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Several watershed events have transformed African international relations since the late nineteenth century. In the aftermath of the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, independent Africa (except for Ethiopia and Liberia) ceased to exist, and African international relations were controlled by the European colonial powers. A second watershed event—the extended global conflict of World War II (1935–1945)—heralded the decline of Europe as the most powerful region of the world and the emergence of African nationalist movements intent upon achieving independence from colonial rule. This period marked the beginning of the end of colonial rule and the return of control over African international relations to Africans. The outbreak and intensification of the Cold War (1947–1989) transformed the newly independent African countries into proxy battlefields between the unparalleled superpowers of the post–World War II era: the United States and the former Soviet Union. 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 U.S.-Soviet involvement. The fourth watershed 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 international economic environment. As African leaders continue to guide their countries into the first decade of the new millennium, they must manage international relations in an environment marked by the growing competition among today’s economic superpowers: Germany, Japan, and the United States.
This chapter is devoted to exploring African international relations in the aftermath of Europe’s partition and eventual granting of independence to the fifty-three countries that currently constitute the African continent (Akinrinade and Sesay, 1998; Harbeson and Rothchild, 2000). After briefly outlining the major themes of what has been called the dependency-decolonization debate, I explore in the remainder of the chapter a variety of factors that are critical to understanding the evolution of African international relations. The topics discussed include (1) the formulation and implementation of African foreign policies; (2) pan-Africanism and the Organization of African Unity; (3) regional economic cooperation and integration; (4) the role of foreign powers in African international relations; (5) the United Nations and international financial institutions; and (6) emerging trends related to military intervention on the African continent.

THE DEPENDENCY-DECOLONIZATION DEBATE

Although the independence of Libya in 1951 marked the beginning of the end of “formal” colonial rule—a process largely culminating in 1994 when elections in South Africa led to black majority rule—both African and foreign observers began an ongoing debate over the degree to which these newly independent countries truly control their international relations (see Shaw and Newbury, 1979). According to one group of observers who belong to what has become known as the dependency school of thought, the granting of legal independence did little to alter the constraining web of economic, political, military, and cultural ties that continue to bind African countries to their former colonial powers (Amin, 1973). This conceptualization of African international relations—often referred to as 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 are said to have ensured the gradual replacement of European neocolonial relationships with a new set of ties dominated by Moscow and Washington (Laïdi, 1990). Simply put, direct colonial rule was merely replaced by a series of neocolonial relationships that permitted the continued external domination—albeit in a more subtle form—of African international relations.

A second group of observers who belong to what has become known as the decolonization school of thought argue instead that legal independence was but the first step of an evolutionary process permitting African leaders to assume greater control over their countries’ international relations (Zartman, 1976; see also Bayart, 2000). According to this school of thought, 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 I. 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 end of the Cold War has ushered in a radically changed international environment with important implications for the dependency-decolonization debate. Donald Gordon discusses in Chapter 4 how the fall of communist regimes in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe—the intellectual heartland of single-party rule—reinforced a democratization trend in Africa. In many cases this has led to the replacement of authoritarian regimes with newly elected democratic leaders less enmeshed of their former foreign patrons (see Schraeder, 1994b). According to optimistic interpretations of the impact of this transforming event, Africa is undergoing a “second independence” or “second national liberation” in which a second generation of African leaders will assume greater control over the international relations of their respective countries. However, observers associated with the dependency school equate the end of the Cold War with the rising marginalization of African international relations. They imply that African leaders will 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 “second scramble” for Africa is occurring (Ake, 1995). Although the dependency-decolonization debate is far from being resolved, the year 2018 will mark a symbolic turning point as the contemporary independence era (1951–2018) will have lasted as long as the colonial era (1884–1951).

THE FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AFRICAN FOREIGN POLICIES

The principal theme of early studies of 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” or “big leader” syndrome of African foreign policy is that the majority of the first generation of African presidents, who assumed power during the initial independence decade of the 1960s, systematically suppressed and dismantled all 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 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 to create “rubber stamp” parliaments (Chazan et al., 1999; see also Clapham, 1996; Schraeder, 2000a: 217–243). In short, the institutional actors associated with democratic governance who made their voices heard in the foreign policy making process 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 Rossberg, 1982). In the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo (Congo-Kinshasa; formerly Zaire), for example, Mobutu Sese Seko assumed power in 1965 through a military coup d’état supported by the U.S. 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, for example, Mobutu made a speech before the United Nations 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 Nixon White House and effectively derailed State Department efforts to win congressional passage of a Zairian foreign aid bill (Schraeder, 1994a:82).

A second outcome associated with the centralization of the foreign policy apparatus is that the first generation of African presidents often pursed 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. Moreover, although they had 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—often 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 only 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 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 1963 to 1993, France intervened militarily at least 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

Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, leaving the State Department in 1986, after meeting with U.S. secretary of state George Shultz. Autocratic leaders like Mobutu have often maintained their power by seeking assistance from the superpowers.
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 (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 end of the Cold War and the rising strength and intensity of prodemocracy movements is contributing to the “democra-
tization” of African foreign policies (Schraeder, 1997). The importance of this democratization trend—especially in the countries where multiparty elections have ensured a relatively peaceful transfer of power from one rul-
ing elite to another—is its reinforcement of the rise to power of a new gen-
eration of African presidents less tied to their former foreign patrons and more willing to pursue increasingly independent foreign policies. In the case of Senegal, for example, President Abdou Diouf (1981–2000), like many of his second-generation counterparts, took advantage of growing economic competition among the industrialized Western democracies in the post–Cold War era to lessen his country’s foreign policy dependence on France (Diop and Diouf, 1990). In a sharp departure from past policies, President Diouf withstood intense French pressures and signed contracts with South African and U.S. companies in 1995 to exploit oil fields discovered off the southwestern coast of Senegal. This trend in favor of the diversification of Senegalese foreign policy ties is expected to be strengthened under the democratically elected administration of President Abdoulaye Wade (2000–present).

