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Sub-Saharan Africa

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I. Sub-Saharan Africa

During the year, a variety of local, sub-regional, continental and global events gave off different signals. At times, there were indications of measurable achievements in terms of advancing African interests, but there were, in contrast, also setbacks. Inadequate performance continued to be the hallmark of many African economies, while conflicts still raged in many sub-regions, notably Central and West Africa and Sudan's western province of Darfur. Sub-Saharan Africa remained overall the least developed and most impoverished region in the world, though initiatives to overcome the constraints and address the challenges were apparent.

African Union

The **African Union (AU)** continued to expand its institutional architecture, despite unresolved budgetary issues. This also cast a shadow over the growing peacekeeping role ascribed to the organisation and so desired by Western donors, the AU Commission and several of its member states. Thus, some bold decisions were taken to create new institutions or organs or to launch new policy initiatives. In some cases, these decisions were actually implemented, but without addressing the underlying financial implications. These were, furthermore, complicated by the perennial arrears in contributions from member states and the frequent failure of Western donors to make good on past financial pledges.

On 18 March, the **Pan-African Parliament** was formally inaugurated in the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa. This fulfilled a promise made back in the early 1990s and, for the first time, provided the continental organisation, with a permanent forum for voices outside the strictly (inter-)governmental sphere. In July, heads of state decided to establish the parliament's permanent headquarters in Cape Town, South Africa. With five MPs delegated by each national parliament, the 265-strong parliament was given only deliberative and consultative powers for the time being. It was, nevertheless, hoped that the parliament, chaired by Gertrude Mongella of Tanzania, would make the AU's government-dominated executive organs more accountable.

It was reported that the parliament's existence would add another \$ 30 m to the AU's budget. This came on top of the price tags for other new institutions not yet up and running, such as the court of justice (\$ 3 m) and the economic, social and cultural council (\$ 9 m). While only \$ 13 m of the 2004 budget had been received by the time of the summit of heads of state in Addis Ababa (6-8 July), with several countries facing the theoretical possibility of

sanctions (i.e., loss of voting rights), the chairman of the commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, nevertheless launched one of the most **ambitious programmes for the continental organisation** ever. This plan, intended to propel Africa into the 21st century, would cost some \$ 1.7 bn to accomplish and involve a doubling of the organisation's headquarters staff, raising the commission's operating costs to approximately \$ 130 m a year. Konaré pleaded for an annual budget of \$ 600 m, much of which would go to finance the AU's projected collective security arrangement (see below). He suggested that member states reserve 0.5% of their national budgets to fund AU activities. In a style characteristic of African continental politics, the heads of state endorsed Konaré's plan but refused to commit themselves to its financial implications, referring the matter to the executive council, which later approved a **fourfold budget increase** for 2005 from \$ 43 m to \$ 158 m. While this did not remotely approach Konaré's requested \$ 600 m, it was decided that \$ 63 m of the budget would have to come from obligatory contributions by member states, the other \$ 95 m to be requested from wealthy members such as Libya or Western donors. With \$ 75 m of the 2005 budget projected for peace and security issues alone, the AU in effect confronted Western donors in particular with the financial implications of their much-favoured slogan, 'African solutions to African problems'.

The AU's official policies on defence and security appeared to take several steps forward when its Peace and Security Council (PSC), whose protocol came into force on 26 December 2003, was solemnly launched at a meeting in Addis Ababa on 25 May ('Africa Day'). Earlier in the year, on 20–21 January, African defence ministers adopted a plan for a common defence and security policy that would include an African peacekeeping force of 10,000 to 15,000 troops. This **African Standby Force (ASF)** was endorsed by the heads of state at a special meeting in the Libyan town of Sirte (27–28 February) and would comprise troops from several countries, including South Africa, Nigeria, Egypt and Kenya. Uganda also offered troops through an East African arrangement that would become part of the ASF, which would comprise four sub-regional brigades of 4,020 soldiers each. The standby force was to operate under the PSC, which, contrary to many reports, only has a mandate in 'peace support' operations (which presumably require the consent of the member state concerned). Decisions about more forceful military actions in cases of war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide are reserved for the AU's Assembly.

