

## BULLETIN

Winter 2000

No. 59

### *US, Corporate America, and Africa*

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## **US, Corporate America, and Africa: Winds of Change? Introduction to a Special Issue**

William G. Martin, ACAS Co-Chair

This issue of the ACAS Bulletin focuses upon how US corporations structure relations across the Atlantic in the post-Cold War, post-Apartheid period that we live in. As scholars and activists know well, neo-liberal policies in the last ten years have done irreparable damage to the education and health services of the continent, while Africa's resources -- including investments made by African states -- have been bought and sold at cheap prices.

Nevertheless we are constantly told that in this globalized age Africa has no choice but to open her doors to the world-economy. This has been the consistent drumbeat of Clinton policy, resulting in a single piece of legislation: the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). This refrain will certainly be repeated by a Bush presidency.

The articles in this special issue raise fundamental questions about such policies. It is not difficult, of course, to illustrate that Africa has long been deeply integrated into the world-economy--indeed this has been true for over four centuries. It is also quite simple, despite low prices for Africa's products, to demonstrate that transnational relationships have been critically important for those living on both sides of the Atlantic. What these articles take on, however, are more recent manifestations of this relationship, particularly the more recent roles played by U.S. multinationals.

We provide four case studies. My own contribution sheds light on one of the more surprising, and largest, of recent U.S. corporate interventions in South Africa: the extension of privatization via the expansion of the U.S. private prison industry to South Africa. In another essay ACAS Political Action Co-Chair Marc Mealy sharply places AGOA within a larger historical perspective, and then proceeds

to illustrate how it serves as a strategic policy tool to promote the global competitiveness of U.S. multinationals. Meredith Turshen takes on U.S. drug firms, and in a succinct march of arguments and evidence charts the denial of access to affordable drugs and the destruction of public health in Africa and at home. Finally, Eric Reeves lay out in succinct detail how US and other major oil companies underwrite war and repression in the Sudan -- and what can be done by activists in response.

Taken together these essays demonstrate both the historical continuity of the underdevelopment of Africa through multinational corporations' operations, and how these operations operate in an age marked by structural adjustment, the WTO, and an increasingly unbridled and unhindered global space for corporate capital. We trust our readers, and particularly those engaged in the African and US wings of the anti-globalization movement, will benefit from our efforts here.

We also include in this issue print copies of the first four of our "On the Edge" commentaries; these are short articles and op-eds by ACAS members and friends that we distribute, via the internet, to members at critical moments. The essays here cover events in Zimbabwe (by Bud Day and Carol Thompson), the Clinton/Bush transition (myself), the Kabila Assassination (Horace Campbell), and repression in Tanzania (Karim Hirj). Finally, we also include copies of recent letters ACAS has issued regarding the repression in Zaire, the kidnapping of Jacques Depelchin, and ethnic violence in Ituri Province/DRC and the need for multilateral peacekeeping intervention.

*Finally: if you have not renewed your membership for this calendar year, please do so! Forms are inside the back cover of this issue.*

**Privatizing Prisons from the USA to SA:  
Controlling Dangerous Africans across the Atlantic\***

William G. Martin, Binghamton University

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From the USA:

The average Black male

Live a third of his life in a jail cell

*Dead Prez, "Police State,"  
on Let's Get Free CD*

From SA:

The policeman said to me son

They won't build no schools anymore

All they build will be prison, prison

*Lucky Dube, "Prisoner,"  
on Prisoner CD*

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Convicted of robbery, the seventeen-year old prisoner was recovering from stomach surgery for a shotgun wound. This didn't prevent the prison guards from forcing him onto a concrete floor, kneeling him in the back, and watching him writhing in pain -- until part of his intestines leaked out of his open wound and into his colostomy bag.

South Africa under apartheid? No, a US prison for juvenile offenders under the control of a private corporation, the Wackenhut Corporation headquartered in Miami.

Forced to light by private protests, federal investigations, and court orders, a litany of similar sexual and sadistic abuses has led state governments to terminate contracts with Wackenhut, as well as with its leading competitor in the drive to privatize US prisons, Corrections Corporation of America (CCA). Local and national student protests against the prison industrial system have publicized these actions; national financial press reports have reported them as well given their impact on corporate profits. 1999 and 2000 were not good years for Wackenhut or CCA.

None of this prevented the South African government, in the midst of its own privatization drive, from signing in August a \$250 million deal with Wackenhut for a new prison in Louis Trichardt. Does the South African government know something that the apparently more liberal Louisiana and Texas officials do not? Even more pointedly: is the South African state following far too closely in the footsteps of US state, marking a new phase in US-African relations and US-African policy?

**Containing and Criminalizing Africa:  
Clinton's Legacy**

At first glance there seems to be little direct connection between the Wackenhut deal and US policy or corporate movements towards Africa. Most commentary on Clinton policy towards Africa has solidly focused upon the "trade vs. aid" debate. This is understandable: as during previous administrations, the Clinton years have been marked by declining levels of aid and rising neo-liberal promises of development through increased trade and investment.

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***Africa is increasingly depicted as a direct threat to the people of the United States for non-military reasons: Africa, we are told, is a major source of international crime, narcotics, and disease. And this elicits a security response of a new order.***

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While tourist trips to Africa by politicians and federal officials have been many, the appearance of Africa in substantive congressional legislation or executive action has largely been limited to one bill: the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, which passed this last year.

As other articles in this special issue reveal, however, US corporations retain strong interests in Africa. Even if these remain largely extractive and commercial interests, rather than new productive investment -- as in the removal of oil and natural resources, the distribution and sale of goods exported to but not produced in Africa, or buying up state enterprises being sold fast and cheap -- they nevertheless represent significant profit centers for large and well-connected US corporations.

What even these activities leave unnoticed, however, is how corporate interests are interwoven with a second major theme of US policy towards Africa: the containment of dangerous Africa and Africans. And here Wackenhut's recently announced deal reveals a new era, where profits from privatization merge with a racially-stratified, global security system.

As departing Assistant Secretary of State for Africa Susan Rice recently put it to the Congressional Black Caucus:

We have consistently articulated two clear policy goals: a) integrating Africa into the global economy through promotion of democracy, economic growth and development, and conflict resolution; and b) *combating transnational security threats, including terrorism, crime, narcotics, weapons proliferation, environmental degradation and disease.*<sup>1</sup>

Africa has not often figured upon "transnational security threat" lists. Words of war and even cruise missiles have, of course, occasionally been launched at Libya and Sudan, but these actions are usually cast within the well-known pattern of official Washington's fear and loathing of Islamic radicals in the "Middle East."

Yet Clinton's actions have spread farther, including support for North African governments that wage war on Islamic challengers and the arming of sub-Saharan African armies surrounding the Sudan. (Such an effort back-fired of course as the previously-hailed "Renaissance" leaders of Uganda, Ethiopia, and Eritrea turned this training and equipment upon

other neighboring states). US military training missions have extended as well to friendly armies in West, Central and Southern Africa. Here the explicit aim, following the Powell doctrine, is to avoid any possible commitment of US peacekeeping troops (as in past calls of support for efforts in Rwanda, Somalia, Sierra Leone, the D.R. Congo, etc.) while retaining control over any multilateral and especially African peacekeeping efforts.

These same aims and limitations underline the new US-controlled African Crisis Response Initiative and the Department of Defense's African Center for Strategic Studies war college in Dakar. Equally new and notable are such projects as the FBI's training of South African police at Quantico, and the establishment by the US Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of a new International Law Enforcement Academy in Gaborone, Botswana.

As these last examples suggest, something new is afoot: it would be a mistake to focus purely upon military and intelligence work as the only security engagement of the US in Africa. For Africa is increasingly depicted as a direct threat to the people of the United States for non-military reasons: Africa, we are told, is a major source of international crime, narcotics, and disease. And this elicits a security response of a new order.

Americans have been apparently sleeping in the face of this rising threat. Speaking in September 1999 to the well-connected organizers of the National Summit on Africa, Assistant Secretary Rice accordingly asked:

How many of you know that 30 percent of the heroin intercepted at U.S. ports of entry in recent years was seized from African-controlled couriers? How many of you know that Americans lose over \$2 Billion a year to African white-collar crime syndicates...?<sup>2</sup>

Worse of all for most commentators is the AIDS threat, with a constant drumbeat telling us in the United States that all aid and policy towards Africa should center upon AIDS. The only solution proposed here is US drugs, supplied by

US multinationals, at prices no African nation can afford much less administer -- in which case the US has now offered African governments loans to buy the drugs -- increasing Africa's intolerable debt burden (see Meredith Turshen's article in this issue).

Indeed of all the initiatives launched by the Clinton administration the creation of Africa as a direct disease, drug, and terrorist threat to Americans stands out as the most novel, and in all likelihood most lasting, contribution to African policy.

### **The Prison Industrial Complex: from U.S. to Africa?**

But what does this have to do with private corporations? Simply put: security and prisons are a big business -- and one that draws upon fears of Africa and Black youth. As *Bulletin* readers are surely aware, instilling fear of crime and criminalizing African-Americans has been an accelerating and profitable feature of the US landscape. By mid-1999 nearly 1.9 million persons, 1 out of every 147 persons in the United States, were in prison,<sup>3</sup> with strikingly disproportionate numbers of Black and Latino young men being detained, arrested, and imprisoned. As the Bureau of Justice reports:

Among the almost 1.9 million incarcerated offenders, more than 560,000 were black males between 20 and 39 years old. Overall, black men and women were at least 7 times more likely than whites and 2 times more likely than Hispanics to have been in prison or jail.<sup>4</sup>

And from imprisonment flows political disfranchisement, for many states permanently withhold the right to vote from all persons with felony convictions: one in fifty adults, 3.9 million people, have lost the right to vote--and over 70 percent of these persons are no longer in prison. African-American men are especially targeted: in nine states, between 25 and 31 percent of African-American men have lost the right to vote for life. Human Rights Watch and the Sentencing Project estimate that if these trends continue, by the next generation 40

percent of African-American men could be permanently deprived of the right to vote in the fourteen states that disfranchise ex-offenders.<sup>5</sup>



A growing movement targeting this "prison industrial system" has emerged, particularly in California where groups such as the Prison Activist Resource Center and activists like Angel Davis have been active.<sup>6</sup> The Black Radical Congress has also launched a major initiative on "Education Not Incarceration," holding workshops in New York City,<sup>7</sup> while the Prison Moratorium Project and other groups such as Critical Resistance East have long been active as well.<sup>8</sup> Such efforts bridge across academic, activist and cultural lines, including leadership from within the hip-hop community, as represented by Raptivism Records' *No More Prisons: the Album* CD.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile the campaign to prevent the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal has become a world-wide movement -- including even work by ACAS in sponsoring panels at African Studies Association meetings and the online petition for scholars and students of Africa (see the petition on the ACAS web site: <http://acas.prairienet.org/mumia.html>).

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***Far from being the home of civilization, post-apartheid, post-Cold War Africa is no longer targeted for modernization but rather fear, a source of terror, disease, crime and drugs. This generates in turn a profitable opportunity: the construction of an overlapping set of prisons, detention centers, and security check points.***

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As this activity suggests, a growing movement is organizing against the criminalizing of Africa-America, and the imposition of structural adjustment and the privatization of state functions at home. The outlines of this story for the USA are increasingly well charted and available.<sup>10</sup> What is unexpected is that the merchants of imprisonment would expand their operations and profit centers to Africa.

## Wackenhut in Louis Trichardt



This became publicly announced on August 11, 2000, when South Africa's Minister of Correctional Services, Ben Skosana, announced a 1.7 billion Rand (\$230 million) deal with US multinational Wackenhut International for the building and management of a new high security prison in Louis Trichardt. With over 3,000 beds, this would be one of Wackenhut's largest prison operations in the world.

