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# Strategy for Increased Stability in Africa

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Capitaine de Frégate Mégna M. Diomandé, Ivorian Navy

**D**URING THE 1960s, INDEPENDENCE swept Africa like fire on the savannah. As country after country threw off the yoke of imperialism and colonialism, nationalism and self-determination rose to replace them. Many intellectuals, economists, and philosophers, in both Africa and the more developed countries, firmly believed that the continent faced a brilliant future.

Thirty years later, the African dream has turned into a nightmare. Starvation, civil war, ethnic cleansing, and racial and political terrorism are serious problems that affect nearly every corner of the continent.

It is my belief that, although the proximate causes of most of Africa's problems are instability and insecurity provoked by military coups d'état, the true explanation for African ills lies in failed political and economic management. To eliminate mismanagement, African states need visionary leaders who can set realistic, achievable goals and a committed populace able to work toward those goals. I believe education is the primary factor that will allow Africa to move forward on the path to improvement. To support my argument I will:

- review briefly the background of the problems plaguing Africa today;
- review the general origin of African states and their military forces;
- examine the link between economic and political mismanagement and military coups;
- show the influence of education on security and stability;
- suggest the type of education needed in Africa and the possible contribution of African military forces to the continent's educational and economic goals; and,
- outline foreign assistance that could help African states achieve the educational goals that will improve their security and stability.

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## Background

Today, Africa is home to the world's largest number of refugees, and the continent contains the majority of the world's poor and lesser-developed countries. In his June 1992 address to the Organization of African Unity summit in Dakar, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali spoke at length on the lamentable state of the continent. In his speech, he defined the "Seven Wounds of Africa": crushing debt, civil war, drought, refugees, famine, AIDS, and population explosion.

During the past thirty years, thirty-one of Africa's forty-nine states have suffered violent coups and subsequent military rule.<sup>1</sup> The history of the continent over the past three decades seems to suggest that military coups have been the cause of instability and insecurity. However, such a view fails to explain why states such as Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, states that have maintained civilian rule since independence, have failed to achieve a significant level of development and are now experiencing serious threats to stability. The cause of the current problems in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal is not the military; these two states, and most of Africa, are suffering from political ills due to economic bankruptcy.

In the 1960s, Africa could be divided into two politically and economically distinct groups. The socialist camp included states like Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana and Julius Nyerere's Tanzania. Socialist leaders turned away from what they perceived as inequalitarian Western capitalism and attempted to define a new African path to development. Capitalist leaders, like Houphouët Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, maintained strong ties with the West in order to receive the assistance they felt they needed to build up their new states. In general, the economic performance of the capitalist group outstripped that of the socialists, at least through the mid-1970s. A continuing slide in commodity prices that began in the late 1970s, combined with increases in petroleum prices, resulted in a deep economic downturn for all African states.

African states must act quickly to stop, or at least slow, their backward economic slide. The more developed nations of Europe and the Americas are growing frustrated with Africa's lack of progress and are now trying to cope with additional requests for assistance from Eastern Europe. Africa no longer seems to be a focus of world economic interest. The world has turned its attention to East Asia, Southeast Asia, and Eastern Europe. Africa, once viewed as a continent with a brilliant future, is now perceived as a continent with problems.

## The Origins of African States and Their Military Forces

Many of the problems plaguing Africa today are a direct result of colonial rule. Since France was the predominant power in northern and equatorial Africa, it is interesting to contrast French colonial rule with the rule of another major colonial power—Great Britain.

The British colonial method was indirect rule of indigenous peoples. Typically, British mastery was exercised through native officials. British colonial practices were driven by trade, with trade objectives to be achieved with indigenous labor. Trade in spices, gold, “ebony labor,” tea, etc., depended on the availability of a cheap local work force. To improve the output of local workers, the British exported technology to the colonies. The British mercantile approach, plus their early experience with decolonization in America, resulted in colonial policies that have been viewed as somewhat less disturbing to local social organizations than policies of other colonial regimes.

France approached her colonies in a way that was markedly different from Britain's. The French believed in direct rule of indigenous peoples through a highly centralized, hierarchical system. It can be argued that France's colonial philosophy was based on a French feeling of cultural superiority. They considered native inhabitants of the colonies to be primitives to whom they should bring the light of superior French civilization. The French sought to convince their subjects that it was important for them to cast aside their social organization and embrace the French way of life. French rule divided indigenous peoples into three groups: a few were granted citizenship, others became subjects, and the majority remained in a native status. Citizens and subjects were used by the small French colonial population to govern the masses of indigenous people. As a result, French-dominated areas, already divided by artificial borders, often became divided internally. At times, internal fragmentation led to problems like the 1958 revolt against Dahoman administrators in Côte d'Ivoire.