The projected peacekeeping role was first put to the test with the unfolding disaster in **Darfur**. While the UN Security Council did not get beyond issuing verbal threats against the Sudanese government, the AU Assembly decided at its July meeting to send an armed protection force of 300 men to the troubled Sudanese region (African Union Mission in Sudan, AMIS). Its initial role would be to protect the 60 AU officials monitoring a ceasefire hammered out between the Sudanese government and two rebel movements rather than to shield the civilian population from attacks by armed groups. The size of the force was clearly insufficient to help restore stability to the huge Darfur region, and it took several months before the troops, from Rwanda and Nigeria, arrived on the scene. On 20 October,

the PSC decided to enhance the force's mandate to include the protection of the civilian population. The force was expanded but by the end of the year still stood at less than a quarter of the projected total (3,000 to 4,000). While the Darfur operation was estimated to cost some \$ 26 m, only \$ 1.6 m had been paid into the AU's peace fund by July.

The deployment of troops was part of a wider AU concern with the crisis in Sudan, a concern that was given concrete expression in a ceasefire agreement brokered and signed at AU headquarters between the Sudanese government and the two rebel movements on 28 May. This was a follow-up to the ceasefire agreed between the Sudanese forces in N'Djaména on 8 April. The PSC concerned itself with this matter at several of its meetings, while Nigerian President Obasanjo, elected chairman of the AU's Assembly at its summit in July, convened talks between the belligerent forces in Abuja on 23 August, in the presence of Commission Chairman Konaré. These talks went on intermittently for the rest of the year, without a fundamental breakthrough being achieved regarding security on the ground. Thus, in the course of new talks held in Abuja from 10 to 21 December, Konaré expressed concern about the **deterioration of security** as a result of numerous ceasefire violations.

Other issues on the AU agenda concerned the continuing crisis in eastern DR Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Burundi, Somalia and Zimbabwe, among others. Some of these problems were tackled more directly by other organisations or countries, such as the UN, ECOWAS and France. President Mbeki of South Africa, as AU representative, mediated in the Ivorian conflict with limited success.

The AU's summit in July also discussed the **rights of women**, pleading for a strategy to improve the situation of women, as well as AIDS-related issues and the social dimension of globalisation, among other subjects. The continent's aspiration for its own seat in the UN Security Council has so far proved divisive, with diplomatic wrangling between some of the AU's leading countries (South Africa, Nigeria, Egypt) as to who would be entitled to the seat in the event that such permanent African representation was achieved.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

During the year, NEPAD implemented the first steps of the **African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)**, which is considered an essential innovation and important tool for achieving more collective responsibility among African states. On 13 February, Rwanda's President Kagame hosted in Kigali the first summit of the committee of participating heads of state and government in the African Peer Review Mechanism (APR Forum). The heads of state from the Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and South Africa attended this inaugural meeting. President Kagame expressed the view that the APRM would offer assistance in tackling the challenges of governance. Nigeria's President Obasanjo, as chairperson of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) of NEPAD, was unanimously elected chairperson of the APR Forum. The forum endorsed the appointment of Marie-Angelique

Savané of Senegal as the chairperson of the **APR Panel** of Eminent Persons for a one-year-period. The panel has a further six members from Algeria (for North Africa), Cameroon (for Central Africa), Kenya (for East Africa), Mozambique (for Southern Africa), Nigeria (for West Africa) and South Africa (also for Southern Africa). It is tasked with facilitating the implementation of the APRM and ensuring the integrity of the process. With two representatives each from West and Southern Africa, the panel reflects in its composition the leading role played by the presidents of Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa in the establishment of NEPAD. The APRM is defined as "an instrument voluntarily acceded to by Member States of the African Union as an African self-monitoring mechanism." To facilitate the process, the APR Panel submitted a questionnaire for a country self-assessment for the APRM. Its four major sections correspond to the four areas identified as relevant to the APRM: 1) democracy and good political governance; 2) economic governance and management; 3) corporate governance; and 4) socioeconomic development. The APR Forum had – in line with the claim to African ownership of the process – at its inaugural meeting in Kigali approved a minimum contribution of \$ 100,000 by each participating country towards the operationalisation of the APRM.

