

Introduction to AFRICOM Special Issue: Analysis and Activism

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Ever since the announcement by President Bush of the new Africa Command, or AFRICOM, in early 2007, resistance to this new imperial formulation has grown on the continent of Africa and in the West, including in the US itself. Other than Liberia, with its historic ties to the US, and Djibouti which already has a US military base, the rejection of AFRICOM on the Continent has been resolute. Yet, as the Bush II era comes to an end, Jr. has decided that he wants his legacy to be one which includes “compassion” towards Africa, and the mainstream media [the CNN to FOX continuum] appear to be ready to concede at least this to the lame duck, self-proclaimed “anti-terror” warrior. Bush’s ‘humanitarian’ goals in Africa, from mosquito netting to his PEPFAR Aids initiative, are strategically removed from both his domestic and his Middle East debacles. But they are also a counter balance to his Pentagon reformulations of AFRICOM at a tactically significant moment in US/China contestation in Africa, and his administration’s attempt to institutionalize change beyond his tenure. President Bush’s marginal humanitarian gestures, played up in the media and his Spring Africa tour, belie a major and continuing investment in military industrial and security spending in Africa as a new global geopolitics take shape.

This Special Issue of the Bulletin looks at AFRICOM, and is guest co-edited by Daniel Volman, whose research on US military spending and AFRICOM has provided much of the groundwork for a US-based opposition movement to this planned re-division of the

US empire’s map of global territories and strategic interests. Volman is an ACAS Board Member, and is Director of the African Security Research Project in Washington, DC, and has long researched security issues in US/Africa relations. We welcome Daniel’s expertise, and the data and analytical resources he provides our readers on this significant new problem in African studies and policy debate. Our issue opens with an overview essay from Daniel, followed by several tables delineating US military spending throughout Africa and the various programs they comprise.

Olayiwola Abegunrin next provides a perspective on the African rejection of AFRICOM, at popular, institutional, national and Pan-African levels. Seeing this as a form of attempted recolonization that will in fact destabilize the Continent by drawing it into the U.S. “war on terror,” Abegunrin refutes the professed security interests of this new US policy. Focusing on the case of Kenya, Volman and Benjamin extend this argument with the specific example of this long-time US ally. While Kenya has joined its neighbors in rejecting the AFRICOM project *en toto*, it nevertheless maintains numerous military agreements many of which are enumerated herein. Further, links are posited between this ongoing military relationship and Kenya’s deployment of force against its own citizens, most recently in the post-election conflict in that country.

The analysis provided in these four contributions is followed by a section on activist responses to AFRICOM. This

section also opens with an introduction and overview by Daniel Volman, which reviews the various grassroots participants in US-based opposition to AFRICOM, and rehearses the basic issues in an activist-oriented formulation that our readers will find useful in taking these concerns to a wider audience. This is followed by the Resist AFRICOM Statement of Concern, outlining the basic facts, concerns, and alternatives, and assembling a growing coalition of partners in opposition to this increasing militarization of the African continent.

We conclude the issue with two essays on the need for peace activists to resist AFRICOM, the first from ACAS Board Member and longtime activist Horace Campbell, and the second from Grannies for Peace. Campbell's

article engages the history of US militarization, the context of AFRICOM, the Middle East context, the centrality of Africa's oil and other resources, and global power posturing, before turning to the need for resistance in Africa and throughout the world at the grassroots. We conclude this issue of the Bulletin with coverage brought to us from GIN of the recent Teach-In Against AFRICOM organized by Grannies for Peace in New York, that included Sonia Sanchez, Emira Woods, Frida Berrigan and Horace Campbell, among others.

We hope the information contained here is both informative and useful for our readers as you contemplate the meaning of AFRICOM and your own involvement in efforts to respond to and resist this latest initiative in US policy relations with Africa.

AFRICOM: What Is It and What Will It do?

By Daniel Volman

On 6 February 2007, President Bush announced that the United States would create a new military command for Africa, to be known as Africa Command or Africom. Throughout the Cold War and for more than a decade afterwards, the U.S. did not have a military command for Africa; instead, U.S. military activities on the African continent were conducted by three separate military commands: the European Command, which had responsibility for most of the continent; the Central Command, which oversaw Egypt and the Horn of Africa region along with the Middle East and Central Asia; and the Pacific Command, which administered military ties with Madagascar and other islands in the Indian Ocean.

Until the creation of Africom, the administration of U.S.-African military relations was conducted through three different commands. All three were primarily concerned with other regions of the

world that were of great importance to the United States on their own and had only a few middle-rank staff members dedicated to Africa. This reflected the fact that Africa was chiefly viewed as a regional theater in the global Cold War, or as an adjunct to U.S.-European relations, or—as in the immediate post-Cold War period—as a region of little concern to the United States. But when the Bush administration declared that access to Africa's oil supplies would henceforth be defined as a "strategic national interest" of the United States and proclaimed that America was engaged in a Global War on Terrorism following the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 11 September 2001, Africa's status in U.S. national security policy and military affairs rose dramatically.

According to Theresa Whelan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs—the highest ranking Defense

Department official with principal responsibility for Africa at the Pentagon, who has supervised U.S. military policy toward Africa for the Bush administration—Africom attained the status of a sub-unified command under the European Command on 1 October 2007, and is scheduled to be fully operational as a separate unified command no later than 1 October 2008. The process of creating the new command will be conducted by a special transition team—which will include officers from both the State Department and the Defense Department—that will carry out its work in Stuttgart, Germany, in coordination with the European Command.

Africom will not look like traditional unified commands. In particular, there is no intention, at least at present, to assign the new command control over large military units. This is in line with ongoing efforts to reduce the presence of large numbers of American troops overseas in order to consolidate or eliminate expensive bases and bring as many troops as possible back to the United States where they will be available for deployment anywhere in the world that Washington wants to send them. Since there is no way to anticipate where troops will be sent and the Pentagon has the ability to deploy sizable forces over long distances in a very short time, Washington plans to keep as many troops as possible in the United States and send them abroad only when it judges it necessary. This, however, was exactly the intention when the Clinton and Reagan administrations created the Central Command and based it in Tampa, Florida; and now the Central Command is running two major wars in southwest Asia from headquarters in Qatar.

Africom will also be composed of both military and civilian personnel, including officers from the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the commander of the new command will have both a military and a civilian deputy. On 10 July 2007, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced that the President had nominated four-star General

William E. “Kip” Ward to be the commander of Africom. General Ward, an African-American who was commissioned into the infantry in 1971, is currently serving as the deputy commander of the European Command. Previously he served as the commander of the 2nd Brigade of the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) in Mogadishu, Somalia during “Operation Restore Hope” in 1992-1994, commander of the NATO-led Stabilization Force in Bosnia during “Operation Joint Forge” in 2002-2003, and chief of the U.S. Office of Military Cooperation at the American Embassy in Cairo, Egypt. The novel structure of the new command reflects the fact that Africom will be charged with overseeing both traditional military activities and programs that are funded through the State Department budget (see below for details on these programs).

The Bush administration has emphasized the uniqueness of this hybrid structure as evidence that the new command has only benign purposes and that and that, in the words of Theresa Whelan, while “there are fears that Africom represents a militarization of U.S. foreign policy in Africa and that Africom will somehow become the lead U.S. Government interlocutor with Africa. This fear is unfounded.” Therefore, Bush administration officials insist that the purpose of Africom is misunderstood.

As Theresa Whelan put it in her congressional testimony,

Some people believe that we are establishing Africom solely to fight terrorism, or to secure oil resources, or to discourage China. This is not true. Violent extremism is cause for concern, and needs to be addressed, but this is not Africom’s singular mission. Natural resources represent Africa’s current and future wealth, but in a fair market environment, many benefit. Ironically, the U.S., China and other countries share a common interest—that of a secure environment. Africom is about

helping Africans build greater capacity to assure their own security.

