



# **Raising the Level of Engagement Between America and Africa**

**A Leon H. Sullivan Foundation White Paper**

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## **Executive Summary**

As President Barack Obama and the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress take office, they face numerous challenges in devising an effective Africa policy in the areas of: insecurity and conflict, governance, food security/agriculture, human capital development, infrastructure/transportation, corporate social responsibility and civil society development. Some of these challenges are more pressing than others in light of current conflicts, simmering issues of concern and post-conflict areas that need consolidation. However, they all deserve the attention of policymakers in Washington.

In selecting policy options, the Leon H. Sullivan Foundation has developed recommendations for Administration and Congressional actions that include:

- Working diplomatically with regional African organizations to address warfare, lack of governance and piracy involving Somalia;
- Multi-level negotiations to identify and implement a lasting solution to the complex problems in Sudan;
- American security assistance and U.S. government and private sector support for more effective community programs in oil communities in Nigeria;
- Diplomatic and programmatic attention to simmering crises in Kenya and South Africa;
- Consensus among African and African Diaspora leaders on dealing forthrightly with the regime in Zimbabwe;
- Effective rules for how to proceed in the fight against corruption in Africa, as well as a stepped-up U.S. effort to facilitate the return of stolen funds to repay debts and address unmet social needs;
- Elevation of the importance of U.S.-Africa agricultural trade, capacity building assistance for African producers and encouragement for investment in African agriculture;
- Enhanced support for distance learning and student and teacher exchanges, as well as encouragement of the involvement of members of the African Diaspora in America in diminishing the impact of Africa's brain drain;
- Stronger endorsement for effective corporate social responsibility practices as embodied in the Global Sullivan Principles for Corporate Social Responsibility, and
- Continued empowerment of women and youth through African civil society organizations and the enhancement of the capacity of civil society organizations themselves.

## **Background**

The American people, and indeed the world at large, are eagerly awaiting the new Administration of President Barack Obama. The first-term U.S. senator was criticized during the presidential campaign for having a less than extensive foreign policy record on which to base a presidential candidacy, but as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee since his election in 2004, he has more foreign policy experience than either Bill Clinton or George W. Bush had when they were elected President, which is a good sign for a successful Africa policy.

President Obama has as Vice President Delaware Senator Joseph Biden, who has a long track record in foreign affairs and served as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Obama's foreign policy advisers range from former Secretaries of State Madeleine Albright and Colin Powell to former Clinton Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Susan Rice and Gayle Smith, previously Senior Director for African Affairs at the National Security Council under Clinton to Rice's former deputy at the State Department's Africa bureau, Witney Schneidman and former Clinton Administration National Security Council Director for African Affairs John Prendergast.

The concern among Africans and Africa watchers is to what extent the Obama Administration intends to engage Africa. While Barack Obama is a Son of Africa, he is the President of all the United States and the Leader of the Free World. Consequently, he has to represent varied interests and address issues far from the African continent. Nevertheless, there are inescapable concerns involving the countries of Africa that any American president has to consider and deal with – some more pressing than others.

For many years, the United States had no Africa policy beyond that connected to policy involving the colonial powers – our European allies. During the period in which African nations were gaining their independence, American policy was guided by the policy of the European colonial power in question, except, for example, Liberia and South Africa. Then-Vice President Richard Nixon came to support U.S.-Africa trade as the result of his late 1950s visit to Africa for the Eisenhower Administration, but not much resulted from his suggested initiative. The end of colonialism provided an opening for more direct engagement with the new African governments, but that opportunity was not taken advantage of at the outset.

When President George H.W. Bush became president, few would have expected him to do anything much to benefit Africa despite his extensive foreign policy expertise. As it turned out, his Administration came to power at a point in history when the Cold War influence on U.S. policy toward Africa was about to end and colonialism was already finished. Now America could consider relationships with African nations that had nothing to do with European colonial powers or Russia. Under the first Bush Administration, the United States fielded a large humanitarian operation in Somalia and created the African Regional Electoral Assistance Fund, which would make significant technical contributions to the wave of African elections and transitions to democratic systems in the 1990s.

Moreover, the Administration of the first President Bush issued National Security Review 30, a paper that outlined a broad policy of increased U.S. engagement with Africa. That policy initiative came too late in his Administration to be enacted, but fortunately, President Bill Clinton did enact it. Clinton had no Africa experience to speak

of coming into the presidency, but building on the Bush plan, he produced a robust engagement of Africa that has set the tone for his successors. He signed into law the first AGOA bill, which realized the increased U.S.-Africa trade Nixon had spoken of decades earlier. Many of his Cabinet secretaries visited Africa and involved their departments in Africa programming.

