Negative: Africa

By “Coach Vance” Trefethen

**Resolved: The United States Federal Government should considerably reduce its military commitments**

The AFF plan withdraws US troops from Africa. This will be a bad idea because US forces are key to fighting terrorism that threatens African citizens and US national security. In addition, US troops withdrawn from Africa would be redeployed to confront China, which would cause far more danger to US security than anything going on in Africa.

Note: The two China disadvantages at first sound mutually contradictory but they are not. The first one says US troops withdrawn from Africa would be redeployed to the Pacific where they would antagonize China, and that’s bad. The second one says US troops withdrawn from Africa would not be in Africa to confront China, and that’s bad. The difference is, we need to confront China in Africa, where we can compete for global influence with other countries, but not confront China in the Pacific, where it will seem we are directly threatening the Chinese homeland itself and getting in their face. Avoiding both disads requires a Negative ballot, because it means US troops will stay in Africa to block Chinese hegemony there, and will not be pulled out to antagonize China in the Pacific.

NOTE: In every case, the red bracketed notations about END QUOTE and LATER IN THE SAME CONTEXT are added by the brief writer to help comply with the new Stoa evidence rules. When these appear in a contiguous text without any line separation, they indicate that we are merely not-reading the non-underlined portion of the evidence quote, even though it is still present. When they appear with line breaks around them, they indicate that we are moving from one part of the quoted article to more distant part of the article and the skipped text is not preserved nor presented in the brief.

If there are evidence quotes where the evidence contains underlined portions and non-underlined portions, you are still obligated by Stoa rules to enunciate (say out loud) the signals “END QUOTE” and “LATER IN THE SAME CONTEXT” to indicate you are skipping some non-underlined text – even if we do not have the bracketed markers there to remind you.

Negative: Africa 3

NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY 3

Do no harm 3

INHERENCY 3

1. Study underway [Let’s wait ‘til it finishes and then decide on a policy change] 3

Africa troop reduction study underway now. 3

COUNTERPLAN – Increase, not decrease, military commitment and develop a continent-wide Africa engagement policy 3

US military resources in Africa are spread too thin 3

AFF needs to stop being impatient: Long-term commitment is needed to really degrade terrorists in Africa 4

Best policy would be 1) NOT disengaging (like AFF does). 2) NOT spreading too thin (like Status Quo is risking). 3) Instead, develop a continent-wide strategy after more study. 4

Developing a continental African engagement policy allows us to compete with China and best uphold America’s interests 4

More study, development of an African continental strategy, and avoiding disengagement would be the best policy 5

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE 5

1. US casualties don’t justify pullout 5

US military casualties in Africa missions don’t justify pullout of US forces 5

SOLVENCY 6

1. More study needed 6

If there’s a problem, it’s the lack of a comprehensive Africa strategy. We need that first in order to develop effective policies 6

DISADVANTAGES 6

1. Terrorism in West Africa 6

US troops in Africa are needed to eliminate terrorism. Other nations can’t solve on their own 6

West African leaders agree: US military is essential to blocking terrorism. Pullout would be a mistake 7

French government agrees: US West Africa anti-terrorism military support is irreplaceable and should not be withdrawn 7

Impact: Terrorist killings and hundreds of thousands driven from their homes 7

Impact: US and Africans under attack by terrorists 7

Impact: ISIS and Al-Qaeda kill thousands 8

2. Antagonizing China in the Pacific 8

Link: US troops moved out of Africa will be relocated to the Pacific to confront China 8

Link: Troop deployments in Asia to confront China recklessly increase the risk of war 8

Brink: Antagonizing China right now is dangerously playing with fire because we don’t have the resources to fight them 9

Impact: Political, economic and military disaster. Our objective should be to reduce tension and avoid conflict with China 9

Impact: The most important foreign policy goal is US-China cooperation. We need China to solve every major global challenge 9

3. Al-Shabab / Somalia / East Africa 10

Al Shabab is a threat to US citizens, and military efforts are reducing their attacks. 71% reduction from 2018 to 2019 10

Link: US airstrikes put pressure on Al-Shabab and stop them from expanding their destruction and chaos 10

Impact: United States and its citizens harmed 10

4. Russia 11

Link: Russia competing for influence in Libya at US expense, threatening future US military partnerships and counterterrorism operations 11

Link: Growing Russian military presence in Africa undermines US influence and threatens freedom of movement in the southern Mediterranean 11

Link: Russia is widely attempting to expand its influence in Africa 11

Brink: US pullout would embolden Russia & China. Sustaining US forces is key to checking their power 12

Impact: US national security harmed and African people face multiple bad consequences from Russian influence in Africa 12

5. Humanitarian missions lost 12

Link: Security threats in West Africa cause cancellation of humanitarian missions 12

Link: Insecurity blocks delivery of food assistance 13

Link: Hundreds of thousands prevented from getting food assistance 13

Impact: US humanitarian aid to Africa saves lives and reduces poverty 13

6. Losing “Great Power” competition to China in Africa 14

Link: Africa is an important competitive space in great power competition with China, and that’s what US forces are focusing on 14

Link: Countering China in Africa is key to blocking Chinese strategic advancement globally 14

Brink: US pullout would embolden China & Russia 14

Impact: Increased corruption and reduced democracy as Chinese influence grows in Africa unchecked by US engagement 15

Impact: Reduced protection of human rights. China uses Africa as a way to reduce global concern for human rights 15

Works Cited 16

Negative: Africa

NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY

Do no harm

Prof. Alan Blinder 2016 (Professor of Economics and codirector of Center for Economic Policy Studies at Princeton Univ.; former vice chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System and was a member of Pres. Clinton's Council of Economic Advisers) 25 Oct 2016 “Message to the candidates: Hands off the Federal Reserve” <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/message-to-the-candidates-hands-off-the-federal-reserve/>

The presidential campaign may not be missing much by skipping a debate over monetary policy and the Federal Reserve — especially if that debate would resemble Donald Trump’s ignorant potshots at its chair, Janet Yellen. Instead, the nation would do well to remember Hippocrates’s wise counsel: “First, do no harm.”

INHERENCY

1. Study underway [Let’s wait ‘til it finishes and then decide on a policy change]

Africa troop reduction study underway now.