DoD recognizes and applauds the leadership role that individual African countries and multi-lateral African organizations are taking in the promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent. For example, Africom can provide effective training, advisory and technical support to the development of the African Standby Force. This is exactly the type of initiative and leadership needed to address the diverse and unpredictable global security challenges the world currently faces. The purpose of Africom is to encourage and support such African leadership and initiative, not to compete with it or discourage it. U.S. security is enhanced when African nations themselves endeavor to successfully address and resolve emergent security issues before they become so serious that they require considerable international resources and intervention to resolve.

On closer examination, however, the difference between Africom and other commands—and the allegedly “unfounded” nature of its implications for the militarization of the continent—are not as real or genuine as the Bush administration officials would have us believe. *Of course* Washington has other interests in Africa besides making it into another front in its Global War on Terrorism, maintaining and extending access to energy supplies and other strategic raw material, and competing with China and other rising economic powers for control over the continent’s resources; these include helping Africans deal with the HIV/AIDS epidemic and other emerging diseases, strengthening and assisting peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts, and responding to humanitarian disasters. But it is simply disingenuous to suggest that accomplishing these three objectives is not

the main reason that Washington is now devoting so much effort and attention to the continent. And *of course* Washington would prefer that selected friendly regimes take the lead in meeting these objects, so that the United States can avoid direct military involvement in Africa, particularly at a time when the U.S. military is so deeply committed to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and preparing for possible attacks on Iran. The hope that the Pentagon can build up African surrogates who can act on behalf of the United States is precisely why Washington is providing so much security assistance to these regimes and why it would like to provide even more in the future. Indeed, as argued below, this is actually one of the main reasons that Africom is being created at this time.

So why is Africom being created and why now? I would argue that the answer to this question is twofold. First, the Bush administration would like to significantly expand its security assistance programs for regimes that are willing to act as surrogates, for friendly regimes—particularly in countries with abundant oil and natural gas supplies—and for efforts to increase its options for more direct military involvement in the future; but it has had difficulty getting the U.S. Congress and the Pentagon to provide the required funding or to devoting the necessary attention and energy to accomplish these tasks. The creation of Africom will allow the administration to go to the U.S. Congress and argue that the establishment of Africom demonstrates the importance of Africa for U.S. national security and the administration’s commitment to give the continent the attention that it deserves. If Africa is so important and if the administration’s actions show that it really wants to do all sorts of good things for Africa, it hopes to be in a much stronger position to make a convincing case that the legislature must appropriate substantially greater amounts of money to fund the new command’s operations. And within the Pentagon, the establishment of Africom as a unified command under the

authority of a high-ranking officer with direct access to the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff will put the new command in a much stronger position to compete with other command for resources, manpower, and influence over policymaking.

Secondly, key members of the Bush administration, a small, but growing and increasingly vocal group of legislators, and influential think tanks have become more and more alarmed by the growing efforts of China to expand its access to energy supplies and other resources from Africa and to enhance its political and economic influence throughout the continent. These “alarmists” point to the considerable resources that China is devoting to the achievement of these goals and to the engagement of Chinese officials at the highest level—including President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao, both of who have made tours of the continent and have hosted high-level meetings in Beijing with African heads of state—as evidence of a “grand strategy” on the part of China that jeopardizes U.S. national security interests and that is aimed, ultimately, at usurping the West’s position on the continent. The creation of Africom, therefore, should be seen as one element of a broad effort to develop a “grand strategy” on the part of the United States that will counter, and eventually defeat, China’s efforts. It should also be understood as a measure that is intended to demonstrate to Beijing that Washington will match China’s actions, thus serving as a warning to the Chinese leadership that they should restrain themselves or face possible consequences to their relationship with America as well as to their interests in Africa.

So, what will Africom actually do when it becomes fully operational? Basically, it will take over the implementation of a host of military, security cooperation, and security assistance programs, which are funded through either the State Department or the Defense Department. These include the following:

Bilateral and Multilateral Joint Training Programs and Military Exercises

The United States provides military training to African military personnel through a wide variety of training and education programs. In addition, it conducts military exercises in Africa jointly with African troops and also with the troops of its European allies to provide training to others and also to train its own forces for possible deployment to Africa in the future. These include the following:

Flintlock 2005 and 2007

These are Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) exercises conducted by units of the U.S. Army Special Forces and the U.S. Army Rangers, along with contingents from other units, to provide training experience both for American troops and for the troops of African countries (small numbers of European troops are also involved in these exercises). Flintlock 2005 was held in June 2005, when more than one thousand U.S. personnel were sent to North and West Africa for counter-terrorism exercises in Algeria, Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, and Chad that involved more than three thousand local service members. In April 2007, U.S. Army Special Forces went to Niger for the first part of Flintlock 2007 and in late August 2007, some 350 American troops arrived in Mali for three weeks of Flintlock 2007 exercises with forces from Algeria, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Tunisia, Burkina Faso, France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP)

Both Flintlock exercises were conducted as part of Operation Enduring Freedom—Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Partnership (TSCTP) which now links the United States with eight African countries:

Mali, Chad, Niger, Mauritania, Nigeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria. In 2004, the TSCTP was created to replace the Pan-Sahel Counter-Terrorism Initiative, which was initiated in 2002. The TSCTP also involves smaller, regular training exercises conducted by U.S. Army Special Forces throughout the region. Although changing budgetary methodology makes it difficult to be certain, it appears that the TSCTP received some \$31 million in FY 2006, nearly \$82 million in FY 2007, and \$10 million in FY 2008.

East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative (EACTI)

The East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative is a training program similar to the TSCTP. Established in 2003 as a multi-year program with \$100 million in funding, the EACTI has provided training to Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Djibouti, Eritrea, and Ethiopia.

Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program (ACOTA)

This program, which began operating in 2002, replaces the African Crisis Response Initiative launched in 1997 by the Clinton administration. In 2004, it became part of the Global Peace Operations Initiative. ACOTA is officially designed to provide training to African military forces to improve their ability to conduct peacekeeping operations, even if they take place in hostile environments. But since the training includes both defensive and offensive military operations, it also enhances the ability of participating forces to engage in police operations against unarmed civilians, counter-insurgency operations, and even conventional military operations against the military forces of other

countries. By FY 2007, nineteen African countries were participating in the ACOTA program (Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia). In 2004, ACOTA became a part of the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) and the Bush Administration's FY 2008 budget includes a request for a little more than \$40 million for ACOTA activities. The GPOI itself, a multilateral, five-year program that aims to train 75,000 troops—mostly from African countries—by 2010, will receive more than \$92 million under the president's FY 2008 budget, which also provides \$5 million to reorganize the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo, \$16 million to reorganize the Liberian military, and \$41 million to help integrate the Sudan People's Liberation Army into the national army as part of the peace process for southern Sudan.

International Military Education and Training Program (IMET)

The IMET program brings African military officers to military academies and other military educational institutions in the United States for professional training. Nearly all African countries participate in the program—including Libya for the first time in FY 2008—and in FY 2006 (the last year for which country figures are available—it trained 14,731 students from the African continent (excluding Egypt) at a cost of \$14.7 million.

Foreign Military Sales Program (FMS)

This program sells U.S. military equipment to African countries; such sales are conducted by the Defense Security

Cooperation Agency of the Defense Department. The U.S. government provides loans to finance the purchase of virtually all of this equipment through the Foreign Military Financing Program (FMF), but repayment of these loans by African governments is almost always waived, so that they amount to free grants. In FY 2006, sub-Saharan African countries received a total of nearly \$14 million in FMF funding, and the Maghrebi countries of Morocco and Tunisia received almost another \$21 million; for FY 2007, the Bush administration requested nearly \$15 million for sub-Saharan Africa and \$21 million for the Morocco and Tunisia; and for FY 2008, the administration requested nearly \$8 million for sub-Saharan Africa and nearly \$6 million for the Maghreb.

