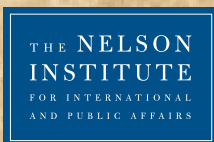
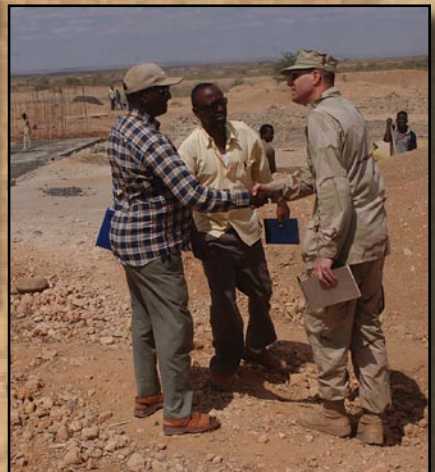


America in Africa

Securing U.S. Interests and Promoting a Continent's Development

J. Peter Pham



Institute
for Infrastructure
and Information Assurance
at James Madison University

COVER PHOTOS (clockwise): Shell Oil fields in Nigeria's Delta region, "flaring" natural gas. Photo © by Robert Grossman. Africaphotos.com. Used by Permission.

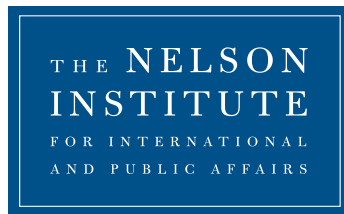
U.S. Navy Cmdr. Paul Vandenberg, right, an engineer with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Seven, greets Abdi Reshid Mohamed Omer, center, the head of Ethiopia's Mines and Energy Department, and Alemayehu Mekonin, a water engineer, at a waste water treatment facility in Gode, Ethiopia, March 31, 2006. Vandenberg is doing preliminary research on behalf of Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa, which is interested in aiding a construction project to add capacity to the area's water treatment capabilities. Photo © by Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Roger S. Duncan, U.S. Navy. Photo courtesy of www.usaid.gov.

The International Republican Institute honors First Lady and Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf at IRI's Freedom Award dinner on September 21, 2006. Photo courtesy of the International Republican Institute, www.iri.org.

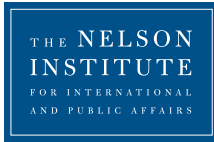
**America in Africa:
Securing U.S. Interests and
Promoting a Continent's Development**

*A Framework for Increased
U.S. Strategic Engagement in Africa*

by J. Peter Pham



Institute
for Infrastructure
and Information Assurance
at James Madison University



Nelson Institute for International and Public Affairs at James Madison University strives to meet both the educational needs of its students in a changing world and a public institution of higher education's responsibility to respond to the "real world" challenges by supporting scholarship in the social sciences and humanities and providing an environment that will encourage interdisciplinary discourse on contemporary public concerns. In particular the Nelson Institute seeks to foster research on and engagement with the global challenges that impact the overall strategic position of the United States and other responsible members of the international community with programming focused especially on terrorism and national security, Africa, religion and world politics, and international ethics and justice.

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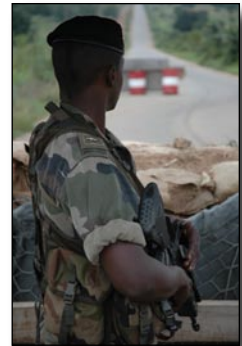
“Africa holds growing geo-strategic importance and is a high priority for this Administration. It is a place of promise and opportunity, linked to the United States by history, culture, commerce, and strategic significance. Our goal is an African continent that knows liberty, peace, stability, and increasing prosperity...The United States recognizes that our security depends on partnering with Africans to strengthen fragile and failing states and bring ungoverned areas under the control of effective democracies.”

—*The National Security Strategy
of the United States of America*
March 2006

Diplomacy in Africa: Securing America's Interests and Promoting a Continent's Development

It has been a longstanding—and, alas, self-fulfilling— cliché that Africa is the stepchild of United States foreign policy. Sadly exploited by colonial rulers before being divided by the proxy battles of the Cold War rivals, the continent has yet to see any “peace dividend” as it continues to be blighted by environmental degradation, economic malaise, social tensions, ethnic conflict, and political misrule. With the exception of a handful of academic experts (for the most part tucked away in academia and Africanists by training or experience), most foreign policy realists wrote the continent off as little more than a source of trouble, albeit one that could be safely ignored since it rarely, if ever, impinged on America’s strategic national interests. In Washington, U.S. Africa policy was often left as the almost exclusive preserve of humanitarians. The September 11, 2001 attacks, however, changed the calculus of Africa’s strategic significance.

Before the attacks of September 11, 2001, few Americans paid much attention to terrorism, particularly in the developing world. If it is possible, even fewer paid any attention to Africa, much less its security concerns. Since then, while the Greater Middle East has figured most prominently in America’s “global war on terrorism,” policymakers have gradually come to realize that Africa already has—and will increasingly acquire even greater—strategic significance for U.S. security broadly understood. African weak states loom large as potential sources of economic disruption and strategic threat for Americans and Africans.