In a presentation to a NEPAD stakeholder dialogue in Johannesburg (22–23 October) on the occasion of the initiative's third anniversary, the NEPAD Executive Secretary Wiseman Nkuhlu (previously economic advisor to South Africa's President Thabo Mbeki) pointed out that 24 African countries (including North Africa) already had signed the APRM Memorandum of Understanding and thereby volunteered to be reviewed by their peers. During the year, the APRM was initiated with Ghana, Rwanda, Mauritius and Kenya. The first **APRM support missions** took place on 24 to 29 May (Ghana), in June (Rwanda and Mauritius), and on 26 and 27 July (Kenya). The second group to be reviewed in the near future consists of six countries, Algeria, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa.

At the **third ordinary session** of the **AU Assembly** of heads of state and government in Addis Ababa (6 to 8 July), the chairperson of the 15-member HSIAGC, Obasanjo, warned that "unfulfilled commitments" by rich nations could pose one of the greatest threats to the envisaged development of Africa through NEPAD. He called on wealthy countries to move beyond rhetoric and start taking action and warned of the "crippling capacity gaps" hampering NEPAD's planning and the implementation of its development programmes at all levels. A progress report indicated a new emphasis on the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as a strategic shift towards closer collaboration with existing sub-regional bodies. Progress was noted in the implementation of **sectoral priorities** with sub-regional perspectives. Most prominent among these are the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the Short Term Action Plan (STAP) for infrastructure, including telecommunications, transport routes, power supply schemes and shared river basins. Both initiatives managed to secure considerable external financing. The FAO funds medium-term investment programmes to fast-track the implementation of

CAADP, while the World Bank provided \$ 500 m to the Multi-country Agricultural Productivity Programme (MAPP). The ADB approved financing for nine investment projects under STAP, amounting to \$ 580 m, and the World Bank approved financing for STAP projects to a total of \$ 570 m. However, as was noted in the communiqué issued at the end of the 10th summit of the HSGIC in Maputo (23 May), the total budget required from external resources to fund all NEPAD infrastructure projects would amount to \$ 8.1 bn.

Support by the United Nations was reiterated in a report by the Secretary-General submitted to the 59th session of the UN General Assembly on 4 August (A/59/206). A 13-member advisory panel monitors international support to NEPAD through the UN system, including technical assistance for institutional development, capacity building, project development, resource mobilisation and advocacy. The UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) provides leadership for the regional consultation meetings of UN agencies with the aim of establishing thematic clusters for NEPAD priority areas. The report recommended more efforts towards coherence in the international community's support for Africa's development agenda, as well as an increase in donor funding. It stressed the need for a strengthened partnership in which African countries deepen their commitment to the priorities of NEPAD.

This could be read as a diplomatically phrased reservation, shared by critical observers both on the continent and outside, that NEPAD might not meet the original expectations had of it. NEPAD organs continued to abstain from critical comment or other forms of interference with regard to **Zimbabwe**. The deteriorating situation there was considered to be a litmus test for the notions of good governance stressed by NEPAD, combined with the emphasis on collective responsibility versus national sovereignty. Owing to the avoidance of a critical stand with regard to the Zimbabwean crisis, however, donors started to question the political will and determination of the NEPAD architects to honour the commitment expressed in the document. In the absence of subsequent actions, policy statements were increasingly seen as mere lip service to noble goals rather than as directives for serious initiatives. The visible shift in priorities towards material infrastructure projects over policy issues gave additional reason for questioning the determination to implement the original political agenda. As a result, external financial support for NEPAD failed to match original expectations. Senegal's President Wade expressed his frustration at the **NEPAD stakeholder dialogue** held on 22–23 October in Johannesburg by stating, "We are spending an enormous amount of time and money on conferences, but . . . we have not had one single (project) that has been realised."

