

Sub-Saharan Africa: *Progress or Drift?*

After many years, Sub-Saharan Africa is undergoing a fundamental transformation of its sociopolitical order that was established during the 20th century. What will be the result of this rapid and complex change? Is Sub-Saharan Africa destined for progress or drift?

The outcome of Sub-Saharan Africa is uncertain. It could be a stable region with greater U.S. commercial ties that result in corporate profits and domestic job creation. Alternatively, it could be an unstable region, drawing the United States into humanitarian disasters and conflicts that threaten U.S. interests. The future will probably be a combination of the two.

In recent years, most African countries experienced positive economic growth and moved toward multiparty electoral systems. This has brought greater expectations for peace, prosperity, and stability across Africa. President Clinton's 11-day trip to Ghana, Uganda, Rwanda, South Africa, Botswana, and Senegal in March 1998 was unprecedented. It sought to build on what was then seen as an unfolding "African Renaissance" initiated by South Africa's transition to majority rule and to forge partnerships, as well as to strengthen U.S. economic relations with Africa.

Six months after the President's visit, a war involving combatants from six African countries erupted in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DROC). A year later, Ethiopia and Eritrea were at war. Moreover, the administration's proposed African Growth and Opportunity Act stalled in the Senate.

What does Africa's complexity, diversity, and rapid change mean for U.S. policy and interests? How can U.S. foreign policy shape this highly unstable, conflict-prone region? What are U.S. interests in Africa?

Africa's Challenge

Africa covers more than 11.7 million square miles and has more than 600 million inhabitants. There is no single Africa; rather there are 54 different countries (48 below the Sahara), and over 700 distinct nations or ethnic groups with as many languages and dialects.

Understanding Sub-Saharan Africa's complexity and contemporary geostrategic dynamics is a major challenge for the United States. Understanding Africa's natural environment is also crucial; three-fourths of the people still make their living from the land. Moreover, understanding where Sub-Saharan Africa might go depends on an understanding of where it has been—historically, politically, economically, and culturally.



AP/Wide World Photos

Nigerians cheering presidential candidate Olusegun Obasanjo

Crafting U.S.-Africa Policy

Africa is too diverse for the United States to apply uniform policy prescriptions. Its societies are moving in multiple directions. They must develop strategic frameworks and policy mechanisms for countries undergoing rapid and complex change. Africa is not alone, either. At the highest levels, all nation-states are being challenged by global market integration and, at lower levels, by the devolution of state authority to local actors.

Africa's already weak states may be experiencing the extreme effects of these global processes. For example, the West views the state as the primary means for political, social, and economic development. However, such states may not be fully functional in Africa. Similarly, ideas of boundaries and sovereignty associated with the nation-state may not be workable for some African states. Even the workings of regional and subregional organizations are complex and difficult to anticipate. Many contradictory trends make it difficult to shape Africa's multiple environments.

The most effective U.S. policy for Africa will be one that is focused and enables efficient use of limited U.S. Government resources for the region. Maximizing the limited development and

security assistance for Africa requires a coordinated interagency approach. Department of Defense peacetime engagement activities can influence African military professionalism in the midterm and contribute to regional stability over the long term. However, this military engagement must be combined with nonmilitary programs; otherwise its effect will be negligible and possibly counterproductive.

U.S. interests in Africa are unsettled and will evolve with time. No African country can threaten U.S. survival, security, or territorial integrity. Until recently, many believed that no U.S. security interests were at stake in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, the U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania demonstrated the error of regarding any region as a marginal security interest. In terms of U.S. security, Sub-Saharan Africa represents a flank that is also vulnerable to such transnational threats as epidemic diseases, narcotics trafficking, organized crime, and serious environmental problems.

Currently, U.S. values compel involvement in Africa. The United States has long-standing relations and historical ties with Africa. The continent is the ancestral home of 12 percent of the U.S. population, and African immigrants continue to make America their home. The United States also has significant and growing commercial interest in African markets as outlets for U.S. foreign trade and investment. Additionally, the United States receives approximately 16 percent of its petroleum imports from Africa.

U.S. involvement in Africa has been characterized by crisis-response: conducting humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, noncombatant evacuation operations, and peace support operations. However, the United States has the opportunity to develop policies and programs that can better shape the environment through coordinated interagency peacetime engagement. Future success in Africa will depend on coordinated multilateral actions that can respond to crises in the short term, and also pursue regional stability over the long term. This means increasing U.S. and other nations' investments in order to prevent state collapses and environmental disasters. Contributing to African institutions and organizations that are intended to prevent and manage conflict will save lives and resources.

Nigeria: Unpredicted Transition

Since its independence on October 1, 1960, Nigeria has been unable to fully realize its potential as a constructive regional leader because of domestic political instability, ethnoreligious regional tensions, economic mismanagement, and corruption, largely under military regimes. Nigerians have lived under civilian government for only 9 of the country's 38 years of independent rule. General Sani Abacha's coup d'état in November 1993 and the unprecedented political repression and human rights abuses over the next 5 years dashed the hopes of Nigeria watchers for a return to civilian rule during this decade. Thus, today's political opening brought on by General Abacha's unexpected death in June 1998 was entirely unpredictable and is indicative of the rapid political reversals that characterize Sub-Saharan Africa's geostrategic environment. Abacha's successor, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, signaled a transition to civilian rule by releasing political prisoners, appointing an Independent National Election Commission, and setting dates for local, parliamentary and presidential elections to take place between December 1998 and February 1999. On March 2, 1999, former President Olusegun Obasanjo was elected president with 63 percent of the vote. He acceded peacefully to power on May 29. However, the long-term success of the transition is largely contingent on restructuring the economy to end the distortions and corruption that have resulted from preoccupation with oil and oil dependence and managing the ethnoreligious regional divisions and tensions that are a part of Nigeria's federal political structure.