This number of beds will hardly dent, it must be noted, the massive overcrowding in South Africa's prisons. Still, the attraction for the South African government for such an arrangement is not hard to suggest. As readers of the U.S. or British press are well aware, the South Africa's crime rate has been made famous around the world. The South Africa state has, moreover, inherited an apartheid-based justice and prison system, one being fed by a high poverty and unemployment rate, a legacy of distrust and revolt against a racist state and its agents, and the harsh realities of a police force trained to enforce apartheid rather justice.

When matched to the ANC government's commitment to the neo-liberal principle of selling off state enterprises, privatizing prisons becomes a low-cost response to popular demands for attacking the crime problem. Here the drop in the US crime rate has led some South Africans to tout the US imprisonment model. As South Africa's *Mail and Guardian* editorialized, "The case of the US demonstrates to South Africa that even amid poverty and inequality it is possible to reverse the trend towards greater crime... the propensity of [U.S.] courts to convict and imprison criminals has made a major contribution to the fall in crime."<sup>11</sup> Few

US observers would draw such conclusions, given the lack of evidence for any correlation between crime and imprisonment, especially for the large number of persons, especially poor and black youth, imprisoned for non-violent drug offenses.

Readers familiar with the siting practices of US prisons would also not be surprised to learn that Louis Trichardt is as far as one can get from South Africa's major cities (and thus inmates' families) as one can get without leaving the country. Indeed, its origins lie in the far northern flights of Voortrekkers from the British, with Louis Trichardt arriving in the area in 1836, just inside the present northern border with Zimbabwe

And similar too to the US, the local Town Council has underwritten the prison by donating the land for it. Furthermore, it appears from published reports that Wackenhut has invested only \$3.5 million to get a \$230 million contract -- in addition to free land, financing is from South African financial houses arranged with its South African partner, an investment holding company headed by three persons with no experience in running a prison.<sup>12</sup> It would not seem to take very long indeed for profits coming to Wackenhut's US offices to overwhelm any investment flow from the United States to South Africa.

## Wackenhut: From the USA to the World

Founded in Miami in 1954 by an ex-FBI agent, Wackenhut has for almost fifty years sold security services to private corporations and the US government. Its connections with the government and especially military and security agencies have been close, making it now the largest supplier of security services to the US federal government. Over the years its board and staff have been heavily populated with veterans of US intelligence and military agencies, including General Mark Clark, Ralph E. Davis of the John Birch Society, former FBI director Clarence Kelley, former CIA deputy director Frank Carlucci, former Admiral and deputy CIA director Bobby Ray Iman, CIA director William Casey, and Jorge Mas Canosa,

leader of the right-wing Cuban American National Foundation. Articles in *Spy* magazine and others detail unconfirmed intelligence services to the CIA and private corporations.<sup>13</sup>

What is uncontested is the leap by Wackenhut and similar firms from national to global operations. Wackenhut's protection contracts cover, for example: nuclear power plants; US government nuclear research labs, including emergency response SWAT teams for nuclear weapons facilities in South Carolina and Nevada; Cape Canaveral and shuttle landing sites in Africa; at least 20 US embassies across the world; GM plants in Latin America; Nike, Campells' Soup, and Levi offices, Ontario Hydro, and even facilities run by an enterprise that one would think could protect its own, the world's leading provider of security services: the Pentagon. Indeed the Department of Defense just awarded Wackenhut its James S. Cogwheel Award for Outstanding Industrial Security Achievement.<sup>14</sup>



**Wackenhut's finest at a Nato Conference**

Source: <http://www.wackenhut.com/canada/canover.htm>

As this sample list suggests, the protection racket is now a world-wide multinational operation, with the global security industry estimated to be worth over \$100 billion annually. Wackenhut is among the largest firms: for the first six months of 2000, Wackenhut reported revenues of \$1.2 billion, an increase of 18 percent over the same six months in 1999. Prison services accounted for \$264 million of this total, up 30 percent over the same period in 1999.

## Wackenhut Corrections

Prison profits are a relatively new but critical part of Wackenhut's growth story. Indeed, it was with the rise of privatization world-wide that Wackenhut turned to prison management as a profit center. Opening its first prison only in 1989, Wackenhut now controls over 40,000 prisoners in over 50 prisons in the United States, England, Scotland, Wales, Puerto Rico, New Zealand, Curacao, Australia, and Canada -- and now South Africa.

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*For Wackenhut's expansion is part of wider trends: rampant neo-liberalism with the shrinking and shirking of state responsibilities, and the escalating numbers of the poor, and especially black youth, denied education and employment...*

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Wackenhut's problems have grown as steadily, with insistent local protests now forcing state investigations of privatized prison operations. In New Mexico, a 500 page legislative report calling for an overhaul of state prisons specifically attacked two run by Wackenhut, including one that had a riot in August 1999 that left one inmate and guard dead, revealing understaffing at Wal-Mart wages. In Texas Wackenhut was stripped of a \$12 million-a-year contract in September 1999 and fined \$625,000; twelve former guards were indicted for having sex with female inmates -- as occurred in another Florida Wackenhut facility.

Among the most notorious reports of prisoner abuse are those that emanated from Wackenhut's juvenile prison in Louisiana.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, conditions were so bad that the US Justice Department sued Wackenhut seeking to protect imprisoned boys from indoor tear gas attacks, pepper spray, and the lack of basic items as underwear, blankets, medical treatment and food. In September 2000 the State of Louisiana agreed in Federal Court to end its experiments with privately-run juvenile prisons, and

specifically prohibited from placing any more inmates in Wackenhut's Jena facility.

Owing an empty facility isn't cheap, and Wackenhut has publicly warned investors that fourth quarter profits (2000) will be lower than expected due in large part to losses associated with "deactivating" the Jena facility as well as increased liability costs and wages.<sup>16</sup> While Wackenhut continues to open new facilities in the US as in San Diego, and a much higher proportion of prison beds could be privatized, long-term troubles in the rich North are clearly a major problem for the corporation: protests are high, crime is down, and states with budget surpluses are less likely to privatize security and prison services. Major competitor Corrections Corporation of America (now listed as Prison Realty) with 55 percent of the private prison market, reported a loss of \$265 million last year;<sup>17</sup> its shares fell from a high near \$40 a year in 1998 to around \$2 in late 2000. Wackenhut has seen its shares fall from over \$30 to \$9.

### **Going Multinational: Reaching out to Africa**

Expanding overseas has long been a proven path to profits for US firms. And as noted above, Wackenhut has long provided security services to corporations and governments overseas. Yet a natural obstacle arises: while the Pentagon, US State Department and US multinationals can afford to pay first-world rates, few African, Asian, or Latin American governments have the resources to generate the kinds of profits Wackenhut and other privatizing firms are used to in the rich North. Hence for example the attention paid by Wackenhut to opening facilities in Australia, England, and New Zealand.

The South African prison promises to thus break new ground--can Wackenhut make money where others have failed to venture? If one can get an average of \$45 per prisoner per day in North America (and up to \$80 in some cases), can one make a profit on Rand 85 (\$11) per prisoner per day in South Africa? Are South African wages--labor accounting for around 60 percent of prison revenues--low enough to make

this possible? Certainly the demand for jobs is there: when applications were handed out in Louis Trichardt for temporary jobs associated with the new prison, six thousand persons rushed the Department of Labour officials, running over and injuring four unemployed persons.<sup>18</sup>

If profits flow in South Africa, would this open up the possibility of privatizing prison operations in the stronger, wealthier Asian and Latin American states? Would not even poorer African states seek to privatize their prisons in order to lower state expenditures in the eyes of the IMF and World Bank--as in the case of rumors surrounding Tanzania? The calculations are surely being run at corporate headquarters and government ministries. In this sense, just how cheap prisoners can be maintained in Louis Trichardt could determine the global expansion of prison-for-profit multinationals. Given Wackenhut's U.S. record, this doesn't bode well for the reform of the apartheid prison complex, South African prisoners, their families, and communities.

### **Controlling Dangerous Flows from Africa to America**

It is not only prisons, however, that generate profits. As noted above, US facilities in Africa require protection services, as African well know from the fortress architecture and mentality that surround US embassies and installations on the continent. Even more dangerous are uncontrolled flows of Africans to the rich centers of the world. And here Wackenhut has found another special niche: protecting the Anglo world from dangerous immigrants--as the welcome received at border posts by Black travelers and political refugees reveals all too well.

Indeed few human beings have fewer rights than those detained at border posts, lacking as they do citizenship or nearby family and communities to protect them and protest on their behalf. Yet where civil and human rights are unprotected, yet another profit opportunity exists: some of Wackenhut's most profitable operations are immigration "detention" facilities in the United

States, England, and Australia. And these opportunities are growing: between 1990 and 1998 the number of Federal inmates held for immigration "offenses" grew by 330%, faster than even the 107% increase for drug offenders.<sup>19</sup>

One detention center is located just past JFK airport in Queens, New York, where Wackenhut runs a 200-bed facility, the final destination for the hundreds of asylum seekers who land in the city every year. And under a new 1996 law, the INS routinely detains for months, sometimes years, even the most valid and non-threatening asylum-seekers. As a lead story in the *New York Times* recently recounted, this includes many Africans fleeing clear cases of persecution. As one Congolese man escaping torture at the hands of the Kabila regime recounted his months in Wackenhut's windowless rooms: "We don't get any fresh air, any sunlight... we never go outside."<sup>20</sup> The *Village Voice* similarly highlighted the plight of Nigerian detainees at the facility in an expose titled "Wackenhut Detention Ordeal."<sup>21</sup> Small wonder then that detainees have staged two hunger strikes in the past two years, suicide attempts are common, and demonstration in support of the human rights of these immigrant detainees have taken place outside INS's New York offices.

### **What is Wackenhut International doing in Louis Trichardt?**

For Wackenhut, the answer "making money" is obvious. For the South African state, the answer surely lies in privatization and a seemingly no-cost response to popular demands to deal with crime.

Yet this not just a local story, or even the story of one multinational's expansion into Africa. For Wackenhut's expansion is part of wider trends: rampant neo-liberalism with the shrinking and shirking of state responsibilities, and the escalating numbers of the poor, and especially black youth, denied education and employment--and all too often being destined for a violent life in prison or the fields of war. This scenario fits all too well the stark, new depiction of Africa and Africans put forward by

US politicians and policy makers. Far from being the home of civilization, post-apartheid, post-Cold War Africa is no longer targeted for modernization but rather fear, a source of terror, disease, crime and drugs. This generates in turn a profitable opportunity: the construction of an overlapping set of prisons, detention centers, and security check points. Such is the apparent cost, and profit, of protecting behind fortress walls the rich and predominantly white world, whether it be the Hamptons in New York, the Gold Coast in Chicago, or Sandton in South Africa.

