Conference, yet South Africa continues to pay the debts accumulated by the Apartheid government out of fear of damaging its future ability to borrow money.<sup>95</sup> The G8, IMF, and World Bank have been reluctant to talk about the issue of odious debt. Critics have suggested that providing for an international body to review questionable existing debt and to adjudicate debt relief, would pressure lenders to be significantly more cautious about entering into loan agreements with despotic leaders and regimes.<sup>96</sup> They further suggest that such economic pressures might be far more effective than financial sanctions in curbing the excesses of rogue states.<sup>97</sup> Although the

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<sup>87</sup> Stiglitz, Joseph. “Odious Rulers, Odious Debts.” *Atlantic Monthly*. November 2003.

<sup>88</sup> David Woodward. *Democracy Versus Hype-ocracy: Critical Times for IMF and World Bank Governance*. Jubilee Research. 16 April, 2007. <http://www.jubileeresearch.org/news/IRFBGov1aa.doc>

<sup>89</sup> “Debt Policy Proposals for a new UK Government.” Jubilee Debt Campaign. 29 June, 2007.

<sup>90</sup> “German Jubilee Movement Slams World Bank Odious Debts Paper as ‘Biased’ and ‘Misleading.’” *Odious Debts*. 28 December, 2007. <http://www.odiousdebts.org/odiousdebts/index.cfm?DSP=content&ContentID=18327>

<sup>91</sup> “The Concept of Odious Debt.” Jubilee USA Network. <http://www.jubileeusa.org/truth-about-debt/dont-owe-wont-pay/the-concept-of-odious-debt.html>

<sup>92</sup> Ibid <http://www.jubileeusa.org/truth-about-debt/dont-owe-wont-pay/the-concept-of-odious-debt.html>

<sup>93</sup> Gail Hurley. “World Bank Paper on Odious Debt: Dismissive and Limited.” *Eurodad*. 13 March 2008. <http://www.eurodad.org/whatsnew/reports.aspx?id=2172>

<sup>94</sup> Michael Kremer and Seema Jayachandran. “Odious Debt.” IMF. April 2002. p. 4-5 <http://www.imf.org/external/np/res/seminars/2002/poverty/mksj.pdf>

<sup>95</sup> Jai Damle. “The Odious Debt Doctrine After Iraq.” *Law and Contemporary Problems*. Autumn 2007. [http://www.law.duke.edu/shell/cite.pl?70+Law+&+Contemp.+Probs.+139+\(autumn+2007\)](http://www.law.duke.edu/shell/cite.pl?70+Law+&+Contemp.+Probs.+139+(autumn+2007))

<sup>96</sup> Kremer and Seema Jayachandran. “Odious Debt: When Dictators Borrow, Who Repays the Loan?” Brookings Institution. Spring 2003. [http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2003/spring\\_development\\_kremer.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2003/spring_development_kremer.aspx)

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

World Bank and G8 have conceded to the need to reign in lenders, efforts to address this need have stalled.<sup>98</sup> It is also worth noting that, although the issue of odious debt is largely absent from the G8 discussions on the HIPC countries, the United States was very active in assisting Iraq renegotiate its debts on very favorable terms following the 2003 U.S.-led regime change.<sup>99</sup>

To most critics the answer is simply to immediately forgive the debt of these countries. They point out that in the last 30 years, HIPC countries have made payments of \$550 billion in principal and interest on \$540 billion in loans,<sup>100</sup> suggesting that continuing to hold this debt as outstanding amounts to a continued exploitative asset transfer from the Global South to the Global North, but most creditors do not agree. They suggest that simply forgiving these debts will encourage these states to borrow in excess again knowing that the loans will just be forgiven. They also worry that countries whose debts are forgiven will suffer because they will not be able to get any further development loans due to their poor credit history.<sup>101</sup> It should be obvious that both of these eventualities cannot be completely true, but both of these responses do point to the issue that, to the lenders, the fault for these debt problems rests squarely on the shoulders of the borrowing nations, while the creditors are absolutely unwilling to consider their own culpability.

Debt relief campaigners point out that while a seemingly academic debate over debt relief takes place in the halls and offices of creditors, the weight of debt is killing thousands of women and children every day through starvation, malaria, and HIV/AIDS.<sup>102</sup> In the year 2000 UNICEF estimated that 30,000 children were dying every day of preventable diseases because they lacked inexpensive immunizations.<sup>103</sup> Without significantly greater debt relief there is little chance of the HIPC countries meeting the Millennium Development Goals.<sup>104</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The African debt crises present a tremendous challenge. The core issues are complex as are the processes and initiatives that have been put in place to address the debt that is crippling the region. Despite the important progress represented by the HIPC and MDRI initiatives, much still needs to be done. The debt burden on African countries, especially Sub-Saharan Africa, is profound and the relief promised under these programs is not enough to ensure continued development and growth on the continent, and may not even be enough to prevent the continent from sliding further into debt, poverty, and decay. Further, comprehensive and meaningful debt relief is needed now to make real the promises of the Millennium Development Goals. It is important to consider the roles that several of the G8 nations played in creating the existing debt crisis through their use of development loans to client states and despotic regimes, and what capacities the African Union has to challenge those nations to provide real and meaningful debt relief not only in terms of bilateral and multilateral loans, but in also in terms of the private creditors who transact business in those countries. Noted economist Jeffrey Sachs has suggested that HIPC countries should simply redirect their debt-service payments away from their rich creditors and towards health and education.<sup>105</sup> It should be noted that his suggestion is not to just stop making payments; he specifies that these

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<sup>98</sup> "World Bank breaks silence on odious debt." Bretton Woods Project. October 2007.  
<http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/art-557160>

<sup>99</sup> Jai Damle. "The Odious Debt Doctrine After Iraq." *Law and Contemporary Problems*. Autumn 2007.  
[http://www.law.duke.edu/shell/cite.pl?70+Law+%26+Contemp.+Probs.+139+\(autumn+2007\)](http://www.law.duke.edu/shell/cite.pl?70+Law+%26+Contemp.+Probs.+139+(autumn+2007))

<sup>100</sup> "The Scale of the Debt Crisis." *Global Issues*. July 2005. <http://www.globalissues.org/TradeRelated/Debt/Scale.asp>

<sup>101</sup> Jorn Madslie. "Debt relief hopes bring out the critics." *BBC News*. 29 June 2005  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4619189.stm>

<sup>102</sup> "Reality Check: the Need for Deeper Debt Cancellation." *Global Issues*. April 2001  
<http://www.globalissues.org/TradeRelated/Debt/ExternalArticles/RealityCheck.asp>

<sup>103</sup> "A Spotty Scorecard." UNICEF. <http://www.unicef.org/pon00/immu1.htm>

<sup>104</sup> Alemayehu Geda Fole. "The Historical Origin of African Debt Crisis." *Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review*. January 2003. p. 68

<sup>105</sup> Emad Mekay. "Jeffrey Sachs to Poor Nations: 'Forget Debt, Spend on AIDS.'" 2 August 2002.  
<http://www.commondreams.org/headlines02/0802-02.htm>

countries should carefully document how they are reutilizing these funds and publish those records. His point, though, is that he believes that the HIPC countries cannot service both their debts and their people.

### ***Committee Directive***

This is a particularly challenging topic, and this overview has been presented to both touch on several of the most important aspects of it, while being detailed enough to give delegates a good sense of the scope of the issue. Delegates will most certainly need to dig deeper into the specific circumstances of their respective Member States, into the numerous shades of criticism and defense of the HIPC/MDRI initiatives, as well as the many proposals for bilateral debt reduction that are being debated in creditor nations such as Norway, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Ultimately, the question comes down to what the African Union, as a multilateral body, can do to respond to the debt crises occurring in its several Member States, and delegates are expected to bring to the floor meaningful and realistic steps that can make a difference. Meaningful and realistic, however, do not necessarily rule out radical changes in the approaches this committee might take. The committee may, for instance, consider whether or not Jeffrey Sachs is right, and to what extent the African states should take his suggestion seriously. Certainly if the committee is going to take him seriously it should seek a broad consensus as to how the Union is going to act upon his suggestion. Please don't think that this means the committee should only be looking at the Sachs proposal. There are a multitude of debt-relief campaign ideas for how Africa should address everything from odious and illegitimate debt to vulture funds. It is the delegate's job is to look at them critically, consider what can be done effectively, and bring those ideas to the table so that the committee can drive a change rather than be driven by our respective circumstances.

## **Topic II: For Future Generations: Further Defining the African Youth Charter**

*African youth have shown considerable leadership in tackling environmental challenges and promoting sustainable livelihoods. Development will simply not happen if we Africans and citizens of the developing world in general, don't get our house together. - Former Secretary General Kofi Annan<sup>106</sup>*

### ***Introduction***

The *African Youth Charter* stands as a vital document for the future of Africa. Adopted on 2 July 2006 by the Seventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly in Banjul, The Gambia, the *African Youth Charter* (The Charter) was created to be a legally binding framework to improve the plight of millions of African children who face poverty, disease and discrimination across the continent. As thirty percent of Africa's general population consists of the 'African youth,'<sup>107</sup> which the Charter defines as being between the ages of 18 and 35,<sup>108</sup> the need to advance the opportunities, health and safety of that population is a top priority, both for the advancement of these individuals, but also for the advancement of Africa.