In the 1970s and 1980s, rising oil production and sharp increases in world oil prices brought a boom in oil revenues that resulted in corruption, mismanagement, and rising indebtedness when oil revenues dropped. Today, Nigeria's capital-intensive oil sector provides half of its gross domestic product, 95 percent of foreign exchange earnings, and about 80 per cent of budgetary revenues. In contrast, the largely subsistence agricultural sector has failed to keep up with rapid population growth. Nigeria was once a large net exporter of food but now must import food. Unemployment has remained around 30 per cent since the early 1990s. Overdependence on oil and lack of transparency and accountability in managing the multibillion dollar oil earnings have limited growth while enriching a small elite, especially military officers. A successful return to civilian rule will require the new government to diversify the economy and stamp out official corruption. This will require weaning senior officers from their access to oil revenues and paying a respectable wage to the armed forces, especially middle-ranking officers.¹

The military also suffers from regional and ethnic strains. All five of Nigeria's military regimes have been dominated by northern officers, drawn heavily from the Hausa-Fulani elite. In the latest failed transition to civilian rule, General Ibrahim Babangida, a northern Muslim who seized power in 1985, suspended and then annulled the June 1993 elections after it became clear that Chief Moshood K.O. Abiola, a wealthy Yoruba Muslim businessman from the south, had won. The 7-year transition program could not survive political power moving to the south. Nigeria remains plagued by its complex ethnic and religious regional divisions, with the Muslim Hausa-Fulani of the north holding political power, while socioeconomic power resides with the Christian and Muslim Yoruba in the industrial southwest, and with the Igbo of the oil-rich southeast. Nigeria's federal system barely holds together its more than 270 ethnolinguistic groups and three distinct regions. Northerners have headed the federal government for 34 of the 38 years since independence. The Yoruba, Igbo, and ethnic minorities are increasingly unwilling to accept northern control over the federal government. It remains to be seen to what extent Nigeria's military will stand on the sidelines and allow the political process to produce a "national" civilian leadership. Nigeria faces daunting challenges not easily managed by civilian officials nor military officers. Its fate will have a large impact on the subregion and on U.S. interests. Nigeria is the major power in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West African Peacekeeping Force (ECOMOG).

Key Trends

Assessing Africa's trends requires setting a historical perspective. Future probabilities cannot be determined based on last week's or last month's events. Even progress and setbacks over the past decade may seem insignificant relative to Africa's 2,500 years of political development. This period has seen the rise and fall of empires, kingdoms, city-states, and colonies. Cultures have flourished, withered, and endured. The Atlantic slave trade, which claimed over 18 million African lives, still shapes American perceptions of the region. Assessing Africa's future depends on an understanding of the history that set the stage for current trends and future developments.

Three factors are changing Africa's strategic environment: mixed economic growth and political progress; regional conflict and resolution; and growing informal strategic networks. Each factor reflects positive and negative trends that set the context for U.S. engagement in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Marginal Progress

Africa is neither sliding into hell nor ascending to heaven. Rather, it is making progress at the margins. However, its future is uncertain given the region's dramatic changes and complexity.

This past century, Africans spent nearly 70 years under foreign rule. The end of colonial rule resulted in great optimism in the early 1960s and expectation of rapid democratization and economic modernization. Hope dwindled in the

1970s and 1980s with a rash of coups d'état and military dictatorships, economic stagnation from mismanagement, corruption, and commodity price shocks, and intense civil wars prolonged by Cold War geopolitics. The 1990s have seen hope reborn. Civil wars ended in Mozambique, Ethiopia, Liberia, Namibia, and South Africa. Moreover, South Africa transitioned to majority rule, and more countries instituted multiparty electoral systems and economic reforms.

Yet, progress is uneven and easily reversible. Last year, Liberia was plagued with internal instability. South African crime is increasing. Ethiopia and Eritrea wage a violent border dispute. Mobutu Sese Seko's removal in Zaire (renamed Democratic Republic of the Congo), has not resulted in a more democratic and stable regime under the new President, Laurent Kabila. Armed rebellions have occurred in Sudan, Angola, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Congo-Brazzaville, Central Africa Republic, and the DROC. Genocide occurred in Rwanda. Africa's countries are undergoing domestic and interstate political realignment that will remain unresolved in the foreseeable future.

Stability Contingent on Key Countries

A few African states can significantly affect subregional development because of their territorial size, population, military and/or regional economy and strategic resources. South Africa and Nigeria are the most important in this regard. They have the potential to be major powers in Southern and West Africa, respectively. They also could be key players across the continent and worldwide.

The DROC also possesses vast mineral wealth and a strategic geographical location. It is in the center of the continent and borders the Central African Republic, Sudan, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Zambia, Angola, and the Republic of the Congo. Its mineral deposits have made it the subject of international and regional competition for two centuries.

Other states—Angola and Zimbabwe in southern Africa, Uganda, Kenya, and Sudan in East Africa, and Ghana and Senegal in West Africa—will have less impact, but still an important influence.

Forecasting Africa's highly fluid environment is inherently difficult as demonstrated by recent dramatic shifts in South Africa, Nigeria, and the DROC. Ethiopia and Eritrea's border dispute that began in May and June 1998 and produced war in 1999 also was unexpected, and it exemplifies the fluidity of today's Africa. So does Nigeria's equally sudden about-face from a failing dictatorship to full elections. Ethiopian President Negasso Gidada, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, and Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki were considered close, personal friends who had collaborated for years to overthrow the bloody military regime of Mengistu Haile Mariam of Ethiopia and had coordinated the policies of their two countries that emerged after the war. Only in retrospect are indicators of a deteriorating relationship apparent. The turning point was Eritrea's decision to issue its own currency and Ethiopia's responding demand for hard currency in cross-border trade. It is still difficult to understand why intensive conflict prevention efforts by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), The United Nations (UN), the United States, and others failed and why the two governments decided to expend major funds on heavy weapons and risk serious material and human lives in a major war over minor pieces of territory.

Uneven Economic Growth

African economies have performed well the past 4 years. In 1997, 27 African countries had annual growth rates of more than 5 percent. Overall African GDP growth in 1997 ranged from -8.7 percent to 12.7 percent. Only three countries experienced negative growth in 1997, compared to two in 1996, six in 1995, and twelve in 1994. Economic growth rates, in 30 out of 53 African countries outstripped population growth rates, leading to increases in per capita income.² Africa's 2.9 percent GDP growth matched global

Economic Performance Indicators of Africa, 1993-97
(Percentage growth rate)

Indicators	Gross Domestic Product Growth	Oil-Exporting Countries	Non-Oil-Exporting Countries	Least Developed Countries
1993	0	-0.3	0.1	-0.4
1994	2	1.4	2.6	-0.7
1995	2.7	3.1	2.4	4
1996	4	4.2	3.7	4.5
1997	2.9	3.6	2.3	2.4

Sources: Economic Commission for Africa, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (New York: United Nations).

Subregional Growth Rates 1993–97

(% p.a.)