The democratization process has also significantly altered the central-
ized foreign policy structures in several African countries. In some cases, democratization has been accompanied by the implementation of policies designed to decrease both the size of the military establishment and its in-
volvelement in governmental affairs, including in the realm of foreign pol-
icy. In South Africa during the 1980s, for example, 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 gov-
ernment headed by Nelson Mandela undertook a series of reforms designed to restore greater government 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 insti-
tutional actors, most notably vocal, powerful, and independent national legislatures capable of challenging the presidency in the foreign policy realm. The primary reason behind this newfound legislative role is the cre-
ation of democratic political systems that embody the concept of separa-
tion of powers between the various branches of government. In the case of

Benin, the democratic leader 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 gov-
ernment (he announced his intention to launch the SAP through the “ex-
ceptional power” granted to the executive under Article 68 of the Constitu-
tion) 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 (1996–present; previously ruled 1972–1991) (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 the second generation of African leaders are increasingly held accountable to public opinion. 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 Ouid Taya of Mauritania, both of these leaders, despite their best efforts to contain public passions, 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.

The role of religion in African foreign policy, especially the impact of the rise of a variety of Islamist movements, constitutes a final element of civil society increasingly confronting today’s African leaders. Sudan, Egypt, and Algeria are three countries in which Islamist movements play a key role either in supporting or opposing government policies in the post–Cold War era. Even during the Cold War, however, religion played a key role in African foreign policies in many countries. In the case of 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 informal role in reducing tensions between Senegal and Mauritania in the aftermath of the 1989 border conflict by shuttling back and forth across the
PAN-AFRICANISM AND THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY

Inspired by the anticolonial activities of peoples of African descent living in North America and the West Indies during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, African 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. There 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 further 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 Congo-Brazzaville), 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. 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 the two key themes that became the hallmark of this international vision: “Africa must unite!” and “Seek ye first the political kingdom!” (see Rooney, 1968).

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 Belewa, prime minister of Nigeria, the Monrovia Group instead 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.

On May 25, 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. The OAU is headquartered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and is headed by a secretary-general elected by member states. All major decisions and resolutions are formally discussed at the annual Assembly of Heads of State and Government after the biannual meetings of the Council of Ministers. The sovereign equality of all member states is an important guiding principle of the organization and significantly differs from the Great Power domination of the UN, given the special powers conferred upon the five permanent members of the UN Security Council: Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States.

Although the creation and continued vitality of the OAU have been described as a “victory for pan-Africanism” (Olusanya, 1988:67), both critics and sympathetic observers have 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).
The OAU’s effectiveness can be tentatively assessed by exploring several elements of the OAU Charter, each of which holds important implications for the dependency-decolonization debate. The most important theme of the OAU Charter is support for the territorial integrity of frontiers inherited from the colonial era. Due to the multiethnic nature of most African countries, African leaders remain fearful that changing even one boundary will 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 case of the Nigerian civil war (1967–1970), for example, the OAU not only refused to sanction the provision of aid 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 was particularly unsettling to international human rights activists, as well as several African countries aiding the secessionist government, because the military-dominated Nigerian government was using very effective starvation methods designed to bring the Biafrans—government and general population alike—to their knees (see Stremlau, 1977).

As ethnic tensions and separatist movements intensify in the post–Cold War era, the second generation of African leaders remains 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 call into question the hallowed concept of the inviolability of frontiers. Unlike the majority of 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). However, in similar cases of voluntary federation that have unraveled in the post–Cold War era, such as northern Somalia’s 1991 unilateral declaration of independence as the Somali land Republic, as well as other cases where a disgruntled region, such as the southern Sudan, has sought the right of self-determination, the OAU continues to affirm the concept of territorial integrity (see Omaar, 1994).

The second most important guiding principle of the OAU Charter is noninterference in the internal affairs of member states. In the early years of the organization, 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 within 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 are nonetheless beginning to accept a growing role for the OAU in addressing human rights abuses. 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 referred to as the Banjul Charter). This human rights code officially went into effect in October 1986, and has served as the guiding principle for a variety of human rights groups that emerged during the 1980s (Welch, 1991). In addition to encompassing “first-generation” rights (civil and political liberties) usually associated with the Western world, and “second-generation” rights (economic and social rights) usually associated with the socialist world, the Banjul Charter has been described as “breaking some new ground” through the adoption of “third-generation” rights intended to protect the rights of individual peoples or ethnic groups (Welch, 1991:538–539; see also Shivji, 1989).

Despite the ratification of the Banjul Charter, however, the OAU’s response to events in Nigeria during 1995 demonstrates the continued difficulty of translating human rights rhetoric into policy action. In response to an uprising 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 peaceful settlement of all disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, or arbitration constitutes a third guiding principle of the OAU. Yet strict adherence to the first two principles—support for territorial integrity and noninterference in internal affairs—historically has impeded the OAU’s ability to mediate either internal conflicts or those between two or more member states. In the case of the 1967–1970 Nigerian civil war, automatic support for the territorial integrity of Nigeria seriously called into doubt (at least from the viewpoint of the secessionist Igboos) the OAU’s ability to serve as an impartial negotiator. It is precisely for this reason that the OAU Commission of Mediation, Arbitration and Conciliation was
The inspiration for this consultative process was a forward-thinking document, "Towards a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Co-operation in Africa," popularly referred to as the Kampala Document, which was the result of a 1991 conference convened by former Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo (see also Zartman, 1999).

