# Table of Contents

Acknowledgments .................................................... i
Abbreviations .......................................................... x
Glossary .................................................................. xxvi
List of Sources .......................................................... xxvii
Notes on Contributors ................................................ xxvi

## PART I

### CURRENT ISSUES: ESSAYS

Peace Collapse in Africa: The Difficulties of Implementing Negotiated Agreements, *Donald Rothchild* ......................................................... A13
The Evolution of Regionalism in Africa, *I. William Zartman* ................................................. A26
The Organization of African Unity: Facing Up to the Failures of its Mediation Efforts, *Colin Legum* .......................................................... A33
Continuity and Change in US Foreign Policy towards Africa: Comparing the Bush and Clinton Administrations, *Peter J. Schraeder* ........ A80
British Policy Towards Africa: The Campaign Against a Declining Interest, *Colin Legum* .......................................................... A98
The Commonwealth’s Role in Africa, *Derek Ingram* ................................................. A10
French Policy in Africa, *Claude Wauthier* .......................................................... A11
The USSR and Africa: A Retrospective Assessment, *David E. Albright* .......... A12
Japan’s Pursuit of Superpower Status in Africa, *Peter J. Schraeder* .......... A14
Europe in Africa, *Robert Kappel* .......................................................... A15
Youth in Sub-Saharan Africa, *Vladimir B. Iordansky* .................................................. A15

## PART II

### COUNTRY-BY-COUNTRY REVIEW

West Africa

- Republic of Benin .................................................. B 3
- Burkina Faso ...................................................... B 13
- Cape Verde ......................................................... B 21
- Côte d’Ivoire ....................................................... B 25
- The Gambia ........................................................ B 39
- Ghana ............................................................... B 44
- Guinea ............................................................... B 60
- Guinea-Bissau .................................................... B 66
- Liberia ................................................................. B 73
- Mali ................................................................. B 82
- Mauritania ........................................................ B 96
- Niger ................................................................. B111
- Nigeria ............................................................... B115
- Senegal ............................................................... B141
Continuity and Change in US Foreign Policy towards Africa

Comparing the Bush and Clinton Administrations

PETER J. SCHRAEDER

The White House held a historic conference on Africa during 26–27 June 1994, that brought together over 200 high-ranking administration officials and a variety of governmental and non-governmental representatives involved in African affairs. For the first time in US history, Africanists held the attention of and were greeted by the speeches of the highest ranking members of the foreign policy establishment, including National Security Adviser Tony Lake, Vice President Al Gore and President Bill Clinton. In addition to capturing the attention of those responsible for formulating policy, an important underlying purpose of the conference was to forge a consensus among a growing and increasingly vocal African affairs constituency over the proper guidelines for US Africa policies in the post–Cold War era. For decades we viewed Africa through a Cold War prism and through the fight against apartheid, explained President Clinton. ‘We often, I think, cared in past years more about how African nations voted in the United Nations than whether their own people had the right to vote… But now the prisms through which we viewed Africa have been shattered’, he continued. In the post–Cold War and post–apartheid world, our approaches have disappeared… we need a new policy’.

Clinton’s emphasis on the need for a new policy was meant to distinguish our policy (of the Democrats) from that of Republican predecessors—a guiding theme of Clinton Administration speeches. ‘Let me be clear’, explained Secretary of State Warren Christopher on 21 May 1993, in a speech before the twenty-third African American Institute Conference, the Clinton Administration’s new relationship towards Africa will differ in important respects from the approach of the past 12 years.9 Less than 12 months later in official testimony before the Africa Subcommittee of the US House of Representatives, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs George Moose underscored that the end of the Cold War had enabled the Clinton Administration to ‘forge a productive new relationship with Africa’ based on democ­ratization, conflict resolution and economic growth and development.10 Perhaps the most poignant characterization of the Clinton Administration’s break with the past was offered by Vice President Gore at the 1994 ‘White House Conference on Africa’: ‘Decades from now, when we look back on what we will have accomplished, let it be said that this was the generation that helped Africa achieve the peace and prosperity that has eluded it for so long’.

The primary purpose of this essay is to address the issue of continuity versus change in US foreign policy towards Africa by examining policy initiatives in the last year of the Bush Administration (1992) and the first two years of the Clinton Administration (1993–94). This tentative assessment is carried out by responding to a series of six expectations of a Democratic president often articulated by African observers of US foreign policy prior to the election of President Clinton in the 1992 presidential elections.11

The United States and Africa

FIRST EXPECTATION: A DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION WILL ELEVATE AFRICA TO A HIGHER LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE WITHIN THE POLICY MAKING ESTABLISHMENT

Regardless of whether the White House is occupied by Republicans or Democrats, several factors historically have ensured that US Africa policies are marked by indifference at worst and neglect at best, especially relative to the time and resources allocated to other regions of greater concern.1 First and foremost, despite the rising numbers of US citizens who have lived and worked on the African continent during the post–World War II era, there exists a gap of knowledge concerning Africa among the majority of elected officials charged with the task of overseeing US foreign policy throughout the world. This lack of knowledge is especially acute at the level of the mass public, which maintains what can be called a National Geographic image of the continent.12 Although some topics, such as racial politics and the transition to democracy in South Africa, receive regular press coverage and have somewhat improved the public’s awareness of African political and economic issues, the mention of Africa typically conjures up stereotypical images of bush jungles and wild animals; poverty and famine; corruption and ‘tribal’ warfare, and rampant sexuality leading to the explosion of AIDS. These stereotypical images are further reinforced by the nature of US media programming which, when it does focus on Africa, usually concentrates on the sensationalist and often negative aspects of the continent.13 Unless field reporters can produce a ‘hard’ news story that can attract attention back home, such as interviews with US Marines detailing the hardships of being deployed in Somalia during the 1992 Christmas season as part of Operation Restore Hope, editors interested in what will sell make it difficult to achieve placement of a feature story in the press. Even the traditional crisis-oriented stories that usually make it into the Western press are often blocked from airing. For example, despite the availability of excellent multimedia coverage of the Ethiopian famine of 1983–85, an event which ultimately would receive significant press coverage and produce an outpouring of Western aid, editors initially refused to air the material because they thought that there was no news in another African famine.14