African Coastal and Border Security Program (ACBS Program)

This program provides specialized equipment (such as patrol vessels and vehicles, communications equipment, night vision devices, and electronic monitors and sensors) to African countries to improve their ability to patrol and defend their own coastal waters and borders from terrorist operations, smuggling, and other illicit activities. In some cases, airborne surveillance and intelligence training also may be provided. In FY 2006, the ACBS Program received nearly \$4 million in FMF funding, and Bush administration requested \$4 million in FMF funding for the program in FY 2007. No dedicated funding was requested for FY 2008, but the program may be revived in the future.

Excess Defense Articles Program (EDA)

This program is designed to conduct ad hoc transfers of surplus U.S. military equipment to foreign governments. Transfers to African recipients have included the transfer of C-130 transport planes to South Africa and Botswana, trucks to Uganda, M-16 rifles to Senegal, and coastal patrol vessels to Nigeria.

Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA)

The ATA program was created in 1983—under the administration of the State Department Bureau of Diplomatic Security—to provide training, equipment, and technology to countries all around the world to support their participation in America’s Global War on Terrorism. In FY 2006, Sub-Saharan Africa received \$9.6 million in ATA funding; for FY 2007, the administration requested \$11.8 million and for FY 2008, the request was \$11.5.

The largest ATA program in Africa is targeted at Kenya, where it helped create the Kenyan Antiterrorism Police Unit (KAPU) in 2004 to conduct anti-terrorism operations, the Joint Terrorism Task Force in 2004 to coordinate anti-terrorism activities (although the unit was disbanded by the Kenyan government in 2005, and is now training and equipping members of a multi-agency, coast guard-type unit to patrol Kenya’s coastal waters. Between 2003 and 2005 (the most recent years for which this information is available), ATA provided training both in Kenya and in the United States to 454 Kenyan police, internal security, and military officers in courses on “Preventing, Interdicting, and Investigating Acts of Terrorism,” “Crisis Response,” “Post-Blast Investigation,” “Rural Border Operation,” and “Terrorist Crime Scene Investigation.” The creation of the KAPU was financed with \$10 million in from the FY 2003 Peacekeeping Operations Appropriation for Kenya, along with \$622,000 from ATA; the ATA spent \$21 million on training for Kenya in FY 2004 \$3.5 in FY 2005, and another \$3.2 in FY 2006. The administration requested \$2.9 for FY 2007 and an additional \$5.5 in FY 2008.

The second largest ATA program in Africa at present is one used to help fund the Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Initiative (TSCTI). For FY 2007, the administration requested \$7.2 million in ATA funding for the TSCTI and for FY 2008 requested another \$6 million in ATA funding for FY

2008 for Africa Regional activities, most of which may be used to fund the TSCTI.

ATA programs are also being used to train and equip police, internal security, and military forces in a number of other African countries, including Tanzania (\$2.1 million in FY 2006), Mauritius (\$903,000 in FY 2006), Niger (\$905,000 in FY 2006), Chad (\$625,000 in FY 2006), Senegal (\$800,000 in FY 2006), Mali (\$564,000 in FY 2006), Liberia (\$220,000 in FY 2006), Ethiopia (\$170,000 in FY 2006). Training courses provided to these countries includes topics like “Investigation of Terrorist Organizations,” “Rural Border Operations,” “Antiterrorism Instructor Training,” “Terrorist Crime Scene Investigation,” and “Explosive Incident Countermeasures.” In Djibouti, this training helped to create the country’s National Crisis Management Unit, within the Ministry of the Interior, to respond to major national emergencies.

ATA utilizes training facilities at three International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) centers, one located in Botswana. In 2003, students from Botswana, Ethiopia, and Tanzania attended a course on “Terrorist Investigations” at the Botswana ILEA center. In 2004, students from Djibouti, Malawi, Uganda, and Zambia took the same course there. In 2005, students from Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Tanzania attended a course on “Combating Domestic and Transnational Terrorism at the Botswana ILEA center and students from Angola, Mozambique, Uganda, and Zambia took a course on the “Police Executive Role in Combating Terrorism.”

Section 1206 Fund

This fund, named for a provision of the FY 2006 National Defense Authorization Act, permits the Pentagon—on its own initiative—to spend up to \$300 million each year to provide training and equipment to foreign military, police, and other security forces to “combat terrorism and enhance stability.” The fund received \$200 million in FY 2007 and has been authorized to spend

\$300 million in FY 2008 for programs in fourteen countries, including Algeria, Chad, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and Sao Tome and Principe. In addition to paying for the cost of sending private military contractors to recipient countries to provide training, the fund is also being used to supply radar systems, surveillance equipment and sensors, GPS navigation devices, radios and other communications systems, computers, small boats, trucks, and trailers.

Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA)

In October 2002, the U.S. Central Command played the leading role in the creation of this joint task force that was designed to conduct naval and aerial patrols in the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the eastern Indian Ocean as part of the effort to detect and counter the activities of terrorist groups in the region. Based at Camp Lemonier in Djibouti, long the site of a major French military base, the CJTF-HOA is made up of approximate 1,400 U.S. military personnel—primarily sailors, Marines, and Special Forces troops—that works with a multi-national naval force composed of American naval vessels along with ships from the navies of France, Italy, and Germany, and other NATO allies. The CJTF-HOA provided intelligence to Ethiopia in support of its invasion of Somalia in January 2007 and used military facilities in Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya to launch its own attacks against alleged al-Qaeda members involved in the Council of Islamic Courts in Somalia in January and June of 2007. The command authority for CJTF-HOA, currently under the U.S. Central Command, will be transferred to Africom by 2008.

Joint Task Force Aztec Silence (JTFAS)

In December 2003, the U.S. European Command created this joint task force under the commander of the U.S. Sixth Fleet (Europe) to carry out counter-terrorism operations in North and West Africa and to coordinate U.S. operations with those of countries in those regions. Specifically, JTFAS was charged with conducting

surveillance operations using the assets of the U.S. Sixth Fleet and to share information, along with intelligence collected by U.S. intelligence agencies, with local military forces. The primary assets employed in this effort are a squadron of U.S. Navy P-3 “Orion” based in Sigonella, Sicily. In March 2004, P-3 aircraft from this squadron and reportedly operating from the southern Algerian base at Tamanrasset were deployed to monitor and gather intelligence on the movements of Algerian Salafist guerrillas operating in Chad and to provide this intelligence to Chadian forces engaged in combat against the guerrillas. And, in a particularly ominous incident, in September 2007, an American C-130 “Hercules” cargo plane stationed in Bamako, Mali, as part of the Flintlock 2007 exercises was deployed to resupply Malian counter-insurgency units engaged in fighting with Tuareg forces and was hit by Tuareg ground fire. No U.S. personnel were injured and the plane returned safely to the capital, but the incident constitutes a major extension of the U.S. role in counter-insurgency warfare and highlights the dangers of America’s deepening involvement in the internal conflicts that persist in so many African countries.

Naval Operations in the Gulf of Guinea

Although American naval forces operating in the oil-rich Gulf of Guinea and other areas along Africa’s shores are formally under the command of the U.S. Sixth Fleet, based in the Mediterranean, and other U.S. Navy commands, Africom will also help coordinate naval operations along the African coastline. As U.S. Navy Admiral Henry G. Ulrich III, the commander of U.S. Naval Forces (Europe) put it to reporters at Fort McNair in Washington, DC, in June 2007, “we hope, as they [Africom] stand up, to fold into their intentions and their planning,” and his command “will adjust, as necessary” as Africom becomes operational.

The U.S. Navy has been steadily increasing the level and pace of its operations in African waters in recent years, including the deployment of two aircraft carrier battle

groups off the coast of West Africa as part of the “Summer Pulse” exercise in June 2004, when identical battle groups were sent to every ocean around the globe to demonstrate that the United States was still capable of bringing its military power to bear simultaneously in every part of the world despite its commitment to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

More recently, American naval forces led an unprecedented voyage by a NATO fleet that circumnavigated the African continent from August to September 2007. Under the command of its flagship, the guided missile cruiser U.S.S. Normandy, the ships of Standing NATO Maritime Group One—composed of warships from Denmark, Portugal, the Netherlands, Canada, Germany, and the United States—conducted what were described as “presence operations” in the Gulf of Guinea, then proceeded to South Africa, where they participated in the Amazolo exercises being held by the South African Navy, and then sailed to the waters off the coast of Somalia to conduct more “presence operations” in a region which has experienced an upsurge in piracy. Later that same month, the guided missile destroyer U.S.S. Forrest Sherman arrived off South Africa to engage in a separate joint training exercise with the South African Navy frigate S.A.S. Amatola.

