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Libya's independence in 1951 marked the beginning of the end of formal colonial rule as well as the emergence of the "dependency-decolonization" debate over the degree to which Africa's newly independent countries truly control their international relations (see Shaw and Newbury, 1979). According to the group of observers belonging to the dependency school of thought, the granting of legal independence to the fifty-four African countries that comprise the African nation-state system did little to alter the constraining web of economic, political, military, and cultural ties that continued to bind African countries to the former colonial powers (Amin, 1973). This conceptualization of African international relations, often called neocolonialism (Nkrumah, 1965), is especially prominent in writings about the relationship between France and its former colonies, primarily due to policies designed to maintain what French policymakers refer to as their chasse gardée (literally, an exclusive hunting ground) in francophone Africa (Suret-Canale, 1975). Even in those former colonies where the European power was either too weak (e.g., Spain) or uninterested (e.g., Britain) to preserve privileged ties, the rise of the Cold War and superpower intervention ensured the gradual replacement of European neocolonial relationships with a new set of ties dominated by Moscow and Washington, DC (Lafti, 1990). In short, dependency theorists argue that direct colonial rule has been replaced by a series of neocolonial relationships that perpetuates external domination of African international relations.

Scholars of the decolonization school of thought argue instead that legal independence beginning in the 1950s was but the first step of an evolutionary process permitting African leaders to assume greater control over the international relations of their countries (Zartman, 1976; see also Bayart,
2000). According to this perspective, although external influences were extremely powerful in the immediate postindependence era, layer upon layer of this foreign control is slowly being “peeled away” with the passage of time. While carefully underscoring that individual African countries can follow different pathways, proponents of the decolonization school argue that the most common pattern begins with legal independence, followed by efforts to assure national sovereignty in the military, economic, and cultural realms. “In this view, each layer of colonial influence is supported by the others, and as each is removed, it uncovers and exposes the next underlying one, rendering it vulnerable, untenable, and unnecessary,” explains J. William Zartman (1976:326–327), one of the most prominent proponents of the decolonization school. “Thus, there is a natural progression to the removal of colonial influence: its speed can be varied by policy and effort, but the direction and evolution are inherent in the process and become extremely difficult to reverse.”

The durability of the dependency-decolonization debate is demonstrated by how both sides interpret the end of the Cold War and subsequent spread to the African continent of the “third wave” of democratization in global history (Huntington, 1991). According to decolonization theorists, Africa is undergoing a “second independence” or a “second national liberation” in which a new generation of African leaders is assuming greater control over the international relations of their respective countries. The most recent manifestation of this trend is occurring in North Africa, where Tunisia’s “Jasmine revolution” of January 2011 has captured the imagination of the Arab world and produced a domino effect, including the toppling of dictatorships in Egypt and Libya (Schraeder and Redissi, 2011). In sharp contrast, dependency theorists equate the end of the Cold War with the rising marginalization of African international relations. They imply that African leaders enjoy less, rather than more, options in the post–Cold War international system (e.g., Shaw, 1991). Focusing on aggressive foreign efforts to promote democratization and economic reform, some observers have even suggested that the “recolonization” or “new scramble” for Africa is occurring (Ake, 1995; Southall and Melber, 2009; Carmody, 2011).

Although the dependency-decolonization debate is far from being revolved, the year 2018 will mark a symbolic turning point as Africa’s contemporary independence era (1951–2018) will have lasted as long as the core colonial era (1884–1951). I designed this chapter to provide food for thought for the dependency-decolonization debate through the exploration of five topics within the broad area of African international relations: the formulation and conduct of African foreign policies; pan-Africanism and the African Union; regional economic cooperation and integration; the role of foreign powers in African international relations; and the UN and international financial institutions.
African Foreign Policy in a Changing International Environment

African countries have a rich foreign policy history dating back to the pre-colonial independence era, when diplomacy was key to the relationships between literally hundreds if not thousands of independent political systems and kingdoms. The case study of West Africa, as artfully described in the work of Robert S. Smith (1976) and Joseph K. Adjaye (1996), demonstrates the existence of sophisticated diplomatic practices that in many respects are similar to those at the beginning of the twenty-first century. First, the dispatch of diplomats to neighboring political systems was common. Often called “messengers,” “linguists,” or “heralds,” these individuals sometimes lived as resident diplomats in neighboring political systems. Unlike contemporary diplomats who work at elaborate embassies that may employ hundreds of workers, the resident diplomats usually served as the sole representatives of their peoples.

African diplomats also carried diplomatic credentials or “badges of office.” Whereas all present-day diplomats carry special diplomatic passports, their precolonial African counterparts carried various culturally significant credentials that included canes, staffs, whistles, fans, batons, and swords. Representatives of the Akan kingdom of present-day Ghana carried a diplomatic staff. The staff was topped by the figure of a hand holding an egg. This image was designed to “convey the warning that neither the king nor his representative should press a matter too hard nor treat it too lightly” (Adjaye, 1996:12). Regardless of culture or the period in which they lived, few, if any, diplomats would question the diplomatic message portrayed by the Akan staff’s image.

A third similarity with current diplomatic practices was the observance of diplomatic protocol and etiquette. It was not uncommon for African diplomats to enjoy diplomatic immunity (freedom from political harassment or persecution by local authorities). This practice was also an extension of the traditional African custom of warmly welcoming African strangers in their midst. Another example of diplomatic protocol and etiquette was the tendency of African kings “to converse only indirectly with their visitors and subjects” (Adjaye, 1996:14). What was intended as a sign of respect and courtesy inevitably ensured a prominent role for diplomatic intermediaries, especially those who were knowledgeable about foreign languages and practices.

A final example of diplomacy that resonates with the contemporary era resolves around the “deliberate” and “tortuous” pace of diplomatic negotiations (Adjaye, 1996:16). The extensive use of public flattery and gift giving, most notably intricately woven cloths, were integral aspects of such negotiations. One custom, still popular in West Africa, is the tradition of beginning or ending negotiations with the mutual breaking and eating of
kola nuts. Available throughout West Africa, the kola nut is a stimulant and allows discussants to stay awake during extended periods of negotiations that sometimes last throughout the night. The kola nut, a symbol of West African hospitality, is broken into an equivalent number of pieces and shared among the participants attending the meeting.

The diplomatic practices of precolonial African kingdoms were significantly altered as a result of at least five international turning points during the past 150 years, beginning with the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885. As a result of this conference, independent Africa (except for Ethiopia and Liberia) ceased to exist, and African diplomatic relations were controlled by the European colonial powers. A second international event—the extended global conflict of World War II (1939–1945)—heralded the decline of Europe as the most powerful region of the world and the emergence of African nationalist movements intent on achieving independence from colonial rule. This period marked the beginning of the end of colonial rule and the return of control over foreign policy to Africans. The outbreak and intensification of the Cold War (1947–1989) transformed the newly independent African countries into proxy battlefields between the United States and the former Soviet Union, the unparalleled superpowers of the post–World War II era. African conflicts often having little, if anything, to do with the ideological concerns of communism or capitalism threatened to become East-West flashpoints in the face of growing US–Soviet involvement.

A fourth international event, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, signaled the end of the Cold War but not the end of international rivalry in Africa. The ideologically based Cold War between the United States and the former Soviet Union was replaced by a Cold Peace, in which the major northern industrialized democracies struggled for economic supremacy in a highly competitive economic environment of the 1990s. The security dimension of this Cold Peace became evident in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks against the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, DC, as the United States sought to enlist its African allies in a global war on terrorism. As African leaders continue to guide their countries during the second decade of the new millennium, they must manage their countries' foreign policies in an environment marked by the growing competition among today's economic superpowers: China, Germany, Japan, and the United States.

The classic theme of studies of contemporary African foreign policy is that foreign policy begins and ends with the desires of African presidents (Korany, 1986; see also Wright, 1998). The primary reason for what has become known as the "big man" syndrome of African foreign policy is that the majority of the first generation of African presidents who took power beginning in the 1950s systematically suppressed and dismantled centers of power capable of challenging the foreign policy supremacy of the presidential mansion. The various efforts undertaken by this first generation included
the stifling of a free press, the suspension of constitutions, the banning of opposition parties, the jailing of vocal political opponents, the dismantling of independent judiciaries, and, finally, the co-optation or jailing of legislative opponents (Schaeder, 2004). In short, the institutional actors typically associated with making their voices heard in the foreign policy making processes of democratic countries were often marginalized in the name of creating single-party regimes capable of promoting unity and development.

The net result of what in essence constituted a highly centralized foreign policy machinery was the promotion of “personalized” foreign policies derivative of the interests and idiosyncrasies of individual presidents (Jackson and Rosberg, 1982). In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC; formerly Zaire), Mobutu Sese Seko assumed power in 1965 through a military coup d’état supported by the US government and gradually concentrated all power around the office of the president (Young and Turner, 1989). Often unwilling to listen to his foreign policy experts within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and having effectively silenced other potential centers of opposition, most notably by disbanding the Zairian National Assembly, Mobutu was known for declaring policies that created international controversy. During a presidential visit to the United States during 1973, Mobutu made a speech before the UN General Assembly in which he announced his decision to rupture all diplomatic ties with Israel. This decision was notable in that it was made without any warning to the Richard M. Nixon White House and effectively derailed State Department efforts to win congressional passage of a Zairian foreign aid bill (Schaeder, 1994:82).