### **Endnotes**

- \* Thanks to Jim Cason and Michael West for comments on an earlier version.
- <sup>1</sup> "The Clinton-Gore Administration Record in Africa" Remarks to the Foreign Affairs Braintrust, Annual Congressional Black Caucus, Washington, DC, September 15, 2000; online at: [http://www.state.gov/www/policy\\_remarks/2000/000915\\_rice\\_cbc.html](http://www.state.gov/www/policy_remarks/2000/000915_rice_cbc.html) (accessed November 3, 2000); emphasis added. See also Rice's statement to the U.S.-Africa Energy Ministers Conference, Tucson, Arizona, December 14, 1999 ([http://www.state.gov/www/policy\\_remarks/1999/991214\\_rice\\_energy.html](http://www.state.gov/www/policy_remarks/1999/991214_rice_energy.html) (accessed September 29, 2000)), where she similarly stated: "the United States is pursuing two over-arching policy goals on the continent: accelerating Africa's integration into the global economy and combating transnational security threats--like terrorism, proliferation, environmental degradation and disease--that put at greater risk both Africans and Americans daily."
  - <sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of State Susan E. Rice, Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, The National Summit -- East Coast Regional Summit, Keynote Address Baltimore, Maryland, Friday, September 10, 1999.
  - <sup>3</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, "Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 1999," April 19, 2000, online at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs> <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/pjim99.htm> (accessed October 21, 2000).
  - <sup>4</sup> Allen J. Beck, "Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 1999," U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin, April 2000, NCJ 181643, online at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/ascii/pjim99.txt> (accessed October 8, 2000).
  - <sup>5</sup> These statistics and projections are drawn directly from the joint Human Rights Watch-Sentencing Project report "Losing the Vote: The Impact of

- Felony Disenfranchisement Laws in the United States," online at <http://www.hrw.org/reports98/vote/>; a summary release is at: <http://www.hrw.org/hrw/about/initiatives/disenfra.htm> (accessed November 3, 2000).
- <sup>6</sup> See for example the web sites run by the Prison Activist Resource Center (<http://www.prisonactivist.org/>), the ARC journal *Colorlines*, online at <http://home.ican.net/~edtoth/lawprisonrace.html>, the Justice Policy Institute, online at <http://www.cjcj.org/jpi/clearinghouse.html>, the Prison Moratorium Project online at <http://www.nomoreprisons.org/front.htm>, and Critical Resistance East, online at <http://www.criticalresistance.org/creast/>, among others.
- <sup>7</sup> As in the BRC-sponsored "Education Works, Prisons Don't" Teach-in and Forum in Harlem on October 27-28, 2000; further information is online at: <http://www.blackradicalcongress.org/organizing/campaigns/index.html>
- <sup>8</sup> See the sources and links in footnotes 6 and 7 above.
- <sup>9</sup> See <http://www.raptivism.com/album.html>.
- <sup>10</sup> See sources cited above and below, as well as such articles as Eric Schlosser, "The Prison Industrial Complex," *The Atlantic Monthly*, December 1998, online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/98dec/prisons.htm> (accessed November 3, 2000). Angela Davis, "Masked Racism: Reflections on the Prison Industrial Complex," *Colorlines*, Fall 1998, online at: <http://www.corpwatch.org/trac/feature/humanrts/cases/p-davis.html> (accessed November 3, 2000).
- <sup>11</sup> *Daily Mail & Guardian*, "Ban guns, build jails, fire Sydney," Editorial, January 15, 1999, online at [www.mg.co.za/mg/news/99jan2/15jan-crime.html](http://www.mg.co.za/mg/news/99jan2/15jan-crime.html) (accessed December 3, 2000).
- <sup>12</sup> Willem Kempen, "What Makes these Women Want to be Behind Bars," *Financial Mail*, September 1, 2000, p. 50.
- <sup>13</sup> John Connolly, "Inside the Shadow CIA," *SPY Magazine*, September 1992.
- <sup>14</sup> Even universities hail Wackenhut: in October 2000 the President of Johns Hopkins, Dr. William R. Brody, presented Mr. Wackenhut the university's Distinguished Alumnus Award.
- <sup>15</sup> See among others, James McNair, "Wackenhut a Prisoner of Its Own Problems," *Miami Herald*, April 15, 2000.
- <sup>16</sup> See Wackenhut press release dated September 19, 2000, "WHC's Third and Fourth Quarter Earnings to be below Previous Expectations," online at <http://www.wackenhut.com/wcc-pr.htm#WCC> Press Release -90 (accessed October 21, 2000).
- <sup>17</sup> For details on the financial troubles of the private prison industry see for example Charles H. Haddad, "Private Prisons Don't Work," *Business Week*, September 11, 2000, p. 95, and on Wackenhut specifically James McNair, "Wackenhut a Prisoner of Its Own Problems," *Miami Herald*, April 15, 2000.
- <sup>18</sup> As reported in the local newspaper, *Zoutspanberger Mirror*, September 15, 2000, online at: <http://www.zoutnet.co.za/archive/2000/september/15th/newssept15.asp?StoNum=9> (accessed November 3, 2000).
- <sup>19</sup> Allen Beck, "Prisoners in 1999," Bureau of Justice, Statistics Bulletin, August 2000, online at: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/p99.pdf> (accessed February 18, 2001), p.12.
- <sup>20</sup> Eyal Press, "No Refuge," *New York Times*, September 17, 2000.
- <sup>21</sup> Alisa Solomon, "Wackenhut Detention Ordeal," *Village Voice*, September 1 - 7, 1999, online at: <http://www.villagevoice.com/features/9935/solomon.shtml> (accessed November 3, 2000).

For further information visit the Association of Concerned Africa Scholars' [ACAS] web site: <http://acas.prairienet.org>

## **United States Economic Relations with Africa under the African Growth and Opportunity Act**

Marc Mealy

October 1st, 2000 will go down in history as another milestone in the continuing evolution of the nature of economic relations between the United States and African societies in the 21st century. On this date, the United States government, utilizing a unilaterally defined criteria, announced which of the 48 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa would be defined as eligible for the honor (dubious or not) of initiating discussions on formulating new trade and investment relations under the framework of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

For policy makers in the chosen thirty-four African nations, the opportunity to enter into such negotiations with the U.S. to develop new U.S.-Africa economic realities has officially begun. However the rhetoric in statements by U.S. and even some African officials, namely that AGOA will serve as a catalyst for structurally transforming the historical nature and characteristics of U.S.-African economic relations, are at best premature. Such expectations should be tempered with a strong dose of objective analysis.

In order to place AGOA in its proper context it is important to conceptualize the agreement in at least seven ways:

- What AGOA is,
- The historical roots of the current "equilibrium" of U.S.-Africa economic relations,
- AGOA's potential impact on conflicts in Africa,
- AGOA's potential impact on socioeconomic transformation and development in Africa,
- AGOA as a global strategy,

- AGOA's impact on Africa's efforts in the WTO, and
- AGOA's impact on African regional integration efforts.

This essay will explore these issues by examining AGOA in the context of the global competitiveness strategies of U.S.-based corporations in the 21st century.

### **What is AGOA?**

AGOA is fundamentally a policy tool for structuring the nature of the "market environment" or "rules of the playing field" which will govern trade, investment and economic activities between Africa and the U.S. in the 21st century. In a nutshell, AGOA is not simply a trade and investment agreement per se, it is a framework for determining the structure and nature of future economic relations and subsequent political, financial and social impacts on African societies. AGOA is indicative of a pro-active, bilateral strategy--in tandem with multilateral approaches in the WTO; the IMF-PRGF; and the World Bank-HIPC and PRSP--of how U.S. government policy and institutions are utilized to impose a set of neoliberal policy reforms on other nations. These thus become instruments to re-create global economic rules based on corporate America's definition of its terms, interests, and logic.

African nations seeking to enter into this relationship must meet the eligibility criteria which clearly creates new opportunities in African societies for U.S. corporations. The criteria include: adopting government policies to liberalize barriers to U.S. trade and investment; creating a private sector led "free market"

economy; fighting corruption; and protecting worker and human rights. The U.S. in return would, 1) extend trade benefits for Africa's raw materials under the GSP program (a program which permits developing countries to export unprocessed products to the U.S. at lower tariff rates), 2) establish annual high-level government meetings, 3) develop a report on the possibility of initiating bi-lateral free trade agreement talks, 4) grant tariff-free entry on selected African textile and apparel export products, and 5) call for further U.S. aid and development programs for sub-Saharan Africa. AGOA also allows the U.S. to unilaterally withdraw any such benefits at any time if they are determined to be a cause of injury to U.S. industries.

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***Allocations of benefits and costs, winners and losers, and the impacts on U.S. and African societies from AGOA, have largely been pre-determined by the interests of the U.S. corporate community and their junior partners in African societies.***

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Hence, because AGOA defines the boundaries, core components, priorities and principle terms for the subsequent process of "changing" or "perpetuating" the relationships between the U.S. and African nations, the eventual costs and benefits will ultimately be determined in the details and outcomes of actual negotiations. The critical issue is how does the AGOA framework shape the likely outcomes of future negotiations in terms of the distribution of benefits and costs of any subsequent changes?

### **Why AGOA?**

When you move beyond the public rhetoric and in/actions of U.S. political and economic policy makers towards Africa, one can pose the question, "Why is the United States seeking to negotiate trade agreements within the AGOA framework with selected countries in a continent so often labeled as 'marginal' to the global economy?" Is it plausible to believe that by some miracle, U.S. policy is now being guided by something other than U.S. strategic interests

or definitions of national security? Has there been some kind of policy reflection exercise or self-evaluation on the part of U.S. policy makers regarding the history of U.S. policy towards Africa? After all, in spite of the facts that Africa represents a bigger trade market potential than all of eastern Europe and the U.S. increasingly imports oil from African producers, the fact remains that these "truths" never carried much political weight before. Could there have been some revelation on the part of America's political and business establishment that Africa's people are actually valuable, perhaps even in the "strategic interests," as potential consumers of U.S. made products and services? Do the people of Africa represent another natural resource -- similar to gold, diamonds, oil, coffee and cocoa -- that is worthy of investment?

A similar question could be raised about Africa. Given that U.S. policy makers often champion that the U.S. market as the "most open" in the world (even as the U.S. maintains a plethora of active tariff and non-tariff barrier import policies), what is the motivation for an African state to develop a free trade agreement with the U.S.? Given the huge differences in the size, qualitative aspects of their economies and the role of trade in their respective economies, how do those differences influence the socio-economic development effects on an African society in having "free trade agreement" with the U.S.? It is this author's opinion that AGOA is actually less about trade and more about the myths of development, U.S. global competitiveness and the investment interests of U.S.-based capital.

One of the biggest fallacies in the economic literature today is that one of the many causes of economic poverty in Africa is that Africans are not participating in the booming global economy. Bringing Africa into the wonders of the global economy is one of the publicly stated goals of U.S. foreign policy, regardless of the reality that African societies have historically been some of the most globalized in the world. Not only do African societies produce what they don't consume and consume what they don't produce, they also maintain some of the highest ratios of exports and imports to GDP in the

world. African mineral and energy resources, debt services payments, and high returns on foreign investments have for centuries been sources of wealth and capital accumulation for others in the world economy. In addition, without Africa how would today's multi-billion dollar global development, NGO, PVO, refugee, and humanitarian industries be profitably sustained?

Proponents of this myth often cite statistics which indicate that African economies only have a small share of global trade and capture an even smaller share of the world's foreign direct investment flows. From this flawed premise many U.S. and African policy makers have deduced that one way to reduce poverty in Africa is to further integrate African nations into the global economy and implementing AGOA is viewed as a fundamental objective in achieving that goal.

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***AGOA can be seen as an U.S. tactical move in a global strategy game of "managed global competition" with the European Union and Japan.***

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However, this author would suggest that even if the flawed accounting statistics cited above were correct,\* the popular deduction is equally wrong. Africa's low share of global trade and investment flows is not an indication of being marginalized, quite the opposite: they indicate the structural nature and terms of trade of how African economies are fully integrated into the global economy. Thus, it is not a question of African nations being in or out of global economy. It is a question rather of how African economies are structurally separated from serving the needs and interests of African societies, and how their strategic oil, mineral and natural resources are currently integrated at the bottom of various global commodity chains. Given this understanding, we can now explore the rationales behind AGOA in terms of U.S. global economic interests.

## **AGOA in the Context of U.S. Global Competitiveness Strategy**

Corporate led globalization affects all societies, and America is the most globalized society in the world. However, this observation must be placed in a context that thus far the nature of how globalization is proceeding in the world, and the principle drivers of many of its processes, is to be found in U.S.-based multinational corporations. In a dynamic and complex global economy, U.S. industries are often incorrectly thought of as global market leaders in almost all sectors. However U.S. capital is fighting from behind, for example, to compete against European and Japanese capital in the wireless communication technology sector, and fighting to stay ahead in low-medium skill manufacturing against producers in Asia. Sustaining America's economic dominance into the 21st century raises inherent policy contradictions and AGOA represents a strategy to manage these challenges.