And in another significant expansion of U.S. Navy operations in Africa, the U.S.S. Fort McHenry amphibious assault ship began a six-month deployment to the Gulf of Guinea in November 2007. The ship carries 200-300 sailors and U.S. Coast Guard personnel and will call at ports in eleven countries (Angola, Benin, Cameroon, the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, and Togo). Its mission is to serve as a “floating schoolhouse” to train local forces in port and oil-platform security, search-and rescue missions, and medical and humanitarian assistance. According to Admiral Ulrich, the deployment matches up perfectly with the

work of the new Africa Command. “If you look at the direction that the Africa Command has been given and the purpose of standing up the Africom, you’ll see that the (Gulf of Guinea) mission is closely aligned,” he told reporters.

Base Access Agreements for Cooperative Security Locations and Forward Operating Sites

Over the past few years, the Bush administration has negotiated base access agreements with the governments of Gabon, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, Tunisia, Namibia, Sao Tome, Senegal, Uganda, and Zambia. Under these agreements, the United States gains access to local military bases and other facilities so that they can be used by American forces as transit bases or as forward operating bases for combat, surveillance, and other military operations. They remain the property of the host African government and are not American bases in a legal sense, so that U.S. government officials are, technically, telling the truth when they deny that the United States has bases in these countries. To date, the United States has done little to improve the capabilities of these facilities, so that there is little or no evidence of an American military presence at these locations.

In addition to these publicly acknowledged base access agreements, the Pentagon was granted permission to deploy P-3 “Orion” aerial surveillance aircraft at the airfield at Tamanrasset in southern Algeria under an agreement reportedly signed in during Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika’s visit to Washington in July 2003. The Brown and Root-Condor, a joint venture between a subsidiary of the American company, Halliburton, and the Algerian state-owned oil company, Sonatrach, is currently under contract to enlarge military air bases at Tamanrasset and at Bou Saada. In December 2006, Salafist forces used an improvised mine and small arms to attack a convoy of

Brown and Root-Condor employees who were returning to their hotel in the Algerian town of Bouchaaoui, killing an Algerian driver and wounding nine workers, including four Britons and one American.

Over the course of the next eighteen months, there is one major issue related to the new command that remains to be resolved: whether and where in Africa will Africom establish a regional headquarters. A series of consultations with the governments of a number of African countries—including Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Djibouti, Kenya—following the announcement of Africom found that none of them were willing to commit to hosting the new command. As a result, the Pentagon has been forced to reconsider its plans and in June 2007 Ryan Henry, the Principal Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense for Policy told reporters that the Bush administration now intended to establish what he called “a distributed command” that would be “networked” in several countries in different regions of the continent. Under questioning before the Senate Africa Subcommittee on 1 August 2007, Assistant Secretary Whelan said that Liberia, Botswana, Senegal, and Djibouti were among the countries that had expressed support for Africom—although only Liberia has publicly expressed a willingness to play host to Africom personnel—which clearly suggests that these countries are likely to accommodate elements of Africom’s headquarters staff when they eventually establish a presence on the continent sometime after October 2008.

Daniel Volman is the Director of the African Security Research Project in Washington, DC and the author of numerous articles on US security policy and African security issues. [An earlier version of this article appeared in the *Review of African Political Economy*, Vol. 34, No. 114, (December 2007), pp. 737-744.]

U.S. Military Programs in Africa, U.S. Policy Toward Africa, and AFRICOM

Daniel Volman

Introduction: Dollars in thousands. Data is current as of 21 December 2007. Sources are listed at the end. See “Description” section below for a description of each program.

<u>Country</u>	FMS FY 2006 Actual Delivery	FMS FY 2007 Estimated Delivery	FMS FY 2008 Estimated Delivery	FMF FY 2006 Actual Funding	FMF FY 2007 Request Funding	FMF FY 2008 Request Funding
Algeria						
Angola						
Botswana	866					
Cameroon						
Chad	1,816					
Dem. Rep. Congo	1,255					600
Djibouti	7,000	4,000	4,000	3,960	4,000	3,200
Eq. Guinea						
Eritrea	240					
Ethiopia	8,852	2,000	2,000	1,980	2,000	850
Ghana	78	400	400	495	400	300
Guinea						200
Kenya	1,600	2,525	25		25	800
Liberia	1,200	1,600	1,600	1,980	1,600	1,000
Mali	3,727					
Morocco	11,828			12,375	12,500	3,655
Niger						
Nigeria	4,201	800	800	990	800	1,350
Rep. of Congo						
Rwanda						
Sao Tome	4					
Senegal	164	2,470	2,250	495	400	
South Africa	699					100
Tunisia	6,947			8,413	8,415	2,064
Uganda	3,017					
Zambia						
Africa Regional				3,960		
Afr. Coastal and Border Security				3,960	4,000	1,980
<u>Total</u> Sub-Saharan Africa	31,542	14,120	11,075	13,860	14,825	8,800

<u>Country</u>	DCS FY 2006 Actual Delivery	DCS FY 2007 Estimated Delivery	DCS FY 2008 Estimated Delivery	EDA FY 2006 Delivery Actual Acquisition Value
Algeria	243,368	37,933	175,052	
Angola	14,529	2,333	1,101	
Botswana	7,937	1,577	2,097	
Cameroon	2	324	1,243	
Chad	43			
Dem. Rep. Congo				
Djibouti	2,521	438	1,084	633
Eq. Guinea				
Eritrea				
Ethiopia	575	712	750	
Ghana	477	184	37	746
Guinea	10	368	50	
Kenya	1,888	867	3,108	
Liberia	1	20	5	
Mali	74	807	37	
Morocco	22,114	5,943	18,871	74,486
Niger	126	75	374	
Nigeria	2,858	3,631	17,112	
Rep. of Congo				
Rwanda	388	616	85	
Sao Tome				
Senegal	394	19	93	880
South Africa	11,887	16,703	61,448	
Tunisia				13,841
Uganda	3,302	277	91	4,097
Zambia				
<u>Total</u>	51,237	31,797	92,183	2,348
Sub-Saharan Africa				

<u>Country</u>	IMET (\$ in thousands)			IMET (# of students)
	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Request	FY 2008 Request	FY 2006 Actual
Algeria	823	840	700	36
Angola	486	400	500	13
Botswana	760	690	690	42
Cameroon	231	295	295	8
Chad	342	295	100	14
Dem. Rep. Congo	306	220	500	16
Djibouti	307	345	350	5
Eq. Guinea		49	45	
Eritrea		445		
Ethiopia	594	640	650	9
Ghana	645	640	600	25
Guinea	376	345	350	57
Kenya		45	550	
Liberia	130	245	300	77
Mali		45	250	
Morocco	1,884	1,975	1,800	116
Niger		45	100	
Nigeria	792	590	800	98
Rep. of Congo	155	105	100	5
Rwanda	288	270	400	108
Sao Tome	289	200	200	29
Senegal	1,089	1,135	1,100	31
South Africa		45	900	
Tunisia	1,847	1,085	1,800	83
Uganda	340	295	500	72
Zambia	261	245	400	108
Africa Regional	136		133	
<u>Total</u>	10,177	10,830	13,663	1,169
Sub-Saharan Africa				

Description of Programs

FMS deliveries: Foreign Military Sales is the total dollar value of defense articles delivered to a foreign government or international organization in any fiscal year

FMF: Foreign Military Financing is the amount of credit/grant aid extended to a foreign government or international organization in any fiscal year for the procurement of defense articles. Such articles may be procured from U.S. Defense agencies through FMS or may be negotiated directly with U.S. commercial suppliers following the approval of the Department of Defense. FMF credit is extended in the form of direct loans, which must be repaid, or grants, which do not require repayment. However, repayments of nearly all FMF loans to African countries are waived, so that in effect all FMF aid for Africa is free.

