

Africa at the Crossroads

Time to deliver

Africa is at a crossroads. Despite the development efforts of the past two decades, Africans are getting poorer. Over 300 million people live on less than US\$1 dollar per day. Life expectancy is 48 years and falling. Twenty-eight million people are living with HIV/AIDS, and 40 per cent of children are out of school. The responsibility for this crisis lies within the continent and outside it. There is a glaring absence of accountable governance at national, regional, and global levels. Only by ending the 'business as usual' approach to Africa can the situation change.

Yet in spite of these problems there is hope. The growing strength of African civil society, combined with the efforts by some African leaders to chart a new course, offer a real chance to tackle the root causes of poverty and conflict. African leaders are working together with the G8 to agree a new plan for Africa. This should include intense action to resolve conflicts and address poor governance, as well as extra support in aid, trade, and debt relief to those countries committed to poverty reduction and good governance. The challenge for Africa is not wondering what to do, but generating the will to do it.

Summary

Africa today stands at a crossroads. The scale of poverty and suffering on the continent is daunting. Three hundred million people live on less than US\$1 per day. Life expectancy is 48 years and falling. More than one-third of all children are malnourished; more than 40 per cent have no access to education. Twenty-eight million people live with HIV/AIDS, and for over 100 million people, war is a part of daily life.

And yet, in spite of these grim statistics, there are grounds for optimism. The spread of democracy and the growing strength of African civil society, combined with the efforts by some African leaders to chart a new course, offer a real chance to tackle the root causes of poverty and conflict.

The crisis facing Africa today is a result of failures at all levels, both within Africa and outside it. Africa needs fair and accountable governance that works in the best interests of poor people, at national, regional, and international levels. Global trade, investment, and diplomatic engagement have too often worked against the interests of the poor.

Other factors behind the crisis include:

- The growth of war economies. The unethical exploitation of natural resources is a major and growing cause of conflict, with disastrous results for local communities. Conflict affects one in five people living in Africa; the majority of them are women and children.
- A culture of impunity. Respect for human rights and the rule of law, essential to durable peace and long-term development, is absent in many parts of Africa. Justice is often elusive or non-existent.
- Corruption and bribery. Corruption enriches the few and impoverishes the many. It places unbearable burdens on the most vulnerable people, and blocks progress towards poverty reduction.
- HIV/AIDS. The pandemic is a great human tragedy with massive economic and political consequences, particularly for women who make up the majority of those infected. HIV/AIDS is arguably the biggest threat facing Africa today.
- Inadequate international support. Despite the scale of the crisis, there is less external assistance than ever. Aid is declining, trade rules are rigged against the poor, and debt relief has not been deep enough.

It is morally indefensible that millions of people, whose lives are a daily struggle, are ignored. Moreover, in a world of increasing interdependence and instability, it is in the interests of Northern leaders to help find solutions to Africa's problems. If they are left to fester, poverty, conflict, and disease will eventually undermine global prosperity and security.

Recent efforts by African and G8 leaders to work together to tackle these problems offer new opportunities to finally redress the failures and develop a new basis for partnership with Africa. African leaders have taken the

initiative by developing their own New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). Though much further consultation with civil society is required, it is a positive start. The international community needs to seize this opportunity and commit to concrete actions that will support lasting peace and development.

Some of the changes that Oxfam believes are needed in order to make progress and further the debate are outlined below. There is no 'one size fits all' solution to the African crisis.

Steps must be taken immediately to tackle conflict, through concerted diplomatic action, and provide humanitarian assistance to affected populations. These efforts will need to take into account the underlying causes of conflicts, including issues of natural resource extraction. At the same time, much more generous support must also be given to those countries taking positive action to reduce poverty and strengthen governance with the involvement of civil society.

Finding sustainable solutions to the gravity of the problems facing Africa today will lie in the ability to move forward both these strategies simultaneously.

Recommendations

1. Improve governance through a true partnership between African citizens, their governments, and the international community.

- African leaders to ensure genuine, participative, and inclusive governance by engaging with civil society on the goals, strategies, and monitoring of NEPAD, the development of the African Union and national development plans.
- Northern and African governments to tackle corruption and bribery through the adoption of the OECD 1998 Convention on bribery and the rapid institution and ratification of a UN convention on corruption, currently in development.
- African governments to address human rights abuses and the widespread culture of impunity by ratifying the African Court for Human and People's Rights, and ensuring that it is functioning within the next two years.

2. Stop the trade in illegal and unethical exploitation of natural resources.

- Agree a UN protocol or convention on the conduct of business, based on the Draft Fundamental Human Rights Principles for Business Enterprises drawn up by the UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. These principles should be the basis of an international regulatory framework that is binding on states and business enterprises.
- Implement the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and ensure that the designated National Contact Points are given greater prominence, with powers for monitoring and enforcement. A company's

willingness to implement the OECD guidelines should be a condition of eligibility for all Northern government guarantees and export credits.

3. Reduce conflict in Africa, and prevent arms getting into the hands of those who abuse them.

- G8 and African leaders to agree a plan of action for intense diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflicts in Angola, the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Mano River Basin region (Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea).
- Agree an International Arms Trade Treaty to regulate the arms trade, so that weapons are not transferred where they might be used in breach of international humanitarian law and human rights, or where this would undermine sustainable development.

4. Increase aid to Africa, especially for education, and deepen debt relief.

- G8 and African leaders to demonstrate the effectiveness of aid and strong partnership by investing in education; donors to increase spending on education by US\$4bn per year to fill the financing gaps in countries which have developed sound education plans.
- In order to achieve all the Millennium Development Goals, Northern governments should increase their aid budgets to Africa by \$40bn each year. This is the equivalent of approximately six weeks subsidy to farmers in OECD countries.
- Creditors should extend debt relief under the HIPC Initiative to ensure that debt repayments do not undermine financing for the Millennium Development Goals, and that no government allocates more than 10 per cent of revenue to debt servicing.

5. Declare a 'War on Aids' by an immediate increase in funds.

- Fully commit to financing the \$10bn Global Fund to Fight AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and ensure that the fund uses the cheapest, good quality drugs, including generic drugs, available.
- The donor community and African governments should ensure that the impact of HIV/AIDS is a consideration in all development programmes, and make available adequate funding for this element in aid budgets.

6. Improve the terms of trade for Africa.

- Northern governments should open their markets to all products from African countries. They should agree a timetable to ban export subsidies and restructure all farm subsidies to achieve social and environmental objectives, rather than increased output.
- The use of conditions attached to IMF/ World Bank programmes, which force poor countries to liberalise their markets rapidly, regardless of the impact on poor people, should be ended.

- A new international commodities institution to tackle the crisis in commodity prices, by promoting diversification and managing oversupply, should be supported.

