

Official Background Guide

African Union



Model United Nations at Chapel Hill XVIII

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Letter from the Chair

Dear Esteemed Delegates,

First and foremost, welcome to MUNCH XVIII. Many of my best memories from high school MUN were at this conference, and I cannot wait to help each of you create your own great experiences when you make the trek to UNC this February.

I am a first year student from Lexington, North Carolina, where I attended Central Davidson High School. I am currently a Political Science and Media and Journalism double major, with the intent of minoring in French. I participated in MUN throughout high school and the beginnings of my endeavors with CIRA have been absolutely incredible. I am more than happy to share my experiences with you and to relentlessly advocate for my school and this club, so please feel free to approach me with any questions you may have.

When I am not doing school work, it is likely that you will find me enjoying the company of my friends, exploring Chapel Hill, spending money I most certainly do not have, watching the women's volleyball team kill it, hiking, eating, sleeping, exercising, or an array of other things.

In regard to the committee, I have put much thought into structuring this committee so that all of you have a great time and take away some sort of applicable knowledge. The African Union and the African Continent are both very unique in a plethora of ways. My personal peak of interest regarding the African continent has developed because of a class I am currently taking entitled Arts, Activism, and Africa. It has challenged me greatly and transformed many of my thought processes. I hope that in the few short days we have together at MUNCH, I can provide you with a similar experience and the ability to think more critically.

As many of you likely know, the African Union is composed of fifty-five African states. I, however, have chosen to add four Western powers to this committee, the long-standing colonizers and oppressors of this continent. This is in order to add a certain level of depth and debate to the committee, as well as to bring to light issues that are not so frequently spoken of in our society. The topics we will be discussing range from the violent conflict in the DR Congo to the creation of the

United States of Africa/African Economic Community, to the far-to-common outbreaks of cholera, specifically in refugee camps. This variety of issues demonstrates the broad task that the AU is constantly confronted with.

My hope is that all of you leave this committee with a comprehensive understanding of each of these daunting tasks that the people of these African countries face. This background guide is the basis of what I would like to see come of this committee, but is just one tool in the development in your country's position and your argumentation. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding anything or if you would like any more insight.

Best of Luck,

Payton Tysinger

Chair of the African Union

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Conflict in The Democratic Republic of the Congo

Introduction

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is the largest country in Sub-Saharan Africa and the eleventh largest country in the world. It is also one of the world's richest countries in terms of natural resources, with abundant deposits of copper, gold, cobalt, uranium, coltan/tantalite, diamonds, and oil. Because of this, since 1996 the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been ravaged by violence, accounting for the loss of at least six million lives. Despite this, very few people in the Western world are aware that this conflict even exists or that their consumerism is a direct cause of this conflict. The First Congo War took place from October of 1996 and lasted until September of 1997. The Second Congo War, also known as the Great African War, began in August of 1998 and is said to have ended in July of 2003 upon the signing of a new constitution; however, conflict in eastern Congo continues to this day. Violent militant groups are constantly raiding towns and villages leaving little to spare while a domineering central government in Kinshasa closely monitors foreigners providing aid and political activism amongst individuals.

History of Conflict in the DR Congo

First Congo War

The First Congo War was primarily a result of the Rwandan Genocide when Hutu nationalist power groups, the ethnic majority in Rwanda, killed 800,000 Tutsi people, the ethnic minority in Rwanda, over the span of three months. After the Rwandan Patriotic Front defeated Hutu nationalist groups and the

Rwandan Genocide came an end, nearly two million of the Hutu genocidaires fled to refugee camps in the east of Congo, but were later driven out by the Congolese Tutsi people. Because of this, the