As a result of colonial-enforced separatism, independence in the 1960s was often beset by continued or further divisiveness. Under the French, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire were governed as a single colony, and Senegalese soldiers were used by the French in Côte d'Ivoire. At independence, Ivoirians clamored for the removal of Senegalese troops and the total separation of the two states. Houphouët Boigny, firmly opposed to maintaining the Federation of French Occidental Africa, stated, “Côte d'Ivoire will not be the milk cow of Senegal.” French colonial policies produced a confusion of peoples and borders, and the states that were born in this confusion faced major obstacles on the road to independence.

The military forces of most African states were the creations of colonial masters, designed to achieve European, not African, goals. The French government, for example, organized, trained, and equipped African units to help fight

France's wars in Europe as well as to help secure the French empire by fighting local resistance to French colonial rule. African troops were used extensively in World War I, World War II, and in the campaigns in French Indochina and Algeria. French colonial forces had well defined missions. Once French colonial states gained their independence, however, local military forces lost their *raison d'être*. Except for externally supported mercenary invasions of Guinea and Benin, Tanzanian support of Ugandan opposition to Idi Amin Dada, and fighting between Ethiopia and Somalia in the Ogaden, there has been no real use of military force to settle disputes between African states. External threats to African state security have been nearly nonexistent. Unfortunately, a reassessment of military missions (in the absence of an external threat) has yet to be made by many African states.

### Economic and Political Mismanagement and Military Coups

Most African military coups d'état have been reactions to economic and political mismanagement—mismanagement that often resulted in a very uneven distribution of power and wealth. New rulers swept in by coups have inevitably claimed that they overthrew the existing government in order to provide citizens a better life. Among the most often promised aspects of that better life have been improvements in housing, education, health, and general welfare, as well as the establishment of a new egalitarianism.<sup>2</sup> Mengistu in Ethiopia; Gowon, Muhammed, and Obasanjo in Nigeria; Ankrah, Acheampong, and Rawlings in Ghana; and Ouedraogo, Sankara, and Compaore in Burkina Faso all made similar promises.

The official claims of new rulers do not always explain the real reasons behind their coups. Samuel Decalo, in *Coups and Army Rule in Africa*, argues that redress of social grievances has often been used as a smokescreen to obscure the true motivation behind the overthrow of a government.<sup>3</sup> He holds that ethnic division, within both governments and militaries, was the real cause of coups. He is convinced that coups were not caused by economic failure or by actual political mismanagement. The weakness of Decalo's argument is that it does not explain those coups that have occurred within homogeneous groups. For example, Ibrahim Babaginda toppled Muhammad Bouary (both members of the Haoussa tribe in Nigeria), and, in the Republic of Central Africa, Bokassa staged a coup against Dacko, his own cousin. Obviously, ethnic grievances are not an all-encompassing explanation.

In fact, the seeds of instability for many African states were present at their very creation. Christopher Clapham traces those seeds to what he calls the ambivalent role of the ex-colonial states.<sup>4</sup> He defines three areas of so-called

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ambivalence, or uncertainty, that he claims are key to understanding the problems that have beset African leaders and people since the 1960s.

The first of these is ambivalence of function. Many African states have an ill defined fundamental national purpose. Does the state exist to ensure the wealth and well-being of all citizens or just that of the rulers? All too often it is the second case that seems to hold true. When rulers appear to be too wealthy, the people tend to revolt against any decision that threatens individual income. When the government imposed an across-the-board salary reduction in 1990, Côte d'Ivoire experienced its first major riot since independence.

The second of Clapham's areas of ambivalence is power. What is the state able, or not able, to do? Colonial masters often combined with nationalist movements to build artificially strong central governments. The resulting power has often been misunderstood and misused by African leaders. As Clapham notes, rulers have tried to use their authoritarian power like an all-purpose Black and Decker drill onto which they could fit different attachments to serve different goals: health, literacy, national unity, and economic development.<sup>5</sup> Nkrumah's actions in Ghana are a good example; in the early 1960s, he attempted to enhance his country's prestige by making flashy, yet not very useful, investments in projects like the Akosombo Dam complex.