Africa: the scale of the crisis

*Africa my Africa ...
I have never known you
But your blood flows in my veins
Your beautiful black blood that irrigates the fields
The blood of your sweat
The sweat of your work
The work of your slavery
The slavery of your children.*

*Africa tell me Africa
Is this you this back that is bent
This back that breaks under the weight of humiliation
This back trembling with red scars.*

From 'Africa' by David Diop, Senegal

There is a crisis in sub-Saharan Africa, and it affects 600 million people. The statistics are scandalous. Nearly half of the population live on less than US\$1 per day.¹ The vast majority of those in extreme poverty are women and children. If current trends continue, the number of Africans living below the poverty line will rise by a further 219 million by 2015. An African citizen today can expect to live for just 48 years. The trend in life expectancy is spiralling downwards for Africans, while it is climbing in nearly every other continent in the world.

Improvements in health and education have been minimal. More than one-third of children are malnourished. In 1990, the region accounted for just under one-third of child deaths worldwide; by 2015, it is estimated that this will have reached 55 per cent. Health infrastructures are inadequate. Women face a 1 in 13 chance of dying in childbirth, compared with a risk of 1 in 4,085 in industrialised countries. While there are serious problems in measuring trends in maternal mortality, evidence suggests that there has been little change since the 1990s. The traditional disease burdens, such as malaria and tuberculosis, continue to take a huge toll. Every year more than one million people, mostly children, die from malaria. It is estimated that malaria has slowed economic growth in Africa by up to 1.3 per cent each year – a loss of approximately US\$100bn over the last 35 years.²

Trends in education mirror those in health. More than 40 per cent of children have no access to primary education. The World Bank estimates that at least 32 countries – two-thirds of them in sub-Saharan Africa – are unlikely to achieve the 2015 target of getting all children into school. Enrolment rates actually fell in 17 African countries during the 1990s.

Humanitarian crises and violent conflict shake the continent. War is a part of daily life for more than 100 million people, the majority of them women and children. Forty per cent of the armed conflicts in the world are in sub-Saharan Africa – the only region where the trend in armed conflict has risen over the past 10-20 years. Those affected live with the constant threat of insecurity, the influx of refugees, illegal trafficking across borders of arms, drugs, and other merchandise that fuels these wars, and the AIDS pandemic which flourishes in unstable environments. Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia for example host large conflict-related refugee populations and have suffered the impact of conflict, if not directly involved themselves.

Conflict has deepened inequality: many suffer, while few benefit. It fuels the spread of HIV through population movements and the use of rape as a tool of war. This was evident in Rwanda, where migration and rape resulting from the genocide led to a six-fold increase in HIV infection.³ In the absence of accountable governance, people turn to violence in their search for alternative livelihoods, or are induced to fight for ‘justice’ in the face of impunity, thus igniting a new cycle of violence.

Economists hoped that sub-Saharan Africa would benefit from the opportunities brought by globalisation. However, as the World Bank and the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID) have acknowledged, the benefits of globalisation are not being passed on to Africa.⁴ Africa’s share of world trade fell from more than 3 per cent in 1950 to 1.2 per cent (excluding South Africa) in the mid 1990s. Africa captures only 0.9 per cent of world investment, most of which flows to mineral-rich areas. Rather than provide the answers to Africa’s ills, globalisation may have exacerbated the problems through rigged trade rules, inappropriate investment and collapsing commodity prices. Many African governments now find that they are powerless to control economic dynamics in their own countries, because the levers of economic and political governance are international in dimension and beyond their control. Average living standards have risen everywhere else in the world except in Africa, where they have fallen by 20 per cent over the same period. Africa appears to be running against the current of the powerful forces driving world trade and globalisation.

Large flows of unethical investment and illegal trade in minerals, natural resources, and arms have gone unrecorded and unregulated. To millions of Africans, the continent's abundant natural resource base may seem more of a curse than a blessing. Investment and trade in extractive industries in the DRC, Sierra Leone, Angola, and Sudan have generated war economies that profit international companies or armed political elites, while undermining long-term economic growth.

With the increase in conflict comes an increase in arms. One hundred million small arms, one-fifth of the world's total, are circulating in Africa. In the decade between 1979 and 1989, the major global powers transferred US\$60bn in weaponry to Africa. The two poorest regions in the world – Africa and South Asia – saw the steepest increase in arms purchases since 1998. Despite this, many conflicts (such as in northern Uganda) are not fuelled by the current arms trade but rather by old arms from the North cascading over borders through small-scale trading. Other conflicts, such as in Sudan, are fuelled by new supplies from beyond Africa, including new equipment (such as reported surface-to-surface missiles).

Despite all these problems, the people of Africa demonstrate hope. In a continent rich in human and natural resources, the diversity of its people and cultures, combined with its amazing natural environment, make Africa an exceptional place. Throughout the continent ordinary people show a deep commitment to development and democracy. Apartheid in South Africa ended peacefully, democracy was restored in Nigeria, and long-standing leaders yielded power peacefully in democratic elections in Ghana and Senegal. It is the courage and resourcefulness of the African people that needs to be harnessed to drive forward change.

Alarming trends

With more than 40 years experience of working in Africa, Oxfam has become increasingly concerned about the situation in Africa today. Many others share this concern, and are part of a rich and vibrant debate about the future of Africa. The preliminary analysis in this paper is by no means exhaustive, nor does it provide all the solutions. It aims to stimulate the debate on Africa further, to recommend a range of actions, and to inform initiatives that look more closely at Africa's problems and possible solutions.

During recent workshops in the Horn, Central, and West Africa, Oxfam staff, partner organisations, and invited experts debated a range of issues that affect the continent. The preliminary conclusions are that progress is mixed in Africa and that it in general is has not been sufficient. The current level of suffering implies there is something fundamentally wrong with the way Africa fits in the new world order.

The analysis highlighted some alarming trends:

- The growth of war economies: the unethical exploitation of Africa's natural resources is a major and growing cause of conflict, with disastrous results for local communities. Conflict currently affects one in five people living in Africa.
- A culture of impunity: respect for human rights and the rule of law, essential to durable peace and long-term human development, is absent in many parts of Africa. Justice is often elusive or non-existent.
- Corruption and bribery: corruption enriches the few and impoverishes the many. It places unbearable burdens on the most vulnerable people, and blocks progress towards poverty reduction.
- HIV/AIDS pandemic: HIV/AIDS is a great human tragedy, with massive economic and political consequences. It is arguably the biggest threat facing Africa today.
- Inadequate international support: despite the scale of the crisis, there is less assistance than ever. Aid is declining, trade rules are rigged, and debt relief has not been deep enough.