A second outcome associated with the centralization of the foreign policy apparatus is that the first generation of African presidents often pursued foreign policies strongly tied to those of the former colonial powers. In addition to the variety of formal ties (e.g., military treaties) that bound the newly independent countries to the former colonial powers, the primary reason for what proponents of the dependency school would characterize as “dependent” foreign policies (e.g., Shaw and Aluko, 1984) was the shared culture and political values of colonially trained African presidents and their European counterparts. Despite having actively campaigned for political independence, several first-generation presidents benefited from colonial efforts designed to ensure the victory of leaders sympathetic to European concerns. In the case of Senegal, for example, former president Léopold Sédar Senghor, sometimes described by his critics as more French than Senegalese, married a Frenchwoman, retired to a home in France, and carries the distinction of being the first African to be inducted into France’s highly prestigious and selective Académie Française, the national watchdog of French language and culture (see Markovitz, 1969).

The most important outcome of the rise to power of the first generation of African presidents is that these leaders would often be more responsive to the foreign policy concerns of their external patrons than to the popular
Mobutu Sese Seko was one of Africa's most notorious dictators (1965–1997). He came to power in a military coup and changed the name of Congo to Zaire.

demands of their own peoples. Especially in the case of francophone Africa, the first generation of African presidents signed a variety of defense agreements with France that, rather than ensuring protection from threats from abroad, in reality were designed to ensure their political longevity. From the 1960s to the present, France has intervened militarily more than thirty times in its former colonies, often at the request of presidents either under threat from internal opposition movements or seeking to be reinstated in power after being overthrown. Even in cases where pro-French leaders were overthrown by military coups d'état during the decade of the 1960s, the guiding principle of French involvement was the willingness of a particular leader to support French foreign policy objectives. For example, when
asked why France did not militarily intervene when David Dacko, the democratically elected president of the Central African Republic, was overthrown in a military coup d'état in 1966, Jacques Foccart (Foccart, with Gaillard, 1995:287), architect of France's policies toward francophone Africa under Presidents Charles de Gaulle and Georges Pompidou, noted in his memoirs that the new leader, Jean-Bedel Bokassa, "after all was a very pro-French military man."

The combination of the Cold War's end and the rising strength and intensity of pro-democracy movements is contributing to the "democratization" of African foreign policies (Adar and Ajulu, 2002; Adar and Schraeder, 2007). The importance of this democratization trend, especially in countries where multiparty elections have been held, is the alternation of power between long-entrenched (often authoritarian) elites and democratic successors who have very different visions of how best to restructure their domestic political systems. An excellent example of this process was the replacement in 1990 of Namibia's local version of South Africa's apartheid system with a multiparty democracy led by elites associated with the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), most notably former guerrilla leader Sam Nujoma, who served as president from 1990 to 2005 and was succeeded by President Hifikepunye Pohamba in 2005. The foreign policy implication of the alternation of power is that new, democratically elected elites may not necessarily share the foreign policy goals and interests of their authoritarian predecessors. The emergence of such new elites should also provide the basis for a realignment in foreign policy, in terms of both the substance of foreign policy and preferred foreign policy relationships, especially in those cases in which a previously unpopular elite was able to illegally maintain itself in power at least partially due to the interventionist practices of the former colonial or another great power. In Namibia, Nujoma's 1990 election under the SWAPO banner signaled the beginning of a restructuring of Namibian foreign policy, most notably the downgrading of foreign policy ties with countries allied to apartheid South Africa, which had served as Namibia's de facto colonial power after Namibia was placed under South African trusteeship at the end of World War I.

The democratization process has also altered the centralized foreign policy structures in several African countries (Schraeder, 2001; Schraeder, with Gaye, 1997). In some cases, democratization has been accompanied by the implementation of policies designed to decrease both the size of the military establishment and its involvement in governmental affairs, including in the realm of foreign policy (Kieh and Agbese, 2004). In South Africa during the 1980s, the military strongly argued in favor of the Afrikaner regime's decision to undertake destabilization policies against its immediate neighbors (Grundy, 1986). In the wake of the country's first multiparty elections in 1994, however, the new government headed by Nelson Mandela
undertook a series of reforms designed to restore greater civilian control over a military force that had become too prominent in both domestic and foreign policies (Bischoff and Southall, 1999).

The democratization process has also led to the strengthening of institutional actors, most notably increasingly independent and vocal national legislatures, capable of challenging the presidency in the foreign policy realm (Barkan, 2009). The primary reason behind this newfound legislative role is the creation of democratic political systems that embody the concept of separation of powers between the various branches of government. In Benin, one of the democratic leaders of francophone West Africa, the National Assembly in December 1995 refused to ratify highly unpopular legislation that would have permitted the launching of a third structural adjustment program (SAP) promoted by both the administration of President Nicéphore Soglo (1991–1996) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. President Soglo’s subsequent attempts at breaking the political stalemate between the legislative and executive branches of government (he announced his intention to launch the SAP through the “exceptional power” granted to the executive under Article 68 of the Constitution) was one of the critical factors that strengthened popular discontent to such a degree that he lost the 1996 presidential elections to his autocratic predecessor, President Mathieu Kérékou (Adjovi, 1998:107–139). Soglo had severely underestimated the power of his legislative opponents and their ability to translate deep-seated popular resentment of foreign-imposed SAPs into electoral defeat at the ballot box. For perhaps the first time in African political history, a democratically elected National Assembly played a critical role in ensuring the defeat of a previously popular and democratically elected president.

The democratization process also portends greater popular input into the foreign policy making process as the policies of a new generation of African leaders are increasingly held accountable to public opinion (see, e.g., Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Bodei, 2005). Even during the Cold War era, public opinion played an influential, albeit intermittent, role in African foreign policies. For example, it has been argued that public opinion, fueled primarily by radio broadcasts by Radio France Internationale, was the primary factor that led to bloody clashes between Senegal and Mauritania in 1989 (Parker, 1991; see also Pazzanita, 1992). Despite the fact that this conflict was neither desired nor promoted by President Diouf of Senegal or President Ould Taya of Mauritania and, despite their best efforts to contain public passions, both these leaders were confronted by violent clashes that spiraled out of control. In a sense, both leaders, as well as the foreign policies of their respective countries, became “prisoners” of public opinion.

One must also consider the impact of religious groups and leaders, especially political Islam, on African foreign policies (see, e.g., Miles, 2007).
In Senegal, Islamic leaders known as marabouts constitute an integral part of the domestic political system and play both informal and formal roles in the making of foreign policy (Villalón, 1995). The marabouts played a critical role in reducing tensions between Senegal and Mauritania in the aftermath of the 1989 border conflict by shuttling back and forth across the river that separates the two countries. An equally dramatic case occurred in the mid-1980s, when the Diouf administration was forced to withdraw an invitation to Pope John Paul II to visit the country due to the threats of leading marabouts to call upon their taalibe (disciples) to occupy the runways at the international airport. Although the Pope was subsequently invited and visited Senegal several years later in 1991, to the wide acclaim of both Muslims and Christians, the marabouts have clearly served notice that sensitive issues had to be raised with them in advance if the president wished to avoid embarrassing public confrontations. In short, if one wants to completely understand the formulation and implementation of Senegal's foreign policy, as well as that of other African countries with sizable Muslim populations, one must take into account the role of religion. (See Chapter 11 for more on the role of Islam in African politics.)

Finally, one must take into account the foreign policy impact of guerrilla groups that are opposed to the central authority of their countries and that create parallel diplomatic networks to promote their guerrilla causes (Boas and Dunn, 2007). Such networks are typically limited to neighboring countries that provide economic and military support and that serve as the bases of military operations. The most extensive diplomatic network maintained by an African guerrilla insurgency was that of the African National Congress (ANC). From 1960, the year that the ANC was banned by South Africa's apartheid regime, to 1994, the year that Nelson Mandela emerged victorious in South Africa's first multiracial, multiparty democratic elections, the ANC established forty-three diplomatic missions in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Western Hemisphere, each of which was maintained during various lengths of time (Pfister, 2003).

Pan-Africanism and the African Union
African nationalists were inspired by the anticolonial activities of peoples of African descent living in North America and the West Indies during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As a result, these nationalists sought to promote a unified African front against colonial rule. What subsequently became known as the pan-African ideal was most forcefully enunciated for the first time at the 1945 meeting of the Pan-African Congress held in Manchester, England. At the conference, participants adopted a Declaration to the Colonial Peoples that affirmed the "rights" of all colonized peoples to be "free from foreign imperialist control, whether political or economic."
and "to elect their own governments, without restrictions from foreign powers" (Ajala, 1988:36). In a separate Declaration to the Colonial Powers, participants underscored that if the colonial powers were "still determined to rule mankind by force, then Africans, as a last resort, may have to appeal to force in the effort to achieve freedom" (Ajala, 1988:36).

