

# African leader calls for equitable terms of trade

Western farm subsidies impoverishing millions: Chirac



**HUNGER AND STRIFE:** Members of the Coalition of African Alternatives, Debt and Development stage a protest in Bamako, Mali, on Friday. — PHOTO: AFP

**BAMAKO (MALI):** Africa's woes came under the spotlight here on Sunday on the second and final day of a Franco-African summit, with calls for fairer trade terms being made ahead of global talks in Hong Kong later this month.

Mali's President Amadou Toumani Toure said trade ties based on "equity and justice" were fundamental, and that farming, for a number of African countries, offered "enormous potential for growth" and jobs.

"But Africa reaps rather little profit from its agriculture on a world market whose rules are distorted by subsidies," he told African leaders and French President Jacques Chirac.

The French leader and, for the

first time at an Africa-France Summit, representatives of all 53 African states, including more than 20 heads of state, were gathered in the Malian capital, Bamako.

#### Focus on youth

The official theme of the summit, which was Africa's youth.

Earlier on Sunday, Mr. Chirac and Mr. Toure met a youth delegation to present a written response to an address read out on behalf of young people at the opening of the summit.

Trade was also in the spotlight ahead of a meeting of the 148-nation World Trade Organisation from December 13-18 in Hong Kong, which will seek an accord enabling a global

trade liberalisation pact to take effect next year.

Four years of talks have largely stalled over the degree to which rich countries offer financial support to their agriculture sectors. France is the biggest beneficiary of European Union farm subsidies.

"Cotton, produced by 33 African countries, is symbolic of inequitable trade which deprives our countries of indispensable resources..." Mr. Toure told the opening of the summit.

"Are we going to continue in Africa sowing cotton to harvest deficits, while others, more affluent, sow the same cotton to harvest subsidies?"

The European Commission

has said it will push for a substantial cut in cotton subsidies in Hong Kong, and Mr. Chirac called here on the United States to remove subsidies to their cotton producers.

#### Against hasty move

"Such subsidies impoverish millions of small African producers despite the competitiveness of the latter," he said.

The French leader said African farmers must "receive a fair reward for their work" but warned against "hasty and generalised liberalisation of agricultural trade" ruining efforts of least developed countries.

The U.N. says 320 million people in Africa survive on less than one dollar a day. — AFP

# Liberia's Iron Lady

## takes charge

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2/14

**Monrovia (Liberia), Nov. 23**  
(Reuters): Liberia's former finance minister Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf became the first woman to be elected head of state of an African country today when she was declared the winner of a presidential run-off.

Liberia's electoral commission said official results from the November 8 run-off showed the Harvard-trained World Bank economist beat soccer millionaire George Weah by winning 59.4 per cent of the valid votes, compared to Weah's 40.6 per cent.

"Consequently, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, having received more than 50 per cent of the valid votes cast from November 8, is hereby declared the winner of the presidential election," NEC chairwoman Frances Johnson-Morris announced at an official ceremony in the capital Monrovia.

"I feel very fine. I am happy about my election and I thank the Liberian people for their support," the 67-year-old President-elect, who wore a maroon African robe and headcloth, said as her supporters cheered and sang around her. She is nicknamed the Iron Lady.

Liberia's electoral authorities confirmed Johnson-Sirleaf's win even though they were still investigating a formal complaint from Weah that the polls were fraudulent.

Supporters of the former AC Milan striker, who has a strong following among mostly young Liberians, staged street protests last week, some of which turned into clashes with police.

International observers had praised the elections, the first since the end of a 14-year civil war in the West African state, as free and fair. Several hundred foreign observers and 15,000 UN troops and police supervised the polls.

Weah's Congress for Democratic Change party said it would continue to contest the election result.



Johnson-Sirleaf: New start

THE TELEGRAPH

# Sirleaf wins Liberian poll

Makes history as Africa's first elected woman head of state

Africa  
AP-19  
2/1/11



**A UNIQUE DISTINCTION:** Liberian President-elect Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf (centre) at the official result announcement ceremony in Monrovia on Wednesday. — PHOTO: AP

**MONROVIA:** Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has won Liberia's presidential vote, becoming Africa's first elected woman head of state and embarking on a six-year mission to lift the war-torn country towards prosperity and reconciliation.

"I thank the Liberian people for performing their legal duty and I am happy to be the next President of Liberia," Ms. Sirleaf (67) told reporters after a ceremony on Wednesday certifying the November 8 results in Monrovia.

The Harvard-educated banker bested football hero George

Weah in a run-off aimed to help Liberia turn the page on decades of lawlessness and corruption after back-to-back civil wars since 1989.

She will be inaugurated on January 16, as will the new bicameral legislature for Africa's oldest independent republic, settled in 1847 by freed American slaves.

"The official results as certified by the Board of Commissioners of the National Elections Commission are as follows: Ellen Johnson Sirleaf with 59.4 per cent of the vote and George Weah with 40.6 per cent of the

vote," said NEC chairwoman Frances Johnson Morris.

"Consequently, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is hereby declared the winner of the run-off election."

## Complaint process

Mr. Weah has alleged massive vote fraud in the November 8 polls, and has launched a complaint process with the NEC that his party, the Congress for Democratic Change, has vowed to take to the Supreme Court.

The 39-year-old former FIFA player of the year did not attend Wednesday's ceremony, which his party said was in line with his

complaints. Ms. Sirleaf now faces the task of rebuilding a country shorn of infrastructure, with high unemployment and threatened by the cross-border recruitment of young fighters to feed west Africa's enduring conflicts. A former Finance Minister who was twice jailed for treason during the 1980s regime of military dictator Samuel Doe, Ms. Sirleaf has vowed to serve just one term in office, couching her Government as a transitional one to be backed up by the 15,000-strong U.N. peacekeeping mission on the ground since October 2003. — AFP

# Political unrest churns the home of African Union

## The capital city of Ethiopia has become the latest crisis point on the African continent.

Marc Lacey

**A**DDIS ABABA, capital of Ethiopia, faces itself Africa's capital, the crossroads of the continent, a refuge where African leaders gather to address crises in places such as Sudan, Ivory Coast, and Congo.

The city's most powerful resident, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, has been deemed one of Africa's new generation of leaders, a rebel turned democrat and darling of the international donors. But after a months-long political standoff that has turned increasingly bloody, Ethiopia's capital has

joined Africa's more ignominious places, becoming the latest continental crisis point to attract the attention of the African Union, which has its headquarters here. Mr. Zenawi now finds himself criticised as a dictator, not a democrat.

"If the situation deteriorates here, it's a major symbolic failure for the African Union," said Abdul Mohammed, an analyst with the Inter-African Group who met African Union leaders on November 4 to discuss the Ethiopia crisis. "This is the home of the A.U. This is occurring in the A.U.'s backyard."

Quite literally. The African Union's crisis management team did not have to consult a map to find the latest hotspot on the continent. It could look out of the window.

Ethiopian security forces fired on stone-throwing protesters in the streets around the African Union's headquarters early this month. Tires were burned in the street. The lot next door to the organisation was turned into a makeshift detention centre as thousands of Opposition supporters were rounded up by the Government.

The discord stems from a democratic transition that has stumbled and fallen flat.

The Government called parliamentary elections in May and, unlike in the last two elections in 1995 and 2000, actually allowed Opposition candidates a chance to campaign. The African Union has condemned the violence and asked Mr. Zenawi to explain how so many people — 40 or more in the latest bout of violence — died. Mr. Zenawi blames the Opposition for the violence, accusing it even of hurling grenades at security forces. He has also accused it of attempting to topple the government through demonstrations, which he says he will not allow. — **New York Times News Service**

15 NOV 2005

# “Iron Lady” set to lead Liberia

Johnson-Sirleaf outlines plans for the country's uplift

12/4 Africa 100-16

CLAIRE SOARES

**MONROVIA:** Africa looks set to get its first elected woman President, with Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the Harvard-educated economist, pulling ahead of the former soccer star, George Weah, in Liberia's presidential runoff.

The National Elections Commission has said with 90 per cent of the votes counted, Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf had taken 59 per cent of the vote, 18 points clear of her rival.

If that result is confirmed, the enormous task of rebuilding a country that has been crippled by 14 years of civil war will fall on her shoulders. “I am humbled by the awesome challenge that this represents,” Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf (66) told the London-based *Guardian* newspaper in an interview at her modest beachside home in the capital, Monrovia.

“This is the last mile of a long road. I have been exiled, jailed and tortured on the way,” said the woman whose powers of political endurance over the decades have saddled her with the nickname Iron Lady.

“I think I have paid the price, I think I have earned it,” she said.

Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf has promised to lift the darkness hanging over the capital by restoring mains electricity within six months. She wants a well or hand pump in every village across the country within two years. And she hopes to provide free education, resuscitate the healthcare system and stamp out the corruption that has plagued a country that has the diamonds and timber to be one of West Africa's most prosperous.

## Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf - Liberia's “Iron Lady”

**1939:** Born to rural Liberian family - mother from Sinoe in Southeast, father from Bomli in West

**1966:** Marries, has four sons. Returns to school to pull her family out of poverty

**1960s:** Gains Masters degree at Harvard University in America

**1972-73, 1977-79:** Liberian Secretary of State for Finance

**1979-80:** Minister of Finance

**1980-85:** Member of Opposition during military rule of Samuel Doe

**1985-86:** Imprisoned on two occasions for criticising Doe regime

**1986:** Flees Liberia for United States - works for World Bank

**1989:** Initially backs, but then opposes Charles Taylor's invasion to oust Doe. Civil war starts



**1990-94:** Leading member of Liberian Government-in-exile based in America

**1997:** Regional Director of UN Development Programme for Africa

**1997:** Returns to Liberia at conclusion of civil war. Becomes leader of Unity Party - comes distant second to Taylor in presidential election. Is charged with treason by Taylor

**1999:** Second civil war begins

**2003:** Serves as head of Governance Reform Commission set up as part of deal to end Liberia's civil war - Taylor exiled to Nigeria

**2006:** Claims victory in presidential run-off against George Weah with 59% of vote. If result is certified Johnson-Sirleaf will become Africa's first elected woman head of state

Picture: Associated Press

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“There are high expectations on the part of Liberians,” she said. “We know that we have to go to work right away.”