Not all African countries are subject to all these trends; nor are they affected to the same degree. And there are numerous other problems in Africa that this paper does not address, such as the complex nature of ethnicity, social exclusion, land issues, recurrent famine, urbanisation, and environmental impacts. However, it has become increasingly clear over the past decade that the trends identified above are affecting a large majority of people, and that their effects are wide reaching and devastating.

The rise in war economies

The causes of conflict in Africa are complex and diverse. Moreover, it is no longer accurate to draw distinctions between inter-state and intra-state conflict, or between local, national, and international wars. However, control over the continent's abundant natural resources is a significant and growing factor behind the conflicts in Africa today.

War economies are managed in such a way that they maintain or prolong armed conflict. In the DRC, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Angola, conflicts have increasingly become attributable to struggles over the control of natural resources and driven by private interests. The unethical, and often illegal, activities of local and international companies extracting commodities such as oil, diamonds, timber and coltan⁵ are fuelling these wars.

The war in the DRC is a clear example. A UN Panel of Experts appointed to consider the implications of natural resource exploitation in the DRC concluded in November 2001 that there was a direct link between the conflict, and the resulting humanitarian disaster, and foreign interests involved with the exploitation of natural resources.⁶ There is a similar story in Sudan. Civilians are caught up in a complex and long-running conflict further complicated in recent years by oil. Reports clearly suggest that the presence of international oil companies is fuelling the war in Sudan.⁷

Sub-Saharan Africa's links with the global economy are based primarily on the export of natural resources. Its role in the international trading system is largely as a supplier of commodities and valuable natural resources, such as diamonds, coltan, and oil. In some cases, problems are caused by governments' lack of legitimacy and accountability. In others, companies are engaged in commercial relationships with armed individuals who, in the absence of a strong central authority, battle for control of resource-rich areas. In the absence of a transparent and effective international regulation system, many foreign commercial operations are able to conduct business with disregard for local populations or ecological sustainability.⁸

The effects of conflict on local communities are disastrous. More than 100 million Africans are affected by violent conflict today. Ten million of them are internally displaced.⁹ This has had a disproportionate impact on women and children, who account for over 90 per cent of displaced people. As the situation in Sudan illustrates, when civilians are in the way – for example those living in areas of oil exploitation – entire communities are simply removed, leading to systematic human rights violations and massive displacement.¹⁰

In the majority of cases the exploitation of oil, gas, and minerals has a negative impact on local economies rather than supporting long-term development.¹¹ This in turn contributes to the proliferation of war economies and the growth in corrupt practices. In Angola, sub-Saharan Africa's second largest oil producer, the IMF estimated that crude oil exports were worth US\$4.6bn in 1999. Yet nine million people, roughly 70 per cent of the population, live in absolute

poverty. Over 3.7 million people are displaced and suffering from severe hunger. UNICEF describes Angola as the worst place in the world to be a child. Nigeria, the largest African oil producer, had exports worth over US\$17bn in 2001, and yet each year one million children die of preventable diseases, 36 per cent are malnourished, and 43 per cent of adults are illiterate. The Niger Delta region has been wracked by violent clashes and environmental devastation.

The dynamics of a number of these conflicts have spilled across borders to create larger regional conflicts, such as in Central Africa or the Mano River states. In recent years some African states have been seeking new sources of income in neighbouring 'failed' or failing states, through joint military-commercial ventures. These foreign interventions may be carried out under the pretexts of regional defence or national security. This has been evident in Zimbabwe's involvement in the war in the DRC, considered by many observers to be a clear example of 'military commercialism'.¹² Under the collective security provision of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Zimbabwe sent troops to Congo. Their military leaders subsequently joined the private sector and the Zimbabwean government to profit from the exploitation of diamonds and timber. A recently established company, SOCEBO, includes senior members of ZANU-PF and military figures. It has effectively created the world's largest logging concession by gaining rights to 33m hectares of forest in the DRC.¹³

Responsibility for resolving these wars lies not just within Africa, but also with the governments of Northern countries where the majority of these multi-national companies are domiciled. Northern governments have a role to play in ensuring that they are not furthering conflict by allowing the illegal or unethical exploitation of natural resources through companies under their jurisdiction. There needs to be a much tougher stance in dealing with those who profit from illegal exploitation and greed.

In recent years there has been a plethora of initiatives to try to tackle various aspects of war economies and unethical business ventures. The majority of these initiatives are voluntary and have no effective enforcement or monitoring mechanisms. Yet some have great potential, such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Companies and the work of the UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, which recently drafted the Fundamental Human Rights Principles for Business Enterprises. However, they need political will to be made effective. Governments and multinational companies need to take active steps to ensure full respect for international human rights and humanitarian standards by those involved in business operations in Africa. This can only be

done through a clear regulatory framework. Without it, those involved in illicit and unscrupulous business activities will continue to exploit Africa's resources, causing further suffering and increased conflict.

Recommendation: Stop the trade in illegal and unethical exploitation of natural resources.

- Northern and African governments should agree a UN protocol on the conduct of business, based on the Draft Fundamental Human Rights Principles for Business Enterprises drawn up by the UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. These principles should form the basis of an international regulatory framework that is binding on states and business enterprises. Governments should work to ensure that independent monitoring and enforcement mechanisms are part of this framework, learning from the lessons of the UN Panel of Experts model.
- Companies and governments should take active steps to implement the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, and ensure that the designated National Contact Points are given greater prominence, with powers for monitoring and enforcement. African governments should assist NCPs in their efforts to monitor company implementation of the guidelines. A company's willingness to implement the OECD guidelines according to the interpretation above should be a condition of eligibility for all Northern government guarantees and export credits.
- Companies should make a specific and public commitment to adhere to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. Companies should ensure that those involved in their business operations do not exacerbate or cause conflict, by committing that their operations will be run in such a way as to fully respect international human rights and humanitarian standards. For example, they should ensure that their personnel, and any security forces engaged by them, are fully informed of national and international guidelines for the use of force; in particular the UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials and the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials.
- Northern and African governments and other institutions should actively support and implement the Global Reporting Initiative, which seeks to implement globally applicable guidelines for reporting on the economic, environmental, and social

performance of corporations and governments. Governments should make it mandatory for companies to report periodically on their social and environmental performance against these established benchmarks. The GRI should develop stronger standards on reporting on operations in conflict zones. Companies should commit to full transparency of their operations by publishing details of all payments to national governments, including signature bonuses and revenue payments.

Recommendation: Reduce conflict in Africa, and prevent arms getting into the hands of those who abuse them.

- G8 and African leaders should agree a plan of action for intense diplomatic efforts to resolve the conflicts in Angola, the Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Mano River Basin region (Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea).
- An International Arms Trade Treaty to regulate the arms trade should be agreed, so that weapons are not transferred where they might be used in breach of international humanitarian law and human rights, or where this would undermine sustainable development.