The current President George Bush came into office with no Africa experience as well, but he has assembled a remarkable record of achievement on Africa policy, including his Administration's greatly expanded contributions of funds to combat HIV-AIDS and malaria on the continent, his steadfast advocacy of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, his support for African education (especially for girls) and his partnership with African governments on mutual security issues.

Now President Barack Obama has an opportunity to continue the growing engagement with Africa that his immediate predecessors have championed and take America's relationship with Africa to a new level. In order to do this, President Obama must face issues that will need to be effectively addressed quickly.

### **Insecurity and Conflict**

Because of the imminent loss of life, the new Administration and Congress will have to deal with issues of insecurity and conflict in three categories: current conflicts, simmering issues of concern and post-conflict areas that need consolidation.

The Bush Administration was focused on conflict issues in Africa and did achieve successes in ending conflicts, particularly in West Africa and the North-South civil war in Sudan. However, there remain conflicts in Africa that must be given priority treatment. For the Bush Administration, **Somalia** was a particularly important concern for a number of reasons. This East African nation has been a source of instability in the Horn of Africa since the fall of its last government in 1991. Moreover, since the attacks of 9/11, the Pentagon and intelligence services have been focused on the potential for al-Qaeda to use the ungoverned spaces and non-existent border controls in Somalia to build a terrorist network.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the al-Qaeda-connected youth and military wing of the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) – al-Shabab – has been placed on the list of foreign terrorist organizations.

Instability in Somalia has posed a threat to its neighbors, with militants crossing into Kenya, weapons flowing into Uganda and UIC support for Somali rebels in Ethiopia's Ogaden region expanding that long-simmering conflict. More recently, pirates operating from Somalia have seized ships (including a \$100 million Saudi oil tanker) and hundreds of crewmen and pose an increasingly serious threat to maritime operations in the Gulf of Aden. The Somalia experience also points out weaknesses in the international peacekeeping process, as neither the United Nations nor the Africa Union were able to fulfill promises to deploy the agreed-upon number of peacekeepers.<sup>2</sup>

The involvement of American military advisers and U.S. air strikes on Somalia helped undermine the argument that the U.S. Africa Command was not intended to

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<sup>1</sup> "Somalia – East Africa's New Afghanistan?", BBC News online, May 2, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> "Somalia Calls for Un Peacekeepers", Al-Jazeera online, June 29, 2007

usher in expanded American military operations in Africa. Initially, the Pentagon reportedly saw limited U.S. military involvement, coupled with an active African military force (in this case Ethiopia) as a model that could be built upon to address African security concerns.<sup>3</sup> However, in this case, the Somalia model has helped to discredit a major American initiative in Africa, and our ally has found themselves embroiled in a quagmire from which neither African nor UN peacekeepers seem prepared to relieve them.

For these reasons, Somalia must be a priority of the U.S. government, which has to effectively deal with the threats of terrorism and piracy for the sake of the entire East Africa region. Working diplomatically through regional African organizations, such as the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development, an end to the Somali conflict must be reached that results in a stable government and controls on terrorist cells and small arms flows. Military operations in Somalia may be tempting, but can be very dangerous in the long run.

Of course, **Sudan** has been a perennial concern for U.S. policymakers in recent years. The Darfur conflict has not only consumed diplomatic efforts by the U.S. government, but also resources taken from other Africa projects. Sustained U.S. efforts in the UN have failed to produce the 26,000 peacekeepers pledged (only half are deployed thus far). The UN estimates that up to 300,000 Darfuris are dead as a result of this conflict.<sup>4</sup> Thus, pressure will continue for the United States, which has played a lead role in ending Sudan's warfare, to consider military intervention, such as a no-fly zone, to prevent the Sudan government from aiding the Janjaweed militias in continuing their reign of terror against the Darfur people.

Several elements make resolution of conflict in Sudan problematic. First, the ongoing splintering of rebel groups in Darfur denies negotiators stable, accountable parties with whom to seek lasting peace agreements. Second, Darfur rebels have demonstrated their reach by a surprise attack on the doorstep of the capital of Khartoum, which has emboldened them. Third, the International Criminal Court indictment of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir – the first such case of charges brought against a sitting head of state – makes negotiations with Sudan more problematic.<sup>5</sup> Fourth, the Government of South Sudan (or New Sudan as it is also known) has a referendum on independence in 2011 that will significantly change the dynamics of Sudan.

Given all the factors involved, further U.S. action on Sudan is inescapable, but this complex situation, which also involves Sudan's impact on neighbors such as Chad and the Central African Republic, will continue to be a U.S. priority and a U.S. responsibility. Short of military intervention that would place the United States outside the UN mandate on Sudan, multi-level negotiations must be stepped up to identify and facilitate a lasting solution to this ongoing African crisis.