Mr. Weah, former London Chelsea and AC Milan soccer superstar, has filed a complaint of fraud with the Elections Commission and international observers who monitored the voting on Tuesday. The Commission said it was investigating the complaint but continued to issue regular results updates. It is clear Ms. Johnson-Sirleaf is already planning the

weeks leading up to an eventual inauguration in January. “Once the results are official, I'm going to make a tour of the sub-region to talk to the heads of state,” she said. “As long as there is conflict in one of our countries, then all of us are threatened.”

West Africa has been convulsed by one violent episode after another. Though Liberia's civil war ended more than two years ago, next door, in divided Ivory Coast, tensions are high. — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2005

THE MINDU

12 NOV 2005

# U.N.'s appeal for urgent aid to Malawi draws a blank

Africa

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Rich Gulf countries have been urged to help stave off hunger in Africa

**UNITED NATIONS:** The United Nations humanitarian chief has complained that not a single penny has been donated to an urgent appeal to feed nearly 4.5 million desperate people in Malawi.

The U.N. launched an appeal for \$88 million in food and agricultural assistance at the end of last month.

"Ten days later we have received zero pledges for this appeal," Jan Egeland, Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs told reporters on Thursday.

In Malawi, 45 per cent of children under 5 years old are stunted, 22 per cent are undernourished and one third of the overall population is undernourished, he said. "Some win and some lose and Malawi is now losing," he said.

Asked why he thought the country had been overlooked, he said: "It drowned in the drama of so many other things."

Mr. Egeland warned that across Southern Africa, 10 million lives were at stake in Lesotho, Mozambique, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe besides Malawi.

The U.N. wants the donor community to act now on southern Africa while there is still chance to avoid a famine like the one which hit the western African nation of Niger, where warnings of looming disaster went unheeded for too long.

Mr. Egeland said the United States, Japan and some European countries were giving money to Southern Africa but it was not enough. And he called on the oil-rich Gulf nations to be more generous. "The oil rich countries have had windfall earnings in this last year. We can save a life for \$1 a day. There is no better investment in the world," he said.

Some 4.5 million Malawians are in dire need of food aid after



**JOINING FORCES:** Nobel Prize laureate and Kenyan Deputy Environment Minister Wangari Mathai (left) and women's world middleweight boxing champion, Conjestina Achieng, at the recent launch of a U.N. advocacy campaign on the need for Africa to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, which include eradication of poverty and hunger. — PHOTO: AFP

the worst harvest in more than a decade, fuelled by drought, the U.N. said.

## Losing battle

Mr. Egeland told reporters that the U.N. was fighting a losing battle for international attention on behalf of the 10 million people in need of food assistance in southern Africa. He said the World Food Programme was trying to feed two million

people there and praised the Malawian Government for its own efforts that aim to feed another 2.2 million people.

"We now have a more intelligent approach" to the U.N. appeal which would be used not just for food aid but also for reconstruction. One third of the requested \$88 million would be earmarked for purchase of seeds and fertilisers for one million of the poorest people. The produc-

tion of maize, the main staple food, has plunged to half of what is needed to feed Malawi, the U.N. noted. Maize prices in some areas of Malawi have risen by 50 per cent, making life even tougher for people hit by hunger, aid officials said.

"We need additional resources," Mr. Egeland said. "I want more from everybody but I do recognise that some Europeans and the Americans give us

already a lot. There are others who should step up to the plate." He cited many oil-rich countries in the Gulf and elsewhere which have not contributed to the cause. Aid agencies have chided donor Governments for reacting too late to other food crises, notably in Niger, in West Africa, where a sluggish response has meant that even more funds are needed now than at the outset. — AFP

# Rift in South Africa's ruling alliance

FD-16  
29/8

## Supporters demand Zuma's reinstatement

**JOHANNESBURG:** South Africa has experienced a politically tense week as signs of divisions within ruling party ranks over the axing of corruption-tainted Deputy President Jacob Zuma crept to the surface.

Staunch supporters of the immensely popular Mr. Zuma have demanded that he be reinstated while others within the ruling African National Congress (ANC) and its alliance partners believe his prosecution on two charges of corruption should go ahead. South African President Thabo Mbeki sacked Mr. Zuma in June before he was charged with two counts of corruption relating to a controversial multi-billion-dollar government arms deal. Since then, rumours of a political plot to prevent Mr.

Zuma from succeeding Mr. Mbeki when he steps down in 2009 have been flying around, with the ANC's biggest traditional ally, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) saying it was all part of a "campaign to discredit Comrade Zuma".

Mr. Zuma, who faces 15 years in jail if found guilty of corruption, has maintained his innocence, repeatedly hinting at a political plot against him.

The alliance partners — the ANC, COSATU and the South African Communist Party (SACP) — met have to discuss behind closed doors the political turmoil which intensified after the elite anti-crime unit launched raids on Mr. Zuma's properties. — AFP

# G4 bid falls through sans African support

**NILOVA Roy Chaudhury**  
New Delhi, August 5

EFFORTS BY India, Brazil, Germany and Japan (G4) to get permanent seats on the UN Security Council collapsed on Friday after the African Union turned down attempts at UNSC expansion minus the veto power. Without support from the 53-nation AU, which had earlier agreed to jointly move a resolution with the G4 at the UN, there "isn't a chance" for the G4 resolution for expansion of the UNSC to go through.

Privately saying the AU had "reneged" on a "commitment" made two weeks ago to G4 foreign ministers in London, the government publicly put up a brave face following the biggest diplomatic setback in recent months and said it "regretted" the AU decision.

"It's a matter of regret that the extraordinary African Union summit held in Addis Ababa was unable to endorse an AU/G4 draft Framework Resolution", MEA spokesman Navtej Sarna said. The AU and G4 were meant to jointly table the resolution immediately after the AU meeting held on Thursday, according to "an understanding arrived at between the G4 foreign ministers

## HOPES SHATTERED

and representatives of the AU in London on July 25", Sarna said.

There was confidence earlier that the G-4/AU framework resolution would pass muster by a two-thirds vote at the UN despite vocal opposition from China and the US. But, with the AU virtually rejecting their compromise formula, there was considerable gloom in South Block on Friday.

While unwilling to concede defeat and withdraw the resolution just yet, officials said the issue of putting the framework resolution for UNSC expansion to a vote would now be put off until (and if) one of the sponsors sought a vote.

Reports from Addis Ababa - where the African leaders met at an extraordinary summit - said the meeting rejected the G4 suggestion that they accept two permanent seats without veto power. The African leaders stuck to their demand for veto power.

External affairs minister Natwar Singh spoke to his counterparts from the other G4 countries and "agreed to remain in

touch to review the situation arising out of" the AU decision. They would also continue to "engage the African countries with a view to promoting a common understanding".

But, despite the AU decision not to pursue the joint resolution, India and other G4 countries seeking permanent membership in the UNSC have said they will continue negotiations for a consensus on the issue.

"We'll continue negotiating with the African Union because... Politically, without the AU, the reform is simply not conceivable because the whole point of the reform is to empower those who have been the most oppressed historically", said Nirupam Sen, India's ambassador to the UN.

Japanese ambassador to the UN, Kenzo Oshima, said, "The outcome wasn't the one we expected, but we'd like to continue to talk with the African countries, as well as with other countries".

The ambassadors of G4, spoke with General Assembly president Jean Ping to discuss the outcome of Thursday's AU summit, as did members of an opposing group, called Uniting for Consensus (UFC also called the 'Coffee Club') led by Pakistan and Italy.

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HINDUSTAN TIMES



## G4, African Union resolve differences

Hasan Suroor

LONDON: In a significant breakthrough, the G4 countries – India, Japan, Germany and Brazil – and the African Union (AU) have resolved their differences over the proposed reforms to the United Nations Security Council and agreed to adopt a joint resolution. The breakthrough came at a series of meetings between Foreign Ministers of G4 and representatives of AU countries here in the past two days with External Affairs Minister K. Natwar Singh playing a key role in breaking the deadlock.

### Understanding

A statement, issued here on Tuesday, said the two sides had reached an understanding on the proposed strength of an expanded Security Council as well as the AU's previous insistence on veto power for new permanent members of the Council.

Under the compromise, the G4 countries agreed to the AU proposal that the expanded Council should have 26 members – as opposed to G4's earlier preference for 25. In return, the AU agreed "not to press the issue of the veto at this time."

The statement said: "The 26th seat shall be a non-member seat which will be floated among the developing countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean states."

It said the AU would "quickly consult" their heads of state and governments and confirm their acceptance of the understanding. The changes would then be incorporated into a joint AU-G4 resolution with a view to adopting it, "if possible by the end of the month." In the meantime, efforts would be made to ensure continued support of AU and G4 co-sponsors.

# Former rebels set to form Government in Burundi

President urges all "to accept the will of the people" W

**BUJUMBURA (BURUNDI):** Burundi's President Domitien Ndayizeye on Wednesday urged Burundians "to accept the will of the people" after his party lost this week's legislative elections to the war-ravaged country's main former Hutu rebel group.

As the former rebel Forces for the Defence of Democracy (FDD) prepared to form Burundi's first post-transition Government after 12 years of conflict, he congratulated the victors of Monday's polls and called for their win to be respected.

"I ask all political actors to accept the will of the people," he told reporters at a news conference held shortly after state radio reported that the political wing of the FDD, the CNDD-FDD, won nearly 60 per cent of the country's lower House.

"I congratulate the CNDD-FDD for its victory and I invite it to lead the country for the good of all Burundians, those who for voted for it and those who did not," Mr. Ndayizeye said.

## Absolute majority

According to official final results announced by the country's electoral panel, the FDD clinched an absolute majority by winning 59 out of 100 seats in the National Assembly.

Legislators in Monday's polls alongside Senators elected by municipal councillors will select Burundi's first post-transition Government next month.

The former rebels, who are now part of the transitional Government, trounced Mr. Ndayizeye's Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU), which took 24 seats, while the main party of the Tutsi minority, UPRONA, won 10 seats.