The ‘safari tradition’ of US journalism (i.e., sending generalists to Africa on short-term assignments) reinforces the chequered view of what the public learns about the continent. Helen Kitchen, a former journalist and director of African Studies at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), notes that while much of the reporting by US newspaper and wire correspondents is informed and conscientious, follow-up is inconsistent. Kitchen laments that what one still gets from the US media is ‘discontinuous segments of the day-to-day history of Africa’.15 For example, the dearth of newspaper reports on Somalia less than six months after the withdrawal of US troops (as opposed to extensive daily coverage while US troops were present) might lead the average reader to assume that the conflict has been resolved and the Somali people are being fed.

Even the scholarly community has focused an inadequate amount of attention on US Africa policies.16 The study of Africa within history, political science and international studies, disciplines perhaps best suited to ensuring a well-informed foreign policy, has been relegated to a low-level status.17 Scholars within these disciplines historically have given academic priority to studies that focus on traditional US security concerns, such as East–West relations and the nature of the Atlantic Alliance, or geographical regions of perceived greater importance, such as Southeast Asia, Central America and, more recently, Eastern Europe and the Middle East. In short, although advances have been made during the post–World War era, the fact that Africa as of 1994 remains poorly understood by the policy making establishment, the
THE UNITED STATES AND AFRICA

general public, the media and the academic community translates into a poor base for formulating effective foreign policy.

To his credit, President Clinton launched his Administration by naming several individuals to his foreign policy team who ensured that Africa would 'at least get a hearing in the White House'. Most notable in this regard was the appointment of Tony Lake as National Security Adviser. Having served as a member of the National Security Council (NSC) and as the Director of Policy Planning in the State Department under the Carter Administration, Lake brought significant Africanist credentials to the office. In addition to writing a doctoral dissertation that examined the evolution of US foreign policy towards South Africa, he is the author of numerous books and articles, most notably what is still considered to be one of the classic works pertaining to bureaucratic politics and the evolution of US foreign policy towards Zimbabwe.

However, the Clinton White House also made other high-ranking appointments that were criticized by Africanists, most notably Warren Christopher as Secretary of State and George Moose as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. Both of these appointments suggested a conservative approach to foreign policy as both men tend to preserve existing policies and eschew innovation. Moose has been characterized by Africanists as an 'implementer' of policy who is unlikely to take initiatives, as did Chester Crocker concerning the much-debated policy of 'constructive engagement' in southern Africa during the Reagan Administration. Indeed, I have argued elsewhere that the initial policies and speeches in the early months of the Clinton Administration demonstrated a Cold War-inspired preoccupation with managing the US security relationship with Russia and the other newly independent republics of the former Soviet Union at the expense of more innovative policies targeted towards the various regions of the Third World, including Africa. Africanists remain hopeful, however, especially due to the fact that the 'hearts' and especially the 'rhetoric' of the new Administration are in the right places. For example, the high-level delegation that attended Nelson Mandela's inauguration (including US President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton) sent a strong signal of US support for the transition process in South Africa. Nelson Mandela's attendance at the Democratic convention and at President Clinton's inauguration provided a foreign policy ace—at least within the Africanist community—to a White House seeking to underscore a forward-looking foreign policy.

The 'White House Conference on Africa' clearly was supposed to serve as an important indicator of the Clinton Administration's interest in Africa. Yet as noted by Michael Clough, Senior Fellow for Africa at the Council on Foreign Relations and one of the speechwriters for the Clinton campaign (including the drafting of the Africa plank of the Democratic platform), the 'Clinton Administration's Africa hands have been reminded that in politics few good intentions are fully understood.' Whereas increasingly vocal critics of Administration policies have dismissed the conference as a poorly conceived and hastily planned public relations exercise indicative of a lack of true interest in Africa, others accepted the conference as a much-needed effort at truly focusing the attention of top policy makers and creating a broad African affairs constituency capable of promoting and carrying out new innovative policies. As is the case with most endeavours of this type, the White House Conference on Africa undoubtedly grew out of both political calculations (i.e., public relations) and a sincere desire to better coordinate US Africa policies. At the very least, the conference suggested an Administration cognizant of the necessity to formally examine its policies towards Africa and perhaps provide a mid-term correction. In this regard, the conclusions and recommendations of its six working groups most certainly will become the basis for assessing the Clinton Administration's record in Africa during the second half of its term in office—specifically in terms of resolving whether the rhetoric of conference results and recommendations matches the reality of actual policies.

Several observers have concluded that the end of the Cold War era has led to the reinforcement of the historical tendency among US policy makers, including those within the Clinton Administration, to treat Africa as a 'back-burner' issue. Adopting a play on words of the Reagan Administration's much-debated policy of 'constructive engagement', Clough poignantly argued that the manifestation of this historical tendency during the Bush Administration was a policy of 'cynical disengagement' in which policymakers were guided by three principles: 1) 'Do not spend much money on Africa', unless Congress makes you'; 2) 'Do not let African issues complicate policy towards other, more important parts of the world', and 3) 'Do not take stands that might create political controversies in the United States'. Even if we give the Clinton Administration the benefit of the doubt that its neglect of Africa is not cynically motivated, each of these three principles, especially the third, appears to characterize the White House approach to Africa. It is arguable that the Clinton Administration's policies can be characterized as 'unrequited engagement'—promises made and expectations raised but never completely kept or carried through. This point will become more clear as we examine other foreign policy expectations of a Democratic Administration led by Clinton.

