

The Secretary of State



Speech

August 31, 1976
Philadelphia, Pa.

Office of Media Services
Bureau of Public Affairs

THE CHALLENGES OF AFRICA

Secretary Henry A. Kissinger before the Opportunities Industrialization Centers.

I am proud to speak before this remarkable group that so well embodies the American tradition of humane concern combined with practical action. And I want to add my voice to the tribute you have paid two great Americans in presenting the A. Philip Randolph award to Roy Wilkins. These men have demonstrated vividly the qualities of courage and vision which have built this country and made it a champion of democratic and compassionate principles around the world.

I have come here today to talk about Africa—one of the compelling concerns of our time.

When we read of young African students killed in riots, of guerrilla raids, or refugee camps attacked in reprisal, the reality lies not in the cold statistics that the media report. In Africa it is the death of men, women, and children; it means hopes extinguished and dreams shattered. The grand issues of strategy or the complexity of negotiations are no consolation to innocent, brutalized victims. As long as these conflicts fester, Africans of all races will be caught up in a widening and escalating cycle of violence. Until these wars are ended, Africa faces a future of danger, anguish, and growing risks of foreign intervention.

This is why I will leave on Friday [September 3] to continue discussions on the President's behalf with the Prime Minister of South Africa [Balthazar Vorster]. This trip will be the next step in an intensive diplomatic effort ushered in by my

visit to Africa in April. Under Secretary of State [for Economic Affairs William D.] Rogers and Assistant Secretary [of State for African Affairs William E.] Schaufele have just returned from a mission to Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique, and Zaire where they met with the Presidents of those African nations most affected by events in southern Africa—the third such mission in three months. In close collaboration with Great Britain, a serious effort by this country is now underway. We shall use our power and influence to help resolve the burning conflicts of southern Africa which now sunder Africa's peace, unity, and hopes for progress.

Nearly a third of the world's some 150 sovereign nations are on the continent of Africa. Africa's independence—now barely 20 years old—has transformed the character and scope of international affairs. African nations play a major role in international institutions; their importance to the world economy is growing; the interdependence of Africa and the industrialized world is obvious. Thus conflict in Africa has political, security, and economic implications that reach far beyond the continent itself.

The relationship between the United States and Africa is unique. We were never a colonial power, but America's character and destiny have been permanently shaped by our involvement in a tragic aspect of Africa's past. Twenty-three million black citizens testify to this heritage and all the American people have been profoundly affected by it. In this generation the affirmation of equality

and black dignity in America has coincided with the assertions of black nationhood in Africa. Both represent a great human struggle for freedom; both compel our support if America's principles are to have meaning.

The United States is the only country which can speak to all sides in southern Africa's current conflicts. We seek no special place for ourselves and thus have an influence that can be important for a peaceful outcome. That position carries with it a great responsibility to promote fair and lasting solutions. Our values, our own self-interest in an Africa that lives in peace and racial harmony, and our abiding commitment to peace and world order permit us no other course.

America's contributions to peace and progress in Africa cannot depend on good will and good intentions alone. Nor can our policy be confined to one continent. Our ability to act effectively in Africa reflects in large measure our standing in the world—our strength, our vision, and our reputation for reliability and steadfastness.

It is with great satisfaction, therefore, that I can tell you that America's foreign relations are prospering and dynamic; that the American people are clearly prepared to do their part in helping shape a better and freer world.

- Today we are at peace for the first time in over a decade. No American is in combat anywhere in the world.

- We have the world's strongest and technologically most advanced military establishment.

- Our relations with our allies in North America, Western Europe, and Japan have never been better. Our close cooperation on a wide range of political and economic issues now reinforces our traditional concern with collective security.

- We have established durable new relations with China, the world's most populous nation. This relationship will hold great significance for global stability and progress as we continue to broaden it in the years to come.

- We are on the road to bringing peace to the Middle East after unprecedented progress in recent years.

