



African Union

ENMUNC V

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Letter from the Chair:

Hello Delegates and Welcome to the African Union!

My name is Angel Sosa, and I am honored to serve as the Chair of this committee, which consists of members of the African Union. To provide some background about myself, I was born in Las Vegas, Nevada, and I have spent most of my life there. Currently, I am a junior pursuing a degree in political science. In addition to my role on the MUN travel team here at Emory, I actively participate in the Latinx Student Organization and conduct much research.

I've had the honor of serving as a backroom staffer for our high school conference, ENMUNC, as a Co-Chair for MUNE (our college conference), and as USG of GA for MUNE. I am fortunate enough to be the Chair of the African Union committee, and I am excited to see where this experience takes us.

The African Union is made up of 55 separate member states that are home to different cultures, languages, religions, geographies, and political situations. I hope you take the time to learn about your country's goals and values and bring that knowledge to the committee. I hope that each delegate will challenge themselves by fully embracing their roles. Furthermore, while I appreciate the competitive nature of MUN environments, it's important to remember that this shouldn't be an excuse for disrespect within the committee. I encourage delegates to craft innovative resolutions.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me or a member of the secretariat before the conference. You can reach me at my email enmuncvau@gmail.com.

I look forward to meeting you all, and I am confident that you will generate outstanding resolutions for the topics we will be addressing.

Sincerely,
Angel Sosa Llanos Jr



Committee Sensitivity

Dear Delegates,

You are expected to maintain decorum throughout the committee and treat these issues with the seriousness they require. Any appeal to or use of discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated. Undiplomatic behavior towards fellow delegates, including bullying, personal insults, and harassment, will also not be tolerated.

ENMUNC seeks to maintain a fair and balanced environment that allows delegates to shine and showcase their talents. As such, using pre-writing or similarly deceptive tactics, such as using AI to write working papers in our committee, will not be tolerated by the dais or ENMUNC as an organization. Plagiarism of any kind is unacceptable at ENMUNC.

If issues do arise with the conduct of a delegation or individual, feel free to reach out to me at enmuncvau@gmail.com or to our Under-Secretary-General at kekeli.amekudzi@emory.edu.

Technology Policy

Generative AI is strictly forbidden from being used to generate documents such as resolutions, trade agreements, or press releases from this committee. These documents must be your work. Technology of any form is only allowed during unmoderated forms of debate.



Position Papers

Each delegation must submit a position paper before the conference. A position paper summarizes your delegation's understanding of the issue, outlines your nation's stance, and proposes solutions for debate. Each paper should follow a clear three-paragraph format. The first paragraph should highlight the most pressing aspects of the issue and key facts relevant to your stance. The second paragraph should explain your country's position, why the issue is important to your nation, and any unique national perspectives. The final paragraph should propose solutions and actions you believe should be included in a resolution.

Each delegation must submit one position paper per topic area. Papers should be written in third person, using Times New Roman, 12-point font, single-spaced, and approximately one page in length, with citations in Chicago, MLA, or APA format. Position papers are crucial for demonstrating preparation and are required for awards consideration. Papers must be submitted by March 14 at 11:59 PM to be eligible for position paper awards and by March 17 for any other awards. No late submissions will be accepted. Advisors or head delegates must submit papers as CountryCommitteeName.pdf/.docx to the designated email: enmuncvau@gmail.com.

Committee Structure

Delegates will act as representatives of the government of their assigned nation to the African Union's Executive Council. The committee will follow typical General Assembly procedures including voting on motions in order of disruptiveness, extensions to caucuses, etc.

All member states will have voting powers in this committee—and in a slight departure from reality—so do nations that are presently suspended. To pass a resolution, it must receive a **two-thirds majority** in favor. Multiple resolutions may be passed in order to account for the scope of different topics and address region-specific issues.

Committee Overview: The African Union

In 1963, 32 independent African states established the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the predecessor of the African Union. The goal of the OAU was to promote solidarity and cooperation amongst African states in fighting against colonialism, apartheid and other violations of sovereignty, making efforts to improve the welfare of the people of Africa, establishing compatible and mutually beneficial policies across multiple sectors, and to overall advance African states' economic, political, and societal development. As more states became independent from colonial rule, membership expanded to include 53 individual countries by the early 2000s.

The African Union was officially established at the Durban Summit in 2002 as a way to amend and adapt the OAU into a form to best address the objectives and challenges of a post-colonial Africa.¹

Now, the African Union is made up of 55 member states across 5 geographic regions with a total population of over 1.4 billion people. The organization's goals span across multiple sectors including national and continental security, internal and external trade, human rights, health, education, and industrialization. Currently, the AU's far-reaching aspirations for future development are outlined in the framework "Agenda 2063," which provides a framework for the Union to work with for the upcoming decades.