A Statistical Snapshot of a Troubled Region

Currently Sub-Saharan Africa supplies the U.S. with nearly 20 percent of its petroleum needs. According to a report prepared for the National Intelligence Council, within a decade the West African subregion will play an increasingly important role in global energy markets, providing more than one-quarter of North American oil imports by 2015 and surpassing the total volume of oil imports from the Middle East.

The People's Republic of China has signed numerous agreements with African states to pursue their own energy interests. China's demand for oil is growing over seven percent a year, far faster than that of even the United States. The need for resources, especially energy resources, is a principle part of China's African policy. Pairing economic and diplomatic incentives, Chinese oil companies have signed long term contracts with oil rich countries such as Nigeria, Sudan, and Angola, among others. Awareness of this desire for energy, very similar to the U.S. need for the same resources, is critical for geo-political considerations.

The African continent also boasts the world's fastest rate of population growth: by 2020, today's more than 900 million Africans will number



more than 1.2 billion—more than the combined populations of Europe and North America. Nor do these absolute numbers tell the whole story: by then, the median age of Europeans will be 45, while nearly half of the African population will be under the age of 15.

Despite the dynamic potential implicit in the natural and human resource figures just cited, Africa also suffers from many woes. Sub-Saharan Africa remains world's economic basket case, with a per capita GDP of barely \$575. The United Nations Development Programme's *Human Development Report 2005* determined that of the thirty-two countries found to have "low development," thirty were in Africa. Finally, World Bank once again declared Africa the most difficult region in which to do business for the year 2005.

While Sub-Saharan Africa is home to only 10 percent of the world's overall population, more than two-thirds of the people living with HIV are Sub-Saharan Africans. The vast majority of the estimated 25 million people who have perished world wide from the HIV/AIDS disease are Africans,

including over 2 million in 2005 alone. A number of programs have started to address these issues including the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (PEPFAR) as well as several multilateral efforts. Of the 8 billion dollars spent combating HIV/AIDS in 2005 over 66 percent of it went to African countries. The programs have produced a mixed bag of results. In many cases, it is too soon to determine the long term impact of those programs.

West African subregion will play an increasingly important role in global energy markets, providing more than one-quarter of North American oil imports by 2015, thus surpassing the total volume of oil imports from the Middle East.

Typically viewed as a humanitarian concern, HIV/AIDS also has significant strategic implications in Africa because it has drastically reduced the military capacity of certain states, due to the high proportion of HIV cases in the militaries of African states. Even the most conservative estimates

show that the South African and Botswanan armies have at least a 30 percent infection rate, making it hard to field to homogenous, trained units.

Furthermore, AIDS is not the only disease on the continent. Often overlooked are the huge problems with malaria, sickle cell anemia, trachoma, polio, guinea worm, and filariasis. In March 2006, for example, the *New York Times* ran a five-article series highlighting deadly diseases that are extinct in the developed world, but that continue to plague poorer African nations. The fact remains that these diseases continue to undermine the economic and institutional capacities of African states.

Poverty and disease are not the only challenges facing the continent and the world, although they certainly complicate the search for solutions to a wide array of difficulties. Throughout the continent, the very institution of the state itself is in trouble. It is on this challenge where the public and policy-makers must focus their attention.

U.S. interests as it relates to Africa can be broadly understood under four headings—natural resources, the global economy, diplomacy, and strategic implications—which justifies the need for a thorough analysis of why the United States needs to be aware of Africa and engaged in its issues, for the sake of U.S. interests.

In what follows, the potential for natural resources will be briefly examined with an emphasis on hydrocarbons currently being exported from African states, and the vast possibilities that exist for more. Next business opportunities, African integration into the global economy, and the barriers to economic success will be discussed. This report will continue by highlighting why U.S. diplomatic relations with African states are more crucial than ever for the general success of global strategies pursued by America. Then strategic concerns are broken down into two major areas—terrorism or transnational threats and state concerns—where security concerns are emerging from or related to the African continent.

The purpose of this report is to outline a framework for engaging Africa in a strategic context. Consequently, it will also delve into the existing security structure and initiatives in Africa, outlining the need for more engagement. Finally, the existing instability of many African states will be briefly elucidated, followed by a discussion of why weak states are a concern in Africa, and a conclusion that reinforces the evidence as to why Africa matters, more today than yesterday, and tomorrow more than ever.

Natural Resources

African natural resources are often overlooked with the tremendous energy concerns that exist related to the Middle East and other parts of the globe. Yet Africa currently provides the U.S. with nearly 20 percent of its consumed hydrocarbons, and this number will continue to rise, potentially doubling by 2015. Indeed, crude oil is not the only resource that needs to be acknowledged as coming from Africa. Huge quantities of natural gas, raw gems, and precious metals are imported from Sub-Saharan African states. According to the U.S. Census Bureau the United States imported over 30 billion barrels of hydrocarbons from Nigeria and Angola alone in 2005. The percentage of U.S. natural gas consumption to be supplied from Africa has been estimated to rise around 40 percent by 2015.