Diana Correll 2020. (journalist) West African leaders warn it would be a ‘mistake’ to cut back US troops in Africa <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/01/21/west-african-leaders-warn-it-would-be-a-mistake-to-cut-back-us-troops-in-africa/>

U.S. Africa Command says that there are approximately 6,000 Department of Defense personnel in Africa, but those numbers could go down following a review the Pentagon is executing to reexamine U.S. troop presence in multiple areas of operations.

COUNTERPLAN – Increase, not decrease, military commitment and develop a continent-wide Africa engagement policy

US military resources in Africa are spread too thin

US Defense Dept. Inspector General’s Report to Congress 2020. (directed by Glenn Fine, Principal Deputy Inspector General for the US Dept. of Defense) 21 Feb 2020 EAST AFRICA AND NORTH AND WEST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM OPERATIONS <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Feb/21/2002252793/-1/-1/1/LEAD%20IG%20EAST%20AFRICA%20AND%20NORTH%20AND%20WEST%20AFRICA%20COUNTERTERRORISM%20OPERATIONS.PDF> (brackets in original)

USAFRICOM reported to the DoD OIG that it has limited resources to deploy for multiple operations across its large area of responsibility. These limited resources include personnel, services to support those personnel (including medical evacuation), and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets. USAFRICOM told the DoD OIG in response to a question about current challenges facing the command, said that “there is resourcing competition within [USAFRICOM],” citing the possibility that some resources may be shifted from Somalia to address threats in Libya.

AFF needs to stop being impatient: Long-term commitment is needed to really degrade terrorists in Africa

US Defense Dept. Inspector General’s Report to Congress 2020. (directed by Glenn Fine, Principal Deputy Inspector General for the US Dept. of Defense) 21 Feb 2020 EAST AFRICA AND NORTH AND WEST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM OPERATIONS <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Feb/21/2002252793/-1/-1/1/LEAD%20IG%20EAST%20AFRICA%20AND%20NORTH%20AND%20WEST%20AFRICA%20COUNTERTERRORISM%20OPERATIONS.PDF> (USAFRICOM is the military organization responsible for operations in Africa. DOD OIG is the Dept of Defense Office of the Inspector General.) (brackets added)

The USAFRICOM Campaign Plan states that it considers a VEO [violent extremist organizations] degraded if it meets several conditions, including the VEO’s “command and control is disrupted,” it “cannot conduct effective operations,” and it “cannot conduct effective information operations.” USAFRICOM told the DoD OIG that it uses these “intermediate objectives” to measure progress towards its overall goal of degrading VEOs. However, the challenge inherent to the “degrade” strategy is that many partner forces in Africa will likely require assistance and advising for a long period of time before they can fully address VEO threats on their own. In addition, terrorist threats in Africa are numerous and dynamic, often requiring U.S. forces and their allies to step in and execute immediate responses to threats across an expansive geography. Furthermore, a “degrade” strategy requires U.S. and partner forces to apply consistent counterterrorism pressure on VEOs to prevent their resurgence, an approach that Secretary of Defense Esper described as “mowing the lawn.” This need for ongoing operations, coupled with the often slow development of partner forces, could require ongoing commitment of U.S. military resources.

Best policy would be 1) NOT disengaging (like AFF does). 2) NOT spreading too thin (like Status Quo is risking). 3) Instead, develop a continent-wide strategy after more study.

Sam Wilkins 2020 (*active-duty U.S. Army Special Forces officer with deployments to Somalia, Nigeria, and Afghanistan; graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point and is currently a student at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies*) 2 Apr 2020 “DOES AMERICA NEED AN AFRICA STRATEGY?” <https://warontherocks.com/2020/04/does-america-need-an-africa-strategy/>

While perhaps appealing in the short-run as a departure from Bolton’s adversarial and China-centric vision, such a piecemeal approach would represent a profound mistake with serious consequences for America’s long-term interests in Africa for five key reasons. First, the United States holds limited resources and means, both globally and within the continent itself, and faces tough trade-offs. It is difficult to assess the appropriateness of current and proposed resource commitments absent a continent-wide strategy. A piecemeal approach risks a form of ad-hocery that can create imbalances between America’s globally strained means and ambitious regional ends. Such imbalances risks overstretch. In America’s limited military history in Africa, from the 1993 [“Black Hawk Down”](https://www.nytimes.com/1993/10/25/world/details-of-us-raid-in-somalia-success-so-near-a-loss-so-deep.html) incident in Somalia to the [2017 Niger ambush](https://dod.defense.gov/portals/1/features/2018/0418_niger/img/Oct-2017-Niger-Ambush-Summary-of-Investigation.pdf), overstretch has repeatedly led to tragedy — followed by American disengagement. Secondly, on the opposite extreme, total disengagement risks sustaining damaging terrorist attacks against American citizens and regional interests on the continent — to say nothing of those of our European allies and African partners.

Developing a continental African engagement policy allows us to compete with China and best uphold America’s interests

Sam Wilkins 2020 (*active-duty U.S. Army Special Forces officer with deployments to Somalia, Nigeria, and Afghanistan; graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point and is currently a student at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies*) 2 Apr 2020 “DOES AMERICA NEED AN AFRICA STRATEGY?” <https://warontherocks.com/2020/04/does-america-need-an-africa-strategy/>

Third, absent a clear strategy, the apparatus of U.S. statecraft can be left vulnerable to distraction and incoherence, as a variety of interest groups and bureaucratic actors may seek to steer or co-opt policy towards contradictory objectives. Fourth, an ad-hoc or country-by-country approach would likely lack public consensus and Congressional support — leaving it brittle and vulnerable to headline-grabbing crises or military defeats. Finally, the emergence of a true continent-wide geostrategic competitor, China, necessitates the formulation of a truly continental strategy. While America’s interests in Africa go well beyond competition with China, a coherent Africa strategy is required to account for Chinese activity, while maintaining a balanced perspective about how Beijing’s activities in Africa might actually threaten American security and prosperity.