DCS: The total dollar value of Direct Commercial Sales purchased directly from U.S. manufacturers by foreign governments. The Office of Defense Trade Controls of the Department of State licenses all sales.

EDA: Excess Defense Articles is the acquisition cost of surplus U.S. defense articles transferred to foreign governments by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency of the Department of Defense.

IMET: International Military Education and Training is the dollar value allocated in any fiscal year for the training of foreign military personnel at U.S. military facilities and the total number of students trained at these institutions.

For More Information

For additional information, see Rachel Stohl, “U.S. Arms Exports and Military Assistance in the ‘Global War on Terror,’” Center for Defense Information (CDI), Washington, DC, 6 September 2007, available from CDI: www.cdi.org. See also country studies on Algeria, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya linked to the above report.

Sources: Congressional Budget Justification for Foreign Operations, Fiscal Year 2008, U.S. Department of State, 2007 and Foreign Military Sales, Foreign Military Construction Sales, and Other Security Cooperation Historical Facts as of September 30, 2006, U.S. Defense Security Cooperation Agency, 2006.

AFRICOM: The U.S. Militarization of Africa

Olayiwola Abegunrin

President George W. Bush approved a Pentagon plan in January 2007 to set up Africa Command Center, to be known as AFRICOM. According to the plan, the Command Center is set to complete and go into service by the end of September 2008. The United States Defense Secretary Robert Gates revealed the new plans as he addressed the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee on the defense spending President Bush proposed in his 2008 budget submitted to the Congress that, “The main purposes of the Africa Command Center would be to fight the war on terror, cooperation, provide humanitarian aid, building partnership capability, oversee security, defense support to non-military missions, and if directed, military training operations designed to help local governments.”

The U.S. had initially reportedly intended to build AFRICOM in Algeria but it was turned down, thus, it had to relocate it to Stuttgart, Germany for the time being. African countries hold that U.S. has harbored with ulterior motives. Mohamed Bedjaoui, the Algerian Minister of State and Foreign Affairs, “questioned that why no one had ever proposed for any anti-terror cooperation with Algeria in the 1990s when terrorist violence went on rampant and wrought great havoc?” Africans are suspicious of the U.S. intentions. Majority of Africans believe that the aim of the U.S. for the Africa Command Center is to protect its potential oil interests in Africa. Second reason is that U.S. is worried about current rapid increased economic and diplomatic competition from China in Africa.

AFRICOM is an example of U.S. military expansion in the name of the war on terrorism, when it is in fact designed to secure Africa’s resources and ensure American interests on the continent. AFRICOM represents a policy of U.S.

military-driven expansionism that will only enhance political instability, conflict, and the deterioration of state security in Africa. This is a project that most African countries have rejected to be located on their soil. African leaders are opposed to U.S. permanent military command bases/installations on African soil. Early (September 2007) this year the Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states defense ministers have decided that no member states would host AFRICOM. Nigeria, Ghana, Libya and Morocco have joined in opposing AFRICOM in Africa. However, Liberian Government has accepted to host AFRICOM on her soil. Of course we should not be surprised that President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia has accepted to host AFRICOM, after all Liberia is the American stepchild in Africa. AFRICOM is a deadly project to accept for any African country that wants peace and stability. Accepting this project would be a recipe to intensify anti-Americanism and for Al-Qaeda to make that African country a target of terrorist attack. AFRICOM would destabilize an already fragile continent, which would be forced to engage with U.S. interests on military terms.

Militarization of Africa with the U.S. designed so-called AFRICOM is not the solution to Africa’s problem. What African countries need is development of their own institutions for security, political and economic independence; massive infusion of foreign direct investment, fair equitable trade, access to U.S. markets, and for U.S. to decrease/or total removal of agricultural subsidies, debt relief and improved Official Development Assistance tailored towards the development aspirations of (recipient countries) African countries and not AFRICOM that will only lead to militarizing the continent.

What has President Bush's current policy in Somalia achieved but chaos and more disasters for the Somali people? AFRICOM is another U.S. strategy of recolonization of Africa through the so-called military assistance to the continent. The age of gun-

boat diplomacy is over. Africans do not need this in this twenty-first century.

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U.S. Military Activities in Kenya

By Daniel Volman and Jesse Benjamin

Once President George Bush's special envoy to the Kenyan crisis, Jendayi Fraser (US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs) has admitted that the elections in Kenya were seriously flawed (a polite way of saying they are fraudulent) and ordered President Mwai Kibaki to meet the opposition leader, Raile Odinga, it was easy for the corporate Western media to forget that the United States Ambassador in Kenya only weeks earlier had declared the elections free and fair. Bush and Fraser's hands were pushed by the emerging evidence that the elections were illegitimate and that the violence, on both sides, had been orchestrated.¹ Maintaining a lopsided alliance with the Kibaki government would not be so easy in the glare of public opinion, now cast briefly on the Kenyan nation, and so we saw a total flip-flop in US policy.

But neither position is contradictory as the US is heavily invested in stability in Kenya.

Kenya has long been a key military partner of the United States and a major African recipient of U.S. military assistance. This strong Western loyalty starts in Kenya's settler-colonial roots. Kenya's first President, Jomo Kenyatta famously promised close allegiance with Great Britain before the former colonial power agreed to release him from jail and grant independence with him and his party cleared to take the helm. This neo-colonial relationship shifted during the Cold War to a closer Kenyatta/US relationship which was cemented by his successor, Daniel arap Moi, in 1978. So

close was this relationship that Moi's tenure as a ruthless one-party dictator – replete with political detention, publicly acknowledged torture facilities in Nyayo House [the seat of KANU party rule and the largest skyscraper in Nairobi], and quasi-open assassination of political rivals² – was characterized by republican and democratic US governments alike as a stable democracy and a reliable trading partner.

US military assistance was indirectly present and crucial to the maintenance of the Moi regime and its domestic suppression of opposition and multiple party politics, most notably in 1992 when the government was implicated in fomenting ethnic violence to destabilize the country, sabotage the elections, and legitimize authoritarian rule. Kenya also played a crucial role in US-sponsored Cold War regional geopolitics, and continues to do so in the War-on-Terror era today. When opposition party politics finally resulted in Mwai Kibaki of the NARC coalition being elected in 2002, the US gradually reoriented its relationship with Kenya, tentative at first, but gradually resuming its patron-client trajectory in recent years.

This can be seen in recently uncovered weapons trade statistics, which have now returned to and surpassed Moi-era levels. The Pentagon gave Kenya \$1.6 million worth of weaponry and other military assistance in 2006, and an estimated \$2.5 million in 2007, through its Foreign Military Sales Program. In 2008, the Bush Administration expects to

provide Kenya with \$800,000 in Foreign Military Financing Program funds to pay for further arms purchases. Kenya has also been permitted to make large arms deals directly with private American arms producers through the State Department's Direct Commercial Sales Program. Kenya took delivery of \$1.9 million worth of arms this way in 2005, got an estimated \$867,000 worth in 2007, and is expected to receive another \$3.1 million worth this year.

In addition, the Bush Administration intends to spend \$550,000 in 2008 to train Kenyan military officers in the United States through the International Military Education and Training Program at military academies and other military educational institutions in the United States.

