



U.S. POLITICAL *and* TRADE RELATIONS *with* AFRICA



GREGORY D. FERRO
EDITOR

AFRICAN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC
AND SECURITY ISSUES

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GREGORY H. ERRO
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PREFACE

This new book presents and discusses current research in the study of U.S. economic, political and trade relations with Africa. Topics discussed include U.S. trade and investment relationship with Sub-Saharan Africa; U.S. strategic interests and the role of the U.S. military in Africa; current issues and U.S. relations with South Africa and Ghana.

Chapter 1 - Following the end of the apartheid era in South Africa in the early 1990s, the United States sought to increase economic relations with Sub-Saharan Africa. President Clinton instituted several measures that dealt with investment, debt relief, and trade. Congress required the President to develop a trade and development policy for Africa.

The economic challenges facing Africa today are serious. Unlike the period from 1960 to 1973, when economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa was relatively strong, since 1973 the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa have grown at rates well below other developing countries. There are some signs of improvement, but problems such as HIV/AIDS and the debt burden are constraining African economic growth.

In May 2000, Congress approved a new U.S. trade and investment policy for Sub-Saharan Africa in the African Growth and Opportunity Act. U.S. trade with and investment in Sub-Saharan Africa have comprised only 1%-2% of U.S. totals for the world. AGOA extends preferential treatment to imports from eligible countries that are pursuing market reform measures. Data show that U.S. imports under AGOA are mostly energy products, but imports to date of other products have grown. AGOA mandated that U.S. officials meet regularly with their counterparts in Sub-Saharan Africa, and six of these meetings have been held.

AGOA also directed the President to provide U.S. government technical assistance and trade capacity support to AGOA beneficiary countries. Government agencies that have roles in this effort include the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Africa (established by statute under AGOA), the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Export-Import Bank, the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, and the Trade and Development Agency. In addition to bilateral programs, the United States is a member of several multilateral institutions that provide trade capacity building.

In AGOA, Congress declared that free-trade agreements should be negotiated, where feasible, with interested Sub-Saharan African countries. Related to this provision, negotiations on a free-trade agreement with the Southern African Customs Union, which includes South Africa and four other countries, began in June 2003, but were suspended in April 2006.

Several topics may be important to the 111th Congress in the oversight of AGOA and in potential legislation amending the act. First, S. 1141 seeks to establish a trade preference program for least-developed countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Yemen. Second, an emerging area of concern for Sub-Saharan African countries is growing interest in Congress over reforming trade preference programs by combining existing programs, some of which are due to expire by the end of 2009, into a unified package. Some African leaders have expressed concern that a preference program giving trade benefits similar to those enjoyed by AGOA countries, or creating one trade preference program for all developing countries, would lead to erosion of the preferences granted to African countries under AGOA, and place them in direct competition for U.S. market share and investment with other developing and least-developed countries such as Bangladesh and Cambodia.

Chapter 2 - On February 6, 2007, the Bush Administration announced the creation of a new unified combatant command, U.S. Africa Command or AFRICOM, to promote U.S. national security objectives in Africa and its surrounding waters. Prior to AFRICOM's establishment, U.S. military involvement on the continent was divided among three commands: U.S. European Command (EUCOM), U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), and U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM). The new command's area of responsibility (AOR) includes all African countries except Egypt. AFRICOM was officially launched as a sub-unified command under EUCOM on October 1, 2007, and became a stand-alone command on October 1, 2008.

In recent years, analysts and U.S. policymakers have noted Africa's growing strategic importance to U.S. interests. Among those interests are the increasing importance of Africa's natural resources, particularly energy resources, and mounting concern over violent extremist activities and other potential threats posed by uncontrolled spaces, such as piracy and illicit trafficking. In addition, there is ongoing concern for Africa's many humanitarian crises, armed conflicts, and more general challenges, such as the devastating effect of HIV/AIDS. In 2006, Congress authorized a feasibility study on the creation of a new command for Africa to consolidate current operations and activities on the continent under one commander. Congress has closely monitored the command since its establishment.

As envisioned by the Department of Defense (DOD), AFRICOM aims to promote U.S. strategic objectives by working with African states and regional organizations to help strengthen regional stability and security through improved security capability and military professionalization. If directed by national command authorities, its military operations would aim to deter aggression and respond to crises.