The pan-African ideal gained momentum during the heady independence era of the late 1950s and early 1960s. In an opening address to the first gathering of independent African nations on African soil, held in 1958 in Accra, Ghana, President Kwame Nkrumah proclaimed: "Never before has it been possible for so representative a gathering of African Freedom Fighters to assemble in a free independent African state for the purpose of planning for a final assault upon imperialism and colonialism" (in Ajala, 1988:39). According to Nkrumah, the realization of the pan-African ideal required a commitment between African leaders and their peoples to guide their countries through four stages: (1) "the attainment of freedom and independence"; (2) "the consolidation of that independence and freedom"; (3) "the creation of unity and community between the African states"; and (4) "the economic and social reconstruction of Africa" (Ajala, 1988:30).

Despite overwhelming agreement among African leaders that pan-Africanism constituted a worthy foreign policy goal, sharp disagreement existed over the proper path to ensure such unity. One group of primarily francophone countries known as the Brazzaville Group (named after the capital of the Republic of Congo) sought a minimalist approach: the coordination of national economic policies through standard diplomatic practices. Little consideration was given to the possibility of creating continent-wide institutions. In sharp contrast, Nkrumah and other leaders, who belonged to what became known as the Casablanca Group (named after the Moroccan city), argued instead that the success of pan-Africanism required a political union of all independent African countries, patterned after the federal model of the United States. In speech after speech, Nkrumah promoted two themes that became the hallmark of this international vision: "Africa must unite!" and "Seek ye first the political kingdom!" (see Rooney, 1988).

A third group of African leaders, who belonged to what became known as the Monrovia Group (named after the capital of Liberia), rejected the idea of political union as both undesirable and unfeasible, primarily due to the assumption that African leaders would jealously guard their countries' newfound independence. They nonetheless sought a greater degree of cooperation than that espoused by the Brazzaville Group. Led by Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, prime minister of Nigeria, the Monrovia Group called for the creation of a looser organization of African states. According to this vision of African international relations, African countries would guard their independence but promote growing cooperation in a variety of functional areas, most notably economic, scientific, educational, and social development. An
important component of the Monrovia Group approach was a desire to create continent-wide institutions that would oversee and strengthen policy harmonization.

In May 1963, thirty-one African heads of state largely embraced the Monrovia vision of African international relations by launching the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the first pan-African, intergovernmental organization of independent African countries based on African soil. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, was chosen as the site for the OAU headquarters, and all major decisions and resolutions were formally discussed at the annual Assembly of Heads of State and Government. The sovereign equality of all member states was an important guiding principle of the organization, which differed significantly from the Great Power domination of the UN, given the special powers conferred upon the five permanent members (Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States) of the UN Security Council.

The OAU was particularly vocal in its unswerving opposition to colonialism and white minority rule, most notably minority white-ruled regimes in Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and the former Portuguese-controlled territories of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, and São Tomé and Príncipe. The OAU established a Liberation Committee based in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, to aid liberation movements with both economic and military assistance (see Akindele, 1988a). Although disagreements often arose over which tactics would best ensure transitions to majority-ruled governments (e.g., should one support dialogue with a white regime or fund a guerrilla insurgency?), every OAU member expressed public opposition to the continued existence of minority white-ruled regimes. The work of the Liberation Committee largely came to an end in 1994, when South Africa transitioned to a multiracial, multiparty democracy.

The OAU's thirty-nine-year existence is correctly described as a "victory for pan-Africanism" (Olusanya, 1988:67). Both critics and sympathetic observers nonetheless questioned the organization's ability to play an effective role in African international relations (see also Amate, 1986; El-Ayouty, 1994). In a special issue of the Nigerian Journal of International Affairs, which assessed the OAU's continued relevance on the "Silver Jubilee" (twenty-five-year) anniversary of the organization's creation, one Nigerian scholar expressed "sadness" over the fact that, despite the best of intentions, the OAU had failed to live up to the expectations of its original framers (Olusanya, 1988:70).

More than forty African heads of state convened in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002 to launch the African Union, as the pan-African successor organization to the OAU. Like its OAU predecessor, the African Union is headquartered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, is based on the sovereign equality of all member states, holds an annual Summit of Heads of State
and Government, adopts official positions on a wide array of diplomatic topics affecting the African continent, and counts on a number of offices and institutions designed to strengthen African cooperation, most notably a Pan-African Parliament headquartered in Midrand, South Africa, that is comprised of 265 elected members from each African Union member state (African Union, 2011).

The African Union is led by a ten-member executive body—the African Commission—that is composed of a chairperson, deputy chairperson, and eight commissioners who are responsible for the following eight portfolios:

- **Political affairs**, such as democratic elections and human rights
- **Peace and security**, most notably efforts devoted to conflict resolution
- **Economic affairs**, inclusive of promoting regional integration
- **Infrastructure and energy**, such as the development of the transportation and telecommunications sectors
- **Social affairs**, ranging from sports and migration to health issues and anti-drug efforts
- **Human resources, science and technology**, such as education and new information technologies
- **Trade and industry**, most notably efforts devoted to trade and investment
- **Rural economy and agriculture**, inclusive of food security and protection of the environment

The impacts of the African Union and its OAU predecessor on African international relations are highlighted by the evolution of three sets of international principles, each of which holds important implications for the dependency-decolonization debate. The first principle—the inviolability of frontiers inherited from the colonial era—served as one of the cornerstones of the OAU Charter. Due to the multiethnic nature of most African countries, African leaders were concerned that changing even one boundary would open a Pandora’s box of ethnically based secessionist movements and lead to the further Balkanization of the African continent into ever smaller economic and political units (see Davidson, 1992). In the Nigerian civil war (1967–1970), the OAU not only refused to sanction aid provision to Biafra (the secessionist southeast portion of the country), but voted a series of resolutions that underscored official support for the Nigerian federal government (Bukarambe, 1988:98). This decision upset international human rights activists, as well as several African countries aiding the secessionist government, because the military-dominated Nigerian government was using starvation methods designed to bring the Biafrans to their knees (see Gordon, 2003:141–142; Stremlau, 1977). As ethnic tensions and separatist movements intensified in the post–Cold War era, African leaders remained firmly committed to maintaining borders inherited from the colonial era. Although the OAU recognized the sovereignty of Eritrea in 1993, after a UN-sponsored referendum in that country resulted in overwhelming popular support for independence, African leaders subsequently noted that this process did not question the hallowed concept of the inviolability of frontiers. Unlike most African countries, Eritrea was federated to Ethiopia after independence from colonial rule and, therefore, enjoyed the legal right to withdraw from that voluntary union (see Iyob, 1995).

In sharp contrast, the African Union decided not to include a statement in the Constitutive Act establishing the organization that recognizes the inviolability of frontiers inherited from the colonial era, providing the new organization with greater political flexibility. It is therefore not surprising that the African Union embraced the Southern Sudanese decision achieved via referendum in January 2011 to secede from the Republic of Sudan and create a separate and sovereign Republic of South Sudan. South Sudan’s independence was recognized by the African Union in 2011, which permitted the country to join the organization that same year. The African Union nonetheless remains heavily inclined toward maintaining the territorial integrity of member states, as witnessed by its continued refusal to recognize the independence of the Republic of Somaliland, despite the fact that this territory has enjoyed de facto independence since the collapse of the Republic of Somalia in 1991. Somaliland submitted a bid for membership to the African Union in 2005, which prompted the organization to send a fact-finding mission to the territory that same year. Although the final report of
the fact-finding mission concluded that the African Union “should find a special method of dealing with this outstanding case” (ICG, 2006), no further progress has been made as of this writing.

A second principle embedded in the OAU Charter but rejected by the African Union is noninterference in the internal affairs of member states. In the early years of the OAU, African leaders debated whether to allow military leaders who had illegally deposed their civilian counterparts to maintain their OAU seats. This debate was resolved in favor of recognizing whatever group controlled the reins of power in a particular country (Akindele, 1988b:82–85). More significant was the silence among African leaders concerning human rights abuses in OAU member states. “Increased repression, denial of political choice, restrictions on the freedom of association, and like events occurred, with rare murmurs of dissent,” explains Claude Welch, Jr., a specialist on human rights in Africa. “The OAU seemed to function as a club of presidents, engaged in a tacit policy of not inquiring into each other’s practices” (Welch, 1991:537). During the 1970s, for example, Ugandan dictator Idi Amin was elected OAU chair despite his personal involvement in “politically sanctioned repression and murders” in Uganda (Welch, 1991:538).