Sub-Region	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Africa	0.5	1.8	1.8	4.4	2.8
North Africa	0.5	2.5	3.4	4.2	3.7
West Africa	-9.2	-1.3	5	4.4	3.8
Central Africa	2.4	4.5	4.9	4.3	3.5
Eastern Africa	1.5	2.5	2.5	3	2.4
Southern Africa	0	2	2.7	4	2.9

Sources: Economic Commission for Africa, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (New York: United Nations).

Africa's Trade and Commodity Prices, 1993–97

Indicators	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Africa's Share in World Trade	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.0	1.9
Oil Price (Brent Crude \$/b)	16.8	23.9	20.5	22.1	20.0
Non-Oil Commodity Price*	2.8	22.1	5.9	-6.3	7.6
Consumer Prices*	29.5	38.7	33.1	25.1	28.3

Sources: Economic Commission for Africa, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (New York: United Nations).

Sectoral Growth, 1993–97

Sectoral Growth	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Agricultural Output	0.9	3.9	1.5	5.2	1.7
Mining Value-Added	-0.5	-0.5	-0.2	6.5	3.8
Manufacturing Value-Added	-0.8	2.9	4.5	2.5	2.5

Sources: Economic Commission for Africa, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (New York: United Nations).

economic trends, although it lagged behind the 5 to 6 percent regional growth rates of Latin America/Caribbean, and Western Asia.³ At the subregional level, 1997 growth rates fell from their 1996 levels.

North Africa and Southern Africa experienced the largest decline. Unfavorable weather drastically reduced agricultural production. In North Africa, only Sudan's exports increased, reaching nearly 10 percent. In Southern Africa, 1997 growth rates fell from 2.5 to 2 percent in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi. In contrast, Botswana, Mozambique, and Swaziland's growth rates were 5 percent, 6 percent, and 6.3 percent respectively—higher than 1996. West Africa's economic slowdown was attributable to the larger subregional economies—Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria. However, Benin, Burkina Faso, and Mali had positive growth. Central Africa's decline in growth was due to internal instability, especially in Burundi and the DROC. The latter achieved positive growth in 1997, but conflict has reversed that. East Africa's economic slowdown was primarily weather-related. Rainfall destroyed crops and damaged infrastructure in Kenya, Somalia, and Uganda.⁴

Africa's participation in the global economy represents only 1.9 percent of world trade in 1997. This minor participation has shielded it from the creeping world recession that began in Asia. Nevertheless, Africa's reliance on exported growth makes it vulnerable to global economic downturns caused by the Asian currency crisis. The region's overall GDP fell from 4 percent in 1996 to 2.9 percent in 1997, largely because of declining oil prices and *El Nino's* negative effect on agricultural production. Lower oil prices, however, were offset by increased oil exports. As global demand and prices decline, African countries can be expected to increase such key exports as oil, gold, and industrial minerals, such as copper. This increased output, along with the Asian economic crisis, will further reduce prices and slow Africa's economic recovery. Improved food production and international trade are needed to reverse the two decades of stagnant growth. Economic growth over the long term will require addressing Africa's deeper structural problems. Essentially, Africa's economies are the result of the colonial period. They are oriented on exporting raw materials, which leaves African economies highly vulnerable to outside shocks. Additionally, Africa's agriculture production is not only vulnerable to adverse weather, it is also negatively affected by deteriorating infrastructure—roads, railways, airways, and harbors. This is especially problematic in conflict areas like Sudan, Angola, and Congo. Transportation infrastructures do not adequately connect farmers with markets. Improved pricing

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Sources: Economic Commission for Africa, *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics* (New York: United Nations).

systems and infrastructure development can improve agricultural production, which is the livelihood for most Africans. In addition to instituting macro-economic reform, most African leaders encourage foreign direct investment to achieve growth and sustainable development. In 1997, the International Monetary Fund extended Structural Adjustment Facility agreements to 22 African countries. To varying degrees, African officials have devalued exchange rates, lifted import restrictions, reduced state spending, and ended agricultural subsidies. While foreign direct investment in Africa has grown, the amounts and impact remain limited. Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, including South Africa, received only \$2 billion out of \$206 billion in private foreign direct investments to developing and transition countries in 1997.⁵ Foreign investors often seek mineral concessions or invest in highly strategic sectors; this does little to help Africa's problems in agricultural production or to create jobs to alleviate poverty. The results of economic reform and increased trade have been mixed. Despite positive growth, it is estimated that over half of Africa's population will live in poverty by 2000, with 220,000 defined as income poor.⁶ African economies remain burdened by foreign debt, widespread poverty, and high unemployment.

Competition over scarce resources will strain ethnic, racial, and religious divisions. Land and food shortages place tremendous pressure on Africa's populations. Environmental circumstances, such as low erratic rainfall, drought, and depleted soils, negatively impact human health and development and economic production. High unemployment has led to growing crime in many African urban areas. Some 30 African cities have populations over one million, with 25

having one to five million inhabitants. Five African cities—Lagos, Kinshasha, Johannesburg, Khartoum, and Cairo—have between five million and ten million.⁷

Persistent poverty and social decline also enable groups to be easily manipulated and mobilized against perceived threats to their fragile existence. For example, Rwanda's high population density, overcrowding, and rapid economic decline were the backdrop for Rwanda's genocide in 1994. Political hard-liners mobilized Hutu resentment against the Tutsi population. The Hutu had long resented the Tutsi for their social advantage that had grown out of Belgian colonial rule. Unscrupulous leaders manipulated this hostility to maintain their personal dominance and block democratic reform and ethnic power sharing.

Democratic Rule and Political Liberalization

African countries are moving toward more democratic regimes. In the 1970s, nearly 60 percent of African countries experienced military rule or coups d'etat. Today, only four governments are the result of coups: Niger, Gambia, Burkina Faso, and Burundi. Military revolts and armed insurgency still remain alternatives to elections. However, the region's elected governments have more than quadrupled over the past decade. Elections are held regularly in at least 22 Sub-Saharan African countries. Nigeria is the latest.

Some countries are allowing greater freedom of the press and more independent judiciaries. As a result, human rights issues receive greater attention than previously. African women are also playing a more active role in policymaking and conflict resolution. Their role in Africa's future development is pivotal. Women constitute the majority of agricultural subsistence workers. Following war, they shoulder the burden of social reconstruction as new heads of households. The status of African mothers also has special significance, with more than half of Africa's population under 15 years of age.⁸ Yet, African female enrollment in primary and secondary education lags behind males by one-third. Their continued advancement will partially depend on educational access, employment opportunities, and improved health care.