Conflict in the **Democratic Republic of Congo** is the one African issue President-elect Barack Obama addressed as Senator. Consequently, he has long realized the need to give attention to this nation at Africa's center. The five-year conflict that began in 1997 – sometimes referred to as "Africa's world war" – eventually involved

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<sup>3</sup> "Pentagon Sees Move in Somalia as Blueprint", New York Times, January 13, 2007

<sup>4</sup> "Q&A: Sudan's Darfur Conflict", BBC News online, November 12, 2008

<sup>5</sup> "Bashir Move Bold but Problematic", BBC News online, July 14, 2008

Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe on behalf of government forces, while Uganda and Rwanda backed the rebels.<sup>6</sup> An estimated 5.4 million people lost their lives during that war. Now renewed conflict in eastern Congo has claimed thousands more lives, while more than 250,000 Congolese have been displaced.<sup>7</sup>

The Rwandans have long had an interest in preventing Congo territory from being used as bases for rebels attacking their country, which is the same reason for Uganda's continued interest. However, a share of Congo's vast mineral wealth, which includes oil, diamonds, gold, cobalt and radium, also has been an incentive for neighboring countries to engage in warfare in Congo. Conflict further has been driven by the ongoing ethnic element of Tutsis living in the East finding discord with Hutu refugees from Rwanda, as well as local Congo ethnic groups such as the Mai-Mai.

Then-Senator Obama's legislation – S. 2125 – calls on the Congolese government to reform its behavior in order to qualify for reconstruction support. He has been adamant with President Joseph Kabila, as with other African leaders, that U.S. support is tied to good governance. However, resolution of Congo's continuing crisis requires its neighbors to cooperate as well. A way must be found to end the rebel attacks against Uganda and Rwanda, which has eluded policymakers thus far, and the looting of Congolese natural resources must be brought to a halt. This already has led to an increase in the current number of 17,000 international peacekeepers covering the vast expanse of DROC.

There are tensions just below the surface in many other nations that could break out into armed conflict (and have in some cases). Global impacts already have been seen in oil producing nations such as **Nigeria**. Many Americans may not have been fully aware of how attacks on oil pipelines and the kidnapping of oil workers in Nigeria's Delta region made significant contributions to the steady rise in oil prices a few months ago. While Nigeria is one of the wealthiest African nations based on per capita income, there is tremendous poverty amongst the oil wealth, especially in some of Nigeria's richest states.

A succession of programs designed to siphon off oil income from multinational energy companies were looted, and the proceeds were never applied to community projects. Destruction of the environment in areas where spilled or leached oil fouled rivers and marshlands critical to livelihoods further created tensions.<sup>8</sup> Exacerbating tensions in Nigeria have been ethnic and religious disputes (some more political than religious) and increasingly powerful organized criminal operations.

Nigeria accounts for 50% of West Africa's gross domestic product, and its implosion would quickly cripple the regional economy, and significant oil supply interruptions would help send global oil prices higher in short order.<sup>9</sup> American security assistance and U.S. government and private sector support for more effective community programs in oil communities would be of great help.

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<sup>6</sup> "Q&A: DR Congo Conflict", BBC News online, November 12, 2008

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

<sup>8</sup> "Burdens of Oil Weigh on Nigerians", Boston Globe, October 3, 2005

<sup>9</sup> "Nigeria: Facts and Figures", BBC News online,

Last year's contentious election in **Kenya** led to weeks of ethnic clashes that claimed the lives of an estimated 1,500 people.<sup>10</sup> Some in the international community, apparently mostly here in Washington, were surprised at the level of violence sparked by the disputed elections, but Kenya has a troubled ethnic history dating back to colonial times. In the days since multi-party democracy in Kenya returned in 1992, there has been wrangling among the dominant Kikuyus, the Luos, the Luhyas and other ethnic groups and among the politicians who represent those groups.

Moreover, the World Bank three years ago placed Kenya among 11 African countries described as being deficient in wealth creation efforts because of massive destruction and depletion of natural resources and high population growth.<sup>11</sup> Given the important role Kenya has played in America's Africa policy, the United States cannot fail to take note of ethnic unrest that could boil over into deadly clashes that threaten the stability of an ally and try to work through diplomatic and programmatic channels with Kenya's government – not just on a temporary political settlement – but also on a more long-range quelling of ethnic discord.

The importance and relative wealth of an ally must not blind us to painful truths about instability. **South Africa** is arguably the most economic powerful African nation, certainly among the non-oil producers. South Africa was one of the G20 nations called together to consult on the global economic meltdown. Nevertheless, South Africa has fissures that threaten to erupt if not handled well.