DOD signaled its intention to locate AFRICOM's headquarters on the continent early in the planning process, but such a move is unlikely to take place for several years, if at all. U.S. officials are consulting with strategic partners in the region to determine what type of presence on the continent would be most appropriate, and what location, or locations, might be most suitable. The new command will operate from Stuttgart, Germany for the foreseeable future. DOD has stressed that there are no plans to have a significant troop presence on the continent. The East African country of Djibouti, home to the Combined Joint Task Force–Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA), provides the U.S. military's only enduring infrastructure in Africa.

The 1998 bombing of U.S. embassies in East Africa, and more recent attacks, have highlighted the threat of terrorism to U.S. interests on the continent. Political instability and civil wars have created vast ungoverned spaces, areas in which some experts allege that terrorist groups may train and operate. Instability also heightens human suffering and retards economic development, which may in turn threaten U.S. economic interests. Africa's exports of crude oil to the United States are now roughly equal to those of the Middle East, further emphasizing the continent's strategic importance. This report provides a broad overview of U.S. strategic interests in Africa and the role of U.S. military efforts on the continent as they pertain to the creation of AFRICOM. A discussion of AFRICOM's mission, its coordination with other government agencies, and its basing and manpower requirements is included.

Chapter 3 - Over a decade after the South African majority gained its independence from white minority rule under apartheid, a system of racial segregation, the Republic of South Africa is firmly established as a regional power. With Africa's largest Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a diverse economy, and a government that has played an active role in the promotion of regional peace and stability, South Africa is poised to have a substantial impact on the economic and political future of Africa. The country is twice the size of Texas and has a population of almost 50 million, of which about 80% is African and 10% white. Its political system is regarded as stable, but South Africa faces serious long-term challenges arising from poverty, unemployment, and AIDS. President Thabo Mbeki resigned in September 2008 and was replaced by interim President Kgalema Motlanthe. South Africa's most recent elections were held on April 22, 2009.

The African National Congress (ANC), which led the struggle against apartheid, has dominated the political scene since the end of apartheid and continues to enjoy widespread support in South Africa. The party fell short of retaining its two-thirds majority in the parliament during the 2009 elections, however. Inter-party divisions, which led to Mbeki's resignation in 2008, resulted in the formation of a breakaway party, the Congress of the People (COPE). COPE received 7.4% of the 2009 vote, picking up 30 seats in the 400-seat parliament. The ANC now holds 264 seats, while the main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA), holds 67 seats and gained control of one of the country's nine provinces. Jacob Zuma, elected as head of the ANC in December 2007, weathered a series of corruption charges and was chosen by the ANC-dominated parliament after the 2009 national elections to serve as South Africa's newest President. Motlanthe now serves as Deputy President.

South Africa has the largest HIV/AIDS population in the world, with almost six million South Africans reportedly HIV positive. The former Mbeki Administration's policy on HIV/AIDS was controversial. The country has weathered a series of corruption scandals, and continues to struggle with high crime and unemployment rates. Mounting social tensions related to the competition for jobs, resources, and social services led to an eruption of xenophobic violence against immigrants in mid-2008. The government and the private sector have undertaken a wide variety of construction and infrastructure projects in preparation for the upcoming 2010 soccer World Cup. South Africa has benefitted from steady economic growth in recent years, although economists predict weaker growth prospects for the near future.

South Africa is considered to be one of the United States' two strategic partners on the continent, along with Nigeria. Bilateral relations are cordial, however, the U.S. and South African administrations have expressed differences with respect to the situations in Zimbabwe, Iran, and Iraq, and U.S. officials have articulated frustration with the South African government on positions it took while serving on the United Nations Security Council. This report will be updated as events warrant.

Chapter 4 - This report provides information on current developments in Ghana and Ghana's relations with the United States, which are close. It describes the purpose of President Barack Obama's forthcoming trip to Ghana, which will focus on issues of good governance and socio-economic and political development, and characterizes the current state of play in bilateral relations. It also summarizes the policy agenda of Ghana's president, John Atta Mills, who won office by a narrow margin in elections in late 2008. The dynamics of that election are described in the report, as are recent policy-centered developments, economic challenges and performance, and socio-economic prospects. Ghana's international relations and bilateral development cooperation with the United States are also covered in the report.

Versions of these chapters were also published in *Current Politics and Economics of Africa*, Volume 3, Numbers 1-4, edited by Frank Columbus, published by Nova Science Publishers, Inc. They were submitted for appropriate modifications in an effort to encourage wider dissemination of research.