The last of Clapham's areas of ambivalence is accountability. By accountability, Clapham means the relationship that exists between the state and the people. Despite efforts by the former colonial regimes to make the new order acceptable to the natives, many of the new states were considered foreign creations. The people viewed government as an alien and imposed institution, lacking responsibility to its own society. The response of the citizenry ranged from uninterest in governmental projects to outright resistance to governmental orders. The people either accepted their new rulers out of fear or rejected them completely and worked to overthrow those in power.

It is interesting to note that problems of role ambivalence extend to African military forces. On the one hand, the military was designed to protect the community, while on the other hand it often works to oppress the people.<sup>6</sup>

Even if the problems of ambivalence were solved, African states would not magically become more economically successful or more stable. In fact, Clapham's arguments are not pertinent to all African states. Countries such as Ethiopia and Liberia were never true colonies. Historically, they have been led by strong local rulers and have not been threatened by external foes, at least for the twenty years from 1950 to 1970. Nonetheless, they have experienced political mismanagement and economic failure—and military coups in their aftermath.

Military coups are characterized by complex cause-and-effect relationships. Every coup is the result of a particular leadership failure in either the civilian ruling team or the military, or both. No two countries and no two coups are

the same, but I believe that a common factor contributing to all military coups is poor education. The absence of properly educated civilian and military officials and populace leads to the myriad of problems that plague African states. Lack of education makes communication difficult, both between rulers and their people and between rulers themselves.

### The Influence of Education on Security and Stability

Education, or the lack of education, can exert a powerful influence on the economic and political development of a state. This is just as true in Africa as it is in more developed areas of the world. The education of both civilians and the military can lead to a stable and economically healthy state.

The “tigers” and the “dragons”—the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN—provide a superb example of the role education can play in economic development. ASEAN nations have experienced spectacular economic growth rates over the past thirty years. The ASEAN economies, collectively, doubled in size during the 1970s and doubled again during the 1980s. In 1970, 60 percent of Indonesia’s people lived below the absolute poverty level.<sup>7</sup> By 1980 the proportion had fallen to 29 percent; by 1990 it was down to 15 percent. For Thailand the equivalent figures were 26 percent, 17 percent, and 16 percent. Even the Philippines, which fell spectacularly from grace in the mid-1980s, managed to reduce its figures from 35 percent in 1970 to 30 percent in 1980 and 21 percent in 1990. Malaysia and Singapore have prospered to the point that abject poverty is more or less illegal.<sup>8</sup>

Even Indochina, in spite of its communist past and its recent instability, is attracting investors, in large part because of its high literacy rate (almost 90 percent in Vietnam). Many businessmen in Bangkok and Singapore compare Indochina with the ASEAN of twenty years ago, but with a better work force.<sup>9</sup>

Western investment certainly has been a factor in the almost incredible economic growth of the ASEAN states. More important, however, has been the impact of education. Without the excellent educational programs of the tigers and dragons, economic progress would not have been so rapid and remarkable.<sup>10</sup>

Education is also a key factor in political stability. An educated citizenry can develop a basic standard of values within a state. A non-homogeneous society can learn about and come to accept ideas and values that transcend ethnic boundaries. Societies can be schooled in modern concepts such as national identity, national interests, democracy, and human rights. Throughout much of Africa, the absence of accepted national values is a serious obstacle to internal stability and security. There, because society as a whole does not understand or share modern values, particularly the concepts of peaceful democratic processes, changes in position or regime are often coupled with the death of the previous

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appointee or ruler. Accordingly, those in power do their best to maintain their positions for as long a time as possible, by whatever means necessary. The ouster of those who eventually fail is generally violent. Those who are crafty or lucky enough to stay in power remain in place for life, no matter how successful or unsuccessful they are in their day-to-day work. Such a system leads to inefficiency and makes civil life complicated and unstable.

It can be argued that education itself cannot ensure stability if a state's social organization is based on ethnic relationships rather than the ideals of common well-being. This issue, the conflict between ethnic affinities and ties to the new nation-state, has been addressed by writers and political scientists. For example, T.O. Odetola, writing about Nigeria in particular and Africa in general, explains just how weak the national institutions of some African states can be when compared to their ethnic structures: "There are few structural links (such as political institutions) between the more traditional segments and the more westernized groups, between the elites and the masses, between the urban proletariats and the rural peasant masses, between the metropolis or centre (such as Lagos, Accra, Addis Ababa) and the periphery or the interior. Social links through which such values can spread are mere ethnic organizations whose orientations are particularistic."<sup>11</sup> Traditionally, many African leaders have used the existence of ethnic division to justify their highly centralized, personal control over every aspect of the state's structure. Centralized political control does not seem to lower the level of ethnic division. For example, ethnic tensions prevented certain candidates from campaigning in various parts of the country during the 1990 elections in Côte d'Ivoire.