The African National Congress' removal of President Thabo Mbeki has been called "regicide" by South African commentators.<sup>12</sup> Unprecedented as it was, it revealed the depths of the serious dispute within the ruling party – both on economic and political grounds. That political divide is made more dangerous by the widening economic cleavage between rich and poor black people in South Africa. The numbers of black South Africans living on less than \$1 a day has risen from 1.8 million in 1996 to 4.2 million in 2005, according to the South African Institute for Race Relations.<sup>13</sup>

A nation such as South Africa, which has critical minerals and gems such as diamonds, gold and platinum and world-class companies, such as South African Breweries (which owns Miller Beer Company in America), would create a global ripple if unrest were to cripple its economy in the post-majority rule era. South Africa is in reality two countries: one is a developed world nation with Western infrastructure and the other is a poor African country with high crime and unemployment and inadequate social services and jobs. The country's overall income limits traditional aid, but some means must be found to help South Africa ease its growing income disparity before internal pressure leads to tragedy.

**Uganda** survived the mass killings by the regimes of Milton Obote and Idi Amin to become one of the continent's most admired countries under the leadership of Yoweri Museveni. The country's major cloud has been in the form of the Lord's Resistance Army, a rebel group attempting to establish rule according to the Bible's 10

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<sup>10</sup> "State 'Sanctioned' Kenyan Clashes", BBC news online, March 5, 2008

<sup>11</sup> "Kenya Registers Negative Wealth Creation as Natural Resources Are Depleted", African Woman and Child Features Service, November 23, 2005

<sup>12</sup> "Why Mbeki Had to Go", BBC News online, September 21, 2008

<sup>13</sup> "South Africa's Widening Divide", BBC News online, December 14, 2007

Commandments.<sup>14</sup> Led by fanatical leader Joseph Kony, the LRA has plagued not only northern Uganda, but also southern Sudan and eastern Congo.

More than 25,000 Ugandan children have been caught up in the northern Uganda war – either as child soldiers or concubines or as internal refugees nightly attempting to escape capture by rebel bands.<sup>15</sup> Peace efforts continue to fail, and two million Ugandans have been displaced. International aid agencies have had difficulty in delivering much-needed supplies to help those involved in a humanitarian crisis that rivals that of Darfur.<sup>16</sup>

A final resolution to the LRA matter will not only require diplomatic pressures, but may also involve military assistance to eliminate recalcitrant rebels. Still, many of the rebels are kidnapped children, and their capture has been the goal. Their reintegration into Ugandan society, though, will not be easy. Local Ugandans fear the boys trained to be killers and often refuse to accept the girls who have reluctantly become mothers due to their nightmare experiences in the LRA. Reintegration of these troubled young people will require innovative programming, which American civil society organizations have experience in undertaking.

The growing crisis in **Zimbabwe** was farmed out to the South African government by the Bush Administration, which had initiated a policy relatively early on to stop engaging with the regime of President Robert Mugabe.<sup>17</sup> Then-South African President Thabo Mbeki was seen by Americans as the leader of a powerful African nation to whom the Zimbabweans owed much. To Zimbabwe's leader, however, Mbeki was a second-generation post colonial leader and not his equal.

Within the southern African region, Mugabe was regarded as a historical figure in the anti-colonial struggle, and only a few leaders would openly criticize his handling of his country's economy and his demonstrable lack of respect for democratic principles. Mugabe successfully played the role of the victim of neo-colonial efforts to dominate his country and managed to portray the British reneging on promises to fund purchases of white farms as manipulation on their part rather than a reaction to cronyism in the allocation of farms.

In the face of an inflation rate so high that it renders a paycheck virtually worthless before it can be cashed, Zimbabwe lives on the knife-edge of disaster.<sup>18</sup> Some African leaders were moved by the violence associated with the elections earlier in 2008 and are willing to help exert pressure to end this crisis. The current process of forming a government of national unity does not work because there are no consequences to Mugabe's refusal to cooperate. If African leaders and African Diaspora leaders, many of whom have long supported Mugabe, forge consensus on dealing forthrightly with the regime in Harare, political progress can be made with the help of ruling party officials who realize that this economic freefall cannot continue.

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<sup>14</sup> “Q&A: Uganda’s Northern War”, BBC News online, August 29, 2006

<sup>15</sup> Ibid

<sup>16</sup> “What’s Going on in Northern Uganda?”, Reuters, February 23, 2006

<sup>17</sup> “Bush Unites with Mbeki on Zimbabwe and Liberia”, Reuters, July 9, 2003

<sup>18</sup> “New Hyperinflation Index Puts Zimbabwe Inflation at 531 Billion Percent”, Cato Institute online, September 26, 2008

In those African countries that have emerged from conflict, there must be support for their reconstruction with the simultaneous demand that assistance is provided upon the guarantee of reform. **Liberia**, the African country with the closest ties to Africa based on the return of freed slave there in the mid-1800s and the continuing presence of large numbers of Liberians in America, has been and should continue to be of interest to Americans.