A growing culture of impunity

Respect for human rights and the rule of law are essential to durable peace and long-term human development. Yet in those parts of Africa where the rule of law has broken down, there are now almost no effective justice mechanisms. Even in functioning states, degrees of impunity for criminal behaviour are evident at many levels. This culture of impunity has allowed appalling crimes to go by without investigation, legal redress, or recompense for the victims. In many instances, the international community has ignored these injustices, or even worse, directly contributed to human rights abuse and genocide. For millions of Africans, the rights set out in various conventions – International Humanitarian Law, International Refugee Law, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the UN Charter itself – have no meaning.

In the Great Lakes region alone, an astonishing five million people died from violent conflict in the last decade, including 800,000 people during the Rwandan genocide in 1994 and 2.5 million people in eastern DRC since 1998. The shockingly high death toll in eastern DRC continues today. While many of the deaths in the DRC can be attributed to the indirect effects of war, such as malnutrition and disease, thousands are also the result of direct violence. In 2001, it was estimated that one in every eight households in eastern DRC had

experienced a violent death since the start of the war. Forty per cent of these were women and children.¹⁴ As the UN Secretary General recently reported, human rights violations and disappearances continue with almost total impunity in the DRC. Civil and military authorities appear incapable of restoring peace and protecting the population, which has become a target for atrocities.¹⁵ To date, no single individual has been held to account before a national or international tribunal for these crimes in the DRC.

This culture of impunity has a significant impact. If there is no justice, local populations become despondent or may cause further violence by taking matters into their own hands. The search for justice must therefore be tackled at two levels. On the one hand, there needs to be a forum where serious war crimes and systematic human rights abuses are dealt with, sending out a clear signal that there will be retribution for such crimes. On the other, the culture of widespread criminal activity must also be tackled. This can best be done by improving local justice systems. It is vital that these solutions are Africa-led.

The implementation of justice must always take account of the specific case. As in South Africa in the 1990s, there will be cases when prosecuting the guilty will create more conflict than it will resolve. The key principle should be that those who have suffered, the women and men and civil-society organisations, should determine whether any post-conflict settlement simply brings war criminals to justice or finds some kind of accommodation with them. The international community should only support post-conflict arrangements that have this genuine popular support.

In recent years there have been some attempts at addressing the culture of impunity. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, based in Arusha, is seeking to prosecute those responsible for the genocide of some 800,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutus in 1994. Although progress has been slow, with only a handful of senior perpetrators convicted, it is a serious attempt to deal with such atrocities. Similarly, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa has helped that country overcome the culture of silence around crimes committed by the apartheid government, and helped move society towards reconciliation.

Through the adoption of the African Charter in June 1981, and the establishment of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Commission) in June 1987, African governments have indicated that human rights are in principle of concern to them. Unfortunately, the African Commission, which is responsible for monitoring state compliance, has not been effective. Countries have

failed to meet their commitment to supply reports every two years: in June 1998 more than 200 reports were overdue. While the establishment of the African Commission is applauded, significant efforts will be needed from African leaders to make it an effective body.

More recently, in addition to the African Commission, an African Court for Human and People's Rights has been proposed.¹⁶ Although not a criminal court, it will be an important step towards a comprehensive mechanism for the protection of human rights in Africa. It does not yet exist, but will be created when enough African governments have ratified it. Regrettably, only five have so far done so. To demonstrate their political will and commitment to accountability, African leaders should immediately ratify this court. They must take the lead in sending a strong signal that human rights violations are not acceptable in Africa.

There is further provision for an African Court of Justice in Article 18 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union. However, the functions, statute, and composition of this court have not yet been determined. Further progress on the development of this court would be welcome. It is also hoped that the establishment of an International Criminal Court will assist in dealing with war crimes in African situations. Although it is complementary to national courts, it may hear cases which national states are unwilling or unable to try.

The culture of impunity must be addressed at all levels. In addition to regional and international initiatives, there must also be stronger domestic justice systems. Too often these suffer from inefficiency and corruption, but should be the bedrock of the accountability required for long-term development. International donors should contribute to building transparent and effective systems of justice at national level.

Recommendation: End impunity by strengthening the African Commission and ratifying the African Court for People's and Human Rights.

- African governments should urgently ratify the African Court for Human and People's Rights, and ensure that it is functioning within the next two years.
- African leaders, with the support of Northern governments, should strengthen the African Commission on Human Rights as set up under the African Union. This would include enhanced funding, the appointment of independent and impartial commissioners, and the timely provision of reports by all African member states.

- All governments, including African governments, should ratify the statute of the International Criminal Court as soon as possible, and establish it with the support of the maximum possible number of governments, protecting its remit to pursue cases of gender violence.
- African governments should support popular and civil-society participation in all post-conflict settlements, to ensure that the women and men who have been affected decide whether or not to bring all war criminals to justice.
- Donors should invest in reform and development of the civil service in African states, including law enforcement agencies and judicial systems.

Corruption and bribery

The growing culture of impunity is reinforced by widespread corruption. Corruption, in a simple definition, is the misuse of entrusted power for private benefit. It is neither new nor Africa-specific. While corruption needs to be addressed on all continents, it is particularly pressing in Africa because of the major opportunity cost in terms of lost investment, and the unacceptable human cost in terms of suffering and impoverishment. In 2001, the Corruption Perception Index published by Transparency International indicated high levels of corruption in many African states. It ranked Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania as some of the most corrupt countries.

As globalisation accelerated in the 1990s, many African states, already weakened by decades of undemocratic leadership, unaccountable aid policies, debt, and structural adjustment, adapted to changes in the world economy in ways that benefited powerful interest groups rather than poor people. As a result, systemic corruption affected many areas of daily life. Corruption did not arrive when African states became newly independent. Studies note a lack of accountability and transparency during the colonial administrations inherited by independent African governments. Many of these colonial administrations favoured specific groups of people or individuals over others, and entrenched a system of privilege.

The culture of economic and financial corruption is insidious and corrosive. Illegal trafficking in people (mostly women), deadly weapons, narcotics, and valuable natural resources enriches individuals and defrauds states of much-needed revenue. Authoritative evidence shows that corruption fuels Africa's wars and generates widespread suffering. It has created a climate in which

progress towards poverty reduction is partially, or even completely, blocked.

A wide range of corrupt practices stretch from those of African leaders or business interests to petty day-to-day corruption, often a survival mechanism given failing social systems. Along this spectrum, corruption at senior levels is of greater significance and has much wider impact. It is this that places unbearable burdens on entire societies, particularly the most vulnerable, by enriching the few and impoverishing the many. Corruption has helped to accumulate crippling public debt, erode social structures, and destroy social services. At its worst, it has led to crime, armed violence, and humanitarian crisis.