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Chapter 1

**U.S. TRADE AND INVESTMENT
RELATIONSHIP WITH SUB-SAHARAN
AFRICA: THE AFRICAN GROWTH
AND OPPORTUNITY ACT***

Vivian C. Jones

ABSTRACT

Following the end of the apartheid era in South Africa in the early 1990s, the United States sought to increase economic relations with Sub-Saharan Africa. President Clinton instituted several measures that dealt with investment, debt relief, and trade. Congress required the President to develop a trade and development policy for Africa.

The economic challenges facing Africa today are serious. Unlike the period from 1960 to 1973, when economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa was relatively strong, since 1973 the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa have grown at rates well below other developing countries. There are some signs of improvement, but problems such as HIV/AIDS and the debt burden are constraining African economic growth.

In May 2000, Congress approved a new U.S. trade and investment policy for Sub-Saharan Africa in the African Growth and

*This is an edited, reformatted and augmented version of CRS Report RL31772, dated July 24, 2009.

Opportunity Act (AGOA; Title I, P.L. 106-200). U.S. trade with and investment in Sub-Saharan Africa have comprised only 1%-2% of U.S. totals for the world. AGOA extends preferential treatment to imports from eligible countries that are pursuing market reform measures. Data show that U.S. imports under AGOA are mostly energy products, but imports to date of other products have grown. AGOA mandated that U.S. officials meet regularly with their counterparts in Sub-Saharan Africa, and six of these meetings have been held.

AGOA also directed the President to provide U.S. government technical assistance and trade capacity support to AGOA beneficiary countries. Government agencies that have roles in this effort include the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Assistant U.S. Trade Representative for Africa (established by statute under AGOA), the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Export-Import Bank, the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, and the Trade and Development Agency. In addition to bilateral programs, the United States is a member of several multilateral institutions that provide trade capacity building.

In AGOA, Congress declared that free-trade agreements should be negotiated, where feasible, with interested Sub-Saharan African countries. Related to this provision, negotiations on a free-trade agreement with the Southern African Customs Union, which includes South Africa and four other countries, began in June 2003, but were suspended in April 2006.

Several topics may be important to the 111th Congress in the oversight of AGOA and in potential legislation amending the act. First, S. 1141 (Feinstein, introduced May 21, 2009, the TRADE Act of 2009) seeks to establish a trade preference program for least-developed countries such as Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Yemen. Second, an emerging area of concern for Sub-Saharan African countries is growing interest in Congress over reforming trade preference programs by combining existing programs, some of which are due to expire by the end of 2009, into a unified package. Some African leaders have expressed concern that a preference program giving trade benefits similar to those enjoyed by AGOA countries, or creating one trade preference program for all developing countries, would lead to erosion of the preferences granted to African countries under AGOA, and place them in direct competition for U.S. market share and investment with other developing and least-developed countries such as Bangladesh and Cambodia.

INTRODUCTION

All of us share a common vision for the future of Africa. We look to the day when prosperity for Africa is built through trade and markets.

—President George W. Bush to delegates at the African Growth and Opportunity Forum in Mauritius, January 15, 2003.



Source: Map resources. Adapted by CRS (6/21/2004).

Figure 1. Africa.

As reflected in the above statement by President Bush, a key element in U.S. policy toward Africa is the potential benefit from improved commerce between the two regions. This interest in increasing bilateral commerce began

after the end of the apartheid era in South Africa in the early 1990s. In 1993, Congress approved the end of anti-apartheid restrictions, and later that year Commerce Secretary Ron Brown led a business delegation to South Africa.

With the end of apartheid, President Clinton instituted numerous measures to help the region and increase U.S. trade and investment there. In 1994, he announced a \$600 million aid and investment package for South Africa. In 1997, he proposed the Partnership for Economic Growth and Opportunity in Africa, which offered different levels of economic benefits to countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), depending on their economic reform measures.

At the same time, Congress was developing legislation that sought to improve U.S.-Africa trade relations. In the 1994 legislation to implement the Uruguay Round multilateral trade agreements (P.L. 103-465), Congress directed the Administration to develop and implement a comprehensive trade and development policy for the countries of Africa. Disappointed with the Administration's first report under this provision, some Members developed legislation to authorize a new trade and investment policy for sub-Saharan Africa. In May 2000, Congress approved such legislation in the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA; Title I, P.L. 106-200). AGOA offers trade preferences and other economic benefits to countries in SSA that meet certain criteria, including progress towards a market economy, respect for the rule of law, and human and worker rights.