SECOND EXPECTATION: A DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION WILL PROVIDE AFRICA WITH GREATER LEVELS OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

A second trend of the post—Cold War era that transcends partisan differences between Republican and Democratic administrations has been budget cutbacks in government offices related to Africa and growing pressures to trim already reduced levels of economic and military aid. Budgetary cutbacks are an outgrowth of the perception among US officials that the continent is less important in the post—Cold War era, and are reinforced by popular pressures to trim the budget deficit and enhance spending for domestic social programmes. For example, in order to staff growing numbers of consulates and embassies in Eastern Europe and the newly independent republics of the former Soviet Union, the State Department trimmed approximately 70 positions from its Bureau of African Affairs and closed consulates and embassies in several African countries.

The US Agency for International Development (AID) similarly cut a variety of programmes and staff positions related to Africa, and reportedly only the 'eleventh-hour intervention' of the Congressional Black Caucus prevented the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives from merging its subcommittees on African and Latin American affairs. Even the CIA announced in June 1994 that it planned to close 15 stations in Africa and withdraw dozens of case officers: 'We have never been in Africa to report on Africa', explained one CIA official. 'We went into Africa as part of the covert activity of the Cold War, to recruit spies. Soviet, Chinese, Eastern European and sometimes North Korean officials under circumstances that were easier to operate under than in their home countries.'

The evolution of levels of US foreign assistance to Africa from fiscal year (FY) 1985 (just prior to passage of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Deficit Reduction Act) to FY 1994 (the last budget prepared by the Bush Administration) offers a revealing barometer of Republican attitudes towards the African continent both prior to and after the end of the Cold War. During this period, US military assistance and assistance to Egypt declined from $279.2m to $3.8m. Other forms of security assistance, such as Economic Support Funds (ESF), similarly dropped from $42.6m to $15m. Although most Africanists will quickly note that reductions in these forms of assistance are not necessarily a bad thing, especially when develop-
THE UNITED STATES AND AFRICA

and eastern Europe with 14.6%) and in fact decreased in importance by nearly 50% over the next three years. The personal significance Carter attached to Africa relative to other regions of the world is portrayed in his memoirs, which included only passing reference to Africa. "This is not a history of my administration but a highly personal report of my own experiences," Carter began, "I have emphasized those matters which meant the most to me, and particularly those events in which I played a unique part, such as the search for peace in the Middle East and the Camp David negotiations."

The net result of presidential inattention to the African continent, a historical reality further reinforced by the end of the Cold War, is a White House tendency to relegate responsibility for overseeing US Africa policies to those "national security" bureaucracies which comprise the executive branch: the State Department, Defence Department and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), as well as their specialized agencies devoted specifically to Africa. The most important outcome of what can be referred to as 'bureaucratic influence' within the policy making process is that US Africa policies become fragmented, interpreted differently according to the established organizational missions of each bureaucracy that historically has been created to deal with a particular aspect of the foreign policy relationship.

The Bush Administration's response to the escalating civil war in Liberia during 1990 demonstrated the importance of the national security bureaucracies in shaping US Africa policies in an emerging post-Cold War era. Unlike its direct handling of more hardline military operations designed to oust Panamanian dictator Manuel Noriega and to expel Iraq from its illegal occupation of Kuwait, both of which initially were opposed by the State Department's Bureau of Latin American Affairs and Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, respectively, the White House deferred to the Africa Bureau's desire to remain relatively neutral in the civil war and seek the negotiated departure of Liberian dictator Samuel Doe. Conscious of African concerns over unilateral superpower intervention on the African continent, the Africa Bureau managed to gain White House approval to seek the negotiated departure of President Doe and, failing that, support of a multilateral occupation force led by Nigeria and solely comprised of African troops. Although the White House ultimately did send in the US Marines to ensure the safe departure of approximately 1,100 US civilians and diplomatic personnel residing in the country, their actions were solely limited to this humanitarian goal. At no point did US forces seek to militarily determine the outcome of fighting between Government forces and two guerrilla factions vying for control. In short, the White House deferred to the Africa Bureau's recommendation to support African efforts to resolve what policy makers perceived as a uniquely African problem within an altered Cold War environment.

This trend clearly has continued under the Clinton Administration, most notably due to President Clinton's initial proclivity to downplay the importance of foreign policy and instead focus primarily on US domestic concerns. One of the earliest criticisms of the Clinton White House (even among those within the Administration) was that it was too concentrated on domestic affairs at the expense of legitimate foreign policy concerns. For example, it was reported that when President Clinton 'ticked off what he viewed as the goals of his Administration for the first 100 days' at one of the first meetings of his major advisors at Camp David, the list included economic recovery, health care, welfare reform, political reform and national service, but there was 'not a single mention of a foreign-policy objective.' It is not that Mr. Clinton is ignoring the myriad problems that confront the United States abroad, explained his aides (who also are usually quick to underscore that the President was elected on the basis of his commitment to the US domestic

THIRD EXPECTATION: A DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENT WILL BE MORE ENGAGED IN US AFRICA POLICIES

The President, John F. Kennedy noted, 'is rightfully described as a man of extraordinary powers.' Standing at the apex of an immense bureaucratic machinery, the President as commander-in-chief, head of state, chief diplomat and chief administrator embodies substantial powers allowing the White House to set the foreign policy agenda. 'Yet it is also true,' Kennedy continued, 'that he must wield those powers under extraordinary limitations.' Among these are the impracticality of one person monitoring relations with over 180 countries (including over 50 in Africa) and time constraints imposed by the elected term of office (four to eight years). In addition, the President often must contend with a Congress with a separate and different foreign policy agenda, a potentially uncooperative bureaucracy and lagging levels of public support. Newly elected presidents, therefore, must balance the overwhelming urge to completely realign the goals, priorities and substance of foreign policy with a recognition of the time constraints involved. In short, presidents are forced by necessity to select those countries, geographical regions and functional issues which will receive priority attention from their administrations.