Any serious and concerted effort against corruption must first and foremost have clear commitment from political leaders. This must go beyond words. African leaders cannot expect to be rewarded for efforts that have little meaning. For example, despite ample rhetoric from the Kenyan government about fighting corruption in Kenya, the Kenyan High Court declared the Kenya Anti-Corruption Authority unconstitutional in December 2000. In South Africa, the head of the Special Investigation Unit mandated to probe corruption was excluded by a constitutional commission from taking part in a high-profile investigation.

Business enterprises operating in Africa also need to address the issue. Corruption has serious links with the trend in war economies discussed above. In the extractive industry, 'Signature Bonus Payments' are used by companies to make large down payments in exchange for being able to bid for concessions. While these are legal, they often lack transparency and are rarely, if ever, used accountably by governments to eradicate poverty. There are currently moves through the Global Reporting Initiative and other non-governmental campaigns to encourage companies to be more transparent in their operations.

Governments alone cannot hope to contain corruption. They need, and must win, the support and participation of an active but independent civil society. Anti-corruption campaigns cannot succeed unless the public is behind them. Any serious tackling of corruption will therefore need to build on African civil society initiatives.

Recommendation: Tackle corruption and bribery, both nationally and internationally.

- The OECD 1998 Convention on bribery should be adopted into law by all OECD governments.

- A UN convention on corruption, currently in development, should be rapidly instituted and ratified by all UN members, and include bribery within its remit.
- African governments should strengthen the involvement of civil society institutions, particularly the media, to fight corruption and to tackle the problem of bribes at levels where ordinary people are most affected.
- The African Union should focus on further measures to fight corruption. Financial assistance and technical expertise should be made available to promote transparency and accountability in the operations of African governments, and specifically to strengthen the security and independence of judicial systems.
- African governments should take a much tougher stance on corruption within national policy, including this as part of the PRSP process where this exists. National legislation against corruption must be strengthened.

HIV/AIDS pandemic

AIDS is arguably the biggest threat facing Africa today. In 1998, conflict killed 200,000 people and AIDS killed over ten times as many. Since the epidemic began, 16.3 million people have died of the disease. Most, by far, have died in Africa.¹⁷ Some 28 million adults and children in the continent were living with HIV or AIDS by the end of 2001. It is estimated that HIV/AIDS infects another person in Africa every 25 seconds. There were an estimated 3.5 million new infections in the region in 2001 alone.¹⁸ The adult prevalence rate in sub-Saharan Africa is approximately 8.4 per cent, compared with a global rate of 1.2 per cent.¹⁹ The statistics may be significantly worse, since it is nearly impossible to get accurate HIV data from countries in conflict. The magnitude of the AIDS crisis far exceeds the worst expectations of a decade ago.

The effects of the AIDS pandemic are enormous and far-reaching. It has already resulted in a 2-4 per cent drop in average national economic growth rates across Africa,²⁰ and is one of the most powerful barriers to achieving the 2015 Millennium Development Goals.

Impacts on people are severe. Africa is the only continent where more women than men are infected. Young girls are at particular risk, partly because of growing gender-based violence such as rape, but also because of the prevalent dominance of men over women.

The most productive age group of 20 to 50 years is particularly affected. Productivity drops, and the workloads of inexperienced young people and the elderly increase. Families try to cope by reducing food intake, and selling productive assets in order to pay for health care. Women and girls are especially susceptible to HIV transmission, and are more vulnerable to the impacts of illness and death. Children are pulled out of school to care for their parents, to earn money, and to bring food to the table. This often puts particularly harsh demands on girls, including reliance on commercial sex work or acceptance of early marriages. Once out of school, children are less likely to return, and therefore their skills and options for employment or self-employment will be limited.

As more people are affected, the impact ripples throughout society and entire sectors of the economy. In Zambia, more teachers may be dying each year of AIDS than are graduating from all teacher-training institutions.²¹ Agricultural productivity is being undermined, reducing food, income, and foreign exchange. Health systems that should be responding to the crisis are collapsing: demand for health care is growing, while capacity to provide services is decreasing as medical personnel and support staff themselves fall sick and die. Programmes to replace skilled professionals are critical. However, rich countries such as Australia, Canada, the United States, and the UK actively recruit medical professionals away from hard-hit countries such as Zimbabwe and South Africa.

There are hopeful signs. New rates of infection among 15–19-year-old girls in Lusaka, Zambia, and among youth in Masaka, Uganda, appear to have declined by one-half.²² Growing sections of civil society in South Africa are pushing the government to acknowledge and address the pandemic. Some businesses, especially mining companies, which historically fuelled the pandemic through systems of migrant labour that split men from their families, are leading the way in trying to develop practical responses to reduce transmission, provide treatment, and minimise impact. In 2001, African leaders, as well as civil society, successfully promoted wider recognition of the urgency of responding to HIV/AIDS. At the World Trade Organisation's summit held in Doha, Qatar, developed countries were forced to acknowledge the principle that public health must take priority over rigid patent protection.

Some African leaders have undertaken highly public campaigns to raise awareness and address the problem, notably in Uganda, Senegal, and Botswana. The OAU Abuja AIDS Summit in April 2001 dealt with some of the serious issues surrounding the virus, and acknowledged that both treatment and prevention are indispensable in the fight against AIDS. However, other African leaders have

virtually ignored the pandemic, or have acted in ways that have directly contributed to the problem.

HIV/AIDS is undermining the capacity of African society to deal with the heavy burdens it already bears. Conflict displaces hundreds of thousands of people, increasing the risk of sexual violence and the economic dependence of women and children, which greatly increases their susceptibility to HIV transmission, and their vulnerability to the impacts of ill health. Corruption undermines efforts to provide effective and efficient basic services, such as the provision of basic information and the counselling that can reduce transmission, or the simple treatment of opportunistic illnesses.

HIV/AIDS is a great human tragedy for Africa with major security, economic, and political consequences. A serious battle against HIV/AIDS will require significant movement on the political and operational fronts. Political will is needed in acknowledging the extent of the problem and adopting policies which put HIV/AIDS at the centre of any development agenda. Operationally, this will require funding. The Global Health Fund estimates that it will only have 10 per cent of the estimated amount needed this year to battle against the disease. Despite the strong words and promises of some African and donor governments, deeds are not matching words.

Recommendation: Declare a ‘War on Aids’ with an immediate increase in funds.

- The donor community should fully finance the US\$10bn Global Fund to Fight AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and ensure that the fund uses the cheapest, good quality drugs, including generic drugs, that are available.
- African governments should strengthen institutional capacities to respond to the HIV/AIDS epidemic and mitigate its impact on households, women, and young people. Radical steps through public education campaigns and support networks should be taken to address the impact on national economic growth.
- World leaders should meet their commitment in the June 2001 UN Declaration to address the issue of HIV/AIDS and conflict – especially, but not only, in humanitarian assistance to affected and displaced populations.
- Donor and African governments should ensure that the impact of HIV/AIDS is a consideration in all programmes, and make available adequate funding for this element in aid budgets.