Late Wednesday, the FRODE-



**CHERISHING VICTORY:** A flag of the Forces for the Defence of Democracy held aloft by supporters (not seen in the picture) as they celebrate their victory outside a party office in Bujumbura, Burundi, on Tuesday. - PHOTO: AFP

BU said it accepted the result.

"The FRODEBU party accepts and respects the verdict of the people expressed at the polls, despite numerous irregularities," its president, Jean Minani, told a news conference. "We accept the result for the good of Burundians, for Burundi and for the ongoing peace process."

Two smaller parties, one Hutu allied with the FDD and one Tutsi, won a total of seven seats.

In his comments, the outgoing President also acknowledged that Monday's polls were orderly and "went well," a sentiment shared by Mamadou Bah, the African Union's envoy to Burundi and European election observers.

"The A.U. is satisfied with the way in which Monday's legislative elections were prepared and run," Mr. Bah said, adding that Burundi could serve as an example for other African countries in

conflict like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and Ivory Coast.

On Tuesday, the victorious CNDD-FDD said it would work with other parties to form the country's next Government, which will be sworn in in August.

The CNDD-FDD victory means they are set for Burundi's leadership as they have the majority the lower House and will have the majority in the Senate when its members are chosen later this month by municipal councillors whose ranks are dominated by members of the ex-rebel group.

Parliament is to select a new President on August 19, setting the stage for the formation of a new Government and its swearing in a week later, according to the regionally backed peace plan for the tiny central African nation. - AFP

THE HINDU

# Sudan, Darfur rebel groups sign pact on war-ravaged region

Document falls short of the comprehensive peace agreement originally hoped

**ABUJA (NIGERIA):** Sudan's Government and two Darfur rebel groups ended their latest round of peace talks on Tuesday without a comprehensive peace deal to end the deadly two-year conflict that has left tens of thousands dead in Sudan's western region.

Representatives from the Government, the Sudan Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement all signed a three-page "declaration of principles" aimed at helping bring peace to Darfur as mediators announced the end of the fifth round of peace talks among warring parties.

War-induced hunger and disease have killed more than 180,000 persons and driven more than two million from their homes in Darfur's conflict, according to U.N. estimates.

Negotiators at the talks venue in the Nigerian capital, Abuja, agreed to broad, generalized commitments, including respecting the unity of Sudan, upholding democracy and "justice and equality for all, regardless of ethnicity, religion and gender."

The document also proposed "an effective devolution of powers" to regional authorities and that Darfur's people should be ensured of a role in all levels of government.

The parties would agree on how best to share power and wealth in Darfur at a later date, according to the document.

Mediators said the talks were scheduled to begin again on Aug. 24, but did not say where.

Insurgent and government representatives have signed numerous cease-fire and other pacts during past rounds of peace talks, but none has yet ended the humanitarian crisis in Darfur.

The preamble of the latest accord reiterated the parties' commitment to stop fighting and allow aid agencies access to all refugees.

The document fell short of the comprehensive peace agreement originally hoped for when the latest round of peace talks began last month, but peace brokers were sanguine nonetheless.

## A step forward

"By adopting the Declaration of Principles, you have demonstrated your own determination that you will not let down the people of Darfur ... and you will not let down our friends in the international community," Salim Ahmed Salim, the African Union's special envoy for Darfur told negotiators.

The 53-nation African Union is hosting the peace talks, now in their fifth round.

"The signing of this document is a step forwards. Nonetheless it isn't worth its ink unless we abide by it," Ahmed Tugod, the leader of the Justice and Equality Movement delegation said at the closing session. — AP



**DRIVEN AWAY FROM HOMES:** Refugees wait for medical assistance for their children at a health care centre for malnourished children in Gereida town, 90 km south of Nyala town in Sudan's troubled Darfur province recently. — PHOTO: REUTERS

# Africa's new best friends

The U.S. and Britain are putting the corporations that created poverty in charge of its relief.

George Monbiot

I BEGAN to realise how much trouble we were in when British Secretary of State for International Development Hilary Benn announced that he would be joining the Make Poverty History march on Saturday. What would he be chanting, I wondered? "Down with me and all I stand for"?

Mr. Benn is the man in charge of using British aid to persuade African countries to privatise public services; was not the march supposed to be a protest against policies like his? But its aims were either expressed or interpreted so loosely that anyone could join. This was its strength and its weakness. The (right wing) London *Daily Mail* newspaper ran pictures of Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown and Bob Geldof on its front page, with the headline "Let's Roll", showing that nothing either Live 8 or Make Poverty History has done so far represents a threat to power.

The G8 leaders and the business interests their summit promotes can absorb our demands for aid, debt, even slightly fairer terms of trade, and lose nothing. They can wear our colours, speak our language, claim to support our aims, and discover in our agitation not new constraints but new opportunities for manufacturing consent. Justice, this consensus says, can be achieved without confronting power.

They invite our representatives to share their stage, we invite theirs to share ours. Economist Noreena Hertz offers, according to the commercial speakers' agency that hires her, "real solutions for businesses and individuals." Ms. Hertz teaches companies how to be smart and avoid the frictions that surface when corporate interests conflict with private life ... the political right is not necessarily wrong. Then she stands on the Make Poverty History stage and calls for poverty to be put at the top of the agenda.

The G8 leaders have seized this opportunity with both hands. Multinational corporations, they argue, are not the cause of Africa's problems but the solution. From now on they will be responsible for the relief of poverty.

## Raw self-interest

They have already been given control of the primary instrument of U.S. policy towards Africa, the African Growth and Opportunity Act. The Act is a fascinating compound of professed philanthropy and raw self-interest. To become eligible for help, African countries must bring about "a market-based economy that protects private property rights," "the elimination of barriers to United States trade and investment" and a conducive environment for U.S. "foreign policy interests." In return they will be allowed "preferential treatment" for some of their products in U.S. markets.

The important word is "some." Clothing factories in Africa will be allowed to sell their products to the U.S. as long as they use "fabrics wholly formed and cut in the U.S." or if they avoid direct competition with U.S. products. The Act, treading carefully around the toes of U.S. manufacturing interests, is comically specific. Garments containing elastic strips, for example, are eligible only if the elastic is "less than 1 inch in width and used in the production of brassieres."

It goes without saying that all this is classified as foreign aid. The Act instructs the U.S. Agency for International

Development to develop "a receptive environment for trade and investment." What is more interesting is that its implementation has been outsourced to the Corporate Council on Africa.

The CCA is the lobby group representing the big U.S. corporations with interests in Africa: Halliburton, Exxon Mobil, Coca-Cola, General Motors, Starbucks, Raytheon, Microsoft, Boeing, Cargill, Citigroup and others. For the CCA, what is good for General Motors is good for Africa. The U.S. State Department has put it in charge of training African Governments and businesses. The CCA runs the U.S. Government's annual forum for African business, and hosts the Growth and Opportunity Act's steering committee.

Now something very similar is being set up in the UK. On July 6 the Business Action for Africa summit will open in London with a message from Tony Blair. Chaired by Sir Mark Moody-Stuart, the head of Anglo American, its speakers include executives from Shell, British American Tobacco, Standard Chartered Bank, De Beers and the Corporate Council on Africa. One of its purposes is to inaugurate the Investment Climate Facility, a \$550m fund financed by Britain's foreign-aid budget, the World Bank and the other G8 nations, but "driven and controlled by the private sector."

## Corporate involvement

Few would deny that one of the things Africa needs is investment. But investment by many of our multinationals has not enriched its people but impoverished them. The history of corporate involvement in Africa is one of forced labour, evictions, murder, wars, the under-costing of resources, tax evasion and collusion with dictators. Nothing in either the Investment Climate Facility or the Growth and Opportunity Act imposes mandatory constraints on corporations.

While their power and profits in Africa will be enhanced with the help of our foreign-aid budgets, they will be bound only by voluntary commitments: of the kind that have been in place since 1973 and have proved useless.

Just as Mr. Gordon Brown's "moral crusade" encourages us to forget the armed crusade he financed, the state-sponsored re-branding of the companies working in Africa prompts us to forget what Shell has been doing in Nigeria, what Barclays and Anglo American and De Beers have done in South Africa, and what British American Tobacco has done just about everywhere. From now on, the G8 would like us to believe, these companies will be Africa's best friends. In the name of making poverty history, the G8 has given a new, multi-headed East India Company a mandate to govern the continent.

Without a critique of power, our campaign, so marvellously and so disastrously inclusive, will merely enhance this effort. Debt, unfair terms of trade and poverty are not causes of Africa's problems but symptoms. The cause is power: the ability of the G8 nations and their corporations to run other people's lives.

At the Make Poverty History march, the speakers insisted that we are dragging the G8 leaders kicking and screaming towards our demands. It seems to me that the G8 leaders are dragging us dancing and cheering towards theirs. —  
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## AFRICAN UNION SUMMIT BEGINS

# Test for India <sup>Africa</sup>

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<sup>57</sup>  
**Statesman News Service**

NEW DELHI, July 4. — By tomorrow, 53 countries in a north African city will take a decision, which will either make or break India's UN ambition.

The 5th African Union summit that began in Sirte, Libya today is extremely significant, as the members are set to debate the "Ezulwini consensus", which calls for at least two permanent seats for Africa. If they do, it will fall neatly in place with G-4 draft resolution, which calls for six new permanent members, including two from Africa.

India has sent the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Rao Inderjit Singh, to the two-day summit together with its permanent representative to the UN, Mr Nirupam Sen there.

If the African Union members do not reach to any decision, it could mean a postponement of the tabling of the resolution, thereby letting the momentum gathered in the last few months go

waste. Such a scenario would be ideal for the USA and the 'coffee club' countries, which are not particularly enthusiastic about the G-4 members — India, Brazil, Germany and Japan — getting permanent member status.

The G-4 had earlier postponed the tabling of the resolution after the AU and the Caribbean Community meetings, the latter ends on 6 July.

After the release of the UN Secretary General's report on reforms in March, ten African foreign ministers had drafted a common African position on UN reforms, called the "Ezulwini Consensus".

In the section on Security Council reforms, it begins by recalling that no African country had been a founding member of UN in 1945. It proposes for at least two permanent seats and five non-permanent seats for Africa in an expanded Security Council.