A further development is a new African consensus on the necessity of creating a multinational African defense force capable of responding militarily to African crises. In May 1997, African leaders agreed that such a force should be comprised of existing military units of contributing OAU member states, and that these units would be equipped with the aid of foreign powers, most notably the United States and France. The African Defense Force would remain under the operational command of the OAU. Unresolved issues revolve around which countries should be eligible to contribute forces (e.g., should involvement be limited only to democratic countries) and what type of decision-making body should be capable of authorizing when and where to intervene (e.g., should intervention be based on the consensus of all OAU member states or should a smaller body of representative members be responsible). Discussions concerning the African Defense Force remain at an exploratory stage, and the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution has yet to be tested in regard to a specific African conflict.

The final and most successful principle embodied within the OAU Charter is the unswerving opposition to colonialism and white minority rule. Principally concerned with the past existence of minority white-ruled regimes in Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and the former Portuguese-controlled territories of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, and São Tomé and Principe, 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 made the transition to a multiracial, multiparty democracy.

**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 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 (Seldman and Anang, 1992:73). Among the most notable and far-reaching economic groupings in each of Africa’s major regions (including date of launching) are the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS, 1975); the Union of Arab Maghreb (UAM, 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 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 Japan) 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 for creating self-reliant development, thereby reducing and ultimately ridding the African continent of the ties of dependency inherited from the colonial era (Asante and Chanaia, 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. It is for this reason that 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 (e.g., see 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 intracommunity trade increased from 63 percent in 1968 to 77 percent in 1974, whereas Uganda’s share decreased from 26 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 Great Britain), Tanzania pursued close links with the socialist bloc (particularly the People’s Republic of China), 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,” which prompted EAC member states to look “outward” toward their foreign patrons rather than “inward” toward their natural regional partners.

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; Lavelgne, 1997; Oyeyide, 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 within their regions.

The 1992 transformation of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) into the Southern African Development Community provides a good example of this growing trend in African regional relations. Originally conceived as a vehicle for reducing the economic dependence of the Frontline States2 on South Africa during the apartheid era, the newly reformed 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). The new SADC stands poised at “the threshold of a new era,” according to a report published by the African Development Bank in conjunction with the World Bank and the Development Bank of South Africa. “Although its efforts 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 the 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” (Momba, 1995:65).

Several factors are essential to understanding the optimism surrounding SADC’s newfound 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 may play a leadership role similar to that enjoyed by Germany in the EU, the United States in NAFTA, and, to a lesser degree, Nigeria in ECOWAS. The majority of SADC members (seven out of ten) also share a common British colonial heritage. Although a shared colonial past is not a precondition for effective regional cooperation, it nonetheless facilitates such technical matters as which language should serve as the official language of communication (in the case of both SADC and the EAC, English).

A third facilitating factor is the decline in ideological differences between SADC member states that accompanied the end of the Cold War. For example, 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 exists 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, 1994). Except for the case of Angola, 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 SADC countries of southern Africa. 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. It is for this reason that the 1992 Windhoek Treaty (named after the capital of Namibia) that 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 only be achieved by the settlement of civil war and the promotion of democracy in Angola and other countries throughout the African continent. As a result, conflict resolution remains an important cornerstone of the pan-African ideal at the beginning of 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 Paris, Washington, Berlin, and Tokyo—the capitals of the four Great Powers that remain heavily involved throughout Africa at the beginning of the twenty-first century (Aluko, 1987; see also Nielson, 1969). France maintains the most 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 (Wauthier, 1995). The United States often became the most influential political-military actor in the francophone portions of the African continent during the Cold War era, and increasingly has sought to promote economic links in the post–Cold War era (Schraeder 1994b; 1998). Japan and Germany emerged during the 1980s as extremely involved economic actors, and have achieved the status of the second or third most important sources of economic aid or trade for individual African countries (often behind the leading roles of France and the United States) (Schulz and Hansen, 1984; Nester, 1992; Hofmeier, 1994; Brune, Betz, and Kuhne, 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 except in the case of South Africa (Styan, 1996; Bangura, 1983). Economic decline forced British policymakers to make difficult decisions as to where increasingly limited economic resources would contribute the most to British foreign policy interests, ultimately leading to the downgrading of British ties with the majority of its former colonies. Britain's most noteworthy ongoing involvement with its former African colonies takes place within the context of the Commonwealth 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 at best demonstrated only sporadic interest in their former colonies during times of crisis, such as Belgium in central Africa and Italy in the Horn of Africa. Although less actively involved in the political realm, Germany continues to foster unique trade relationships throughout Africa (consistently serving as either the second or third most important trading partner of the majority of African countries) (Hofmeier, 1994; 1986). Portugal, however, has exhibited a renewed interest in strengthening cultural ties with its former colonies and played an important role in promoting the resolution of civil war in Mozambique during the 1990s (MacQueen, 1985).

Despite extensive involvement during the Cold War era, the former communist-bloc countries have drastically reduced their political-military and economic presence on the African continent. The preoccupation of Russian leaders with the economic and political restructuring of the former Soviet Union has precluded any meaningful diplomatic role in Africa (Putman, 1990). The one notable vestige of the previously active foreign policy of the People's Republic of China (PRC) is an ongoing diplomatic battle with Taiwan as to which capital—Beijing or Taipei—is recognized by African governments as the official seat of the Chinese government (Larkin, 1971; Snow, 1988; Xuetong, 1988). 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, 1990), 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 Belkin, 1982). An important result of socialist-bloc involvement in Africa from the 1950s to the 1980s is that it prompted extensive U.S. involvement in countries perceived as threatened by communist influence (Schraeder, 1994b). As discussed below, these relationships are significantly changing as the United States attempts to refashion its former Cold War-oriented foreign policy.