More study, development of an African continental strategy, and avoiding disengagement would be the best policy

Sam Wilkins 2020 (*active-duty U.S. Army Special Forces officer with deployments to Somalia, Nigeria, and Afghanistan; graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point and is currently a student at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies*) 2 Apr 2020 “DOES AMERICA NEED AN AFRICA STRATEGY?” <https://warontherocks.com/2020/04/does-america-need-an-africa-strategy/>

Disengagement risks leaving the United States unable to defend its interests against these continued threats. Removal of America’s hard power backbone in the region, moreover, could also degrade the capabilities of the valuable intelligence, diplomatic, and humanitarian actors needed to detect emerging threats, pursue political solutions, or mitigate the harmful humanitarian impacts of conflict. Policymakers face the difficult, but achievable, task of minimizing the risk of terrorist attacks against American interests while avoiding large troop commitments in Africa and balancing China in the Indo-Pacific region. A continental strategy would not be a panacea against these dual hazards of overstretch and disengagement. Rather, it would help illuminate risks and provide a guiding structure from which to adjust means-ends imbalances.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. US casualties don’t justify pullout

US military casualties in Africa missions don’t justify pullout of US forces

Sam Wilkins 2020 (*active-duty U.S. Army Special Forces officer with deployments to Somalia, Nigeria, and Afghanistan; graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point and is currently a student at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies*) 2 Apr 2020 “DOES AMERICA NEED AN AFRICA STRATEGY?” <https://warontherocks.com/2020/04/does-america-need-an-africa-strategy/>

Washington’s commitments to the region are especially brittle in the wake of American casualties. Within six months of the “Black Hawk Down” incident, President Bill Clinton [withdrew](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0959231042000275551?journalCode=fswi20) all U.S. forces from Somalia. Less than a year following Niger ambush, AFRICOM [withdrew](https://www.cnn.com/2018/11/15/politics/us-reduce-troops-africa/index.html) a reported ten percent of its assigned special operations forces from West Africa. Despite Washington’s sensitivity to casualties in Africa, retrenchment will not lead to better outcomes. Pulling resources from Africa at this time, given rising instability in the Sahel and the significant and ongoing jihadist threats to American interests at home and abroad, would be short-sighted.

SOLVENCY

1. More study needed

If there’s a problem, it’s the lack of a comprehensive Africa strategy. We need that first in order to develop effective policies

Sam Wilkins 2020 (*active-duty U.S. Army Special Forces officer with deployments to Somalia, Nigeria, and Afghanistan; graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point and is currently a student at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies*) 2 Apr 2020 “DOES AMERICA NEED AN AFRICA STRATEGY?” <https://warontherocks.com/2020/04/does-america-need-an-africa-strategy/>

Fortunately, in this contemporary era of partisan rancor, Congress has taken a remarkably bi-partisan approach to Africa policy issues. Recent attempts to [cut foreign aid](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/07/us/politics/foreign-aid-freeze-congress.html) or humanitarian assistance to African countries, for example, have been [met with disapproval](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/22/us/politics/trump-foreign-aid.html) from both parties. This [bipartisan consensus](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2018/10/05/congress-takes-the-lead-on-us-africa-policy/) concerning Africa’s importance to the United States represents a solid foundation on which to formulate a collaborative Africa strategy that is resilient to tactical setbacks.
**An Absence of Strategy Increases Vulnerability to Distraction or Co-Option**Absent firm central guidance, policy around African affairs can be vulnerable to the influence of various humanitarian, religious, and bureaucratic interests. While far from unique to Africa policy, these sometimes-opposing influences can accelerate the aforementioned risk of overstretch and lead to the dilution of already limited resources. This phenomenon also accelerates the chances of distraction. As scholar Gorm Rye Olsen [notes](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01436597.2017.1315298), “because policymaking has been influenced by a number of different actors, American Africa policy may appear incoherent and ambiguous if judged narrowly on the expectation that it only aims to take care of U.S. national security concerns and economic self-interests.”

DISADVANTAGES

1. Terrorism in West Africa

US troops in Africa are needed to eliminate terrorism. Other nations can’t solve on their own

Diana Correll 2020. (journalist) West African leaders warn it would be a ‘mistake’ to cut back US troops in Africa <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/01/21/west-african-leaders-warn-it-would-be-a-mistake-to-cut-back-us-troops-in-africa/>

“If one actor leaves the chain, it weakens the whole group,” Togolese President Faure Gnassingbé said, [according to the Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/west-african-presidents-urge-us-trump-to-stay-in-the-fight-against-terrorism/2020/01/20/ac000e3a-3b8e-11ea-afe2-090eb37b60b1_story.html). Gnassingbé warned that militants from Iraq and Syria are filtering into Africa via Libya, and predicted they would gain power on the [African continent](https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/01/20/how-africom-plans-to-counter-russian-chinese-influence-in-africa/), the Post reports. Senegalese President Macky Sall also characterized a possible reduction of U.S. troops as an error, citing that “instead of coming to help, you wish to remove the little help there is.” “It would be a mistake, and it would be very misunderstood by Africans,” Sall told the Post, stressing that help from the U.S., Europe, and African states is required to eliminate terrorism.

West African leaders agree: US military is essential to blocking terrorism. Pullout would be a mistake

Diana Correll 2020. (journalist) West African leaders warn it would be a ‘mistake’ to cut back US troops in Africa <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/01/21/west-african-leaders-warn-it-would-be-a-mistake-to-cut-back-us-troops-in-africa/>

West African leaders aren’t on board with the possibility of U.S. troops vacating the region, according to a new report U.S. Africa Command says that there are approximately 6,000 Department of Defense personnel in Africa, but those numbers could go down following a review the Pentagon is executing to reexamine U.S. troop presence in multiple areas of operations. “If one actor leaves the chain, it weakens the whole group,” Togolese President Faure Gnassingbé said, [according to the Washington Post](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/west-african-presidents-urge-us-trump-to-stay-in-the-fight-against-terrorism/2020/01/20/ac000e3a-3b8e-11ea-afe2-090eb37b60b1_story.html). Gnassingbé warned that militants from Iraq and Syria are filtering into Africa via Libya, and predicted they would gain power on the [African continent](https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/01/20/how-africom-plans-to-counter-russian-chinese-influence-in-africa/), the Post reports. Senegalese President Macky Sall also characterized a possible reduction of U.S. troops as an error, citing that “instead of coming to help, you wish to remove the little help there is.” “It would be a mistake, and it would be very misunderstood by Africans,” Sall told the Post, stressing that help from the U.S., Europe, and African states is required to eliminate terrorism.