Certainly oil is the major focus. The case of Nigeria is an excellent example of U.S. interest in “swing-producers” or producers in the global oil market that contribute to stability in the price of crude and allow for the offsetting of shortages. Nigeria’s 2002 cumulative production was 22.7 gigabarrels, which was approximately 36 percent of the projected 62.5 gigabarrels of oil in the defined area. Essentially, the Nigerian oil

supply will exist for some time, provided it is strategically viable.

This need of natural resources like natural gas and crude oil has pushed much of the drilling in Western Africa to offshore areas. U.S. companies can purchase the right to drill and harvest the oil from countries that would otherwise be unable to do so, as in the case of Vanco Energy's purchase of the Cape Three Points Deep oil contract from Ghana. Hundreds of other U.S. African contracts exist, all with the goal of providing the United States with the energy it needs to sustain itself. The lack of large scale immediate alternatives to crude oil and natural gas means that the U.S. has a vividly defined interest in maintaining this supply. This offshore operation increase has lessened the burden on some aspects of pumping oil, but raises other potential maritime security risks.



However, natural resources only constitute one component, albeit a major one as to why the U.S. needs to take notice of the continent's strategic situation. The development and integration of African state or regional economies could potentially play a multi-faceted role in this strategic process.

African States and the Global Economy

Unfortunately, in recent years, the phenomena associated with globalization have, at least for the short-term, exacerbated the inherent weakness of post-colonial African states. Some of the reforms mandated by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, for example, have focused on dismantling state regulations and bureaucracies, thus undermining the client-oriented nature that alone holds these states together. In his recent book, economist Peter Griffiths recounts how he was sent to Sierra Leone by the World Bank to report on the dismantling of the notoriously corrupt state monopoly on rice importation. He discovered that the government actually imported about half of the West African country's staple food and that, because of Sierra Leone's well-known political instability and plummeting economy, no businessman would take on the job in the government's stead. Griffiths concluded

that the World Bank's pre-ordained policy, although it would eventually boost the incomes of local producers and retailers in the long run, would starve them in the interim. As for the government, the reform meant that it lost yet another of its few links to its citizenry. While cutting away the shackles on economic development is a positive change, it has to be conceded that, in Africa, often those same shackles are the only civil bonds in some countries. The often-painful adjustments during economic transitions are—thanks to almost instantaneous communications—even more acutely felt and widely resented, especially if inequities within a given society, whether relative or absolute, are increased. UN Under-Secretary-General Shashi Tharoor has commented:

Conversion to free markets has exacerbated the problem of economic inequality in underdeveloped countries, many of which have underdeveloped regions which correspond to specific ethnic groups or segments of society...Indeed, some of the poster children for globalization proved that they were more, not less, vulnerable to civil strife as a result.

In other instances, the arrival of multi-party politics, by exposing government corruption and failure, has actually aggravated the competition for spoils and, as Yale Law School professor Amy Chua



has pointed out in her sobering work, fanned the flames of ethnic conflict—all the while contributing to further state instability, collapse, and disorder. Finally, corruption and in-efficiency have continued to play a huge role in firms' view of potential investment in Africa, with huge amounts of funding for

both public and private development simply disappearing. As a result of bureaucracy as many as 40 percent of American firms in West Africa operate outside the formal or legal framework. Government alterations in law in the countries such as Chad, Angola, and especially Nigeria have curtailed the vast amounts of revenue that flow in from energy exports. One author, Daniel Morris, has elaborated, "Unless corruption is curtailed, the U.S. government and oil companies cannot hope to advance the safety and security of oil supplies from the region. Corruption that has been nurtured can be difficult to uproot."

Despite this somewhat bleak outlook, a number of businesses have invested heavily in Africa, giving rise to the hopes that the continent will someday realize its vast labor and resource potential. As *The Economist*

recently described, many successful firms cite the potential for profits in various industries, provided there is effective local knowledge, and considerable investment capital. Many corporations have started initiatives in Africa to support local communities, and especially local businesses. But what is currently being done by the U.S. and others to address these economic shortcomings?

There have been a variety of programs put forward over the last few years including:

- The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and the subsequent AGOA Acceleration Act signed by Presidents Clinton (2000) and Bush (2003), respectively, and recently extended by the 109th Congress, are provisions to lower trade barriers with the U.S. and allow Sub-Saharan countries to qualify for trade benefits. AGOA decreases costs of trading with countries that have trade value around \$35 billion to the U.S.
- The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was established by the African Union and implemented in 2002. This constitutes an internal peer review mechanism that many African Union states have self-imposed to pursue structural adjustments, and improve their internal trade.
- The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), established in 2004, promotes and supports innovative foreign aid strategies which benefit states that qualify for the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), a multi-billion dollar program which provides assistance for "compact agreements" to fund specific programs targeted at reducing poverty and stimulating economic growth as well as "threshold programs" to improve performance with an eye to achieving "compact" status.

More developmental programs are needed to help build strategic partnerships. The MCC, like the AGOA initiatives, mostly targets countries that are already transitioning towards democracy and greater market liberalization, while leaving those others still isolated.

Dealing with the problems of the congenital weakness of African states (their low capacity to exercise authority over territory and population and to provide basic services) will be key to providing long-term security to the peoples of Africa as well as those of the rest of the world. The challenge will be to discover the means of doing so in a manner that does justice both to the interests of Westerners and the sensibilities of Africans.