A variety of middle powers play varying roles on the African continent. 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 Menkhaus, 1986). Iran in particular seeks to foster links with Islamist regimes and movements in Sudan, Egypt, and Algeria; and Iraq’s previously expanding relationships with several African countries, most notably Mauritania, were sharply curtailed after Iraq was defeated in the 1991 Gulf War (Lesser, 1993). India and Brazil lead their respective regions in seeking to expand economic relations with the African continent (Collins, 1985; Dubey, 1990; Kamik, 1988).

The specific impact of foreign powers can be illuminated by analyzing the evolving policies of the two countries—France and the United States—that remain the most active on the African continent. U.S. and French foreign policies were essentially driven by different sets of motivating factors during the Cold War era. U.S. policymakers were principally guided by the ideological interest of containing the former Soviet Union and its communist allies (Schaedler, 1994b). A variety of presidential doctrines, beginning with the Truman Doctrine in 1947 and culminating in the Reagan Doctrine of the 1980s, declared Washington’s self-appointed right to intervene against communist advances throughout the world, including in francophone Africa. As a result, pro-West administrations, such as Senegal under President Abdou Diouf, were treated as potential U.S. allies deserving of foreign aid, whereas Marxist administrations, such as Madagascar under Didier Ratsiraka, were isolated. U.S. 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 or maintained important U.S. technical facilities (e.g., telecommunications stations) deemed critical to containment policies in Africa (for example, see Lefebvre, 1991).

French policymakers sought first and foremost to consolidate and promote the rayonnement (spread) of the most notable aspects of French culture, including the French language and intellectual traditions (Kolodziej, 1974:479). Also referred to as the promotion of la francophonie (a greater French-speaking community), this policy is best represented by the biannual Franco-African summit attended by the leaders of France and francophone Africa, the twentieth of which was held in Paris in 1998. Economic interests were perceived by French policymakers as both parallel and integral to the promotion of French culture, as witnessed by the organization of thirteen former French colonies and Equatorial Guinea in la zone franc (the franc zone). Created in 1947, the franc zone constitutes a supranational financial system in which France serves as the central bank, and a common currency—the Communauté Financière Africaine (CFA)—is tied to the French franc and guaranteed by the French treasury. By wedging its fiscal policy to the franc zone, France has sought to preserve monetary stability and French influence throughout francophone Africa (Vallée, 1989).

As long as the United States and France were pursuing fundamentally different but complementary foreign policy interests, Africa remained the chief beneficiary of a “complementary Cold War regime” in which U.S.-French relations tended to be balanced, cooperative, and predictable. Regardless of whether France was led by the conservative partisans of Charles de Gaulle or the socialists of François Mitterrand, French policymakers predictably claimed that historical links and geographical proximity justified placing francophone Africa within France’s sphere of influence. The implicit assumption of what one observer has referred to as the French version of the Monroe Doctrine is that francophone Africa constituted France’s domaine réservé (natural preserve) or chasse gardée (private hunting ground), and therefore remained off-limits to other Great Powers, regardless of whether they were friends like the United States and the other northern industrialized democracies, or enemies such as the former Soviet Union and other radical powers (quoted in Schraeder, 2000b).

During the Cold War, this conception of francophone Africa was wholeheartedly accepted and even encouraged by U.S. policymakers. Washington, in particular, expected France and the other European allies to take the lead in their former colonial territories. As succinctly stated by George Ball, undersecretary of state in the Kennedy administration, the United States recognized Africa as a “special European responsibility,” just as European nations were expected to recognize “[U.S.] responsibility in Latin America” (Ball, 1968). According to U.S. 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. Much to the chagrin of French policymakers, this perception led some analysts to refer to France as Washington’s de facto gendarme (police officer) in francophone Africa (Goldsbrough, 1978; Lellouche and Moisi, 1979; see also Hoffman, 1967).

The end of the Cold War transformed the international order and set the stage for dramatic changes in Great Power involvement in Africa (see Pastor, 1999; Rusi, 1998). The most notable immediate change was that one superpower, the Soviet Union, ceased to exist, and its successor state, the Russian Federation, was too preoccupied with the economic and political restructuring of its domestic system to play any sort of meaningful role on the African continent. Equally important, Germany and Japan had overcome the defeat of World War II to join the United States and France as the most influential great powers on the African continent (see Garten, 1993; Schraeder, 2000b). However, expectations of Great Power cooperation in
factor: economic self-interest. In the case of France, policymakers were confronted by an intensifying economic crisis on the African continent that created rising pressures for change within the carefully crafted web of economic ties that bound the French economy to those of francophone Africa (Sandbrook, 1993; Callaghy and Ravenhill, 1993). With many of their clients on the verge of financial bankruptcy, French policymakers initially decided to undertake an economic bailout that entailed massive increases in foreign aid. French aid to francophone Africa increased from the already substantial level of $3.7 billion in 1980–1982 to $8.2 billion in 1990–1992—a nearly 120 percent increase during a ten-year period. Once it became clear that the short-term bail-outs were insufficient and that projected aid levels were beyond France’s fiscal capabilities, French policymakers took the extraordinary step in January 1994 of devaluing the CFA franc by 50 percent. The decision sent shockwaves throughout the CFA franc zone, which had never before suffered a devaluation. Most important, the devaluation signaled that France’s commitment to the cultural imperative of la francophonie no longer took precedence over the pursuit of economic self-interest in an increasingly competitive, post–Cold War environment.