Before the end of the year, the **12th HSGIC summit** met in Algiers, the capital of one of the five founding member states of the initiative (23 November). The heads of state of Algeria, Botswana, Republic of Congo, Egypt, Mali, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and São Tomé and Príncipe attended. To accelerate the implementation of NEPAD, the summit identified the following goals: 1) increased development assistance; 2) debt cancellation; 3) increased access to markets of the North without insistence on reciprocity; 4) the

pooling of resources provided by partners; 5) effective engagement with the UK Commission for Africa and in the implementation of the G8 Africa Action Plan; and 6) use of the 5th anniversary of the MDGs to achieve tangible results. The integration of NEPAD into AU structures and processes was mentioned separately in the final communiqué. One critical issue was the continued operation of the NEPAD secretariat out of offices based at the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) in Midrand (between Pretoria and Johannesburg). This contributed to reservations that the initiative was being too much driven and dominated by South Africa. Recommendations that NEPAD move physically to the AU underlined the continuance of suspicions within the family of African states that the initiative is being used to promote the particular interests of a minority of states who wish to pursue their own agendas within a continentally defined framework.

Africa and Globalities

In November, the World Bank issued a gloomy assessment of Africa's economic performance in 2004. While the continent reaped the benefit of booming commodity prices, the effect was more than offset by rising oil prices, from which, however, some African oil-producing countries benefited enormously. Although per capita incomes were expected to increase modestly, the increase was not enough to catch up with other parts of the world. The growth rate, which in November was estimated by the IMF at 4.5% for sub-Saharan Africa, would not be sufficient to meet Millennium Development Goals on poverty reduction, health and education. Ineffective economic structures and inefficient government spending were still considered a fundamental problem.

As in other recent years, the world's leading industrial powers in the **Group of 8** (G8) discussed African issues. Six African countries (Algeria, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda) were represented at the summit's African session, held at the US Sea Island resort in June. The results were widely viewed as disappointing since, despite British backing, the industrial countries refused to agree to a comprehensive write-off of multilateral debt owed by the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), most of which are in Africa. So far, only \$ 30 bn of a total of \$ 100 bn of multilateral debt had been forgiven, with even the IMF and World Bank admitting that the HIPC scheme had fallen short of expectations. The G8 agreed to expand funding for the existing HIPC scheme and to extend it until the end of 2006. As part of its Africa Outreach plan, the summit also vowed to create a global HIV/AIDS vaccine initiative, intended to help coordinate scientific research into finding an effective treatment for the disease. In the area of conflict, the G8 agreed to launch a multi-year scheme (until 2010) to train 50,000 to 75,000 African troops for peacekeeping missions on the continent. In part, this initiative was intended to coordinate existing training programmes offered by the US, Britain and France. Nevertheless, world leaders did not discuss such issues as Zimbabwe, while the bloodshed in Darfur merely triggered a call for the

UN to take the lead in stabilising the situation in Sudan, while the UN, in turn, left the matter to the African Union.

In contrast, the **WTO** made a more tangible step forward when one of its trade panels ruled that American **cotton subsidies** (\$ 3 bn) distort international trade. These subsidies have been particularly detrimental to cotton producers in some poor West African countries. While the US appealed the decision, which is expected to be upheld by the WTO, a group of poor countries led by Rwanda struck a deal with the Americans in Geneva on 31 July to conduct separate negotiations on cotton subsidies and trade. By the same token, the WTO pressed the EU to cut its subsidies to sugar farmers further, a programme strongly defended by poor African, Caribbean and Pacific countries whose **sugar exports** are bought up by the EU at more than three times the world price.