Interestingly, the "Ezulwini consensus", which had been reached in March, had called for at least two permanent seats "with all the prerogatives

and privileges of permanent membership including the right of veto."

It had explained that while Africa was opposed to the veto in principle, "it is of the view that so long as it exists, and as a matter of common justice, it should be made available to all permanent members of the Security Council".

India had been the last one to give up on the veto in the G-4, which has offered to defer the power of veto to new permanent members for 15 years.

While the AU members may give their support to the "Ezulwini consensus", it will have a far tougher decision on whom to nominate for the two seats, with Nigeria, Egypt and South Africa being the leading candidates.

However, even the 'coffee club' has its African franchise, with Senegal, Algeria and Kenya being its members.

For the G-4, a decision to nominate two African members in principle would be enough, as it will allow the tabling of the resolution in the General Assembly.

05 JUL 2009

THE STATESMAN

# The scourge of Africa

Hunger kills more people than HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB combined.

Olusegun Obasanjo

HD-11

THERE IS a pain in the belly of Africa that just will not go away. It is gnawing at our development goals and undermining our economies. It is blighting the lives of the young and shortening the lifespan of the old; yet somehow it is getting forgotten.

What is this scourge? A rampant virus with no cure? An insect that pricks our skin and poisons our blood? If it were so dramatic and captivating, it might gather more attention. In fact, it is much more prosaic. It is hunger that is the scourge of Africa. It is advancing rather than receding, and consuming more lives today than ever before.

A hungry person is an angry and dangerous person. It is in all our interests to take away the cause of this anger. There is a saying in my country: when you take hunger out of poverty, poverty is halved. That is why it is crucial we give top priority to ridding ourselves of this blight on development.

This year, when so much energy has been focussed on the campaign to Make Poverty History and the Commission for Africa, we should remember that hunger and malnutrition continue to kill more people than HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined. Food is the stuff of life. Without it, free trade, debt relief and poverty alleviation will mean little to the millions of African farmers who till the soil and herd their goats far from the benevolent gaze of the developed world.

We should not forget that the first of the U.N. Millennium Development Goals is that there be a firm commitment by Governments to "eradicate the abject and dehumanising conditions of extreme poverty and hunger in which hundreds of millions of people continue to live."

The grim reality we face today is that while global poverty dropped by 20 per cent during the 1990s, the number of hungry people rose. Efforts to alleviate poverty have been most successful among populations that have some access to social services and the market economy. By contrast, the global hungry are part of a growing underclass that has no access. In the latter half of the decade, almost five million more people became hungry every year. Today, the total number around the world who know what it is like to go to bed hungry stands at a staggering 852 million.

While there is evidence of slow progress towards making poverty history, the underclass is growing and the world is losing ground in its bid to halve the proportion of those who suffer from hunger by 2015.

In a country like Nigeria, carefully mapped out policies have promoted food production, strengthened the agriculture sector, increased food exports and income, and created employment for



President Obasanjo ... an appeal to tackle hunger. - PHOTO: REUTERS

hundreds of thousands of people.

As chairman of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, I have called for collaboration with the World Food Programme to strengthen agriculture and research and share best practice to increase output drastically. In addition, savings from debt and debt servicing can go into these sectors that directly and immediately benefit the people. The WFP has put a price on what it would cost to eradicate hunger among the 300 million children from Africa and beyond who live with the grinding and debilitating symptoms of hunger — \$5 billion, if carefully targeted at improving nutrition for the neediest 100 million children, could have a seismic impact.

The plan foresees a partnership between rich and poor nations. Increasing the food supply and reducing hunger is a target across Africa, so developing nations would be encouraged to play their part, contributing food to the value of \$2 billion to meet the needs of women and children, especially through school feeding programmes. For its part, the developed world would be expected to provide the balance of \$3 billion.

When I think of Africa today, it reminds me of Oliver Twist. Like him, Africa is struggling to extract itself with dignity from poverty and neglect. It is unacceptable that Africa might be forced once again to go to the top table at G8 and say: "Please, sir, I want some more." It does not have to be that way. In partnership, we have the opportunity to conquer these challenges to development in Africa and beyond. We cannot forget that hunger is the voracious handmaiden of poverty. If we do not destroy the one, we will never consign the other to the dustbin of history. — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2005

(The author is Nigeria's President.)

2005

# Africa can be saved, US willing

Africa is ready to break out of poverty if the US and other rich countries help. Europe appears poised to do more, while the US appears to be the main obstacle, says **Jeffrey D Sachs**.



THE G-8 Summit in Scotland in early July will bring together the political leaders of the richest countries to consider the plight of the poorest countries. So far, President George

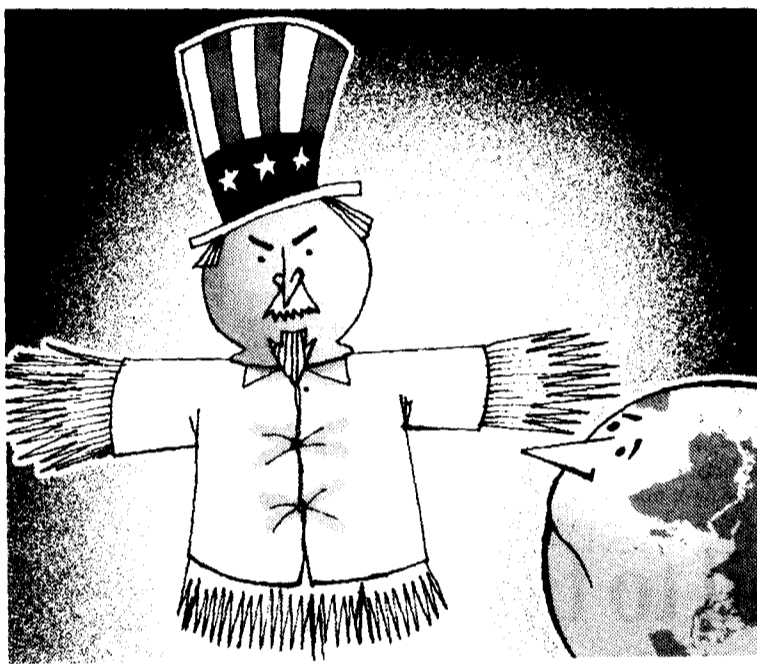
W Bush has resisted Prime Minister Tony Blair's call for a doubling of aid to Africa by 2010. This is a tragic mistake, one that results from a misunderstanding of the challenges facing Africa and of America's responsibilities.

American policy is based overwhelmingly on the idea that Africa can lift itself out of extreme poverty through its own efforts, that aid is largely misused because of corruption, and that the United States already gives generous amounts. This is wrong on all counts: Africa is trapped in poverty, many countries are well poised to use aid effectively, and America's contribution is tiny relative to Africa's needs, America's promises, and America's wealth.

Africa suffers simultaneously from three challenges that trap it in poverty. First, Africa does not grow enough food. Unlike Asia, Africa did not have a Green Revolution in food production. In 1965, India averaged 854 kilograms of grain per hectare in use, while Sub-Saharan Africa averaged almost the same, 773 kilograms per hectare. But, by 2000, India was producing 2,293 kilograms per hectare, while Africa was producing only 1,118.

Second, Africa suffers from disease unlike any other part of the world. Africa's AIDS pandemic is well known; its malaria pandemic, which will claim three million lives and a billion illnesses this year, is not. India controlled malaria after the 1960's, while Africa did not, one reason being that Africa's malaria-bearing mosquitoes are particularly adept at transmitting the disease.

Third, Africa is economically isolat-



ed, owing to very poor infrastructure, large over-land distances, and many landlocked countries. These geographical barriers keep much of Africa, especially rural Africa, out of the mainstream of international trade. Without the benefits of trade, much of rural Africa struggles at subsistence levels.

Bush might think that America is doing a lot to help overcome these problems, but the truth is that US aid is minimal. Blair's Africa Commission, as well as the UN Millennium Project, found that Africa needs about \$50 billion per year in aid by 2010.

America's fair share of the total is about \$15 billion per year. Yet official US aid to Africa is only \$3 billion per year, and much of that covers salaries for American consultants rather than investments in Africa's needs.

This tragically small sum amounts to just three cents for every \$100 of US gross national product, which is less

than two days of US military spending.

Not only is US aid a tiny fraction of what it should be, but American explanations for the lack of aid are wrong. Bush and others imply that Africa wastes the aid through corruption. But impoverished and slow-growing African countries like Ghana, Senegal, Mali, Benin, and Malawi are ranked as having less corruption than fast-growing Asian countries like Vietnam, Bangladesh, and Indonesia.

**I**NDEED, America's own Millennium Challenge Account has already recognised such African countries for their strong governance. Good governance surely will help in Africa and elsewhere, but corruption should not be used as an excuse not to help Africa.

On hunger, the key is to help Africa achieve its own Green Revolution. Rich countries should help African farmers use improved seed varieties, more fer-

tiliser, and better water management, such as small-scale irrigation.

The techniques are known, but Africa's farmers are too poor to get started. With increased help to African farmers to grow more food (as opposed to shipping food aid from the US), it would be possible to double or even triple crop yields.

On disease, malaria could be controlled by 2008 using proven, low-cost methods. But, again, Africa cannot afford them. The first goal should be to distribute long-lasting insecticide-treated bed nets to all of Africa's rural poor within four years.

The best estimates show that Africa needs about 300 million bed nets, and that the cost per net (including shipping) is around \$10, for a sum of \$3 billion. This cost would be spread over several years. In addition, Africa needs help with anti-malaria medicines, diagnostic equipment, and training of community health workers.

On economic isolation, Africa needs help with the basics – roads and ports – but there is also an opportunity to “leapfrog” technology. Cell phones and Internet connectivity could reach all of Africa at low cost, ending the economic isolation of hundreds of millions of people. Some reasonable estimates put the cost at around \$1 billion for an Africa-wide fibre-optic network that could bring Internet connectivity and telephone service across the continent's villages and cities.

Africa is ready to break out of poverty if the US and other rich countries help. Europe appears poised to do more, while the US appears to be the main obstacle.

The G-8 Summit provides an opportunity for the US, which will spend \$500 billion on its military this year, to make a lasting – and certainly more cost-effective – contribution to global security by saving millions of lives in Africa and helping its people escape extreme poverty.