- We have reduced the levels of tension with the Soviet Union, resolved some conflicts, and begun to push back the spectre of nuclear war. We have slowed the strategic arms race, and there is

hope that we may soon, for the first time in history, set a firm ceiling on the total number of strategic nuclear weapons of the two major nuclear powers.

- And we have begun a comprehensive and promising dialogue with the nations of Latin America, Asia, and Africa on fundamental questions of economic equity and progress.

In short, America has come through a decade and more of travail with unmatched strength and resiliency and with a reinforced dedication to the cause of freedom. America with its vast strength remains the hope of the world; America with its optimism and energy remains the tide of the future.

And we ourselves have much at stake. Never before has the well-being of Americans been so affected by events abroad. Our own peace and safety depend on global security; our prosperity at home depends on a flourishing global economy.

Nowhere are contemporary events moving more rapidly than in Africa. Within recent months southern Africa has faced an imminent, seemingly inescapable prospect of widening violence, economic disarray, and a virulent new form of colonialism. The Soviet Union and its Cuban surrogate took upon themselves the right of massive military intervention. Time has been running out fast for negotiated solutions—the only alternative to mounting warfare which could embitter and burden the region for generations to come.

Change has come to Africa with astonishing swiftness. Thirty years ago much of Africa was the dominion of European powers; today we see a continent of 49 independent new nations struggling against time, against the elements, and against the forces of instability to consolidate their nationhood.

Africa seeks to achieve three fundamental goals: self-determination and racial justice in southern Africa; economic development and progress for all of Africa; and the preservation of the continent's unity and integrity against outside interference and great power rivalry.

The pace of change has accelerated in the last two years in every dimension.

- The sudden collapse of the Portuguese colonial empire wrought fundamental changes in

southern Africa. The remaining outposts of colonialism were now in an untenable position. But civil war within the liberation movement in Angola, Soviet-Cuban intervention, and the continuing massive Cuban military presence in Angola raised the danger that foreign powers, acting for their own ends, would seek to impose solutions to all the problems of southern Africa.

- New efforts to find negotiated solutions for the racial conflicts in Rhodesia and Namibia failed. The forces for moderation in black Africa risked irrelevance. The peoples of southern Africa were menaced by a mounting spiral of action and reprisal. A course of violence from which no nation was safe had been set in motion.

- Worldwide recession and the sharp rise in oil prices had a drastic impact on the poorest nations, many of them African. Development plans were crippled by the fall of export earnings and by the surge of prices for fuel, fertilizer, and other key imports. New cycles of drought and famine halted economic progress and intensified the suffering of hundreds of thousands of people.

Against this ominous backdrop, President Ford, last April, decided on a new American initiative in support of peace, racial justice, prosperity, and independence for Africa. Our offer of help and constructive influence was strongly encouraged by the leaders of Africa.

With wisdom and flexibility by the parties involved, and with the support of the American people, we have a chance to contribute to a turning point in the history of Africa. We can, if we will, participate in a new birth of independence and racial peace; we can, if we will, help shape a new international dedication to Africa's economic development; and we can, if we will, contribute to an Africa strong and free of the threat of outside intervention.

There is no guarantee that our current diplomatic effort will succeed. It would be naive to suggest that a peaceful solution to issues so surrounded by passions is inevitable. But whatever the immediate outcome, let it never be said that the United States did not exert itself with energy and determination in the cause of peace, freedom, and human dignity at a moment of need and opportunity.

Let me discuss with you what has been achieved and what yet remains to be done.

Southern Africa

Most urgent has been the mounting racial conflict of southern Africa—in Rhodesia, in Namibia, and in the Republic of South Africa itself.

The white minority regime in Rhodesia, representing only some four percent of the population, is not recognized by a single Government—not even by neighboring South Africa. Its unilateral declaration of independence from Britain in November 1965 is regarded as illegal by every member of the world community. Three U.S. Administrations have supported Britain throughout its long effort to restore its constitutional authority; Britain has been—and remains—committed to grant independence only under conditions of majority rule.

Early this year negotiations between the illegal white minority regime and moderate black nationalist leaders broke down. Guerrilla action intensified; rapidly escalating violence threatened to engulf the region.