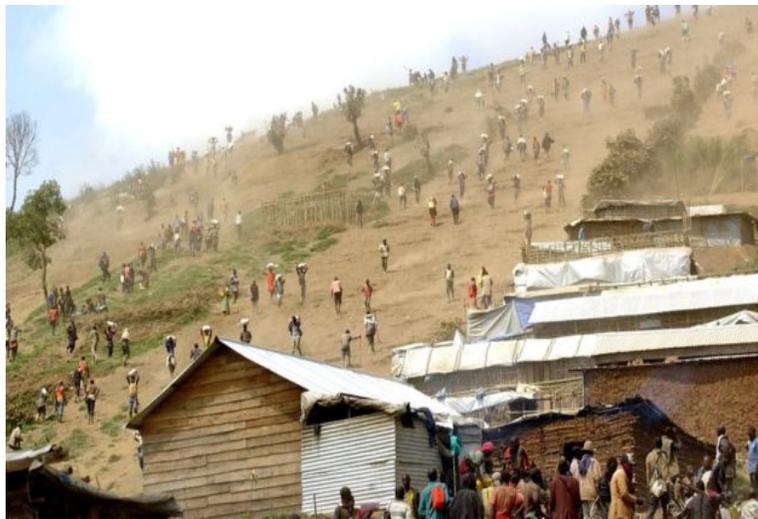


the Because of this, the Rwandan and Ugandan armies backing prominent political figure, Laurent-Désiré Kabila, invaded Congo under the name of the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire, or the AFDL. Within months the AFDL controlled eastern Congo and in May of 1997, marched into the capital city of Kinshasa and overthrew President Mobutu Sese Seko and his government, that had been in power since 1965. In September of 1997 Laurent-Désiré Kabila was appointed president of the newly renamed Democratic Republic of Congo.

The Great African War

Laurent-Désiré Kabila, the newly appointed president of Congo, and former ally to the AFDL, betrayed Uganda and Rwanda by allowing Hutu military groups to regroup in the east of Congo once again. As a result, Uganda and Rwanda invaded eastern Congo in August of 1998. This insurgency was met with resistance from Kabila and the neighboring countries of Angola, Namibia,

and Zimbabwe that backed the Congolese Government. The official civil war between the Congolese government and rebel forces continued for five years, ending in 2003. In 1999, however, all seven countries involved signed the Lusaka Peace Accord which allowed for the creation of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), and accepted five thousand U.N. peacekeepers. President Kabila was assassinated in January of 2001, leaving his son, Joseph Kabila, a former taxi driver, to take charge of the country. By December of 2002, Uganda and Rwanda had been removed from Congo and negotiations and peace deals were being settled with internal rebel groups. By April of 2003, a transitional constitution had been signed by Kabila, marking an end to Africa's "first world war." However, the tension and conflict did not subside for long.



Informal mining of cassiterite, a mineral used in the production of most cell phones

Current Situation in the DR Congo

Roughly 3.8 million individuals lost their lives in Congo between 1998 and 2004, and at least another three million individuals have been killed since that time period. From 2003 until now, militias and rebel groups that are largely believed to be backed by Rwanda have ravaged the Democratic Republic of the Congo, specifically those in North Kivu province in the east of the Congo. An overwhelming majority of these groups are heavily armed and will go to extraordinary bounds to gain control of the natural resources that are abundant beneath their feet. The invasion of towns and villages, the raping of local women, and the rotting corpses of soldiers left as warnings are

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all common things to witness in Goma and surrounding towns and villages. The government is not apathetic to these things; it simply does not have sufficient time, resources, or political infrastructure to handle this issue. This is in part because of deep rooted corruption and the ever present political power struggles between officials within the government.

The current political situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is not one that is cohesive to the revision of such conflict. Joseph Kabila, who assumed the position of president after his father was assassinated in 2001, is once again defying the constitution by refusing to step down from the presidency, all the while those who protest his refusal are being massacred by security forces. This crisis is only causing more discomfort and deterioration in this security situation.

Political matters aside, ethicality is hardly taken into account in the western world when such desirable natural resources are at stake. Gigantic corporations like Apple use unethically sourced coltan from Congo to make iPhones, thus consumers are unknowingly financing this conflict. Many people accredit the past two decades of conflict to the effects of neo-colonialism, the assertion of economic, political, or cultural pressures to control other countries, which is plausible considering that a majority of African countries were dependent colonies until the 1960s. Because of such factors, many multinational corporations and western governments take advantage of the resources being produced at low prices as a result of the continuous conflict.

Objectives

Considering all of these factors, how can the Congolese government, the African continent as a whole, western powers, and the United Nations unify in order to defeat these issues of greed that have no end in sight with an appropriate balance of interior and exterior actors?