The United States is also providing training and equipment to Kenya's military, internal security, and police forces via several global and regional programs. These include, the:

- The East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative established in 2003 as a multi-year program with \$100 million in funding to provide training to Kenya as well as to Uganda, Tanzania, Djibouti, Eritrea, and Ethiopia.
- The Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) Program was created in 1983—under the administration of the State Department Bureau of Diplomatic Security—to provide training, equipment, and technology to countries all around the world to support their participation in the US's Global War on Terrorism. The largest ATA program in Africa is targeted at Kenya, where it helped create the Kenyan Antiterrorism Police Unit (KAPU) in 2004 to conduct anti-terrorism operations, the Joint Terrorism Task Force in 2004 to coordinate anti-terrorism activities (although the unit was disbanded by the Kenyan government in 2005), and is now training and equipping members of a multi-agency, coast guard-type unit to patrol Kenya's coastal waters. Between 2003 and 2005 (the most recent years for which this

information is available), ATA provided training both in Kenya and in the United States to 454 Kenyan police, internal security, and military officers. Much like School of the Americas trained troops and officers in Latin America, these [in part] US-trained forces in Kenya were deployed against their own civilians during the post-elections violence and electoral controversy in early 2008, discussed further below.³

The creation of the KAPU was financed with \$10 million in 2003, along with \$622,000 from ATA; the ATA spent \$21 million on training for Kenya in 2004, \$3.5 in 2005, and another \$3.2 in 2006. The Bush administration requested \$2.9 for 2007 and an additional \$5.5 in 2008.

- The Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) was created in October 2002 to conduct naval and aerial patrols in the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, and the eastern Indian Ocean as part of the effort to detect and counter the activities of terrorist groups in the region. The CJTF-HOA used military facilities in Kenya as well as in Djibouti and Ethiopia to launch air and naval strikes against alleged al-Qaeda members involved in the Council of Islamic Courts in Somalia in January and June of 2007. The Kenyan port of Mombasa is central to US naval operations in East Africa, and is believed to have been involved in the US missile strike against suspected terrorists in Somalia on March 2nd, when one or more Tomahawk cruise missiles were fired from a US naval submarine into a remote area of southern Somalia on the border with Kenya.⁴

In addition, the Bush administration has negotiated base access agreements with the government of Kenya—along with the governments of Gabon, Mali, Morocco, Tunisia, Namibia, Sao Tome, Senegal, Uganda, and Zambia—that will allow American troops to use their military facilities (known as Cooperative Security Locations and Forward Operating Sites) whenever the United States wants to deploy its own troops in Africa.

Since 2002, the Bush Administration has built a close military relationship with the government of Mwai Kibaki and has played a central role in the creation of the very internal security apparatus that was deployed with such bloody results throughout Kenya. In the midst of the worst of the post-election violence, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, the acclaimed Kenyan writer and activist whose latest novel, The Wizard of the Crow, allegorically foretold many of these events, presciently stated: "Ethnic cleansing is often instigated by the political elite of one community against another community. It is premeditated – often on order from political warlords." He then went on to locate such premeditation in both the government and the opposition, and called for external investigations.⁵

The United States, thus has a direct responsibility for the post-election violence in Kenya during the beginning of 2008, and for bringing it to an end. Jendayi Frazer certainly surprised many outside the US with her reconciliatory comments, but one can be sure that she also has US military priorities in mind when she urged Kenyans to end the violence. In the end, the US role was less in

finding the path to peace than in containing and waiting the conflict out so its business as usual could resume with whichever government of, by and for the elite emerged. The use of divide-and-conquer government-fomented ethnic violence has rarely stopped the United States from building its alliances in Africa or the rest of the world.

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The Campaign to Resist AFRICOM

By Daniel Volman

Join the Campaign to Resist AFRICOM

In the summer of 2007, a group of concerned U.S. and Africa based organizations and individuals opposed to the creation of Africom—the new U.S. military command for Africa—came together in Washington, DC, to organize Resist Africom to campaign against the increasing militarization of U.S. policy toward Africa. ACAS voted to join Resist Africa at the membership meeting on 20 October 2007, during the ASA meeting in New York City. Resist Africom is working to educate people both in the United States and abroad about Africom and to mobilize

people in a campaign to prevent the creation of Africom in its present form.

The struggle against Africom has already achieved one major victory. The Bush Administration had expected to have little trouble finding governments in Africa that would welcome an Africom headquarters. But there has been so much public opposition to the idea in Africa that no government—with the exception of Liberia's—has agreed to let Africom set up shop on their territory, even though many of them have privately reassured American officials that they are eager to work with the new command. As a

result, the Bush Administration had to announce in February 2008 that Africom's headquarters would have to remain in Stuttgart, Germany, for the foreseeable future. This is eloquent testimony both to the impressive political maturity of the people of Africa's many nations and to the increasing capacity of civil society groups in Africa and of individual Africans to force their governments to limit their military cooperation with the United States.

This web site contains the current version of the statement of concern issued by Resist Africom in August 2007, along with analysis and data on Africom and other U.S. military activities in Africa, articles, and other useful documents. You are invited to go to the Resist Africom website: (www.resistafricom.org) for more information and to join the campaign.

What is AFRICOM?

Africom is a new military command that will take over responsibility for an area previously overseen by the European Command, the Central Command, and the Pacific Command and will assume operational control of activities formerly conducted by these three commands. President Bush made the first public announcement of the creation of Africom on 6 February 2007. Africom attained the status of a sub-unified command under the European Command on 1 October 2007, and is scheduled to be fully operational as a separate unified command no later than 1 October 2008. The new command will initially be based in Stuttgart, Germany, while it searches for African countries willing to host a base or set of regional bases on the African continent. It will constitute a unique new type of "hybrid" command, as it will oversee foreign operations previously undertaken under the direction of the State Department (DoS), the Agency for International Development (AID), and other U.S. government agencies. In addition, the deputy commander and many other staff positions will be filled with civilian personnel from DoS and AID.

Why Resist AFRICOM?

The Bush administration has emphasized the uniqueness of this hybrid structure as evidence that the new command has only benign purposes and that and that, in the words of Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Africa Theresa Whelan, while "there are fears that Africom represents a militarization of U.S. foreign policy in Africa and that Africom will somehow become the lead U.S. Government interlocutor with Africa. This fear is unfounded." Therefore, Bush administration officials insist that the purpose of Africom is misunderstood.

It is clear, however, that the differences between Africom and other commands—and the allegedly "unfounded" nature of its implications for the militarization of the continent—are not as real or genuine as the Bush administration officials would have us believe. *Of course* Washington has other interests in Africa besides making it into another front in its Global War on Terrorism, maintaining and extending access to energy supplies and other strategic raw material, and competing with China and other rising economic powers for control over the continent's resources; these include helping Africans deal with the HIV/AIDS epidemic and other emerging diseases, strengthening and assisting peacekeeping and conflict resolution efforts, and responding to humanitarian disasters.

But it is simply disingenuous to suggest that accomplishing these three objectives is not the main reason that Washington is now devoting so much effort and attention to the continent. And *of course* Washington would prefer that selected friendly regimes take the lead in meeting these objects, so that the United States can avoid direct military involvement in Africa, particularly at a time when the U.S. military is so deeply committed to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and preparing for possible attacks on Iran. The hope that the Pentagon can build up African surrogates who can act on behalf of the United States is precisely why Washington is providing so much

security assistance to these regimes and why it would like to provide even more in the future.

The establishment of Africom is also a further instance of the continuing transfer of the control and funding of American foreign policy from “civilian” agencies like the State Department and the Agency for International Development to the Defense Department. And along with control, comes freedom from existing legislative restrictions and oversight mechanisms. Furthermore, it is clear that Africom will rely heavily on the services of U.S. private military contractors, who are already participating in large numbers in current operations in Liberia and Sudan, among other countries. These “dogs of war” will be now be set loose all over Africa, just as they were in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In addition, neither African governments nor the people of African countries were consulted in the creation of Africom and their response to the president’s announcement has been almost unanimously negative. For example, the government of Nigeria has

publicly stated that it would not host Africom facilities and leaders of SADC have said that no member state should allow Africom to set up shop on their territory either. And public opinion, as expressed by civil society groups and in Africa’s increasingly vigorous press, has been extremely critical, and even hostile, demonstrating that the creation of the new command itself is causing unrest and instability in Africa.