Still, one must wonder whether the reliance on ethnic bonds instead of national ties is not the effect of a more serious weakness: the society's absence of education and knowledge about the organization and role of a modern state. Sometimes, such knowledge exists within a restricted circle, but these elite have no way of sharing it with the majority of the population, because the state does not have the infrastructure to dispense such information.

Even when a means of communicating with the masses exists, other problems may block the dissemination of important information. Rulers often do not respect their constitutions or their people and view themselves as royalty rather than public servants. They say one thing today and do the opposite tomorrow. Because of their own ignorance in political matters, such as elections and peaceful protest, the people believe they are powerless. An uneducated, uninformed populace does not participate in or react to the political process. The resulting "fantasy" elections simply compound the stability and security problems of the state—dictators, military coups, and foreign intervention are manifestations of those problems. Political ignorance is a roadblock to popular support and leads to the failure of many African development programs.



Education of the ruling class is just as important as education of the masses. Rulers who have no clear vision of the issues affecting their countries are likely to make decisions based on personal preference rather than national good. For example, many African rulers, uneducated in economics, prefer to secure much of the state's money in foreign banks, even though there is a dire need for foreign currency and wealth at home.

Within the military, education is important for several reasons. The most obvious is basic fighting skills. A weapon in the hands of a novice is a danger to him and his fellow soldiers. There is another reason for educating the military, and it may be even more important to the state. The military is a profession, and the training that leads to professional status is long and difficult. The ultimate goal of this training is to make specific actions and values a part of the trainee's everyday life. When the values to be inculcated are selected properly, the military education process becomes a process of nationalization, that is, can lead the military to see themselves as an integral part of national life.

Unfortunately, indigenous military forces have contributed little to nationalization. Many African militaries are provided little training. Accelerated promotions are based on service as an office worker, status in civilian society, or relationship to the rulers. Often, the political leader who controls the military (usually the minister of defense or the president) has little knowledge of military matters. President Houphouët Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire, faced with a soldier's revolt in 1990, was surprised to discover that he knew little about the true nature of his military. Since 1960, his chiefs of staff had accepted his directions and assured him that the country had a professionally trained, well equipped, and well led army. Military leaders themselves often have only vague knowledge of civilian law and even their own regulations. They rarely attempt to oppose civilian mismanagement of military matters, and consequently, many African military organizations have been destabilizing forces rather than aids to nationalization and security.

A proper education for rulers and the people could break the cycle of African poverty and instability. Education would eventually allow everyone to share modern values and would help African states develop sound and growing economies.

### **Education for African Development: Requirements and Military Role**

According to a 1989 World Bank report on sub-Saharan Africa, the long-term development of African states depends on improvements in three areas.<sup>12</sup> The first is human development. States must improve their ability to provide the people with basic health, education, nutrition, and technical skills. Next, states

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must restructure public and private institutions to create a context in which skilled workers can function effectively. Finally, political leadership must understand that institutions are fragile entities, painstakingly built up, easily destroyed, and therefore requiring sustained nurturing. In order to address these areas, Africa must first concentrate on education.

Africa's fundamental educational needs are simple. What Africans need is basic literacy in a common language (French, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, or any major African tongue), which will allow communication between various ethnic groups, between different countries, and between African states and the rest of the world. This would make possible the translation of African values into terms understandable both to African people and to Africa's helpers—the Western powers. Although some would argue that education in foreign languages would destroy African cultural identity, experience seems to show that the more knowledge people have about foreign cultures, the more they appreciate their own.

Each African ethnic group has its own social organization, its own way of living together, and its own way of dealing with common interests and issues. Only through education can Africa forge a smooth marriage between the organizational ways of the modern state and the traditional behaviors still strongly embedded in the majority of the population. Education can form the foundation for building stable, modern states in Africa.

Africa is not without writers, philosophers, scientists, engineers, and technicians. Unfortunately, their thoughts and their work affect only a minority of the population. The majority of the citizens cannot read or understand their messages and are left untouched by the ideas of African intellectuals and professionals.