Links for More Information

- <https://enoughproject.org/blog/congo-first-and-second-wars-1996-2003>
- <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13283212>
- <https://www.warhistoryonline.com/instant-articles/casualties-war-ten-deadliest-conflicts-human-history-m.html>
- <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/16/sunday-review/congos-never-ending-war.html>
- <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/role-external-actors-drc-congo-crisis-sadc-au-icglr-un-eu/>

The United States of Africa

The United States of Africa is a proposed plan that would integrate the African continent into a single state, or at least a much stronger coalition of states, similar to the EU, where states have autonomy in some aspects of governance and share powers in others. While in reality, this plan is unlikely to come to fruition anytime soon, its proponents believe it would bring unprecedented unity and prosperity to the continent. Delegates should consider whether or not they want to unify Africa, and if they do, what the goals of unification should be and how to achieve them.

A Brief History of Modern African States

Before the European colonization of Africa beginning in the late nineteenth century, Africa was composed of thousands of autonomous states, each with distinct languages and cultures. Simply put, the borders and governance of the continent were nothing like they are today, because much of modern Africa's political geography is the result of its subordination and colonization by European empires.

The borders of Africa as they look today largely date back to the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, wholly drawn by European powers as they sought to exploit the natural wealth of the continent during a period of aggressive colonization. They were drawn to prevent conflicts between European colonial powers during the scramble for Africa, disregarding the wishes of the colonized people, who often saw their ethnic communities split between arbitrarily drawn borders. By the early 20th century, nearly all of Africa was under the control of European governments.

However, while European rule in Africa had massive lasting effects, it was ultimately short-lived. After WWII, many African nationalists began calling for independence. Despite opposition by some European governments, the UN Charter of 1945 proclaimed the right of self-determination for all countries. By the 1970s, nearly all of Africa had been granted independence.

Despite the end of colonial rule, the continent still faces significant challenges, being the poorest of the six inhabited continents. African national boundaries today are largely the same as during colonization, meaning they are largely arbitrary. Additionally, African countries face significant problems of corruption within their governments. In a 2015 democracy index, only Mauritius was awarded full democracy status. Much of Africa has some degree of democracy, but not nearly as much as Europe or the Americas. Many hope that a United States of Africa has the potential to change that.

Issues Regarding the Creation of the United States of Africa

Incentives to Join

In order for a successful union of African states, there must be an incentive for them to join. Delegates should consider the issues currently facing their country, what their nation has to gain from African unity, and whether or not they would be in favor of the creation of the United States of Africa.

Economy

One of the main reasons why proponents of the United States of Africa believe it would be beneficial is the economic benefits that unification could bring. The current state of African Economic Integration lies in the African Economic Community (AEC). However, the force of this agreement is limited. It consists of several regional trade blocs among different African countries. This means that trade barriers have been removed between certain groups of countries, but not universally across Africa. A comprehensive free trade zone could encourage greater economic interdependence among African nations.

One economic proposal that many hope will be in place by 2023 is a common currency among all African states. This would effectively remove any barriers to trade among African states if combined with a free trade zone. Without concerns about fluctuations in the values of other countries' currencies, African firms, farmers, and individuals will be more likely to buy and sell commodities across national borders. Because it encourages specialization and competition, international trade is almost always beneficial for economies, with consumers gaining the most from trade.

However, while free trade among African states may be a no-brainer, trade outside of Africa may not be as straightforward. Many believe that removing barriers to trade with nations outside of Africa, such as the USA, China, and Western Europe, will lead to suffocation of domestic industries. Proponents of this argument worry that upstart African firms will not be able to compete with the economies of scale that large and multinational firms benefit from. Because of this, the influx of imports will drive out domestic firms that cannot compete with their lower prices, leading to an African economy highly dependent on imports, making domestic development more difficult. However, others believe these concerns are unwarranted and that the benefits gained by consumers from lower prices will increase their wellbeing and outweigh the losses suffered by only a select



number of domestic firms. Should the United States of Africa be created, delegates should consider its trade policies within and outside of the continent.