Although still highly reluctant to criticize their counterparts, African leaders began to accept a growing role for the OAU in addressing human rights abuses at the beginning of the 1980s. In 1981, the annual Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Banjul, Gambia, adopted the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights (popularly called the Banjul Charter). Despite the ratification of this charter, the OAU’s response to events in Nigeria during 1995 demonstrated the organization’s reluctance to translate human rights rhetoric into policy action. In response to disturbances among the Ogoni ethnic group in southeastern Nigeria, which began in 1990 over control of that region’s vast oil resources, Nigeria’s military regime unleashed a brutal campaign of repression that included the November 1995 execution of Nobel Peace Prize candidate Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists on trumped-up murder charges (French, 1995:E3; see also Osaghae, 1995). Although OAU secretary-general Salim Ahmed Salim expressed “disappointment” over the fact that the Nigerian generals failed to “respond positively” to OAU appeals for clemency, the organization did not adopt concrete, comprehensive measures to punish or to internationally isolate the Nigerian regime (quoted in French, 1995:E3).

The African Union has clearly rejected the OAU principle of noninterference in the domestic affairs of member countries. In fact, Article 4(h) of the Constitutive Act affirms “the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity,” and Article 4(j) underscores “the right of Member States to request intervention
from the Union in order to restore peace and security” (quoted in Murithi, 2007:16-17). “With the adoption of these legal provisions, for the first time in the history of Africa, the continental organization (the African Union), working through an appointed group of states, has the authority to intervene in internal situations in any state that may lead to atrocities against minority groups or communities at risk,” explains Tim Murithi (2007:17). “In other words, the AU [African Union] has the right and the responsibility to act.” The African Union has also adopted the 2007 African Charter on Democracy, Elections, and Governance, thereby committing member states to strengthening democratic practices, most notably holding free and fair elections and ensuring freedom of expression. It is precisely for this reason that the African Union has strongly denounced military coups that have overturned constitutionally elected governments, including suspending Mauritania’s African Union membership in the aftermath of an August 2008 military coup d’état.

A third and final principle—the peaceful settlement of all disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, or arbitration—was adopted by both the OAU and the African Union. However, the OAU’s embrace of support for the previous two principles of territorial integrity and noninterference in the internal affairs of member states historically impeded that body’s ability to mediate either internal conflicts or conflicts between two or more member states. In the 1967–1970 Nigerian civil war, almost reflexive support for the territorial integrity of Nigeria seriously called into doubt, at least from the viewpoint of the secessionist Igbo, the OAU’s ability to serve as an impartial negotiator. For this reason, the OAU Commission of Mediation, Arbitration, and Conciliation was “stillborn” (Zartman, 1995b) and most African-initiated arbitration efforts were carried out ad hoc by African presidents. For example, Djiboutian president Hassan Gouled Aptidon used his country’s stature as the headquarters for the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to mediate the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia. According to Zartman (1995a:241), a specialist of conflict resolution, such efforts led to success in only 33 percent of roughly twenty-four cases, and this success was often only temporary in nature as warring parties returned to the battlefield.

The ability to dispatch peacekeeping or peacemaking forces once a conflict has broken out is a critical aspect of conflict resolution. The OAU founding fathers attempted to prepare for this eventuality by planning the creation of an African High Command, a multinational military force comprised of military contingents from OAU member states. The African High Command never made it beyond the planning stage, leading once again to a variety of ad hoc measures. In 1981, the OAU sponsored the creation of a short-term, all-African military force designed to resolve an expanding civil war in Chad. Composed of approximately 4,800 troops from Zaire, Nigeria,
and Senegal, the OAU force "failed to achieve any concrete solution" due to financial, logistical, and political difficulties and within a few months was "forced to withdraw" (Gambari, 1995:225).

The African Union has sought to undertake a more robust and leading role in conflict resolution through the creation in 2003 of a Peace and Security Council. This body is made up of fifteen member states who can authorize the imposition of economic sanctions against regimes that have assumed power due to unconstitutional changes (e.g., military coups d'état) or the deployment of military missions under the African Union banner. In this regard, the African Union has been more aggressive than its predecessor, including deploying peacekeeping missions to Burundi in 2003, to Darfur, Sudan, in 2004, and to southern Somalia in 2007. The Darfur operation was ultimately handed over to the United Nations in 2007, and the Somali operation is ongoing as of this writing. The peacekeeping mission in Somalia has been particularly controversial, due to the deaths of numerous African Union soldiers and disputes between member states, some of whom oppose the African Union deployment, such as Eritrea, which recalled its ambassador from the African Union between November 2009 and January 2011. Despite a greater commitment to conflict resolution, the African Union, like its OAU predecessor, has been unable to create a permanent African force capable of responding to African conflicts.

The combination of Africa's unstable nation-state system and the basic weakness of the OAU and African Union in military affairs has led to a variety of military interventions by individual countries and intergovernmental organizations. Four sets of actors periodically have intervened in African conflicts: (1) the UN, as demonstrated by its approval of more than twenty peacekeeping missions in Africa since 1989, not to mention the UN Security Council's authorization for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to undertake military operations in Libya during spring 2011 that contributed to the overthrow of the regime of Muammar Qaddafi; (2) African regional organizations, such as the decision of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to sponsor a series of Nigerian-led military operations in Liberia; (3) foreign powers, most notably France, the United States, and, to a lesser degree, the United Kingdom, as witnessed by French military intervention in Côte d'Ivoire and British military intervention in Sierra Leone; and (4) African powers, as demonstrated by Ethiopian and Kenyan military interventions in southern Somalia against the Islamist forces of al-Shabaab.

The rising tendency of African countries to militarily intervene in neighboring countries has become especially prominent in the post–Cold War era. The most clear-cut example of this trend was the expansion of civil conflict in the DRC into what foreign observers now commonly call Africa's "First World War." At its height in 2002, this conflict was marked by the introduction of massive numbers of ground troops by at least five African countries: Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, which were fighting
on the side of the DRC’s government, and Rwanda and Uganda, which were seeking to topple that government. Although the individual stakes of African countries contributing troops to this conflict were extremely varied (see, e.g., Clark, 2002), together they underscored an emerging reality of African international relations at the dawn of a new millennium: the rising importance of regional military balances of power and the political-military and economic interests of regional actors. Africa, having provided a battlefield for superpower interests during the Cold War, provides another for rising African powers intent on dominating the international relations of their respective regions. Moreover, from the perspective of pan-Africanists, such ad hoc interventions, regardless of whether undertaken by foreign or local African powers, are ultimately undesirable; rather than representing an African consensus opinion, such interventions are theoretically driven by the self-interests of the intervening country.

Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration
Inspired by the success of the European Union (EU) and encouraged by the UN-sponsored Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the first generation of African leaders sought to create regional entities capable of promoting regional cooperation and integration. This vision of African international relations was best captured by the OAU’s publication in 1981 of a document, Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980–2000, which proposed the establishment of an African Economic Community (AEC) that would be based on an African Common Market (ACM). The guiding logic of the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) is that the creation of intergovernmental economic organizations in each of Africa’s five major regions—North, East, West, southern, and central Africa—is the best means for ensuring the ultimate creation of a continent-wide AEC. (See Chapter 5 for information on the economic crises that have inspired these efforts.)

The flourishing of experiments in regional cooperation and integration throughout the contemporary independence era demonstrated the firm commitment of the first generation of African leaders to the economic dimension of the pan-African ideal. By the end of the 1980s, it was estimated that at least 160 intergovernmental economic groupings existed on the African continent, with thirty-two such organizations in West Africa alone (Seidman and Anang, 1992:73). Among the most notable and far-reaching economic groupings in each of Africa’s major regions (including dates of launching) are the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS, 1975); the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU, 1989); the Southern African Development Community (SADC, 1980); the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS, 1983); and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in northeast Africa (1986). These regional organizations are
complemented by a few larger groupings, such as the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Lomé Convention, which promotes preferential trade links between the European Union and dozens of countries from Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific (see Ojo, 1985: 146–150).

African leaders offer several rationales for seeking regional cooperation and integration. The simplest reason is the firm belief that there is strength in numbers. In order to effectively compete within an increasingly competitive international economic system, dominated by economic superpowers (e.g., the United States and China) and powerful regional economic entities (e.g., the European Union and the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA] zone), African countries must band together and pool their respective resources. Second, African leaders desire to promote self-sustaining economic development and, particularly, the industrialization of the African continent. Struggling with the reality that many of their countries are economically impoverished and lack the tools for the creation of advanced industries, African leaders believe that they can build upon the individual strengths of their neighbors to forge integrated and self-sustaining regional economies.

Most important, regional economic schemes are perceived as the best means of creating self-reliant development, thereby reducing and ultimately ridding the African continent of the ties of dependency inherited from the colonial era (Asante, with Chanaïwa, 1993:741–743). For example, African leaders are rightfully concerned that national control over the evolution of their respective economies is constrained by Africa’s trade dependency on Europe, at the expense of intraregional trade links with African countries. For this reason the primary objective of early regional economic schemes was to promote intraregional trade with neighbors who theoretically share a common set of development objectives—either due to special geographic features, historical ties, or a shared religion such as Islam in North Africa (see, e.g., Grundy, 1985). By strengthening these ties with like-minded neighbors, a stronger African economic entity is expected to emerge that will be capable of reducing foreign influence and strengthening Africa’s collective ability to bargain with non-African powers on a more equal basis.