Under the despotic rule of Charles Taylor, Liberia was a bane to the region, as its chaos spread to neighboring countries – in some cases making them unstable as well.<sup>19</sup> The United States has contributed hundreds of millions to the reconstruction of Liberia based on the reputation of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who came to office with a policy of zero tolerance for corruption. Unfortunately, she has found it hard to eliminate corruption in a country whose leaders have so long been steeped in graft, especially with former Taylor family members and allies still in government.

Meanwhile, The Robert Johnson Group of Companies and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation have established a \$100 million fund to promote investment in Liberia, which has the potential of dwarfing all American foreign assistance to Liberia in its long-term impact.<sup>20</sup> If successful, this will be a model for U.S. reconstruction efforts through public-private partnerships in addition to conditioned aid.

**Angola** exports more than \$38 million in products to the United States annually, mostly in the form of petroleum, but besides being a major American trading partner, the United States was heavily involved in the long-running civil war in Angola. Under the Administrations of Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush, America sided with the rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). The Administration of Bill Clinton recognized the Angolan government, and U.S. relations with Angola have improved since the mid-1990s. Over the last two decades, America has been one of the foreign guarantors of various peace processes in Angola. Since the mid-1990s, once-polarized Washington policymakers no longer cling to allegiances to either UNITA or the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA); the climate has long since been ripe for bipartisan efforts to rehabilitate this country, which also faced tens of thousands of disarmed troops needing reintegration into society.<sup>21</sup>

The Angolan government instituted a policy of returning disarmed soldiers to farms, but many of them had skills beyond farm work they could apply to civilian life. The complementary government policy of “Angolanization” called for Angolans citizens to be hired by foreign firms rather than foreigners.<sup>22</sup> Like many African governments, though, Angola sought a closer relationship with China, which offered the prospect of loans without conditions. What they found was a lack of cooperation on Angolanization.

Several years ago, the Angolan government conceded that the country had no business sector to speak of and requested assistance in building one. In addition to the construction of infrastructure and the certainty of removal of pernicious land mines,

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<sup>19</sup> “Crimes of War: Former Liberian Leader on Trial”, National Public Radio, June 4, 2007

<sup>20</sup> “USD\$100 Million Announced for Liberia to Promote Investment”, Executive Mansion web site, October 7, 2008

<sup>21</sup> “Washington Roundtable on Angola” Search for Common Ground discussion summary, September 30, 2003

<sup>22</sup> Country Studies – Angola - Labor Force, U.S. Library of Congress

Angola requires assistance in creating business opportunities and jobs for its people to create a middle class, and this could be a useful common ground for nations like the United States and China to work in cooperation to develop a division of labor among them to meet the needs of Angola's people.

In Congress and in the Bush Administration, **Cote d'Ivoire** has remained on the radar screen, so to speak, but has never been a top priority. Perhaps this is because the country continued to be a major trading partner despite two coups and an armed rebellion that deeply divided the country. It also may be due to a level of ethnic cleavage that is not as well understood by the international community as it should have been.

When the late Robert Guei overthrew Henri Bedie in 1999, he touched off ethnic discord by demonizing Muslim northerners as part of his effort to discredit rival Alassane Ouattara. Guei's rival in the elections of 2000, Laurent Gbagbo, also echoed that anti-northerner theme.<sup>23</sup> When Gbagbo took office following the ouster of Guei in a popular uprising that same year, the xenophobia stirred by both men erupted in violence. A 2002 troop mutiny escalated into a full-scale rebellion. Even though the fighting has mostly ended, there remains great tension within the country.

Instability and a lack of preparedness for elections led the UN Security Council to accept several postponements, and Gbagbo, elected in 2005, has had his mandate extended several times.<sup>24</sup> Elections are now expected to take place no later than mid-2009. The international community can no longer accept excuses for postponement without exacerbating a still-tense ethnic and cultural divide. Donors, including the United States, must be proactive in facilitating the elections this time.