Although contacts between the US and Africa have expanded in both quality and quantity during the post-World War II era, presidents from Harry S. Truman to George Bush traditionally have been the least interested in and paid the least amount of attention to Africa relative to other regions of the world. Even under President Carter, recognized by Africanists as pursuing one of the most enlightened policies towards the continent during the post-World War II period, Africa ranked last in terms of foreign policy attention. Despite the fact that Africa accounted for 10.9% of the Carter Administration's foreign policy actions in 1977, this figure still trailed all other regions of the world (the second lowest region was the Soviet Union

A 84

A 85
FOURTH EXPECTATION: A DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION WILL BE MORE WILLING TO SUPPORT MULTILATERAL PEACEKEEPING INITIATIVES BY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE UNITED NATIONS

The end of the Cold War raised expectations that unilateral intervention by individual superpowers for self-interested ideological pursuits gradually could be replaced by multilateral intervention carried out by international organizations for the benefit of the international community. Application of this international ideal to Africa seemingly reached its apogee in November 1992 when President Bush authorized the introduction of over 20,000 US troops into Somalia as part of a UN Security Council–sponsored military action ultimately including over 36,000 troops from at least 20 different countries. In a significant departure in US foreign policy towards Africa, US troops were introduced not for the purpose of shoring up a valued client state, or to counter either real or perceived communist aggression, but under the auspices of an international organization for the sole purpose of guaranteeing the delivery of humanitarian relief aid to a population on the brink of starvation. In this regard, the operation clearly reflected the ‘globalist’ world view of President Bush and his two closest foreign policy advisors, Secretary of State James Baker III and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft. Their collective desire to fashion a new ‘world order’ was based on active US involvement within the international system as the sole remaining superpower. ‘Only the United States’, explained President Bush on 4 December 1992, ‘has the global reach to place a large security force on the ground in such a distant place quickly and efficiently and thus save thousands of innocents from death’.54

Despite the flowery rhetoric, it is clear that domestic politics rather than an interest in Africa led President Bush to undertake what more likely than not will be regarded in the future as an anomaly of US foreign policy towards Africa. Similar to events in the mid-1980s in which public perceptions of a mounting humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia prompted the Reagan Administration to act, the Bush Administration’s initial disregard for the unfolding famine in Somalia was clearly altered by growing public awareness of the issue. However, unlike the US response to famine relief in Ethiopia, the nature of the Bush Administration’s response—sending in over 20,000 US combat troops—surprised many within the Administration. Due to his defeat in the 1992 presidential elections, President Bush would be leaving office in little over a month after the beginning of the operation. For this reason critics have argued that ‘domestic political considerations, most notably a desire to be remembered in the history books as a “decisive leader” in the realm of foreign affairs as opposed to a “quainted politician”, contributed to the largest direct US military undertaking on the African continent to date’.45

Regardless of whether President Bush was responding to domestic political concerns or high-minded foreign policy principles, neither the concept of a ‘new world order’ led by the US nor the introduction of US military troops into Somalia were questions for candidate Clinton during the 1992 presidential campaign. In fact, these ideas were expanded into a campaign pledge to significantly expand US efforts in peacekeeping by supporting the creation of a ‘UN rapid deployment force’. According to candidate Clinton, this international army would be ‘standing at the borders of countries threatened by aggression, preventing mass violence against civilian populations, providing humanitarian relief, and combating terrorism’.46

This campaign pledge was sharply reconsidered in the aftermath of the firestorm of domestic debate that surrounded the killing of US soldiers in Somalia in October 1993. On 5 May 1994 a long-awaited policy directive, Presidential Decision Directive 25, outlined severely constrained conditions that had to be met before the Clinton Administration would agree to any further UN Security Council–sponsored military
THE UNITED STATES AND AFRICA

operations, including in Africa, regardless of whether US troops were taking part:

1) threat to international security, including an urgent need for relief aid after widespread violence or rioting; 2) a sudden interruption of a democracy, or a gross violation of human rights; 3) clear objectives; 4) the availability of enough money and troops; 5) a mandate appropriate to the mission; 6) a realistic exit strategy; and 7) consent of the parties before the force is deployed. 45

The simple message of this new presidential directive was that 'the United States cannot resolve the conflicts of the world but does not believe that the United Nations is capable of making and keeping peace, particularly when hostilities among parties still exist.' 46 When I wake up every morning and look at the headlines and the stories and the images on television of these conflicts, I want to work to end every conflict, I want to work to save every child out there, and I know the President does and I know the American people do,' explained National Security Adviser Lake in a summary of the new policy. 'But neither we nor the international community have the resources nor the mandate to do so.' 47

An important outcome of this new peacekeeping policy, which in essence denied US support for UN-sponsored peacekeeping initiatives designed to militarily impose peace among warring parties, was an overt cautious approach to other conflicts in Africa. Clinton's reluctance to intervene in the ethnic warfare in Rwanda led to further criticism of his Administration's commitment to a more forward-thinking set of policies towards Africa. In the aftermath of President Juvenal Habyarimana's death in a mysterious plane crash on 6 April 1994, extremists among the Hutu ethnic group unleashed a reign of terror against the Tutsi minority (as well as against Hutu deemed sympathetic to the plight of the Tutsi) that, according to a UN report issued in December 1994, resulted in the execution of between 500,000 and 1m unarmed civilians. Fearful of being drawn into 'another Somalia,' 48 the Clinton Administration not only initially blocked the dispatch of 5,500 troops requested by UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, but instructed its spokespersons to avoid labelling the unfolding ethnic conflict as 'genocide', lest such a label further inflame US public sympathy and demand US intervention as was the case in Somalia. According to Madeleine K. Albright, the primary US supporter at the UN, Rwanda served as the first test case of Presidential Decision Directive 25 and precipitous action on the part of either the US or the UN would have constituted sheer "folly." 49