Arguably, most African countries have not been able to afford large-scale education programs. African countries "may have to choose between immediate investment in intensive development of strategic manpower on a selective basis and the early elimination of illiteracy on a mass basis. This is a cruel, but compelling mandate for rapid development."<sup>13</sup> It is very true that educational programs may have been unaffordable early on, but that does not excuse the failure of many states at least to develop an educational policy. The lack of self-sufficiency does not explain the absence of a policy of self-reliance in such a vital matter.

Education is a long-term process without an easily measurable output, and these characteristics tend to make leaders shy away from educational investments. African rulers spend their money in areas that promise near-term payoffs. Industrial and agricultural projects are looked upon as ways to fulfill the people's desire for immediate, visible progress.

African states must develop grand strategies aimed at meeting short-term needs while addressing long-term improvement. African military forces can play a major role in this process. The situation faced by African states since the 1960s is similar to the one facing the United States today: what do you do with the

military when there is no defined threat? Do you create a new enemy in order to keep the military busy? Do you disband or drastically cut back military forces? Or do you find new uses for the forces you have? Because African leaders have never been able to answer those questions clearly, African military forces have ill defined missions, are poorly drilled, and are often misused. The military is a reservoir of potential skilled manpower that the state can tap to improve its capacity to function in a modern world.

The military could be used as a partial solution to the problem of balancing the need for long-term improvements with the call for short-term results. African military forces could participate in civic action to support a long-term educational effort. If political leaders developed a viable educational policy for their people, the military could provide extremely valuable support for that policy. An educated military would be well suited to teach basic literacy and hygiene classes to people in rural areas. Military units, with well educated and committed staffs, could be sent to remote areas, where they could stay for as long as they were needed. Alternatively, the military could establish central education sites. Students could be brought together, schooled, and then sent home.

Côte d'Ivoire ran a centralized training program in the early 1960s, the Service Civique. It recruited young men and women in the countryside and placed them in a special training camp run by the military. Training was provided by Ivorian, Taiwanese, and Israeli technicians. The subjects that were taught included farming, construction of inexpensive and modern houses, basic health care, nursing, and animal husbandry. After two or three years of training, participants were resettled in the countryside. Young people trained by the Service Civique made up much of the skilled work force responsible for improving Ivorian agricultural performance in the 1970s.

After the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, Côte d'Ivoire, like many other African states, broke off relations with Israel. As a result, the Israeli technicians dropped out of the training program. After the American recognition of the People's Republic of China in 1972, Ivorian policy, like that of the United States, changed with respect to Taiwan. Almost immediately, the Taiwanese technicians also left the Service Civique. The loss of outside technicians and lagging interest by civil and military leaders led to the program's end. Without enough properly educated Ivorian technicians and managers, the Service Civique was doomed to die.

Some military professionals assert that the military should be prepared only for defense and not employed for educational purposes. But if defense is looked at in a broader context—one that includes economic and political as well as military security—using the military to further education is perfectly natural.

The military can be used to build up a sense of national identity and a spirit of civic service. A conscription policy that calls a large number of youngsters to

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a short term of service—one or two years—can be an effective nation-building tool. Military and civilian leaders, however, must ensure that recruits truly represent the state's population. Conscripts should be called from all sections of the country and from all tribes. Promotion rules must be made equitable so that all feel they are being treated fairly.

The military can also be used to launch state-owned companies. A committed, strong-willed military can provide necessary stability in the early stages of start-up, when doubt and hesitation are prone to kill the company's chances for survival. This concept was implemented quite successfully in Côte d'Ivoire during the mid-1970s. Military officials were appointed to a number of business and government economic positions, ranging from hospital managers in rural areas to high-level functionaries in the state bureaucracy.

Perhaps the best known example of the Ivorian use of military officers was the 1974 appointment of Lamine Fadika, a commander in the navy, to the position of Minister of Maritime Affairs. Fadika created a comprehensive and efficient national and regional maritime network. He founded SITRAM, the Ivorian national shipping company, and CEMEAOC, a western and central African maritime conference. Unfortunately, his impressive work and popularity led civilian politicians to fear his rising power. He was removed from his position in 1987, and subsequent poor civilian management has all but erased the gains he achieved.