First, AGOA can be seen as an U.S. tactical move in a global strategy game of "managed global competition" with the European Union and Japan. All nations have weak spots and it is well known that one source of the global competitiveness of European economies is the access and control over African resources, markets and financial sectors enjoyed by European-based corporations. In spite of the vast African wealth and resources (mining, debt service, commodities and energy) currently being developed, exploited, exported and consumed primarily in the developed world, significant sources of Africa's wealth and resources still remain outside of emerging global commodity chains and sectors dominated by multinational firms (bio-technology for example). Finally, in a global market environment of stagnating profits in some industries due to excess global productive capacity, coupled with slow global demand in certain regions, cost cutting via access to lower cost inputs remains a means of sustaining profitability.

Second, U.S.-based industries in a number of manufacturing sectors (such as textiles and apparel) are facing increased global competitive

challenges from emerging competitive industries based in developing countries. In today's global economy, low cost textile and apparel manufacturing in India, China and other countries have forced U.S.-based manufacturers to move significant U.S. productive capacity and jobs off-shore in order to compete globally. The policy arena has become a source of challenge and opportunity for these industries as the U.S. Government places greater weight on multilateral approaches (the WTO) to "open foreign markets" to U.S. trade and investment in sectors where U.S. companies are globally competitive. However, such approaches also require the U.S. to reciprocate and provide "liberalizing" concessions in other areas, by opening the U.S. market to foreign nations.

To counter this potential adverse impact, U.S. textile and apparel firms (sometimes aligned with U.S. labor) have lobbied for trade policies to either protect them from "unfair" foreign competition and/or to create new opportunities in higher value segments of global industries. Since AGOA would, like the WTO, provide some African countries which enter into this framework duty free access to the U.S. market for African textile and apparel manufacturers, AGOA potentially represents another "problem" for U.S. textile and apparel firms. To address the dual challenges of reduced national protection and greater foreign competition, U.S. textile and apparel business interests have increasingly adopted a strategy of global production sharing and marketing options.

Using a global production base strategy, technology and transport systems now enable U.S. textile and apparel manufacturing firms to increasingly combine U.S. production with outsourcing at various stages of both low and high end textile and apparel manufacturing processes to low cost of production countries around the world. This approach is what makes the buyer driven textile and apparel global commodity chains some of the most "globalized" industries in the world. AGOA thus offers U.S.-based manufacturing firms another strategic option to create a new source of global competitive advantage by tapping into Africa's "low cost" labor and natural resources.

AGOA's "Buy American" provisions governing U.S.-African trade in textiles and apparel gives U.S. firms an opportunity to re-create in Africa the U.S. Components and Materials in Foreign Assembly Operations business model which is extensively utilized under the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Caribbean Basin Initiative. Under AGOA, some African exporters of apparel may have to purchase U.S. made fabric or thread to receive duty free access for their exports to the U.S. market. In this context, AGOA represents a bi-lateral tactical vehicle for replicating a U.S.-African business environment similar to existing U.S.-Mexico and U.S.-Caribbean business environments -- with the added benefit of relatively lower labor costs to offset higher transportation costs and to have additional downward pressure on labor costs in existing producing countries.

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***Can the human and economic development needs and long term strategic interests of African societies be optimally pursued in a framework designed to primarily serve the global competitiveness interests of U.S. corporations?***

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By having greater access to lower cost African labor and inputs in their global production sharing operations and new customers for U.S. made fabrics, selected segments of the U.S.-based yarn, thread and apparel manufacturing industries can compete more effectively domestically against foreign Asian producers. This was the much less publicized economic factor behind the political debates between members of Congress and Senators from southern states about the potential damage to U.S. industries and workers from granting African exporters duty free access to the U.S. market.

**What Should African Societies Expect?**

If AGOA is going to be a catalyst for changing U.S. economic relations with African societies, then as in all forms of change there will be

winner and loser. It is this author's opinion that allocations of benefits and costs, winners and losers, and the impacts on U.S. and African societies from AGOA, have largely been predetermined by the interests of the U.S. corporate community and their junior partners in African societies.

A thorough examination of the eligibility requirements, conditionalities and policy provisions as indicators of likely outcomes should not be a surprise, because they are logical conclusions of the unilateral conceptualization of interests which has characterized the nature of the entire process which created AGOA. The recently proposed U.S. custom systems requirements which African countries would have to meet in order to get the additional market access benefits related to the trade of textiles provides another example.

Under the pretext of seeking the prevention of transshipments of textile goods from non-African eligible producers (something which is presumed will occur), the U.S. announced that African countries had to sign a U.S. drafted model customs agreement. After an outcry from several African states and African-American members of Congress concerning some of the provisions which could hinder the expansion of African exports to the U.S., the U.S. Administration relented on the most stringent aspects of the proposed agreement. The moral of the anecdote is not the action itself. It is the continuing example of the principle of unilateralism imbedded in the approaches and actions of one side, which seemingly contradicts the premise that AGOA will serve as a basis for developing a "new relationship" between The U.S. and Africa.

This is not to say that African policy makers and those living in this country who truly connect their realities with Africa don't have options to

consider and hard choices to make. Quite to the contrary, it is precisely because of the serious long-term implications for the strategic interests and security of African societies that African policy makers must take AGOA in a deadly serious manner. First it must be clearly stated again that AGOA is nothing more than a framework or set of parameters by which future negotiations will be governed. Anything is possible in a true negotiation, but indications of the future can be found in the socioeconomic development experiences in the countries of Caribbean and Andean regions which have "benefited" from years of having preferential trade relations with the U.S. Unfortunately, the current socioeconomic realities of nations like Peru, Columbia, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic are similar to what AGOA could produce in Africa.

The best advice I could share with anyone about AGOA is as follows: "AGOA at its core is just one strategic policy tool, coupled with others to promote U.S. global business competitiveness in the 21st century global economy." This begs the question can the human and economic development needs and long term strategic interests of African societies be optimally pursued in a framework designed to primarily serve the global competitiveness interests of U.S. corporations? African peoples, not simply policy makers and elites must have the final say in answering that question.

#### **Endnote**

\* A soon to be published paper by Prof. Yash Tandon, "The Role of Foreign Direct Investments in Africa's Human Development," provides an analysis of the flawed statistical methods and their consequences for African societies.

**Allies in Oppression:  
Talisman Energy, Inc. and the War in Sudan**

Eric Reeves, Smith College

The abuses of the National Islamic Front government in Sudan are notorious: the systematic use of humanitarian food aid as a weapon of war, the bombing of civilian hospitals, the trade in human slavery. But what is less well known is the role that Western oil companies are playing in fueling this civil war by sending oil revenues to the Khartoum regime and providing an incentive to expand the scorched-earth warfare in southern Sudan to open up new areas for oil exploration and development.

The policies of successive Khartoum-based regimes in the northern part of Sudan have led to the deaths of more than 2 million people, to the creation of between four and five million refugees, to the revival of the practice of slavery, and to the destruction of the largest country in Africa. In early 2001 the UN World Food Program estimated that as many as 3 million people, mostly in southern Sudan, are at risk from famine, and humanitarian aid groups have repeatedly condemned the government's attacks on the civilian population.

This is not a new conflict. The fighting in Sudan has raged for most of the last half century, and the roots of the conflict are much more complicated than the easy categorization offered by some observers that this is a war between African adherents to Christian and traditional religions in the South and predominantly Arabic Muslim northerners. To give just one example, successive governments in Khartoum have waged war not only on the Dinka and Nuer people in the south, but also on the Nuba people in the central part of the Sudan, many of whom are Muslim.

Today, this is also a war about profit, a war about oil. Since late 1999, the Khartoum government has been earning millions of dollars in revenue generated by Talisman Energy Inc. and its partner China and Malaysia, who together are pumping as much as 200,000 barrels per day out of the Sudan. The Calgary, Alberta based company and its partners in the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company are not only providing \$500 million a year in hard currency to the Khartoum government, they are providing crude oil to fuel the tanks that destroy villages and the airplanes that have continued to bomb civilian targets and humanitarian relief efforts.

The hard currency from oil exports works to keep the government in Khartoum in power by paying the approximately \$1 million a day cost of the war. In 1999, then Parliamentary Speaker Hassan Turabi acknowledged that the government also hoped to use the oil revenues to build factories for missiles and tanks. More recently, one cabinet minister declared: "What prevents us from fighting while we possess the oil that supports us in this battle even if it lasts for a century?"

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***Only by refusing to own shares in a corporation that has so clearly revealed its willingness to trade in genocidal oil can investors be free of complicity in terrible human suffering in Sudan.***

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There is now evidence to suggest that the government has recently accelerated its scorched

earth campaign to clear new oil fields and oil pipeline areas to earn additional hard currency. In a report titled "Sudan: the human price of oil," Amnesty International recently documented "a pattern of extra-judicial and indiscriminate killings, torture and rape -- committed against people not taking active part in the hostility." And the fighting will almost certainly continue, indeed intensify because the government does not yet have effective control over the areas of the country with the richest oil deposits.

But when the government does gain control of these areas, there are companies already waiting to exploit them. In addition to Talisman and its partners from Malaysia and China, there are oil companies from Sweden, Austria, Italy and France that are seeking to develop oil concessions in the Sudan (see box for further details and the New York Stock Exchange symbols of these companies).

### **A New Divestment Campaign**

That is why we have launched a new divestment campaign to force Talisman to stop fueling the conflict in the Sudan and to let other foreign companies know that if they put their money into the Sudan, we will take our money out of their stocks. Talisman Energy of Canada is the only western oil company participating in pumping oil out of the Sudan. Talisman holds a 25 percent share in the multibillion dollar Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company,

which is jointly owned with the China National Petroleum Corporation and the Malaysian government's oil company Petronas. The Greater Nile consortium also operates a 1,500 kilometer pipeline from the oil fields in southern Sudan to the Red Sea.

Although Talisman is one of Canada's largest corporations and its largest oil and energy concern, the company is already under divestment pressure. TIAA-CREF, the City of New York and, most recently, the Presbyterian Church have all divested their shares in Talisman and pressure is mounting for similar actions across the country. Late last year, the campaign also began to target Fidelity Investment Management, which holds more than 5 million shares of Talisman (3.7 percent of total shares outstanding by one calculation) and, according to recent business disclosure reports, has this year doubled its shareholding position.

No less an authority than the Holocaust Museum (Committee on Conscience) in Washington recently warned that government action in Sudan threatens genocide. Only by refusing to own shares in a corporation that has so clearly revealed its willingness to trade in genocidal oil can investors be free of complicity in terrible human suffering in Sudan.

For more information, or to sign up to a listserve with updates on this campaign write Eric Reeves at [ereeves@.smith.edu](mailto:ereeves@.smith.edu).

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## **Companies Involved in Oil Development in Sudan**

*Who is involved in the oil-driven destruction in Sudan? What does a roster of corporate complicity look like? How can people outraged by Sudan's catastrophe be heard by those who would put oil profit before Sudanese lives and livelihood? Herewith an annotated list of companies that are taking part in oil development in Sudan.*

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Contact information for corporate offices and officers appears at the end of this list, along with contact information for the governments that have acquiesced in such corporate complicity. (Stock exchange symbols for these companies are given where available.)

[1] **Talisman Energy of Canada** (TLM on the Toronto and New York Stock Exchanges). Talisman is the only Western corporation in the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (GNPOC), which now sends roughly \$500

million [US] per year to the regime in Khartoum. Talisman entered Sudan in fall of 1998 by virtue of its acquisition of Arakis Energy (also Canadian), thereby becoming a 25% partner in GNPOC. Talisman CEO Jim Buckee has described Sudan as a "friendly, peaceful place," and declared in published commentary that, "Increasingly, Sudan is becoming a relative source of regional stability." In fact, Talisman's security--like that for all the oil companies operating in Sudan--continues to take the form of brutal scorched-earth warfare, designed to displace or destroy the civilian populations in the southern oil regions.