French government agrees: US West Africa anti-terrorism military support is irreplaceable and should not be withdrawn

WASHINGTON POST 2020 (journalists Dan Lamothe & Danielle Paquette) 20 Jan 2020 “Pressure builds against the Pentagon as it weighs reducing troop numbers in Africa” <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2020/01/20/pressure-builds-against-pentagon-it-weighs-reducing-troop-numbers-africa/>

The issue has also caught the attention of the French government, which has about 4,500 troops deployed to Mali and nearby nations and relies on American support for intelligence, transportation, surveillance and aerial refueling to fight extremists. French Defense Minister Florence Parly said recently that she will travel to Washington this month amid growing concern that the United States could withdraw forces. French President Emmanuel Macron announced Jan. 13 that he is sending hundreds more troops to West Africa and urged other European countries to join the battle, expressing alarm over the prospect of losing the “irreplaceable” help of the U.S. military.

Impact: Terrorist killings and hundreds of thousands driven from their homes

WASHINGTON POST 2020 (journalists Dan Lamothe & Danielle Paquette) 20 Jan 2020 “Pressure builds against the Pentagon as it weighs reducing troop numbers in Africa” <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2020/01/20/pressure-builds-against-pentagon-it-weighs-reducing-troop-numbers-africa/>

Concerns about a U.S. withdrawal have grown, and Western officials say the Sahel region, which lies south of the Sahara Desert, risks becoming an expansive refuge for terrorists planning attacks worldwide. Militants linked to the Islamic State and al-Qaeda have chased hundreds of thousands of people from their homes [in recent months](https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/01/1054981), rendering once-peaceful communities uninhabitable as they kill indiscriminately.

Impact: US and Africans under attack by terrorists

Nick Turse 2020 (journalist; fellow at The Nation Institute) 27 Feb 2020 “PENTAGON’S OWN MAP OF U.S. BASES IN AFRICA CONTRADICTS ITS CLAIM OF “LIGHT” FOOTPRINT” <https://theintercept.com/2020/02/27/africa-us-military-bases-africom/>

Talk of scaling back U.S. posture and presence in Africa has prompted fierce pushback in Congress. “These personnel and installations are critical in combatting the ever-increasing number of violent extremist groups throughout the region that pose an immediate threat to our partners and allies,” wrote U.S. Sens. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and Chris Coons, D-Del., in a January 15 letter to Esper. The senators argued that “any withdrawal or reduction would likely result in a surge in violent extremist attacks on the continent and beyond as well as increase the geopolitical influence of competitors like Russia and China.” James Inhofe, chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee echoed these concerns. “Today, more than a dozen terrorist groups with ties to Al Qaida and ISIS are operating across Africa,” he said late last month. “Many of these groups have ambition to attack Americans and our partners. Without sustained pressure, the threat posed by these groups will.”

Impact: ISIS and Al-Qaeda kill thousands

US Defense Dept. Inspector General’s Report to Congress 2020. (directed by Glenn Fine, Principal Deputy Inspector General for the US Dept. of Defense) 21 Feb 2020 EAST AFRICA AND NORTH AND WEST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM OPERATIONS <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Feb/21/2002252793/-1/-1/1/LEAD%20IG%20EAST%20AFRICA%20AND%20NORTH%20AND%20WEST%20AFRICA%20COUNTERTERRORISM%20OPERATIONS.PDF>

The UN envoy to West Africa stated that the region has experienced “a devastating surge” in terrorist violence against civilians. The envoy told the UN Security Council in January 2020 that more than 4,000 civilian and military deaths were reported in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger in 2019 compared to 770 in 2016. The envoy attributed much of the violence to West Africa becoming a geographic focus of ISIS and al Qaeda groups collaborating to undermine fragile countries.

2. Antagonizing China in the Pacific

Link: US troops moved out of Africa will be relocated to the Pacific to confront China

Diana Correll 2020. (journalist) West African leaders warn it would be a ‘mistake’ to cut back US troops in Africa <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/01/21/west-african-leaders-warn-it-would-be-a-mistake-to-cut-back-us-troops-in-africa/>

Troops from allied nations are also involved in counterterrorism efforts, including France, who has roughly 4,500 troops in West Africa. But Secretary of Defense Mark Esper has stressed that China is the Pentagon’s top priority. As a result, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army Gen. Mark Milley said the U.S. was examining several possibilities that would redistribute troops in Africa to enhance readiness in the continental U.S. or relocate them to the Pacific, according to Agence France-Presse.

Link: Troop deployments in Asia to confront China recklessly increase the risk of war

Bonnie Kristian 2020 (journalist, fellow at Defense Priorities, a defense policy think tank) 19 March 2020 “Esper’s dark vision for US-China conflict makes war more likely” <https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2020/03/19/espers-dark-vision-for-us-china-conflict-makes-war-more-likely/> (brackets in original except for the quote break notations)

The defense secretary also has been conducting a “blank slate review” of U.S. force levels in Africa to the same end, “predominantly to reduce presence” there, he said, so the Pentagon can train its sights on China. And the Air Force described a flight by a nuclear-capable B-52 bomber over Somalia in February as, in part, a warning to China of engagement to come. The rationale here, as Esper summarized in a recent interview on CNBC, is that the United States is in a new “era of ‘great power competition,’ and that means we need to focus more on high intensity warfare going forward.” **[END QUOTE]** For the United States, “our long-term challenges,” Esper continued, “are China, No. 1, and Russia, No. 2. And what we see happening out there is a China that continues to grow its military strength, its economic power, its commercial activity, and it’s doing so, in many ways, illicitly — or it’s using the international rules-based order against us to continue this growth, to acquire technology, and to do the things that really undermine our [and our allies’] sovereignty, that undermine the rule of law, that really question [Beijing’s] commitment to human rights.” Esper’s argument is compelling because it includes a bit of truth: China is a rising power and our economic rival. It is growing in military strength, and it does engage in illicit business practices, including hacking and theft of trade secrets. Beijing has [acted without regard](https://thediplomat.com/2019/05/does-china-really-respect-sovereignty/) for other nations’ sovereignty (which is not to say Washington is innocent of the charge), and its treatment of the Uighur people and response to the [new coronavirus outbreak](https://www.defensenews.com/coronavirus/) in Wuhan have settled, once again, any remaining question of whether the Chinese government has adequate respect for human rights. None of this is in dispute, except perhaps by Beijing’s propagandists. But none of it remotely justifies twisting great power competition into a shooting war. [**THEY GO ON LATER IN THE SAME ARTICLE TO SAY QUOTE:]** To deliberately court war with China by ramping up the American military footprint in Asia and seeking to “compete with the Chinese” — a troubling euphemism, as there’s really only one way militaries “compete” — is not the prudent grand strategy Esper suggests. It is reckless in the extreme. War between two nuclear powers is never to be sought and would have grim worldwide consequences far beyond those of our present interventions in the Middle East.