Therefore, the creation of Africom is the latest, and most dangerous, stage in the increasing militarization of U.S. policy toward Africa. It is a command designed to fulfill the short-sighted and ultimately self-destructive vision of U.S. interests – to expand the Global War on Terror and to satiate America’s hunger for oil and other resources. We are particularly concerned that the creation of Africom constitutes another step in the removal of existing legal restraints and congressional oversight mechanisms on the conduct of foreign policy and in the transfer of control of foreign policy to the Defense Department and to private military contractors.

RESIST AFRICOM

AFRICOM: STATEMENT OF CONCERN

We are a group of concerned U.S. and Africa based organizations and individuals opposed to the creation of AFRICOM. AFRICOM represents the expansion of the role of the U.S. military – potentially shifting the face of disaster response and humanitarian assistance from civilians to military personnel. Our vision is a comprehensive U.S. foreign policy grounded in true partnership with the African Union, African governments, and civil society on peace, justice, security, and development.

Key Facts and Concerns Regarding the Creation of a U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM)

Background:

- On February 6, 2007, the Bush Administration announced plans to establish a unified U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), stating that it "will enhance our efforts to bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals of development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth in Africa."
- Currently, US military engagement on the continent is under three separate commands – U.S. European Command (EUCOM), U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), and U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM).
- Since 2002, with the establishment of the Combined Joint Task Force: Horn of Africa, the United States military has sought unprecedented access to the continent of Africa. The Global War on Terror has changed the geopolitical landscape and has resulted in U.S. privileging of military relationships over development and diplomacy.
- The projection that Africa may supply as much as 25 percent of all US oil imports by 2015 only enhances the strategic importance of the region, particularly in light of increased competition with China.

Our primary concern as organizations promoting peace, development, and justice in Africa lies in the projected structure and mandate of AFRICOM:

- The primary concern is that U.S. – Africa policy will be driven by military engagement rather than diplomacy, development, and a genuine partnership.
- Humanitarian work previously done by State Department and USAID will now fall under DOD directive. Tasks such as drilling wells and building schools that were once done by individuals in civilian clothing will now be carried out in part by Americans in uniforms wielding guns. The resulting dual-nature of the military will not only be confusing to African civilians but blurs the roles of armed forces and civil society.
- The Bush Administration is mapping out an approach to Africa that is more focused on security and resources than the development of Africa's economies. This could lead to further instability and insecurity throughout the continent.
- It is in the long-term strategic interest of the U.S. to amplify 'soft power'. An alternative framework that includes development and diplomacy, rather than militarism would reduce conflict and sources of terror in the region.

Concerns from the continent:

- On September 14th 2007, Nigerian media reported that the Nigerian government began meetings with West African governments and the leadership of the African Union to oppose AFRICOM -- the Pentagon's Africa command -- from establishing itself in the Gulf of Guinea region. This follows a similar decision by the 14 Nation Southern African Development Community (SADC) which recently refused the entrance of U.S. soldiers on Southern African soil. This growing opposition to AFRICOM should be taken into serious consideration as the Bush Administration furthers its plans for military expansion on the African continent.
- To date, the only African government to come out in full public support of AFRICOM is Liberia. Others, such as South Africa and Nigeria, have expressed deep concern over the role of AFRICOM and an expanded U.S. military footprint on African soil.
- While some African officials see AFRICOM as an opportunity for development and capacity-building, others recognize the inherent risks in having a U.S. military base on their own soil. There are fears that a country hosting AFRICOM will become a terrorist target or will become militarized simply for the sake of U.S. security and resource interests.
- African leaders are also apprehensive about the extent to which AFRICOM may violate rules of sovereignty and take the place of African Union (AU) forces that are very capable of defending the continent if given adequate resources.
- Local NGOs fear that the U.S. military will take their place in the development of their own communities.
- Civil society organizations throughout the continent have begun to speak out in strong objection to the command, insisting that it will destabilize an already fragile continent.

These voices must be heard. The State Department and DOD should open a public forum between governments, civil society, and the AU to ensure that every opinion is freely expressed.

We are a group of concerned organizations and individuals opposed to the creation of AFRICOM.

Africa Action

Africa Faith and Justice Network

African Security Research Project

Arms and Security Initiative, New America Foundation

Association of Concerned Africa Scholars

Center for Democratic Empowerment, Liberia

Foreign Policy In Focus

Missionaries of Africa

Pan Africa Network, Oakland CA

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Justice and Peace Office

Resolve Uganda

TransAfrica Forum

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Alternatives and Recommendations for AFRICOM

Instead of establishing a military command, the US government should promote a just security doctrine. AFRICOM is not what the people of Africa need and it is not what will achieve long-term stability on the continent. What is needed is a boost in education, job opportunities, health care, debt relief, fair trade policies, and many other things that would ensure development, peace and prosperity.

With enough pressure from the American people, Congress can decline to fund AFRICOM in the coming defense appropriations cycle. President Bush recently unveiled his FY2009 Defense Budget. Within it, he requested \$389 million for the AFRICOM headquarter operations in Stuttgart, millions more for operations on the continent, and a continuation of the funding for the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa located in Djibouti.

It is our hope that Congress will take this stand against AFRICOM. However, if AFRICOM must be established, we insist that:

1. The role of Ambassadors as point-persons in US-Africa policy is maintained and that the command structure is delineated to ensure that diplomatic efforts do not fall under the jurisdiction of the military.
2. Congress has sufficient oversight whether through regular reports or a special committee.
3. Restrictions are placed on funding to ensure that private military sub-contractors are never used to carry out the mandate of AFRICOM.
4. Restrictions are placed on funding to ensure that the military is under the same guidance as the State Department and that human rights violations never occur.
5. When training and equipping foreign armies, local communities are made fully aware of US presence and its intended goals.
6. The military acts in the most culturally respectful way possible when engaging in activities on the continent.
7. Every decision is made with the interests of Africans in mind.

Peace Activists Must Oppose the US Africa Command

by Horace G. Campbell

In February 2007, President Bush announced that the Defense Department would create a new Africa Command (Africom) to coordinate U.S. government interests on the continent. Under this plan all governmental agencies of the US would fall under the military, i.e.,

USAID, the State Department, the US Departments of Energy, Treasury, and the Department of Education, etc. In pursuance of the plans for the militarization of Africa, the US Department of Defense announced the appointment of General William “Kip” Ward

(an African American) as head of this new military command. On September 28, 2007, Ward was confirmed as the head of this new imperial military structure and, on October 1, 2007, Africom was launched in Stuttgart, Germany. The major question that is being posed by African peace activists and by concerned citizens is, why now? One answer may lie in the diminished power of the United States in the aftermath of the fiascos in Iraq and Afghanistan. I will maintain in this article that it is urgent that peace activists who want reconstruction and transformation in Africa oppose the plans for the remilitarization of Africa under the guise of fighting terrorism in Africa.

Why Now?

At the end of World War II the United States emerged as a leading political, economic and military force in world politics. It was in this period that the US established unified military command structures such as the European Command, the Pacific Command, the Southern Command, the Northern Command, and Central Command. Each command covers an area of responsibility. When this command structure was being refined, Africa was an afterthought, insofar as the United States had relegated the exploitation of Africa to the former European colonial exploiters. Hence, Africa fell under the European Command with its headquarters in Germany. Africa had not been included in the geographic combatant commands because it was expected that France, Britain, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Portugal and other colonial powers would retain military forces to guarantee western 'interests' in Africa. The collapse of the Portuguese colonial forces in Mozambique, Angola, Guinea and Sao Tome, and the collapse of the white racist military forces in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) gradually led to a rethinking by the US military. During this period the US had labeled all African freedom fighters as terrorists. In fact, when the US was allied with Osama Bin Laden and Jonas Savimbi, Nelson Mandela had been branded a terrorist.