Despite the overwhelming call for a document to protect the children of Africa, the ratification of the Charter has yet to occur. Only four African states has deposited ratifying instruments, and another eleven are needed to bring the Charter into force. But while the political will is still lacking, the need for the Charter is nonetheless clear—the formulation of the document, its ratification and its implementation are necessary for major reform to occur in Africa, and the principles set forth by the *African Youth Charter* will have far reaching effects for children throughout Africa and throughout the world.

### ***Background***

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<sup>106</sup> "Youth and Leadership." United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. [www.uneca.org/adf/docs/ADFTodayNo2.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/ADFTodayNo2.pdf)

<sup>107</sup> "African Youth Charter." Human Sciences Research Council. [http://www.hsrc.ac.za/HSRC\\_Review\\_Article-34.phtml](http://www.hsrc.ac.za/HSRC_Review_Article-34.phtml)

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

Many of the problems that plague the African youth are often a combination or result of another. Poverty, defined as living on less than one dollar a day, is devastating the continent due to a lack of education, which results in a low paying job or unemployment. Additionally, many orphans, due to AIDS and other health problems stemming from a number of diseases in the area, live in poverty. In some areas, AIDS is predicted to be responsible for one in five orphaned children by 2010.<sup>109</sup> Across sub-Saharan Africa, the percentage of children orphaned has increased to 32 percent and continues to increase. This not only causes poor health, psychological issues, and high mortality rates in the orphans, but is predicted to affect future economies.<sup>110</sup> The abstinence programs to control the epidemic have also shown limited results. Furthermore, it has been shown to possibly increase infection rates, as they detract from education that can help prevent infection during intercourse.<sup>111</sup> Rounding out the major areas of concern in the region is the historically ever presence of conflict and war. War destroys property and displaces individuals far from their home. These are among the problem areas the Charter plans to improve.

Education in Africa is in need of vast improvements, as the quality of education is still lacking in many areas. The education offered to the extremely poor is of substandard quality. They do not have access to the essentials needed for learning, such as effective teachers, an adequate number of textbooks, and other learning materials required for a proper education.<sup>112</sup> Education has been shown to benefit raising productivity, improving health and nutrition, reducing family size, and raising community participation in decision making.<sup>113</sup> Improving education is fundamental for the future of Africa. Without it, illiteracy and poverty will plague present and future generations of Africans.<sup>114</sup> Surmounting these issues is the combined problem in education, a devastating number of teachers dying of AIDS. Something must be done about this, or teachers could disappear due to AIDS.<sup>115</sup>

Teachers are not the only individuals in Africa affected by AIDS. The disease has also attributed an increase in the number of deaths of elected officials has been attributed to AIDS.<sup>116</sup> This often quick removal of public officials leaves the governments scrambling and leads to a disconnect in the daily operations of the country. Additionally, this has been responsible for power shifts, and has caused additional expenses for special elections.<sup>117</sup>

Adding to the professionals in Africa affected by AIDS is the sharp decline of nurses. Lack of education is not the only cause of their dwindling number. Many nurses migrate to countries such as the United Kingdom or United States from Africa, so losing more to AIDS is devastating hospitals across Africa.<sup>118</sup>

It has become increasingly difficult finding employment in the region. The unemployment rates in Africa have become some of the highest in the world. In 2003, Sub-Saharan Africa's unemployment was 10.9 percent and North Africa's unemployment rate was 10.4 percent, which put them as the second and third highest in the world.<sup>119</sup> While these numbers show the averages for all of Africa, unemployment is not distributed evenly. Youth unemployment is

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<sup>109</sup> Duffin, Christian, and Colin Parish. *Africa Faces Apocalypse as AIDS and Migration Decimate Key Staff*. Nursing Standard. 1 June 2005: 9.

<sup>110</sup> Hagedorn, Sarah. *AIDS Orphans in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Looming Threat to Future Generations*. Nieman Reports Fall 2004: 54.

<sup>111</sup> "Abstinence Fails." New Scientist. August 19, 2006: 6.

<sup>112</sup> Asmal, Kader. *Education is the Key; as South Africa's Experience Shows, Education is a Fundamental Tool for Lifting People from Poverty and Removing Threats to Peace*. OECD Observer May 2002: 35.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> "Africa Education in Decline." BBC News. 6 Dec. 1999. 3 May 2008 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/552724.stm>.

<sup>115</sup> Clark, Andrea. *AIDS Decimates African Teachers*. Bulletin of the World Health Organization Oct 2001: 999.

<sup>116</sup> "AIDS Seen as New Threat to African Democracy." The AIDS Reader 17.7 July 1, 2007: 336.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Duffin, Christian, and Colin Parish. *Africa Faces Apocalypse as AIDS and Migration Decimate Key Staff*. Nursing Standard. 1 June 2005: 9.

<sup>119</sup> "Ensuring Decent Employment for Africa's Poor: Key Challenges." 8 May 2008 <http://www.uneca.org/era2005/chap2.pdf>.

twice the unemployment rate across Africa. In Southern Africa, the unemployment was at 31.6 percent, and at this time, Lesotho had an unemployment rate of 39 percent.<sup>120</sup> The labor force in Africa grows between 2.3 to 2.9 percent per year, needing nearly 8 million new jobs each year to accommodate the increasing number of job seekers.<sup>121</sup> Another problem is that skills offered and skills required in the job market are mismatched. The education system and training is tailored for the civil service rather than the private sector, and these curriculums have not been changed “to emphasize vocational training for practical and marketable skills.”<sup>122</sup> These figures further prove that poverty is affecting Africa.

With the unemployment rates for Africa some of the highest in the world, the future outlook is bleak for the employed. In 2003, 56 percent of the employed in sub-Saharan Africa were not making enough money to support their families’ basic needs. Africa is not exceeding the seven percent economic growth rate per year needed to cut poverty in half by 2015, as dictated by the Millennium Development Goals established in 2000.<sup>123</sup> The majority of economic growth that is occurring is in capital intensive industries rather than labor intensive industries where the growth is needed. Also, low agriculture productivity sectors dominate African economies, and these “low productivity and earnings account for the lack of structural economic transformation and diversification into higher productivity sectors, within agriculture or in the industrial and services sectors.”<sup>124</sup>

War torn areas of Africa expand these problems and create more difficulties for individuals in those areas. Conflicts often displace millions of people and result in violations to their basic human rights. During these outbreaks, refugee assistance and development is given, but these ignore the real need in the region: peace.<sup>125</sup> To accomplish this, certain objectives must be in place. Quick deployment of peacekeeping forces is essential, but gathering the troops can take time. Standby forces can offset this time gap, but training and maintaining these forces must also be kept up to date.<sup>126</sup> Peacekeeping missions are showing greater success, but other measures are needed beyond this. Initiatives that promote and preserve peace should be promoted throughout these areas. Also, post conflict peacebuilding must be implemented to prevent another upsurge of violence.<sup>127</sup> Along with peacebuilding, the government restored or created must be legitimate and competent enough to not invite a rebellion.<sup>128</sup>

Securing solutions for these problems will enhance the security of youth in Africa and help guarantee a brighter future. The African Youth Charter was written to work toward these solutions, such as the right to a good quality education, the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to gainful employment, good health, peace, security, and others. However, the Charter must be ratified to begin helping solve the problems plaguing Africa. This is a major step in helping the youth of Africa.

### ***Creation of the Charter***

To understand the intent of the Charter, it is important to first note the various building blocks which formed the Charter’s foundations. The most important of these blocks is the Status of the Youth Report (SYR). Established by the Umsobomvu Youth Fund in 2003-2004, the SYR serves to make regular evaluations on the youth of South

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid

<sup>123</sup> Ibid

<sup>124</sup> Ibid

<sup>125</sup> "West Africa Churches Seek Peace Efforts." *The Christian Century* April 5, 2003: 18.

<sup>126</sup> Neethling, Theo. *Pursuing a Policy Framework for Peace and Security in Africa: Developments, Progress and Challenges.* Strategic Review for Southern Africa Nov 2004: 71.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Ramirez, J. Martin. *Peace and development in Africa.* International Journal on World Peace Sept 2005: 5.

Africa.<sup>129</sup> The SYR focuses on both the available literature in the area and the access to secondary data sources, and conducts a survey of representative youth participants. In order to encompass the widely ranging diversity of South Africa's youths, the nature of the examining the youth in this region requires a vast amount of topics, the SYR focuses on a wide-range of subtopics; including education, labor market participation, inequality, health, crime, and social integration. The information from these assessments is implemented into the SYR.<sup>130</sup>

The Charter was further initiated by the United Nations Population Fund.<sup>131</sup> The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) was established in 1969 as the United Nations Fund for Population Activities.<sup>132</sup> Originally administered by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), it was reviewed by the General Assembly (GA) in 1971 where it was decided that UNFPA should take on a more leading role in the UN system in promoting population programmes.<sup>133</sup> The success and increase in resources and jurisdiction of operations caused the UNFPA to be a part of the GA, with the UNDP remaining as the governing body, but placing the overall guidance of the Fund to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).<sup>134</sup> The results of the UNFPA's work showed that enrollment in post-secondary education in sub-Saharan Africa had dropped to 3.6 percent and that public funding into higher education had declined since the 1980's, remaining under funded.<sup>135</sup> It was also discovered that 60.7 million youth were living on less than one US dollar per day, with the unemployment of youth in Africa, varied throughout the region, as high as 70 percent.<sup>136</sup> It was estimated three quarters of the 12 million youth ages 15-24 infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) are living in sub-Saharan Africa. Further it was noted that half of the 300,000 child soldiers in the world were in Africa, and were mostly forcibly recruited young girls that were subjected to sexual violence. Finally the UNFPA found that the African youth had limited opportunities to participate in decision making and government.<sup>137</sup> This information showed the urgency needed to establish a document for youth programs in the Member States of the African Union.