Paradoxically, the initial opening of African governments to multiparty elections has seen more violent competition. Party demonstrations

Democratic Republic of the Congo: Hope Beyond Reason

When President Laurent-Desire Kabila overthrew the government of Mobutu Sese Seko in May 1997, Zaire, renamed the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was widely considered a “failed” state. The central government lacked administrative reach beyond the capital, the national currency had lost value and was replaced by local notes and a barter economy, and the national army’s loyalty and discipline were unreliable. Thus, the expectation that President Kabila could easily establish political, economic, and military control in the vast territory of more than 2 million square kilometers within 1 year represented hope beyond reason. President Kabila seized control of a country that was “divided, demoralized and bankrupt.” President Mobutu’s 32 years of rule, from November 24, 1965, until forced into exile on May 17, 1997, was “marked by economic and institutional decay and by corruption and repression on an enormous scale.”⁹ Mobutu’s unpaid military largely dissolved in the face of the rebel march to the capital city, Kinshasha. Then, as now, the rebellion began in the east, largely in response to the central government’s inability to prevent Hutu militia from using Congolese territory for cross-border raids into Rwanda, and the related failure to recognize fully the Banyamulenge or Congolese Tutsis as citizens deserving government protection. Both Mobutu and Kabila failed to open the political system to unarmed democratic forces to begin the long process of addressing three of Africa’s most enduring challenges: ensuring the respect and defense of territorial sovereignty, given artificially drawn borders, clarifying the meaning of citizenship, given ethnic based communal identities, and exercising political leadership in the context of weak administrative systems and the state apparatus, including questionably loyal security forces.

and labor strikes are legitimate political expressions across Africa. They can quickly escalate into volatile confrontations with poorly trained and undisciplined police. The lack of police and judicial professionalism exacerbates public disorder, insecurity, and crime. It also encourages military involvement in internal security. Such deployments undermine civilian control, because armed forces may become more politicized with each intervention.

Another problem that plagued independent Africa in the 1960s and 1970s has returned with a vengeance: suppression of the press. There is increasing pressure upon editors and journalists, as well as newspapers, in a number of African countries, for example, Zimbabwe, where the media have become relatively free. Over time, modern technology, such as the Internet and satellites, will overcome censorship, but for the near future, this might be a major obstacle to greater democracy and a source of serious internal and external tensions for African regimes.

Authoritarian rule in Africa dates back at least to colonialism, when European governors

ruled by decree. In many cases, this rule precedes the colonial period. It will not easily give way to institutionalized democratic processes. The idea of sharing power with opposition parties or of responding to popular will is not widespread. Normal political competition that results in less ethnic conflict will depend on adherence to the rule of law and government accountability. Moreover, democratic progress will only be achieved when African heads of state share authority with parliaments and cabinets—consulting them before, rather than after, taking action. Transforming today’s system of power and patronage will be a long-term process. Nigeria’s progress serves as a hopeful indication of the future.

Conflict and Resolution More Regionalized

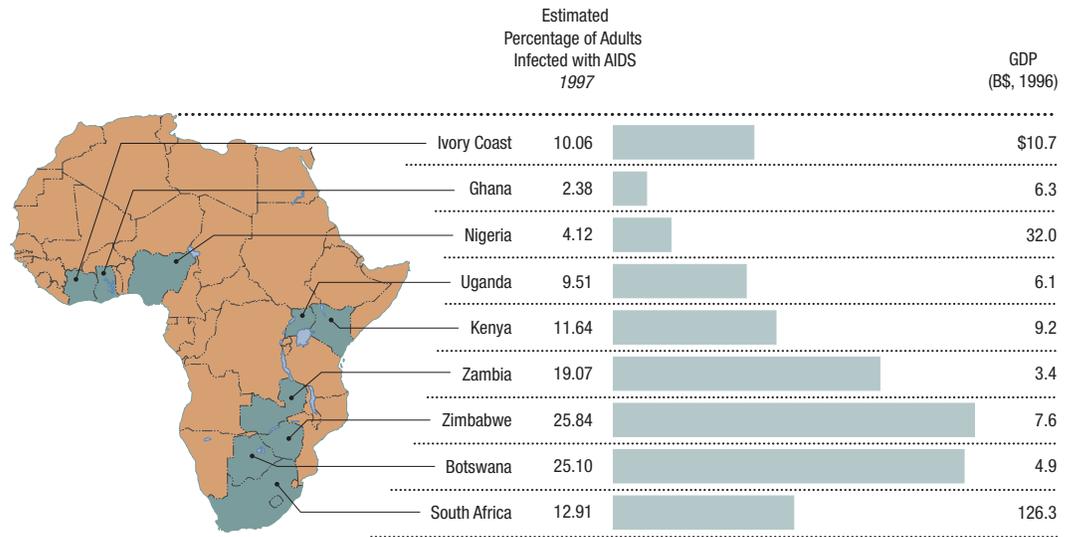
Political competition resulting in armed conflict continues in Africa, despite development of subregional organizations to promote dialogue and conflict resolution. Pressures to transform state entities and territorial boundaries inherited from the colonial era will remain a source of civil wars, border skirmishes, and interstate military intervention.

The social and humanitarian consequences are vast and will be felt years after hostilities end. Civilian noncombatants are often the victims and even targets of war. The long-term human effects—loss of limbs, other maiming, and psychological trauma—are profound. In the 1994 civil wars of Rwanda and Sierra Leone, life expectancy fell to 23 and 34 years of age, respectively. Life expectancy in Sub-Saharan Africa is 50 years due to the spread of diseases, lack of fresh water, and inadequate health facilities.

Civilian noncombatants are displaced from their homes during conflict. Refugee movements in the millions destroy the environment, contribute to the spread of disease, destabilize neighboring states, and damage the infrastructure. This is in addition to the destruction caused by combatant forces. Extensive technical and financial assistance is required for reconstruction. This effort includes restoring basic services demobilizing forces and reintegrating them into society.

AIDs alone ravages the continent. In 1997, an estimated 2.3 million people died of AIDS world wide. About 83 percent of AIDs deaths were in Sub-Saharan Africa. Two-thirds of the world’s HIV population, some 21 million people, live in the region. If this trend continues, AIDs is

African Epidemics



Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators: UNAIDS, The New York Times*, November 15, 1998, 20.

expected to reduce African populations in the next 10 to 15 years.¹⁰

The distinction between civil war and interstate war has diminished as states sponsor dissidents in neighboring territories. War by proxy is not new in Africa. In the 1980s, South Africa's destabilization campaign supported rebels in Mozambique, Angola, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Today's regional wars, characterized by the clash of rebel forces and national armies from multiple countries, will continue.