**Sierra Leone**, another African country created through the return of freed slaves, emerged from a decade of civil war in 2002, facing a tough reconstruction and 70,000 disarmed combatants needing rehabilitation and reintegration into society. This country was one of the centers of trade in so-called "blood diamonds," whose illicit trade funded rebel activities.<sup>25</sup> Ernest Bai Koroma, elected as President in 2007, promised zero tolerance for corruption and pledged to fight against the mismanagement of state resources. Shortly after his election, a confidential presidential audit showed widespread corruption and mismanagement and inadequacies in health care, tax collection and security services – all similar to the situation Liberia's President Sirleaf found her government facing.<sup>26</sup>

Lax record-keeping has made accountability difficult, and that lack of accountability, according to the Koroma report led, in the case of the Ministry of Agriculture, to "almost zero productivity" among the lower levels of that agency. President Koroma has been lauded for his appointment of young lions Allieu Sesay as head of the National Revenue Authority and Tejan Cole to lead the Anti Corruption Commission. Yet if these men are to succeed in changing a longstanding culture of corruption, President Koroma will have to support them despite the complaints of those disabled from their previous way of doing business, and donor countries such as the United States will have to support reform even when it takes a while to have an impact.

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<sup>23</sup> "Country Profile: Ivory Coast", BBC News online, November 5, 2008

<sup>24</sup> "Annan, Gbagbo Confer over Polls in Ivory Coast", Gulf Times online, July 3, 2007

<sup>25</sup> "Blood Diamonds", The History Channel web site

<sup>26</sup> "Sierra Leone 'Riddled with Corruption'", BBC News online, November 14, 2007

In all the crisis points in Africa, there are numerous issues that must be addressed to achieve stability and then prosperity. For example, governance is a critical element in preventing or ending conflict and ensuring sufficient transparency for economic development.

## **Governance**

When the Bush Administration created the Millennium Challenge Account, it installed a new formula for deciding which countries would be recipients of grants larger than those normally provided under foreign aid programs. Participating governments were required to create economic freedom, rule justly and invest in their people. Furthermore, they had to effectively control corruption and devise a business plan in conjunction with the business sector and civil society. This formula is critical to creating an environment in which good government can be established and maintained. Almost simultaneous with the American effort was an African process to achieve similar goals.

At a summit in Durban, South Africa in July 2002, the newly-created New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) successfully promoted a Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance that committed participating African governments to "just, honest, transparent, accountable and participatory government and probity in public life." In order to fulfill that commitment, NEPAD presented the concept of an African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to which governments voluntarily agree to be measured in terms of democracy and political governance, economic governance and management, corporate governance and socio-economic development.<sup>27</sup>

The mechanism was hailed by the international community, but many donors neglected to acknowledge the term "voluntary" and insisted that the APRM was bogus so long as countries such as Zimbabwe were not assessed. Thus far, 29 African governments have signed onto the APRM, and as of November 2008, nine countries have undergone the review process: Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya, South Africa, Algeria, Benin, Uganda, Burkina Faso and Nigeria.<sup>28</sup>

U.S. and Africa policy dovetail on this matter, and there is ample ground for collaboration to make the MCA and APRM processes more effective. What would further enhance the common intent to promote good government would be the fulfillment of an often-discussed but little-implemented American plan to work with African governments to recover stolen funds – both from government revenues and from donor funds. Effectively fighting corruption will require not only rules for how to proceed, but also on the return of stolen funds to repay debts and address unmet social needs.

## **Food Security/Agriculture**

Approximately, 70% of Africans are believed to be involved in the agriculture sector.<sup>29</sup> Nevertheless, while agriculture is the backbone of African economies,

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<sup>27</sup> APRM Overview, NEPAD web site

<sup>28</sup> "Peer Review Progress, But Many Miss the Meeting", South African Institute of International Affairs web site, October 29, 2008

<sup>29</sup> "Agriculture: Why Africans Must Take Charge of the War", The African Executive, November 19-26, 2008

agricultural output in Africa has declined significantly from the 1960s, when many African countries were self-sufficient in food production.<sup>30</sup>

The current global spike in food prices has exacerbated the difficulties many African countries have in feeding their people. The UN Food and Agricultural Organization estimates that nearly 200 million Africans were undernourished in the year 2000 as opposed to only 133 million 20 years earlier.<sup>31</sup>

There are many causes for this lack of agricultural production, including a diversion of attention to oil production, a lack of modern agricultural techniques, poor soil due to overuse, the diversion of crops to create alternative fuels and a dearth of investment in African agriculture. One major reason that has been suggested is the lack of markets for African agricultural products due to developed country sanitary/phyto-sanitary regulations that are not well understood by African agricultural producers. At the sixth African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) summit in Accra, Ghana, in July 2007, several U.S. officials made the point that about oil and gas comprise about 80% of AGOA imports into the United States even though most of the 6,400 eligible items are agricultural products.<sup>32</sup>

Congressional legislation now under consideration would elevate the importance of U.S.-Africa agricultural trade and provide capacity building assistance for African producers, as well as encourage investment in African agriculture. To that could be added public-private U.S. efforts to impart agricultural technology to African producers to help increase their crop yields.