Brink: Antagonizing China right now is dangerously playing with fire because we don’t have the resources to fight them

Prof. Hal Brands 2020 (Distinguished Professor at Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies, and a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute) 5 May 2020 “Can a Broke America Fight a Cold War With China?” <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-05-05/coronavirus-can-a-broke-u-s-fight-a-cold-war-with-china>

The poor man’s version of Soviet containment required running tremendous military and strategic [risks](https://www.google.com/books/edition/What_Good_Is_Grand_Strategy/nGqoAgAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&bsq=hard%20money%20man) — a gamble that America might be caught short if war came, along with the possibility that the imbalance of military power in key areas might dishearten U.S. allies and create opportunities for communist intimidation or aggression. “The trouble,” Secretary of State George Marshall [commented](https://www.google.com/books/edition/A_Constructed_Peace/2pEQpx8CB7oC?hl=en&gbpv=1&bsq=playing%20with%20fire), “was that we are playing with fire while we have nothing with which to put it out.” [**END QUOTE**] When the Korean War began and then escalated in 1950, American policymakers had to confront the horrifying [possibility](https://www.jstor.org/stable/2538735?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents) that the Soviets might be willing to risk a global war that Washington would be in danger of losing. That sequence of events led to the military buildup of the early 1950s, meant to close the gaps that an opportunistic enemy might exploit. The lesson is that economic, political and diplomatic tools of competition are vital — but as tensions rise, they may not be sufficient**.[HE GOES ON LATER IN THE SAME CONTEXT TO SAY QUOTE**:] A policy of confrontation, however justified, can invite disaster if undertaken without an adequate military shield. It would be a perilous irony if the coronavirus was what finally convinced many Americans to take the challenge from China seriously, but left the nation too weak to do much about it.

Impact: Political, economic and military disaster. Our objective should be to reduce tension and avoid conflict with China

Abraham Denmark 2015 (senior vice president for political and security affairs at the National Bureau of Asian Research; quoted by journalist Peter Rugh) 6 Feb 2015 “We Asked a Military Expert What Would Happen if the US Went to War with China” <https://www.vice.com/en/article/kwpvvw/we-asked-a-military-expert-what-would-happen-if-the-us-went-to-war-with-china>

A conflict between China and the US of any significance would be disastrous for both sides—politically, economically, and militarily. **[END QUOTE]** It's something both sides have a profound interest in avoiding. The Chinese would have to take very seriously the implications of entering into a conflict with the US military. The US military is by far the most capable military that has ever been seen in human civilization. A war is not something to be taken on lightly. . [**THEY GO ON LATER IN THE SAME ARTICLE TO SAY QUOTE:]** From an American point of view, our objectives are always to reduce tension, avoid conflict, and reduce the potential for miscalculation.

Impact: The most important foreign policy goal is US-China cooperation. We need China to solve every major global challenge

US-China Smart Power Commission 2009(chaired by former US Defense Secretary William Cohen and Maurice R. Greenberg), March 2009, "Smart Power in US-China Relations," CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES <http://csis.org/files/media/csis/pubs/090309_mcgiffert_uschinasmartpower_web.pdf>

The evolution of Sino-US relations over the next months, years, and decades has the potential to have a greater impact on global security and prosperity than any other bilateral or multilateral arrangement. In this sense, many analysts consider the US-China diplomatic relationship to be the most influential in the world. Without question, strong and stable US alliances provide the foundation for the protection and promotion of US and global interests. Yet within that broad framework, the trajectory of US-China relations will determine the success, or failure, of efforts to address the toughest global challenges: global financial stability, energy security and climate change, nonproliferation, and terrorism, among other pressing issues. Shepherding that trajectory in the most constructive direction possible must therefore be a priority for Washington and Beijing. Virtually no major global challenge can be met without US-China cooperation.

3. Al-Shabab / Somalia / East Africa

**[Al Shabab is a militant Islamist group trying to take over Somalia and attacking both within Somalia and against neighboring countries like Kenya.]**

Al Shabab is a threat to US citizens, and military efforts are reducing their attacks. 71% reduction from 2018 to 2019

US Defense Dept. Inspector General’s Report to Congress 2020. (directed by Glenn Fine, Principal Deputy Inspector General for the US Dept. of Defense) 21 Feb 2020 EAST AFRICA AND NORTH AND WEST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM OPERATIONS <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Feb/21/2002252793/-1/-1/1/LEAD%20IG%20EAST%20AFRICA%20AND%20NORTH%20AND%20WEST%20AFRICA%20COUNTERTERRORISM%20OPERATIONS.PDF>

On January 5, 2020, al Shabaab attacked Manda Bay Airfield in Kenya, killing one U.S. Army soldier and two DoD contractors. Speaking after the Manda Bay attack, General Stephen Townsend, Commander of USAFRICOM, described al Shabaab as “ruthless” and said the group “must be dealt with before the network expands its reach to other places, to include their stated desire to strike U.S. citizens in the U.S. homeland.” In testimony before the Senate on January 30, 2020, General Townsend said that of all the VEOs in Africa, “al Shabaab is most dangerous to U.S. interests today.” Al Shabaab militants also continued to exploit Somalia’s porous border with Kenya to launch attacks and conduct illegal trade. However, according to the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), cross-border attacks into Kenya as of October 2019 decreased by 71 percent compared to the same period in 2018.