Diplomatic Importance

U.S. foreign policy should acknowledge the importance of Africa in the realm of global multilateral diplomacy. On a bilateral, state-to-state level, and within the realm of intergovernmental organizations, African states are more crucial in generating support than ever. It is often forgotten that Sub-Saharan African states count for 41 votes in the UN General Assembly. The Republic of Congo, Ghana, and South Africa all currently hold temporary seats on the UN Security Council. In trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization African states count for a third of the votes. Such a pool of states provides diplomatic opportunities for the United States within the framework of these institutions.

The African Union as an organization is growing and trying to expand its legitimacy, modeling many of its still forming institutions after aspects of the European Union. Yet in the AU the United States has a consolidated contact point for diplomatic initiatives for security and economic related programs. Taken into account at an international level, winning African support will be key for international support for U.S. global action in the future.

The U.S. is often seen as lacking comprehensive diplomatic representation in African states, including in critical regions of some important countries like northern Nigeria. Movements of development



programs, emergency aid, and most importantly long term investment, all need to be coordinated through effective and clear channels of diplomatic dialogue, without undermining or short changing planned programs.

International political considerations mean that diplomatic relations with African states should not be underestimated, especially with Chinese strategies that utilize the African vote, in for example the UN Commission on Human Rights (now the Human Rights Council).

More attention to the issues in Africa is necessary, and in no realm is this now more obvious than in that of strategic concerns. U.S. foreign policy needs to address and engage these security threats, humanitarian concerns, and state capacity deficits. Subsequently, the issues driving

strategic implications for the United States can be broadly broken down into two categories, terrorism or transnational threats, and rising geopolitical competition from major states, such as China.

Transnational Threats Affecting Africans and Americans

Civil wars provide a most hospitable environment for extremists. They often allow insurgents—or even governments—to have recourse to criminalized economic networks for acquiring arms, funds, and other illicit operations. The activities of Charles Taylor and his RUF (Revolutionary United Front) partners in West Africa which one can discover through research on the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone are cases in point. The overall instability of many African states lends them to this kind environment, one of threats transcending borders.

There is an increasing body of literature on linkages between organized criminal activities and international terrorist networks in Africa. In his book *Blood from Stones: The Secret Financial Network of Terror*,

The threat to America's West African oil supply, which has historically been low, is nonetheless steadily increasing.

former *Washington Post* correspondent Douglas Farah described how al-Qaeda procured somewhere between \$30 million and \$50 millions worth of diamonds from the RUF and its

Liberian patron, Charles Taylor in the month prior to 9/11. In contrast to Osama bin Laden, who saw in the gemstones a means to hide his money, Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah's sees in the same stones a way to make money, using the extensive Lebanese Shia communities in places like Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea. Recall that in 2004 alone somewhere between \$170 million and \$370 million worth of uncut gems were taken out of Sierra Leone by members of this diaspora, according to Ambassador Daudi Mwakawago, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in the country.

The case study of the Sierra Leonean conflict exhibits the shadowy role that various factions from the Middle East, many associated with Islamists groups in Lebanon, played in that West African country's civil war. In fact, Nabih Berri, the speaker of Lebanon's parliament and leader

of the Shia Amal militia closely aligned with Syria, was born in Sierra Leone. Islamists from abroad have also been actively exploiting economic stagnation and political corruption in Nigeria in an attempt to fracture Africa's most populous state (and America's fifth largest source of crude petroleum). Muslim-Christian clashes over Islamist attempts to impose *sharia* law regularly leave hundreds dead.

The link between drug trafficking and terrorism in Africa is less well documented. However, it is safe to presume that a significant connection exists. We know, for example, that Nigeria is the transshipment point for approximately one-third of the heroin seized by authorities in the United States and more than half of the cocaine seized by South African officials. It would seem obvious that this traffic opens multiple possibilities for international terrorism. In addition, there is the very lucrative *qat* trade in the Horn of Africa with evidence that profits from it are partially financing the conflict in Somalia.

Aside from the issues of criminality, there are the threats represented by Africa's poorly-secured, porous borders and vast, ungoverned territories. These latter areas can be conceived as a spectrum ranging from the physical to the non-physical, from ungoverned territories to areas of competing governance, to areas of "legal" exploitation, to opaque areas of activity. Much of the Sahel region is an example of an ungoverned physical space, while the inability of the Nigerian government to control that country's infamous internet scams is an example of an opaque area of activity. These ungoverned spaces, however, have been duly "exported" through the African migrations to the West where the same spectrum has been duly reproduced: from the effectively ungoverned/ungovernable *banlieue* of a major French city to the poorly-policed *hawala*-type remittance systems operative among African immigrant communities in the United States.

Piracy, especially off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Guinea, is another concern that currently figures low among terrorism-related research. Should, for example, terrorist elements already present in Africa ally themselves with pirates, the damage that maritime terrorism could do to the global economy—shipping and energy supplies—would be devastating. The International Maritime Bureau's annual *Piracy and Armed Robbery Against Ships Report* recorded 35 cases of piracy or attempted piracy off the coast of Somalia, with over 240 people taken hostage in 2005 alone. The low level of existing physical security for off-shore oil rigs in the Gulf of Guinea for example, means that these are potentially soft targets.