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125 Sussex Ave.,  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0G2  
Email: [john.manley@dfait-maeci.gc.ca](mailto:john.manley@dfait-maeci.gc.ca)

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[2] **Petronas**, the state-owned oil company of Malaysia. An original GNPOC partner, Petronas has a 30% stake in the consortium. Petronas is also a very significant participant in other concession areas in Sudan, and has a 28.5% share in Concession Block 5a, where presently human displacement and destruction related to oil development is most intense. They also have the "right of first refusal" on Talisman's 25% share in GNPOC, should Talisman withdraw. The Malaysian press has recently begun an intensive charm offensive of its own, celebrating the benefits that accrue to Sudan because of oil development. The numerous reports on scorched-earth warfare and civilian displacement in the oil regions are never mentioned.

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[3] **China National Petroleum Corp.**, the state-owned oil giant of the People's Republic of China. They have the largest share of the GNPOC consortium: 40%. They are also extremely active in the Adar Yel concession area in eastern Upper Nile (GNPOC areas are in western Upper Nile). China is the major military supplier to the Khartoum regime; they continue to do nearly all the construction in the oil regions; and Amnesty International reports that Chinese workers are armed, and evidently willing to use their weapons on Sudanese civilians. Many of the perhaps 15,000 Chinese nationals working in Sudan are from the military, or have military training. China -- now a net importer of oil -- looks to Sudan as its premier off-shore oil source.

China National Petroleum Corp. has been amply capitalized by New York Stock Exchange-listed PetroChina. PetroChina is a virtually wholly owned and governed unit of China National Petroleum Corp (CNPC); almost \$300 million of last April's PetroChina IPO on the New York Stock Exchange went directly to CNPC, and thus became available for use in Sudan. (PetroChina is PTR on the NYSE)

China National Petroleum Corp. (CNPC) is a wholly state-owned oil company. The Chinese government can be contacted through their embassy in Washington, DC:  
2300 Connecticut Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20008  
Tel: 202-328-2500  
Fax: 202 588-0032

Email: [webmaster@china-embassy.org](mailto:webmaster@china-embassy.org)

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[4] **Lundin Oil of Sweden.** This small oil exploration company very recently resumed activities in Concession Block 5a, south of Bentiu (GNPOC operations are north and west of Bentiu). They are presently the prime beneficiaries of the newly constructed, all-season road that extends 60 miles south of Bentiu and allows not only oil equipment but also heavy military equipment to move south. Lundin is evidently not persuaded by the numerous reports of extremely intense scorched-earth warfare and civilian displacement associated with their oil development in Concession Block 5a. (NASDAQ listing under: LOILY)

Lundin Oil of Sweden:  
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The Swedish Foreign Ministry may be contacted by email at: [registrator@foreign.ministry.se](mailto:registrator@foreign.ministry.se)

The Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications may be contacted by email at: [registrator@industry.ministry.se](mailto:registrator@industry.ministry.se)

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[5] **TotalFinaElf of France/Belgium** (TOT on the New York Stock Exchange and in Paris). The oil giant is not yet active in its huge concession areas (running as far south as Juba in Equatoria), but all signs are that they will soon begin active exploration. This will mark a major escalation of Western corporate participation in oil development efforts in southern Sudan. Recent large-scale military moves by the Khartoum regime seem designed to secure TotalFinaElf's concessions.

TotalFinaElf (Thierry Desmarest, Chairman and CEO) may be contacted by email through their website (email location):  
<http://www.totalfinaelf.com/ho/en/tools/contact/index.htm>

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[6] **BP Amoco** (BP on the New York Stock Exchange and in London). BP Amoco provided the critical investment in the PetroChina IPO (spring 2000). Without BP's \$578 million investment in the initial offering, it would have failed outright because of opposition from Sudan advocates, Tibet advocates, human rights groups, organized labor, and those concerned about the national security issues raised by an American capital market presence for Chinese oil companies. This makes BP responsible for the nearly \$300 million that went directly from the PetroChina IPO to China National Petroleum Corp (40% partner in the Greater Nile project).

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[7] **OMV of Austria.** This Austrian oil company is in the process of privatizing (i.e., seeking a presence in capital markets). It is has a 26.125% stake in Concession Block 5a.

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[8] **Agip of Italy.** Signed an agreement with Petronas in December, 1999 for oil exploration in Sudan.

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[9] **Royal Dutch Shell** owns a refinery in Port Sudan; the Dutch Trafigura Beheer BV has served as the initial agent for Sudanese crude oil exports.

## Access to Drugs: A Universal Issue

Meredeth Turshen

This issue of the *ACAS Bulletin* is devoted to US corporate activity in Africa, and the central theme of this contribution is the deadly influence of multinational pharmaceutical companies in both the United States and Africa. The drug industry rakes in higher profits and spends more on advertising and lobbying than many other industries. Pharmaceutical manufacturers spend less on research than they claim, however, and they do far less for public health than they pretend. The article begins with a description of industry greed and goes on to discuss how the corporations have undermined the public drug sector, Africa's truly original contribution to public health. It ends with a progressive analysis of health crises and points out public health solutions for the US and African countries.

### Corporate Greed

PhRMA, the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers Association, the drug industry's trade group, created Citizens for the Right to Know, a "grassroots" group that lobbies the US Congress on its behalf. The group's spokesperson recently testified that drugstores are to blame for the high price of medication, not the producers of drugs. In 1999, 15 pharmaceutical manufacturers spent \$60 million on lobbying. Pharmaceutical manufacturers spent more on lobbying in 1997 than any other industry, that's more than the insurance industry, the tobacco industry, the utilities, oil & gas, etc. (New York Times, 5 October 2000)

Congress is not the only place the pharmaceutical industry peddles influence. The top 40 US pharmaceutical companies spent over \$5.3 billion in 1998 to employ more than 56,000 people to push their products directly to doctors and hospitals. They spent another \$1 billion to hold "marketing events" for doctors. (New York

Times, 11 January 1999) The latest ploy is to market directly to consumers, which cost \$1.85 billion in 1999.

At stake is the \$111.3 billion the nation spent on prescription drugs in 1999. (New York Times, 29 October 2000) Unlike members of the European Union, which all control drug prices, the US exerts limited influence through Medicaid and other public programs. When President Clinton planned to offer prescription drug benefits to everyone on Medicare last year, the industry ran an advertising campaign attacking him for daring to propose price controls. (New York Times, 24 September 1999) Bernie Sanders, the democratic socialist from Vermont, started taking elderly constituents across the border to buy prescription drugs in Canada, where prices are lower because the Canadian government controls them. (New York Times, 10 April 2000) For example, the antibiotic Amoxil, made by SmithKline Beecham, cost \$36 in the United States and \$14 in Canada in 1995.

The industry argues that drug prices are high because research and development (R&D in the industry's lingo) of new drugs are costly. But compare what Pfizer, the nation's largest pharmaceutical company with the biggest research budget, spent on marketing and administrative expenses — \$6.2 billion — with what it spent on R&D in 1999 — less than \$3 billion. (New York Times, 27 August 2000) In fact the public sector accounts for 30% of pharmaceutical research. And as we all know, the private firms spend millions to develop Viagra and other profitable "lifestyle" drugs but only pennies for diseases of the poor. (The Nation, 19 July 1999). They spend additional "research" millions to mimic the successful products of rival firms, which adds zero to pharmacological knowledge.

Companies price their drugs according to what the market will bear, not in relation to the costs of production or distribution. Manufacturing accounts for 40% or less of total costs. We've known this since the early 1960s, when Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee held the first Congressional hearings to investigate the outrageous pricing practices of this industry. An understanding of the margin between the cost of raw materials and brand-name products was behind the move to adopt generics, which in 1997 accounted for 44% of the nation's prescriptions. (New York Times, 11 January 1999) And the universal need for access to affordable drugs was behind the remarkable international cooperation to restructure the pharmaceutical industry, as well as economize and rationalize prescription practices, in the 1970s and 1980s.

### **The Public Drug Sector**

Few health care issues have generated so much sustained attention from so many partners as the high cost of drugs. In the UN, an array of agencies led the fight — UNCTAD, UNCTC, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNITAR, and WHO; among trade unions, the leader was the International Federation of Chemical and General Workers' Unions; among non-governmental organizations, Health Action International and the International Organization of Consumers Unions; among governments, the UK Monopolies Commission, Egypt, and Mozambique. The solutions were multi pronged and graduated. For governments that had to import drugs, the advice was to centralize purchases, order only the 200 essential drugs, buy generics, and issue tenders to get the lowest prices. Health services needed to standardize treatment regimens and educate doctors about the costs of drugs. Because drugs can account for 40% of the national health budget, the astounding savings meant that many more people could receive treatment. Ultimately, developing countries needed to achieve independence from the multinationals by building their own industries, but intellectual property rights have proved an insuperable barrier to that goal.

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***Africa desperately needs an environmental program to combat malaria, the sort of approach that succeeded in Asia and Latin America but was never even tried in Africa, which lacked the requisite public health systems.***

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The multinational pharmaceutical industry has actively obstructed every national and multi-lateral reform on drug supplies and sales. It has pushed "branded generics", which have profits margins of 70%, twice that of regular generics. Donors have consistently used tied aid to ensure the sale of their makers' products, undermining national drug policies. US firms blocked the development of an international code of conduct for pharmaceutical manufacturers, and they lobbied the US government to withhold its contribution to WHO in the mid-1980s because of WHO's essential drugs policy. And now the monetarist economic paradigm and the WTO have given the multinational pharmaceutical industry new powers.

The World Bank brought a halt to the innovative work on a public drug sector at about the time it displaced WHO as the leading international agency setting the global health agenda. We all know that the World Bank operates at the bidding of the multinational corporations and the G-7 nations; we are all familiar with the neoliberal program for privatization; and we are all painfully aware of the assault on state delivery of public services. In the United States, these changes come at a moment of unprecedented prosperity, which has enabled the Clinton administration to patch some of the worst rents in the disintegrating safety net. But in Africa they follow decades of destructive civil wars, negative economic growth, and the steady rise of disease epidemics.

### **Public Health Analyses and Solutions**

Progressive public health analysts address the causes of disease and promote solutions that require policy changes ranging far beyond the narrow field of medical care. For example,

tuberculosis is a disease of poverty and displacement. Yes, the pharmaceutical industry has given us both a vaccine to prevent children from developing TB and medications to cure it, thereby preventing adults from spreading it. But the dramatic drop in TB rates in the US in the mid-20th century was due to the New Deal and postwar labor strength; by the time drugs were available in the 1950s, the epidemic was over.

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***Above all we need to do the political work of opposing indebtedness, austerity, and structural adjustment programs. And we need to focus on supporting the principles of public health... on opposing the privatization of medicine, and on rebuilding primary health care and the public drug sector.***

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Another example: malaria — the disease that kills nearly one million African children each year — was once common in the Upper Mississippi Valley. Economic development, not chloroquine, hastened its elimination in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Africa desperately needs an environmental program to combat malaria, the sort of approach that succeeded in Asia and Latin America but was never even tried in Africa, which lacked the requisite public health systems.

A third example: cholera is a nasty but minor inconvenience to the wealthy and well-fed; it is fatal to the poor and undernourished. Clean water and environmental sanitation protect against cholera (and a host of other infections) far better than the available vaccine, yet over 50% of sub-Saharan Africans don't have safe water, 62% have no proper sanitation, and some 50 million pre-school children suffer from malnutrition.