In sharp contrast, critics accused the Clinton Administration of being 'less than candid' in its approach to Rwanda (clearly genocide was occurring at the time), and underscored the irony of holding a White House Conference on Africa designed to focus Administration attention on Africa at the same time that White House officials were actively seeking to avoid further engagement in one of Africa's most brutal conflicts to date. 50 One of the harshest critiques was offered by Human Rights Watch Africa (formerly known as Africa Watch) in a policy paper prepared for the White House conference, in which the Clinton Administration's 'foot-dragging' was deemed responsible for contributing to the deaths of civilians who otherwise could have been saved by prompt international action. 51 'President Clinton's failure to make the prevention and punishment of genocide in Rwanda a priority reflects the low level of American interest in Africa', argued the Human Rights Watch Africa report. 'Yet while the Clinton Administration has failed to elevate Rwanda to a foreign policy priority, genocide has proceeded apace.... Soon Rwanda may join the growing list of "failed" states on the continent, where international engagement, when it did come, came too late.' 52 Indeed, although President Clinton ultimately did authorize US involvement in military relief programmes targeted towards saving civilian lives, the highly publicized decision-making process that led to this result underscored a seemingly confused and poorly coordinated approach to multilateral initiatives in Africa.

FIFTH EXPECTATION: A DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION WILL BE MORE EXTENSIVELY INVOLVED IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The end of the Cold War facilitated US involvement in the resolution of regional conflicts that had become internationalized due to East-West conflict. An early example of what such diplomacy could yield was demonstrated in 1985 by a series of accords brokered by the Reagan Administration that linked South Africa's withdrawal from Namibia and independence to the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola. The latter served as a proxy East-West battlefield in which over 341,000 people, mostly civilians, died during the 1970s and the 1980s. In an event of historic proportions, Namibia, on 21 March 1990, achieved independence under the leadership of African nationalist Sam Nujoma, who was reelected President in 1994, and entered the ranks of Africa's growing number of multiparty democracies. Two important ingredients which facilitated the resolution of this long-standing regional conflict were the efforts of Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Chester Crocker to make the US a broker in the negotiating process and the willingness of the former Soviet Union to prompt its Angolan and Cuban allies to accept a negotiated settlement. Both of these ingredients, which built upon the desires of regional African participants to seek a negotiated settlement, were by-products of a decline in Cold War tensions. 53

Under the Bush Administration, US efforts in conflict resolution remained largely focused on holdovers from the Cold War era, most notably in the Horn of Africa. In the aftermath of the loss of the Carter Administration's proxy war against Somali warlord Siad Barre, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Robert G. Frasure; Robert C. Grayson, Jr., a member of the NSC; and Rudy Boschwitz, a former Republican Senator from Minnesota who acted as President Bush's personal envoy, the Bush Administration's actions facilitated an orderly transfer of power on 28 May 1991, that largely avoided the bloodshed associated with earlier US policy failures in Somalia and Liberia, where the overthrow of US-supported leaders was followed by the escalation of ethnically- or clan-based violence. Equally important, US support for a UN-sponsored referendum leading to Eritrean independence in 1993 marked a significant departure in previously unquestioned US support for the territorial integrity of Ethiopia. 54

The efforts of the Reagan and Bush administrations were indicative of a 'globalist' mind-set accepted by the newly elected Clinton Administration that the US can work together with other major powers as 'facilitators' of resolving regional conflict in Africa. 55 However, neither Republican Administration made conflict resolution throughout Africa a priority relative to other goals, and instead oversaw the sporadic implementation of strategies in isolated cases. In the case of the Reagan Administration, US efforts in southern Africa obviously stemmed from Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Crocker's personal interest in the region, whereas the Bush Administration's involvement in the Horn of Africa (most notably Ethiopia and Somalia and, to a lesser degree, the Sudan) was heavily influenced by a greater sensitivity to US domestic politics. 56 Entering office at a period in which internal civil conflicts were multiplying throughout the African continent, the Clinton Administration was expected to formulate and to adopt a comprehensive policy of conflict resolution that went beyond the sporadic nature of its Republican predecessors. This expectation was reinforced by the fact that National Security Adviser Lake had written extensively about US foreign policy towards radical Third World regimes and prob-
THE UNITED STATES AND AFRICA

Conflicts associated with conflict resolution and national reconstruction in the emerging post-Cold War environment. The newly elected Clinton Administration was in reality split between two currents of thinking on how to approach the conflict resolution in Africa. The Administration had to deal with the classical dilemma of how to balance the interests of the United States and the United Nations peacekeeping forces. The first emphasis was on the classic strategy of using military means to force a solution. The second emphasized the traditional approach of engaging in dialogue and negotiation. According to this view, the United States involvement, even in terms of conflict resolution, should be restricted in order to avoid entanglement in ‘future Somalias’. A second, more activist point of view was also embedded in the Somalian example, but underscored that the massive costs associated with Operation Restore Hope could have been avoided by earlier, preventive action. The choice is not between intervening or not intervening, explained one policy maker in the incoming Clinton Administration. It is between getting involved early and doing it at a cheaper cost, or being forced to intervene in a massive, more costly way later. As witnessed by our brief discussion of the Clinton Administration’s cautious approach to the initial stages of the Rwandan conflict, the events of October 1995 in Somalia seem to have strengthened the position of those warning against getting too closely involved in ‘intractable’ conflicts in Africa.