Conflict in the DROC could engulf North, East, and Southern Africa in war, with bleak prospects for a negotiated settlement. Armed forces from six African states have deployed to the DROC. Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, and Chad support President Kabila. Uganda and Rwanda support the rebel faction led by Dr. Wamba dia Wamba. President Kabila has also received sporadic military assistance from irregular forces. The motives for deployments to DROC vary among the countries. Angola, Rwanda, and Uganda seek to end insurgent border incursions from DROC. Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola, and Chad have alliance commitments. Zimbabwe and, again, Angola seek economic access to DROC mineral resources. Libya has also tried to involve itself in this complex conflict and negotiations because of its anti-Western posture. It also seeks to bust the (Senator Frank) Lautenberg sanctions by courting African countries. The

conflict in the DROC is becoming linked to other conflicts in the region, making any settlement more difficult.

Regional interlocking wars in more than one subregion can overwhelm the weak OAU. It has shown capacity for resolving African disputes, although it has sought a conflict resolution mechanism. Africa's main subregional organizations are the Southern African Development Community (SADC), ECOWAS and its monitoring group, ECOMOG, and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Their persistence as institutions has been impressive, despite limited resources and limited success in resolving Africa's conflicts.

The fragility and strength of Africa's subregional institutions are demonstrated by the rapid spread and escalation of interstate conflict in the DROC and the long series of peace talks in Victoria Falls, Addis Ababa, and elsewhere. The West viewed the split within the SADC as ominous. Zimbabwe, Angola, and Namibia sent forces to back President Kabila's regime, which South Africa opposed. Conversely, SADC members have sought to resolve differences using the institution's forums, rather than abandoning it. IGAD was weakened by Ethiopia and Eritrea's confrontation; this interrupted its efforts to politically settle the Sudanese civil war. However, it remains intact.



AP/Wide World Photos

A government soldier in Makobola, southeastern Democratic Republic of Congo, the scene of an attack by rebels killing more than 100 civilians

Members of subregional organizations have shown the ability to use military force to influence regional outcomes. Certain SADC and ECOMOG states deployed forces to reverse rebel successes in the DROC and in Sierra Leone. Nigerian forces, as ECOMOG, intervened to save the legal government of Sierra Leone. However, the application of force has resulted less from collective decisionmaking and more from member states' desire to demonstrate their power and initiative.

Over time, subregional organizations will either develop or degenerate. The new government in Nigeria may adopt a more collegial and less dominating approach to ECOWAS and ECOMOG, sharing with Ghana, Ivory Coast, and others. This would significantly strengthen its ability to resolve conflict in West Africa. The long-term objective is to develop confidence-building measures that prevent major diplomatic divisions and armed conflicts.

Expanding Informal Networks

Informal political, economic, and security networks should not be overlooked or underestimated. Personal patronage and loyalty are central features of African politics. University and military service ties are especially salient. However, none is relied on more than family relations.

Accurate prognosis for Africa requires an understanding of these informal relations. Personal financial interests, business deals, and private corporate networks influence foreign policy decisions and geostrategic outcomes. This has been

seen repeatedly in the widespread competition for access to vast natural resources in the DROC. Zimbabwe's recent military intervention in the DROC was about more than upholding state sovereignty. It also sought to expand private business and financial interests, including those of Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe.

Private security companies and mercenary groups are filling the security vacuum left by Western and Eastern Bloc states that no longer will prop up African regimes. Military assistance and support are becoming more privatized. Security firms like the British company, Sandline, and a South African mercenary group, Executive Outcomes, have trained, equipped, and sometimes fought alongside African forces in Sierra Leone, Angola, and Zaire. Reportedly, Executive Outcomes has made deals to provide services to both sides in the DROC conflict.¹¹ Large-scale, small-arms trafficking inevitably accompanies such multifaceted conflicts.

Africa's past wars were largely anticolonial and ideological campaigns, often assisted by non-African states. Today's conflicts are driven by personal and corporate interests, as well as those of individual African states. Arms manufacturers and dealers, mercenaries, rebels, and corrupt government officials all profit from short-term war and control of strategic minerals.

The informal economic pattern reflects the region's complexity. Formal and informal economies, such as barter systems and stock markets, exist side by side. Economic trends indicate increasing regionalization and informality in African economic activity. Economic assessments do not come close to capturing African entrepreneurial activities. Many respond to market forces and escape taxation through cross-border trade, smuggling, and parallel markets. Rural hinterlands often are separated from the capital's economies. They are forming regional trade networks such as the "great lake zone" of eastern DROC, Kenya and Tanzania, and "greater Liberia", which encompasses parts of Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Indigenous nongovernmental organizations are numerous and widespread in Africa, compensating in part for both authoritarian tendencies and deterioration of state institutions. "Civil society" appears to be a normal state of affairs for Africa. However, in most countries the NGOs are so numerous, so limited in terms of national influence, and so much at odds with one another,

South Africa: Unforeseen Success

At the beginning of the decade in 1990, South Africa was gripped in political violence, and the prospect that a successful political transition to majority rule would occur within 4 years was not generally foreseen. In April 1994, an ANC-led Government of National Unity was elected and a new non-racial democratic constitution entered into force on February 3, 1997. Levels of political violence have dropped significantly since the abolition of apartheid, but tensions remain high in some areas, especially parts of Kwa Zulu-Natal Province. Despite fear of violence this year, the June 2 elections went off peacefully throughout the country. The ANC, led by President-elect Thabo Mbeki, won 266 of Parliament's 400 seats (up from 252 in 1994), with a majority in all but 2 of 9 provincial elections. The main security threat to South Africa is a rise in violent crime and organized criminal activity that the domestic police have thus far proven unable to curb. The underlying cause of crime in South Africa is chronic poverty among the majority African population. Income inequality in South Africa remains among the world's most extreme. South Africa's major challenge is to transform the economy to maintain economic growth while achieving a more equitable distribution of wealth and redressing the socioeconomic disparities created by apartheid. Unemployment is officially stated to be about 30 per cent. The South African Government estimates that the economy must achieve real growth at a minimum of 5 to 6 percent to offset unemployment and to absorb the more than 300,000 workers entering the labor force annually. South Africa's annual growth rate is estimated at between 1.5 and 1.7 percent for FY97–98 and at 3 percent for FY96, far below the needed rates to reduce unemployment and alleviate poverty. Although South Africa's economy is more diversified than all other Sub-Saharan African countries, two-thirds of its exports are still based on its rich mineral resources. South Africa is the world's largest exporter and producer of gold. Platinum, chromium, and coal are also significant exports. Fluctuations in the price of these commodities have an immediate economic impact, with exports and imports accounting for 44 per cent of GDP. In 1997, the world price of gold fell, and South Africa's gold production was affected by the declining quality and quantity of the ore milled, which fell to 484 tons produced in 1997 down from 495 tons in 1996.¹²