Link: US airstrikes put pressure on Al-Shabab and stop them from expanding their destruction and chaos

Diana Correll 2020 (journalist) 21 Jan 2020 “West African leaders warn it would be a ‘mistake’ to cut back US troops in Africa” <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2020/01/21/west-african-leaders-warn-it-would-be-a-mistake-to-cut-back-us-troops-in-africa/> (brackets added)

[AFRICOM spokesman Air Force Col. Chris] Karns said that the strikes are designed to thwart al-Shabab’s influence on the continent. “The pace of airstrikes can be characterized as an active effort to disrupt terror networks, create organization confusion, and degrade their ability to plot and plan broader attacks,” Karns told Military Times. “Persistent pressure and pursuit of al-Shabab contains their ambition and denies them an opportunity to expand their vision of destruction and chaos more broadly." AFRICOM estimates there are approximately 5,000 to 7,000 al-Shabab militants in Somalia.

Impact: United States and its citizens harmed

US Defense Dept. Inspector General’s Report to Congress 2020. (directed by Glenn Fine, Principal Deputy Inspector General for the US Dept. of Defense) 21 Feb 2020 EAST AFRICA AND NORTH AND WEST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM OPERATIONS <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Feb/21/2002252793/-1/-1/1/LEAD%20IG%20EAST%20AFRICA%20AND%20NORTH%20AND%20WEST%20AFRICA%20COUNTERTERRORISM%20OPERATIONS.PDF>

According to the USAFRICOM Campaign Plan, the U.S. military seeks to “degrade” VEOs in East Africa by FY 2021 to the point where they cannot harm U.S. interests. The DIA told the DoD OIG that the terrorist threat from al Shabaab and ISIS-Somalia against Somali government officials, international forces, and key infrastructure remains “high.” The USAFRICOM Commander, General Stephen Townsend, stated publicly in January 2020 that al Shabaab “must be dealt with before the network expands its reach to other places, to include their stated desire to strike U.S. citizens in the U.S. homeland.” In testimony before the Senate on January 30, 2020, General Townsend said that of all the VEOs in Africa, “al Shabaab is most dangerous to U.S. interests today.”

4. Russia

Link: Russia competing for influence in Libya at US expense, threatening future US military partnerships and counterterrorism operations

US Defense Dept. Inspector General’s Report to Congress 2020. (directed by Glenn Fine, Principal Deputy Inspector General for the US Dept. of Defense) 21 Feb 2020 EAST AFRICA AND NORTH AND WEST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM OPERATIONS <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Feb/21/2002252793/-1/-1/1/LEAD%20IG%20EAST%20AFRICA%20AND%20NORTH%20AND%20WEST%20AFRICA%20COUNTERTERRORISM%20OPERATIONS.PDF>

This quarter in Libya, a U.S. surveillance drone monitoring violent extremist activity was shot down over Tripoli. USAFRICOM said that Russian paramilitary forces who are fighting alongside the Libyan National Army (LNA) in that country’s civil war were likely responsible for the incident. The U.S. military conducts counterterrorism operations from outside Libya in coordination with the internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA). Russian mercenary forces known as the Wagner Group increased their presence in Libya this quarter by deploying an additional 600 to 1,200 mercenaries to support the LNA and Russian objectives in North Africa. General Townsend said in January 2020 that Russia seeks to “demonstrate itself as an alternative partner to the West” and sees an opportunity to position itself along NATO’s southern flank. ISIS-Libya remained “degraded” during the quarter, according to the DIA. However, Secretary of Defense Mark Esper told reporters in November 2019 that there is an ongoing need for lethal operations to keep ISIS-Libya in a degraded state. USAFRICOM also stated that the growing Russian military presence in Libya threatens future U.S. military partnerships and counterterrorism cooperation by impeding U.S. access to Libya.

Link: Growing Russian military presence in Africa undermines US influence and threatens freedom of movement in the southern Mediterranean

US Defense Dept. Inspector General’s Report to Congress 2020. (directed by Glenn Fine, Principal Deputy Inspector General for the US Dept. of Defense) 21 Feb 2020 EAST AFRICA AND NORTH AND WEST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM OPERATIONS <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Feb/21/2002252793/-1/-1/1/LEAD%20IG%20EAST%20AFRICA%20AND%20NORTH%20AND%20WEST%20AFRICA%20COUNTERTERRORISM%20OPERATIONS.PDF> (USAFRICOM is the military organization responsible for operations in Africa. DOD OIG is the Dept of Defense Office of the Inspector General.) (brackets in original)

USAFRICOM told the DoD OIG that Russia uses the Wagner Group and other private military companies to provide military training and support to North African nations as an alternative to Western partners. General Townsend testified in April 2019 that the Wagner Group is closely tied to the Russian government, stating “they train right alongside the Russian armed forces.” The growing Russian military presence in Libya, USAFRICOM said, “could inhibit U.S. military partnerships and [counterterrorism] cooperation.” USAFRICOM reported that Russian military activity in North Africa presents two significant challenges to the United States and its partners. First, Russian military cooperation undermines the ability of the United States and its partners to enhance or maintain military relationships with North African nations. Second, Russia could inhibit freedom of movement in the southern Mediterranean Sea.

Link: Russia is widely attempting to expand its influence in Africa

NEW YORK TIMES 2020 ([Eric Schmitt](https://www.nytimes.com/by/eric-schmitt) and [Thomas Gibbons-Neff](https://www.nytimes.com/by/thomas-gibbons-neff)) 28 January 2020 “Russia Exerts Growing Influence in Africa, Worrying Many in the West” <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/28/world/africa/russia-africa-troops.html>

The Russian military presence in Mozambique follows a growing pattern of Russia exerting influence in the security sphere across the continent. In the Central African Republic, where a Russian has been installed as the president’s national security adviser, the government is selling mining rights for gold and diamonds at a fraction of their worth to hire trainers and buy arms from Moscow. Five sub-Saharan African countries — Mali, Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso and Mauritania — appealed to Moscow in 2018 to help their overtaxed militaries and security services combat the Islamic State and Al Qaeda.