Inadequate international support

Given the scale of the problems facing Africa today, it is remarkable that external assistance is actually declining.

Falling aid

In recent years rich nations have dramatically decreased their levels of development assistance to Africa: between 1990 and 1999, this fell by over 40 per cent. Per capita aid to sub-Saharan Africa fell from US\$34 to US\$20 in the second half of the 1990s, even as per capita GDP in OECD countries rose from US\$16,000 to \$20,000.

In 1970 the UN and many other donors agreed that 0.7 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) should be spent on overseas development assistance (ODA). However, ODA provided by the 22 members of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee in 2000 was an average of only 0.22 per cent. If all OECD governments were spending 0.7 per cent of GNP on development assistance, aid flows would be \$114bn higher.

The world's largest economies – the Group of Seven – have led by bad example. In terms of per capita spending, only Japan was spending more on aid at the end of the 1990s than at the start of the decade. Countries such as the United States, Canada, Italy, and Germany have cut per capita aid by one-third or more. The United States, the world's wealthiest economy, allocates only 0.1 per cent of GNP to aid, which is less than half of the OECD average. When compared to military spend the picture is even worse. Total humanitarian aid to Africa in 2000 was less than US\$2bn; most of this was very unevenly distributed. By contrast, world military expenditure in the same year, a decade after the end of the cold war, was estimated at \$798bn.

At the UN General Assembly in 2000, the world's governments pledged to eradicate extreme poverty, reduce child deaths and extend educational opportunities. Ambitious human development targets for 2015 – the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – were adopted. On present trends, all the MDGs will be missed by a wide margin. The region furthest off-track is sub-Saharan Africa. While it is difficult to calculate exactly how much money is needed to achieve the MDG's, Oxfam estimates that an extra \$100bn per annum will be needed – a large, but affordable figure.²³ Of this, Africa will require \$40bn. For the OECD as a whole, this represents the equivalent of only six weeks subsidy payments currently made to relatively high-income farmers and agri-business corporations.

Aid has often been distributed in a grossly unequal way. This is especially true in relation to humanitarian interventions where, under

international law, people in need have equal status and right to assistance, wherever they are. In 1999 donor governments gave US\$207 per person to the UN appeal for the former Yugoslavia, but only US\$16 per person in Sierra Leone, and US\$8 in the DRC. The numbers reveal the two-tier approach adopted by the international community with regard to humanitarian emergencies. Aid is forthcoming for the victims of wars which occupy the media spotlight, or for countries of strategic interest to Western governments. But most humanitarian disasters, and certainly those in sub-Saharan Africa, have rightly been termed 'forgotten emergencies.'

Development aid has not always been well used. It has sometimes propped up corrupt governments and been wasted on bad projects. Yet despite its negative press, official development assistance has played a critical role in supporting human development. It has played a vital role in financing access to basic services. In the case of Uganda, for example, school enrolment rates increased from 54 per cent to 80 per cent between 1996 and 1998 after education charges were phased out.

Where governments have strong national poverty-reduction strategies, aid generates very large returns. The changing environment is epitomised by the adoption of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), intended to strengthen ownership and broaden civil-society representation on public-spending priorities. There are serious problems with the PRSPs. Consultation with civil society has been mixed and, in some cases, governments and/or the IMF-World Bank have adopted schedules that preclude effective dialogue. Yet the PRSP framework marks an important step in the right direction. Important benefits are emerging despite patchy performance. For example, in Ghana the influence of civil society through the PRSP process has helped to focus attention on the more deprived areas in the North of the country, and in Ethiopia the process set out strategies for building in improvements in primary education, notably by reducing gender-based inequalities.

Aid should not be given blindly, nor should donors assume that targeting it towards human development sectors will automatically lead to good governance. In the past, the effectiveness of aid has been compromised by bad policies, both of donors and some corrupt African governments. Reforms are needed on the part of Northern and African governments if real progress is to be made. Many developing-country governments are changing their budget priorities far too slowly, if at all. Deep-rooted problems of corruption, excessive military spending, and a bias towards services sparsely used by the poor, such as higher education and curative health care, remain.

Despite their rhetoric, many donors need to do much more to address serious problems in aid quality, such as the under-financing of education, weak donor co-ordination, inappropriate policy conditions, tied aid, and geopolitical priorities. Aid is especially problematic where recipients are involved in conflict, and where budget support in particular could be used for purposes other than poverty alleviation.

Unfair Trade

Africa gets a particularly raw deal when it comes to trade. Northern governments shut Africa out of world markets, and dump subsidised surpluses into African markets, undermining local production. At the same time, African countries are forced through IMF conditionality to open their markets at breakneck speed. As the IMF director Horst Koehler stressed in January, 'rich countries still spend hundreds of billions of dollars on subsidies in areas where developing countries have a comparative advantage – as in agriculture, processed foods, textiles, clothing, and light manufacturing.'²⁴

Africa's share of world trade has fallen from more than 3 per cent in 1950 to only 1.2 per cent (excluding South Africa) in the mid 1990s. In the past ten years, world trade in primary commodities has been growing at less than one-third of the rate for trade in manufactured goods. Countries dependent on primary commodities are trailing behind. This dependency is most pronounced in sub-Saharan Africa where 17 countries depend on commodities (excluding oil) for over three-quarters or more of their export earnings. In many cases, a large share of export earnings derives from a small group of products. Coffee alone accounts for nearly 60% of Ethiopia's exports, cotton for around half of Burkina Faso's exports and coca for nearly one quarter of Ghana's exports. When commodity prices collapse, the impact on a country can be devastating. In Ethiopia, for instance, a combination of lower production and lower price caused export earnings from coffee to collapse from \$257m to \$176m in just one year.

Business investment is essential to Africa's development. Yet private investment has often exacerbated conflict rather than reduced poverty, as the growth of war economies shows. A large percentage of foreign direct investment is in the extractives sector. A report released in January 2002 by the International Trade Commission shows significant increases in US imports from Africa for 2001, but these were overwhelmingly dominated by oil and other energy-related products.²⁵ While this trade is mostly legitimate, much of it is unaccountable and unethical and, as discussed, can have devastating impacts on local economies and human rights. Business investment in Africa should not be halted, but it should be regulated to ensure

that it results in maximum benefit to local communities and drives development forward.

Deeper Debt Relief

The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative marked a major step forward towards debt sustainability. However, the headline figures are misleading. Total debt service relief for the 23 countries covered by HIPC in mid-2001 amounted to a projected \$34bn. But 15 of these countries were still spending more than 10 per cent of government revenue on debt servicing. More than half were spending more on debt than on primary education; two-thirds were spending more on debt than on health services. In the case of Zambia, a country with rising levels of illiteracy and child mortality, almost one-quarter of the government budget is still allocated to debt repayments even after HIPC Initiative debt relief.