The Fadika experience reflects the difficult civil-military relationship that exists in many African states. Civilian workers dislike military rule. The typical military authoritarian style is probably not compatible with the running of large, profit-making firms. Instead of dismissing military involvement in development projects, however, leaders should define strict rules for the management of state-owned companies and continue to use the best available talent, whether civil or military, to manage them. African states cannot afford the luxury of ignoring skilled, trained talent.

African military forces can also be used to stabilize state boundaries, improve confidence between political leaders, and promote peace. In the past, African military forces rarely exercised with those of neighboring states. Combined exercises could lead to improved communication and understanding between military forces, as well as between citizens and leaders of participating countries. Such exercises could also lead to a better understanding of military capabilities and missions in general. In 1991, the United States European Command organized and conducted a large-scale exercise for African military leaders. The ten-day event, held in Stuttgart, Germany, brought together senior naval representatives from nearly every African Atlantic coastal state. If Western allies really want to help African states become self-reliant, a well designed exercise program may be one of the best forms of assistance they can provide.

## Foreign Involvement and Assistance

Technology is unfolding rapidly throughout Asia and Southeast Asia. The Asians are applying lessons learned by the Japanese; abroad, education and training is often a critical factor in the successful transition to a modern, economically stable state. The Japanese government invites over ten thousand ASEAN students annually to study in Japan.

Africa needs similar assistance in education, both at home and through exchange programs. Professional military exchanges, training of military students, and civilian education and training are among the best ways to help Africa recover from her long-term economic weakness.

Some might argue that African students might be unwelcome in Western countries, or that exchange programs inevitably lead to "brain-drain," whereby the best-educated people emigrate to developed countries or remain there after their training. The first of these issues is hardly worth discussing—well educated people are almost always welcome in any country. The second issue, however, deserves examination.

In the past, many exchange students have become semipermanent expatriates. The fact that a percentage of the students do not return home should not be used as an argument against exchange programs. Those who choose to stay in the country where they study become informal ambassadors who improve understanding of African issues in their adopted lands. Today, most experts and writers about Africa are not African. Consequently, they cannot view Africa's problems and propose solutions from an African point of view. Educated Africans, whether at home in Africa or at work abroad, will examine problems and devise solutions from an African frame of reference. There are at least two other important reasons why African states should not fear exportation of their work force. First, expatriate workers tend to increase the wealth of their home countries. Typically, they send home a portion of their salaries, usually in foreign currency. Second, many expatriates will eventually transfer necessary and suitable technology and ideas to Africa.

It can be argued that the countries that can provide the most help, such as the United States, have no real interest in Africa. Even though that may be true today, it will not necessarily remain true in the future. National interests evolve over time, based on the geopolitical situation and the international economy. African states may need to develop and market interests that will ultimately bring Western financial and technological resources to Africa. Tourism appears to be just such an interest.

A well planned and organized tourism policy in a secure and stable environment will, in the long run, bring people with talent, money, and imagination to Africa. To implement such a policy, African states must invest heavily in

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advertising in certain countries. The richer countries—the U.S., Japan, and Germany for example—should be considered prime targets. Even the African military can be given a role in the tourism program. Military people can be used for safety and security purposes in zones of major tourist interest such as game parks, resorts, waterways, biodiversity sites, etc. Since 1989, the Ivorian Navy, with American assistance, has been developing a program for increased security on lagoons and waterways in the Azagny Reserve, as well as a plan to protect sea mammals. Among the projects associated with this program have been the construction of radio sites and the establishment of an air wing.

African states should not overlook any possibilities in their pursuit to develop as modern states. As the world order changes, political and military cooperation in the UN and its agencies may become even more important than it has been. Coalition-building and participation in peacekeeping forces could provide excellent opportunities for African states to improve their relations with the U.S. and other Western powers.

Because they did not invest properly and intensively in education at home and abroad, African states have few ties with the United States. New ties may be forged, and existing ones strengthened, by exploiting the potential friendship rooted in the history of slavery—a history represented by the large African-American community. Some will argue that the topic of black Americans and their supposed ties with Africa is too emotional an issue, one that can only act as a brake on the development of good relations between Africa and the United States. Such an argument should not stop African states from moving towards the United States. Certainly the issue of slavery is painful, but one should remember that much of American history is a story of people resettled in a painful way. The flight of the first European settlers to America was, sometimes, from life-threatening religious intolerance. The Jews sought escape from racial extermination when they left Europe. Even within the U.S. there has been severe religious and social intolerance between segments of the white population. The events of history, however, eventually overcome prejudice against each new wave of immigrants. It is time for Africans and African-Americans to overcome their historical pain and play their role in a world which belongs to all. Education is the key to success in this challenge also.