Another economic issue regarding the United States of Africa is how to encourage foreign investment in the continent. Between 2000 and 2015, foreign direct investment (FDI) on the

African continent increased fivefold. This can be partly attributed to the rising costs of labor in Asia leading to more firms moving production to Africa, where wages are still very low. However, there are still major impediments to further growth of investment in Africa. Namely, Africa has lagged behind in infrastructure improvements compared to Asian countries. The vast majority of roads are unpaved, and many places still lack electricity. This makes it more difficult for businesses thrive, and has discouraged greater investment in the past. The continent would benefit greatly from universal electricity or a highway system. However, most individual governments are incapable of this. Could a more unified continent lead to development of greater infrastructure?

Security

One of the most contentious issues facing the unification of Africa is the question of national and international security. Africa north of the equator is currently plagued by civil war, unrest, and terrorism. Civil wars continue in South Sudan and Libya, while north Africa is under constant threat of terrorism from Islamic State and related groups. Nigeria is dealing with violence from Boko Haram, and a several other states are dealing with insurgencies in specific regions. Nearly all conflicts in Africa today are intra-national rather than international. Despite this, leaders of surrounding countries have not hesitated to intervene in crises, most notably in west Africa. Member nations of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have taken military action in countries such as Sierra Leone and Mali, and imposed sanctions on a number of others as a result of civil conflicts.



Military cooperation among states could look different if Africa were to unify. Would a United Africa bring militaries together or allow states to keep their own security forces? What powers would a centralized African government have to prevent conflicts within and amongst states?

Government

The question of government is perhaps the most pressing issue facing the creation of the United States of Africa. However, it could be based off the structure of the African Union. The AU's supreme governing body is the Assembly of the African Union, which includes the heads of state of the member countries, as well as a chairperson, although his powers are limited. The future of the AU, however, lies in the Pan-African Parliament, to which the Assembly is gradually giving some of its power. This body is comprised of 265 elected representatives from member countries, with the goal of bringing greater democratic governance to the AU. However, there is no guarantee that a United States of Africa government would be either democratic or benevolent. Delegates should consider the structure of government and how much power a central government should have.

Links for More Information

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Union
- <http://www.ozy.com/fast-forward/a-united-africa-leaders-revive-a-dream/70330>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_of_Africa
- <https://dilemma-x.net/2013/02/10/black-history-month-the-united-states-of-africa-the-diasporas-remittances-in-2012/>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Africa

- <https://selfstudyhistory.com/2015/01/25/decolonisation-of-africa/http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/opinion/2015/06/30/africa-still-poised-to-become-the-next-great-investment-destination>
- <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/publication/the-challenge-of-stability-and-security-in-west-africa>

Sanitation in Refugee Camps: Cholera

Cholera outbreaks are extremely common throughout the continent of Africa, specifically in refugee camps. Many individuals and families are crowded into a very tight area with minimal access to hygiene necessities such as plumbing for defecation and hand washing. Cholera is a disease that is spread through the consumption of food and water contaminated by the bacterium *Vibrio Cholerae*. It causes severe watery diarrhea and can be deadly if not quickly treated. It is common in densely populated places that lack public sanitation or clean drinking water, such as refugee camps. The threat of epidemics is particularly strong in refugee camps, where there are few sanitation measures. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), “the long-term solution for cholera control lies in economic development and universal access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation.” However, this is a luxury that most of Africa cannot afford, especially in refugee camps, where much of the resources come from the UN Refugee Agency or other NGOs. Despite the lack of resources, this issue must be dealt with, due to the threat it poses to the health of millions of Africans.

Case Study #1

In Nigeria, approximately 1.4 million people live in refugee camps, displaced by the ongoing war against Boko Haram militants. Cholera outbreaks have been



sweeping through the region, and only get worse during the rainy seasons, when excessive rainfall makes maintaining a reasonable level of sanitation in refugee camps even harder, as this rainwater is susceptible to contamination. WHO estimates put hundreds of thousands of children in these camps

at risk for cholera. Young children, whose immune systems are the weakest, are the most susceptible to virulent diseases. This problem is only compounded by the fact that many children in Nigerian refugee camps suffer from malnourishment, malaria, and other waterborne illnesses.