In the case of the United States, the end of the Cold War fostered the decline of ideologically based policies in favor of the pursuit of trade and investment (Schraeder, 1998). In 1996, the Clinton administration unveiled the first formal U.S. trade policy for aggressively pursuing new markets throughout Africa, including in francophone Africa (Department of Commerce, 1996). This report led to the creation of an interagency Africa Trade and Development Coordinating Group, which was jointly chaired by the National Economic Council (NEC) and the National Security Council (NSC). The Africa Growth and Opportunity Act, envisioned to stimulate U.S. investment and trade with Africa, and passed by both the House and the Senate in 2000, serves as an important component of this economic strategy.

The launching of the Clinton administration’s long-awaited trade policy was a significant departure from the Cold War deference to European economic interests in their former colonies. This policy was preceded by the launching in 1992 of a series of highly publicized speeches rejecting Washington’s past support for France’s privileged role in francophone Africa in favor of a more aggressive approach to promoting U.S. trade and investment. “The African market is open to everyone,” explained former assistant secretary of state for African affairs Herman Cohen in a 1995 speech in Libreville, Gabon, explicitly designed to denounce the concept of a chasse gardée. “We must accept free and fair competition, equality between all actors” (quoted in Schraeder, 2000b). The most noteworthy example of the administration’s determination to highlight and advance expanding U.S. economic interests on the African continent was President Clinton’s decision to make a twelve-day presidential trip to Africa in 1998 that included stops in Botswana, Ghana, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, and Uganda.

the post–Cold War era have been dampened by the emergence of a Cold Peace, in which the northern industrialized democracies compete for markets and influence throughout the African continent. Three specific themes reflective of this emerging Cold Peace are once again nicely illuminated by focusing on U.S. and French involvement in Africa (see also Petras and Mosley, 2000).

The fall of the Berlin Wall marked the beginning of the end of the complementary Cold War regime among the Western democracies and its gradual replacement with a new competitive international environment, in which Great Power policies increasingly are being driven by the same...
For the first time in U.S. history, a sitting U.S. president had led an extended diplomatic mission to Africa intent on improving U.S.-African ties and promoting U.S. trade and investment on the African continent.²

The transformation of foreign policy interests in the post–Cold War era has contributed to the rise of Great Power economic competition throughout Africa, particularly in the highly lucrative petroleum, telecommunications, and transport industries. In the eyes of French policymakers, the penetration of U.S. and other Western companies constitutes “at best an intrusion” and “at worst an aggression” into France’s chasse gardée. The seriousness with which this issue is treated at the highest levels of the French policymaking establishment was demonstrated by the public admission of Minister of Cooperation Michel Roussin that a series of meetings 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 Congo-Brazzaville, Elf-Aquitaine (the French oil corporation), and Occidental Petroleum Corporation (Oxy), a U.S.-based oil company, is an excellent example of the potential future stakes involved in rising U.S.-French economic competition. Desperately in need of nearly $200 million in order to pay government salaries prior to the holding of legislative elections, one observer has noted that newly elected president Pascal Lissouba “naturally turned for help to Elf-Aquitaine (which controls 80 percent of the country’s oil production).” When its French manager refused to approve either a $300 million loan or “a request for a $300 million mortgage on the future production of three promising new off-shore oil deposits,” Lissouba initiated secret negotiations with the U.S.-based Oxy. An agreement was signed, but ultimately renounced eight months later by the Lissouba administration due to “intense French pressure” (quoted in Schraeder, 2000b).

The very public war of words between the U.S. State Department and the French Ministry of Cooperation reached a feverish pitch during the fall of 1996, and demonstrated how economic competition had spilled over into the political realm. Minister of Cooperation Jacques Godfrain chided Secretary of State Warren Christopher for his decision to make his first (and last) official visit to Africa approximately four years after assuming office, and literally weeks before the U.S. presidential elections of November 1996. Christopher responded to the perceived diplomatic slight by demanding an official apology. When none was forthcoming, he publicly criticized French policy: “All nations must cooperate, not compete, if we are going to make a positive difference in Africa’s future,” explained Christopher. “The time has passed when Africa could be carved into spheres of influence, or when outside powers could view whole groups of states as their private domain” (French, 1996a:A5). Not to be outdone, Godfrain responded in kind: “If I were a political or electoral counselor to President Bill Clinton, I would advise him to worry more about helping African development after the elections” (French, 1996a:A5).

The diplomatic war of words also had important ramifications within international organizations, as witnessed by U.S.-French competition in 1996 over the future leadership of the United Nations. The Chirac administration led a losing battle to reelect Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali for a second term of office. The Clinton administration had vowed early on to utilize its veto right to block Boutros-Ghali’s candidacy, and did so at a November 19 meeting of the Security Council. The Chirac administration responded by threatening to veto any candidate from a non-francophone country, and strongly promoted the candidacy of Amara Essy, Côte d’Ivoire’s foreign minister. In the end, Kofi Annan, a native English speaker from Ghana who was perceived among French policymakers as the “American candidate,” was chosen by the Security Council on December 13, 1996. The most plausible explanation as to why the Chirac administration ultimately backed away from its earlier support of Essy was the loss of support among francophone African leaders who ultimately rallied around Annan’s candidacy. When confronted with the possibility that an extended stalemate between the United States and France might lead to the selection of a non-African Secretary-General, the francophone African leaders placed their common heritage as Africans before their more select common attachment to la francophonie.