Regardless of the long-term impact of the Somali episode, the Clinton Administration’s early policy towards Angola demonstrated a more critical structural problem inherent in its approach to conflict resolution in Africa. During the presidential campaign of 1992, candidate Clinton called for ‘strong’ US support for whoever emerged victorious in the Angolan presidential elections to be held in September 1992. Yet when Savimbi rejected his initial defeat in these elections (which international observers regarded as ‘generally free and fair’) and returned the country to civil war, the newly elected Clinton Administration delayed recognizing the MPLA Government until 1993. The primary reason for the delay was the continuation of a failed pro-Savimbi policy advanced by one portion of the State Department that stood in stark contrast to a growing recognition in other quarters of Savimbi’s unwillingness to accept anything short of total victory, if not in the electoral arena, then on the military battlefield. According to the latter interpretation, the proper policy response, which would have been warmly accepted by the Africanist community in both the US and abroad, would have been ‘prompt recognition’ of the ANC Government immediately following the elections to leave no doubt in Savimbi’s mind that the US fully supported the democratic process.

Although an argument can be made that a new foreign policy team mishandled initial tests in Angola and Somalia, and subsequent policies (withdrawal of US military forces and long support of the MPLA Government) have placed US policy on the right track, policy towards the successor Somalian Republic suggests that the Clinton Administration has yet to articulate a new proactive conflict resolution policy. As southern Somalia continues to descend into anarchy in preparation for the complete withdrawal of UN peacekeeping troops at the end of March 1995, the Clinton Administration is wasting valuable time by not recognizing the Somalian Republic’s declaration of a return to the independent status it briefly enjoyed in 1960 prior to voluntarily federating with southern Somalia to create the Republic of Somalia.

The primary reason for Clinton Administration inaction is the continued belief of middle-range policy experts that Italy and especially Great Britain should take the lead in their former colony, therefore avoiding the responsibility (most notably economic aid) that presumably would accompany recognizing the independence of this resource-poor country. From whatever standard one wishes to adopt, this is a shortsighted policy in light of the strides that northern Somali leaders have made in fostering stability and democracy. The lessons of the Somalian Republic’s experiment with conflict resolution and democratization could serve as the basis for correcting a largely failed US policy towards southern Somalia that, after $2bn in expenditures during two administrations has left the region no better off, except perhaps in terms of famine relief, than it was prior to the arrival of US and other UN peacekeeping troops.

The most important lesson revolves around the Somalian Republic’s return to traditional forms of democratic practice. In rebuilding their nation, northerners have embraced customary laws, values and traditional leadership to give them direction and restore normality. Thus we find the elders and the civic and religious leaders actively involved in promoting peace and security, and replacing clan or community relationships and settling internal disputes through the time-proven machinery of customary law. The Somali Siiyir (traditional conference) is the channel through which these activities have taken place. Unlike the hastily organized, unrepresentative and short-lived meetings of southern militia leaders that were convened in Addis Ababa in 1993 under the aegis of the United Nations, a broad cross section of northern Somali elders, intellectuals, sheikhs and clan leaders organized their own national conference in Borama over a five-month period (December 1992 to April 1993) in accordance with Somali traditions and customs.

A critical aspect of this democratization process was the marginalization of military leaders (who unfortunately were the focus of diplomatic efforts in the south) in favour of a civilian transition government headed by President Mohamed Ibrahim Egal, one of the Somalian Republic’s most distinguished elder statesmen. Equally important, Egal avoided the reemergence of clan conflict that is still all too evident in the south by forming a traditional government inclusive of the major northern clans. His government even includes those clans which supported the Siad regime in its war against Ethiopia in the 1970s. Finally, in a move that UN forces would consider a tremendous victory if it occurred in the south, the Egal government recognized the vital relationship between demilitarization and democratization. Over 6,000 former guerrilla fighters were disarmed and housed at a former British police academy in Mandera. Unfortunately, inadequate international assistance prevented this plan from being effectively implemented and expanded to soldiers who had been willing to lay down their arms.

Even if unwilling to extend diplomatic recognition, a forward-looking foreign policy could at least provide official support to the fashioning of an electoral process designed to poll the wishes of those living in the Somalian Republic. The obvious model to examine would be that which led to Eritrea’s independence from Ethiopia’s sovereignty in 1991: a two-year ‘cooling off period’ followed by a UN-sponsored referendum monitored by international observers. Yet an important constraint on a more coordinated, activist approach to conflict resolution in the Somalian Republic and elsewhere in Africa is the historical neglect of Africa by the President and his closest advisers, regardless of whether the White House is occupied by a Democrat or a Republican. In order to be successful US efforts require the interest and support for activist measures at the highest levels of the policy making establishment. Indeed, facilitating the resolution of the Somali civil war would be extremely difficult even if President Clinton made peace in that country his number one priority. Unfortunately, at least from the perspective of conflict resolution in Africa, the highest levels of the Clinton Administration remain primarily concerned with Western and Eastern Europe, the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union and flashpoints in other parts of the Third World, most notably the Middle East, where they are not focused on US domestic concerns. Although the Clinton Administration has taken a significant step to understand conflict resolution, most notably in terms of making it a topic of a special panel at the ‘White House Conference on Africa’, its approach still lacks the high-level vision and coordination necessary to
THE UNITED STATES AND AFRICA

avoid what still remains a series of inconsistently applied policies that often are more reactive than proactive.