While Rhodesia is the most immediately dangerous problem, Namibia is also of urgent concern.

From 1920 South Africa administered the former German colony of South West Africa under a League of Nations mandate. In 1966 the U.N. General Assembly concluded that South Africa was violating important obligations. As a result, the United Nations—with U.S. support—terminated South Africa's mandate. The United Nations assumed direct responsibility for the territory. South Africa, however, stayed on. In 1971 the International Court of Justice concluded that South Africa's occupation was illegal, that it must immediately withdraw, and that no country should recognize, support, or assist South Africa in Namibia. The United States has consistently supported the conclusions of the Court and the resolutions of the Security Council. The latest resolution, unanimously passed last January, calls on South Africa to comply with the Court's conclusions; to declare its acceptance of free elections under U.N. supervision and control; and to respect the rights of Namibians and the responsibility of the United Nations. The Security Council decided to review South Africa's compliance on or before today, August 31, 1976.

Namibia, like Rhodesia, contains the seeds of greater conflict. There, too, time is running out. With thousands of foreign troops north of the Namibian border and with intensifying warfare in Rhodesia, a volatile situation is emerging.

And in South Africa itself, the recent outbreaks of racial violence have underscored the inevitable instability of a system that institutionalizes human inequality in a way repugnant to the world's conscience.

Therefore, in Lusaka, Zambia, in April, on behalf of President Ford I put forward an American initiative which addressed the full sweep of the crisis in southern Africa.

- We promised that we would actively support [British Prime Minister James] Callaghan's proposal for majority rule in Rhodesia in two years or less. We urged the African parties involved to pursue a negotiated settlement in which black and white could coexist and cooperate. We stated our readiness to assist a new Rhodesia-Zimbabwe—to overcome economic dislocations, so that it could effectively take its place in the community of nations.

- We urged South Africa to set a date for Namibian independence and to broaden the political process. In our view *all* the political groups of Namibia should be permitted to express themselves freely, under U.N. supervision, and to participate in shaping the constitutional and political future of their country.

- And I restated on African soil America's rejection of the principle and practice of apartheid. I called on South Africa to demonstrate its commitment to peace and harmony on the continent by facilitating early solutions in Rhodesia and Namibia.

Unmistakable progress has been made since this American initiative.

- The character of our relationship with black Africa has been transformed. Our dialogue with the nations of black Africa has become close and intensive. Mutual confidence and respect between America and black Africa have grown substantially. We are now seen as active agents in the process toward independence, self-determination, justice, and human dignity in Africa, not as passive observers.

- Since my talks with Prime Minister Vorster in June, South Africa has publicly proclaimed its support for majority rule in Rhodesia—an important step forward.

- In Namibia the Constitutional Conference, organized by South Africa, has recently proposed a date of December 31, 1978, for Namibia's independence, conceding the vital principles of independence and majority rule. The means and processes by which the country moves to independence must still be worked out between the interested parties, but the fact that Namibia will shortly be independent is in itself a major breakthrough.

These significant developments show that progress is possible. But the obstacles to a negotiated settlement remain formidable.

In Rhodesia it is now vital to bring together the leaders of black Africa, the various liberation movements, South Africa, and the Rhodesian regime on a common program. Namibia will not be removed from the world's agenda of crises until a means and a forum are found for working out Namibia's political future on the basis of participation by *all* authentic groups.

The situation in South Africa continues to be highly volatile; it poses a threat not only of intensified suffering within that country but also to South Africa's ability to assist constructively in solutions for Rhodesia and Namibia.

The task of diplomacy is to find the common ground among the differing objectives of the multitude of nations and groups involved. Our consultations have convinced us that there is common ground. But all parties must overcome the legacy of generations of mistrust; all must keep in mind that the desire to achieve everything at once may frustrate the significant progress which may now be attainable.