A fourth example: sleeping sickness, nearly eliminated 50 years ago, is once again claiming lives in Africa. The only drug, developed 70 years ago and described as “arsenic in antifreeze”, kills 5% of those treated with it. The company that used to manufacture an alternative drug ceased production last July because it was

not profitable to treat the 300,000 poor people infected each year. (New York Times, 21 May 2000) Traditional methods of containing trypanosomiasis, which denied the tsetse fly its habitat, cannot be practiced in the midst of civil wars.

A public health analysis of AIDS — which is not a single disease but a syndrome of some 20 opportunistic infections that overtake weakened immune systems — indicts the debt, austerity programs, and the damage of structural adjustment programs and privatization. (Lurie, Hintzen & Lowe, 1995) Free-market principles forsake equity for efficiency and undersupply collective goods — clean air, safe water, and basic literacy — that are the foundations of public health. Neoliberal “reforms” have reduced half of all Africans to absolute poverty and chronic malnutrition and simultaneously deprived them of the public health programs that might protect them from infection. Countries such as Zambia are able to fund only 40% of their health budget because debt repayment takes precedence.

The pharmaceutical industry, hoping for a subsidized market — which is the implicit promise of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, the Global AIDS and Tuberculosis Relief Bill (HR 3519), SKB's (SmithKline Beecham) pledge to give \$100 million to fight AIDS in southern Africa, and the proposed Export-Import Bank \$1 billion loan program for the purchase of AIDS drugs — has diverted our attention from the dilapidated state of health services in Africa. (Garrett, 2000) The median annual health care expenditure per African was \$14 in 1993; for drugs it was less than \$1 per person per year in most countries. Even if Africans were able to produce generics — for example, the anti-retroviral drug stavudine costs \$6.10 per daily dose in Uganda, where it is marketed by Bristol-Myers Squibb, but just 55 cents in Brazil in generic form — the reality is that 55 cents is half of what the average Ugandan spends per year on drugs. The demand for cheaper AZT and anti-retrovirals has to be accompanied by an analysis of how, where, and by whom complicated AIDS palliatives will be administered and a demand for the requisite

services. Otherwise expensive drugs for AIDS will further deplete health budgets and deprive Africans of the full range of health services they desperately need.

### **In Conclusion**

Yes, we can and should persuade the pharmaceutical industry to lower the prices of its products in Africa and the United States — or work for legislation that will regulate profits. Yes, we can and should demand more industry research on remedies for the common conditions that shorten and burden the lives of the poor in Africa and the United States — or press for public funding of public institutions that will find solutions. But above all we need to do the political work of opposing indebtedness, austerity, and structural adjustment programs. And we need to focus on supporting the principles of public health (the collective provision of clean air, safe water, and basic literacy), on opposing the privatization of medicine, and on rebuilding primary health care and the public drug sector.

For further reading see:

- Garrett, L. 2000. *Betrayal of Trust: The Collapse of Global Public Health*. New York: Hyperion.
- Lurie, P., P. Hintzen and R.A. Lowe, 1995. "Socio-economic Obstacles to HIV Prevention and Treatment in Developing Countries: the Roles of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank," *AIDS* 9(6)
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- Tarabusi, C. C. & Vickery, G. 1998. "Globalization in the Pharmaceutical Industry" *International Journal of Health Services* 28(1):67-105.
- Turshen, M. 1999. "Reprivatizing Pharmaceutical Supplies" in *Privatizing Health Services in Africa* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press).
- Weissman, R. 1999. "AIDS and Developing Countries: Democratizing Access to Essential Medicines" *Foreign Policy In Focus* 4(23) August.

### **“On the Edge” Commentary Series**

*In order to present critical viewpoints in response to breaking events, ACAS recently launched an "On the Edge" critical commentary series distributed via the internet. This series presents short essays on current issues from ACAS members and friends; they are emailed to members and posted on our web site: [acas.prairienet.org](http://acas.prairienet.org)*

*We present below the first of these commentaries. As always, the views expressed do not represent ACAS official positions; they are provided to stimulate progressive discussion and debate.*

#### **Tanzania: The Travails of a Donor Democracy**

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February 5, 2001

Political strife has been mounting in Tanzania ever since the disputed elections of October 2000. It reached a boiling point last month as one of the opposition parties, the Civic United Front (CUF), began a nationwide campaign of peaceful protest over the election results. On the mainland, police harassed and beat up those who attended its rallies. And on the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba, the focal points of the unrest, local police led by the Union military forces embarked on a ferocious orgy of suppression. At least nineteen people, including a policeman, are officially acknowledged to have died, though some sources put the death toll to be anywhere from sixty to eighty. Hundreds were injured, and hundreds are under arrest in Zanzibar and Pemba, as members of the security forces committed rape, looting, and torture and even denied medical service to the injured. Many of those attacked by the security forces were bystanders or relatives coming to help the injured. Further, many CUF leaders on the mainland and the islands were placed under arrest, and mistreated while in custody.

Since the days of one party rule, the political process in Tanzania has had a bipolar character stemming largely from the history and nature of

the political union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar. That feature has carried over into the era of multipartyism as the recent elections demonstrated. On the mainland, the opposition parties alleged numerous irregularities, and initially refused to recognize the declared winner of the presidential race. However, Western governments and donor agencies declared that the process had met their basic criterion of fairness. In Zanzibar, where CUF had wide support and stood a good chance of securing the majority vote, it was quite a different story. The polling was marred by problems so obviously serious and pervasive that a fresh election had to be held. Not convinced that the new round would be free from fraud, the opposition boycotted it, giving a victory by default to the ruling party. For their part, Western governments and aid agencies criticized the electoral exercise in Zanzibar, and most have refused to give it their stamp of approval.

The election fiasco set the stage for a vicious cycle of protest and harsh repression followed by further protests and harsher repression. As the police and military came out in full force armed with an array of weapons, some CUF supporters also came out with machetes. On the

whole, the opposition has been non-violent while the authorities have responded with rough intimidation and force. That conflict has now turned into a tragedy. The Legal Aid Committee of the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) has condemned the provocative posture and lethal tactics of the security forces. The Committee was dismayed by the 'arrest, torture, injury and incarceration' of the CUF leaders. Its statement noted that the police have shown no respect for the constitutionally protected right of political parties to hold public meetings. A ruling of the Tanzania Court of Appeal allows any political party to hold a public gathering without an official permit. Nonetheless, the police continue to use the lack of a permit as a reason to break up, often by force, opposition political rallies in Zanzibar, Pemba and the mainland.

The year 2000 election fiasco in Zanzibar was a repeat of what had transpired five years ago. The systematic harassment of CUF members, especially in Zanzibar, has been an ongoing affair since that time. Yet, it has not been just a Zanzibari issue. The strong presence of the Union military units on the islands ensures that what occurs there occurs with broad consent and support from central authorities. The CUF also has a vibrant and somewhat wide base of support on the mainland where its leadership and members have also faced the wrath of the government.

In the light of the latest events, it is therefore important that people of goodwill towards Africa condemn the harsh actions of Tanzanian authorities in suppressing political dissent, demand an impartial inquiry into the killings of civilians and the allegations of rape and looting by the police and military, and demand trial and appropriate sanction for those found guilty. The Union and Zanzibari authorities must respect the right of the people to hold peaceful political meetings as and when they choose, and allow all political parties participate in a process to establish a truly independent electoral commission. The specific problems in Zanzibar need to be resolved by means of an open and unhindered nationwide political dialogue which would recognize the fundamental right of the people of Zanzibar to determine their own

destiny. A viable and strong union is based on free and full consent on both sides of the nation, and not simply on the basis of a convenient arrangement between ruling elites.

These critical concerns also require that we place the political crisis in Tanzania in a broader context. The inescapable fact is that the people of Tanzania, as other peoples in Africa, are painfully wedged between the rock and a hard place, between internal political repression and unrelenting externally driven economic brutalization; between those who hit them with a hammer on their head and those who use intravenous needles to suck out the very essence of life from them.

Those two types of assaults are not unrelated; they complement each another. Despite their loud lectures to Africa on democratic governance, the main Western nations (euphemistically known as the international or donor community) are not interested in genuine democracy. In fact, they oppose any political scenario, democratic or otherwise, that puts their economic dominance over Africa into question, one that seeks to sever the bonds of dependency. For them democracy translates into a free and fair process of selecting the local dignitaries who will maintain law and order so that the raw materials, land and labor of Africans continue to be readily available to them. In that regard, their standards of what constitutes democracy are not only shallow but eminently flexible.

No wonder then that the international community was satisfied with what was but a pseudo-democratic election exercise on the mainland, or that the outgoing U.S. ambassador to Tanzania urged the government to keep on implementing 'economic reform' and extended amiable overtures to the Zanzibari authorities whilst castigating the tactics of the opposition. Further, the reactions of the U.S. and most European nations to the most recent events have been muted at best.

Within a fundamental scheme of things, Zanzibar is to the rest of Tanzania what Florida is to the rest of the U.S. While Florida showed

the malodorous side of a corporatized democracy, Zanzibar shows the foul face of its poorer nephew, the smelly side of a donor democracy. To place an exclusive focus on the constitutionally questionable and otherwise ugly Republican shenanigans in Florida is to forget the fundamental flaws in the entire process, namely, that money is the major determinant of who has a chance to win, that corporate media monopoly effectively stifles voices that question the dominant corporate world view, that the two party duopoly bars other voices from the nationally televised debates, the structure of the primary process within each party favors establishment rather than grass roots candidates, that police actions and media propaganda during the Democratic and Republican conventions served to stifle street dissent, and so on.

Similarly, to just focus on the massive electoral irregularities in Zanzibar is to forget that in mainland Tanzania, the ruling party employed state media and other resources unfairly to its advantage, that opposition voices were hardly heard on the broadcast media which reach into all corners of the nation, that the independent national electoral commission was far from living up to its name, and so on. In the same spirit as the deck in the U.S. was institutionally stacked against the Green Party candidate Ralph Nader, it was as much stacked against the opposition party candidates in Tanzania.

In that setting, it seems that the best that the international community wants for Tanzania is a moderately fair contest between two or more of the pro--donor candidates, as in Peru where it wanted a free and fair contest between Fujimori and a former World Bank economist, or in Zimbabwe, where it wanted a fair fight between Mugabe and the opposition associated with the settlers.

The election fiasco in Florida showed that in a system with deep-rooted flaws, egregious violations of people's civic rights can occur even in a long-standing bourgeois democracy. In Africa, where the elites have as yet to learn how to conduct an amiable process of deciding who among them will be rewarded with the task of managing the economic interests of the donor

community, the formal electoral process faces even greater obstacles.

This is not to disparage the need for political democracy and respect for civic rights in Africa. Africa desperately needs accountable and responsive governments based on the will of the people. What we are saying is that a genuine democracy for Africa is a process that will give the people the power over political and economic decisions affecting their future, a process which will at the same time deprive the donor community the monopoly it has over key economic decisions. It is therefore a process that will not be favored by the latter as they constitute the very entity that funds and sustains corrupt regimes in Africa. It is the donors who train and arm, directly or indirectly through the complex web that constitutes the international arms trade, the security forces of Africa. And, it is they who will be first ones to call for a crack down on a political party that questions their ideology of 'free trade and liberalization.'

We make this point even at this time of sadness and death because most opposition parties in Tanzania as elsewhere in Africa are, just like the ruling regimes, firmly wedded to that pro--donor ideology. Many prostrate themselves before the donor community even before they have come to power. In an age when even Nelson Mandela has sold out his people to that ideology, we need to keep this issue at the forefront of our concerns for Africa. We cannot forget what the 'free market democracy' entails for Africa. A very small minority is becoming extremely wealthy as it enables Western nations to further dominate the economy. For the majority, free market democracy is a journey into greater depths of misery. Just to take one example:

"It is a big shame that while the police force is armed to the teeth with most modern instruments of murder, our hospitals have no medicines and our schools have no desks and teachers go for months without salaries." UDSM Legal Aid Committee.