The threat to America's West African oil supply, which has historically been low, especially in contrast to the volatile Middle East, and remains so, is nonetheless steadily increasing. Without taking funding from the other much-needed U.S. security cooperation programs in Africa, Congress and the President need to make adequate provision in future budgets for increased naval engagement with Africans, especially those resource-rich states along the Gulf of Guinea, and for capacity-building of our partners on the continent.

Grasping the Religious Dimension of Extremism and Terrorism within Security Paradigms for Africa

It is certainly true that all-too-many groups around the world are extremist in nature and have relied on terrorist tactics in pursuit of their objectives. It is also true that not all of these are Islamist in orientation. A look across recent African history turns up many utterly non-Islamist groups that have engaged in "domestic terrorism," including the

Africa is a fertile soil for the advance of Jihad and the Jihadi cause.

various factions in the Liberian civil wars, the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone, the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, and others.

However, it is also true that there is an increasingly Islamist slant to the phenomenon on the African continent, one that many are reluctant to acknowledge.

Enemies of the U.S. and its western allies have been very forthcoming in what they are up to, but for a variety of reasons—ranging from the general neglect of Africa in U.S. foreign policy circles to concerns about overstretched resources or unwillingness to engage the problem—have granted extremists too much leeway.

In June 2006 an online magazine for actual and aspiring global "*jihadis*" and their supporters, *Sada al-Jihad* ("Echo of Jihad"), which late last year took the place of *Sawt al-Jihad* ("Voice of Jihad") as the publication of al-Qaeda in Saudi Arabia, ran a four-page article by one Abu Azzam al-Ansari entitled "Al-Qaeda is Moving to Africa." The author of the *Sada al-Jihad* article, Abu Azzam al-Ansari, is quite up-front about his agenda for Africa:

There is no doubt that al-Qaeda and the holy warriors appreciate the significance of the African regions for the military campaigns against the Crusaders. Many people sense that this continent has not yet found its proper and expected role and the next stages of the conflict will see Africa as the battlefield.

In a methodical manner al-Ansari then proceeds to enumerate and evaluate what he perceives to be significant advantages to shifting operations to Africa, outlined as follows: He points out the fact that “*jihadi*” doctrines have already been spread in many African countries and critical the political and military weakness of African governments. He analyzes the easy availability of a wide range of weapons coupled with the geographical position of Africa vis-à-vis international trade routes. The author also evokes the proximity of the continent to old conflicts against



“Jews and Crusaders” in the Middle East as well as emergent flashpoints like Darfur, which is explicitly mentioned. The strategy includes the population of Africa, citing that the poverty of Africa “will enable the holy warriors to provide some finance and welfare, thus, posting there some of their influential

operatives.” He describes technical and scientific skills that potential African recruits would bring, as well as the presence of large Muslim communities, including ones in conflict with Christians or other Muslims. Crucially, he mentions links to Europe through North Africa “which facilitates the move from there to carry out attacks.”

He also recognizes the fact that Africa has a wealth of natural resources, including hydrocarbons and other raw materials, which are “very useful for the holy warriors in the intermediate and long term.” Consequently, Abu Azzam concludes with a passage one could echo from the opposing side:

In general, this continent has an immense significance. Whoever looks at Africa can see that it does not enjoy the interest, efforts, and activity it deserves in the war against the Crusaders. This is a continent with many potential advantages and exploiting this potential will greatly advance the Jihad. It will promote achieving the expected targets of Jihad. Africa is a fertile soil for the advance of Jihad and the Jihadi cause.

The implication of the global hunt for energy is that rising states such as China and India have vested interest in securing access to energy sources all over the world. Both states, with rapidly expanding economies and growing populations, have tremendous need to secure reliable relationships with areas of the world that can fulfill their mounting energy requirements. This search of course includes Africa, and this is reflected in the African strategy of both of these states, especially China. Oil contracts signed in the Sudan contribute to China's hesitancy to condone efficient action related to the Darfur crisis in the UN Security Council. Furthermore, China's calculated energy policy does not require states to possess legitimate human rights or domestic political records. Generally, China connects diplomatic goals (urging states to recognize solely the People's Republic for example, and not Taiwan for example) to the terms of oil contracts and marginalizing world criticism of African regimes.

Two specific kinds of Chinese efforts tip-off this deliberate emphasis on African issues. For the first time ever, China deployed UN sponsored peace-keepers in Liberia, and subsequently provided troops for peace keeping operations in the Congo. Deployments such as these indicate a long term plan to generate considerable diplomatic and strategic

Chinese efforts in the direction of oil competition and diplomatic jostling warrant close analysis and attention from U.S. policy-makers.

support among African states. Secondly, arms sales of military aircraft and arms to the Sudan, and Zimbabwe in the last few years lend support to a study conducted by the *Armed Forces Journal* which reached

the following conclusion as early as 2001: "From the varied evidence of Chinese arms transfers, oil concessions, and military delegations in Africa, it is apparent that China has dramatically increased its military business dealings in Africa."