Both the executive and legislative branches continue to consider ways in which to improve trade relations between the United States and SSA. In 2002, the Congress amended AGOA to further increase market access for products from SSA [1]. The Administration began free-trade negotiations with the South African Customs Union (Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, South Africa, and Swaziland) in June 2003. In 2004 Congress passed legislation further amending AGOA, extending its benefits beyond the original deadline and clarifying certain provisions. This legislation also included directives to the President on investment initiatives and technical assistance. Congress passed legislation in December 2006 which further amends AGOA, to extend certain provisions concerning textile and apparel imports to 2012 [2].

This report presents perspectives on African economic trends and provides an overview of U.S. trade and investment flows with SSA. It discusses the provisions of AGOA and the changes that have occurred since its enactment. It concludes with a brief discussion of issues of congressional interest.

PERSPECTIVES ON THE SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN ECONOMY

Historical Perspectives

The historical pattern of contemporary Africa's economic growth provides insights to help understand Africa's current economic situation and policy options. Between 1960 and 1973, which is the period immediately following independence in most African countries, economic growth was reasonably strong in much of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The subsequent two decades were, however, a period of stagnation or decline for most countries [3]. The causes of Africa's slow and stagnant economic growth have been a source of debate among development economists. Analysts have cited poor governance, political instability, geographic features, and historical conditions such as colonialism as different reasons for Africa's economic malaise. Whatever the underlying cause, Africa's slow growth and stagnation have been attributed to slow accumulation of both human and physical capital, dependence on single commodity exports, low productivity growth and pressures from high population growth rates [4].

Most African countries experienced a sharp decline in their growth trends at some point between 1973 and 1980, followed by persistent stagnation until the early 1990s. Average SSA per-capita GDP reached its minimum point in the mid 1990s, and still had not recovered to 1970s levels in 2005 [5]. High economic growth volatility is a common feature in SSA countries' historical trends. A recent World Bank study finds that SSA has experienced more growth volatility than other regions, resulting in dampened investments and obscuring periods of good performance for some countries. This volatility has been caused by conflict, poor governance, and fluctuating world commodity prices. The authors of the study contend that reducing volatility is at least as important as promoting growth [6]. Recent data demonstrate that many African countries have made a modest recovery since about 1994, but the growth rates for the remainder of the 1990s tended to remain far below the first post-colonial phase [7]. For the four decades as a whole, SSA's average per capita income growth of 0.9 % lagged behind that of other developing countries by 1.5% and approximately 3% below that of the high-performing African economies (Botswana and Mauritius) [8].

Individual African countries have shown widely divergent economic growth performance. A recent study found that in a group of 36 African

countries, 22 countries exhibited reasonably robust growth before the long period of stagnation. The remaining 14 either experienced sharp growth fluctuations or showed persistent stagnation at growth rates below 1.5% throughout the last three decades. In this study, the high growth rates achieved by Botswana and Mauritius stand out [9].

The consequence of the long period of stagnation for a large number of African economies, combined with high population growth rates, is that little or no progress has been made in raising the standards of living in these countries. Many African countries have experienced a decrease in the standard of living.¹⁰ Between 1960 and 1994, out of 35 SSA countries for which comparable data exist, 16 suffered at least 20% loss in income per capita measured in 1985 constant U.S. dollars. Most of the losses were registered after 1975 [11]. In contrast to SSA, developed countries have sustained a remarkably steady per capita growth of approximately 2% for about 100 years, and some newly industrializing countries have maintained income growth rates above 3% for nearly three decades, thus enabling them to gain significant ground on the industrialized countries [12].

Current Perspectives

According to the World Bank, Sub-Saharan Africa's resilient economic growth performance over the past decade suggests that it may have achieved a milestone in its quest for sustained growth. SSA's economic performance from 1995 to 2005 "reverses the collapses in 1975-1985 and the stagnations in 1985-1995" [13]. Its growth has averaged 4.0% between 2000 and 2005, compared with less than 1% during the early 1990s. In 2006, GDP expanded by 5.6 % in SSA, followed by 6.2 % in 2007, and 5.2 % in 2008. During that time period, analysts also considered the growth trends as less volatile and more evenly distributed among African countries than in the past. Twenty-two countries (out of a total 48 Sub-Saharan African countries) had average growth rates of 4% or greater during the past five years, as compared with only four countries in the first half of the 1990s. In 2006, half of the SSA countries experienced growth of 5% or more. This improved economic performance may reflect many factors, including better governance, increased trade flows, strong commodity prices, rising aid flows, and debt forgiveness [14].