Therefore, as people in the U.S. and Europe who are concerned for Africa in general and for Tanzania in particular protest and write on behalf of the victims of the rampage of the

security forces in Zanzibar and Pemba and otherwise extend their solidarity, they should also face the important task of exposing the often hidden role of Western governments and corporations in supporting repression in Africa, and their not so hidden role in perpetuating the misery of its people. They should seek information on and demand investigation and

accountability about such activities, work towards a fundamental change in the relationship between Africa and the West, and where appropriate, criminal prosecution for the funders, trainers and accomplices of brutality from their own lands as they voice similar demands for the local perpetrators in Africa.

### **The Assassination Of Laurent Kabila**

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January 20, 2001

President Laurent Kabila was shot and killed in Kinshasa the capital of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on Tuesday January 16. His shooting stemmed from the acrimonious situation within the military leadership of the army, after the stinging defeat of the military forces at Pweto in Katanga Province in the past three months. Thousands of soldiers ran away from Pweto to Zambia, reporting that they had been fighting for years without pay. The Zimbabwean government evacuated their own soldiers after the routing at Pweto.

The fighting between the Rwandan supported elements of the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD-Goma) and the Kabila military had exposed the weaknesses of the Lusaka Peace Process. The Lusaka Peace Process Accord was signed in Lusaka Zambia on July 10, 1999. This Accord called for a cease-fire, the release of prisoners, the deployment of a Joint Military Commission, the arrest of those who committed genocide in Rwanda, the disarming of the armed militias, and the convening of a National Dialogue. The government of Zimbabwe had pressured Kabila to sign the Lusaka accord because its military forces had been trapped and surrounded at Ikela. After the Peace Accord in July 1999, there was renewed fighting and as soon as the Namibian and Zimbabwean troops broke out of encirclement at Ikela. The war continued with the plunder of the mineral resources of the country to finance the war.

When the Peace Accord was signed, the Kabila Government sought to use the period to re-arm and to extend the war. There has been an intensification of the plunder of the country by all of the military forces, who find war more profitable than peace. The armies of both Uganda and Rwanda, which had intervened in the DRC to support elements of the Congolese society, were both involved in the looting and there was an occurrence of fighting between these two armies in the DRC. This was the high point of the senseless war that had engulfed the country and held fifty five million Congolese people hostage to militarists.

Wamba dia Wamba, one of the leaders of the rebellion, had rejected the military means and on Monday, January 15, 2001, one day before the assassination, had rejected another effort to strengthen the militarist forces. It was the plan of the Ugandan political leadership to sideline Wamba and the civilian political leadership in order to strengthen the military cooperation between Uganda and Rwanda for the military overthrow of the Kabila Government. Jean Pierre Bemba of the MLC had been nominated as the new military strongman for the militarists. The merger of the RCD Kisangani (Wamba's formation) and the MLC was to lead to one new military opposition. Wamba argued that the merger only made sense politically if it were a step to support the Lusaka Peace Process and the National Dialogue.

### **Government of National Unity**

In rejecting the new military alliance, Wamba dia Wamba called for unity among all Congolese people to liberate the country from the forms of governance that had been set up and institutionalized by Mobutu and Laurent Kabila. Now is the best time for the end of the war, the deployment of UN peacekeepers and for the formation of a government of National Unity. This must be a government of all Congolese who are committed to the National Dialogue and for the transfer of power to the Congolese people. This process must be anchored in the positive gains of the Congolese people since the Sovereign National Conference of 1992. This conference laid down the basic principles for the transition beyond Mobutism and was the high point of the organization of the ordinary Congolese. Neither the British, the French, the US, nor the Belgians wanted to hear anything of the Sovereign National Conference, because this body called for the release of all information relating to the assassination of Patrice Lumumba. Today, January 17, is exactly 40 years since Patrice Lumumba was assassinated in the Congo. It now a matter of public record that President Dwight Eisenhower had given orders for the elimination of Lumumba.

### **The Road to Peace**

Laurent Kabila has been an obstacle to the peace process in the DRC. His government opposed

the Lusaka Peace process, opposed the calling of the National Dialogue and opposed the peace process in Burundi. There were some in the United States and elsewhere who argued that Kabila was the heir to the anti imperialist traditions of Lumumba and that he should be supported. This position was maintained in the face of the overwhelming evidence of his support for the forces that had committed genocide in Rwanda. In August 1998, when Kabila called on the citizens of the DRC to go out and kill fellow citizens, he became an illegitimate leader irregardless of his previous record.

The death of Kabila should be the opportunity to end the war, to respect the Lusaka Accords and for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The history of the failures of the United Nations in the Congo for the past forty years can be remedied by the swift deployment of peacekeepers to support a government of National Unity. Those who support peace in all parts of the globe must seize this opportunity to promote peace over war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The person named by the organization of African Unity to be the neutral facilitator for the National Dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire, must be dispatched to Kinshasa to start the National Dialogue to initiate the new road to peace, truth and Reconciliation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

### **Waging War Against Africa: Will Bush Follow Clinton's Lead?**

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December 20, 2000

As the moving vans circle the White House, it is only natural to speculate on what looms ahead for Africa. Among liberal and even many progressives commentators there is a growing consensus: a Bush presidency will mark a new era of antipathy towards Africa.

Thus for example the title of the essay by Salih Booker, director of The Africa Fund/American Committee on Africa and the Africa Policy Information Center: "The Coming Apathy: Africa Policy Under a Bush Administration." A Bush presidency, Booker argues, "portends a

return to the blatantly anti-African policies of the Reagan-Bush years."<sup>1</sup>

It is of course not difficult to show that Bush has been unaware and uninterested in Africa; indeed this holds for almost the whole world beyond the borders of North America. And certainly the past actions of Bush's travelling party--from his father to his top cabinet appointments--are marked by opposition to the release of Nelson Mandela, votes against sanctions against apartheid, support for the lack of U.S. action in Rwanda, rejection of non-conditional debt relief, etc. And of course as Bush said during the election, "at some point in time the president has got to clearly define what the national strategic interests are, and while Africa may be important, it doesn't fit into the national strategic interests."<sup>2</sup>

Yet such assessments obscure a far more dangerous policy path: Bush accelerating not simply the Reagan but Clinton legacy by casting Africa as a threat to the people of the United States, and moving to segregate and destabilize Africans at home and abroad.

Here we need to recall Clinton's actions--and not just his rhetorical flourishes and photo-shots with complacent animals and politicians on African safaris. For Clinton's policy was based on two pillars. The first was taken right out of Reagan's house: an acceleration of opening the world to U.S. corporate interests under the free trade banner and structural adjustment. Hence the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act became the central policy initiative of the Clinton presidency; 400 years after the Atlantic slave "trade," we were told, Africa would finally open up to the world-economy.

Bush will surely not depart from such neo-liberal positions. As he responded when asked a second time if Africa fit his definition of strategic interests, he said of course "No" but then continued "It fits into my definition of economic interest, and that's why I try to promote free trade."<sup>3</sup> Nor will he depart an inch from Clinton's avowed stance of rejecting any US support for peace-keeping efforts, unilateral or multilateral--even if such wars are waged, as

during the Clinton years, by troops trained by the Green berets.

Still, why does this not mean simply a new era of open apathy? Where is the enhanced danger for Africa?

Here we need to examine the second, often unnoticed pillar of Africa policy under Clinton--and one that was absent under previous Republican administrations. For as Clinton cabinet officers repeatedly stated, Africa was important not just for trade and investment, but because it posed a new transnational threat to the United States.

As Assistant Secretary Rice put it to the Congressional Black Caucus, "We have consistently articulated two clear policy goals: integrating Africa into the global economy... and combating transnational security threats, including terrorism, crime, narcotics, weapons proliferation, environmental degradation and disease."<sup>4</sup> Or as she asked organizers of the recent National Summit on Africa: "How many of you know that 30 percent of the heroin intercepted at U.S. ports of entry in recent years was seized from African-controlled couriers? How many of you know that Americans lose over \$2 Billion a year to African white-collar crime syndicates...?"<sup>5</sup> Or as Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "Africa is a major battleground in the global fight against terror, crime, drugs, illicit arms-trafficking, and disease."<sup>6</sup>

This definition of Africa as a transnational security threat broke new ground. In one fell swoop Africa became the home of deadly diseases, dangerous drugs, and devilish inhabitants. And having named and categorized Africans as such, we all know what policies follow: segregate or imprison the threat, inoculate ourselves, and eliminate all contact with the contagion.

The implications of Clinton's policy thus fit well with Bush instincts: isolate Africa, train select military and police allies there to control drugs and migration to the U.S., rely upon friendly

regional powers to contain military conflicts and police refugee camps, and do not under any circumstances allow US troops or persons to land in Africa or Africans to land in the U.S. If there is a key difference with Clinton, it is likely that Bush will be more open regarding this policy, relying upon over a century's depiction of Africa as the most primitive, dangerous and dark place on the planet.

Focusing on AIDS, one should note, fits this pattern quite well. For as currently cast by both democrats and republicans in Washington, AIDS, like Ebola, represents a curiously deadly threat peculiar to Africa, one that needs to be contained there; the best America might do is to sell the hideously expensive fruits of U.S. drug companies to suffering Africans.

One must emphasize that this framework does not mean an apathetic dis-engagement from Africa. Aid to and migrants from Africa might end, but no one is speaking of cutting off imports of African oil, preventing exports of U.S. goods or investments to Africa, or stopping unilateral actions against unfriendly regimes as in Reagan's bombing of Libya, George Bush's ill-fated military expedition to Somalia, or Clinton's cruise missile attack from afar on the Sudan.

Indeed new oil fields off Africa's coast will surely be drilled by U.S. firms and be protected by U.S.-trained troops or private security corporations. Similarly, recent U.S. initiatives to train and secure influence over African, especially South African, police and military forces through building new US-dominated war colleges and security police academies are likely to continue. Securing US economic interests is thus likely to mean enhanced, low-intensity commitments in resource rich parts of the continent -- not to end conflict and protect and secure African lives, but rather to protect narrow U.S. investments and interests. Thus while Africa may not have a high enough value on the national security criteria to permit the dispatch of US troops to protect lives and U.S. assets -- as within or along the borders of North America or Europe -- intervention via proxy forces, strong regional states, and bilateral military/security

relationships is likely to continue and accelerate. Indeed, should we expect otherwise now that foreign policy is largely in the hands of General Colin Powell, teamed up with ex-NSC staffer now NSC Secretary, Condoleeza Rice, and ex-Secretary of Defense, now Vice-President, Dick Cheney?

What will not continue is Clinton's ability to speak on the one hand as a friend to Africa, and act as a agent for US business and military interests on the other. Here the Bush presidency may in its bluntness, its very clumsiness towards nations of color, provide a breath of fresh air: no longer will it be necessary to struggle to unmask hidden pillars of policy and action. Appointing a few colorful faces is unlikely, this time around, to bamboozle anyone.

In this there may well be large gains for progressives and all those rejecting the high cost of neoliberal policies under Reagan, Bush, Clinton and Bush. If during the Clinton years expectations of the President as a friend of black people everywhere emerged, this was matched and fed by a wave of African-centered and anti-globalization activity. For a while, for many, there seemed to be no contradiction between these two trends. This will not continue under a Bush presidency, as the wake-up call provided by the denial of voting rights in Florida illustrated. An unmasked policy of discrimination, disdain and racial prejudice toward Africans may open the door, in ways impossible during the Clinton years, for equally blunt, direct action against racist policies toward Africa and her peoples.

#### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Online at:  
<http://www.africapolicy.org/docs00/bush0012.htm>

<sup>2</sup> *Newshour with Jim Lehrer*, Feb 16, 2000.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Susan E. Rice, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, "The Clinton-Gore Administration Record in Africa," Remarks to the Foreign Affairs Braintrust, Annual Congressional Black Caucus, Washington, DC, September 15, 2000 Online at:  
[http://www.state.gov/www/policy\\_remarks/2000](http://www.state.gov/www/policy_remarks/2000)

/000915\_rice\_cbc.html, accessed September 29, 2000.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of State Susan E. Rice, Assistant Secretary for African Affairs The National Summit -- East Coast Regional Summit Keynote Address Baltimore, Maryland, Friday, September 10, 1999.