United Nations and Peacekeeping

Despite its ineffectual stance on Darfur, **UN peacekeeping operations** commenced or continued in several countries, including Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Burundi and Congo. From April to September, the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) gradually handed over control of security to the country's police and army. Once the biggest UN peacekeeping operation in the world, UNAMSIL's size was reduced to some 8,000 men by autumn and was expected to drop to 3,500 by the end of the year. Although initially projected to be withdrawn from the country by the end of 2004, the Security Council extended the mission's mandate until July 2005 in view of security worries in Liberia and Guinea and doubts about the ability of the Sierra Leonean government to face up to potential external threats. The UN's Liberian operation, UNMIL (UN Mission in Liberia), some 10,000 to 15,000 men strong, was engaged in overseeing a protracted disarmament exercise as part of the country's attempts to achieve a return to peaceful politics, with elections scheduled for 2005. Little if any coordination in security matters occurred between the UN operations in Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire, whose security problems frequently spilled across the forested international borders. The UN Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI, 6,240 men), which ran in parallel with the UN-approved French presence and integrated former ECOWAS contingents, was approved by the Security Council on 27 February, with deployment beginning in April. The Security Council also imposed an arms embargo on the country (15 November) as a consequence of Ivorian government attacks on French peacekeepers on 4 November. By the end of the year, none of the international forces had managed to break the deadlock in the Ivorian conflict. The UN Observation Mission in Congo (MONUC) continued to experience serious difficulties. Although the Security Council agreed, on 1 October, to expand the peacekeeping force by over 5,000 men to a total of 11,000 and beef up its mandate, it was unable to put an end to the violence by various militias or the interference of neighbouring countries such as Rwanda. A sex-abuse

scandal further tainted MONUC's standing, already impaired by its inability to protect the civilian population in the volatile eastern region. By the end of the year, in the wake of the emerging peace deal between the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the Sudanese government, a new UN force was projected to be installed in the south of the country. A special Security Council meeting in Nairobi on 19 November welcomed the signing by the Sudanese parties of further arrangements detailing their peace agreement. This was notwithstanding the UN's ineffectual stance on Darfur, which was partly the responsibility of China and Russia. Both countries have major economic interests in Sudan (arms exports and importation of Sudanese oil) and consequently opposed sanctions against Khartoum. The UN Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) continued to patrol the border region disputed by the two countries, with little progress towards genuine peace being achieved. Finally, on 21 May, the Security Council approved the deployment of 5,650 military personnel as part of the UN Operation in Burundi (UNOB). This was to take over from the under-funded AU African Mission in Burundi (AMIB), which consisted of 2,870 troops from Ethiopia, Mozambique and South Africa and was mandated to oversee the implementation of ceasefire agreements; support disarmament, demobilisation and the reintegration of combatants; and ensure favourable conditions for the establishment of the UN mission.

Peace and War

War continued to affect the lives of many African people. UNHCR provided support for about 3.1 m refugees (4.6 m in the previous year), primarily from Sudan, Burundi, Sudan, DR Congo, Somalia, Liberia and Angola. Tanzania remained the country with the highest number of refugees (approx. 690,000) on its soil. In West and Central Africa and in the Horn there were ongoing violent conflicts. Only the region of Southern Africa was untroubled by escalations. The complex cross-border conflict situation in the Great Lakes region was only seemingly pacified, with numerous small-scale violent incidents continuing. Most attention was attracted by the Darfur conflict. In Côte d'Ivoire, French troops were placed in an awkward position – as peacekeepers, saviours of French interests and as 'neo-colonial oppressors'.

The Great Lakes region once again had its share of armed violence: in DR Congo violence escalated again at the end of May in Bukavu (South Kivu), with fights between government and dissident army troops, the latter obviously supported by Rwanda. Congolese Tutsi fled the war-torn area across the border to Burundi. Their camp was attacked in August under mysterious circumstances and approximately 160 people were murdered. New fighting was reported in North Kivu in December. Ten thousand civilians fled until a ceasefire came into effect on 21 December.