Based on these two alarming reports, representatives of African states set out to draft a charter that addressed the concerns highlighted in the research study on the SYR, in addition to building on the international and youth development frameworks already in operation.<sup>138</sup> These frameworks included the Platform of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (1994), the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (1995), the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990), and the Millennium Declaration (2000).<sup>139</sup> African states subsequently held national consultations to discuss the Charter and assess "how it effectively address[es] the needs of young people and ties into the provisions of the National Youth Policies and Development efforts in Member States."<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> "The Status of the Youth Report 2003: Young People in South Africa." Child, Youth and Family Development. Human Sciences Research Council. [www.hsrc.ac.za/research/output/outputDocuments/3641\\_Panday\\_Pan-African%20youth%20charter.pdf](http://www.hsrc.ac.za/research/output/outputDocuments/3641_Panday_Pan-African%20youth%20charter.pdf)

<sup>130</sup> Mac-Ikemenjima, Dabesaki. *The Long Road to Banjul and Beyond*. Nov. 2006. UNECA. 8 May 2008 [http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/Process\\_African.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/Process_African.pdf).

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> "UNFPA in the UN System." United Nations Populations Fund. <http://www.unfpa.org/about/unsystem.htm>

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Mac-Ikemenjima, Dabesaki. *The Long Road to Banjul and Beyond*. Nov. 2006. UNECA. 8 May 2008 [http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/Process\\_African.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/Process_African.pdf).

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Mac-Ikemenjima, Dabesaki. *The Long Road to Banjul and Beyond*. Nov. 2006. UNECA. 8 May 2008 [http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/Process\\_African.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/Process_African.pdf).

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.



Following the decision to create the Charter, a meeting of youths and experts was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to analyze the Charter's contents, to ensure it would meet the needs of the youth. There, the Charter was discussed extensively and adopted at the African Youth Forum and experts meeting.<sup>141</sup> In May of 2006, the Conference of Ministers in Charge of Youth in the African Union convened in Addis Ababa and adopted the Charter. After the Charter was adopted by the Ministers, the African Union Heads of State and government endorsed the Charter at their July 2006 Summit in Banjul, Gambia.<sup>142</sup>

Unfortunately, despite the efforts made by the Charter's numerous proponents, it has yet to come into force. For the Charter to do so fifteen states must ratify or accede to it; however, only four member states have deposited instruments of ratification or accession with the Chairman of the African Union.<sup>143</sup> Having the Charter ratified and implemented will allow the contents of the Charter to begin benefiting African youth and will help identify and define problem areas that still affect Africa.

### ***The African Youth Charter***

To fully understand the implications and effects that implementing the Charter would have on the landscape and people of Africa, it is important to note its contents. As shown, the region was devastated by disease, poverty, lack of education, and poor employment. These guiding issues laid the groundwork for the Charter. Starting with topic of Non-Discrimination, the authors wanted to ensure that young people were not treated differently, nor had a lower quality of life based on "race, ethnic group, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, birth or other status."<sup>144</sup>

Secondly, the Charter addresses the freedoms that the youth should be granted. This includes: Freedom of Movement or movement of youth to and from other countries at their will; Freedom of Expression, granting the ability to express thoughts and ideas without restraint; Freedom of Association, which states that no young person can be made to be apart of any group; and Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion.<sup>145</sup> Protection of Family and Protection of Private Life ensures that the youth are allowed to live freely in the family, lifestyle, and reputation of their liking. Additionally, special noticed was placed on the right to property.<sup>146</sup>

The Charter next delves into the role of the youth in society, providing Development and Youth Participation. These both strive to make active positions available to the youth in the community, by establishing programs and youth organizations. Further mention is given to the ability of the media to provide access to information. Adding to the program available, the Charter institutes a National Youth Policy for each Member State. The National Youth Policy is designed to give an outlet for the youth to make recommendations and suggestions for their individual countries and is to be adopted and placed into national law. The Policy shall create:

"A national youth coordinating mechanism shall be set up and shall provide a platform as well as serve as a linking agent for youth organisations to participate in youth policy development as well as the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of related programmes;"<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> "Status List: African Youth Charter." 15 Feb. 2008. African Union. 8 May 2008 <http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/list/Youth%20Charter.pdf>.

<sup>144</sup> "African Youth Charter." UNECA. [http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/African\\_Youth\\_Charter.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/African_Youth_Charter.pdf)

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> "African Youth Charter." UNECA. [http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/African\\_Youth\\_Charter.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/African_Youth_Charter.pdf)

Next the Charter makes recommendations for Education and Skill development, addressing the issues of unemployment and poverty in the region, and requiring Member States to upgrade educational standards and create age-appropriate parenting and sexuality courses. By enhancing education at a younger age, the Charter hopes to curb the effects of these problems. Further the Charter addresses these issues by making guidelines for Poverty Eradication and Socio-economic Integration of Youth, as well as Sustainable Livelihoods and Youth Employment.<sup>148</sup>

The next topics relate directly to the quality of life for youth. These topics specifically stress the importance of Health, Peace and Security, and Law Enforcement as they relate to the African landscape. They place great significance on educational programs, awareness and outreach programs, access to rehabilitation, and technical and financial assistance.<sup>149</sup>

Looking toward the future, the Charter provides for Sustainable Development and the Future; calling on Member States to implement programs that will sustainable methods to ensure that future generations will not encounter similar or worse circumstances.<sup>150</sup> Again the Charter puts the onus to the media and youth programs to disseminate the information. To further their cause, future generations will have more defined traditions, as the Charter makes particular mention of the Youth and Culture.<sup>151</sup>

**Diaspora** is defined by the Charter as “peoples of African descent and heritage living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and who remain committed to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union.”<sup>152</sup> Youth in Diaspora gives recognition to these prior citizens as a means of enhancing the current and future landscape of the region.<sup>153</sup>

The Charter ends with mention of the variety of youth in the region, noting Girls and Young Women and Mentally and Physically Challenged Youth.<sup>154</sup> Additionally, it calls on Member States for the Elimination of Harmful Social and Cultural Practices. The Charter dictates specific duties for the youth with the Responsibilities of Youth clause. The last aspects of the Charter address maintenance, regular checks, provisions, and duties of the African Union.<sup>155</sup>

### ***Implementation***

The ratification of the African Youth Charter has been very slow thus far. The ratification process for charters is still a challenge. Countries will not ratify charters that they do not agree with at the international level.<sup>156</sup> With only one third of the required number of countries ratifying the document so far, it still cannot be put into effect. Representatives from African countries restate that the continent is not in a position to not to ratify this Charter, which affects 60 percent of Africa’s population.<sup>157</sup> The youth hold the key to Africa’s future, which is why these representatives have called on governments to ratify the Charter quickly as 15 Member States must ratify it to come into effect.<sup>158</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Mac-Ikemenjima, Dabesaki. *The Long Road to Banjul and Beyond*. Nov. 2006. UNECA. 8 May 2008 [http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/Process\\_African.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/Process_African.pdf).

<sup>157</sup> "Youth Charter Holds Key to Unlocking African Youth Potential." Speak Africa. 14 Feb. 2008. 11 May 2008 [http://www.speakafrika.org/youth\\_charter\\_holds\\_key\\_unlocking\\_african\\_youth\\_potential](http://www.speakafrika.org/youth_charter_holds_key_unlocking_african_youth_potential).

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

The political process involved is also lengthy. Legislatures inside the countries have processes to ensure the “content is enacted into a legal framework that is binding to people at the national level.”<sup>159</sup> The ratification of the Charter is important as it cannot become a legal document recognized by government until this is complete. Using available methods for advocating the ratification and popularization of the Charter can help get the remaining ratification the Charter needs.<sup>160</sup> Traditional methods of communication include workshops and conferences, official meetings, gatherings, and official documents. Using large conferences is beneficial due to large media attention, especially when high level officials are present. Youth can hold official meetings with government officials and leaders and discuss the Charter. These meetings are ideal for the youth sector to advocate the ratification of the Charter, as well as attracting rallies where it is permitted. These can help push the youth development agenda forward as well.<sup>161</sup>

The traditional community gatherings in many African countries can be used for discussion of the Charter as well. Doing this allows community leaders to become allies for advocating the process of ratifying and implementing the charter. Using official documents to popularize the Charter among policy makers can help to show the importance of its ratification. Modern methods of communication use more technology, such as radio, television, telephones, internet, and print media, which can also be used for spreading information to popularize the Charter.<sup>162</sup> Young people use technology the most, so spreading information through this medium allows the media to be spread quickly and efficiently. This is an effective device for popularizing and advocating the ratification of the Charter.<sup>163</sup> The larger the force of people backing the Charter, the greater success youth will have urging the ratification of the Charter.