Despite claims by creditors for the success of HIPC, the IMF estimates that Africa's debt service payments would only fall as low as 17.1 per cent of export earnings in 2001 (down from 20.3 per cent in 1999), before rising again to 18.4 per cent in 2002.²⁶ This is still a crippling economic burden, as African leaders and debt campaigners continue to stress. Most of this debt is owed to the World Bank and the IMF, organisations with a mandate to combat poverty. Neither of these institutions, nor rich creditor countries, gives any indication they are willing to consider more than marginal adjustments to the HIPC programme.

Recommendation: Increase aid to Africa, especially for education, and deepen debt relief.

- The international donor community should increase overall aid budgets to Africa by US\$40bn per year if development goals are to be achieved. This is the equivalent of approximately six weeks subsidy to farmers in OECD countries.
- The G8 and other key donors should demonstrate the effectiveness of aid and strong partnership by investing in education and increasing their spending in this sector by US\$4bn per year. Donors should ensure that no national strategy for achieving universal access to good quality education fails for want of finance by developing a global initiative on education. There should be an international commitment to achieve the abolition of education charges within three years, and specifically to finance the gap caused by the abolition of fees.
- There should be deeper debt relief for those African governments firmly committed to poverty reduction. This should be based on the proposals set out by African governments in the NEPAD

initiative, which link debt relief with costed poverty-reduction outcomes.

- Debt relief under the HIPC Initiative should be extended to ensure that debt repayments do not undermine financing for the MDGs, and that no government allocates more than 10 per cent of revenue to debt servicing.
- The international response to humanitarian crises should be determined by need, not by strategic interest or media coverage. Donors should devise an effective approach to sharing the responsibility for meeting global humanitarian need based on their respective wealth.

Recommendation: Improve the terms of trade for Africa

- The G8 should take the lead and open its markets to all products from African countries and agree a timetable to ban export subsidies and restructure all farm subsidies to achieve social and environmental objectives, rather than increased output.
- The use of conditions attached to IMF/World Bank programmes, which force poor countries to liberalise their markets rapidly, regardless of the impact on the poor, should be ended.
- A new international commodities institution should be supported, to tackle the crisis in commodity prices by promoting diversification and managing over-supply.
- Donors need to work together to secure tiered-pricing agreements from companies. They should reform the TRIPS Agreement to strengthen existing public health safeguards and introduce longer transition periods for poor countries. Furthermore, they should support the proposal to lift TRIPS restrictions on pharmaceutical exports to countries in Africa with an insufficient manufacturing capacity.

Optimism for the future

Is there hope for the future? The gravity of the situation in Africa has attracted greater attention in the past year, and there are certainly some positive signs. Africans are increasingly holding their governments to account: they are actively demanding change and greater inclusiveness. Local and regional media are speaking openly and freely about highly controversial political issues, against enormous odds. Women's groups and other networks have raised the profile of female genital mutilation, domestic violence, and rape.

Local non-governmental organisations are pressing their governments to fight HIV/AIDS and increase access to reproductive health. In 2001, an alliance of activists forced multinational drug companies to withdraw a legal challenge to South Africa's right to obtain more affordable medicine. Peace building and conflict resolution efforts at local levels across the continent are increasing. Governments are tacitly engaging with these social movements. In Uganda, for example, the Participatory Poverty Assessment has involved civil society in developing, implementing, and monitoring a Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan (PRSP).

Most significantly, African governments have recognised the need for concerted action and have demonstrated new political will to achieve this. In July 2001, they transformed the Organisation for African Unity and created an ambitious new structure, the African Union, with a view to reinvigorating collective action across the continent.

A key initiative by African leaders, approved by the African Union, is the 'New Partnership for African Development' (NEPAD). It argues that Africa's future is in its own hands. It calls for a new relationship between Africa and the international community based on a commitment to good governance, democracy, and human rights. At the same time, African leaders will endeavour to prevent and resolve conflict and instability, thereby creating the conditions conducive for investment, growth, and development. The NEPAD analysis recognises that Africa cannot be understood without an understanding of the legacy of the continent's history, and its interaction with the rest of the world.

The advantage of NEPAD stems directly from its origins and status as a regional institution with roots in African democracies.²⁷ Africans must lead Africa out of poverty. The most effective policies and programmes are those based on domestic processes of consultation and fair decision-making. That requires good governance, a capable state with effective institutions, sound economic management, and the participation of all sectors of society.²⁸ African governments can and should do significantly more to involve civil society in governance, especially in relation to NEPAD, which can be seen as a rather top-down approach.

At an international level there appears to be greater willingness to help address the crisis in Africa. It is still unclear whether this will lead to the dramatic change in political will that is required. The NEPAD initiative has been well received by the main development players in Africa, including the G8, the European Union, the UN, and the World Bank. International donors appear to be in agreement about Africa's unique problems and the need for special

arrangements in a range of development areas. They applaud African governments for taking ownership and responsibility for the development process – and promise to support them in doing so.

Since September 2001 the political context for international action, and the prospects for addressing some of the underlying and chronic inequities that continue to undermine global security, have changed. Nearly every world leader has drawn connections between the acts of terrorism on 11 September and the global crisis of poverty, inequality, failed diplomacy, and persistent humanitarian need. The crisis in global security has been linked to the crisis of globalisation, whereby the exclusionary effects of many international policies have led to extreme polarisation and frustration around the world. This analysis has generated ambitious proposals to shift the patterns of globalisation radically in favour of the poor and to create a more just and inclusive approach to development.

However, there has been very little political action or new resources to match these good intentions. The world has seen little, if anything, of the promised resources for building the foundations for lasting peace and security that so many of its leaders have promised.

Afghanistan highlighted the need to deal with the root causes of conflict and insecurity. It is not sustainable to have millions of people excluded from basic opportunities, and for part of the world to get richer, while the rest gets poorer. These issues will not go away. Their consequences will be even greater if they are not systematically and definitively addressed.²⁹

Taking action to address these fundamental causes is not only a moral imperative; it is also in the security interests of the world community. It is time to make globalisation work for the poor, and to reform a range of interconnected policies that lie at the heart of global security. A number of key meetings this year will provide opportunities to discuss and address these issues for Africa: the IMF/World Bank Spring meetings in April, the G-8 meeting in Canada in June, the inaugural summit of the African Union in July, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in August.

Recommendation: Support the NEPAD initiative through enhanced political engagement and consultation with civil society.

- African leaders and international donors to ensure genuine, participative, and inclusive governance by engaging with civil society on the goals, strategies, and monitoring of NEPAD.