Brink: US pullout would embolden Russia & China. Sustaining US forces is key to checking their power

NEW YORK TIMES 2020 ([Eric Schmitt](https://www.nytimes.com/by/eric-schmitt) and [Thomas Gibbons-Neff](https://www.nytimes.com/by/thomas-gibbons-neff)) 28 January 2020 “Russia Exerts Growing Influence in Africa, Worrying Many in the West” <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/28/world/africa/russia-africa-troops.html>

This campaign for influence is playing out as Defense Secretary Mark T. Esper is weighing [the potential withdrawal of hundreds of forces from West Africa](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/24/world/africa/esper-troops-africa-china.html) to better counter threats from Russia and China closer to their borders. But Mr. Esper’s review has drawn sharp criticism from influential congressional Republicans and Democrats who argue that cutting American forces in Africa would help only its rivals. “A withdrawal from the continent would also certainly embolden both Russia and China,” Senators Lindsey Graham, Republican of South Carolina, and Chris Coons, Democrat of Delaware, wrote to Mr. Esper this month. Sustaining United States forces in Africa “serves as a check” against those rivals expanding their influence on the continent, the senators said.

Impact: US national security harmed and African people face multiple bad consequences from Russian influence in Africa

Prof. Jideofor Adibe 2019 (Professor of Political Science and International Relations - Nasarawa State University, Nigeria) 14 Nov 2019 “What does Russia really want from Africa?” <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2019/11/14/what-does-russia-really-want-from-africa/>

The U.S. is already critical of Russia in Africa. In fact, former U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton even [suggested in a 2018 speech,](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-national-security-advisor-ambassador-john-r-bolton-trump-administrations-new-africa-strategy/)that “predatory practices pursued by China and Russia stunt economic growth in Africa, threaten the financial independence of African nations, inhibit opportunities for U.S. investment, interfere with U.S. military operations, and pose a significant threat to US national security interests.” In critical reference to the “votes-for arms deals” in the U.N., Bolton stated that such moves “keep strong men in power, undermine peace and security and run counter to the best interest of the African people.”

5. Humanitarian missions lost

Link: Security threats in West Africa cause cancellation of humanitarian missions

US Defense Dept. Inspector General’s Report to Congress 2020. (directed by Glenn Fine, Principal Deputy Inspector General for the US Dept. of Defense) 21 Feb 2020 EAST AFRICA AND NORTH AND WEST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM OPERATIONS <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Feb/21/2002252793/-1/-1/1/LEAD%20IG%20EAST%20AFRICA%20AND%20NORTH%20AND%20WEST%20AFRICA%20COUNTERTERRORISM%20OPERATIONS.PDF>

USAID reported that deteriorating security and the increased number of internally displaced persons in West Africa has caused humanitarian organizations in Mali to temporarily suspend programming and force changes in the way programs are designed. Additionally in West Africa, USAID program implementers working to address the humanitarian needs in northeastern Nigeria continue to struggle with the Nigerian government’s interference.

Link: Insecurity blocks delivery of food assistance

US Defense Dept. Inspector General’s Report to Congress 2020. (directed by Glenn Fine, Principal Deputy Inspector General for the US Dept. of Defense) 21 Feb 2020 EAST AFRICA AND NORTH AND WEST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM OPERATIONS <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Feb/21/2002252793/-1/-1/1/LEAD%20IG%20EAST%20AFRICA%20AND%20NORTH%20AND%20WEST%20AFRICA%20COUNTERTERRORISM%20OPERATIONS.PDF> (brackets added)

In Mali, according to USAID, insecurity has caused implementers to temporarily suspend programming and change the way programs are designed. USAID extended some programs to account for activity suspension and there are increased costs for security. FFP also coordinates with other humanitarian actors to ensure food assistance reaches those most in need. A future development program, which will be awarded this year, will also coordinate with other USAID programs in Mali. The Famine Early Warning System Network reported that in Burkina Faso, IDPs [internally displaced persons] who were unable to cultivate their fields or abandoned them due to the insecurity are dependent on host communities or humanitarian assistance, but 31 percent of IDPs live outside of areas more accessible to humanitarian organizations. Further worsening the situation, security incidents often delay the delivery of assistance where it is available.

Link: Hundreds of thousands prevented from getting food assistance

US Defense Dept. Inspector General’s Report to Congress 2020. (directed by Glenn Fine, Principal Deputy Inspector General for the US Dept. of Defense) 21 Feb 2020 EAST AFRICA AND NORTH AND WEST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM OPERATIONS <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Feb/21/2002252793/-1/-1/1/LEAD%20IG%20EAST%20AFRICA%20AND%20NORTH%20AND%20WEST%20AFRICA%20COUNTERTERRORISM%20OPERATIONS.PDF> (brackets added)

In the Lake Chad Basin—Cameroon’s Far North region, Chad’s Lac region, Niger’s Diffa region, and northeastern Nigeria’s Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states—most of the humanitarian need is in northeastern Nigeria, where approximately 2.9 million people currently require emergency assistance, including more than 264,000 IDPs [internally displaced persons] residing in camps. [**END QUOTE**] USAID reported to the USAID OIG that while USAID implementers are working to address the humanitarian needs in northeastern Nigeria, they continue to struggle with the Nigerian government’s interference. Specifically, the Nigerian government has taken uncoordinated actions against humanitarian organizations that are often reversed. [**THEY GO ON LATER TO SAY QUOTE:]** For example, following a suspension of Mercy Corps and Action Against Hunger in September, the Nigerian government temporarily reversed the ban in late October. However, the suspension had already prevented nearly 400,000 people from receiving food assistance.

Impact: US humanitarian aid to Africa saves lives and reduces poverty

Prof. Stephen A. O’Connell 2017 (Professor at Swarthmore College; authority on the political economy of Africa & on macroeconomic policy in low-income developing countries; member of the Programme Committee of the AERC, an NGO devoted to building the research and advisory capacity of the economics profession in sub-Saharan Africa; Ph.D. from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) 31 Jan 2017, “What the U.S. Gains From its Development Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa,” <http://econofact.org/what-the-u-s-gains-from-its-development-aid-to-sub-saharan-africa>

Health and humanitarian aid represent more than 80 percent of U.S. aid to Africa and are supported by many Americans. [**END QUOTE**]The U.S. continues to lead the global fight against HIV/AIDS and malaria in Africa, with major results and with apparent support from President Trump during the campaign and from Rex Tillerson, Trump's nominee for Secretary of State. [**HE GOES ON LATER IN THE SAME CONTEXT QUOTE**:] For instance, between 2000 and 2015 the number of malaria deaths in children under 5 years in Sub-Saharan Africa dropped from an estimated 694,000 to 292,000 per year. The U.S. is the largest donor towards efforts to combat malaria, contributing 35 percent of global funding. These programs enhance the well-being and productivity of African populations, including girls and women whose access to security, nutrition, health services and education can break the inter-generational transmission of poverty.