Early optimism began to wane in the aftermath of the launching of several regional integration efforts, which included the creation of supranational authorities and formal economic unions designed to promote intraregional trade and investment. In the case of the East African Community (EAC), the 1967 decision of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda to create a common market with common services, coordinated by a supranational governing body, collapsed less than ten years later, and was followed in 1978–1979 by Tanzania’s military intervention in Uganda to overthrow the dictatorial regime of Idi Amin (Potholm and Fredland, 1980). As explained by Olatunde Ojo (1985), a specialist of regional cooperation and integration in Africa,
several factors that contributed to the EAC’s decline clarify why other similar efforts, from the 1960s to the 1980s, either failed or demonstrated minimal progress.

An initial problem was the polarization of national development and the perception of unequal gains (Ojo, 1985:159–161). As typically occurred in other cases in Africa where the creation of a common market served as the cornerstone of the regional grouping, the most industrialized country (Kenya) usually reaped the benefits of economic integration at the expense of its partners (Uganda and Tanzania). For example, Kenya’s share of intra-community trade increased from 63 percent in 1968 to 77 percent in 1974, whereas Uganda’s share decreased from 26 percent to 6 percent during the same period. In addition, despite the fashioning of a common policy toward the establishment of new operations by multinational corporations (MNCs), the majority of these firms decided to locate their bases of operations in Kenya due to its more advanced economy and workforce as well as its extensive infrastructural network of roads, railroads, ports, and airports.

The EAC also foundered due to the inadequacy of compensatory and corrective measures (Ojo, 1985:161–166). In every integration scheme, some countries inevitably benefit more than others. As a result, policymakers can implement measures, such as the creation of regional development banks or the disproportionate sharing of customs revenue, to correct the imbalance and compensate those countries expected to lose out in the short term. In the case of the EAC, a regional development bank was created to disburse funds in the following manner to the three members: Kenya (22 percent), Tanzania (38 percent), and Uganda (40 percent). However, in this and other cases of integration in Africa, even the richest members are usually incapable of subsidizing bank operations. The actual finances provided to the most needy members therefore never even begin to approach true development needs or completely compensate for losses incurred.

A third stumbling block to successful regional integration of the EAC was ideological differences and the rise of economic nationalism (Ojo, 1985:168–169). Simply put, ideological differences often ensure a radically different approach to development projects, which in turn can significantly hinder regional integration. In the case of Kenya, a pro-West capitalist regime was very open to private enterprise and foreign investment, particularly the opening of local offices of MNCs. The socialist-oriented regime of Tanzania, however, opted for a self-help strategy known as ujamaa (the Kiswahili term for brotherhood), which not only denounced private enterprise as exploitative, but also restricted the flow of foreign investment and strongly controlled the MNCs. When combined with the growing public perception of unequal gains between the two countries, these ideological differences led to often acrimonious public debate between President Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya and President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, and to the rise of economic nationalism in both countries.
A final element that contributed to the EAC's decline was the impact of foreign influences (Ojo, 1985:169–171). Whereas Kenya developed close relationships with the Western bloc nations (e.g., the United States and Britain), Tanzania pursued close links with the socialist bloc (particularly the People's Republic of China [PRC]), and Uganda sought links with the former Soviet Union and the Arab world. These links ensured that the EAC became embroiled in the Cold War rivalry of the 1960s and the 1970s and contributed to the creation of an outwardly directed "strategic image" that prompted EAC member states to look "outward" toward their foreign patrons rather than "inward" toward their natural regional partners (Ojo, 1985).

Beginning in the 1980s, the failure and stagnation of classic integration schemes prompted African leaders to undertake looser forms of regional economic cooperation in a variety of functionally specific areas such as transportation infrastructure (e.g., regional rail links), energy (e.g., hydroelectric projects on common rivers), and telecommunications (see Onwuka and Sesay, 1985; Aly, 1994; Lavergne, 1997; Oyejide, Elbadawi, and Collier, 1997). The logic behind pursuing this form of regionalism is that it does not require the creation of supranational authorities, nor does it require policymakers to sacrifice national control over the sensitive areas of foreign trade and investment. This looser form of economic cooperation is gathering strength in the post–Cold War era, particularly as democratically elected elites increasingly assume power and seek to promote cooperation with other democracies in their regions.

The 1992 transformation of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) into SADC is a good example of this trend in African regional relations. Originally conceived as a vehicle for reducing the economic dependence of the Frontline States on South Africa during the apartheid era, the transformed SADC now counts South Africa among its members and is seeking to enhance traditional cooperation in a variety of functional realms, most notably transportation (Khadiagala, 1994; see also Love, 2005). The new SADC is at "the threshold of a new era," according to several reports published by the African Development Bank in conjunction with the World Bank and the Development Bank of South Africa. "Although its effects and the inequities it has embedded will linger for a long time to come, the demise of apartheid opens up prospects unimaginable even a few years ago," explains one report. "New opportunities have emerged in every sector of economic activity for expanded trade and mutually beneficial exchanges of all kinds among the countries of southern Africa" (Morna, 1995:65).

Several factors are essential to understanding the optimism surrounding SADC's status as a model for economic cooperation in Africa, particularly in terms of reducing southern Africa's dependence on foreign economic interests and creating the basis for self-sustaining development in the post–Cold War era (see Blumenfeld, 1992; see also Gibb, 1998). First, the
inclusion of a highly industrialized South Africa provides SADC with an engine for economic growth that will potentially reinvigorate the entire region. In this regard, South Africa is playing a leadership role similar to that enjoyed by Germany in the EU, the United States in NAFTA, and Nigeria in ECOWAS. The majority of SADC members also share a common British colonial heritage. Although a shared colonial past is not a precondition for effective regional cooperation, it facilitates such technical matters as which language should serve as the official language of communication (in the case of SADC, English).

A third facilitating factor is the decline in ideological differences between SADC member states that accompanied the end of the Cold War. Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe have discarded in varying degrees their adherence to Marxist principles of development; South Africa has officially renounced its apartheid system; and Tanzania and Zambia have dismantled significant portions of their formerly socialist economies. In essence, there is a growing consensus among SADC member states that effective regional economic cooperation must be based on a shared commitment to some variant of the liberal capitalist model of development.

SADC’s greatest strength is a regional commitment to conflict resolution and to the promotion of shared democratic values (Ohlson and Stedman, with Davies, 1994). The Cold War’s end and the rise of democratization movements have led to the end of civil wars and the holding of democratic elections throughout the region, although an ongoing leadership crisis involving the dictatorial and capricious rule of Zimbabwean president Robert Mugabe remains an issue of concern for regional leaders. One of the most important lessons of regional integration theory, which draws upon the success of the European Union, is that the existence of elites with a shared commitment to democracy is the foundation of long-term economic cooperation and development. For this reason, the 1992 Windhoek Treaty (named after the capital of Namibia), which consecrated the launching of SADC, underscored the political dimension of regional relationships and its critical role in the continued expansion of economic cooperation. The leaderships of SADC member states recognize that the fruits of pan-Africanism can be achieved only by the settlement of civil war and the promotion of democracy throughout the African continent. As a result, conflict resolution remains an important cornerstone of the pan-African ideal in the twenty-first century.

The Role of Foreign Powers in African International Relations
Many important policies affecting the future of African politics and society are decided in Beijing, Berlin, Paris, Tokyo, and Washington—the capitals of the Great Powers that are significantly involved in Africa at the beginning of the twenty-first century. France maintains extensive political-military and
economic relationships with African countries, most notably in francophone
Africa, those former French and Belgian colonies where, among a variety
of factors, French serves as one of the official languages of administration
and/or education. The United States often became the most influential po-
litical-military actor in the non-francophone portions of the African con-
tinent during the Cold War era and increasingly has sought to promote eco-
nomic links in the post–Cold War era (Schraeder 1994, 1998). Japan and
Germany emerged during the 1980s as rising economic powers and serve as
important sources of economic aid or trade for individual African countries
(Engel and Kappel, 2002; see also Schulz and Hansen, 1984; Nester, 1992;
Hofmeier, 1994; Brüne, Betz, and Kuhnke, 1994; Morikawa, 1997).

Britain’s official interest in maintaining privileged colonial ties, once
rivaled only by that of France, dramatically waned during the Cold War
(Styan, 1996; Bangura, 1983). Economic decline forced British policymak-
ers to make difficult decisions as to where limited economic resources
would contribute the most to British foreign policy interests, ultimately
leading to the downgrading of British ties with most of its former colonies.
Beginning with the administration of Prime Minister Tony Blair, Britain has
become more active in African international relations, as demonstrated by
its leadership role in dispatching peacekeeping troops to Sierra Leone in
West Africa (Porteous, 2008). Britain’s most noteworthy ongoing involve-
ment with its former African colonies takes place in the context of the Com-
monwealth of Nations, a loose association of former British colonies
that holds an annual summit meeting of heads of state.