## **Human Capital Development**

Africa has lost one-third of its human capital, according to the International Organization for Migration, and since 1990, an average of 20,000 skilled professionals have left the continent annually. IOM estimates that more than 300,000 skilled African professionals now live abroad. In a paper presented at AFRICAfest at the University of Pennsylvania in 2002, Dr. John Kiwanuka Ssemakula, a Ugandan public health doctor living and working in the United States, stated that each skilled individual who leaves an Africa country costs approximately \$184,000 in replacements costs, totaling \$4 billion for about 100,000 foreign experts.

Once world-class African universities are suffering from a lack of resources and losing experienced professors at an alarming rate. Meanwhile, African countries have among the lowest rates of primary school enrollment in the world. As of 2000, approximately 82 million young women and 51 million young men were illiterate, with another 130 million children not in school.<sup>33</sup> If Africa is to effectively turn around its devastating brain drain, it will not only need to address its university problems, but also the primary and secondary school systems which provide college students.

The U.S. government's African Education Initiative is focused on increasing access to quality basic education in more than 30 African countries through

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<sup>30</sup> "The Development of African Agriculture", [africangreenrevolution.com](http://africangreenrevolution.com)

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

<sup>32</sup> "African Agricultural Exports Focus of Capacity Building Program", Washington File, July 20, 2007

<sup>33</sup> World Youth Report, 2005

scholarships, textbooks and teacher training programs and should be continued.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, Historically Black Universities and Colleges, such as Tuskegee Institute and Lincoln University, have had long histories of involvement with their African counterparts, and a more vigorous effort to encourage distance learning and student and teacher exchanges can help to address the deficits in African higher education. Further encouragement of the involvement of members of the African Diaspora in America can provide expertise to address the need for capacity building in African countries.

### **Infrastructure/Transportation**

The image of African villagers carrying water, wood and even commercial goods by foot may be a quaint sight for tourists, but it is inconsistent with Africa's transportation needs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The *Financial Times* did a series of articles in 2006 examining the African infrastructure challenges as well as the successes that have been achieved.<sup>35</sup>

The *Financial Times* reported that the paucity of transportation connections, particularly by road, has been a glaring obstacle to regional and even national integration. Few railway lines have been built since independence. At current rates, it is estimated that 60% of sub-Saharan Africans will lack electricity by 2020. While drought is the persistent image many have of Africa, there are available water resources, although only three percent of renewable water resources are managed, and nearly 40% of Africans still lack access to clean water.

Thanks to the entrepreneurial spirit and the presence of public-private partnerships, however, the infrastructure news is not all bad. The number of mobile telephone lines in Africa rose nearly 54% between 2000 and 2006, compared with 24% globally.<sup>36</sup> In Nigeria, entrepreneurs have started private airlines to first compete with and then compensate for the collapse of Nigerian Airways. The U.S. Agency for International Development's African Global Competitiveness Initiative has committed \$200 million through 2010 for African economic development, and its infrastructure component seeks to leverage more than \$41 billion in investments in energy and other infrastructure in sub-Saharan Africa. American investment and expertise can help Africa leap into the 21<sup>st</sup> century in all forms of infrastructure as it has with telecommunications.

### **Corporate Social Responsibility**

EnviroNics International, a Canadian-based issues research and consulting firm, released a 20-country survey in 2006, which found that in wealthy countries, corporate social responsibility contributes more to corporate reputations than brand image and that companies that ignore this lesson risk market share.<sup>37</sup> This lesson has been learned by companies operating in Africa, who are adopting CSR standards. Unilever in Ghana, Anglo-American in South Africa, Mozal Aluminum in Mozambique and Brookside Dairy in Kenya are among the growing number of companies operating in Africa with active CSR practices.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> African Education Initiative, USAID web site

<sup>35</sup> African Infrastructure 2006, *Financial Times*, November 20, 2006

<sup>36</sup> Ibid

<sup>37</sup> "CSR – First Principle of Survival", *African Business*, February 2007

<sup>38</sup> Ibid

At the seventh Leon H. Sullivan Summit in Abuja, Nigeria, in July 2006, ten African heads of State signed a declaration endorsing the Global Sullivan Principles for Corporate Social Responsibility (GSP). Overall, there are more than 400 endorsers of GSP globally, including companies operating in Africa. GSP provides a framework by which socially responsible businesses, governments and organizations can be aligned. Implementing these principles can create a more favorable commercial environment in African countries, can safeguard the human rights and safety of employees and involve corporations in mutually beneficial relationships with the communities in which they operate. It is particularly useful as a guide for governments in the process of negotiating concessions with companies seeking to utilize natural resources.