Although the global financial crisis did not initially hit Africa directly, the effects of the global economic downturn are now beginning to be felt. IHS Global Insight projects that Sub-Saharan Africa's real GDP will grow only

0.2% in 2009, down from 5.2% in 2008. Real GDP growth in the region is projected to grow by 2.2% in 2010, and 4.0% in 2011. In contrast, however, the growth rate for the world in 2009 is forecasted to contract to a negative 2.4%, with modest economic recovery expected in 2010 (1.7%) and 2011 (2.2%) [15].

Foreign direct investment in the region has been strong in recent years. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit, inward direct investment flows amounted to \$12 billion in 2005, \$14 billion in 2006, \$18 billion in 2007 and \$20 billion in 2008 [16]. However, as the results of the global economic downturn continue to be felt in Sub-Saharan Africa and other regions, investment is expected to decline to \$4 billion in 2009, and then increase once again to \$6 billion in 2010, and \$11 billion in 2011 [17].

Investment and Growth Challenges

Despite the region's improved economic performance, the economic challenges facing Africa remain enormous. African countries are vulnerable to volatile weather conditions, commodity price fluctuations, poor road and other infrastructure conditions, and political events in parts of the continent.

Much of Sub-Saharan Africa's trade with the world is largely still reliant on primary product exports, such as oil and other mineral fuels (68% of its exports to the world by value in 2008); ores, slag and ash (about 14% by value); and precious stones (about 4% by value) [18]. As a result, many Sub-Saharan African countries continue to be vulnerable—as do many developing countries and regions—to the rise and fall of international commodity prices. Correspondingly, the global slump in oil prices, combined with price declines and decreased demand for other primary products due to the world economic downturn, have dealt a severe blow to the region.

HIV/AIDS [19]

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is also straining African economies and threatens to curtail future economic growth. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in SSA was estimated at 6.1% in late 2005, compared with 1.1% worldwide. By 2007, the incidence decreased to 5%, compared to 0.8% worldwide.²⁰ Nine countries in southern Africa had incidence rates of over 10 percent. Botswana, long considered one of the region's most successful economies, had an incidence rate of 25.9% as of 2006. Only Swaziland had a higher HIV/AIDS incidence rate than Botswana in 2006, at 25.9%. The pandemic not only

diverts resources from investments in productive resources and social services to care for the sick and dying, but it also erodes human capital by striking some of the most productive members of society: skilled workers, teachers, and professionals [21].

Debt

The debt burden carried by SSA countries has been identified as a drag on the economies of the region. At the end of 2007, the states of SSA owed foreign creditors a total of \$195.1 billion.²² While SSA's debt is comparable to other regions in terms of absolute amount, per capita share (\$244 per head), or debt service as percentage of export earnings (5.0% in 2007), its debt burden has been considered onerous because of its high ratio of debt to income.²³ Africa's total debt was equal to 66% of its income in 2002. As of late 2007, Africa's total debt stood at about 20% of its income.²⁴ Declines in SSA's external debt were due to comprehensive debt relief initiatives including the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC), the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI), and the Paris Club agreement with Nigeria [25].

U.S.-AFRICA TRADE AND INVESTMENT TRENDS

U.S. Trade with Sub-Saharan Africa

The United States conducts a small share of its total trade with Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2008, the United States exported \$18 billion to Sub-Saharan Africa, or 1.6% of total U.S. global exports of \$1,070 billion. The United States imported \$86.1 billion from the region, or 4.1% of its total imports of \$2,090 billion. Total trade (exports plus imports) between the United States and Sub-Saharan Africa more than quadrupled between 1990 and 2007, from \$17 billion to \$81 billion. However, U.S. trade with Sub-Saharan Africa as a share of total U.S. trade did not increase as dramatically from 1990 to 2007, from 1.9 % in 1990 to 2.7% in 2007.

Most U.S. trade with Sub-Saharan Africa is with a small number of countries. Seventy percent of U.S. imports from the region were from three SSA countries in 2008: Nigeria (44%), Angola (22%), and South Africa (12%). Exports were similarly concentrated, with three countries receiving 68%: South Africa (34%), Nigeria (22%), and Angola (12%). The remaining