# Thousands held ahead of meet to resolve Ethiopian crisis

## Calm returns to Addis Ababa, residents return to work

**ADDIS ABABA:** Ethiopian police have rounded up more than 3,000 Opposition supporters after deadly clashes last week, a rights group said on Monday as a bid to end disputes over alleged election fraud was set to begin.

Calm returned to Addis Ababa with taxi drivers ending a crippling strike and city residents returning to work en masse after the violence in which at least 36 persons were killed during protests over the May 15 polls.

Shops and cafes, most of which shut their doors on Wednesday after police opened fire on crowds downtown, reopened, while Government and Opposition officials were to discuss the handling of hundreds of election fraud complaints.

### Vast crackdown

An official with the Ethiopian Human Rights Council (EHR-CO) said more than 3,000 Opposition supporters had been detained in a vast police crackdown launched after protests began last Monday.

"There are several thousand currently under arrest, more than 3,000 now," the official said, adding that a precise figure was impossible to ascertain given ongoing detentions and a lack of information from the Government.

"Anyone who has shown some support to the opposition during the election by going to public rallies is being targeted now to be arrested," the official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The official said many detenus were being held unlawfully, denied their fundamental rights, unable to meet lawyers or families and in some cases, not given food.

There has been no official comment from the Government on the reported mass arrests since Friday when authorities defended the actions of security forces, including Wednesday's police shootings, as necessary to preserve the peace.

On Saturday, the main Opposition group, the Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD), alleged that some 3,600 of its supporters had been detained in a



*A photographer is beaten by Ethiopian police outside the house of Hailu Shawul the leader of Opposition party the Coalition for Unity and Democracy in Addis Ababa on Saturday . - PHOTO: AP*

military camp outside Addis Ababa.

In addition, the group said its chairman, Hailu Shawel, and main spokesman remained confined to their houses after being placed under effective house arrest on Saturday.

### Death toll 36

Meanwhile, Yerdaw Ashagari, medical director at the Menelik Hospital in Addis Ababa, the home of the capital's only morgue said the death toll from election-related violence now stood at 36, up from 30 reported at the weekend.

Thirty-five of those deaths came from Wednesday's violence and one from clashes on Monday when students began protesting election results showing a ruling party win in defiance of a Government ban on demonstrations.

The Government blamed the Opposition for inciting illegal protests and violence while the Opposition has claimed the ruling party is carrying through with plans to steal the election and destroy political foes.

The violence alarmed foreign donors who, led by the European Union, brokered a truce on Fri-

day. This was immediately marred by arguments between the two sides.

At the weekend, the Opposition retracted comments doubting the Government's commitment to the accord and on Monday, E.U. officials lauded its new stance and said they hoped the deal would be immediately implemented.

### Joint meeting

Under the agreement, the election board was to meet in the presence of the Opposition and Government officials to begin screening nearly 300 complaints of electoral fraud it has received.

The board, which delayed by one month the announcement of final results due to the volume of complaints, is now scheduled to release official returns on July 8.

Amid the signs of potential reconciliation, the five-day taxi strike, called to support arrested student protesters, ended with nearly all of the city's 14,000 blue-and-white cabs back on the streets.

"The strike was only meant to last five days," one taxi driver said. "Furthermore, it's difficult to go on strike for long, people need to work." — AFP



# \$55-billion Africa debt relief agreed on at London meet

Africa  
17/6

Package will benefit 18 of the poorest countries immediately

Larry Elliott and Ashley Seager

**LONDON:** Eighteen of the world's poorest countries will have their debts to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund wiped out as part of a \$55 billion package agreed on Saturday by the G-7 leading economies.

After weeks of intense negotiations, a deal brokered by British Chancellor Gordon Brown will save countries such as Mozambique and Ethiopia a total of \$15 billion in debt payments over the next 10 years.

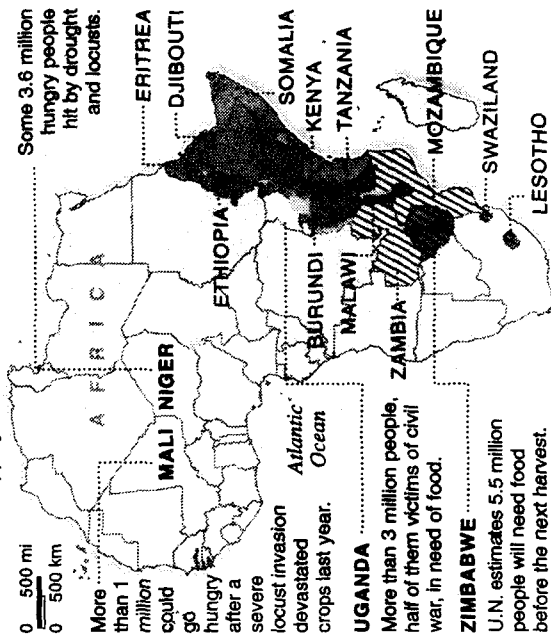
The U.K. Treasury said on Friday a further nine countries would qualify for debt relief within 12-18 months, and that the total could rise to almost 40 once countries beset by civil war resolved their conflicts.

## Uniqueness of deal

"The uniqueness of this deal is that so much would be written off almost immediately — more than \$40 billion within a few weeks of the agreement," Mr. Brown said.

"When I started this it was

Drought conditions in the 2004-05 cropping season



SOURCE: U.N. World Food Program

AP

one country that would qualify but now it's 27 and potentially it's 37." Writing off the multilateral debts of poor countries has been one of Britain's priorities for its presidency of the G-8, and Saturday's deal will be seen as a triumph for Mr. Brown, who has

cajoled sometimes reluctant G-7 countries — the G-8 minus Russia — to back his plan.

The deal goes further than the agreement between U.S. President George Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair earlier this week in Washington, which included debts owed to the World Bank and the African Bank but not the IMF.

Sources said the logjam had been broken when it was found that the IMF had several billion dollars available from gold sales in the late 1990s that it could use to cover the losses it would make from writing off debts.

The 18 countries named in the announcement are those which have had their bilateral debts to rich countries written off under the World Bank's heavily indebted poor country initiative, but despite the success of the Jubilee 2000 campaign, many countries were still left spending more on servicing debts to the Bank and the IMF than they were spending on health and education.

The agreement will be rubber-

stamped at the Gleneagles G-8 summit next month, when the leaders of the G-7 countries will be joined by President Vladimir Putin.

Mr. Brown acknowledged last night that there was "still work to be done" to get approval for his International Finance Facility, a scheme under which rich countries would raise money for development by selling bonds on the world's financial markets.

## The beneficiaries

Eighteen countries have completed the heavily indebted poor countries initiative: Benin, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guyana, Honduras, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

Nine countries are due to reach completion point within 18 months: Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Malawi, Sao Tome and Principe, and Sierra Leone. — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2005

# The feasibility of helping Africa

## Is the G8 initiative for fighting poverty in Africa the right way forward?

Martin Kettle

IF GOOD intentions could change the world then the campaign to Make Poverty History would be sweeping all before it. And in one sense it is. Make Poverty History is the new Not in My Name. The millions with their white wristbands are alive with the energy and commitment that the political parties — furtively bussing their backdrops of hired supporters from town to town during the election — so conspicuously lacked this spring.

When Bob Geldof summons the masses to Edinburgh, Scotland, the city fathers tremble and the Queen decides to stay away. Against Saint Bob, the predictable journalistic anti-Geldof backlash of the past few days is powerless, a misanthropic spit into the wind. When Richard Curtis' campaigning film *The Girl in the Cafe* hits the screen in a couple of weeks' time, its signature click of the fingers — a click every three seconds to mark a child's death from poverty — will become the ofstage accompaniment to the arrival of the G8 leaders at Gleneagles.

### Moral test

Gleneagles has been elevated into a moral test for a generation of world leaders. It is hard to think of a precedent since 1919. From the Kiss FM radio station to the London *Daily Telegraph* newspaper, the decisions that face the G8 are presented in uniquely stark form — will they end world poverty, will they save Africa — and as

though they themselves possessed godlike powers to enforce them. Make fun of the rock concert to save the human race if you dare. But MTV world has morphed into MPH world. Get used to it.

Why has Gleneagles become such a focus of such high expectation on the part of so many? Part of the truth, of course, is that this is an optical illusion, a British view of the event that is not so strongly held elsewhere, not just in unsympathetic America but in better-disposed places such as France and Germany too, to say nothing of Africa itself.

Part of the reason for this is extremely manipulative. Every few years, it falls to Britain to chair the G8. But this is the first time such a summit has come to our islands since the Battle in Seattle during the WTO meeting in 1999. I don't think it is entirely fanciful to suppose that Tony Blair and Gordon Brown looked at the risks and decided not to let the anti-globalisation demonstrators set the agenda again.

Sincerity is part of the explanation too, though, and this must not be denied. Even today, both the U.K. Labour party and the progressive Left in general are still the bearers of a tradition of solidarity towards the developing world in general and the former imperial possessions in particular, Africa above all. Religion is part of it in many cases, as Mr. Blair and Mr. Brown both bear witness. So is residual hostility towards empire. But political formation is important too. When today's Cabinet Ministers and today's

ageing rock stars were student demonstrators, southern Africa was a place of stark injustice while other parts of the continent seemed places of hope. Gleneagles in that sense is about a generation's unfinished business.

Yet good intentions and admirable motives, while obviously better than malign intentions and suspect motives, are not enough. The strategy Mr. Blair and Mr. Brown are promoting for Gleneagles has to be judged by its results as well as its aspirations. And on this basis it is open to two charges: first that it may even be prolonging what it is seeking to alleviate, and second that it may be promoting expectations that would be beyond even the power of the Almighty himself to fulfil.

Mr. Blair has recouped a little of his lost global and domestic esteem with his work on Africa. His commission report is a serious document, informed by at least some African experience, though its strength in recognising the centrality of African governance is vitiated by its optimism about African governance's actual current condition. You would look in vain too for any recognition in the document that for every £1,000 of African debt and debt interest, Africa's elites have exported £1,450 of capital into overseas banks and investments.