The emergence of economic competition during the Cold Peace has affected Great Power support for democratization. The end of the Cold War raised expectations that the Western democracies would promote democracy and human rights as the cornerstones of a new democratic international order that would be consistently applied to all regions of the world, including in francophone Africa. Scholars, activists, and policymakers in both the United States and France increasingly coalesced around the Wilsonian concept of making political democratization a precondition for the improvement of economic and political relations with Paris and Washington. However, the simultaneous emergence of prodemocracy movements throughout francophone Africa threatened the very essence of France’s carefully crafted francophone network: the potential replacement of staunchly pro-French, undemocratic leaders with opposition candidates less enamored with France and more sympathetic to seeking closer ties with other northern industrialized democracies (Clark and Gardnier, 1997).

To the surprise of many, President François Mitterrand initially embraced these democratization movements in a much-quoted speech at the 1990 Franco-African summit held in La Baule, France, and warned his counterparts in francophone Africa that future French aid would be contingent on their willingness to promote true democratic change. What became known as the “La Baule Doctrine” suggested that the promotion of democracy would become the new hallmark of French foreign policy in francophone Africa. The
bold rhetoric of democratization was nonetheless forestalled by the reality of ongoing foreign aid programs designed to keep pro-French leaders in power (Bayart, 1991; Agir Ici et Survie, 1995). In the case of Cameroon, French aid to the authoritarian regime of President Paul Biya expanded from $159 million in 1990 to $436 million in 1992, the year of the country’s first multiparty presidential elections. The primary reason for the dramatic increase in French aid was to ensure Biya’s victory, especially as the most popular opposition candidate was John Fru Ndi, an anglophone politician perceived as a threat to French interests in Cameroon. Any misunderstandings generated by earlier French rhetoric were resolved at the 1992 Franco-African summit held in Libreville, Gabon. At this meeting, French prime minister Pierre Bérégovoy privately stated that when confronted with the potentially conflicting goals of promoting democracy, ensuring development, and maintaining security, the leaders of francophone Africa were expected to adopt the following order of priorities: above all, security, followed by development and, finally, democratization (Glaser and Smith, 1994:102).

The election of Jacques Chirac as president of France in May 1995 coincided with an increasingly turbulent period in French foreign policy (Marchal, 1995). The growing contradictions in France’s democratization policies were demonstrated by the Chirac administration’s response to a February 1996 coup d’état in Niger, the first against a democratically elected government in France’s former colonies since the beginning of the democratization process in 1990. Despite a commitment in 1995 by Minister of Cooperation Jacques Godfrain that France would intervene to reinstate a democratically elected government if a defense treaty had been signed with that country, France refused to intervene in Niger and ultimately decided to work with the military regime headed by Colonel Ibrahim Mainassara Baré (French, 1996b:A3). Not surprisingly, the democratically elected francophone neighbors of Niger were worried by French inaction. In a throwback to an earlier era of authoritarian rule and highly questionable democratic practices, Colonel Baré announced that there would be multiparty elections in 1996, presented himself as the candidate of the ruling party, and subsequently “won” inherently flawed elections to the congratulatory toasts of local French diplomats.

U.S. diplomats have typically been more vocal than their French counterparts in their support for democratization throughout francophone Africa. This vocal stance is not due to a greater U.S. commitment to promoting democracy in Africa, relative to that espoused by France and the other industrialized democracies. In fact, there is abundant evidence of ongoing contradictions between Washington’s pro-democracy rhetoric and its foreign policy actions. For example, punitive measures designed to enforce pro-democracy rhetoric are at best unevenly applied depending on the perceived importance of the African country. Although the Clinton administration was quick to enforce comprehensive economic sanctions against the mini-state of Gambia, when that country’s military took power in a coup d’état in 1994, it refused to impose comprehensive economic sanctions against the military dictatorship of Nigeria (prior to that country’s democratic elections of 1999) that would have affected U.S. access to Nigerian oil, the mainstay of the Nigerian economy (although a variety of more limited sanctions, such as the suspension of military cooperation, were nonetheless imposed).

The unusually vocal stance of U.S. diplomats in francophone Africa are at least partially due to a self-interested calculation that the United States has little to lose and everything to gain by excoriating pro-French elites who impede the transition to a new political order. The logic of diplomatic competition at the local level is based on perceptions of the democratization process as a zero-sum game (i.e., one person’s gain is another’s loss). From the perspective of local U.S. ambassadors, for example, promoting multiparty democracy is a low-cost strategy with potentially high returns—namely, the replacement of pro-French elites with new leaders potentially more sensitive to U.S. interests. From the perspective of local French ambassadors, the reverse holds true, which explains why French policymakers tend to emerge as protectors of the status quo.

In the case of Benin, for example, Nicéphore Soglo’s victory in the first presidential elections to be held after his country’s transition to democracy in 1991, led to the formation of an administration less dependent on France and more interested in promoting closer foreign ties with the United States (Adjovi, 1998). It is precisely for this reason, argue critics of French policies in Africa, that local French diplomats provided significant support to Soglo’s authoritarian predecessor, Mathieu Kérékou, who emerged victorious in the 1996 presidential elections. Although he ultimately accepted the 1996 election results, Soglo remained sharply critical of the “northern countries” (read France) who he at least partially blamed for his defeat at the hands of Benin’s former dictator of nineteen years. Regardless of France’s ultimate role in the 1996 presidential elections, however, Kérékou’s reemergence did not signal a return to the same Beninois-French relationship that existed prior to 1991.

Rising competition between the United States and France holds important implications for the dependency-decolonization debate. In sharp contrast to the Cold War era when the West (especially the United States) sought to strengthen and enhance France’s privileged role in francophone Africa as a bulwark against communism, the end of the Cold War has heightened Great Power competition within the political and (especially) economic realms among the northern industrialized democracies. As a result, French policymakers increasingly claim that the United States and Japan, and to a lesser degree Germany and Canada, pose economic and political threats to French interests in francophone Africa. According to Stephen Smith (1994), the Africa correspondent for the French daily
Libération, such statements are indicative of a growing duel within the West over Africa, particularly between Washington and Paris.