Chinese efforts in the direction of oil competition and diplomatic jostling warrant close analysis and attention from U.S. policy-makers. Continuing to develop formal and informal institutions with African states where possible, means that the U.S. should be aware of China, or other energy needy states' efforts to exploit Africa and the opportunities it offers. Security is thus a rigid requisite element, to ensure U.S. interest in all four

of the content areas previously described. The arguably obvious nature of this security concern, is not wholly reflected in the level of planning and initiatives for the U.S. on the continent.

Toward a Mutually Beneficial Agenda: America's Interest in Developing Authentic African Security Capabilities

No non-African country has done more than the United States to combat and prevent terrorism on the continent. Since the attacks on the American homeland, four multilateral programs have been established by the U.S. in Africa. These development and counter-terror programs attempt to establish informal and formal linkages between U.S. personnel, local African units, infrastructure, and economies.

- The Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), based at Camp Le Monier in Djibouti helps develop capacity in the Horn of Africa and partially along the eastern littoral of the continent.
- The East Africa Counterterrorism Initiative (EACTI) complements CJTF-HOA activities by equipping, training, and assisting the governments of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda in their counterterrorism efforts. The force consists of 1,800 U.S. and coalition troops based at Camp Lemonier.
- The modest Pan-Sahel Initiative (PSI) provides similar counterterrorism assistance in Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger.
- The new Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI), launched last year, will include Algeria, Nigeria, Morocco, and Senegal as well as the four countries of the PSI. If delivered as promised, the TSCTI will assist in improving political as well as military and security capacities. The program plans to provide an estimated \$500 million over the next five years to accomplish a multi-faceted agenda.

All of this being said, however, much needs to be done. Other than inclusion of Nigeria and Senegal in the TSCTI, there are no fully operational multilateral initiatives beyond “ordinary” military-military cooperation for whole subregions of the continent: West Africa, Central

Africa, and Southern Africa. Moreover, existing programs have largely focused on the admittedly-daunting security challenges African states face on the ground. Provision also needs to be made for improving the waterborne counterterrorism capacity of America's partners. In addition, longer-term strategies must be developed to address the factors that have created a facilitating environment for terrorism on the African continent.

In addition to these special initiatives, American assets within North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) structures have also begun looking south toward Africa.

“A separate command for Africa would provide better focus and increased synergy in the support of U.S. policy and engagement.”

*– General Bantz Craddock
Commander, U.S. EUCOM*

Until the February 6, 2007, announcement by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates of the creation of a new military command for Africa—“the president has decided to stand up a new unified combatant command, Africa Command, to oversee security

cooperation, building partnership capability, defense support to non-military missions, and, if directed, military operations on the African continent”—most of Africa fell under the aegis of the U.S. military's EUCOM,¹ with the balance coming under the area of responsibility (AOR) of Central Command (CENTCOM)² and, to some extent, the Pacific Command (PACOM).³ At a September 2006 hearing before the Committee on Armed Services of the U.S. Senate which was discussing his confirmation to be the next commander of EUCOM, Army General Bantz Craddock affirmed:

The increasing strategic significance of Africa will continue to pose the greatest security stability challenge in the EUCOM

¹U.S. EUCOM's area of responsibility (AOR) embraced 42 of the 53 African countries: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

²U.S. CENTCOM's AOR included the African countries of Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Seychelles, Somalia, and Sudan, as well as the waters of the Red Sea and the western portions of the Indian Ocean not covered by U.S. PACOM.

³U.S. PACOM's AOR included Comoros, Mauritius, and Madagascar, as well as the waters of the Indian Ocean, excluding those north of 5° S and west of 68° E (which fell into U.S. CENTCOM's AOR) and those west of 42° E (which fell into U.S. EUCOM's AOR).

AOR. The large ungoverned area in Africa, HIV/AIDS epidemic, corruption, weak governance, and poverty that exist throughout the continent are challenges that are key factors in the security stability issues that affect every country in Africa.

Experts have argued that adding an Africa Command to the five already existing unified combatant commands around which the U.S. military is organized is a reform long overdue. In fact, during his confirmation hearing General Craddock declared:

From a unity of command and unity of effort perspective, a change in U.S. command arrangements in Africa has merit and should be considered. A separate command for Africa would provide better focus and increased synergy in the support of U.S. policy and engagement, but it would also require a significant commitment of resources.

However, until the new command structure (which will embrace all of Africa except for Egypt, which will remain under CENTCOM's responsibility) is fully operational, one can expect the U.S. to continue negotiating bilateral agreements like the ones currently in force with Djibouti and Kenya. The latter, signed in 1981, was originally conceived as a support for American

activities in the Middle East. Its provisions allow for the U.S. to maintain a modest pre-positioned supply facility at the airport in Mombasa and to use, on short notice, the international airports at Nairobi and Mombasa

and the seaport at Mombasa for military and humanitarian missions. In the quarter-century of its existence, the U.S.-Kenyan Access Agreement has enabled U.S. forces to have a forward base from which to respond to a variety of needs ranging from the military intervention in Somalia in the early 1990s to the massive relief operation mounted following the Rwandan genocide in 1994.

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Over time, some of these bilateral relations are slowly evolving into components of what will be the Africa Command's more comprehensive regional security architecture. An example is the involvement of U.S.