Mr. Brown's ideas about Africa have had an even easier ride. His manifest sincerity, the high profile he has given to the subject, and the mere fact that he is not Mr. Blair, have protected his ideas from the kind of

scrutiny that they merit. At the heart of Mr. Brown's approach, after all, is a desire to increase the flows of capital to Africa, whether in the form of aid, which he is keen on increasing, and in debt relief, including the international finance facility, which would have a parallel effect. This is why he speaks so often of a Marshall plan for Africa.

Yet is lack of capital Africa's real problem? Many say emphatically no. Africa has 100,000 millionaires. Pointing out that every African alive today has received roughly \$5,000 in aid, Richard Dowden of the Royal Africa Society argues that "if aid were the solution to Africa's problems it would be a rich continent by now."

My fear is that the dynamics of the G8 summit involve too much of the naive leading the naive. Too much of the Make Poverty History campaign reeks of middle-class Europeans trying to feel good about themselves by prescribing very radical but practically dubious solutions to Africa's problems. A similar criticism can be levelled against our normally pragmatic and careful government too.

Mr. Geldof and Mr. Brown are in the same game. Both are brilliant at playing on liberal guilt. Neither of them is nearly as good at helping us to understand Africa.

Unless we rein in our rhetoric and our expectations very quickly then, at the very least, a lot of people are going to be very disappointed about what happens at Gleneagles. — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2005

HP - 1/8/05

# Child soldiers of Congo want to stop killing

Hunger, poverty stalk people of one of the richest countries in the world in natural resources

189-16

6/6

Anushka Asthana

**CONGO:** "They made me kill." Emmanuele looked at the ground as he fumbled with the tassels on his coat. "If I refused to go to the front line they beat me. They treated me like an animal."

Emmanuele was 15 when he joined a rebel army group in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The decision was his own. "I had no money and they said they would give me some," he said. Other children were taken by force. Serge was at school when a group arrived, firing shots in the air and setting fire to the building. "I was afraid but I had to go." He was taken to an army base in Bunia, in the largest town in the Ituri region of the country, where he was put to work on a roadblock. Serge was then eight. "I remember holding a gun and shooting," he said, dropping his voice. "When it stopped all I could see was bodies on the ground. I knew it must be me who had killed them." Racked by guilt and missing home, Serge wanted to leave but did not know how.

Eventually he was released and taken to a Save the Children

camp in the city of Goma, where he now waits to be reunited with his parents.

It has been two years since the conflict, known as Africa's world war, was officially declared over, but the violence has yet to stop. So far it has claimed more than three million lives.

## Militias growing

While hostility has undoubtedly lessened, militias associated with various groups continue to roam the forests and towns. Over the years they have raped, murdered and kidnapped. Boys and girls, still in primary school, have been snatched to bolster their forces. Others as young as seven volunteered to join either the Government militia or rebel army groups, desperate to escape their wretched poverty.

Emmanuele and Serge are among about 30,000 child soldiers in the country, 12,500 of them girls. It is common to see children in camouflage uniforms on the roads, with one — or several — weapons slung across their shoulders.

The plight of these forgotten children of conflict will be thrust into the public consciousness

again by Bob Geldof's Live8 concerts and when thousands demonstrate at the G8 summit in Scotland next month. Long-term aid to help these children return to their communities and rebuild their lives will be among their demands. Indeed, the report of the Commission of Africa, signed by Geldof, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and his Chancellor (Finance Minister) Gordon Brown among others, has already highlighted the fact that in African conflicts it is women and children who suffer most, "recruited — often by force — as combatants, porters or "wives" for male combatants."

And in the Democratic Republic of Congo groups such as Save the Children and the United Nations children's agency UNICEF have been informally trying to release child fighters since 1999.

After the establishment of a government in 2003 these efforts became co-ordinated. A year ago a programme for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reinsertion was adopted and thousands of children began to return home. — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2005



**KILLING FOR A LIVING:** A child soldier with his machine gun patrolling near Bunia in the Democratic Republic of Congo in this June 2004 file photo. — PHOTO: REUTERS

# Britain unveils new "Marshall Plan" to wipe out Africa's poverty

F10-19  
9/6 ✓

Plan envisages debt relief, more aid and trade; global sale of bonds to raise \$4 billion

Hasan Suroor

**LONDON:** Britain on Friday unveiled what the Chancellor Gordon Brown described as a "modern Marshall Plan" to alleviate poverty in Africa through debt relief, more aid and trade.

Cancellation of all debt owed by poor countries to international institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund was the centre-piece of Mr. Brown's proposals which he hailed as a "new deal" between rich and poor countries.

"They are a modern Marshall Plan for Africa and the developing world," he said likening his proposals to America's ambitious post-war effort to rebuild Europe.

## G-8 summit

Mr. Brown said the plan would be presented to leaders of the Group of Eight industrialised nations ahead of next month's G-8 summit in Scotland.

Besides debt cancellation, the proposals include removing trade barriers to allow African countries easier access to western markets, and a boost in direct aid to poorer nations.

Mr. Brown also announced plans to sell bonds in the international market to raise \$4 billion, which he said, could save millions of lives in Africa.

Apart from Britain, France and Sweden had already agreed to contribute to bonds.

"This is not a time for timidity, nor is it a time to fear reaching too high," he said adding: "This year ... is our chance to help reverse the fortunes of a continent and it is our opportunity to help transform the lives of millions." Prime Minister Tony Blair, who will chair the G8 sum-



**A HARSH REALITY:** Refugees in Sudan's western province of Darfur wait for water in Abu Shouk, just outside El-Fasher, the capital of the province recently. The civil war has exacerbated poverty in the region, where people go without even the basic necessities of life. - PHOTO: AFP

mit, is to visit Washington next week for talks with the U.S. President George W. Bush to push his anti-poverty agenda.

He is also expected to meet other G8 leaders ahead of the summit to get an agreement on Britain's key proposals. Mr.

Brown said Britain was "determined" to make empowerment of Africa a reality. He claimed

American support for 100 per cent debt relief for poor countries and said: "What we now have to work out are the mechanics and I believe we will see

progress in the next few days on exactly that agenda."

In a boost to "Make Poverty History" campaign, Mr. Brown backed singer Bob Geldof's plans for "Live 8" concerts ahead of the G-8 summit to raise awareness about Africa.

He said the Government would waive the bill for the cost of the concert. About anti-globalisation demonstrations planned on the eve of the summit, he said people had a right to hold "peaceful" protest.

# A chance for peace in Darfur

The parties to the conflict must negotiate a political agreement offering solid guarantees for lasting peace. But in the end peace will only be made, and kept, by the Sudanese people themselves.

Kofi A. Annan and Alpha Oumar Konare

**W**HILE NO one knows for sure how many people have died in the conflict in Darfur, western Sudan, more than 2.6 million are suffering because of it, and in urgent need of assistance.

Villages have been burnt, crops uprooted, men murdered, women raped, children abducted.

1.9 million people have been displaced from their homes within Sudanese territory. Others are still at home but prevented from planting the crops on which their lives depend. If food does not soon reach them, they too will be forced to go in search of it, swelling the already overcrowded camps.

## Intensive media coverage

For a period, crimes against civilians in Darfur were not on the front pages. But for well over a year, they have been. That it took intensive coverage in the world media to prompt action is a reproach not only to Sudan, but to the whole world. Even today, those who are trying to bring the crisis in Darfur to an end do not have the kind of support they need.

Our two organisations have come together to prevent further suffering. The United Nations is in the lead in bringing relief to the victims, and in seeking to end impunity for those who have committed the most heinous crimes. The African Union is in the lead in providing security on the ground, and in efforts to revive political negotiations — which alone can bring lasting peace and are now scheduled to resume on June 10 in Abuja, Nigeria.

In recent months, the situation has stabilised, and fewer large-scale crimes have been reported. A massive U.N.-led humanitarian operation is under way, with over 10,000 humanitarian workers (mostly Sudanese) delivering food, water, shelter, and other life-saving relief to up to 1.8 million people. In the areas where African Union troops are on the ground their heroic efforts have made a real difference: people are less exposed to predatory violence, many have returned to their villages, and attacks have decreased.

## Limited access

The humanitarian situation is thus undoubtedly better in some areas than it was a year ago, but access remains limited, the harassment of humanitarian workers has increased, and insecurity remains unacceptably high. Hundreds of thousands of war-affected people are still not receiving the help they need, and the African Union troops are as yet far too few to deploy throughout the whole vast territory. Relief workers are often harassed by local authorities, and sometimes even attacked, kidnapped or threatened with violence.



**SEEKING SUCCOUR:** A woman and her son at a camp for some 100,000 refugees in Sudan's troubled western province of Darfur. — PHOTO: REUTERS

Non-governmental relief workers from abroad find it increasingly hard to obtain visas. And trucks delivering aid are hijacked, often by rebels. Early this month two drivers for the World Food Programme were killed, in separate incidents. As a result, aid does not get through to many of those who most need it.

The international response is thus falling short in two lethal ways: another \$350 million in aid is needed to help more than 3 million people survive the rest of this year, and more troops, police, aircraft and other transport, training and logistical support are needed to enable the African Union to protect the population in much of Darfur.

As part of our efforts to address the crisis in Darfur, we have jointly convened the donor conference in Addis Ababa: to give the rest of the world — especially the wealthy countries which have the means to contribute, and whose media and public opinion have been most vocal about the need to halt atrocities in Darfur — an opportunity to rally round and give practical support to the Afri-

cans who are actually doing something on the ground. This conference will complement the one held in Oslo last month, at which \$4.5 billion of aid was pledged to Sudan, mainly to support the fragile peace, which has at last been achieved between north and south after a 21-year civil war.

## Role for new Government

Indeed, Darfur can only benefit if the rest of the Sudan is at peace, and if the new government of national unity (due to take office in July) leads the whole country in a new, more inclusive direction. Thus the 10,000-strong peacekeeping force which the United Nations is now deploying in the south will help make peace viable throughout the country, including Darfur.

But action is urgently needed in Darfur itself, on three fronts:

The humanitarian effort must be fully funded, and safe access for relief workers — both inter- and non-governmental — must be fully guaranteed by all parties.