Other, traditionally less powerful colonial powers, such as Spain, were
never important diplomatic players due to the lack of extensive colonial
holdings (Naylor, 1987; Segal, 1989). Weaker colonial powers demon-
strated only sporadic interest in their former colonies during times of crisis such as
Belgium in central Africa and Italy in the Horn of Africa (e.g., Ercolessi,
1994). Portugal, however, has exhibited a renewed interest in strengthening
cultural ties with its former colonies and played an important role in promot-
ing the resolution of civil wars in Angola and Mozambique during the 1990s
(MacQueen, 1985).

Despite extensive involvement during the Cold War era, most of the
former communist bloc countries have drastically reduced their political-
military and economic presence on the African continent. The preoccupa-
tion of Russian leaders with the economic and political restructuring of
the former Soviet Union precluded any meaningful diplomatic role in Africa
during the 1990s, and Russian diplomatic activities did not significantly in-
Other communist bloc countries that once enjoyed privileged relations with
the African continent either completely disappeared (e.g., the former East
Germany, which now constitutes part of a reunified Germany) (Winrow,
or became marginalized (e.g., Cuba) due to their pariah status within the international system and a drastic reduction in aid formerly provided by their socialist patrons (Mesa-Lago and Beikin, 1982).

The one exception to this trend involves the People’s Republic of China, whose once formidable presence during the 1960s had been transformed by the end of the 1980s into primarily a diplomatic battle with Taiwan as to which capital—Beijing or Taipei—was recognized by African governments as the official seat of the Chinese government (Larkin, 1971; Snow, 1988; Xuetong, 1988). At the beginning of the twenty-first century, however, the PRC economy’s burgeoning demand for primary resources (especially oil) and trade outlets has fueled a dramatic expansion of Chinese-African relations, leading some to emphasize the potential dangers that such activities pose for Western, especially US, interests in Africa (Council on Foreign Relations, 2005). China’s determination to play a leading role in Africa is nicely demonstrated by the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, the first of which was held in Beijing, China, in 2000. Held every three years, the 2012 forum took place in Beijing. (Read more about China in Africa in Chapter 13.)

A variety of middle powers plays varying roles on the African continent. India is recognized as a rising economic power in Africa (Chen and Obi, 2010; see also Dubey, 1990; Karnik, 1988). Canada and the Nordic countries, most notably Sweden, demonstrate a strong humanitarian interest, particularly concerning famine relief in the Horn of Africa and southern Africa (e.g., Stokke, 1989). During the height of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Israel pursued an aggressive policy that exchanged Israeli technical aid for continued or renewed diplomatic recognition of the state of Israel (Peters, 1992; Decalo, 1997). Other Middle Eastern powers, such as Saudi Arabia, pursue religiously based policies regarding the predominantly Muslim states of North and northeast Africa (Creed and Menkhau, 1986). Finally, Brazil is one of the leaders in promoting Latin American economic relations with the African continent (Collins, 1985).

The specific impact of foreign powers on African international relations is illuminated by the evolution of US foreign policy toward Africa. During the Cold War era, US policymakers were principally guided by the ideological interest of containing the former Soviet Union and its communist allies (Schaedler, 1994). A variety of presidential doctrines, beginning with the Truman Doctrine in 1947 and culminating in the Reagan Doctrine of the 1980s, declared Washington’s right to intervene against communist advances throughout the world, including in Africa. As a result, pro-West administrations, such as Senegal under President Diouf, were treated as potential US allies deserving of foreign aid, whereas Marxist administrations, such as Madagascar under Didier Ratsiraka, were isolated. US policymakers also sought special relationships with strategically important regional
actors, such as Morocco in North Africa, Ethiopia in the Horn of Africa, and South Africa in southern Africa, that offered special military access rights or maintained important US technical facilities (e.g., telecommunications stations) deemed critical to containment policies in Africa (see, e.g., Lefebvre, 1991). The United States nonetheless expected France and the other European allies to take the lead in their former African colonial territories. As stated by George Ball, undersecretary of state in the Kennedy administration, the United States saw Africa as a special European responsibility, just as European nations were expected to recognize a responsibility in Latin America for the United States (Ball, 1968). According to US policymakers, France emerged as the only European power with both the long-term political will and the requisite military force capable of thwarting communist powers from exploiting instability (Goldsbrough, 1978; Lelongche and Moisi, 1979; see also Hoffman, 1967).

The Cold War's end meant the decline of Washington's ideologically based policies in favor of the pursuit of trade and investment (Schraeder, 1998). In 1996, the administration of Bill Clinton unveiled the first formal US trade policy for aggressively pursuing new markets throughout Africa (US Department of Commerce, 1996). As discussed in more detail in Chapter 13, the centerpiece of this economic strategy was congressional legislation, the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), passed by both houses of Congress under the prodding of the Clinton White House during its second term in office. Africa's enhanced economic standing in Washington was perhaps best captured by President Clinton's decision to make a twelve-day presidential visit to Africa in 1998, which included stops in Botswana, Ghana, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, and Uganda. For the first time in US history, a sitting US president had led an extended diplomatic mission to Africa, intent on improving US-Africa ties and promoting US trade and investment on the African continent.  

The response of the administration of President George W. Bush to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, nonetheless demonstrated the durability of strategic interests in Great Power involvement in Africa. These attacks profoundly influenced US foreign policy as the Bush administration announced a global war on terrorism, including pledges to aid countries threatened by terrorism, that harkened back to the initial stages of the Cold War when the Harry S. Truman administration underscored the need to aid countries threatened by communism. In the case of Africa, the Bush administration focused its efforts on North and East Africa. The microstate and former French colony of Djibouti, for example, emerged in 2003 as the site for the Defense Department’s Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), the primary responsibility of which is to maintain surveillance over the movement of potential terrorist groups in neighboring Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen. The US-Djiboutian
agreement includes the housing of a US military base in Djibouti—the only such agreement signed with an African country—whose function is to carry out military operations against terrorist groups in the region. Similar counterterrorism programs include the Trans-Saharan Counter-Terrorism Initiative (TSCTI), which encompasses the countries of Algeria, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal (including the involvement of Morocco, Nigeria, and Tunisia as observer countries) and the East Africa Counter-Terrorism Initiative (EACTI), which includes Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. Together these three programs were indicative of the strengthening of US security ties with African countries deemed important to the war on terrorism.

Barack Obama’s election in 2008 as the first African American president of the United States raised extraordinary expectations concerning the future of US foreign policy toward Africa. In addition to being a product of the African diaspora and publishing two well-received books in which Africa is referenced (Obama 2006, 1995), Obama is the first sitting president to have visited the African continent prior to taking office, including traveling to his father’s country of Kenya for five weeks in 1998 before starting Harvard Law School, and to Chad, Djibouti, Kenya, and South Africa for two weeks in 2006 while serving as a US senator. Africa nonetheless has remained the region of least concern within the global hierarchy of US foreign policy during the Obama administration, as the White House by necessity has focused on domestic issues and other regions of perceived greater importance, most notably daunting challenges associated with the ongoing crisis in the US economy and overseeing two wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (Schrader, 2011).

It is noteworthy that the Cold War’s end had raised expectations that the Great Powers would coordinate with each other to address a host of challenges confronting the African continent, most notably the resolution of regional conflicts and the promotion of regional economic development (Gromyko and Whitaker 1990). Expectations of Great Power cooperation nonetheless were dampened by what Jeffrey E. Garten (1993) refers to as the emergence of a Cold Peace, in which the Great Powers compete for markets and influence in all regions of the world, including Africa. The defining characteristic of the Cold Peace, which harkens back to the “scramble for Africa” during the colonial era, is the emergence of a highly competitive and sometimes conflictual system in which Great Power policies increasingly are being driven by the same factor: economic self-interest. This conceptualization of international politics does not preclude the existence of countervailing elements, most notably the emergence of a more cosmopolitan international regime, as marked by the 1997 Ottawa Treaty banning anti-personnel landmines, the establishment of international tribunals to deal with crimes of humanity in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, and
the creation of an International Criminal Court (ICC). Nor does it ignore
the durability of strategic interests in Great Power involvement in Africa, as
witnessed by the George W. Bush administration’s search for allies in North
and East Africa in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11,
2001. The simple point is that economic interests are the key to understand-
ing contemporary Great Power competition and conflict in Africa.