Central Command

After the Iranian revolution in 1978-1979, the US established the Central Command. CENTCOM, based in Florida, was responsible for US military activities in East Africa and the Horn of Africa (Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Seychelles, Somalia and the Sudan). The Pacific Command, based in Hawaii, was responsible for the Comoros, Diego Garcia, Madagascar and Mauritius. Added to these commands in six continents are the logistical command structures, such as the Joint Forces Command (JFCOM), the Space Command (SPACECOM), the Strategic Command (STRATCOM), the Special Operations Command (SOCOM) and the Transport Command (TRANSCOM).

At the end of the era of formal apartheid, the US military had established the Africa Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) with the goal of supporting humanitarianism and ending genocide. This was the same US government that had lobbied the United Nations to withdraw troops from Rwanda in the midst of the fastest genocide in Africa.

Throughout this period the US military had been cautious about involvement in Africa in the aftermath of the painful experience in Somalia in 1993. This cautious stance changed after the events of September 2001. In the next year, the USA updated its ACRI "plans" to organize the African Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA). Under ACOTA, African troops were supposed to be provided with offensive military weaponry, including rifles, machine guns, and mortars. The Africa Regional Peacekeeping Program (ARPP) was also established in order to equip, train, and support troops from selected African countries that are involved in "peacekeeping" operations. Additionally, the US government launched a Pan Sahel anti-terrorism initiative (later called Trans Sahara Counter Terror Initiative). Behind these grand mutations lay one clear fact: the USA wanted to control the oil resources from Africa. Presently Africa supplies more petroleum to the USA than the Middle East, and US corporations want the US

military to guarantee the dominance of US oil conglomerates.

The Failures in the Middle East

The United States Central Command launched two major wars; these wars (Afghanistan and Iraq) pointed to the reality that high technology weapons couldn't guarantee military superiority in battles. It was in the face of the quagmire that the US faced in Iraq that the United States government announced the formation of a new command structure called Africom.

African Oil – The Real Objective

The invasion of Iraq, the instability on the border between Turkey and Iraq (with the threat of a Turkish invasion of Iraq), the stalemate over the future of Lebanon, and the continued struggles for self-determination in Palestine have sharpened the conflict between imperialists and the peoples of the Middle East. In the face of this situation, there are scholars who have argued and presented evidence that the government of the United States has been “fabricating terrorism” in Africa. This fabrication of terrorism carries with it racial stereotypes of “failed states harboring terrorists” to support a US military buildup in Africa. The hypocrisy of the US government in this region is clear when we see that while there is a major campaign against genocidal violence in Darfur, the government of the US is actively cooperating with the government of the Sudan on the grounds of “intelligence sharing to fight terrorism.” It is in the Sudan that the neo-cons are stoking the fires of war in order to get access to the oil resources of that country.

Challenging the European Union and China in Africa

The changed realities in the Middle East and in Africa have been accompanied by a new activist posture of China in Africa. Outmaneuvered in Asia by China, and challenged by the rising democratic forces in Latin America, the opportunities for the accumulation of capital by US imperialists are dwindling.

In the past, when there was a crisis (such as the period after the Vietnam War), the US could transfer the crisis to other countries via the IMF. But the European Union has challenged this calculus and created the Euro as an alternative to the US dollar.

It will not be possible for the IMF to transfer the crisis to Asia, Europe, India, the Middle East or Latin America.

This means that there is only one area of the world where the US imperialists will have free rein. This is in Africa. It is also in Africa where there is a movement against the economic terrorism of neo-liberalism and the unjust conditions of the IMF and World Bank.

African Responses

Thus far the majority of African states have refused to host the Africa Command. Despite the aggressive military and diplomatic efforts by the US government, not even the closest “partners” of the imperialists have supported this call for the Africa Command. There are but one or two states (such as Gabon and Liberia) that have openly called for basing the US Africa command on African soil. Though the United States has 5,458 “distinct and discrete military installations” around the world there are pressures from the military-industrial and oil complex for the US to have more effective resources in Africa to defend US capitalism.

In 1980 when the US Central Command was being debated, the citizens of the Middle East and North Africa did not sufficiently grasp the full meaning of this new military structure. After the militarization of the Middle East, five major wars and millions dead, however, it is urgent that peace activists oppose the plans to bring Africa closer into this arc of warfare.

The quest for peace in Africa has been hampered by the crude materialism of the present period and the intensified exploitation of Africans in the era of imperialist plunder and looting. This looting is hidden behind the Orwellian wordplay of “liberalization”, “privatization”, “the freedom of markets”,

“humanitarianism” and “the global war on terror”. Racist images of war, anarchy and “failed states” are mobilized by the international media to justify the launch of the US military command structure for Africa. Those who support real cooperation, solidarity and anti-racism must oppose the US Africa command.

We should remember the statement by New York Times columnist, Thomas Friedman who has written, “The hidden hand of the market will never work without the hidden fist – McDonald’s cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas, the designer of the F-

15. And the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley’s technologies is called the United States Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps.”

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<http://www.peacecouncil.net/pnl/08/770/770peace.html>.

NY ‘Grannies’ Say ‘No’ to AFRICOM

Global Information Network



Emira Woods of the DC-based Institute for Policy Studies at the Grannies for Peace Protest 3/30/08. Photo by: Rachel Eliza Griffiths, GIN.

Mar 31 (GIN) - Longtime activist Vinie Burrows and poet Sonia Sanchez, speaking to other 'grannies' at a church-based Teach-In on Africom, made it clear that proposed U.S. funding for a military command in Africa would be misguided and probably lead to war on the continent, not peace.

"How would Martin Luther King respond to Africom?" queried Burrows to almost 100 senior grandmothers and others at the Unitarian Church of All Souls in upper Manhattan on Sunday. Many were wearing bright yellow buttons of the Granny Peace Brigade organizers.

Teach-In attendees heard distinguished Africa experts criticize the command, already rejected by most African leaders, as too expensive (between \$389 and \$600 million) and unhelpful.

Speakers were Emira Woods of the DC-based Institute for Policy Studies where she co-directs Foreign Policy in Focus; Frida Berrigan of the NY-based New America Foundation's Arms and Security Initiative, and Horace Campbell, professor of African American studies at Syracuse University and author of numerous books.

Africom, a proposed military command, was announced last year to direct U.S. military and civil relations with 53 countries, except Egypt, from a base in Stuttgart, Germany. According to the Dept. of Defense, its mission is to fight terrorism, protect access to Oil and other resources, and counter China's growing economic involvement on the continent.

"Terrorism is what we faced from the colonialists' civilizing missions," said

Campbell. "Then there's the economic terrorism of the World Bank, IMF and Wall St. The U.S. is fabricating terrorism in Africa in order to justify military intervention," he charged.

"Don't forget that in the 1980s, (Nelson) Mandela was a terrorist and (Osama) Bin Laden was a freedom fighter," he observed.

Woods noted that Africom would put the Defense Department first in running health programs, drilling wells, building schools and other social programs in Africa - displacing the traditional State Dept. role.

"We must de-fund Africom," said Woods, urging the audience to contact NJ Rep. Donald Payne, chair of the Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health. Payne's office said the congressman objected to parts of command including failure to consult with his and other departments.

"Pres. Bush called his trip 'a mission of mercy,'" said Berrigan skeptically. Our government officials refer to killing as 'kinetic engagement.'

Sonia Sanchez, a playwright, poet and social activist, closed the meeting with a call for cultural understanding and a long poem on war and peace.

"All we are simply saying is let us begin this discussion of peace," Sanchez said in a recent interview. "Let us begin to invigorate this earth with peace. Let us begin again the whole idea of people being able to live on this earth in a peaceful fashion. Let us begin again the beginning work that must be done that says, simply, that peace is necessary."



Sonia Sanchez and another Granny for Peace at NY Protest 3/30/08.
Photo by: Rachel Eliza Griffiths, GIN.

The editor thanks: GLOBAL INFORMATION NETWORK for kind permission to reprint this article. GIN distributes news and feature articles on Africa and the developing world to mainstream, alternative, ethnic and minority-owned outlets in the U.S. and Canada. Their goal is to increase the perspectives available to readers in North America and to bring into their view information about global issues that are overlooked or under-reported by mainstream media.