The African Union force must be expand-

ed without delay, and bolstered by logistical and financial support, so that it can provide real security throughout Darfur, allowing the people to return to their homes and resume cultivating their crops. African states that have promised troops must provide them promptly, and donors must provide the means needed for those troops to deploy.

Both the Government and the rebels must bring their forces and allied militias under full control, and ensure that they fully respect the ceasefire and humanitarian law.

And the parties to the conflict must negotiate a political agreement offering solid guarantees for lasting peace.

The African Union and the wider international community can and must help. But in the end peace will only be made, and kept, by the Sudanese people themselves.

(The authors are respectively Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union.)

27 MAY 2005

THE HINDU

# Togo presidential poll peaceful

LOME: Togo voted in a tense presidential election on Sunday following a campaign marred by violence after the death of longtime strongman Gnassingbe Eyadema threw the West African state into political turmoil.

Voting by the 3.5 million eligible voters among the five million people began at 6:30 a.m. No incidents were reported at the start of voting in the capital Lome and Sokode, the country's second city.

"We have already won the first battle: the election is taking place at the time specified by the constitution," said the ruling Rally of the Togolese People (RPT) party candidate Faure Gnassingbe after casting his ballot. In a televised address on Saturday, the acting President Abass Bonfoh called for calm and respect for the verdict of the ballot box, after

clashes between the Opposition and government supporters which have left 50 wounded and a handful of dead.

Regional leaders are closely watching the electoral process in the former French and imperial German colony, and the U.S. has expressed "deep concern" over the credibility of the polls. Voters have a choice essentially between Mr. Gnassingbe, the 39-year-old son of long-time strongman Gnassingbe Eyadema, who died on February 5 after 37 years in power, and main challenger Emmanuel Akitani Bob (74).

Eyadema's death triggered a constitutional crisis in the tiny state, but a short-lived bid to install Mr. Faure Gnassingbe as President without a popular vote collapsed under pressure from African leaders. — AFP



**A SURGE OF HOPE:** Voters form a line at a polling station in the presidential elections in the capital Lome, Togo, on Sunday. — PHOTO: AP

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER

25 APR 2005

THE TOWER

# Defiant Mugabe comes down on Western nations

**"Zimbabwe will never again be colonised"**

Andrew Meldrum

**PRETORIA:** President Robert Mugabe marked Zimbabwe's 25th anniversary of independence on Monday by an attack on the west and a defence of his land-grab policy.

In a 35-minute speech in the national sports stadium in Harare broadcast on national television, he repeatedly harked back to colonialism and white minority rule.

"To this day we bear the lasting scars of that dark encounter with colonialism, often described in the west as civilising," he said.

Newly acquired Chinese jet fighters screamed over the Chinese-built stadium to emphasise his policy of friendship with

Asian powers. "We have turned east, where the sun rises, and given our back to the west, where the sun sets," he told the crowd, reported to be between 8,000 and 40,000. It had brought new economic partnerships with the "Asian tigers".

## Poll rigging denied

Scorning the accusation that the March 31 parliamentary elections had been rigged, he said: "We made our democracy and we owe it to ourselves, not to anyone, least of all Europeans. Until we beat them at the battlefield, Britain and her kith and kin here would not concede voting rights to Africans. Let it be forever remembered that it was the bullet that brought the ballot. Our ballots have not needed An-

glo-American validation."

The 81-year-old President, who has ruled since overthrowing the white regime which severed Southern Rhodesia from Britain in 1965, spoke of the "strangled shrieks of brave guerrilla fighters facing execution" in the bush war. He described his land seizures as one of the greatest achievements since independence. "We have resolved the long-outstanding land question and the land has now come to its rightful owners".

Mr. Mugabe awarded state honours to past Presidents of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia, saying: "We proclaim our pan-African spirit, stressing we shall never be a colony again." — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2005

20 APR 2005

THE HINDU

THE HINDU

# Zimbabwe results disputed

Reuters  
Harare, April 12

ZIMBABWE SWORE in new members of parliament on Tuesday, including 30 unelected ruling party loyalists that guarantee President Robert Mugabe a crushing majority following disputed elections last month.

The main opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), which accuses Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF of rigging the March 31 vote, lodged the first of what it said would be a series of court challenges to the vote results.

But MDC MPs still took the oath in the new parliament, dispelling speculation that the party might boycott the legislature to show its displeasure.

ZANU-PF won 78 of the 120 elected seats in the March vote, and is guaranteed a further 30 under constitutional provisions which allow Mugabe to directly appoint 20 legislators and draw another 10 from Zimbabwe's traditional leaders — known as ZANU-PF loyalists.

The total puts ZANU-PF well above the two-thirds majority it needs to change the constitution at will.

Among those appointed to seats were Vice President Joseph Msika, who did not stand in the election, and outgoing Speaker Emerson Mnangagwa who received another presidential appointment after posting his second consecutive loss to an opposition candidate in his district.

The ruling party successfully nominated its national chairman John Nkomo as new speaker of parliament. "May I ... appeal for the fullest co-operation of all members of parliament ... Though we belong to different political parties, there is need for us to be guided by national interests," Nkomo said in his acceptance speech.

The MDC has cited "serious and unaccountable gaps" in vote tallies to back its accusations, supported by the West, that Mugabe's party rigged the election. ZANU-PF denies cheating and African observers said the poll was free and fair.

On Tuesday MDC shadow legal affairs minister, David Coltart, told reporters in neighbouring South Africa that the opposition had already filed a petition at Zimbabwe's electoral court challenging one election result, and would lodge more on Friday.

The MDC won 41 seats, 16 fewer than in the last parliamentary polls in 2000, which it also said ZANU-PF won fraudulently.

The remaining elected seat went to former information minister Jonathan Moyo, who won as an Independent after falling out with the ruling party.

Moyo, previously reviled as the perceived architect of harsh media laws aimed at silencing Mugabe's opponents, received wild applause from MDC legislators as he went to take his oath.

Mugabe dismisses the MDC as a puppet of former colonial power Britain, which he said has led a Western campaign to push him from power because of his seizure of white-owned commercial farms for redistribution among landless blacks.



# Zimbabwe Opp demands new polls

Associated Press  
Harare, April 4

ZIMBABWE'S EMBATTLED Opposition demanded new parliamentary elections under a different constitution, saying voting can never be free and fair under the current legislative framework.

President Robert Mugabe's party scored an overwhelming win in a poll on Thursday condemned by all but his closest African neighbours as severely flawed.

Citing major inconsistencies in the results, Opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai maintained that his Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), won 94 of the parliament's 120 elected seats — and not the 41 announced by electoral officials. MDC officials did not specify how they calculated the figure.

Mugabe's ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) claimed 78 seats. One seat went to an independent candidate, according to official results.

Under Zimbabwean law, Mugabe gets to appoint another 30 seats, giving his party a more than two-thirds majority, to fill out the 150-seat legislature.

Opposition leaders and independent rights groups said years of violence, intimidation and repressive laws skewed the election in Mugabe's favor — a view echoed by Britain and the United States.



Sunday Telegraph journalists Julian Simmonds (left) and Toby John Harden before a court appearance on Monday. They were arrested for interviewing voters.

"As long as we run elections under the same set of conditions, there is no way that elections will be free and fair," opposition spokesman William Bango said on Sunday. Tsvangirai did not specify how a new constitution would be drawn up or new elections conducted. David Coltart, the opposition's spokesman on legal issues, suggested the United Nations

might have to step in. The Opposition and independent rights groups have complained of huge discrepancies in the results, particularly in the government's rural strongholds. In at least one area, the number of votes counted exceeded the number of people who cast ballots by more than 15,000, according to official figures.

AFP

05 APR 2005

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

# Mugabe wins 'rigged' polls

HARARE, April 1. — Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe's party won enough seats to clinch a parliamentary majority, according to results announced today in an election the Opposition and rights groups said was skewed from the start.

Opposition leader Mr Morgan Tsvangirai accused the government of stealing

the poll and urged Zimbabweans to defend their votes. Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front won 55 of parliament's 120 elected seats, compared to 34 for the main Opposition Movement for Democratic Change, the national election commission announced. Mr Mugabe appoints another 30 seats, ensuring

his party a majority.

"The government has fraudulently, once again, betrayed the people," Mr Tsvangirai told reporters at an earlier news briefing. "We believe the people of Zimbabwe must defend their vote and their right to free and fair elections." He added that inconsistencies in the results pointed to rigging. — AP

# Fight Mugabe, says archbishop

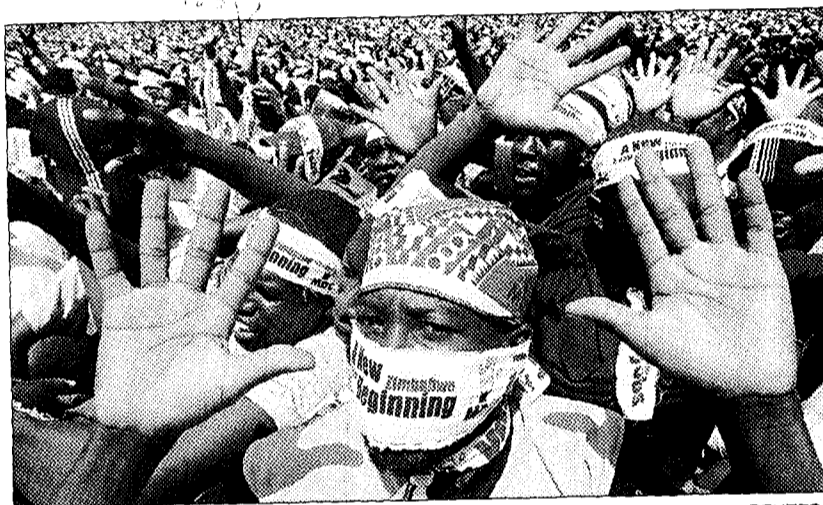
Associated Press  
Harare, March 27

ONE OF Zimbabwe's most outspoken church leaders urged fellow countrymen on Sunday to take to the streets in a peaceful uprising, saying key parliamentary elections this week were certain to be rigged.