We shall be carrying this message:

- The white populations of Rhodesia and Namibia must recognize that majority rule is inevitable. The only issue is what form it will take and how it will come about. Will it be through protracted and bloody conflict that will leave a heritage of bitterness and destruction for generations? Or will it come rapidly through the peaceful means which offer hope for a just and cooperative future

in which majority rule is coupled with a guarantee of minority rights?

- South Africa has taken positive steps with respect to Rhodesia and Namibia. We hope that it will continue to recognize that now is the time to make a constructive contribution to Africa by committing itself to rapid progress toward independence in Rhodesia and Namibia.

- Black African leaders in the states neighboring Rhodesia and Namibia have perhaps the most difficult challenge. They feel in their hearts the suffering of their brothers; they have themselves experienced the oppression of colonial rule; and they have seen past efforts of settlements fade away. All their instincts are for rapid solutions without the tedious give-and-take of negotiations. And yet violence will only escalate bloodshed and lengthen, rather than shorten, the road to their goal. The wisdom and moderating influence of black African leaders are essential if progress is to be achieved. Their own suffering must have taught that new injustice does not right old injustice. They now have the opportunity to break the vicious cycle of centuries of suffering by seizing this opportunity not for conflict but for reconciliation of the races.

- Black nationalist groups competing for power must bridge their differences if there is to be early progress to majority rule. We will urge them not to jeopardize everything by personal competition for power. Those rivalries are certain to delay—and may even defeat—the realization of what they have fought so long to attain.

A complex process of negotiation is underway on the urgent issues of Rhodesia and Namibia. These issues are related but we recognize that the requirements for solutions in each case are substantially different. If circumstances so indicate, each issue can be dealt with at the pace appropriate to it. Depending on the desires of the many interested parties, we are prepared to deal with each issue on its individual merits.

Most importantly all parties must keep in mind that lost opportunities can be irretrievable; there are now conditions for settling *both* issues that did not exist previously and may never do so again. It would be ironic, to say the least, after years of struggle, hope, and disappointment if those who have the most to gain should let the

opportunity slip away because of internal disagreements.

Public support for this effort will be a major factor in the success and durability of any settlement that may eventually emerge. Our goals—to end the suffering and violence of southern Africa, to bring about majority rule and minority rights—reflect what is best in American values. They are a firm foundation for our common commitment; they are not confined to one party or one branch of the Government. They represent an American effort.

South Africa's racial problems are more complex. In Lusaka in April I pointed out that South African assistance in bringing about rapid negotiated solutions in Rhodesia and Namibia would be viewed positively by the community of nations as well as by the rest of Africa. And I must point out here that since then South Africa's role—with respect to these two problems—has been constructive.

As for conditions within South Africa itself, the world and most black African leaders recognize South Africa as an African country. Its white settlers have lived on African soil for centuries. No one, including the responsible leaders of black Africa, challenges their right to remain there. Unlike Rhodesia and Namibia, South Africa cannot be regarded as an illegitimate government, as an outside colonial intrusion.

But South Africa's internal structure is incompatible with any concept of human dignity. We are deeply saddened by the recent and continuing clashes in black urban townships, universities, and schools throughout South Africa. They are dramatic evidence of the frustration of black South Africans toward a system which denies them status, equality, and political rights. No system that leads to periodic upheavals and violence can possibly be just or acceptable—nor can it last.

The United States must be true to its own beliefs. We urge South Africa to take account of the conscience of humanity. We will continue to use all our influence to bring about peaceful change, equality of opportunity, and basic human rights in South Africa. Our policy is based upon the premise that within a reasonable period of time we will see a clear evolution toward just internal arrangements. In our talks with the South African Prime Minister, and in our diplomatic efforts, we

will impress upon South Africa the need to make this premise a reality.

Economic Progress

It is economic progress which ultimately will determine whether *Africa* can fulfill the aspirations of its peoples.

You here at this convention know that the economic dimension is fundamental. You know full well, as a black Mississippi politician said recently, that "it's no good being able to join the country club if you haven't got the money to buy a drink."

And you are taking action.