SIXTH EXPECTATION: A DEMOCRATIC ADMINISTRATION WILL BE MORE INCLINED TO PROMOTE MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY

During the Cold War era, a serious contradiction existed between Washington’s often-stated preference for democracy in Africa and perceived national security interests. Whenever the ideal of democracy clashed with the national security objective of containing communism on the African continent, containment often prevailed at the expense of democracy. For this reason a succession of both Democratic and Republican administrations were willing to downplay the internal shortcomings of a variety of U.S.-backed regimes such as Ethiopia’s Haile Selassie, Somalia’s Siad, Zaire’s Mobutu Sese Seko and a host of African regimes in South Africa, in favour of their strong support for US policies of anti-communism and containment.67 Even the Carter Administration’s human rights programme, which questioned the utility of identifying the US with inherently unstable dictatorships, was compromised by strategic exceptions: when the pursuit of human rights clashed with perceived national security interests, especially in proven allies of strategic importance (such as Iran, the Philippines, South Korea and Zaire), national security interests prevailed.68

The end of the Cold War raised expectations among Africanists that the US could make the promotion of democracy and human rights the cornerstone of a reinvigorated US foreign policy towards the former Soviet Union and the various regions of the Third World, including Africa. Scholars, activists and policy makers increasingly coalesced around the Wilsonian concept of making political democratization a precondition for the improvement of economic and political relations with Washington. The Bush Administration picked up on this growing current of democratic activism, as evidenced by Secretary of State Baker’s testimony before Congress that ‘our first and preeminent challenge is consolidating democracy’.69 Equally strong pro-democracy rhetoric was offered by Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Cohen, who emphasized the necessity of a vigorous US response to the ‘profound, revolutionary’ changes sweeping Africa:

The United States stands ready to assist. We have reservoirs of talent, experience, and financial resources that can have a real and lasting impact. We can and will remain engaged in Africa’s progress towards democracy—and we will not abandon Africa when democracy is achieved.70

Despite rhetorical support for democratization initiatives in Africa, actual Bush Administration policies as corroborated by the leaking of National Security Review 30, American Policy Towards Africa in the 1990s, suggested a much greater emphasis on a Cold War–oriented framework heavily influenced by strategic interests and concerns, most notably the importance of maintaining stability and order.71 For example, the Bush Administration’s response to events in Algeria in 1991 seemed to indicate that containment of Islamic fundamentalism had replaced anti-communism as at least one security objective that overrode preferences for democratization. In sharp contrast to US denunciations of authoritarianism in other regions of Africa, the Bush Administration remained curiously silent when the Algerian army annulled the first multiparty elections in Algeria since independence and assumed control of the country in a military coup d’etat. The reason for US silence was not a firm belief in the Algerian generals as the guarantors of democracy; but rather was due to the fact that an Islamic fundamentalist party, the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), was on the verge of taking power through the ballot box.72

THE UNITED STATES AND AFRICA

Entering office at a period in which democratization movements were multiplying throughout the African continent, the Clinton Administration was expected by Africanists to make democratization one of the critical elements of its Africa policy. A variety of observers of US Africa policies warmly noted that ‘democracy’ was one of the ‘common threads’ linking Clinton’s campaign speeches during the presidential elections, and strongly greeted his statement in Madison, Wisconsin, campaign stop that ‘we should encourage and nurture the stirring for democratic reform that is surfacing all across Africa from the birth of an independent Namibia to the pressure for democratic reforms in Kenya’.73 The Clinton Administration even went as far as to codify US support for the democratization process into an official (albeit awkwardly worded) doctrine—the so-called ‘policy of enlargement’—intended to replace the outmoded strategy of containment.74

The Clinton Administration clearly has integrated the rhetoric of democratization into its policy pronouncements concerning Africa, and several cases indicate that this rhetoric is being transformed into viable policies. In the case of Nigeria, the Clinton Administration’s decision responded to General Ibrahim Babangida’s decision to annul the presidential elections of 12 June 1993, by implementing a variety of sanctions against the military regime. Among those actions taken were a swift, public denunciation ‘deploiring’ the military’s decision, the suspension of some arms sales and a cut-off of $450,000 in aid for military training, the termination of an $11m grant to the Ministry of Health, the expulsion of Nigeria’s military attaché in Washington and the recall of a US Security Assistance Officer from Lagos.75

In the case of South Africa, the Clinton Administration further demonstrated what can be accomplished in the aftermath of a successful transition to democracy. The administration tapped into an already well-organized domestic constituency interested in South Africa and put together a highly publicized conference, ‘Investing in People: US-South Africa Conference on Democracy and Economic Development’, less than two months after the South African elections of 26–29 April 1994. The primary purpose of this conference was to stimulate US investment and trade in South Africa. Among those in attendance were Vice President Al Gore, Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown, Executive Deputy President Thabo Mbeki and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Most important, rhetorical support for investing in democratic change was matched by a White House announcement less than one month after the South African elections that US aid would be increased to approximately $528m during the next three years, including the immediate doubling of USAID funding to over $160m in 1994.

The case of US foreign policy towards Zaire, however, suggests that the Clinton Administration’s democratization rhetoric does not always conform with actual policies. During the presidential election campaign, candidate Clinton attacked the Bush Administration for failing to distance itself from ‘corrupt and dictatorial leaders’ in Africa, specifically in terms of being ‘trepid, when it should have been decisive’ in terminating aid to the Zairian regime of Mobutu Sese Seko.76 This sent a hopeful signal to specialists of Zaire that the Clinton Administration would once and for all place serious pressure on the Mobutu regime to democratize. Yet despite undertaking some minor steps designed to distance the US from the Mobutu regime, such as refusing to appoint a new ambassador after Melissa Wells left in March 1993, the Clinton Administration ultimately adopted a more status quo oriented policy that, similar to that pursued by the Bush Administration, perceives Mobutu as both part of the problem and ‘part of the solution’ to what may become an increasingly violent political solution in Zaire.77