From the viewpoint of the second generation of African leaders, rising economic competition among the Great Powers 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 in favor of France of the "oil war" in the Congo 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 U.S. and South African companies at the expense of previously privileged ties with the French oil industry, the second generation of African leaders are 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 UNITED NATIONS 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 assume 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 socioeconomic 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 when it has become fashionable for many Westerners, particularly Americans, 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 International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Labour Organisation (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, however, a highly 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 largely ethnic-based crises, such as in Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Rwanda, which seemingly have intensified in the post–Cold War era. As succinctly summarized by Zartman (1995a:1-14), these crises often 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 Mohamed 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 Congo–Kinshasa under the authoritarian rule of Laurent Désiré Kabila. The cornerstone of debate over the proper role of the UN in the post–Cold War era revolves around an emerging international consensus that downplays 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; see also Prendergast, 1996). As summarized by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali (1992:9), "The time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty . . . has passed; its theory was never matched by reality."

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 had contributed to the creation of a humanitarian crisis in which approximately 330,000 Somalis were at “imminent 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 the case of 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 (OEOA) to undertake a humanitarian intervention in 1989 known as Operation Lifeline Sudan (Deng and Minear, 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 M. Deng, a Sudanese national who served as Special Representative of the United Nations 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 DeLancy 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 International Monetary Fund, 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 conditionalities designed to restructure African economies and political systems in the image of the northern industrialized democracies (Callaghy and Ravenhill, 1993).

The emergence of economic conditionalities was signaled by the 1981 publication of a World Bank study, Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Agenda for Action. The major conclusion of this report was that misguided decisions of the first generation of African leaders were responsible for the mounting economic crisis. In order 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 that demanded an end to food subsidies, the devaluation of national currencies, the trimming of government bureaucracies, and the privatization of parastatals (state-owned corporations). In short, 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).

The emergence of political conditionalities in IMF- and World Bank-sponsored SAPs was heralded by the 1989 publication of a World Bank report, Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth: A Long-Term Perspective Study. 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.” Theoretically inclusive of all types of political systems, the concept of good governance is in reality the establishment of multiparty democratic political systems similar to those in the northern industrialized democracies. The IMF and the World Bank had affirmed that all future flows of Western financial capital were contingent on the willingness of African leaders to promote the democratization of their respective political systems.

The economic and political conditionalities imposed by the IMF and the World Bank were often challenged by African policymakers and academics. During the 1980s, the SAPs were criticized due to their complete disregard for the political realities confronted by African leaders. IMF and World Bank economists failed (and even refused) to take into consideration
that the cutting of government subsidies of food—one of the above-noted four pillars of private sector reform always included in SAPs—could lead to often violent urban riots. In the case of the 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 due to the fact that the SAPs were usually formulated by international economists with little (if any) political training or first-hand knowledge of the individual African countries their programs were supposed to serve.

The SAPs of the 1990s were also strongly challenged by African policymakers and academics 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 congressional representatives are hesitant to enact legislation that will place significant economic burdens on already impoverished populations—essentially committing political suicide in favor of their political opponents.

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 Nicéphore 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, hardheaded” analyses of Africa’s economic plight that avoid both the Afro-pessimism 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 (Callaghan 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 nonetheless are capable of pursuing paths that may lead to economic success over the long term. More pessimistic interpretations from the dependency tradition nonetheless suggest that African countries “desperate for access to international capital” are now “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 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.” One of the harshest critiques of the impact of conditionalities draws upon the involvement of international financial institutions and donor communities in restructuring the formerly Marxist-inspired political and economic systems of Mozambique:

Recent developments in Mozambique and elsewhere suggest that the most likely successor to post-colonial sovereignty will be neo-colonial vassalage, in which the Western powers assume direct and open-ended control over the administration, security, and economic policies of “deteriorated” states under the banner of the UN and various donors. The interests of many Africans may have been poorly served in nation-states ruled by aid-sponsored despots, but there is no reason to suppose that they will be better served in a world governed by UN proconsuls, U.S. marines, and World Bank economists. (Plank, 1993:430; see also Hanlon, 1991)

THE CHANGING EQUATION OF MILITARY INTERVENTION

The emergence of new security challenges, such as the growing numbers of “collapsed states” (Zartman, 1995a) beset by ethnic, religious, and
political rivalries, has fostered renewed international debate over the desirability of foreign intervention in Africa. At the beginning of the new millennium, often referred to as the "cold superpower" era, military operations in Somalia (since 1993) and the Rwandan civil war (since 1990) were Operation Restore Hope. Most notably, operations in Somalia (Operation Restore Hope) were widely criticized for their failure to achieve any lasting peace in the region. The presence of foreign military forces in these conflicts, often under the auspices of the United Nations, raised questions about the role of international intervention in promoting stability and security in Africa. The experiences in Somalia and Rwanda highlighted the complexities of international intervention and the challenges of achieving sustainable peace.

The potential for foreign intervention in Africa is often linked to the need for counter-terrorism and anti-political violence efforts. The use of military force by various national and international actors has been a common strategy to address these issues. The cases of Somalia and Rwanda illustrate the difficulties in implementing such interventions, including the need for a clear mandate, the challenges of deploying and sustaining military forces, and the importance of coordinating efforts across different actors.