Africa's development needs are massive, and your OIC programs strike at their heart: vocational training to teach the skills that Africa needs to realize its potential regardless of changing political circumstances. A mechanic's training or a carpenter's trade can be practiced in the most turbulent times; political upheavals cannot diminish the individual's sense of worth which your training instills. We give you concrete support through the Agency for International Development and will continue to do so. But it is your initiative and energy which has turned that support into something vital and alive.

Beyond its need for skilled manpower, Africa's economic aspirations confront a wide range of other challenges.

Africa is blessed with immense natural wealth. The ratio of population to resources is as favorable as that of any region of the developing world. Agricultural productivity can be vastly improved.

But no continent suffers so cruelly when crops fail for lack of rain. No continent's natural economic regions are so fragmented by borders drawn up—often arbitrarily—in the colonial era. And no continent bears such a crushing burden of poverty and illiteracy.

Africa is doubly challenged—by recurrent economic catastrophes and by the need for long-term growth. The United States is dealing with the various dimensions of the task.

- To provide relief from natural disasters, drought, and famine we have, in the past five years, more than quadrupled emergency aid to African nations.

- American trade and investment are crucial for Africa's development. While they are rapidly expanding, they are not enough—especially for the poorest countries. Therefore, we plan to increase development assistance for Africa substantially over the coming years—especially for the least developed countries.

- Because Africa's needs frequently transcend the limits of national boundaries, we are now directing much of our assistance to support regional cooperation—in transportation, agricultural development, health programs, and in collecting information by satellite on crops, weather, water resources, land use, and mineral extraction.

What Africa requires above all else is a strategy for development. For example, the Sahel—the chronically drought-ridden region of the southern edge of the Sahara Desert—has been a major recipient of international relief assistance. The monumental suffering in that area has prompted the generous contributions of many individual Americans, as well as large-scale government relief efforts.

But the disasters which afflict the Sahel come in recurrent cycles. They are altering the ecology across central and western Africa; the desert is steadily encroaching upon once-fertile lands.

The time has come to go beyond periodic measures of relief and to take comprehensive steps. To this end the United States, together with an international group of donor countries, is seeking to reverse the economic and ecological decline of the Sahel and lay the foundations for future growth. We have proposed developing major river basins to improve water supply; increasing crop acreage by modern agricultural methods; improving food storage facilities; and enhancing the transportation network of the area.

The long-term effort in the Sahel, and others needed elsewhere in Africa, will require intensified cooperation among the industrial democracies of North America, Western Europe, and Japan. This is why the United States has endorsed the imaginative proposal of President Giscard of France for a fund to organize and coordinate Western assistance efforts for Africa. And we are seeking within the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development a more general

coordination of development efforts among the industrial democracies.

Africa is heavily dependent upon the world economy. No African nation can plan its future effectively if its income is buffeted by external economic forces over which it has little or no influence. The export earnings of many African economies rely upon global market conditions for a single commodity. And higher energy prices or inflation abroad can—as they have—raise to prohibitive levels the price of imports that Africa desperately needs.

One year ago [September 1, 1975] at the Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly, the United States presented a comprehensive series of proposals aimed at responding, in a cooperative spirit, to the needs of the developing countries. We have followed up these initiatives with major efforts at the Paris Conference on International Economic Cooperation, at the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development in Nairobi, and in many other international institutions. Many of our proposals have been implemented and have had a direct impact on Africa.

Substantial progress has been made in the past year in shaping the long-term economic relationship between the nations of the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. The initiatives which now form the agenda for discussion are, by and large, proposals made by the United States. But much work remains to be done. The United States is prepared to move forward in areas of great importance to the nations of Africa.

- We are prepared to address the crushing balance-of-payments problems and debt burdens which many poor African nations suffer as a result of high oil prices, global inflation, and the recession-related downturn in export earnings.

- We are prepared to join with producers and consumers of key commodities to explore measures to improve and stabilize markets. We are ready to participate in producer-consumer forums in ways that will benefit Africa.