Roman Catholic Archbishop Pius Ncube of Bulawayo, said he was willing to put on his vestments and lead a march to President Robert Mugabe's residence himself. However, he feared, "If I do it, I do it alone. The people are so scared. You are not going to get that where people are so cowardly."

Mugabe, a former guerrilla leader, has led Zimbabwe since the end of the white rule in 1980. Ncube believes Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front party will easily win Thursday's poll, which he believed is already tainted by years of violence, intimidation and repressive laws.

He pointed out that the military will be overseeing the count, and accused them of cheating. "I hope that people get so disillusioned that they really organise against the government and kick him out by a non-violent, popular, mass uprising," Ncube told South African newspaper *The Sunday Inde-*



REUTERS

Zimbabwe opposition Movement for Democratic Change supporters display their party's open palm salute at an election rally in Harare on Sunday.

*pendent*. "Because as it is, people have been too soft with this government. So people should pluck up just a bit of courage and stand up against him and chase him away."

Ncube confirmed the comments to others, but was more guarded in an interview conducted over Zimbabwe's state-monitored telephone lines. Calls

for unauthorised protests are punishable by up to 20 years in jail under Zimbabwe's harsh Public Order and Security Act.

Ncube also accused the government of denying desperately needed food aid to opposition supporters in rural centres south of Harare, where he said over 200 hungry families were starving.

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5/3

# Africa faces HIV disaster: U.N. report

**GENEVA, MARCH 4.** By failing to take committed measures and boost funding, Governments could allow up to 89 million HIV/AIDS infections to develop virtually unchallenged in Africa over the next 20 years, a United Nations study issued on Friday warned.

However, nearly half that — up to 43 million HIV infections — could be averted across Africa if leaders take the right steps and significant foreign aid is forthcoming, said the report entitled "AIDS in Africa: Three scenarios to 2025".

## Decisions called for

"Millions of new infections can be prevented if Africa and the rest of the world decide to tackle AIDS as an exceptional crisis that has the potential to devastate entire societies and economies," said Peter Piot, the

head of the U.N. agency leading the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Piot warned that the evolution of the AIDS epidemic in Africa over the next 20 years would be based on "decisions taken today by African leaders and the rest of the world".

If African Governments implement effective policies but foreign aid is insufficient, less than half that number of new HIV infections — some 23 million — could be averted by 2025, the UNAIDS report said.

A third scenario of a failure by both African Governments and the international community to tackle the problems foresees increasing poverty and underdevelopment across the continent even if infection rates remain stable at about five per cent.

UNAIDS warned that would also cause huge economic costs, while health and support

systems would be "underdeveloped and overwhelmed".

The optimistic scenario, which expects global changes in trade and development policies to boost African economies, would see about 70 per cent of HIV positive people receive life-enhancing anti-retroviral drugs that suppress the virus.

## Worst case scenario

In the worst case of the three scenarios, just 20 per cent of African HIV patients would have access to those anti-AIDS drugs. The cumulative death toll from AIDS in Africa between 1980 and 2025 would range from 67 million to 83 million under the scenarios presented by the U.N.

The Ethiopian President, Girma Woldegiorgis, presented the report on Friday at a news conference in Addis Ababa. — AFP

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## High hopes on Burundi referendum

13  
H.O. 16

**BUJUMBURA (BURUNDI), FEB. 28.** Citizens of Burundi began voting in a referendum aimed at ensuring power-sharing between the central African country's rival ethnic groups and ending a war that has claimed some 300,000 lives. *Kinca*

The new constitution, which envisages a balanced power arrangement between the minority Tutsi tribe and the majority Hutus, is widely expected to be approved. The Tutsis have ruled since Burundi achieved independence from Belgium in 1962. Some 3.1 million persons were registered to cast ballots in the referendum, the first national vote in Burundi since it was plunged into chaos in 1993.

Preliminary results are expected by Tuesday and final returns to be announced on March 4, according to officials.

"I came to vote because it is important for the transition to peace and democracy," a 55-year-old teacher told AFP in Bujumbura.

Under the constitution, Burundi's President will have two ~~deputies from the different~~ ethnic groups while 60 per cent of the Cabinet will be Hutu and 40 per cent Tutsi. — AFP

THE HINDU

01 MAR 2005

# UN indicts Sudan govt for systematic killings

**United Nations:** Accusing the Sudanese government and the *janjaweed* (men on horses) militia with systemic killing, rape and torture of civilians in the Darfur region, a UN-appointed commission has suggested that the perpetrators of these crimes be prosecuted in The Hague-based International Criminal Court (ICC).

The panel said while the acts constituted crimes against humanity, it did not amount to genocide as has been contended by the US. However, it added that the conclusion that no genocidal policy had been pursued and implemented by the Sudanese government should not be taken in any way as detracting from the gravity of the crimes perpetrated in the region.

"International offences such as crimes against humanity and war crimes that have been committed in Darfur may be no less serious and heinous than genocide," it asserted in a report released on Monday night, "strongly" recommending that the Security Council immediately refer the situation in Darfur to the ICC. According to the report compiled by the five-member commission set up by UN secretary general Kofi Annan in October, the situation constitutes a threat to interna-



tional peace and security and serious violations of international human rights and humanitarian law is continuing by all the parties involved.

It recommended that the council establish a compensation commission to grant reparation to the victims whether the perpetrators have been identified for not. The commission has compiled a list of "likely suspects", but says it is not passing "final judgment" and therefore withholding their names from public. The list reportedly includes Sudanese government officials, members of militias and rebel groups and some foreign military officers act-

ing in their personal capacity.

Some 70,000 people have died and more than 1.8 million driven out of their homes in the conflict which began when two rebel groups in Darfur revolted against alleged discrimination, and government forces, with the help of Arab *janjaweed* militia, tried to put them down. The *janjaweed* militia are accused of killing, raping, burning villages and crops of Africans in Darfur, which is equal in area to France.

Meanwhile, the US has strongly opposed the commission's recommendation that the cases be referred to the ICC as Washington does not recognise the court. Agencies

ARSC

# Million Rwandans face village trials

By Andrew Meldrum

APD-12

1871

**PRETORIA, JAN. 15.** One million Rwandans — an eighth of the country's population — are expected to be tried for alleged participation in the 1994 genocide, an official said yesterday.

Domitilla Mukantaganzwa, executive secretary of the National Service of Gacaca Jurisdictions, said the trials, which will be conducted in traditional gacaca village courts, could start next month in a few areas but they will not get under way throughout the country until 2006.

"Drawing from the experience and figures accruing from the pilot trials, we estimate a figure slightly above one million people that are supposed to be tried under the gacaca courts," Ms. Mukantaganzwa told Reuters in Kigali.

The new estimate of one million indicates the vast scale of the task of bringing to justice those suspected of participating in the killings of 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus massacred in Rwanda between April and June 1994.

The traditional courts are preparing to hear accusations against hundreds of thou-

sands of people who are currently living freely, often beside neighbours whose relatives they are suspected of killing.

## Traditional justice

The gacaca courts are a modernised version of traditional Rwandan justice.

They were launched in 2002 on a trial basis to try to speed up the ponderous pace of the genocide trials in the conventional courts. Nearly 11 years after the killings, there is a huge backlog of suspects awaiting trial in conventional courts. There are 80,000 peo-

ple languishing in jail and it is believed many could die before their cases are heard at the current slow pace. Those deemed to be ringleaders of the killings are to be tried by the conventional courts, while those suspected of lesser crimes will be sent to the gacaca courts.

Focusing on confession and apology, the gacaca courts are also intended to ease the way to national reconciliation. Under the gacaca system, those who admit guilt before a set date will receive reduced sentences. — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2005

THE HINDU

16 JAN 2005

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AP

Mark Thatcher outside the Cape Town High Court on Thursday.

HT-13

## Thatcher son pleads guilty in coup plot

MARK THATCHER on Thursday pleaded guilty to being involved in a failed coup attempt in Equatorial Guinea under a plea bargain that saves him from prison.

The Cape Town high court ordered the son of the British former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to pay a £265,000 fine and gave him a four-year suspended prison sentence. Judge Abe Motala warned Thatcher that if he does not pay the fine he will face a five-year prison sentence with a further four years suspended for five years.

Thatcher, 51, is now expected to leave South Africa and join his wife and two children in Dallas, Texas.

It is not known, however, whether Equatorial Guinea will pursue his extradition or renew efforts to compel him to answer questions about the conspiracy.

Thatcher admitted to paying for a military helicopter used by the mercenaries in the failed plot but maintained that he believed it was to be used as an air ambulance. Thatcher ignored a poster hung in a window across the street reading "Save me mummy".

GNS, Cape Town



# Longest-drawn African war ends

Associated Press

NAIROBI, Jan. 9. — Sudan's vice-president and the country's main rebel leader signed a comprehensive peace agreement to end Africa's longest-running conflict on Sunday, concluding an eight-year process to stop a civil war that has cost more than 2 million lives since 1983.

In a lavish ceremony in neighbouring Kenya — where the talks were based — Sudanese vice-president Ali Osman Mohammed Taha and Mr John Garang, chairman of the Sudan People's Liberation Army, signed the peace agreement.

The north-south war has pitted Sudan's Islamic-dominated government against rebels seeking greater autonomy from the largely animist south. The conflict is blamed for more than 2 million deaths, primarily from war-induced famine and disease.

Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki and Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni signed as witnesses. US Secretary of State Mr Colin Powell, Italy's foreign minister Mr Gianfranco Fini and Norwegian international

development minister Mr Hilde Johnson then signed as witnesses, representing donors who've backed the peace negotiations.

Kenya has hosted the talks since they began in earnest in 1997.

Nine other African leaders attended the ceremony, including Sudanese President Mr Omar El-Bashir and African Union chairman and Nigerian President Mr Olusegun Obasanjo. Arab League Secretary General Amre Moussa was also present.

During the last two years of talks, the adversaries have signed protocols on how to share power and natural wealth, what to do with their armed forces during a six-year transition period and how to administer three disputed areas in central Sudan.

They also agreed that after the six-year transition, southerners would vote in a referendum on whether to remain united with the north, or to become independent. UN officials have said the Security Council will review the peace agreement within two weeks, after which the council will adopt a resolution establishing a peace support mission for Sudan.

THE STATESMAN

10 JAN 2005