South Africa's internal security and regional military effectiveness are directly tied to its economic fortunes. Significant resources are needed to restructure and retrain the South African Police Service to handle growing crime while abandoning its apartheid-era militaristic practices. Deaths in police custody and as a result of excessive force remain serious human rights problems. The difficulties experienced by the South African National Defence Force in ending the mutiny of Lesotho's military units in September may forecast the effect of limited resources for military readiness. In 1995–96, military expenditures totaled \$2.9 billion and represented 2.2 per cent of the GDP. There are between 6 and 10 million military personnel in the South African National Defence Force. Military expenditures on housing and salaries can help to alleviate South Africa's social disparities in the short term. Adequate resources are also needed for equipment and logistical upkeep and training exercises. The planning and execution problems with the Lesotho deployment and reports that scheduled peacekeeping exercises were canceled for 1997 because of financial constraints can only undermine subregional security over the medium and long term. South Africa will remain the regional economic and military leader; however, it will continue to pursue its interests through subregional and continental organizations, such as the SADC and the OAU, while the government concentrates on internal reform efforts, especially in the economic sphere.¹³

that their effect is limited—even when supported by foreign NGO or governmental programs.

Africa will continue to be a place of considerable political and economic differences. Small-scale polities have significant, if not greater, impact on lives than do national governments. Many forms of authority coexist, and the notion of borders and frontiers requires reconsideration. Personal, family, communal, and business ties constitute intricate webs that extend across the continent. Political, economic, and social traditions date back to and before the colonial period. They will remain an underlying force for cooperation and intense conflict in Africa.

U.S. Interests

U.S. interests are not static. Rather, they are evolving. Cold War interests are past. Others will emerge. Sub-Saharan Africa may provide growing markets for U.S. goods in the midterm if Africa's purchasing potential is nurtured now.

Ultimately, this would help the U.S. economy and trade balance. The United States also has an interest in seeing democracy and development take root in Africa. This is especially true in South Africa, which has become a powerful symbol of the promise that democracy holds. Essentially, the United States pursues the same objectives in Africa as elsewhere. It seeks to promote regional stability, economic prosperity, and democracy, and to combat transnational threats.

Promoting stability in Africa enables U.S. access to the region, to include its oil and other strategic resources. Promoting democracy and better economic development can help counter narcotic trafficking, epidemics, and environmental problems. Such achievements are needed to forestall massive humanitarian tragedies. The challenge is to move from today's crisis-response mode to peacetime engagement that positively shapes the region. The bigger challenge is to do this at a time when the nation-state in Africa

is eroding and subregional institutions have not fully matured.

Regional Peace and Stability: A Key U.S. Interest

Sub-Saharan Africa has many security challenges, but the United States tends to become involved in those requiring humanitarian assistance. Domestic pressure to respond to African humanitarian needs is unlikely to abate. African-Americans, environmentalists, development specialists, human rights advocates, and others will remain an organized constituency for U.S. involvement in Africa.

The United States also has pragmatic reasons to promote regional peace and stability. What U.S. interests would be affected if the Congo collapses, Nigeria is engulfed in turmoil, Sudan disintegrates, Angola explodes, or genocide resumes in Rwanda? The subregional implications of any of these events would be immense, and the United States and its European allies would be faced with very stark choices. The United States and Europe receive important oil and mineral resources from Nigeria, Angola, and the Congo. The spread of regional conflict threatens U.S. access to key energy resources and encourages the growth of such transnational threats as terrorism, epidemics, and conventional and chemical weapons proliferation. They could unexpectedly harm U.S. citizens, forces, and installations. The deliberate killing of U.S. and U.K. tourists in Uganda by Rwandan Hutus operating out of the DROC in February 1999 illustrates how dangerous the situation is in several countries. After President Clinton's condemnation of the world's delayed response to genocide in Rwanda, the United States would be hard-pressed to do nothing and still claim global leadership.

Following Somalia, the U.S. response to African conflict has been to evacuate U.S. citizens and other foreign nationals. Tremendous resources have been expended for this limited purpose, but not to prevent the next conflict. The crisis-response approach must be replaced by a longer term peacetime engagement that shapes Africa.

The Africa Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) is intended to improve African peace and stability. The program trains and provides nonlethal materiel to African battalions to enhance their peacekeeping capabilities. The 5 year program is annually funded at \$20 million. Each participating African country receives \$2 million for training and individual soldier equipment. Military

units from Uganda, Malawi, Senegal, Ghana, and Benin have received ACRI training. As of yet, there are no larger African peacekeeping mechanisms into which ACRI-trained units can fit.

The United States also conducts small unit training exercises under the Joint Combined Education Training program; the OAU provides equipment to improve conflict management and early warning capability and supports subregional peacekeeping forces like ECOMOG in Liberia. The United States has increasingly participated in such multilateral efforts as the 1997 peacekeeping exercise in Southern Africa. However, resources devoted to engagement activities lag behind those allocated for crisis response.

The next step is to utilize limited resources more effectively. This can be accomplished through synchronization of the combatant commands' exercise programs in Africa and by coordinating U.S. activities with those of European states. The United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Portugal, and Scandinavian states have similar programs; and the United States, United Kingdom, and France are working more closely together. Military programs also must reflect political realities, including strengthening such institutions as ECOWAS and ECOMOG, IGAD, the Economic Commission for Africa, and the SADC.

Africa and the Global Economy Trade Relations

The strong economic performance of African countries presents a positive impression to the informed American public. Africa is an attractive outlet for U.S. exports and foreign investments. U.S. trade growth in Africa averaged 16.9 percent for 1995 and 1996, outpacing growth in global trade. Nevertheless, U.S. trade with Africa remains limited. In 1997, U.S. exports to Africa totaled only \$6.2 billion. Currently, the United States accounts for only 7 percent of global exports to the region.

Africa represents a huge, untapped market. U.S. private economic investment in Africa receives strong returns; from 1990 to 1995, the average annual return on U.S. direct investment in Africa was 30 percent. Major legislation to promote U.S. trade with Africa, the African Growth and Opportunity Act (H.R. 1432), passed the House with a bipartisan vote in March 1998 but failed to pass the Senate before the 105th Congress adjourned.

