ADVOCACY NETWORK FOR AFRICA . ADNA

STATEMENT

JUNE 24, 2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Briefing booklet was compiled by the African Advocacy Network (ADNA)
as a means of collecting relevant materials on critical issues related to U.S. Africa policy.

The statement will be used to inform meetings with the Obama Administration and Congress.

THE ADVOCACY NETWORK FOR AFRICA

Informing + Mobilizing US Grassroots Advocacy

Our History

Under the name of the Southern Africa Working Group (SAWG), this network was founded to share in formation and mobilize action in solidarity with the anti-Apartheidand grassroots liberation movements of the Southern African countries still remaining under white minority rule. With the successes of those movements during the late 80s and early 90s, SAWG neede to rename itself and define a new agenda. Adopting the new name - The Advocacy Network for Africa (ADNA) - it took up the task of addressing a broad spectrum of US/Africa foreign policy issues, with an expanded focus on sub-Saharan Africa, and some attention to the northern African countries.

Our Purpose

Today, ADNA has three primary objectives:

- In Washington, DC we work to raise the level of understanding and attention to current events in Africa and in International policy and funding with Members of Congress, with the President, with key Admin istration officials, and in international organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank.

- Additionally, we work nationally and internationally through the organizationalmembers and contact networks to increase the flow of dependable and timely action-oriented information shared among the Africa advocacy community here in the US, and between US-based and African grassroots groups.

- Finally, we mobilize progressive US voters across the country to be politically active on key US/Africa and International policy issues.

What We Do

The key to mounting effective popular political pressure on policy makers at the national and interna tional level is to build a broad based, well-informed and persistently active constituency, especially where those officials are elected and accountable to the citizens. Collaboration among our organizations expands our reach and magnifies our effect. We share background information and action strategies such as situation updates from our partners in Africa, Action Alerts, petition campaigns, letter-writing and call-in campaigns, advocacy days, public vigils and demonstrations, and other creative ideas through an e-mail communications system.

This statement

spotlights 3 points of concern from members of the Africa Advocacy Network (ADNA):

1. Militarization of US policy toward Africa;

2. Food, Agricultural Investment, Land Grabs;

3. Financial Integrity and Economic Development.

Egypt
Mali
Congo
Angola
Malawi
South Africa

Militarization

of U.S. Policy Towards Africa

We are opposed to the Western focus on building larger, more politically powerful, more technologically-equipped, and more expensive militaries in African countries. This reflects a policy based on a belief - and on a habit - that military solutions are the first step toward peace. Military responses to conflict and contestation are often counter-productive in the long term and results in gross violations of human rights and deaths of civilians.

The introduction of the philosophy and strategy of the Global War or Terror (or "overseas contingency operations") into Africa with aggressive militarization has not and will not facilitate peace and will continue to contribute to human rights violations.

The policy of the "whole of government" approach to combine State Department, US AID, and Department of Defense policy and planning is a mistake to the extent that it erases the important differences between traditional policy making by the civilian arm of the executive Branch such as the Department of State and USAID and the implementation of a military, security focused policy, driven by DOD.

We are especially disturbed at the explosive growth of the DOD in policy assessment and policy-making, in the relative numbers of U.S. military personnel representing the U.S. in Africa, in the militarization of the programs of the Department of State and USAID, and in the apparent decline of the role, influence, and resources of the State Department and USAID.

We are deeply troubled at the broad and hidden engagement in dozens of African countries of the U.S. Special Operations Command-Africa troops with a mandate "to disrupt, degrade, dismantle and ultimately defeat those who attacked America on 9/11 -- al-Qaida" and "affiliated movements" without any opportunity for public policy debate about the targets of their attacks and nature of their actions or for any broader reflection on both the collateral civilian damage, the license to take action without public accountability, and the wisdom and effectiveness of a military suppression of dissidence.

We are especially concerned that the strategies of aerial attacks since 2007 in Somalia and potentially now in the rest of the Sahelian Region - by C-130 Hercules gunships, attack helicopters, cruise missiles, and now by drones from the four bases in Africa and from Europe - can be a source of mounting collateral deaths of civilians and blowback in facilitating the recruitment of new militants.

We advocate more U.S. support and resources for human rights, conflict resolution, and negotiation in Africa in order to develop long-term peace based on the often difficult agreements among different legitimate stakeholders, including the many varieties of Islamic and Islamist organizations across Africa.

With this emphasis on conflict resolution, additional funds are needed for economic development activities in health, education, housing, and infrastructure as incentives for conflicting groups to come to the table and to begin to build cooperation across lines of conflict for the reconstruction of disrupted civil society.

Food, Agricultural Investment & Land Grabs

President Obama's trip to Africa comes one year after announcing the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition at the 2012 G8 Summit. The President's stop in Tanzania will draw attention to this cooperation between private companies and governments.

However, this alliance is not the anti-poverty "alliance" it claims to be because it turns away from the G8 commitments of $22 billion in public investment in agriculture made at L'Aquila in 2009 in response to the 2008 food crisis. Instead of maintaining and expanding public investment, the New Alliance rolls public sector investment together with those of the large private agribusiness sector as if the two are similar in effect.

The New Alliance is not new because it represents G8 endorsement of the private sector initiative Grow Africa, which has been working to obtain policy change commitments from African governments that favor large private investors. Although promising to benefit poor farmers, the New "Alliance" has not involved organizations representing these smallholders who form the largest portion of the private sector throughout Africa.

Many African smallholder organizations and other sectors of civil society have denounced the framework agreements for this lack of inclusivity, as well as the alliance's promotion of market dominance by large companies selling machinery, chemicals, and genetically modified seeds.

The New Alliance cannot be evaluated by focusing on projects which promise benefits for smallholders. Instead it should be evaluated on what happens on the ground and on the likely overall effects of promoting large agribusiness growth in Africa instead of types of public investment aimed at strengthening smallholder agriculture, which has been effective in many Asian countries.

We are concerned that the New Alliance will justify and facilitate land-grabbing by a wide array of investors inside and outside Africa as diverse as Saudi Arabia, India, Brazil, China, the U.S., and local wealthy elites in Africa and endorses the creation of land banks for large investors in several countries, prior to fully implementing the land tenure guidelines of the UN Committee on World Food Security to ensure that community land rights are respected and that the needs of the landless rural poor are met.

The New Alliance frameworks give incentives to large agricultural machinery, fertilizer, and chemical companies which will be primarily interested in doing business with highly mechanized farms and encourages additional land acquisitions for large farms. This ignores research showing that smallholder farmers have a higher potential production per land area than large farms.

The New Alliance also undermines the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) of the African Union as smallholders and civil society, and countries have been admitted to the New Alliance without meeting their public investment goals required under CAADP.

The New Alliance also gives new tax breaks to agribusinesses, eliminating potential revenue sources for public investment. The New Alliance commits countries to changing their seed laws to end the public distribution of seeds. It also favors the large seed monopolies and their introduction of genetically modified seeds despite the risks that these crops will undermine food security by increasing costs and decreasing genetic diversity.

Our key recommendations are to establish regional food reserves, end biofuels incentives, help farmers adapt to climate cand empower African women farmers.

Financial Integrity & Economic Development

We believe the United States should seek to promote greater financial transparency and integrity among African stakeholders, U.S. investors in African projects and in their transactions with the rest of the world.

Illicit financial flows, the size of the underground economy, and the business climate are all intimately linked to financial transparency and integrity.

There is ample evidence of massive cross-border flow of illegal funds from African countries which harbor booming underground economies linked with government and corporate corruption

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