At the heart of the Clinton Administration’s revised approach to Zaire is an apparent acceptance of the ‘Mobutu or chaos’ argument advanced by the national security bureaucracies ever since Mobutu took power in the mid-1960s.78 Regardless of the fact that we are no longer faced with a communist threat’, explained a Foreign
Service Officer (FSO) of the State Department, ‘the destabilization of Zaire—which borders nine other African countries—could have a tremendously negative impact on regional stability’. Although this FSO, like many of the officials in the Clinton administration, supported US efforts in subtly pressuring Mobutu to ‘recognize the inevitable’ and ‘accept the growing role of opposition officials’, his approach was tempered by the strong belief that ‘a Zaire without Mobutu could entail a Zaire engulfed by chaos’. It is not in our interest that Mobutu suddenly disappear’, explained another diplomat with extensive experience within the region. ‘What may replace him is unclear, and meanwhile, the situation could prove chaotic.’ With the experiences of Somalia and Rwanda still fresh in the minds of most policy makers, the Clinton Administration seemingly has decided to back off of a situation that, according to another FSO, ‘could easily turn into a Somalia and a Rwanda rolled into one, although this time in one of Africa’s largest and most populous nations.’

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN PERSPECTIVE

The emerging picture of the Clinton Administration’s foreign policy record in Africa at midterm is that of a non-engage President whose Administration, despite good intentions, initially placed foreign policy on the back burner (with Africa still occupying the smallest slice), supported cuts in financial assistance to Africa, is more cautious concerning US involvement in multilateral military operations, has been more reactive than proactive in terms of conflict resolution and has mixed record in terms of promoting democratization. As a result, the Clinton Administration’s rhetoric of change seems masking strong undercurrents of continuity with the policies and trends associated with its predecessors.

The case of Zaire, which ultimately undermined the human rights policies of the Carter Administration, offers perhaps the strongest testimony to the Clinton Administration’s inability to take the lead and forcefully confront one of the most difficult cases on the African continent. Clearly this is due to a failure to realize that economic pressures may lead to chaos of such immense proportions that the US may be drawn into yet another unwanted and politically damaging quagmire in Africa. However, as perceptively outlined by Larry Diamond, a noted scholar of the democratization process, Zaire and other countries like it already are descending into chaos and continued external aid and support only postpone the day of reckoning. ‘The only way to help . . . is to pressure vigorously now—before it is too late—for true democratization’, concludes Diamond. ‘This demands not only halting all forms of aid to the government, but also suspending debt negotiations, denying visas to ruling elites, and freezing the overseas assets of the regime—including the personal assets of the officials if credible evidence can be presented of their corrupt acquisitions’. In short, the key to any future policy is the fashioning of clear-cut policy guidelines that are both publicly defensible and consistently applied across the board.

During the next two years the Clinton Administration will be judged as to the lessons it learned from, among other causes, its initial hesitation to recognize the MPLA Government in Angola, the lack of high-level coordination concerning the former US military presence in Somalia and its initial hesitation to respond to the growing crisis in Rwanda. Indeed, the Administration’s handling of these early foreign policy crises were severely criticized by Africans, many of whom nonetheless remain hopeful that the ‘White House Conference on Africa’ will serve as the basis for the thoughtful reconsideration of policies. In this regard, President Clinton’s own critique of past administrations at the ‘White House Conference on Africa’ captures the essence of what was still lacking at the mid-point in his administration, and will perhaps serve as the best yardstick with which to judge his next two years in office prior to the presidential elections of 1996:

NOTES


5. These questions are derivative of those asked by citizens in Benin, Burundi, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Somalia when I lectured during 1990 and 1991 while writing a book on US foreign policy towards Africa as part of the American Participants (AmPart) program sponsored by the US Information Agency.


10. Ibid.


THE UNITED STATES AND AFRICA


22. The six working groups are as follows: 1) Meeting the challenge of global issues; 2) Promoting sustainable development; 3) Addressing Africa's internal conflicts; 4) Fostering human rights and democracy; 5) Promoting bilateral trade and development; and 6) Developing an American constituency for Africa.
25. Ibid.

28. Figures for FY 1994 are provided by USAID, Bureau for Legislative Affairs.
30. Ibid.
31. For an explanation and discussion of these figures, see Rosati, The Carter Administration's Quest for Global Community, (1987), 123, 130, 139, and 147.
36. Ibid.
38. Indeed, there were important divisions within the Pentagon which also contributed to policy failure. See Michael R. Gordon, 'US Officers Were Split on Botched Somali Raid', NYT, 13 May 1994, A6.
39. See, for example, Ken Menkhaus and Torrence Lyon, 'What Are the Lessons to Be Learned from Somalia?' CSIS Africa Notes, no. 144 (January 1993).
40. Personal interview.
45. Quoted in Elaine Sciolino, 'New US

THE UNITED STATES AND AFRICA

47. Ibid.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
50. See Douglas Jehl, 'Officials Told to Avoid Calling Rwanda Killings "Genocide"', NYT, 10 June 1994, A8.
52. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
58. See Crockett, High Noon, esp. 25-30.
61. See Cason and Martin, 'Clinton and Africa', 2.
62. Ibid.
65. For discussion see Schroeder, United States Foreign Policy Towards Africa, 170.
71. For a critique of Bush Administration policies, see Clough, 1992.
73. Quoted in Cason and Martin, 'Clinton and Africa', 3.
74. See Anthony Lake, 'From Containment to Engagement' (address at the School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C., 21 September 1993).
76. Quoted in Cason and Martin, 'Clinton and Africa', 3.
79. See Schroeder, United States Foreign Policy Towards Africa, 107.
80. Ibid.
81. Personal interview.