- We will seek satisfactory international arrangements to foster the investment necessary for Africa's growth—arrangements which both respect national sovereignty and assure predictability and fair treatment for foreign investors.

- We have proposed in the multilateral trade negotiations to reduce tariffs for tropical products which are of special interest to Africa.

- We are seeking authorization from Congress to make an initial contribution of \$15 million to the African Development Bank's Development Fund in order to foster industrialization.

- And we will make major efforts to stimulate the flow of modern technology to Africa so as to promote growth and diversify economies now excessively dependent on a single commodity.

The United States is committed to work constructively with the nations of Africa and with other developing countries to promote economic progress and fuller participation in the global economic system. But we must be frank to say that rhetorical assaults and one-sided declarations undermine the conditions for such cooperation. They weaken public support for development in the industrial democracies whose effective and sustained role is crucial. No other group of countries—least of all the Socialist countries—is able to provide the technology, the managerial expertise, or the resources.

Many of the resolutions of the just concluded nonaligned conference in Colombo were clearly anything but nonaligned in content or phraseology. We reject such one-sided proclamations and warn that to be effective nonalignment must be true to its name. It cannot—indeed it will not—be taken seriously if it becomes nothing more than a rigid grouping aimed at producing automatic majorities and rhetorical attacks against the industrial democracies.

The choice that all nations face is between cooperation and chaos. America has made its decision for cooperation. We invite others to join us in the same spirit.

African Independence: Precondition for Progress

Africa's development will be impossible if the independence and integrity of the continent are not maintained. Africa must not again become an arena in which outside powers contest for spheres of influence.

This is why the United States agreed with the Presidents of Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia that non-African nations should not

deal directly with the liberation movements of southern Africa—to avoid the divisions and the competition which led to the tragedies of the Angolan civil war. We oppose those who would subject the African people to outside domination. Western colonialism in Africa is dying; it must not now be replaced by a new form of external intervention more insidious because less familiar, which in the end may take generations to root out.

The United States seeks no African bloc of its own, no paramount influence in Africa. We will oppose all those who do. The United States calls on all nations to affirm the principle that Africa's destiny is for Africa to determine. The United States will not import great power conflict into Africa. We will expect others to do the same.

There is no better guarantee against foreign intervention than the determination of African nations to defend their own independence and unity. Let us, therefore, not minimize the importance of the security problems that some African nations face. Economic development is certainly a crucial priority; but by itself it cannot prevent outside pressure or threats to African sovereignty. So let us not accept the facile proposition that black African nations do not have the same need as other nations to defend themselves against recognized dangers—especially when they perceive serious and imminent threats from nearby nations which have been heavily armed by the Soviet Union. We are determined to avoid unnecessary arms races. But when friendly and moderate nations like Kenya or Zaire make modest and responsible requests for assistance to protect themselves against belligerent neighbors possessing substantial quantities of

modern Soviet weapons, we owe them our serious considerations.

Africa and the World

One fact is clear: A time of change has come again to Africa. Let us all take the opportunity before us to avoid a future of bitterness, escalating war, and foreign intervention. Let us all help a peaceful and prospering and just Africa take its rightful place in the world.

What Africa needs now is not a return to the exploitive or interventionist practices of decades past. Nor does it need exuberant promises and vapid expressions of good will. It requires concrete commitments to progress—political and economic. It requires our readiness to cooperate as sovereign equals on the basis of mutual responsibility and mutual benefit.

In this spirit the United States will do its part. Let there be no mistake: Africa will take its destiny firmly into its own hands, whether we like it or not. It will make its contribution to the world community in its own way, whether we cooperate or not. But the cause of freedom—not only for ourselves but for all mankind—will be vitally affected by the part America plays. We can turn our backs on one of the most massive awakenings of a people in history and in the process desert our principles and help doom a continent to a future of despair.

Or we can, as every generation of Americans before us, make history ours.

I believe Americans will choose the course of hope and heart. And by so doing we will once again have demonstrated the vitality of our values and given the world a "new birth of freedom."

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, U.S.A.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20520

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
STA-501