The Corporate Council on Africa was established in 1992 as an umbrella U.S. corporate business lobby for Africa. It is likely to cement U.S.-Africa commercial ties over the middle and long term. Sustainable growth and development will require transforming Africa from a provider of primary commodities to an exporter of diversified goods and services. The latter will encourage foreign investments, leading to job creation and alleviating poverty.

Integrating Africa into the global market is not necessarily the same as integrating Africa into global production. Full integration requires mutually beneficial commerce that opens U.S. markets to African exports. It also means continued development assistance; this includes investment in education, technological transfer to bolster Africa's human capital, and elevating the processing level of its exports.

Agricultural Development

Farming is the dominant economic activity for most Africans. Economic reform must, therefore, be focused on the region's agricultural sector—a necessity, given the realities of a continent that cannot feed itself. Agrarian development also can curtail migration to urban areas, where population density contributes to conflict and strains infrastructure and public services. Finally, agricultural reform can create jobs and improve living standards.

U.S. humanitarian assistance can improve the conditions for agricultural development. This assistance would include military demining, bio-diversity, construction, and veterinarian programs. Such programs must be focused on achieving near-, mid- and long-term objectives. Their implementation must also be synchronized between the U.S., European, Central, and Pacific Commands, and coordinated at the interagency level. An interagency task force would combine the efforts of several U.S. Government agencies, rather than conduct single agency efforts. For example, the Department of Defense (DOD), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would work together to improve Africa's infrastructure development and enhance biodiversity conditions, including road networks and port facilities.

Debt Relief

Sub-Saharan Africa's debt is miniscule in terms of the global economy; however, it is draining African economies and contributing to account deficits. Most countries are unable to repay the debt. They are trapped in a cycle of borrowing new money to pay old debt. Between 1985 and 1995, Africa paid more than \$100 billion in debt servicing alone. This did not reduce the principal, and capital inflows barely stayed ahead of capital outflows. In 1998, sub-Saharan African countries owed approximately \$180 billion; 83 percent was owed to such public institutions as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development, and Western governments. The remaining was owed to commercial lenders, mainly European banks.

Sub-Saharan Africa's debt is an area where U.S. interests should be considered carefully. Currently, the United States backs the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative, which seeks to reduce poor countries' unsustainable debt. Established by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, this program has been criticized for not providing debt relief in a timely, uniform, and adequate manner to really reduce Africa's debt burden. Only four African countries meet its requirements. U.S. influence could improve this initiative and, ultimately, Africa's prospects for prosperity.

Without debt relief, African governments cannot hope to manage their future. Debt will impede them in dealing with such decentralizing forces as regionalization and increasing informality in Africa's economy. It will also limit their ability to institute policies that stimulate private sector production and job creation. Debt is a major obstacle to Africa's economic growth and integration into the global economy.

Democratic Practices, Processes, and Institutions

Policy Priorities

Africa's political, economic, and security realities are inextricably linked. At present, U.S. policy views Africa's economic integration as the primary goal, and democratic governance as a supporting objective. This implies a "pragmatic approach." It overlooks a degree of political repression if the country pursues economic reforms. However, overlooking human rights abuses in the name of market reform can be a

slippery slope. This approach requires knowing when to hold leaders accountable.

Good governance is a necessary element of economic reform. Political order is needed to ensure rule of law; it fosters internal stability and, ultimately, attracts foreign investment needed for economic growth. The challenge facing the United States is to roll back the protectionist practices of authoritarian regimes without causing sudden collapse and widespread disorder.

Democratic Governance

Promoting democracy in Africa is a messy and difficult process. This is largely attributable to the devolution of authority and proliferation of new political arrangements. Promoting democracy will require decades, not years. Past expectations regarding rapid progress have been too high.

African national governments are not always appropriate vehicles for engaging the political environment. Their administrative power outside their capitals varies. Civil society in its many forms has an important contribution to make, provided it becomes more cohesive and disciplined. Africa cannot be treated as a monolith amenable to a uniform set of policy tools.

Effective policy requires looking at each country to determine whether its internal policies can benefit from U.S. and other external interventions. For example, outside pressure to hold multiparty elections was applied differently in Uganda than in Kenya. Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni's refusal to permit party competition is generally accepted as secondary to reconciliation in the aftermath of Uganda's devastating civil war. His effective state reconstruction and economic reform have earned international tolerance with respect to holding multiparty elections.

By comparison, the United States suspended economic aid to Kenya to force President D. T. Arap Moi to allow multiparty elections in 1992. Despite national elections again in December 1997, President Moi is widely perceived as using divide and rule tactics to remain in power. This is undermining national unity.

Multiple political parties are also not necessarily seen as the best system for all African countries. Some parties are given to building on tribal or ethnic bases, thus contributing to separatism and clan conflict. Achieving specific conditions that foster democracy may be more important; these include the rule of law, government accountability, and protection of human rights.

Civilian Rule

Civilian control is a necessary first step toward democracy. The professionalism of military and police forces is pivotal. They must be trained, disciplined, and made apolitical in order to withstand the social and political tensions that often accompany political liberalization.

The United States supports military professionalism and democratic rule through several security assistance programs. The International Military Education Training and Expanded International Military Education Training programs provide courses in democratic civil-military relations, military justice systems, and defense resource management. These are offered to African military officers, government officials, and civil society groups. A new DOD initiative, the African Center for Security Studies, which is planned to open in fall 1999, will educate senior African military officers and civilian participants in civil-military relations. Flag officer visits and military-to-military contacts are used to promote democracy in the region.

The effects of these programs and those of European countries on African democratization will not likely become apparent in the short to midterm. Their immediate benefits are the personal relationships forged between African and U.S. military officials. They are the foundation for effective diplomacy and greater understanding.

Civil Society Engagement

In supporting the growth of civil society in Africa, the State Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the U.S. Information Service will complement DOD engagement programs. Over the long term, a strengthened civil society can contribute to better governance and stable polities. A sustained, multifaceted effort is required, especially in countries like Nigeria, where domestic opposition was highly disorganized and ineffective against the regime of the late Sani Abacha.

Quick fixes are not viable solutions. Pressuring intransigent regimes requires a full range of policy tools. They must be employed as part of a broad, synchronized, long-term strategy. This strategy must be comprehensive and must consider the interplay of professional education and training, economic aid resources, diplomatic resources, and private sector involvement. Additionally, many uncontrollable factors and unintended consequences are likely to occur when

trying to strengthen civil society and develop an accountable state. Success will also depend on greater U.S. credibility. U.S. actions must match articulated policy. African officials often ask if the United States is promoting democracy in the Middle East as aggressively as in Africa. Promoting democratization is as much a learning process for U.S. policymakers as it is for African governments, opposition parties, and NGOs.

