

June 24, 1999

Christine Root
& David Wiley
729 Sunset Lane
E. Lansing, MI 48823

Dear Chris & Dave,

As we write this letter, Tarzan -- still the image that most defines Africa for millions of Americans --- takes on his latest Disney incarnation. In the new version, writes Rita Kempley in the *Washington Post* (June 16), "there's no racism ... There are, in fact, no Africans. While earlier movie versions of the tale have included unflattering portraits of native folk, here [it] has been politically corrected to such an extent that no indigenous peoples appear on screen."

Africa's invisibility, as APIC board member Salih Booker often reminds audiences, recalls the *Invisible Man* of Ellison's classic novel. It has real consequences. The enclosed *Los Angeles Times* article, for example, notes that per capita spending on refugees in the Balkans averages more than 11 times that on refugees in Africa. The resumed war in Angola, made possible by diamond sales recounted in the enclosed report from Global Witness, attracts only a tiny fraction of the attention given to Kosovo.

As you know, making Africa's invisible realities visible, by providing accessible information to those willing to use it in advocacy and education, is at the heart of APIC's work. We continue to reach out to new people: we add over 50 new addresses a month to our Africa Policy Electronic Distribution List, now at more than 2600 addresses. Last month the Africa Policy web site was receiving more than 300 visits a day, up from less than 200 visits a day at this time last year. Last month more than 20 people a day, including large numbers of teachers, filling out the survey on our web site to request a free poster of Africa's Regions. Just in the last few days it has suddenly jumped to over 100 people a day. One recent respondent, perhaps the farthest north we are going to get, was an elementary school teacher in North Pole, Alaska. Meeting this rising demand imposes strains on both staff time and budget. But we need to make investments like this in order to make Africa more visible beyond those already informed.

In addition to our electronic outreach, APIC's print publications, such as the recent Africa's Debt background paper, are being widely used by advocacy groups. And we have been able this year to organize more events outside of Washington, including recent workshops in Seattle, Washington and Flagstaff, Arizona. Our strategy for the period 1999-2000 calls for further increasing direct interaction with constituencies around the U.S. and with partners in Africa, which are the essential complement to our electronic publication work.

Twenty

Years of

Information

for Action

1978-1998

*Hi Chris & Dave,
Thanks for your
earlier contribution.
Thought you might
want to see the
enclosed anyway.
Bill*

110 Maryland Avenue, NE
Suite 509
Washington, DC 20002
202•546•7961
202•546•1545 FAX
apic@igc.apc.org
www.africapolicy.org

In April Executive Director Pearl-Alice Marsh resigned for personal reasons (see enclosure). The APIC Board appointed us as a three-person management team to direct the organization, with a commitment to continue the program strategies that have led to APIC establishing itself as a leading resource for Africa-focused policy and advocacy networks both in the U.S. and internationally. Despite the fact that we have been through more "transition" than we would like, our program work still continues on a rapid upward curve. We are confident in affirming, along with other staff and with the APIC board, that the organizational changes over the past two years are "growing pains" reflecting necessary adjustments for our structure to keep pace with new levels of demands placed upon us as a result of our successes.

Our current staffing picture includes some very positive developments. As of June 1, we have our first "Electronic Communications and Network Manager," Dawit Isayas. Dawit comes to us with more than three years of experience at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa. The three of us signing this letter include APIC Board vice-president Adwoa Dunn-Mouton, who you may remember was Staff Director for the Senate Subcommittee on Africa under Senator Paul Simon. Adwoa is taking a leave of absence from her board responsibilities to spend part-time in a staff role as development director and member of our management team.

We have also secured the commitment, beginning September, of Dr. Maliq Simone as the principal coordinator of our new Electronic Roundtable, which will be launched in the fall in partnership with the ECA. Maliq, currently at the University of the Witwatersrand, brings to the task extensive experience and contacts with both scholars and activists around the African continent, with African-based networks such as Codesria and the African NGO Habitat Caucus. In addition, we will shortly be welcoming Imani Countess back on board as project director of a follow-up to the 1997 Constituency Builders' Project, which will allow her to meet with constituency groups in several cities around the country over the next 18 months.

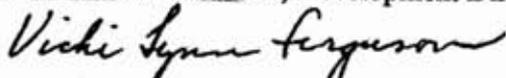
The bottom-line, however, is that we need your continued and increased support to sustain these advances. We are hopeful of additional funding from foundations, but it will not be enough. Over the past twelve months contributions from you and other APIC members to us have risen by 20%. In order to sustain our programs and to demonstrate to foundation funders that we are continuing to diversify our support, we need to do even better than that.

We are grateful for your support and depend on it. Please consider renewing your membership early, or making an additional contribution at this time.

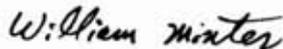
Sincerely,



Adwoa Dunn-Mouton, Development Director



Vicki Lynn Ferguson, Director for Education and Outreach



William Minter, Senior Research Fellow