Great Power competition has particularly emerged in the highly lucra-
tive petroleum, telecommunications, and transport industries, leading to
strained Great Power ties. In the case of France, for example, policymakers
viewed the penetration of US and other Western companies as an intrusion
or even as aggression into France’s chasse gardée in francophone Africa.
The seriousness with which this issue was treated at the highest levels of
the French policymaking establishment was demonstrated by the public ad-
mission of Minister of Cooperation Michel Roussin that a series of meet-
ings had been held on how best to defend French interests, including those
within the economic realm, against those of the United States (Glaser and
Smith, 1994; see also Védrine and Moisi, 2000).

Intense competition between the government of the Republic of Congo,
Elf-Aquitaine (the French oil corporation), and Occidental Petroleum Cor-
poration (Oxy), a US-based oil company, is an excellent example of the po-
tential future stakes involved in rising Great Power competition. Desper-
ately in need of nearly $200 million to pay government salaries before
legislative elections, newly elected president Pascal Lissouba turned for
help to Elf-Aquitaine (which controls 80 percent of the country’s oil pro-
duction). When its French manager refused to approve either a $300 million
loan or a $300 million mortgage on the future production of three promis-
ing new off-shore oil deposits, Lissouba initiated secret negotiations with
the US-based Oxy. An agreement was signed but renounced eight months
later by the Lissouba administration due to intense pressure from the
French (Schraeder, 2000). US-French competition in the highly lucrative
petroleum industry is not limited to the Republic of Congo or even US-
French relations for that matter, but rather is indicative of a more compe-
titive foreign policy environment in which Africa has become an increasingly
important source of global oil (e.g., see Klare and Volman, 2004; Ellis,
2003).

Rising Great Power competition holds important implications for the
dependency-decolonization debate. From the viewpoint of a new genera-
tion of African leaders, rising economic competition among the Great Pows
provides an opportunity to lessen previously privileged ties of dependence
and pursue special relationships and especially economic contracts with
countries willing to provide the best offer. Although the ultimate resolution
of the “oil war” in the Republic of Congo in favor of France suggests that
the ties of dependency are not automatically broken by the end of the Cold
War, the Lissouba government nonetheless was able to obtain a better agreement from the French as a result of "playing the American card." In other cases, such as Senegal's decision to offer lucrative exploration rights to US and South African companies at the expense of previously privileged ties with the French oil industry, a new generation of African leaders is successfully utilizing their increased independence within the international system to acquire the best deals for their respective countries, thereby ensuring future electoral victories in democratic political systems where public support—not authoritarian force—increasingly is the key to power.

The UN and International Financial Institutions

The relationship of African countries to the UN and to a host of international financial institutions is critical to understanding the relevance of the decolonization-dependency debate. During the independence era of the 1960s, a variety of factors suggested that membership in the UN was facilitating the ability of the first generation of African leaders to exercise greater control over the international relations of their respective countries (Mathews, 1988). In addition to serving as a concrete symbol of African independence, UN membership historically has provided African leaders with an important international forum for promoting African views on a variety of international issues such as unequivocal support for complete decolonization, opposition to apartheid in South Africa, the promotion of socio-economic development, and the need for disarmament and attention to regional security. Most important, the UN provides a unique forum for diplomatic negotiations. Financially unable to maintain embassies throughout the world, let alone throughout the African continent, African diplomats take advantage of the fact that almost all countries maintain a permanent mission in New York to carry out the day-to-day business of diplomacy (Mathews, 1988).

In an era in which it has become fashionable for many Westerners, particularly those in the United States, to criticize their countries' involvement in the UN as providing few if any tangible economic or political benefits, it is important to recognize that UN agencies often play substantial administrative and development roles in many African countries. In several African capital cities, there are a variety of UN offices whose budgets and staffs sometimes approach those of their counterparts within the host government. In Dakar, the capital of Senegal, for example, offices represent a variety of UN agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):
Capturing the sentiment of African policymakers during the 1960s, a Senegalese diplomat noted that “these agencies were perceived as critical to the fulfillment of African development goals during the initial independence era, and provided a source of hope especially for those impoverished countries lacking both the resources and the expertise to implement the studies and programs pursued by each of these agencies.”

In the aftermath of the Cold War, a sometimes vocal segment of African leaders and intellectuals is often apt to associate the UN with foreign intervention and the imposition of Western values. The primary reason for this development is the UN’s increased involvement in a variety of African crises, which have multiplied in the post–Cold War era. As succinctly summarized by Zartman (1995a:1–14), these crises sometimes occur against the backdrop of “collapsed states”—the temporary disintegration of the legitimate, sovereign authority of the nation-state that is responsible for maintaining law and order within its territory. This collapse can be complete, as was the case in Somalia when civil war engulfed the country in the aftermath of the overthrow of Somali dictator Mohammed Siad Barre in 1991, or it can entail the breakdown of effective central authority over the majority of the country despite the existence of a ruling regime, as occurred in the case of the DRC under the authoritarian rule of Laurent Désiré Kabila.

This perception is due to the replacement of the classic international norms of sovereignty and nonintervention in the affairs of UN member states with a new set of norms that focus on human rights protection and humanitarian intervention, particularly to save refugees and other peoples threatened by civil conflict and starvation (Deng et al., 1996:5; see also Prendergast, 1996). As aptly noted by former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1992:9), “The time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty . . . has passed; its theory was never matched by reality.” Indeed, the UN has undertaken more than fifty-four peacekeeping missions in Africa since 1948.

The series of UN-sponsored military interventions in Somalia from 1992 to 1995 serves as one of the most notable examples of the UN’s increasingly interventionist role in African politics and society. At its height, the UN military operation included over 38,000 troops from twenty countries and led to the effective occupation of southern and central Somalia. The intervention was launched in the absence of any official invitation from a legal Somali authority (which, in any case, did not exist), and in direct opposition to heavily armed militia groups who shared a historical mistrust of UN intentions and operations dating back to the colonial era (Hirsch and Oakley, 1995). From the perspective of the UN, the collapse of the Somali state and the intensification of a brutal civil war demanded UN intervention; the conflict was not only spilling over into the neighboring territories of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti, but it had contributed to the creation of a humanitarian crisis in which approximately 330,000 Somalis were at “im-
minent risk of death" (Lyons and Samatar, 1995:24). According to this logic, the UN could justify international intervention, even in the absence of an official invitation by a legally constituted authority, on the grounds of “abatement” of a threat to international peace (Joyner, 1992:229–246).

The Somali case is part of a growing international trend of prompting even internationally recognized governments to accept UN-sponsored humanitarian intervention (Deng, 1993; see also Prendergast, 1996). In Sudan, for example, a combination of civil war and drought-induced famine, which led to the deaths of over 500,000 civilians since 1986, prompted the United Nations Office of Emergency Operations in Africa (OEAO) to undertake a humanitarian intervention in 1989 known as Operation Lifeline Sudan (Deng and Mincar, 1992). Constituting one of the largest peacetime humanitarian interventions ever undertaken in UN history, Operation Lifeline Sudan was made possible only by mounting international pressure on the Sudanese regime to recognize the scope of the problem and to accept UN-sponsored intervention. Ultimate acceptance, however, did not ensure ultimate happiness on the part of the Sudanese regime. “Even when the initial issues of involvement are resolved, relations between the donors and the recipient country or population are never entirely harmonious,” explains a group of specialists on conflict resolution, led by Francis Deng, a Sudanese national who served as special representative of the UN secretary-general for internally displaced persons. “The dichotomy expressed between ‘us’ and ‘them’ becomes inevitable as the nationals feel their pride injured by their own failure and dependency, while the donors and relief workers resent the lack of gratitude and appreciation” (see Deng et al., 1996:11).

African perceptions of eroding sovereignty have been reinforced by the rising influence of international financial institutions in African economies (Mkandawire and Olukoshi, 1995). As Virginia DeLancey discusses in Chapter 5, by the beginning of the 1980s, African leaders were struggling to respond to the effects of a continent-wide economic crisis that combined internal economic decline with mounting international debt. In order to obtain necessary international capital, most African leaders had little choice but to turn to two international financial institutions: the IMF, which issues short-term stabilization loans to ensure economic solvency, and the World Bank, which issues long-term loans to promote economic development. Unlike typical loans that simply require the recipient to make regular scheduled payments over a specific period of time, those of the IMF and the World Bank have included a series of externally imposed demands, typically referred to as “conditionality,” designed to restructure African economies and political systems in the image of the northern industrialized democracies (Callaghy and Ravenhill, 1993).

The emergence of economic conditionality was signaled by the 1981 publication of a World Bank study, *Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan*
Africa: An Agenda for Action. The conclusion of this report was that misguided decisions of the first generation of African leaders were responsible for the mounting economic crisis. To resolve this crisis, the World Bank and the IMF proposed the linking of all future flows of Western financial capital to the willingness of African leaders to sign and implement structural adjustment programs: economic blueprints designed to radically restructure African economies. Four sets of private sector reforms are characteristic of SAPs: (1) the termination of food subsidies that kept food prices artificially low, effectively discouraging farmers from planting food crops; (2) the devaluation of national currencies to stimulate exports and the domestic production of manufactured products; (3) the trimming of government bureaucracies; and (4) the privatization of parastatals (state-owned corporations).