Naval Forces Europe and the U.S. Sixth Fleet engagement of the Gulf of Guinea region over a ten-year period. Their cooperative exercises aimed at increasing maritime safety and security, increasing maritime domain awareness, and building the capacity of the naval and coastal forces of countries on the western littoral of Africa have moved gradually towards building a broad coalition of partners with interest in the stability of a strategic coastal region.

Having Africans work with Americans to build on the early successes of these pilot programs will create long-term capabilities that go beyond military and security preoccupations to include the full panorama of governance issues.

“Quasi-States” and the War on Terrorism

Coping with these threats requires efforts in conjunction with the states that make up the African continent, most importantly with their governments. A cursory glance at any major newspaper, however, reveals that in Africa today many nation-states are still in trouble. Sierra Leone is only now emerging from more than a decade of civil war that saw the near total collapse of its government as well as frightening scenes of apocalyptic violence. Until 2003, Liberia was run as a personal fiefdom by a warlord-turned-president, Charles Taylor, who is currently being prosecuted for war crimes by the United Nations-sponsored Special Court for Sierra Leone. Despite holding much-celebrated elections in 2005 which brought to power the first African woman to be elected to the presidency, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the West African country is still struggling to establish its governance structures which remain hampered by an outdated constitution and an imported legal code.

The present conflict in Côte d'Ivoire has, since its start in September 2002, killed thousands and displaced around a million more refugees; the semi-truce between the legitimate government and the rebels remains fragile. The ironically-named Democratic Republic of Congo has barely started its long recovery from conflict that has been called “Africa’s first world war” and taken an immense toll of nearly 4 million lives giving the DRC the world’s highest crude mortality rate. Zimbabwe has degenerated from being the breadbasket of Africa to being its basket case in less than half a decade: production of maize and wheat has fallen dramatically.

Despite the recent rout of the armed militants of the Union of Islamic Courts, Somalia—or, rather, what is left of it—still lacks an effective and truly legitimate central government (the success of the Republic of Somaliland is an entirely separate case). Resources must now be found to facilitate the development of governmental structures lest the current defeat of the Islamists be a mere interval before more disorder spreads out from the vacuum. While a peace deal is tenuously holding in Sudan’s south, the western Darfur region is witnessing a state-sponsored pogrom—described as a “genocide” by both President George W. Bush and former Secretary of State Colin Powell—that has killed no fewer than 250,000 people, while displacing more than 2 million people, and threatens to tear apart Africa’s largest country just as it is beginning, with revenues from newly-discovered oilfields, the first sustained development effort in its history.

While America can help Africa secure its interests, Africa can help America remain true to her ideals.

All of this leads to the hard lesson that

September 2002 *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* acknowledged as having been taught by the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington: “Weak states...can pose a great danger to our national interests as strong states. Poverty does not make poor people into terrorists and murderers. Yet poverty, weak institutions, and corruption can make weak states vulnerable to terrorist networks and drug cartels within their borders.” Consequently, that document noted:

In Africa, promise and opportunity sit side by side with disease, war, and desperate poverty. This threatens both a core value of the United States—preserving human dignity—and our strategic priority—combating terror. American interests and American principles, therefore, lead in the same direction: we will work with others for an African continent that lives in liberty, peace, and growing prosperity.

The *National Security Strategy* correctly identified weak or failed states as a major threat to the U.S. These “quasi-states,” to borrow the formulation of Boston University professor Robert Jackson, may be “internationally enfranchised and possess the same rights and responsibilities as all other sovereign states,” but their governments “are often deficient in the political will, institutional authority, and organized power to protect human rights or provide socio-economic welfare.” These capacity-challenged states—somewhere between one-third and one-half of all Sub-Saharan

African countries are estimated to fall in this category—provide potential haven for terrorist groups and other transnational criminal networks taking advantage of the inability of ostensibly sovereign governments to assert authority beyond the environs of their capitals. While post-invasion of Iraq *volte-face* of Libya's Mu'ammarr Qadhafi has hopefully exorcized the specter of state sponsorship of terrorism from the continent, Africa's weak states and corrupt rulers still willingly or unwittingly provide haven and other support for all manner of terrorists and other non-state actors. It was by no accident that Osama bin Laden ran al-Qa'eda from Khartoum, Sudan in the 1990s.

It is this challenge on the African continent that Africans, Americans, and the rest of the globe must continue to grapple.