Once the charter has been ratified, putting it into effect quickly will be important. The 2007-2015 Plan of Action has been used to see the areas that need improvement for the ratification and implementation of the African Youth Charter.<sup>164</sup> The four areas the AU Commission found for the slow process of ratifying the charter were “lack of continuous political advocacy, lack of sound communication and advertisement campaigns, lack of strong cultural advocacy events at the national level by all stakeholders, and lack of sustainable financial resources to address the major challenges facing the process of ratifying the charter.”<sup>165</sup> The Plan of Action urges effective strategies to be implemented to address the challenges facing ratification and implementation of the Charter.<sup>166</sup> The document also puts into effect an end date of 2015 to outline the goals, actions, and results to be achieved in the ratification and implementation of the African Youth Charter.<sup>167</sup> This is an effective date since it falls in line with other programs such as the Millennium Development Goals. Providing employment for youths is one of the Millennium Development Goals. The Charter helping provide this service will also help ensure that goal is met before the 2015 deadline.<sup>168</sup>

### ***Establishment of Programs***

While no programs have been established from the Charter due to it not being ratified, it sets forth numerous areas for programs to help the youth of Africa. Youth participation programs include youth advocacy and peer-to-peer

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> "2007-2015 Plan of Action." African Union. <http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Conferences/2007/october/hrst/youth/AU-EXP-YOUTH-4-ENG.doc>.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> "Government Urged to Ratify the African Youth Charter." Africa Wire - Zambia 15 Dec. 2007.

programs for marginalized youth, training programs in higher education and training institutions, and programs for youth voluntarism in local, regional, and international levels for participation and peer-to-peer training.<sup>169</sup> Education programs include literacy and youth service programs for skill development outside mainstream education and scholarship and bursary programs to promote higher education. Youth employment programs will address topics such as unemployment and skill development to enter the labor market.<sup>170</sup> Health programs will address the AIDS/HIV pandemic and try to institute programs to prevent the transmission. Gender equality programs will help allow women to participate equally in society.<sup>171</sup> While these are only a handful of programs to be established once the Charter becomes active, numerous other areas will benefit the youth of Africa.

The Charter also addresses other rights of Africans such as non-discrimination to enjoy these rights and freedoms regardless of their race, ethnic group, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national and social origin, fortune, birth or other status.<sup>172</sup> New freedoms include freedom of expression of their ideas and opinions; freedom of association and peaceful assembly; freedom of thought, conscience and religion; and a right to own property.<sup>173</sup> With these rights and the programs that will be established are other areas that cannot be overlooked. There must be measures established to make sure these rights and freedoms are not violated. Another major area of concern for the programs will be funding. Underfunding can cause the program to be unsuccessful as well as collapse. Along with the funding is the responsible party for the directive. Committees to help establish and run the programs, monitor the progress, and make changes as they are needed will also need to be established.

### ***Conclusion***

Once the Charter has been implemented and programs established, the lifestyles of many Africans will begin to improve. However, many improvements for Africa are dependent on the Charter. Without the Charter, the problems in Africa will continue to expand. With so much effort put into formulating the Charter and the vast population it will benefit, allowing it to fade will be detrimental. Present and future generations will be continue to be plagued with the negative conditions many there endure now if the problem areas shown in the Charter are not resolved. While this Charter centers on the majority of the population, there are other areas that need attention to improve. Any areas of the youth of Africa that have been overlooked will show once improvements begin and will need to be addressed. Even other areas of the population can benefit from a charter similar to the African Youth Charter. Many of the children of Africa will benefit indirectly from the improvements due to the Charter, but it may not be enough. Programs for improvement, especially the orphaned, may follow as the next step. Although it is the smallest portion of the population, the elderly may need areas of improvement. Establishing programs to benefit them as their health declines and such may be beneficial. There are numerous areas presently in Africa that can sustain improvement. Charters such as these are critical for improvement and future success of the people of Africa. There are many difficult issues African youth face across the continent. Without the African Youth Charter, these problems will continue to prevent growth and prosperity across Africa. However, the Charter cannot begin to remedy these problems without first coming into force. The Charter must be ratified quickly to begin to solve these problems. Finding solutions to the issues preventing ratification is imperative so this vital document can benefit African youth. After the Charter is ratified, initiatives to fix the problems addressed inside it must be implemented quickly. Eradicating the problems revealed in research for the Charter is critical. The future of Africa is dependent on the youth and without a solution such as the Charter, the outlook will be bleak.

### ***Committee Directive***

The African Youth Charter has been adopted, but has still yet to be ratified or implemented. Also, the Charter has numerous problem areas to be addressed. With some areas discovered causing the slow ratification of the Charter, what can be done to remedy these problems? What initiatives can be done to speed the ratification of the Charter? What must be done after ratification to quickly implement the solutions set forth in the Charter? What must be done

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<sup>169</sup> "African Youth Charter." UNECA. [http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/African\\_Youth\\_Charter.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/African_Youth_Charter.pdf).

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

to address the issues set forth in the Charter? Are there any areas shown in the Charter that should be addressed before others? What means, financial and otherwise, will be used to solve the problems the Charter focuses on?

### **Topic III. Uniting Africa: Enhancing Partnerships that Create Regional Cohesiveness**

#### ***Introduction***

The idea of African unity reaches back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, when the sentiment of Pan-Africanism began to coalesce in contrast to the oppression of the colonial system and slavery.<sup>174</sup> Pan-Africanism is defined as a sociopolitical world view, thought process, as well as a campaign, designed to unify both native Africans and those of the African descent, together as the "global African community"<sup>175</sup>. Through the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the work of activists and scholars such as Marcus Garvey and WEB Dubois, and following the end of the Second World War, it was this sentiment that galvanized the continent to drive the colonists out and ensure the true sovereignty of all the African peoples, including those who had been carried off in the Diasporas.<sup>176</sup> Diaspora is defined as "peoples of African descent and heritage living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and who remain committed to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union."<sup>177</sup>

Through the vision of leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah and Haile Selassie this movement also led to the formation of the Organization for African Unity (OAU) in 1963, with its primary focus to foster unity amongst the independent African states and to eradicate colonialism on the continent.<sup>178</sup> However, because the sentiment of Pan-Africanism had developed abroad and was then imported back into the continent, it quickly lost any ideological consistency and the attempts to foster real unity and solidarity were lost to philosophical differences over how to effect such changes, such as the divide between strictly socialist and strictly capitalist ideologies.<sup>179</sup> After negotiating compromise through these challenging conflicts the OAU emerged as a non-aligned international organization with utmost respect for the sovereignty of independent African states.<sup>180</sup> Unfortunately it was this very principled approach to sovereignty that would make the OAU weak in the face of many of the challenges to come and unable to protect Africa from some of the worst African leaders.<sup>181</sup> This was one of the very important changes in the transformation from the OAU to the African Union, which, in article 4(h) of its Constitutive Act makes it clear that,

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<sup>174</sup> Hakima Abbas *From Roots To Branches: The African Diaspora In A Union Government For Africa. Towards A Union Government For Africa: Challenges and Opportunities. Monograph No. 140. Institute for Security Studies. January 2008. p. 107*  
[http://www.iss.co.za/index.php?link\\_id=3&slink\\_id=5454&link\\_type=12&slink\\_type=12&tmpl\\_id=3](http://www.iss.co.za/index.php?link_id=3&slink_id=5454&link_type=12&slink_type=12&tmpl_id=3)

<sup>175</sup> Langley, J.A. *Pan-Africanism and Nationalism in West Africa 1900-1945. London: Oxford University Press. 1973.*

<sup>176</sup> Francis, David J.. *Uniting Africa: Building Regional Peace and Security Systems London: Ashgate Publishing. 2006. p. 4*

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> "OAU Charter." OAU. 25 May 1963.  
[http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/text/OAU\\_Charter\\_1963.pdf](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/text/OAU_Charter_1963.pdf)

<sup>179</sup> "The Dream of a United Africa". ABC (Australian Broadcast Company) National Radio Program Rear View. 25 May 2008. <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/rearvision/stories/2008/2254019.htm>

<sup>180</sup> Carbone, Maurizio. *From OAU to AU: Turning a Page in the History of Africa. The Courier ACP-EU. September 2002. p. 30.* [http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/publication/courier/index\\_194\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/development/icenter/publication/courier/index_194_en.cfm)

<sup>181</sup> Murithi., Timothy. *Introduction: Contextualising the Debate on a Union Government for Africa. Towards A Union Government For Africa: Challenges and Opportunities. Monograph No. 140. Institute for Security Studies. January 2008. pp. 3-4*

“the African Union has the ‘right’ to intervene, without consent in a member state in order to ‘restore peace and stability,’ to ‘prevent war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity’ and to respond to situations that constitute ‘a serious threat to legitimate order.’<sup>182</sup>

This indicates a clear shift in the intention of those who are driving for a unified Africa, from unification against an outside force of oppression to unification for the purposes of advancing Africa through all of the challenges the continent faces. With this change in focus has come a reawakening to the call of Pan-Africanism, not as the tired rhetoric of cold-war African leaders, but rather as a rallying cry for all types and sizes of organizations; from grass roots groups seeking land rights for the displaced to those calling on heads of state to advance the work towards a union government.<sup>183</sup> It is in this new spirit that many voices are recalling Kwame Nkrumah’s prediction that he could,

“see no security for African states unless African leaders, like ourselves, have realized beyond all doubt that salvation for Africa lies in unity... for in unity lies strength, and as I see it, African states must unite or sell themselves out to imperialist and colonialist exploiters for a mess of pottage, or disintegrate individually.”<sup>184</sup>