<sup>6</sup> Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee On Fiscal Year 2000 Budget, February 24, 1999, Washington, D.C. As released by the Office of the Spokesman U.S. Department of State. Online at: <http://www.un.int/usa/99a10224.htm>, accessed September 29 2000.

### What is Zimbabwe?

Bud Day, University of Zimbabwe, Medical College <warren.day@nau.edu> and  
Carol Thompson, University of Zimbabwe, Political and Administrative Studies  
<carol.thompson@nau.edu>.  
September 17, 2000

There is concern among many activists in Southern Africa because the media and even liberals in the USA are labeling Zimbabwe as a "failed state" or that it is "self-destructing." Further, many analyses of Zimbabwe rely on the simplistic notion that removing President Robert Mugabe will solve everything. As activists, we do need to expose every human rights violation, every breach of the rule of law, and every corrupt act.

However, there has never been a livelier debate in Zimbabwe -- political, economic and social (e.g. gender rights). The people of Zimbabwe have shown their patience, their determination and their bravery in holding general elections, in voting, and in constantly organizing in many civil society organizations to resolve the problems. The press daily criticizes any abrogation of law and order by the government, and it is exposing corruption, probably to a higher degree than the US establishment media is exposing US corruption.

The churches are a strong voice of conscience, with leaders assisting in democratic organizing. Labor is highly organized and militant, as the recent general strike revealed. The women are working in at least two dozen organizations to be represented in the political discussions, in

land redistribution, in stopping the violence, in ending the HIV-Aids crisis. National developmental NGOs are highly efficient and working to overcome the extreme poverty by empowering rural peoples. As for the government itself, within the parliament, the debates are very lively and highly critical of executive branch policy.

The court system remains quite independent and ruled just recently that one executive action was null and void (discounting all mailed ballots for the election). Only the executive branch of the government is still acting unilaterally and very often, irresponsibly. One could point out many governments, including the USA, when such a case was operative, and it took time to change it. Within the ruling party, Zanu-PF, there is much debate, and power struggles, over the next steps, economic and political. The cabinet even has a member who says he will not join a political party (Minister of Trade and Industry Nkomo) in order to remain independent enough to do his job, and the Minister of Finance has pledged that all government agencies will follow the budget (Makoni). Zimbabwe -- its civil society, its political parties, and most of its government -- remains very democratic, involving higher levels of commitment and participation than other, more mature democracies.

Zimbabwe's economy, however, is failing. The reasons for that are many, including corruption. However, the concern is that in the USA, analysts seem to have forgotten the international context which is [sic] marginalizing all African economies. The debt of Zimbabwe in 1991, when it signed on to the IMF structural adjustment program (SAP), was equal to its defense expenditures during the 1980s when it was defending itself against apartheid incursions. Any new government in Zimbabwe will be strapped with apartheid debt. The war in the DRC (Democratic Republic of the Congo) was caused by an invasion by Uganda and Rwanda, encouraged by the USA, with the government of Zimbabwe defending the standing DRC government against military overthrow, a long-term policy of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). The war is highly unpopular among the Zimbabwean people, who criticize that expenditure, relative to social development needs, for the engagement was taken unilaterally by Mugabe, without reference to the parliament. With 6 governments and 3 guerrilla forces involved militarily, (colonial) instability in the DRC remains, yet global corporations are able to continue mining the minerals for incredible profits. The majority of the Zimbabwean people are demanding complete, immediate withdrawal, while knowing that any new government in Zimbabwe will be burdened with another (in addition to Angola) giant neighbor in turmoil.

As predicted by progressive Zimbabwean economists who advised not signing, the SAP has de-industrialized Zimbabwe; according to the latest figures, manufacturing output has declined by 25% since its high in 1991, with textiles now below its 1980 level. Structural adjustment has dismantled the internationally award-winning primary health care system in Zimbabwe and has made primary education unaffordable for many parents. HIV/AIDS has reduced life expectancy in Zimbabwe to about 43 years.

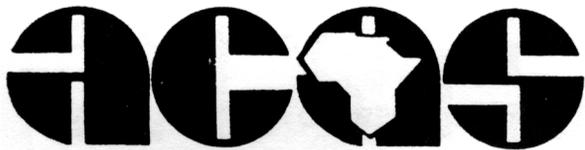
As is true in every other country where it has been implemented, SAP has also increased corruption in Zimbabwe. No international agency or government has taken seriously the need for land redistribution by offering sufficient funds to do it. When South Korea and Taiwan redistributed land, American aid provided hard currency to pay farmers for their land and the US army went to the farms with the South Korean army to enforce it. Land inequity in Southern Africa is a legacy of apartheid. No amount of planning or transparency will provide sufficient funds in Zimbabwe, Namibia or South Africa to compensate current landholders and to settle, with infrastructure, new farmers.

Instead of quickly labeling "Zimbabwe" (the people, the state, the executive or the economy?) as "self-destructing," we must insist on linking the suffering of the peoples of Southern Africa to the wider global issues.

Many Americans are involved in concerted work on debt cancellation, peace, HIV/AIDS, the WTO, structural adjustment. It is important to use the abysmal and rapid deterioration of the Zimbabwean economy to illustrate the effects of

- economic apartheid (land and inequity)
- colonial wars, which become endless civil wars -- Angola and DRC (USA is #1 exporter of armaments)
- onerous debt (apartheid debt)
- global corporations (mining for profit and directly fueling war)
- structural adjustment programs (privatization of health care/essential drug programs, education fees unaffordable to poor)
- USA fast-tracking intellectual property rights over drugs and plants, resulting in unaffordable medicine of all kinds, in biopiracy (TRIPs Plus, USA Trade and Development Act 2000)

The people of Zimbabwe are highly organized and dedicated to change; your understanding and advocacy contribute to their efforts.



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February 5, 2001

President Benjamin William Mkapa,  
United Republic of Tanzania  
The State House  
PO Box 9120  
Dar Es Salaam  
Tanzania,  
FAX 22-211-3425

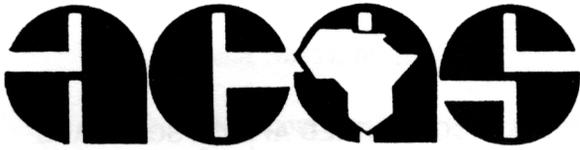
Dear President Mkapa,

The Association of Concerned Africa Scholars writes today to condemn the killings of activists on the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba in late January and the ongoing suppression of peaceful citizens exercising their democratic rights. We support the call of our colleagues in the Legal Aid Committee of the Faculty of Law of the University of Dar Es Salaam (28 January 2001) for an end to police violence and repression.

As a national association of scholars in the United States, many of whom have had a long association with and respect for the United Republic of Tanzania, we are deeply concerned by these violations of fundamental human rights and the killings on the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba on Saturday 27 January 2001. We were equally appalled by the reports of arrests, harassment, torture, injury and incarceration of the leaders of political organizations exercising their rights to peaceful assembly on these islands and in Dar Es Salaam. We condemn these actions unequivocally and call for your government to immediately put a stop to such measures and to investigate the abuses of the police and other security forces.

We note that the Legal Aid Committee, which has been providing human rights training for members of the police force since 1997, expresses particular concern at the behavior of the police force and we call on the government to ensure that the commanders of this force are held accountable for the actions of their subordinates.

Mr. President, we look forward to hearing from you the actions that your government is taking to put a stop to these violations of human rights and we will be following these events closely in



this country and working to make others aware of the reports from your country.

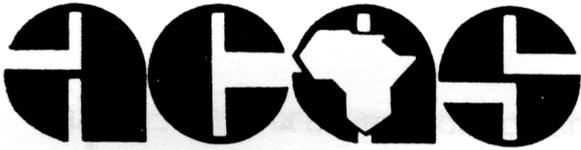
Sincerely,

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Co-Chair, Association of Concerned Africa Scholars  
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Fax 2666701  
Email: usembassy-dar2@cats-net.com

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Tel: (202) 884-1080 & (202) 939-6125  
Fax: (202) 797-7408  
e-mail: balozi@tanzaniaembassy-us.org

Secretary of State Colin L. Powell  
U.S. Department of State, Washington, DC, 20520  
Fax: 202-261-8577  
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31 January 2001

His Excellency Yoweri K. Museveni  
President of the Republic of Uganda  
The President's Office  
Kampala, Uganda  
Fax: 256 41 235 462

Dear Mr. President,

I write on behalf of the Association of Concerned Africa Scholars to express our deep concern and dismay over the kidnapping by Ugandan forces of Dr. Jacques Depelchin, whom many of us know from his work in the North American and African academic community. Dr. Depelchin was arrested at gunpoint on January 28, 2001 in Bunia, and taken to Kampala by force. He is now apparently under some form of "city arrest," and is engaged, in response, on a hunger strike.

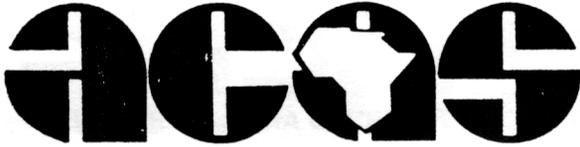
As far as we know, there is no justification for this action, and no charges have been laid against him. We thus urge that restrictions on Dr. Depelchin be immediately removed, and that his possessions be returned to him.

If, however, the Ugandan authorities have evidence that Dr. Depelchin has violated the law or committed a crime, then they should formally charge in open court and give him an opportunity to defend himself, with legal counsel, as guaranteed under law.

We also urge that your office to work to end the promotion of ethnic violence and genocide in Ituri province, and to encourage the despatch of neutral international observers to Bunia and Ituri.

Sincerely,

William G. Martin, Co-Chair



ACAS Executive\*

January 15, 2001

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Ambassador Harold Wolpe  
Special Envoy  
U.S. Department of State  
Via fax: 202 647 6301

Dear Ambassador Wolpe,

I write with some urgency regarding the deteriorating situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a situation that now threatens not just more conflict but serious ethnocide. Conditions in Ituri province are particularly alarming and yet conducive to immediate attention.

Both news reports and personal messages from the region have highlighted a growing polarization between ethnic groups, reportedly fueled by the Ugandan military's arming and politically appointing members of one ethnic group over another. While these differences have a long, colonial history, the fostering of them for armed conflict is particularly reprehensible. As the BBC report of January 5th, 2001 indicated (see [http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/africa/newsid\\_1102000/1102289.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/africa/newsid_1102000/1102289.stm)), this points towards an escalating pattern of war and ethnic conflict not just in this province but across the region.

More recent reports in the last week confirm, moreover, the escalation of conflict, the emergence of no-go zones, and increasing pressures against those, including members of the RCD-ML like Jacques Depelchin, who support grassroots peace initiatives across ethnic and political lines.

Americans, Congolese, and the international community alike face a series of deadly conflicts that will raise the cost of establishing peace and a stable political community in the DR Congo; action at this moment may prevent genocide and a much larger intervention down the road.

I thus urge you to use your good offices to investigate, with international allies, the situation in Bunia and Ituri province, and apply whatever pressure you can to defuse and de-arm ethnic polarization and support grassroots peace initiatives. Enhanced UN observation and investigation, at the minimum, and words of warning to those fostering ethnic warfare, particularly to the Ugandan military in this case, are urgently needed.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

William G. Martin, Co-Chair

Cc: Her Excellency Edith Grace Ssempala, Ugandan Ambassador to the United States, via 202-726-1727  
Ambassador Martin G. Brennan, U.S. Ambassador to Uganda, via [256]  
(41) 259794

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