The United States, for example, has been involved in various interventions in Africa, including operations in Somalia, which was part of the larger U.S. strategy for countering terrorism. The Rwandan civil war, on the other hand, was primarily a conflict between two insurgencies, with外部 involvement playing a significant role. The intervention in Rwanda by the United Nations and the multinational peacekeeping force was seen as a positive step in addressing the conflict, but it also raised questions about the role of international organizations in such situations.

The experiences in Somalia and Rwanda underscore the need for a more nuanced approach to intervention, one that is informed by a deep understanding of the local context, the potential for unintended consequences, and the importance of fostering local ownership and support. The international community must be prepared to engage with African nations to promote stability and security, while respecting their sovereignty and the need for self-determination.

In conclusion, the cases of Somalia and Rwanda highlight the complexities of foreign intervention in Africa. They demonstrate the importance of careful planning, coordination, and a commitment to the principles of peace, stability, and sustainable development. The experiences in these two countries serve as a reminder of the challenges faced by interventionists and the need for a more informed and measured approach to international engagement in African affairs.
intervention in Africa—a trend that is captured in ongoing debates within the French foreign policy making establishment between the so-called anciens (the ancients), who favor activist measures (including direct military intervention) to maintain pro-French clients in power, and the modernes (the moderns), who emphasize the need to move beyond France’s interventionist past in its former colonies (Bourmaud, 2000). At least as far back as February 1994, when the CFA franc was devalued, moves have been afoot to isolate the old-line defenders of France’s chasse gardée in Africa. No case demonstrated the rising influence of the moderns better than Chirac’s rejection of the use of military force to return Henri Konan Bédié to power in Côte d’Ivoire—one of the linchpins of French foreign policy in francophone Africa—after his regime had been overthrown in a December 1999 military coup and replaced with a military regime led by General Gueï. Indeed, the position of several ancients, most notably Michel Dupuch, presidential advisor for African affairs, of the need to consider using French troops to reinstate Bédié in power, were successfully rejected by the moderns in Paris.

The combination of the United States’ hesitancy to become directly involved in African conflicts and France’s recognition of the need to decrease its military presence has fostered U.S.-French military cooperation on the African continent. The cornerstone of this cooperation (which also includes Great Britain) is the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI), a military aid program designed to train African armies in the art of peacekeeping and peacemaking so that African countries can take the lead in resolving African conflicts. An earlier version of this initiative, the U.S.-promoted African Crisis Response Force (ACRF), was denounced by France as a unilateral measure that did not take into account French desires (as well as those of African countries that presumably would contribute troops). ACRI, however, has been based on the comparatively harmonious planning between the U.S., British, and French military establishments. Training is now going on, and there has been signal French-U.S. cooperation in multinational military exercises like Guidimaka, which involved Senegalese, Malian, and Mauritanian troops, with French and U.S. support units. While not without friction, this cooperation is based on the recognition of common U.S., British, and French military interests, and the unwillingness (and/or inability) of the Great Powers to commit major new public (especially military) resources to Africa.

The African dimension of an evolving interventionist equation is best captured by two developments. First, a series of successful guerrilla insurgencies fostered the rise during the 1990s of what is often referred to as a “new bloc” of African leaders that includes Isaias Afwerki of Eritrea, Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, and Paul Kagame of Rwanda (Connell and Smyth, 1998; Ottaway, 1999). Successful in their pursuit of power primarily due to their control over strong, disciplined, and battle-tested guerrilla armies, this new generation of elites demonstrates varied degrees of commitment to create “responsive and accountable” (but not necessarily democratic) governments that significantly reorder the foreign policy relationships pursued by their predecessors—although they certainly do not act as a cohesive bloc, as witnessed by the outbreaks of warfare between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1999 over a disputed boundary. Equally important has been the greater willingness on the part of African regional powers, most notably Nigeria and South Africa, to flex their authority within their self-appointed regions. Indeed, South Africa’s self-appointed role as leader of the “African Renaissance”—the strengthening of democratic practices and economic liberalization throughout Africa since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989—is part of a conscious effort among South African policymakers to underscore their country’s unique position as an intermediary between the African continent and leading foreign powers in all other regions of the world (Crouzel, 2000).

The most noteworthy impact of these trends has been the rising tendency of African countries to militarily intervene in their neighbors against the backdrop of declining military intervention on the part of the Great Powers. One decade after the Cold War’s end, Africa’s “new bloc” of leaders and other regional military powers increasingly are becoming the new power brokers of African international relations (see for example Bayart, 1999). The validity of this trend is highlighted by several examples: cooperative efforts among Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Uganda (at least prior to the outbreak of the Eritrean-Ethiopian border conflict) to undermine Sudan’s Islamist regime; Rwandan military involvement in Kabila’s 1997 guerrilla victory in Congo-Kinshasa; South Africa’s military intervention in neighboring Lesotho in 1998; and Nigeria’s military intervention in Sierra Leone to restore the democratically elected government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, who was returned to power in March 1998.

The most clear-cut example of this new trend is the far-reaching military conflict in Congo-Kinshasa that foreign observers now commonly refer to as Africa’s “First World War” due to the introduction of ground troops by at least five foreign countries (Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe). In sharp contrast to Great Power conflict in the region during the 1960s, however, when the United States launched a series of very aggressive covert (and overt military) operations to counter the spread of perceived “radical” influences within the region, the dawn of the new millennium had witnessed the Clinton administration’s determination to employ its UN Security Council veto to block the dispatch of any UN-sponsored force that included peacemaking in its mandate; a clear signal that the United States (and other Great Powers) are either unwilling or perceive themselves as unable to impose peace in this vast politico-military arena. Peace, according to this vision, can only emerge from the evolving regional military balances of power and the political-military and economic