This vision seems particularly important to Africa today as her people struggle to develop in the face of crippling debt and an international landscape that, if it is interested in Africa at all,<sup>185</sup> appears to be much more interested in African goods and markets (and bargaining with African states individually and not with the AU)<sup>186</sup> than with actually assisting the continent with the profound social issues the continent faces, even when that assistance has been promised.<sup>187</sup> Nkrumah, like Marcus Garvey, envisioned a federalized government of African unity, a United States of Africa,<sup>188</sup> and feared that without such a structure the individual African states would be subverted by their former colonial masters and would remain divided.<sup>189</sup> Nkrumah also feared the development of regionalized inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) because he believed they were as prone to exterior subversion as the individual African states.<sup>190</sup> It is somewhat ironic then, not only that the cause of African unity has been best expressed in the

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<sup>182</sup> Francis, David J. *Uniting Africa: Building Regional Peace and Security Systems* London Ashgate Publishing. 2006. p.129

<sup>183</sup> Abbas, Hakima. *From Roots To Branches: The African Diaspora In A Union Government For Africa. Towards A Union Government For Africa: Challenges and Opportunities.* Monograph No. 140. Institute for Security Studies. January 2008. p. 109

<sup>184</sup> Nkrumah, Kwame. *Africa Must Unite.* London. Heinemann, 1963

<sup>185</sup> “Globalization, Regionalism, and Africa’s Development Agenda.” UNCTAD-ECA Paper for UNCTAD 10. February, 2000. p. 2. [http://www.unctad-10.org/pdfs/ux\\_id\\_ecapaper.en.pdf](http://www.unctad-10.org/pdfs/ux_id_ecapaper.en.pdf)

<sup>186</sup> Johnson, Dominic. *How Europe Lost Africa.* Der Spiegel. 28 February, 2008. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,537699,00.html>

<sup>187</sup> Plaut, Martin. “Blair report spares Africa’s feelings.” BBC News. 16 June, 2008. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7453468.stm>

<sup>188</sup> “Ambitious Plan for a New Africa: Welcome to the U.S.A.” The Independent. 30 June, 2007. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/ambitious-plan-for-a-new-africa-welcome-to-the-usa-thats-the-united-states-of-africa-455337.html>

<sup>189</sup> Francis, David J. *Uniting Africa: Building Regional Peace and Security Systems* London Ashgate Publishing. 2006. p. 4

<sup>190</sup> Ibid

regional bodies that have been created,<sup>191</sup> but that these successes are the examples of unity which the new Pan-Africanists point to while simultaneously praising Nkrumah's vision.<sup>192</sup>

### ***Case Study: The International Red Cross (ICRC) and Red Crescent Movement***

A non-governmental organization (NGO) is an alliance of private persons or organizations that are not a part of, nor a representation of any government. In cases in which an NGO is funded partially or completely by governments, the NGO is able to maintain its NGO status, with the stipulation that government representatives are excluded from membership in the organization.<sup>193</sup> NGOs are the lifeblood of the United Nations, as a whole, providing valuable information to the Member States, while also providing educational, technological, and financial assistance to these areas. African Member States rely heavily on the work of these organizations within its borders and requires more support to maintain and enhance the quality of life for its citizens. Currently there are hundreds of agencies working within Africa, promoting and education about proper family planning, subsidize farming techniques, technology advancements, equal gender roles, and health education and disease prevention, among a slew of others.<sup>194</sup>

The work of a NGO differs greatly than that of the Member State government, as these groups work across country, political, and religious lines. As stated, there are a number of NGOs at work throughout the globe providing care and aid in a variety of forms; however, no where is this undertaking noticed or needed more than in Africa.<sup>195</sup>

The International Red Cross (ICRC) and Red Crescent Movement is a volunteer grouping of global, humanitarian workers, with the sole task of promoting and enhancing human life, as well as the respect for, and protection of, all human beings, regardless of race, religion, color, creed, or class.<sup>196</sup> Currently the Red Cross operates in 48 African countries, in every region of the continent, providing medical care and disease prevention practices, as well as humanitarian aid, and education.<sup>197</sup> The 2008 ICRC budget for Africa, \$378 million, is up about 10 percent from the budget from just one year previously in 2007.<sup>198</sup> The work of the ICRC focuses on protecting and supporting the citizens affected by conflict and instability in the area, and increases the acknowledgement and achievements of the International Human Law (IHL). According to the ICRC, the IHL is "a set of rules which seek, for humanitarian reasons, to limit the effects of armed conflict. It protects persons who are not or are no longer participating in the hostilities and restricts the means and methods of warfare. International humanitarian law is also known as the law of war or the law of armed conflict."

Some of the largest missions worldwide of the ICRC are within Africa, in places like The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Somalia and Sudan.<sup>199</sup> In spite of international peace program, the situation in the Sudan in the

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<sup>191</sup> Francis David J. *Uniting Africa: Building Regional Peace and Security Systems* London Ashgate Publishing. 2006. p. 5

<sup>192</sup> Murithi., Timothy. *Introduction: Contextualising the Debate on a Union Government for Africa.* Towards A Union Government For Africa: Challenges and Opportunities. Monograph No. 140. Institute for Security Studies. January 2008. p. 1

<sup>193</sup> "NGOs." Global Policy Forum. <http://www.globalpolicy.org/ngos/index.htm>

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> "Development Organisations in Africa." The Crawford Homepage. <http://crawford.dk/africa/organisations.htm>

<sup>196</sup> "Who We Are." The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. [http://www.ifrc.org/who/movement.asp?navid=03\\_08](http://www.ifrc.org/who/movement.asp?navid=03_08)

<sup>197</sup> Ibid,

<sup>198</sup> "IHL in Brief." The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. [http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/section\\_ihl\\_in\\_brief](http://www.icrc.org/web/eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/section_ihl_in_brief)

<sup>199</sup> Cernojevich, Susannah. "American Red Cross Visits Darfur Refugees; U.S. Reps. Honda and Payne host Chair of American Red Cross on Capitol Hill." American Red Cross. 7 December 2006. [http://www.redcross.org/pressrelease/0,1077,0\\_314\\_5903,00.html](http://www.redcross.org/pressrelease/0,1077,0_314_5903,00.html)

western Darfur region, hostilities in North and South Kivu in the DRC, and in central and southern parts of Somalia, are still affected by causality, population displacement and economic adversity.<sup>200</sup> New initiatives are ongoing in the region, including the Central African Republic, where the newly opened ICRC headquarters is gearing up to address the issues in the areas due to conflict in the north of the country. There are some success stories in the region, most notably in Côte D'Ivoire, Eritrea and Uganda, where internationally displaced people (IDP) are starting to return to their home, and in Chad, where activities and conflict has been reduced.<sup>201</sup>

### ***African International Government Organizations***

Approximately 500 IGOs have been formed in Africa in the last century,<sup>202</sup> and while it is not known how many are still functional or in operation, it has been noted that only a few have made any significant contributions to African growth while most have been “stillborn.”<sup>203</sup> While there are several types of IGOs in Africa, they have been broadly categorized as either Pan-African organizations (like the AU, or the proposed Union Government), neo-colonial customs unions, sector development or project specific organizations, outward-looking trade facilitators, or what are considered more traditional “top-down” African regionalism as endorsed by the various heads of state.<sup>204</sup> The primary stated aims of most IGOs center on economic and social development based on the belief that through regional cooperative efforts individual states will be better able to integrate into the global economy.<sup>205</sup> A prime example of such an IGO is the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), founded in 1975 with the mission of promoting integration in:

“all fields of economic activity, particularly industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture, natural resources, commerce, monetary and financial questions, social and cultural matters.”<sup>206</sup>

ECOWAS has a complex history that is difficult to position as either a success or a failure. The stated goal of the institution of a common market and currency has not been achieved,<sup>207</sup> and little progress has been made toward the goals of intrastate trade, the advancement of industry in the region, or linkage between different sectors (such as industry and agriculture).<sup>208</sup> This is partially because many of the agricultural and industrial products which come from throughout the region are essentially the same, but it is also because of external factors such as the shortage of funding for strategic initiatives like the Industrial Master Plan, the apathy of ECOWAS Member States, and the depressed domestic and regional markets.<sup>209</sup> These apparent failures appear even larger when considering that the volume of intra-regional trade is less than one third the volume of trade between individual ECOWAS states and Europe.<sup>210</sup> This could be attributed solely to the preference of European countries to trade with individual states as

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid,

<sup>202</sup> Fredland, Richard. *A Guide to African International Organizations*. London: H. Zell. 1990

<sup>203</sup> “From Regional Security to Regional Integration in West Africa: Lessons from the ASEAN Experience.” Center for Democracy and Development. June 2002. p. 4 <http://www.cdd.org.uk/resources/workingpapers/ecowas/ECOWASintro.htm>

<sup>204</sup> Matthews, Alan. *Regional Integration and Food Security in Developing Countries*. Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations Agricultural Policy Support Service Policy Assistance Division. 2003. Ch. 6. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/004/Y4793E/y4793e00.htm#Contents>

<sup>205</sup> Ibid

<sup>206</sup> “ECOWAS in Brief.” ECOWAS. May 11 2007. [http://www.comm.ecowas.int/sec/index.php?id=about\\_a&lang=en](http://www.comm.ecowas.int/sec/index.php?id=about_a&lang=en)

<sup>207</sup> Francis, David J. *Uniting Africa: Building Regional Peace and Security Systems* London Ashgate Publishing. 2006. p. 5

<sup>208</sup> Center for Democracy and Development. June 2002. p. 5

<sup>209</sup> Ibid. pp. 5-6

<sup>210</sup> Ibid. p. 11



mentioned previously (see note 11), but given that the 2000 Cotonou Agreement<sup>211</sup> between the European Union (EU) and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) nations directs the EU to prefer trade agreements with regionally integrated bodies over agreements with individual ACP nations<sup>212</sup> it seems unlikely. Certainly there is the problem of regional organization overlap. Many of the members of ECOWAS are also members of several other regional bodies, some of them with contradictory goals making it difficult to develop comprehensive international trade agreements with other regional bodies.<sup>213</sup> There is also strong sentiment among the largest industrial states in the region, such as Nigeria, Senegal, and Ghana, that they can negotiate better deals on their own than they could negotiating in common with the smaller states of the region,<sup>214</sup> but there are, perhaps, deeper reasons for the mixed record of organizations like ECOWAS. One of those may be the dramatic proliferation of IGOs on the continent.