In short, the SAPs embodied the liberal economic consensus of the northern industrialized democracies that Africa’s future economic success depended on the pursuit of an export-oriented strategy of economic growth that systematically dismantled all forms of governmental intervention in national economies (Commins, 1988; Campbell and Loxley, 1989).

A second World Bank report published in 1989, Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth: A Long-Term Perspective Study, heralded the emergence of political conditionalities in IMF and World Bank-sponsored SAPs. In addition to claiming that African countries following IMF and World Bank economic prescriptions were performing better than those that were not, the 1989 report went beyond previous studies by underscoring that the success of economic reforms was dependent on the promotion of “good governance,” the creation of transparent, accountable, and efficient political systems patterned after those of the northern industrialized democracies. Simply put, the 1989 report signaled an emerging consensus in favor of making all future flows of Western financial capital contingent on the willingness of African leaders to promote the liberalization of their respective political systems (World Bank, 1989).

The economic and political conditionalities imposed by the IMF and the World Bank have been challenged by African policymakers and academics. During the 1980s, SAPs were criticized for their complete disregard for the political realities African leaders confront. IMF and World Bank economists failed to consider that cutting off government subsidies, one of the above-noted four pillars of private sector reform always included in SAPs, could lead to often violent urban riots. In Sudan, for example, the launching of an SAP in 1985 sparked an urban insurrection that contributed to the overthrow of the regime of Gaafar Mohammed Nimeiri (Harsch, 1989). The implementation of the three remaining pillars of private sector reform also entailed serious political risks, due to their tendency to reinforce short-term economic hardships. The devaluation of the national currency meant an immediate decline in the already marginal buying power of the average citizen, and the trimming of government bureaucracies and the privatization of
parastatals triggered significant increases in already high levels of national unemployment. In retrospect, the lack of political sensitivity was because SAPs were usually formulated by international economists with little (if any) political training or firsthand knowledge of the individual African countries their programs were supposed to serve.

SAPs were also challenged by African policymakers and academics during the 1990s despite the fact that both the IMF and the World Bank had undertaken serious efforts to assess and, when possible, incorporate African sentiments into policy planning documents. Africans were particularly critical of the consensus of IMF and World Bank economists that economic and political conditionalities were mutually reinforcing and therefore could be pursued simultaneously (Sandbrook, 1993). As demonstrated by Africa’s experiments with democratization after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the creation of democratic political systems complete with institutional checks-and-balances has hindered the implementation of SAPs. Indeed, democratically elected African presidents and legislative representatives often hesitate to enact legislation that will place significant economic burdens on already impoverished populations and, thereby, potentially contribute to their political demise the next time elections are held.

The end of the Cold War has had a dramatic effect on the role of conditionalities in the African continent’s international economic relations. The terms of the debate have shifted away from such Cold War-inspired questions as whether Marxism or an African variant of socialism is favorable to capitalism, or whether single-party or multiparty regimes can better promote the welfare of their respective peoples. Instead, the IMF and the World Bank now consider how to best facilitate the creation of capitalist, multiparty political systems throughout Africa.

The critical dilemma confronting Africa’s newly elected democratic leaders is the extent to which they will attempt to work with international financial institutions. If they wholeheartedly embrace SAPs for the future economic health of their societies, they are bound to alienate important actors within their political systems and, therefore, run the risk of losing subsequent democratic elections. In the case of Benin, for example, the democratically elected government of Soglo was rejected in the 1996 presidential elections after only one term of office, at least partially as a result of his administration’s strong support for externally inspired SAPs. In contrast, if democratically elected African leaders refuse to embrace SAPs, they run the risk of losing access to international capital and contributing to the further decline of their economies.

Cautiously optimistic interpretations suggest that reform-minded African leaders and external supporters of change must adopt “realistic, hard-headed” analyses of Africa’s economic plight that avoid both the Afropeanism of critics of change and the overly optimistic “cheerleading” stance of those who believe that change can be implemented quickly,
smoothly, and relatively free of pain (Callaghy and Ravenhill, 1993). According to this viewpoint, although even the best-intentioned and most reform-minded African leaders may find themselves "hemmed in" by a variety of international constraints that restrict policy choices, they are capable of pursuing paths that may lead to economic success over the long term. More pessimistic interpretations from the dependency tradition suggest that African countries "desperate for access to international capital" are "uniquely vulnerable" to the demands of the IMF and the World Bank. "While dependency analysts long argued that international capitalist structures provided the context within which development in Africa occurred," explains William Reed (1992:85), "it was only as Africa approached the 1990s that international financial institutions—controlled by the leading capitalist powers and designed to bolster the international capitalist economy—were able to impose policy prescriptions directly upon African governments."

African leaders have sought to curb the impact of economic and political conditionalties by formulating alternative frameworks for development. One of the earliest attempts was the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action at the 1980 OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The LPA was not taken seriously in international financial circles due to its contradictory assumption that Western governments and financial institutions would finance the pursuit of self-reliant economic development designed to delink the African continent from the international economic system. In 1989, the ECA published a document, *African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socioeconomic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP)*, that drew at least the grudging acceptance of IMF and World Bank economists. Acknowledging that African leaders were partially responsible for Africa's economic crisis and that some form of economic restructuring was necessary, the 1989 report nonetheless castigated the IMF and the World Bank for ignoring the social and political impacts of SAPs. The report specifically called on international donor agencies to promote structural adjustment with a human face: to plan for and respond to the short-term negative social impacts (e.g., rising unemployment) that inevitably accompany the good-faith efforts on the part of African leaders to implement SAPs (UNCA, 1989).

The most recent and far-reaching alternative framework for development advanced by African leaders is the New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The essence of NEPAD is that African countries must undertake economic and political reforms if they wish to attract the foreign capital from the northern industrialized democracies that is deemed necessary to Africa's future development (Hope, 2002). Specifically, African leaders are seeking increases in grant aid (as opposed to loans that must be paid back) and foreign investment and trade from the northern industrialized democracies. In return, they have agreed to participate in a
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Peer review mechanism in which African leaders will assess and critique the degree to which African countries are undertaking promised economic and political reforms. An important step in the NEPAD initiative was educating and seeking the agreement of key northern leaders. To this end, the four major African proponents of the NEPAD initiative (Presidents Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, and Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal) attended the 2002 annual meeting of the Group of Eight (G8), where they received endorsements for NEPAD and promises of increased aid from the leaders of the eight most powerful northern industrialized democracies: Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United States. Although the African Union and the UN have embraced NEPAD, the long-term impact of this initiative, including the degree to which African reforms have led to increased flows of capital from the northern industrialized democracies, remains unclear. (See Chapter 5 for more on NEPAD.)

Toward the Future
The end of the Cold War and the rise of democratization movements served as transforming events in the evolution of the international relations of the African continent. These events in turn allow us to draw some tentative conclusions about the dependency-decolonization debate. Although neither approach was completely supported or rejected by the analysis, three trends—the democratization of African foreign policies, rising competition among the Great Powers, and the rising assertiveness of African regional powers—suggest the increased ability of a new generation of African leaders to assume greater control over the international relations of their respective countries. Yet proponents of the dependency approach can point to the increasingly pervasive nature of intervention on the part of the UN and international financial institutions as supportive of their vision of international relations. Moreover, despite some promising developments related to SADC and ongoing efforts within the African Union to promote democracy and regional security, neither the African Union’s pursuit of pan-Africanism nor regional experiments in economic cooperation and integration offer compelling evidence to resolve the dependency-decolonization debate. A common element in all five of the topics that I have discussed, however, is the importance of the democratization process and its impact on the rise of a new generation of African leaders committed to democratic principles. Although it is perhaps too early to tell one can hypothesize that, if democratization succeeds, it will facilitate the peeling away of another layer of dependency and allow a new generation of African leaders to assume greater control over the international relations of their respective countries.
Notes

1. The only remaining territorial questions revolve around the future disposition of Western (Spanish) Sahara (partitioned by Morocco and Mauritania), and Spain's continued control over the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, both of which are claimed by Morocco.

2. These countries are Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

3. For the purposes of this chapter, francophone Africa includes twenty-five independent states from the following regions: central Africa (Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, and Rwanda); East Africa (Djibouti); Indian Ocean (Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, and Seychelles); North Africa or the “Maghreb” (Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia); and West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Togo). My definition of francophone Africa, therefore, is inclusive of both sub-Saharan and Saharan Africa (i.e., “trans-Saharan” Africa or the entire continent) rather than the more exclusionary set of sub-Saharan African countries.

4. The only exceptions to this trend include President George H. W. Bush’s one-day visit to Somalia in 1993 while in transit to the Middle East, and President Jimmy Carter’s March 29–April 2, 1978, visit to Nigeria.


6. Somali distrust of the UN stems from the decision of that international body to support the reimposition in 1950 of Italian colonial rule over what is currently known as the Republic of Somalia.

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