GSP is not only compatible with such African human rights instruments as the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, but in fact can provide a useful bridge between theory and implementation. In April 2007, the Senate of the United States acknowledged the GSP as part of Reverend Leon H. Sullivan's achievements. More specific endorsement of the GSP by the U.S. government would send a strong message on the need to expand adherence to CSR for the benefit of governments, corporations, workers and communities.

### **Civil Society**

The term "civil society" embraces a broad array of entities – from think tanks to service organizations to professional associations to faith-based groups. Civil society organizations have acted as advisers and watchdogs on government policy implementation, organized election observation mechanisms and acted as conduits for social welfare projects funded by foreign donors. The Millennium Challenge Account program has elevated civil society to the status of equal partner with government and the business sector in devising grant proposals, which cannot be successful without a legitimate role for civil society once the funds are provided.

Increasingly, civil society in Africa is being asked to facilitate an expanded role in society for both women and youth. Traditionally, the role of women has been limited in African countries and policies were routinely developed without significant female input, but that is changing. At the inception of NEPAD, women's groups banded together to protest the lack of involvement of women in its creation, but by the time of the development of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme in 2003, NEPAD acknowledged that "special attention must be given to the vital food-producing and entrepreneurial roles of women in rural and urban African communities."<sup>39</sup> An estimated two-thirds of African economies involve women entrepreneurs.

African youth have faced a troubling trend that threatens their future. According to the International Labour Organization, the number of young people aged 15 to 24 seeking jobs in sub-Saharan Africa continues to outpace the number of new jobs being created in the region.<sup>40</sup> Too often, unemployed African youth, including educated youth, are falling into crime or being recruited into political party and government militias. The creativity of young people is not being properly applied to African development, and many young people are emigrating for opportunities abroad, further exacerbating Africa's brain drain. African college graduates are not counted as professionals if they never

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<sup>39</sup> "Women Push onto Continent's Agenda", African Renewal (United Nations), July 23, 2007

<sup>40</sup> "ILO Report Bemoans Youth Unemployment and 'Working Poverty'", The African Executive, June 2007

work in their professions because of a lack of employment opportunities, but they represent an uncounted portion of the brain drain since they take what skills they have with them if they leave their home country. Therefore, the brain drain could be much worse than what is currently calculated.

African civil society organizations provide the early warning system for crises in African countries and are the nexus between donor programs and the grassroots. Continued empowerment of women and youth through African civil society organizations and the enhancement of the capacity of civil society organizations themselves are critical goals for the U.S. government.

## **Conclusion**

The experience of the last two Administrations and the last six Congresses has demonstrated that Africa is an important element in the foreign policy of the United States. The African Growth and Opportunity Act, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, the African Regional Electoral Assistance Fund, the Congo Basin Forest Partnership and the Initiative to End Hunger in Africa are all examples that the continent has achieved a more prominent place among U.S. government initiatives in a broad range of areas. Africa does matter to America, and the U.S. government has acknowledged that fact, as have companies like Delta Airlines, which has announced an Atlanta-Monrovia, Liberia flight starting next year

American Presidents are now expected to devise an Africa policy that reflects Africa's importance to American interests. If Bill Clinton and George Bush can create active Africa policies in their Administrations, the next President will be expected to do no less. A Congress whose composition is even more favorable to foreign aid should be prepared to shape and fund Africa initiatives that enhance American engagement with the continent. However, certain realities force one to be pragmatic about the level and timing of American engagement with Africa.

While President-elect Obama does indeed have direct African heritage, he was elected by a broad range of Americans who expect him to be the President of the United States and not primarily an Africa-oriented leader. Congress must focus on the pending global economic crisis as well as many other broad policy areas, as will the President. Africa certainly must be part of the foreign policy equation, but those who expect dramatic, overnight changes will be disappointed. In the long run, however, the incoming Administration and the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress have an opportunity, working together, to build on the legacy of previous Administrations and Congresses, and taking into account lessons learned, create an Africa policy that benefits Americans and Africans.

As has been our tradition, the Leon H. Sullivan Foundation, as well as the Network of Sullivan Organizations (e.g. Opportunities Industrialization Centers of America, Opportunities Industrialization Centers International and the International Foundation for Education and Self-Help) will carry on the legacy of Reverend Leon H. Sullivan by continuing to create and maintain a bridge between Africans and Americans. Programs implemented by these organizations, particularly the biennial Leon H. Sullivan Summits (which will next be held in Kigali, Rwanda, in the summer of 2010), will bring together Americans and Africans to promote the best interests of the African people. We stand ready to work with the new Administration and Congress in our common goal of advancing Africa.