One positive development was a basic agreement between the governments of DR Congo, Rwanda and Uganda during a meeting in Kampala that included the disarmament

within a year of groups operating from their respective territories against neighbouring states. Nevertheless, Uganda and Rwanda deployed troops along their common border. A joint declaration of eleven heads of states aimed at ending the conflicts in the Great Lakes region was signed in Dar es Salaam (20 November). In addition, the peace process between northern and southern **Sudan** made significant progress. The core of the new relationship was an agreement on the allocation of benefits from natural resources that was signed in Naivasha, Kenya on 5 January. This should have meant the end of a conflict that had raged for at least 21 years. However, in January, new fighting broke out in the Darfur region in the west and escalated into a new war. In March, the so-called Janjaweed militias extended their assaults and plundered hundreds of villages, murdering their inhabitants. Given the situation of ongoing killing, US Secretary of State Colin Powell stated on 9 September that genocide had taken place in Darfur. According to the UN, half of Darfur's six million people were directly affected by the conflict. The death toll was variously estimated: while the lowest reliable number was 70,000, in December Caritas estimated the number of deaths to be 180,000.

Contradictory developments were reported from still unpacified **Somalia**. On the one hand, there were new local conflicts (the battle at Kismayo in September and fights between Somaliland and Puntland over a disputed border line in October). On the other hand, it was possible to establish a transition government in Kenya (22 August). Tensions remained high between Ethiopia and Eritrea, without however, any further escalation.

With the government's attacks on northern positions on 4 November, the 'frozen' civil war in **Côte d'Ivoire** escalated. At first, the UN peacekeeping force and the related French mission (4,000 troops) did not adequately counter the attack. On 6 November, the Ivorian air force bombed the town of Bouaké, the rebel stronghold, and launched an apparently targeted attack on a French military camp there. During the attack, nine French soldiers and one US citizen died. The African Union and the UN Security Council both discussed sanctions against members of the regime. The violent outbreak precipitated a new wave of refugees into Liberia, where the ceasefire agreement between government and the two rebel movements remained shaky.

Democracy and Elections

Eleven national elections (plus one constitutional referendum) were held. They could be interpreted in different ways – some were steps towards consolidating fragile democracies, others as evidence of a blockage in the transition process.

Parliamentary elections in **South Africa** (14 April) led to the consolidation of the ruling party, combined with decreasing voter participation. Instead of characterising the free multiparty election as proof of the further consolidation of democracy ten years after the ending of apartheid, some commentators stressed the perils of the overwhelming dominance of one party. Thabo Mbeki was re-elected as president for a second term. One more recent

phenomenon has been increasing acceptance of **constitutional limitations** on the number of consecutive presidential terms (usually two terms). Presidential and parliamentary elections in **Malawi** (20 May) ended with a slight shift in power. In **Namibia**, too, (15–16 November), President Nujoma, in office since independence, was not allowed to participate. Parliamentary and presidential elections in **Mozambique** (1–2 December) proceeded along similar lines, though they were heavily criticised by international observers for the irregularities and intimidation. President Chissano was not allowed to stand a third time as a candidate. Low expectations accompanied elections in notorious authoritarian systems: unfree parliamentary elections in **Equatorial Guinea** (25 April) were boycotted by the main opposition parties. An election of a less exciting nature was also held in **Cameroon** (11 October), where only about half the citizens of voting age were enrolled on the lists.

No major changes occurred in the course of parliamentary elections in **Botswana** (30 October), perceived as one of the oldest democracies on the continent.

Two other elections were viewed as part of a transition process: Parliamentary elections were held on the **Comoros** (14 and 21 March, 18 and 25 April). The result was a 'cohabitation' situation, with president and government from different political families. As a result of parliamentary elections in **Guinea-Bissau** (28–30 March), the former ruling party made a strong return to the political stage by winning 45 of 100 seats, more than any of its rivals. The return to civilian government, however, would only be accomplished with the presidential elections to be held in March 2005. One positive development was the gradual consolidation of the crisis-ridden democracy in **Niger**, following two rounds of parliamentary and presidential elections (16 November, 4 December). As favourably viewed were parliamentary and presidential elections in **Ghana** (7 December).