6. Losing “Great Power” competition to China in Africa

Link: Africa is an important competitive space in great power competition with China, and that’s what US forces are focusing on

US Defense Dept. Inspector General’s Report to Congress 2020. (directed by Glenn Fine, Principal Deputy Inspector General for the US Dept. of Defense) 21 Feb 2020 EAST AFRICA AND NORTH AND WEST AFRICA COUNTERTERRORISM OPERATIONS <https://media.defense.gov/2020/Feb/21/2002252793/-1/-1/1/LEAD%20IG%20EAST%20AFRICA%20AND%20NORTH%20AND%20WEST%20AFRICA%20COUNTERTERRORISM%20OPERATIONS.PDF> (USAFRICOM is the military organization responsible for operations in Africa. DIA is the US Defense Intelligence Agency. DOD OIG is the Dept of Defense Office of the Inspector General.) (brackets added)

The 2018 National Defense Strategy stated that “inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security.” During the quarter, [AFRICOM commander] General [Stephen] Townsend completed his initial assessment of USAFRICOM’s operations and identified the “increasing focus on the transition to great power competition” as a key challenge for the command. USAFRICOM reported to the DoD OIG that “Africa has emerged as an important competitive space in great power competition. In East Africa, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) reported to the DoD OIG that China exports defense materials to African states, including small arms, combat aircraft, infantry vehicles, and unmanned aerial vehicles. The DIA said that China has supplemented state-to-state arms sales by offering military and technical training to East African militaries. China has also conducted joint military exercises with at least two East African nations, Djibouti and Tanzania.

Link: Countering China in Africa is key to blocking Chinese strategic advancement globally

Yun Sun 2013 (Nonresident Fellow - [Global Economy and Development](https://www.brookings.edu/program/global-economy-and-development/), [Africa Growth Initiative](https://www.brookings.edu/project/africa-growth-initiative/), Brookings Institution) 3 Apr 2013 “China in Africa: Implications for U.S. Competition and Diplomacy” <https://www.brookings.edu/research/china-in-africa-implications-for-u-s-competition-and-diplomacy/>

Furthermore, China’s engagement in Africa has profound geopolitical implications for the U.S. global strategy. As the U.S. rebalances to the Asia-Pacific region, China has identified increasing hindrances in its strategic advancement in East Asia and the Pacific. In response, China is shifting its attention westward to South Asia, the Middle East and Africa to expand arenas for its political and strategic influence. These areas are seen as the most promising by Beijing given the stagnant or declining U.S. involvement. Especially in Africa, China is looking beyond the traditional pursuit of economic benefits and aspires to increase and solidify its strategic presence through enhanced political, economic, diplomatic and academic resources. The failure to perceive and prepare for China’s moves would be dangerous, unwise and potentially detrimental for the United States in the near future.

Brink: US pullout would embolden China & Russia

Cross-apply the Brink card from DA-4.

Impact: Increased corruption and reduced democracy as Chinese influence grows in Africa unchecked by US engagement

Dr. Michael Tiboris 2019 (Fellow, Chicago Council on Global Affairs; Lecturer at the Harris School of Public Policy Studies at the University of Chicago. PhD in applied ethics and political philosophy from Univ of California, San Diego May 2019 “Addressing China’s Rising Influence in Africa” <https://www.thechicagocouncil.org/sites/default/files/report_addressing-chinas-rising-influence-africa_20190521.pdf>

The stakes of global leadership through foreign policy and diplomatic relationships are high. Both democracy and authoritarianism are increasingly prevalent on the African continent. The Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) is a systematic comparison utilized by the British, German, and US governments to asses partner countries. Of the 44 African governments (out of the 54 on the continent) that the BTI quantified the status for in 2016, 22 were scored as some form of democracy of varying stability and 22 were scored as some form of autocracy. More countries than ever before in West and Central Africa are now under democratic systems, but South and East Africa have experienced a regression of political freedoms. The United States has historically made efforts to support the growth of democratic governance in Africa. Some have expressed concern that China’s nonintervention principle allows it to support authoritarian regimes and encourages corruption. Therefore, without continued US engagement, it is possible that the advancement of democracy on the continent is at risk. While China is willing to work with less stable, authoritarian regimes, the very fact that the regimes are less stable and authoritarian has severely limited China’s ability to achieve favorable outcomes in those countries. Evidence suggests that the presence of China’s aid projects is positively correlated with increased local corruption. And recent regression analysis shows that China’s financing disproportionately flows to political leaders’ birth regions and areas populated by their ethnic groups, while no such relationship exists for World Bank funding. Further, aid projects in corrupt areas have shown little to no positive local economic impact. In fact, the combination of China’s nonintervention attitudes and existing local corruption could lead to ineffective projects and a weakening of local political institutions.

Impact: Reduced protection of human rights. China uses Africa as a way to reduce global concern for human rights

Lloyd Thrall 2015 (analyst for the RAND Corporation; former enlisted light infantryman in the First Ranger Battalion; forward-deployed military advisor in Iraq; intelligence analyst for the Navy. MA with Distinction in Diplomatic Studies from the University of London China’s Expanding African Relations - Implications for U.S. National Security <https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR905.html>

Beijing has gone to great lengths to emphasize a “peaceful development” of Chinese power.1 Outreach efforts in Africa can increase the credibility of this image, as well as reap tangible diplomatic benefits through African support. While diplomatic competition with Taiwan is relatively dormant, Beijing has a continuing interest in isolating Taipei, now recognized by only three African states. With regard to international norms, African support can assist Beijing in countering precedents that China views as potentially dangerous domestically. From both a legal and diplomatic perspective, Beijing likely perceives an interest in preventing international activism on issues of democratic governance and human rights intervention in Africa that could apply equally to domestic Chinese political order.

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