### ***Intergovernmental Overlap***

In the West African region there were over 40 IGOs representing not only colonial-era organizations and subject-specific or project cooperatives when the ECOWAS treaty was revised in 1993.<sup>215</sup> Currently there are also two other economic communities pursuing specific economic integration goals of their own, the West African Monetary and Economic Union (UEMOA) and the Mano River Union (MRU).<sup>216</sup> In fact the strength of the already extant UEMOA monetary union threatened the ability of ECOWAS to form a larger comprehensive monetary union. The UEMOA is formed largely upon linguistic and cultural ties, and its currency, the CFA-Franc, was tied with a fixed-rate exchange to the French Franc before being converted to a fixed exchange rate with the euro.<sup>217</sup> Because of a combined reluctance on the part of UEMOA countries to alter their union, and on the part of non-UEMOA ECOWAS members to join the francophone monetary union ECOWAS initiated a “fast track” to form a second monetary union, the West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) within the ECOWAS region by 2000 in the hopes that they will then be able to join to two unions together by 2004.<sup>218</sup> Unfortunately, because of economic difficulties in the interim, most of the member countries have failed to meet the convergence criteria of the WAMZ so the target dates have been pushed back several times.<sup>219</sup> This can be seen as two essential kinds of failure, a failure due to what has been called “an absence of integration culture,”<sup>220</sup> and a failure to “rationalize” IGOs. In this sense rationalization refers to coordinating or combining the efforts of organizations that serve the same or very similar purposes.<sup>221</sup> In 1991 ECOWAS undertook structural reform to minimize organizational overlap and to empower

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<sup>211</sup> “The Cotonou Agreement.” European Commission. [http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/cotonouintro\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/cotonouintro_en.cfm)

<sup>212</sup> Matthews, Alan. *Regional Integration and Food Security in Developing Countries*. Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations Agricultural Policy Support Service Policy Assistance Division. 2003. Ch. 6. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/004/Y4793E/y4793e00.htm#Contents>

<sup>213</sup> Ibid

<sup>214</sup> Center for Democracy and Development. p. 11

<sup>215</sup> Bundu, Abbas. “ECOWAS and the Future of Regional Integration in West Africa.” *Regional Integration And Cooperation In West Africa: A Multidimensional Perspective*. Ed. Réal Lavergne. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre. 1997. p. 29

<sup>216</sup> Ibid

<sup>217</sup> “The CFA franc: new peg for a common currency.” Africa Recovery. April 1999. <http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/subjindx/124euro3.htm>

<sup>218</sup> “Achievements and Prospects.” ECOWAS. <http://www.sec.ecowas.int/sitecedao/english/achievements.htm>

<sup>219</sup> “International Operations: ECOWAS.” The Central Bank of Nigeria <http://www.cenbank.org/monetaryPolicy/ecowas.asp>

<sup>220</sup> Bundu, Abbas. “ECOWAS and the Future of Regional Integration in West Africa.” *Regional Integration And Cooperation In West Africa: A Multidimensional Perspective*. Ed. Réal Lavergne. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre. 1997. p. 31

<sup>221</sup> Ibid. p. 30

sector-specific IGOs to manage regional programs in order to reduce organizational cost and the duplication of effort.<sup>222</sup> Unfortunately little has been done to institute such changes.<sup>223</sup>

The plethora of IGOs in Africa can be seen as a demonstration of the desire of the people to cooperatively address the issues they face,<sup>224</sup> but it can also be seen, as previously mentioned, as a failure to successfully integrate an organization or a set of goals across ideological, socio-cultural, political, and other lines.<sup>225</sup> The issues herein are even more troubling when one considers that the UEMOA was formed almost 20 years after ECOWAS<sup>226</sup> which was meant to be the central, if not the sole, economic and trade organization for the region.<sup>227</sup> However, this sort of failure to integrate is not only on the part of African IGOs. In 1996 the EU and South Africa entered into a Free Trade Agreement<sup>228</sup> after South Africa had joined the Southern African Development Community<sup>229</sup> (SADC), and after it had been granted only qualified membership under the Lomé IV Convention.<sup>230</sup> This action gave the EU access to South Africa's more developed markets and allowed it to bypass similar agreements with the other Southern African Customs Union (SACU) members, while at the same time undercutting the effort to better integrate southern Africa.<sup>231</sup>

### ***Politics and Peacekeeping***

There is a subtle suggestion here, despite the statements that these organizations are built primarily to develop and enhance economic integration and develop trade, that there may be other goals. If the economic returns on the removal of tariff and trade barriers are so small on the African continent,<sup>232</sup> then the prolific volume of African IGOs must serve another purpose. It has been suggested that they are most likely motivated by political and security needs in their respective regions.<sup>233</sup> A prime example of such an IGO is the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) operating in the Horn of Africa. Formed initially in 1986 to address the problems of drought, famine, and economic hardship in the region, the organization was expanded (and renamed from the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development) in 1996<sup>234</sup> to focus on "food security and environmental protection," the "promotion and maintenance of peace and security and humanitarian affairs, and, economic cooperation and

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<sup>222</sup> Ibid

<sup>223</sup> Ibid

<sup>224</sup> Ibid

<sup>225</sup> Ibid

<sup>226</sup> "UEMOA." UEMOA. [http://www.paris21.org/Dir\\_Partners\\_06/dir\\_partners\\_06\\_uemoa.pdf](http://www.paris21.org/Dir_Partners_06/dir_partners_06_uemoa.pdf)

<sup>227</sup> Bundu, Abbass. "ECOWAS and the Future of Regional Integration in West Africa." *Regional Integration And Cooperation In West Africa: A Multidimensional Perspective*. Ed. Réal Lavergne. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre. 1997. p. 31

<sup>228</sup> Keet, Dot. "Cap In Hand? South Africa and the European Union." Southern Africa Report. November 1996  
<http://www.africafiles.org/article.asp?ID=3864>

<sup>229</sup> "Southern African Development Community (SADC)." Republic of South Africa Department of Foreign Affairs.  
<http://www.dfa.gov.za/foreign/Multilateral/africa/sadc.htm>

<sup>230</sup> Sasman, Catherine. "Economic Partnership Agreements – No Plan B?" New Era. 20 September 2007  
As cited by bilateral.org. [http://www.bilaterals.org/article.php3?id\\_article=9713](http://www.bilaterals.org/article.php3?id_article=9713)

<sup>231</sup> Ibid

<sup>232</sup> Matthews, Alan. *Regional Integration and Food Security in Developing Countries*. Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations Agricultural Policy Support Service Policy Assistance Division. 2003. Ch. 6.  
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/004/Y4793E/y4793e00.htm#Contents>

<sup>233</sup> Ibid

<sup>234</sup> "About IGAD." IGAD. 5 October, 2007.  
[http://www.igad.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=43&Itemid=53](http://www.igad.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=43&Itemid=53)

integration.”<sup>235</sup> It is interesting that, although economic cooperation is third on IGAD’s list of missions, almost all of its objective statements relate to that mission, while only one reflects the organization’s efforts to “promote peace and stability in the region and create mechanisms within the region for the prevention, management and resolution of inter-State and intra-State conflicts through dialogue.”<sup>236</sup> Unfortunately that objective has marked most of the organization’s work as it has been very active in the efforts to stem the unrest in Sudan and Somalia,<sup>237</sup> as well as trying to encourage diplomacy between current Member State Ethiopia and now former Member State Eritrea, both of whom accuse the other of undermining peace efforts in Somalia.<sup>238</sup> Eritrea, however, has gone further, saying that the whole of IGAD is being manipulated by outside forces implying that the organization is a vehicle for United States policy in the region.<sup>239</sup> It also motivated IGAD to respond to the AU Peace and Security Council’s call for the creation of stand-by brigades by forming the Eastern Africa Standby Brigade (EASBRIG) in 2004.<sup>240</sup> ECOWAS, although self-identified as an economic and trade-related organization, has also taken direct action to address conflicts in the region, perhaps most notably in forming and deploying the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in an attempt to stem a violent civil war in Liberia in 1990.<sup>241</sup> This action is notable not only because the intervention of ECOMOG is generally considered a success,<sup>242</sup> but also because it represents the first time that an African regional IGO dispatched peace-keeping troops into a Member State.<sup>243</sup> There are questions as to constitutionality of that move, to the impartiality of ECOMOG troops in the conflict,<sup>244</sup> and even to whether or not the entire body of ECOWAS was truly behind the actions of ECOMOG or if they were the reflection of the will of Nigeria alone.<sup>245</sup> However, the effectiveness of the deployment is clear from the positive responses of the UN and the AU.<sup>246</sup> It is also significant that ECOWAS has successfully deployed ECOMOG troops into Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau.<sup>247</sup> Some of the justification for this kind of intervention is found in the statement by EASBRICOM that