**D**espite their sacrifices and contribution to victory in World War II, African states unfortunately remained subjugated, first officially and then informally, by European countries. African history since the end of the Second World War might have been very different had Africa received a Marshall Plan and been granted most-favored-nation status by the United States. Postwar Soviet

moves in the eastern zone of Germany captured American attention, and the U.S. all but ignored European actions in Africa. Instead of supporting native African struggles for independence, the U.S. tacitly accepted recolonization. Now, with the collapse of communism, African states should seize the opportunity to open a direct dialogue with the United States.

African states should invest in education, advertising, and lobbying in the United States, Germany, Japan, Taiwan, and China. Africa needs to build on the experience of others. It needs not only to learn from modern states but also to teach them about Africa. Such an approach will take time—there are no quick solutions to Africa's problems.

Since military coups are the products of military minds, it is in the minds of the military that defenses must be built against coups d'état. The only way to reach man's mind is through education. Military and civilian training and education is the key to African development and stability.

Africans and their leaders must accept as a challenge the world's new view of an Africa with problems and begin the difficult task of rethinking the future and proposing new strategies for political and economic development. The new strategies must incorporate all means available to African states, including their military resources. Instead of limiting the military to classic defense roles, African states must use their forces to help develop national economic capacities.

International relations is not a game; it is an enduring challenge. A country that wants to survive and prosper must remain alert to enemies and cultivate allies. In the struggle for African development, our allies are those who share with us their knowledge. To be successful, African states must heed Clausewitz's advice—*one must know what kind of war he is fighting*—and Sun Tzu's counsel—*one must know his enemy as himself*.

### Notes

1. John W. Harbeson, *The Military Rulers in African Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1987), p. 1. The number of states experiencing military coups has increased since Harbeson's work was published.
2. T.O. Odetola, *Military Regimes and Development: A Comparative Analysis of African States* (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1982), p. 165.
3. Samuel Decalo, *Coups and Army Rule in Africa: Studies in Military Style* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 1976), pp. 14–5.
4. Christopher Clapham, "The African States," in Douglas Rimmer, ed., *Africa 30 Years On* (London: The Royal African Society, 1991), p. 91.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
7. As defined by the World Bank, absolute poverty represents a standard of living providing less than 2,150 calories a day.
8. All the statistics in this paragraph were taken from *The Economist*, 20 March 1993. Sources: Asian Development Bank and World Bank.
9. *The Economist*, 20 March 1993.
10. Andrew Cowley sees several reasons for the success of emerging ASEAN economies: the choice of economic development as first priority for state action; government commitment to markets (properly guided but not controlled) and to private property; relatively equal distribution of income and low taxation, fostering

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the feeling that everyone is "in the same boat"; and, above all, education. "The last lesson is probably the most important: investing in education pays in spades. The tigers' [i.e., powerful Asian economies] single biggest source of comparative advantage is their well educated workers." See Andrew Cowley, "Burning Bright," *The Economist*, 16 November 1991.

11. Odetola, p. 27.

12. Kenneth King, "Education and Training in Africa," in *Africa 30 Years On* (London: The Royal African Society, 1991), pp. 73-88.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

Ψ

If attendance here will serve, in any degree, to broaden an officer's views, extend his mental horizon on national and international questions, and give him a just appreciation of the great variety and extent of the requirements of his profession, the [Naval War] College will not have existed in vain.

Rear Admiral Stephen B. Luce

### **Second International Congress for Maritime History, 5-8 June 1996**

The Dutch Association for Maritime History, in cooperation with the Netherlands Maritime Museum in Amsterdam and the Maritime Museum Prins Hendrik in Rotterdam, wishes to announce its Second International Congress, on the theme of "Evolution and Revolution in the Maritime World in the 19th and 20th Centuries."

The congress will concentrate on three main topics focusing on the changes in the maritime world resulting from either dramatic new developments or continuation of long-term trends. Papers are invited in the following areas: nautical science and cartography; the construction, equipment, and propulsion of ships; and the management and infrastructure of navies, shipping companies, and ports.

Forward proposals and queries to Mrs. drs. C. Reinders Folmer, Box 102, 2350 AC Leiderdorp, The Netherlands, telephone . . . -31-71895382.