Succession crises in authoritarian states in which the rulers had serious health problems became more apparent. The rules of succession were obviously not clear and had already led to public discussion in some cases (Guinea, Chad, Togo, Cameroon and potentially Burkina Faso or Gabon).

Overall, instead of a democratic breakthrough (such as in Kenya in 2003), there were no uniform developments in 2004: there were some encouraging trends towards democratic consolidation but there was also the consolidation of some authoritarian regimes.

Coup Attempts and the Struggle Against Terrorism

There were several new signs of the inherent weakness of several African states in 2004. Four attempted coups d'état were recorded. A coup attempt in Equatorial Guinea, in which approx. 80 mercenaries from all over the world (especially South Africa) and the son of former British Prime Minister Thatcher were involved, was the most spectacular. The plane carrying the mercenaries was stopped in Zimbabwe's capital Harare. In Guinea-Bissau, a mutiny ended with the murder of the joint chief of staff and with the mutineers' demands being met by the government. In **Chad**, an attempted military insurrection was reported in

May, but government was immediately able to bring it under control. In **Mauritania**, a putsch attempt in 2003 was followed by two further attempts in 2004 (August and September). As already noted, the question of succession in several authoritarian states on the continent became acute. The personalised nature of power meant that the illness of heads of state in Guinea, Togo, Chad and Cameroon represented a threat to stability, though in Guinea the matter became less acute when the president's health appeared to stabilise. Ongoing ethnic conflicts in the Niger Delta, with hundreds of deaths, were a sign of the weakness of the most populous state on the continent, Nigeria. In addition, numerous states were unable to administer their whole territories, for example, the north in Uganda, usually considered to be a strong state.

US African policy was strongly influenced by the terrorist theme. The Pan-Sahel-Initiative (PSI, later renamed the Trans-Sahara Counter-Terrorism Initiative), led by the US's European Command (EUCOM) in Stuttgart, Germany primarily consisted of training and instruction for troops from Algeria, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad in hunting down 'terrorists'. Officially, the initiative also targeted smuggling activities and international crime. The general staffs of these countries and their counterparts from Morocco, Senegal and Tunisia participated in a EUCOM conference in Stuttgart on the worldwide 'fight against terrorism' (23–24 February). In March, 43 fighters from the Algerian (and supposedly al-Qaida-supported) 'Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat' (GSPC) were killed. At the end of March, GSPC leader Amari Saif ('el para') was captured by a Chadian rebel group and handed over to Algeria (June). Amari Saif was responsible for the kidnapping of European tourists in 2003. In addition, US General Charles Wald visited 11 African countries (Morocco, Algeria, Nigeria, Angola, South Africa, Namibia, Gabon, São Tomé and Príncipe, Ghana, Niger and Tunisia). A parallel initiative was run in the Horn of Africa. It led to the capture of several dozen persons in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Kenya and Djibouti (April). But there were also genuine African initiatives. At a high AU-government level a second meeting was held in Algiers (13–14 October) dealing with the prevention and fight against terrorism in Africa. The terror discourse was still being exploited by several African governments to denounce legitimate opposition movements and parties.

HIV/AIDS and other Epidemics and Disasters

Sub-Saharan Africa has just over 10% of the world's population, but it is home to more than 60% of all people living with HIV. According to an **AIDS epidemic update** for 2004 released by the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the number of HIV-infected people up to the age of 49 years was estimated at over 25 million, the majority of these being women between the ages of 15 and 49 (over 13 m). It was further estimated that during 2004 more than 3 million further adults and children were newly affected with HIV, and that during the year close to 2.5 million adults and children died from AIDS.