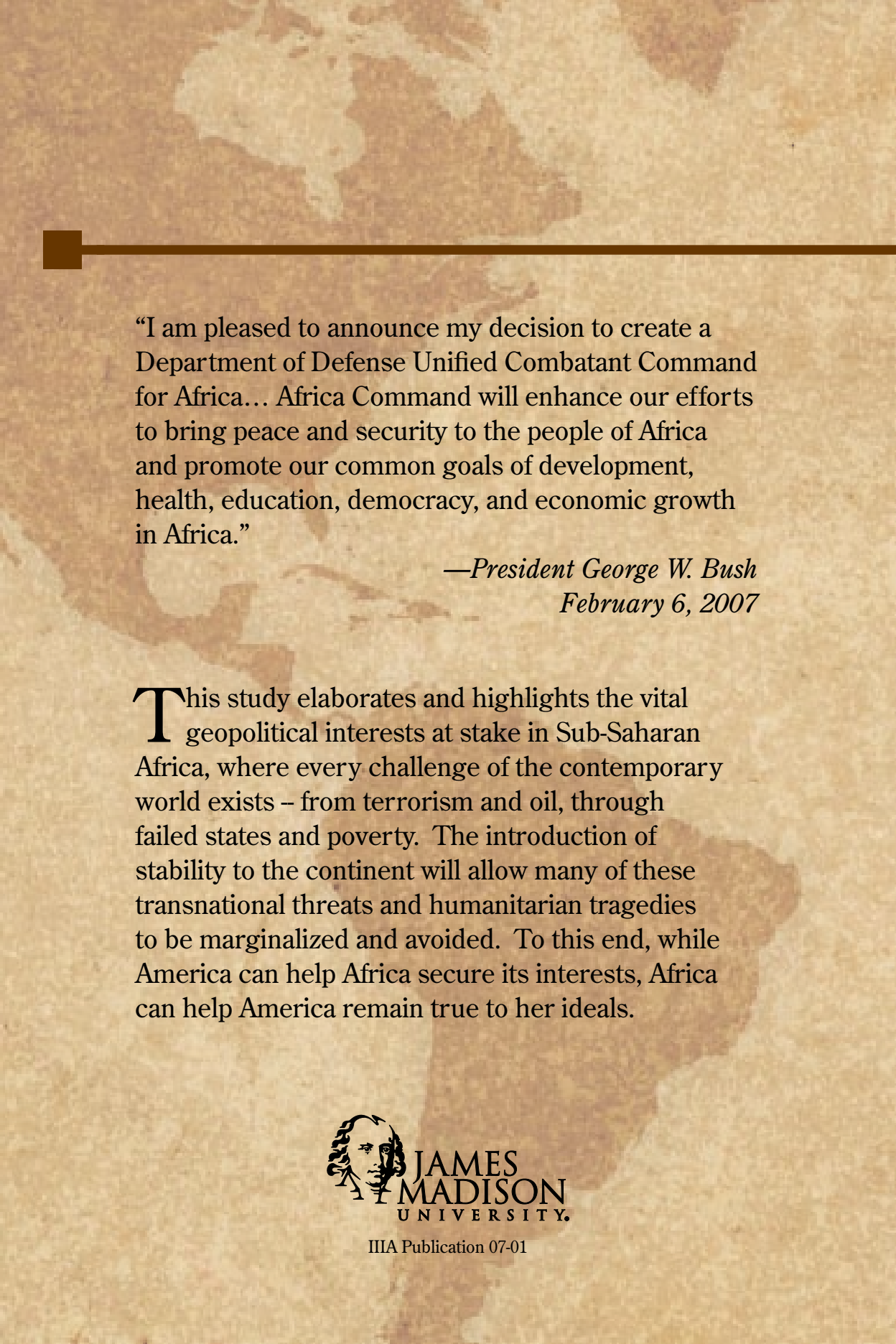
Conclusion

This study has elaborated and highlighted the vital geopolitical interests at stake in Sub-Saharan Africa, where every challenge of the contemporary world exists, from terrorism, and oil, through failed states and poverty. Policy-makers, politicians, academics, and the general public need to be aware of the colossal implications related to U.S. foreign policy in Africa. Efforts to engage Africa and anticipate potential strategic threats and terrorist attacks, while strengthening Africa's state institutions are well advised. The introduction of stability to the continent will allow many of these transnational threats and humanitarian tragedies to be marginalized and avoided. To this end, while America can help Africa secure its interests, Africa can help America remain true to her ideals.

About the Author



Dr. J. Peter Pham, Director of the Nelson Institute for International and Public Affairs at James Madison University, is the author of nearly two hundred essays and reviews on a wide variety of subjects in scholarly and opinion journals on both sides of the Atlantic and the author, editor, or translator of over a dozen books. Among his recent publications are *Liberia: Portrait of a Failed State* (Reed Press, 2004), which has been critically acclaimed by *Foreign Affairs*, *Worldview*, *Wilson Quarterly*, *American Foreign Policy Interests*, and other scholarly publications, and *Child Soldiers, Adult Interests: The Global Dimensions of the Sierra Leonean Tragedy* (Nova Publishers, 2005). He also writes a weekly column on African security issues, "Strategic Interests," which is distributed by the *World Defense Review*, and regularly contributes to various online publications. Dr. Pham has appeared in various media outlets, including CBS News, CBC News, SABC News, Voice of America, CNN's *Late Edition* with Wolf Blitzer, Fox News Channel's *Weekend Live* with Brian Wilson, MSNBC News, National Public Radio, the John Batchelor Show, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News & World Report*. He has testified before the U.S. Congress and conducted briefings or consulted for both Congressional and Executive agencies on Africa.



“I am pleased to announce my decision to create a Department of Defense Unified Combatant Command for Africa... Africa Command will enhance our efforts to bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals of development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth in Africa.”

—*President George W. Bush*
February 6, 2007

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