Case Study #2:

Beginning in 1986, Malawi--often referred to as the 'Warm Heart of Africa'-- began accepting refugees from the Mozambican conflict. By 1990, the number of these refugees reached 920,000. Nyamithuthu, the largest of the Malawi refugee camps, was meant to house 50,000 individuals, but from October 15th to November 15th, the refugee population ballooned from 57,000 to 74,000. This overwhelmed sanitation and water facilities which resulted in the outbreak of cholera.

Between August 23rd and December 15th of 1990, 1,931 Mozambican refugees in Malawi were infected with Cholera. Of those infected, 52% had arrived to the camp within only sixteen days. It was concluded by this study that a majority of the cases in this specific camp were due to a lack of sanitation and clean water in the process of transport and those that were not were infected by contagious newcomers. Sixty-eight of the 1,931 patients diagnosed with cholera died as a direct result, bringing the death rate to roughly 3.5%. Of the sixty-eight deaths, a majority occurred within twenty-four hours of arrival and were caused, in large, by extreme dehydration. The suggested plan of action proposed in this case study is to provide adequate sanitation facilities and clean water during transportation.

Case Study #3

On December 26th, 2014, several incidents of Cholera had been reported in and near Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya. The disease continued to spread, and the numbers of those

infected increased drastically around the onset of 2017. The diverging aspect of this outbreak, however, is that there were multiple separate outbreaks that generally ranged in the hundreds with few to no deaths. A majority of the outbreaks that occur in Kenya are along the Tana River in Tana River County and in densely-populated Nairobi, which is in close vicinity to the Tana River. Outbreaks are being reported among both the general population and those in refugee camps, and have been especially potent in areas with high population density and poor sanitation. These factors are present in refugee camps, which is why they have often been hardest hit by outbreaks. Additionally, medical care in camps is often lacking. According to the World Health Organization, the risk of cholera in Kenyan refugee camps is high as a result of the above conditions, but there is also supporting evidence that correlates these outbreaks to polluted water sources such the Tana River. Case studies in from this region generally show some correlation between refugee camps contaminating and infecting the general population or small outbreaks among select groups exposed to each other in a closed environment.



Objective:

Cholera outbreaks are rampant in Africa, specifically among the millions of refugees and internally displaced individuals. Based on these case studies, what is a viable solution that can be implemented on a large scale that would

minimize the spread of Cholera and other type diseases within refugee camps? How can Cholera infection be contained to refugee camps?

Links for More Information

- <https://www.voanews.com/a/cholera-outbreak-threatens-more-than-one-million-people-in-nigeria-refugee-camps-/4019759.html>
- <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/stories/2017/10/59de261a4/home-close-far-central-african-republic-refugees.html>
- https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/B95618DCDA92158D2A15153C9BBBA5E6/S0950268896007352a.pdf/epidemic_cholera_among_refugees_in_malawi_africa_treatment_and_transmission.pdf
- <http://www.who.int/csr/don/21-july-2017-cholera-kenya/en/>

Position List:

- **Democratic Republic of the Congo**
- **Central African Republic**
- **The Republic of Chad**
- **Republic of the Congo**
- **People`s Democratic Republic of Algeria**
- **Republic of Angola**
- **Republic of Ghana**
- **Republic of South Africa**
- **Republic of Guinea**
- **Arab Republic of Egypt**
- **Republic of Rwanda**
- **Republic of Kenya**
- **Republic of South Sudan**
- **Republic of The Sudan**
- **Republic of Senegal**
- **Republic of Sierra Leone**
- **Somali Republic**
- **Kingdom of Belgium**
- **United States of America**
- **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**
- **Federal Republic of Nigeria**
- **Republic of Botswana**
- **Republic of Burundi**
- **Republic of Cameroon**
- **Republic of Cote d'Ivoire**
- **Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia**
- **French Republic**
- **Gabonese Republic**
- **Republic of the Gambia**

- **Republic of Guinea-Bissau**
- **Republic of Liberia**
- **Libya**
- **Republic of Madagascar**
- **Republic of Malawi**
- **Kingdom of Morocco**
- **Republic of Mozambique**
- **Republic of Namibia**
- **Republic of Niger**
- **United Republic of Tanzania**
- **Tunisian Republic**
- **Republic of Uganda**
- **Republic of Zambia**
- **Republic of Zimbabwe**
- **Republic of Mali**