“conflicts in Africa bear certain unique characteristics  
predominantly embedded in their root causes, intensity,

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid

<sup>236</sup> Ibid

<sup>237</sup> “IGAD Profile.” Institute for Security Studies. April, 2005.  
[http://www.iss.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity\\_to\\_union/igadprof.htm](http://www.iss.co.za/AF/RegOrg/unity_to_union/igadprof.htm)

<sup>238</sup> “Eritrea pulls out of African bloc.” Al Jazeera English. 22 April, 2007.  
<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/africa/2007/04/2008525144333672612.html>

<sup>239</sup> “Eritrea suspends its membership in IGAD over Somalia.” Sudan Tribune. 23 April, 2007.  
<http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article21508>

<sup>240</sup> “EASBRICOM.” Eastern African Standby Brigade Coordination Mechanism.  
<http://www.easbrig.org/about.php#>

<sup>241</sup> Christopher Tuck. “‘Every Car Or Moving Object Gone’ The ECOMOG Intervention in Liberia.” African Studies Quarterly. 2000. <http://web.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v4/v4i1a1.htm>

<sup>242</sup> Ibid

<sup>243</sup> Gino Naldi. “Review of *Regional Peace-Keeping and International Enforcement: The Liberian Crisis.*” African Affairs. July 1995. p. 434

<sup>244</sup> Ibid. pp. 435-436

<sup>245</sup> Mitikishe Maxwell Hobe. “The Evolution and Conduct of ECOMOG Operations in West Africa.” From *Monograph 44: Boundaries of Peace Support Operations.* Institute for Security Studies. February 2000. <http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/Monographs/No44/ECOMOG.html>

<sup>246</sup> Gino Naldi. “Review of *Regional Peace-Keeping and International Enforcement: The Liberian Crisis.*” African Affairs. July 1995. p. 434

<sup>247</sup> “Profile: Ecomog.” BBC News. 17 June 2004. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country\\_profiles/2364029.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/2364029.stm)

duration (often too long), escalation and their propensity to spill over to neighbouring states.”<sup>248</sup>

It certainly is also true that without peace and some measure of political stability economic development is no longer possible, but the question of whether or not ECOWAS was justified in its actions remains open.<sup>249</sup> However, political conflict does not have to mean armed conflict. There is a profound value to IGOs that lies beyond their ability to take demonstrable action in response to problems; the value of providing a forum for discussion and interaction which allows Member States to raise and discuss bilateral issues within the context of a body specifically formed to negotiate differences.<sup>250</sup>

### **Conclusion**

David Francis has suggested that the purposes and goals of unity should be considered carefully, especially for a continent as diverse ethnically, culturally and linguistically as Africa. His argument is that there is very little to effectively bind the regions together, and this would seem especially true since there is little economic synergy to be found in regions that produce largely the same types of goods. He further suggests that it is the role of regional hegemony such as Nigeria, South Africa, and Kenya to be the focus of integration efforts, and to drive the process of regionalization politically and economically. This raises at least two important sets of questions. The first is to what extent should the smaller Member States of a regional body be bound to the will of a regional hegemon? If the stated goals of the AU include the promotion of “democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance,”<sup>251</sup> is this principle being served by the institution of a top-down hegemonic regional IGO? The second is whether or not Nkrumah was right in his concerns that regional organizations are no less likely to become the pawns of foreign powers than individual African nations. This concern becomes even greater with the advent of regional standing armies such as the EASBRIG. In what ways can a regional body, the AU, or even the UN appropriately balance the competing concerns of national sovereignty and the rights of that nation’s citizens? This question is particularly challenging to the AU in light of the international pressure over the situation in Sudan. At the same time, it is reasonable to ask to what extent regional intervention in such a situation might be considered less, or possibly more intrusive.

The issue of IGO rationalization must be addressed as well. Spreading resources across several bodies that are seeking solutions to the same problems is not an effective use of those resources, but rationalization brings several questions as well. Who will decide which organizations are best suited or most appropriately positioned to become the sanctioned clearinghouse for a specific program? Is there conflict between, for instance, grass-roots organizations business organizations and programmatic bureaucracies, and what can be done to resolve it? The issue of IGO overlap is also important in the context of economic organizations because it makes trade negotiations significantly more difficult.

Finally, the mixed record of successes and failures of the many African regional and intergovernmental organizations is troubling. Some failures can be seen to stem from a lack of willingness by Member States to cede power to supranational organizations, but much is simply because of lack of support or commitment by the Member States. This is what Abbas Bundu, a former executive secretary of ECOWAS, termed the “absence of integration culture.” He lists several other factors that negatively affect the integration process, including the economic struggles of African nations and the challenges to peace in the region. If unity is important, and if unity is being built through regional and intergovernmental organizations, what can be done to make those organizations stronger and more effective? How can organizations be built that either foster the environment Bundu claims is lacking, or that can operate in the environment that exists?

### **Committee Directive**

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<sup>248</sup> EASBRICOM

<sup>249</sup> Comfort Ero. “ECOMOG: A Model for Africa?” *Monograph 46: Building Stability in Africa: Challenges For the New Millennium*. Institute for Security Studies. February 2000  
<http://www.issafrika.org/Pubs/Monographs/No46/Ecomog.html>

<sup>250</sup> Center for Development and Democracy. pp. 29-30

<sup>251</sup> “African Union in a Nutshell.” African Union. [http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/au\\_in\\_a\\_nutshell\\_en.htm#vision](http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/AboutAu/au_in_a_nutshell_en.htm#vision)

The focus in this guide has been mostly on the challenges that existing regional organizations have faced, as well as on some of the successes they have had. Although this guide has focused largely on ECOWAS, and to a lesser degree on SADC and IGAD, these are just the start of the important intergovernmental and regional bodies on the continent. Delegates should become familiar with the organizations they belong to as well as their aims and missions. Specific focus should be paid to ways to effectively pair organizations that are working on related or similar issues. Delegates should also consider whether similar organizations in different regions might be consolidated as well. It is also important to consider ways that these organizations can be made more transparent and responsive to the populations they serve. Finally, the focus of this topic is on building partnerships. Partnerships can be between individuals, or between individuals and their governments, or between interests groups and businesses, etc. There is, literally, almost no end to the possible partnerships that could be formed. Delegates should look creatively at the challenges that their respective Member States face and consider what kinds of partnerships they might form to address those challenges.

## Technical Appendix Guide

### *Topic I. Examining the Challenges and Solutions of the African Debt Crisis*

Bouchet, Michel and Gros Lambert, Bertrand. "An Empirical Study of the Relationships Between Corruption, Capital Leakages, and Country Risk, Part I." *Cuadernos de Difusión*. Vol. 11. 2006. pp. 9-27

Despite the journal's Spanish title, this work is available in English. The issue of odious debt is important, and the questions surrounding the identification of illegitimate state debtors are thorny. This study provides an excellent and detailed discussion of the nature of a particular subset of the issues surrounding illegitimate and odious debt; corruption and capital flight.

Council on Foreign Relations. <http://www.cfr.org>

Although it sometimes oversimplifies a topic, CFR is excellent because the writers can distill difficult issues to brief sketches. It is also helpful for taking two different ideas and doing a nice compare/contrast. As an example, their compare/contrast of the UK's proposed International Finance Facility versus the US's Millennium Change Account proposal is very short, salient, and uncovers important concerns with both initiatives.

Ferraro, Vincent, and Rosser, Melissa. "Global Debt and Third World Development." *World Security: Challenges for a New Century*. Eds. Klare, Michael and Thomas, Daniel. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994). pp. 332-355

Although it is a little dated, this chapter provides an excellent starting point for understanding the causes of the debt crisis as well as a nice set of citations with important names and other relevant sources and articles. This is an excellent place to start for any delegate, but especially for those who want to better understand the origins of the global debt crisis. It is available online at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/globdebt.htm>.

Financial Policy Forum. <http://www.financialpolicy.org>

The staff at FPF not only publish excellent primers covering important topics like sovereign debt restructuring proposals and policy reports on vulture funds, they also have a complete (and outstanding) curriculum (including a comprehensive lecture outline) on financing for development. Delegates struggling to understand the financial aspect of debt relief should start here.

Goldman, Michael. "Under New Management: Historical Context and Current Challenges at the World Bank." *Brown Journal of World Affairs*. Vol. 13. 2007. pp. 11-25

A brief but excellent history of the World Bank discussing some of the structural reasons behind the ways the bank does business, how and why those methods have changed over the last 60 years, and raising

important questions about how the bank has been successful and who has benefited from that success. Unfortunately this article was written prior to Paul Wolfowitz's resignation from the World Bank.

