

Humanitarian Committee, PRAMUN 2017

Synopsis

Topic #1: Establishing post-war relief in African countries

I. Background Information

Surrounded by water from all directions, Africa has become a vital asset to the world. Consisting of a total 54 independent states, Africa has had many internal and external conflicts, some of which are still on going. Much of the deep rooted problem that stem wars in Africa, date back to the late 18 hundreds. Artificial borders divided much of the continent. This was known as The Scramble for Africa. Colonization was motivated by the European hunger for African resources. The subsequent exploitation of the African people and the uprooting of their spiritual values by christian missionaries left heavy influence on the continent.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes have benefited around 70,000 ex-combatants in Sierra Leone and more than 100,000 in Liberia, as well as many displaced people. Assistance has taken a number of forms: cash handouts, skills training and short-term employment, usually in public-works projects. Besides dealing with short funding, programmes also had to deal with the trauma suffered by many ex-combatants. Many in their home communities were deeply angry over the violence and atrocities committed during years of war, and resentful that perpetrators were being unjustly “rewarded” for their violence.

The employment element of DDR was a short-term programme designed to help calm the situation in immediate post-war periods. Maintaining job creation programmes over several years is essential for successfully sustaining peacebuilding operations. Cash handouts and training were presented as a humanitarian contribution to young people who have often been abused and deprived of their chance for schooling or to learn skills.

African countries emerging from war, observed how debt relief can provide a vital financial boost, enabling a shift of scarce revenues from debt payments to reconstruction and combating poverty. Eliminating a high debt burden can also encourage domestic and foreign investors to finance new ventures. Many countries rebuilding from war have received some debt relief. In an analysis of 16 post-conflict African countries published in May 2009 by researchers of the

African Development Bank, debt relief accounted for nearly a quarter of all financial assistance to those countries in 2003.

II. United Nations Involvement

With assistance from all relevant United Nations entities, offices and specialized agencies are able to provide humanitarian assistance to rehabilitate political institutions and economy while promoting political settlement and national reconciliation. Such assistance should include economic relief and rehabilitation, the repatriation of refugees and displaced persons, the re-establishment of national and regional institutions and civil administration in the entire country, as well as the the re-establishment of police. Generating decent and sustainable livelihoods for Africa's poor is at the heart of the continent's development plans and the ultimate goal of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the blueprint adopted by African leaders in 2001. Achieving that goal, however, has proved to be profoundly difficult, especially so in countries struggling to recover from years of civil strife.

In recent years the UN has mounted peacekeeping operations in Angola, Congo, Eritrea and Ethiopia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan and Chad. UN's ability to develop a fully workable peacekeeping mission in Sudan and Chad (2007), where rebellion in Sudan's Darfur region and bordering parts of Chad created large numbers of refugees beginning in 2003. The UN peacekeeping mission along the Eritrea-Ethiopia border (2000–2008) was ended after the two benefiting nations undermined it. In 2011, in response to fighting in Libya, the Security Council authorized a no-fly zone in Libya to protect civilians and imposed sanctions on the government, but the NATO-Arab mission enforcing the zone also acted at times in apparent support of the rebels, who ultimately overthrew the government.

Resettling refugees and displaced people and demobilizing and reintegrating combatants were the first priorities for the new elected governments of both Sierra Leone and Liberia. With impoverished and disaffected youth predominant in many of the armed groups that had ravaged their countries, both governments were clear on the potentially lethal consequences of failing to provide employment for those aged between 15 and 35. It is a simple equation: "If they have an alternative, they do not fight," says Andrea Tamagnini, who heads up the reintegration, rehabilitation and recovery arm of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). The continuing high

number of unemployed or underemployed youth “remains a particular concern that could be used by spoilers seeking to undermine stability,” UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned in a February report on Liberia to the Security Council. In January, Mr. Ban voiced similar concerns about Sierra Leone.

III. Bloc Positions

The African Union originated from the now defunct Organization of African Unity (OAU). The objectives of the OAU were to rid the continent of the remaining vestiges of colonization and apartheid, to promote unity and solidarity among African states, to coordinate and intensify cooperation for development, to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each member state, and to promote international cooperation within the framework of the United Nations. The OAU was fairly successful in achieving these goals. However, the goals of the African Union and its member states have evolved from establishing the independence of former colonies to economic and political hardships on the continent.

The AU has added the protection of human rights, promotion of sustainable development, and eradication of preventable diseases to its list of goals. The AU’s concern with these newer goals is evident in its efforts to bring an end to the humanitarian and political crisis in Zimbabwe. The AU is Africa’s principal organization for the promotion of solutions to socio-economic issues, unity among the African people, partnerships between governments and civil society, stability and peace, and development programs for Africa.

The AU has also begun to take a more active role in creating and sustaining peace after conflicts on the continent. The AU is working with the UN in the United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) hybrid peacekeeping mission. The AU has also deployed a peacekeeping mission to Somalia in an attempt to provide stability within the country. In addition to the AU mission in Somalia (ANISOM), the AU has also deployed missions of negotiators to help bridge the gaps between conflicting groups within the country.

IV. Questions to Consider

When writing your Position Papers and Resolutions, concentrate on the following questions:

- What is my country's official position/stance when it comes to providing post-war relief?
- Does my country have affiliations to African countries? If yes, what are they?
- Are there UN actions that your country supported or opposed regarding the topic?
- How do other countries positions affect your country's position on the residing issue?
- Which aspects of the issue are most important to your country?
- Is there evidence or statistics that help back your country's position?

Concentrate on researching relevant information that applies to your country. You will need to have a firm understanding of your country's policy towards issues. It is important to have knowledge of prior events, seeing that there could be some sort of connection to be made. Also, familiarizing yourself with other countries positions is recommended.

V. Sources and Useful Links

Basic Information

<https://www.countries-ofthe-world.com/countries-of-africa.html>

Peace Building

<http://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/january-2013/after-africa%E2%80%99s-wars-%E2%80%98new-day%E2%80%99-building-peace>

Rebuilding Postwar Rwanda

<http://www.oecd.org/countries/rwanda/50189461.pdf>

Basis for Understanding Humanitarian Aid Operations

<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/humanitarian-aid>

Humanitarian Emergencies

<https://www.nap.edu/read/9897/chapter/11>