Consequences for U.S. Policy

Current U.S. policy emphasizes three goals: security, economic prosperity, and democracy. Overall, progress has been made on all three in recent years. Yet, challenges and frustrations arise. Large pockets of transnational conflict remain, economic progress has a long way to go, and democracy is uneven. The key challenge will be to target U.S. resources so that they achieve the maximum positive effects.

Africa's complex environment raises important conceptual questions about the meanings of democracy, state sovereignty, and tradition. These meanings are important, because the United States must communicate with African officials at various levels of government and civil society. The question is, should U.S. policy center on theory or reality? Moreover, how can the United States work within multilateral frameworks? With African friends, the United States must achieve diplomacy and seek policy solutions. With European allies, the United States must coordinate policies and resources. Within subregional institutions, the United States must help build institutional capacity, encourage financial investments in the private sector, and stem arms flows.

Democracy's Meaning

Has the United States thought through what democracy means, given Africa's 20th century political and economic experiences? Pursuit of what some perceive to be democracy could immediately cause instability in a region composed of fragile, sometimes illegitimate, and usually economically weak states. It might also lead to "disruptive" boundary changes with long-term impact. Is the United States prepared to accept such instability, particularly in a region undergoing a fundamental transformation of its political

traditions and territorial demarcations established during colonial rule?

Political and social development problems are often not resolved until conflict results. Indeed, historically, war and state building have been intricately linked. This paradoxical relationship is very relevant to policy today. It can directly affect decisions of external actors regarding when and how to prevent further conflict and broker peace agreements. The United States has compelling reasons to determine when to intervene and attempt conflict resolution, rather than prolong oppressive authoritarian regimes and exacerbate war. If it does not, U.S. support for democracy in Africa will become increasingly rhetorical.

The long-term political and social consequences of Africa's current regional instability are difficult to foresee. U.S. policy will have to contend with this uncertainty. When considering the states to support, the United States should focus on the reality rather than the theory. It should look at those regions and localities that are taking care of the local population in a manner that fosters participation, accountability, and transparency.

Meaning of State Sovereignty

Is Africa's Western administrative state system the best instrument for political and economic development in the region? Many current states in Africa are part of the problem, not part of the solution. They cause conflict. Their implosion may be the beginning of a real African renaissance that creates a more organic link among African political, social, and economic orders.

In 1963, the OAU adopted the sanctity of state borders inherited from the colonial period. Yet, what does this mean in Africa, where resources were arbitrarily divided and national boundaries determined at the Berlin Conference in 1884-85? Disintegration of the region's four largest states—Nigeria, Congo, Angola, and Sudan—could be catastrophic. It could include refugees, famine, warfare, and pressure for U.S. involvement.

On the other hand, the slow, evolutionary breakup of these states could be a positive trend. It might provide the opportunity for developing more rational economic and political entities. Such is the case with Shaba, Kivu, and the increasing autonomy of southern Sudan, and possibly eastern and southern Nigeria. Has the United States thought about such competing imperatives as maintaining territorial integrity, yet

promoting self-determination? Do we seek border integrity or stable political entities? The two are not necessarily the same.

Future Partners: A High-Priority Policy Goal

African institutional development is the single most important objective over the midterm. It cuts across security, political, and economic policy areas. African progress remains fragile because it is not sufficiently underpinned by strong institutions. How African institutions can be built or improved is a principal criterion for effective U.S. policy. Another key criterion is how U.S. policies will facilitate local or indigenous decisionmaking. Education also is a priority for improving leadership, skilled labor, and private capital formation.

Nonstate actors and/or institutions should receive priority attention and funding in order to bring about democratic governance and equitable economic growth. Local councils and entities are often the most suitable agents for establishing Africa's own democratic norms and ensuring equitable development. Civil organizations can also help target those societal and economic sectors that warrant assistance. Political parties also require assistance. They sometimes channel political and economic competition in ways that cause ethnic fragmentation and violent conflict. They must become better intermediaries between the state and society.

The United States will need to focus on regional and subregional solutions because of the inadequacies of Africa's national states. They may have limited capacity beyond the capital city. Additionally, Africa's transnational challenges—environmental problems, arms proliferation, and organized crime—do not recognize national borders.

However, regional and subregional institutions may not be able to meet U.S. expectations or play a desired role in security and economic development. Also, a regional focus does not necessarily mean relying on large bureaucratic institutions. Faced with declining resources, U.S. and European policymakers ultimately may have to select key countries that are regionally important and hubs of development.

A subregional engagement within a multilateral framework is the optimal strategy to promote African security, democracy, and economic reform. U.S. policy should focus on those countries with significant regional impact, like Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Angola, and the DROC.

The selection of such countries will depend on U.S. foreign policy priorities.

Criteria for selection might include countries with economies and populations large enough to affect the subregion. Another criterion might be countries in which the United States has long-standing interests and which offer an opportunity to build on past successes. Finally, countries might be selected on their importance to the U.S. and global economies. Clearly, responses to humanitarian crises will be easier and more effective in an Africa with a stable Nigeria, South Africa, Angola, Kenya, Sudan, and DROC. These countries could serve as the basis for mobilizing broader regional actions.

The policy focus will vary with the country. For example, South Africa would be seen as a U.S. ally with a positive regional impact. The DROC would be seen as a potentially destructive regional force. Sudan is seen as pursuing domestic policies counter to U.S. interests. Nigeria, Angola, and Kenya are transition countries where U.S. economic interests are protected but democracy has yet to take root. It is necessary to adapt approaches to meet the varied challenges of Africa's subregions and to avoid the development of unipolar regions.

We may indeed be in the early stages of an African renaissance ushered in by the violent transformation of Africa's 20th century colonial order. The long-standing debate between "Afropessimists" and "Afro-optimists" may result in an "Afro-pragmatist" approach that takes into account African environment, history, and culture.

Net Assessment

Africa is making progress, but it has a long way to go before democracy and prosperous markets succeed. In the future, marginal progress can be expected in ways that will have a cumulative effect over the long haul. In the interim, areas of Africa will continue to experience local instability, ethnic strife, and wars. This mixture of caution and hope provides the framework for shaping U.S. policy toward Africa in the coming decade.

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