Herman, Barry. "Introduction: The Players and the Game of Sovereign Debt." *Ethics & International Affairs*. Vol. 21. 2007. pp. 5-32

The discussion of sovereign debt, especially in light of the current initiatives trying to address the debt crises throughout the global South, the words "fair" and "just" are often brought in. As these words generally reflect some moral value, there is little that can be done to quantify them, making it difficult to assess what can be done about the debt crisis that is fair or just. These words also often polarize people into camps based on whether they see the borrowers as being at fault for reneging on their obligations or whether they see the lenders as being irresponsible in their practices. In order to challenge this dichotomy, Dr. Herman presents a detailed and even-handed consideration of the motives and purposes driving the various players in this game.

The New Economics Foundation. <http://www.neweconomics.org>

The New Economics Foundation (nef) has published four thought provoking analyses of the sovereign debt crisis. It is a progressive organization; in fact they are one of the many successor organizations of the original Jubilee 2000 debt campaign. The four publications are "Chapter 9/11: resolving international debt crises," "Debt relief as if people mattered," "Odious lending: debt relief as if morals mattered," and "Debt relief as if justice mattered." All four are available as free pdf downloads. These publications definitely have an agenda, but they also raise many important questions.

South Centre. "The Relationship Between Trade and Debt." (2002)

South Centre is an intergovernmental organization of developing nations. They specialize in analysis of development issues especially with regards to policy support. This particular analytical note considers the evidence in support of the assertion that there is a relational link between trade and debt and examines the ways these factors have negatively impacted the developing world. It also presents several suggestions covering how existing debt relief mechanisms should be tailored to individual states and how the negative effects of current trading mechanisms might be alleviated. This document is available as a free pdf download from <http://www.southcentre.org>

Teunissen, Jan Joost, and Age Akkerman, eds. *HIPC Debt Relief: Myths and Reality*. (2004)

Published by the Forum on Debt and Development, an independent research facility out of the Netherlands, this book presents an excellent, detailed, and nicely balanced analysis of the HIPC initiative with a significant eye towards what can be done to make debt relief initiatives more effective. The book is available as a free download from <http://www.fondad.org>

## ***Topic II: For Future Generations: Further Defining the African Youth Charter***

"2007-2015 Plan of Action." African Union. <http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Conferences/2007/october/hrst/youth/AU-EXP-YOUTH-4-ENG.doc>.

This document shows a brief background of the creation and adoption of the African Youth Charter. This is followed by the progress that has been made for ratifying and implementing the Charter as well as the areas that have caused the slow ratification. This plan is a beginning for speeding the ratification and implementation of this vital document for Africa.

"AIDS in Africa: Three Scenarios to 2025." UNAIDS. 29 July 2008. [http://data.unaids.org/publications/irc-pub06/jc1068-scenarios-execsumm\\_en.pdf](http://data.unaids.org/publications/irc-pub06/jc1068-scenarios-execsumm_en.pdf).

AIDS is a serious epidemic in Africa and needs to be addressed quickly. Without a solution to the spread of the disease, it will continue to devastate Africa. This shows three scenarios placed in a story form for the outcome of AIDS in Africa: along the current trend, a nationally adjusted plan paralleled to the most successful application, and a projected plan incorporating a comprehensive prevention and treatment program.

Caldwell, John C., and Pat Caldwell. *Is Integration the Answer for Africa?*. International Family Planning Perspectives 28.2 (June 2002): 108(3).

Many programs have worked trying to reduce the spread of infection of AIDS and HIV. Combining programs could be a key to help reduce the spread. Using existing counseling, such as family planning, to also implement strategies for reducing infection rates is an option for trying to reduce the incidence of these diseases in Africa.

Janvry, Alain De, and Elisabeth Sadoulet. *World poverty and the role of agricultural technology: direct and indirect effects*. Journal of Development Studies 38.4 (April 2002): 1(26).

Increasing agriculture has many benefits. Some of these include increases in employment, lower food affected people out of poverty.

Mac-Ikemenjima, Dabesaki. *The Long Road to Banjul and Beyond*. Nov. 2006. UNECA. 8 May 2008 [http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/Process\\_African.pdf](http://www.uneca.org/adf/docs/Process_African.pdf).

Much effort has gone into the development of the African Youth Charter. There is also still more work to be done in getting the ratification process completed. Knowing how the African Youth Charter began and the progress achieved thus far is a key to helping ratify and implement the Charter quickly.

"Rural Poverty in Africa." Rural Poverty Portal. 29 July 2008 <http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/english/regions/africa/index.htm>.

Poverty occurs throughout the world, but is especially prevalent and extreme in Africa. The rural areas of Africa are where poverty is most prevalent and there are several roots of this poverty. This occurrence is also increasing faster than the problem. Finding and reversing the causes of poverty is detrimental for the future of Africa.

Teferra, Damtew, and Philip G. Altbach. *African higher education: challenges for the 21st century*. Higher Education 47.1 (Jan 2004): 21(30).

Higher education is a challenge to Africa. While it is necessary for development, it faces many roadblocks along the way. Funding, generalization, language and gender barriers are among the obstacles that must be overcome in order for a proper post-secondary education and beyond to be available for the youth of Africa.

"The Impact of HIV and AIDS in Africa." Avert: Averting AIDS and HIV. 30 Apr. 2008. 29 July 2008 <http://www.avert.org/aidsimpact.htm>.

AIDS and HIV not only affects the person infected, but also expands several problem areas already present. The lasting impacts these diseases cause increases in poverty, decrease educational opportunities, set back economic factors, and drastically reduce life expectancy. This will show delegates how many of the issues revealed in the African Youth Charter are caused and expanded by each other.



### ***Topic III. Uniting Africa: Enhancing Partnerships that Create Regional Cohesiveness***

Ben-Meir, Yossef. "National Sovereignty Through Decentralization: A Community-Level Approach." *International Journal On World Peace*. Vol. XXV. 2008. pp. 59-71

Professor Ben-Meir argues that national sovereignty is enhanced by decentralizing power which leads to small groups feeling as though they are pursuing their own goals, not having the will of another imposed upon them. This is an excellent counterpoint to the common imposition of the African "top-down" intergovernmental model. Delegates would do well to consider how the African Union can adopt models of regional integration that do a better job of inducting the hearts and minds of the grass-roots.

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). <http://www.comesa.int>

What is now COMESA was once the Preferential Trade Area, one of the first economic co-operative bodies to be envisioned on the continent, although it was not the first to actually be ratified. It is the largest trade bloc on the continent covering 19 Member States, 12 million km<sup>2</sup> and a GDP of US\$ 275 billion. The website contains a vast library of instruments, statistics, reports, and proposals.

"African NGOs." Duke University. [http://library.duke.edu/research/subject/guides/ngo\\_guide/ngo\\_links/africa.html](http://library.duke.edu/research/subject/guides/ngo_guide/ngo_links/africa.html)

A gateway to information on a few dozen African NGOs, including the states they operate out of, their focus, and a link to their web presence.

Kaplan, Seth. "West African Integration: A New Development Paradigm?" *The Washington Quarterly*. Summer 2006. pp. 81-97

Kaplan brings together the importance of governance and economic development as well suggesting reasons why traditional development aid has failed and what might be done to alter the economic models on the continent.

New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). <http://www.nepad.org>

NEPAD is a strategic framework for African renewal striving for integrated socio-economic development across the continent. It includes the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), an initiative to harmonize the policies and practices of all NEPAD Member States in such areas as democracy, political governance, corporate governance, and socio-economic development. It is reasonable to ask whether or not this level of integration is possible on the continent, but it is equally valid to consider some NEPAD initiatives as opportunities to challenge a higher level of integration for non-NEPAD Member States.

Okeke, Chris Nwachukwu. "The Second Scramble for Africa's Oil and Mineral Resources: Blessing or Curse?" *International Lawyer*. Vol. 42. 2008. pp. 193-209

While Professor Okeke's article is pointing most squarely at the international community's failure to consider the rights and needs of the citizens of the African nations while negotiating for access to Africa's resources, the point he raises is very salient for the consideration of the AU itself. To what extent are the individual Member States of the AU responsible to their citizens? The notion of true sovereignty is built upon the idea that the legitimacy of a regime is somehow tied to the will of the people. If this is true then does the AU bear some responsibility for ensuring that the interests of all Africans are brought to the bargaining table when oil and mineral rights are being negotiated?

Southern African Development Community (SADC). <http://www.sadc.int>

The SADC, as one of the largest regional organizations, and one of the four largest economic organizations, is very important in any discussion of regional integration. In much the same ways as ECOWAS in Western Africa, and IGAD in the East, SADC has been active in shaping the economic and political landscape of Southern Africa. There is a wealth of materials, from existing agreements and instruments to program proposals and research.

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). <http://www.uneca.org>

The UN's first regional commission for promoting economic and social development in Africa, the UNECA has become a key figure in much of the regional and subregional work done on the continent today. Its mission is to promote regional integration supporting the goal of African unity and vision, and to assist in meeting African needs and in facing new global challenges. Along with the annual Economic Report on Africa, UNECA also provides periodic reports on governance and integration across the continent.

Woodward, Peter. "Somalia and Sudan: a tale of two peace processes." *Round Table*. Vol. 93. 2004. pp. 469-481

A well detailed look at the history of the conflict in these two regions as well as the work of the Inter-Governmental Authority for Development (IGAD) to bring peace in both conflicts. Of particular interest is Professor Woodward's discussion of IGAD's attempt to move beyond development concerns and their need to concentrate on the roots of conflict such as access to water.