While the average HIV prevalence in sub-Saharan Africa among adults was estimated by UNAIDS at 7.4% in 2004, all the **most affected countries** are in Southern Africa, which has a considerably higher rate (see further details in the regional chapter). AIDS is considered to be the leading cause of death on the continent (ahead of even malaria). The **Commission on HIV/AIDS and Governance in Africa (CHGA)** was established as a UN system-wide initiative in February 2003. During the year, it held two meetings, in Maputo (23–25 March) and in Addis Ababa (13–14 October). It organised an interactive conference in Botswana on treatment scale-up and the prevention of mother to child transmission (26–27 July); another in Ethiopia on HIV/AIDS and its impact on rural livelihoods and food security (12 October); a third in Ghana entitled ‘The World of Work, Legal Frameworks’ (18–19 November); and a fourth in Cameroon on gender and HIV/AIDS orphans in Africa (13–14 December).

Successes in combating the pandemic to date have been rare, the most prominent being in Uganda, where the earlier escalation in infection rates has been halted and the trend reversed. During the year, the **World Bank** published an interim review of the Multi-Country HIV/AIDS Program (MAP) for Africa. It identified a number of shortcomings in practice. Its recommendations include making national HIV/AIDS frameworks more strategic; strengthening HIV/AIDS governance and civil society involvement; improving public sector responses; expediting the completion of national monitoring and evaluation systems; further harmonising and simplifying procedures; and enhancing performance incentives.

Treatment access remained low: the WHO estimated that during 2003 (latest available figure) only 3% of the 4.4 million people in need received antiretroviral therapy. The World Bank agreed to allocate \$ 60 m through a new treatment acceleration programme to scale up treatment, with Burkina Faso, Ghana and Mozambique as pilot countries. Botswana and Senegal have made their own substantial progress in increasing access to treatment. The AIDS pandemic remained far from being solved and continued to pose the biggest single threat to the welfare of the population, in particular in Southern African societies. On the occasion of World AIDS Day (1 December), a former chief writer for UNAIDS from South Africa commented upon the dilemma that “part of the problem also lies in the failure to reconcile the schizoid aspects of AIDS – as a short-term emergency and a long-term crisis.”

Southeast Asia, with its **tsunami** at year’s end, found itself, in top position in the ranking of worldwide catastrophes, a place normally reserved for Africa. In comparison to the death toll in Asia, the destruction in Africa caused by the tsunami seemed negligible. This was the reason international media attention on this aspect of the disaster was so limited. However, Somalia was badly affected, with approximately 300 people dying along a 650-kilometre strip of coast. About 18,000 households were seriously damaged or destroyed. In Tanzania, ten people died, in Kenya one person. On the Seychelles, there was considerable loss of property, and water reservoirs, especially drinking-water reservoirs, were contaminated.

The **plague of locusts** in the western Sahel affected many more people, and approximately 3.5 m ha of agricultural land were at risk. This was the worst plague of locusts in 15 years. FAO anticipated damage amounting to \$ 245 m for 2004 alone. Worst affected were Mauritania, Mali and Senegal. Niger, too, was badly hit, with food shortages expected in the coming year. Technical support mainly came from the North African countries, specifically Morocco, Algeria and Libya.

Cross-regional Forms of Cooperation

On 26–27 November, the tenth **Francophone summit** was held in the Burkinabè capital Ouagadougou, bringing together 15 heads of state and six prime ministers. The summit discussed a range of African and international issues, including, officially and unofficially, the Ivorian crisis, and demanded strict application of the Linas-Marcoussis and Accra III agreements (see the West Africa regional chapter). The ‘Autorité du Bassin du Niger’ (ABN), a grouping of nine West and Central African states, held a conference in Paris (26–27 April) to discuss cooperation in the sharing of river resources and the protection of ecosystems, but with few tangible results. CEN-SAD, dominated by Libya, held its sixth conference of leaders and heads of state in Bamako on 15 May. Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia were accepted as new members, thereby increasing the number of member states to 21. Ghana participated as an observer.

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