- Northern governments, especially G8 leaders, to support the NEPAD initiative through a concrete plan of action and committed funds.
- Donor governments and African governments to create an independent monitoring and appraisal body to monitor donor performance in Africa, as proposed by African governments under the NEPAD initiative.

Recommendation: Improve the accountability of African states through greater engagement with civil society.

- The African Union should develop a systematic approach of engaging with all its institutions and with civil society organisations, to ensure that the African Union can be truly characterised as a ‘Community of Peoples’. Consultation and monitoring should be done in tandem with civil society to develop a culture of good governance.
- African governments and international donors should improve accountability by strengthening the role of national and regional African civil-society organizations and by encouraging joint planning, such as through the PRSP process. This is particularly important in conflict situations.
- African governments should develop specific plans for increasing women's participation in local and national governance, with particular reference to the Beijing Platform for Action. Action should be taken to decrease gender inequality, including the implementation of zero tolerance to gender-based violence. This is especially urgent in the context of HIV/AIDS.

No more ‘Business as Usual’

Moving towards a new and effective partnership with Africa that benefits Africans will require a major shift – both within Africa and outside it. Throughout its history, the continent has been exploited: during the slave trade by a desire for labour, and in the colonial period by the scramble for land and wealth. During the Cold War, Africa was used as an ideological battleground to further geo-political strategies. Africa’s relationship with the rich world has been far from a partnership of equals. While much has changed, much also remains the same. The ‘business as usual’ approach must be stopped.

The problems facing Africa can only be addressed through a focus on justice and genuine partnership. This requires a different kind of engagement at global, regional, and national levels between the

international community and African leaders, underpinned by a new commitment to accountability from both.

At **global** level, there is a need to create the conditions for effective global governance that supports a new kind of partnership with Africa. It is at this level that issues of global trade, investment, business partnerships, financing, and international engagement must be addressed, based on the accountability of all actors and mutual rights and responsibilities.

At **regional** level, there is a need to re-invigorate forms of political and economic cooperation, especially with regard to peace-building and peace-keeping measures. It is perhaps at this level that the best chance lies for finding new approaches to deal with those accused of committing crimes against humanity, war crimes, and profiteering from war economies, as well as combating corruption. While it is important to tackle issues such as impunity and corruption, it is equally critical to find ways of healing the socio-cultural fabric of countries that have been exposed to conflict.

At **national** level, there is a need to create the conditions that allow African countries to function as legitimate states, with a social contract between their governments/leaders and their people. This means states that are accountable to their citizens, and capable of providing them with security and the rule of law, conditions for safe and secure livelihoods, as well as public services such as health and education. This will require much greater engagement with social movements and civil society on the part of African leaders.

At each of these levels, practical mechanisms and procedures are required to enforce accountability.

There is no 'one size fits all' solution to the African crisis. On the one hand, steps must be taken to tackle conflict, through concerted diplomatic action, and provide humanitarian assistance to affected populations. These efforts will need to take into account the underlying causes of conflict, including natural resource extraction. At the same time, strong support must also be given to those countries not directly involved in conflict, which are taking positive action to reduce poverty and strengthen governance with the involvement of civil society. Finding sustainable solutions to the gravity of the problems facing Africa today will lie in the ability to move forward both these strategies simultaneously.

Prosperity and peace in Africa can only be achieved if the local, national, regional, and international dimensions of the current crisis are addressed. Now is the time when words might actually be turned into deeds, when Africa might be helped to take the right path from the crossroads at which it now stands. The challenge for Africa is not

wondering which route to take, or what to do, but generating the will to do it.

Notes

- ¹ Estimates range between 45 per cent and 52 per cent.
- ² Estimates from WHO, Harvard University, and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.
- ³ Rwandan Government Report.
- ⁴ World Bank (2000). DfID (2000) 'White Paper on Globalisation'.
- ⁵ Coltan is shorthand for columbite-tantalite, a steel-grey, metallic mineral ore that is found in the Americas, Africa, and South-East Asia. It is a highly versatile raw material that is used in a number of highly strategic industries for its resilience to high temperatures, corrosion by acids, and ability to conduct heat and electricity. It is particularly important in the production of capacitors for mobile telephones, personal computers, games consoles, video recorders, camcorders, and automotive electronics.
- ⁶ Oxfam GB (2002) 'Poverty in the Midst of Wealth', Briefing Paper No. 12, Oxford: Oxfam
- ⁷ Christian Aid 'Scorched Earth'
- ⁸ See UN 'Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo'.
- ⁹ World Bank *et al.* (2000) *Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?*
- ¹⁰ Christian Aid 'Scorched Earth'
- ¹¹ Oxfam America, 'Extractive Sectors and the Poor', Oct 2001.
- ¹² Dietrich, C. (2001) 'Les Commerçants Militaires Sans Ethiques et Sans Frontières', International Peace and Information Service
- ¹³ Global Witness (2001) 'Zimbabwe's Resource Colonialism in the DRC', London, 26 August
- ¹⁴ IRC (2001) 'Mortality in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo'
- ¹⁵ Tenth report of the Secretary General on the UN Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, February 2002
- ¹⁶ This court is set out under the protocol to the African Charter of Human and People's Rights adopted by the African Union in 1998.
- ¹⁷ UNICEF 'Children Orphaned by AIDS: Frontline Responses from Eastern and Southern Africa'
- ¹⁸ *Ibid*, p3
- ¹⁹ UNAIDS 'AIDS Epidemic Update' December 2001, page 3
- ²⁰ Dixon, S., S. MacDonald, and J. Roberts 'The Importance of HIV and AIDS in Africa's Economic Development, *British Medical Journal* 324, 26 January, p232

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- ²¹ Kelly, M.J. (2000) 'What HIV/AIDS Can Do To Education, and What Education Can Do to HIV/AIDS', paper for presentation to the All sub-Saharan Africa Conference on Education for All, Johannesburg, 6 December 1999
- ²² UNAIDS (2000) 'Report on the Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic', p10
- ²³ For more information, see Oxfam 'Last Chance in Monterrey: Meeting the Challenge of Poverty Reduction', Briefing Paper No. 17, March 2002
- ²⁴ Minter, W. and S. Booker (2002) 'Africa Policy Outlook 2002: African Priorities Ignored due to Washington's War on Terrorism', *Foreign Policy Focus*, February 2002, p3.
- ²⁵ Ibid
- ²⁶ Ibid
- ²⁷ Kanbur, R. (2001) 'The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD): An Initial Commentary', Southern African Regional Poverty Network, December 2001, p5
- ²⁸ 'Fulfilling Africa's Promise', Millennium Lecture by K.Y. Amoako, Downing Street, London, 17 December 2000
- ²⁹ For more information, see 'From Words to Deeds', Briefing Paper No. 14, 19 December 2001.

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