¹ African Union Commission, and New Zealand Crown. 2023. "African Union Handbook 2023." Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: African Union Commission & New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/31829-doc-African_Union_Handbook_2023_ENGLISH.pdf.

Topic 1: Addressing the Burden of Disease

Disease burden describes the impacts of a health problem on the morbidity and mortality of a population. It is often quantified using a standardized measurement called “health-adjusted life years” or “HALYs,” which include “disability-adjusted life years” or “DALYs.” 1 DALY represents 1 year of a healthy life lost, whether due to disability or premature death. Disease burden not only describes loss of life or decrease in quality of life within a population; it also can be interpreted to encompass the socioeconomic effects of disease.

Africa has the highest calculated burden of disease at an annual rate of over 60,000 DALYs per 100,000 people in several countries (compared to 20,000 DALYs per 100,000 people in regions with the best health).² According to a report by the World Health Organization (WHO), disease was responsible for approximately 705 million DALYs just in 2015 and an economic loss of 2.4 trillion international dollars (equivalent to USD).³

Subtopic A: Vector-borne diseases

In 2017, vector-borne diseases were responsible for a burden of 52 million DALYs.⁴ According to the WHO, vector-borne diseases (VBDs) are, “human illnesses caused by parasites, viruses and bacteria that are transmitted by vectors.” VBDs make up more than 17% of infectious diseases, infect hundreds of millions of victims, and kill over 700,000 people per year.⁵ Additionally, VBDs are responsible for one sixth of cases of disability and illness. Vectors and the parasites/viruses/bacteria they carry span across a diverse group of species that can multiply quickly and exponentially.

These diseases are not merely a passing nuisance but can affect the development of future generations through prenatal interference, as well as cause lifelong disability in those who have survived the illness. This translates to significant financial loss for

² Max Roser, Hannah Ritchie, and Fiona Spooner. “Burden of Disease.” Our World in Data, February 29, 2024. <https://ourworldindata.org/burden-of-disease>.

³ World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa, *A Heavy Burden: The Indirect Cost of Illness in Africa* (Geneva: World Health Organization, March 21, 2019).

⁴ Henk van den Berg et. al. “Recent Trends in Global Insecticide Use for Disease Vector Control and Potential Implications for Resistance Management.” *Scientific Reports* 11, no. 1 (2021): 23867. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-03367-9>.

⁵ “World Health Organization, “Vector-borne diseases,” accessed April 15, 2024, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/vector-borne-diseases>.

individuals and families as well as for governments trying to establish/maintain overburdened health systems.

<u>Vector</u>	<u>Disease caused</u>	<u>Type of pathogen</u>
Mosquito	<i>Aedes</i>	Chikungunya Dengue Lymphatic filariasis Rift Valley fever Yellow Fever Zika
	<i>Anopheles</i>	Lymphatic filariasis Malaria
	<i>Culex</i>	Japanese encephalitis Lymphatic filariasis West Nile fever
Aquatic snails	Schistosomiasis (bilharziasis)	Parasite
Blackflies	Onchocerciasis (river blindness)	Parasite
Fleas	Plague (transmitted from rats to humans)	Bacteria
	Tungiasis	Ectoparasite
Lice	Typhus	Bacteria
	Louse-borne relapsing fever	Bacteria
Sandflies	Leishmaniasis	Parasite
	Sandfly fever (phlebotomus fever)	Virus
Ticks	Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever	Virus
	Lyme disease	Bacteria
	Relapsing fever (borreliosis)	Bacteria
	Rickettsial diseases (eg: spotted fever and Q fever)	Bacteria
	Tick-borne encephalitis	Virus
	Tularaemia	Bacteria
Triatome bugs	Chagas disease (American trypanosomiasis)	Parasite
Tsetse flies	Sleeping sickness (African trypanosomiasis)	Parasite

Figure 1. WHO table of common vector-borne diseases according to their vector

Despite decades of programs and initiatives meant to help lessen the burden of VBDs, the progress that has been made is in jeopardy. Poorly planned/maintained urbanization (especially waste and water systems), rapid globalization, and growing insecticide resistance in vectors all further complicate the status of VBD control. Additionally, evidence suggests that increased climate variability will expand the range of different vector species, change disease transmission dynamics, and limit adaptive strategies.⁶

Some of the more threatening VBDs include:

Malaria

In 2001, the lost economic growth in countries with endemic malaria was estimated at 1.3% and cost Africa \$12 billion USD annually; though cases have significantly dropped since then, they seem to have plateaued.⁷ In some endemic countries, 40% of public health spending goes towards combating malaria. 8.46% of DALYs in Africa are due to malaria. 70% of the global malaria burden is felt by 11 countries: 10 of those are in Africa. According to the 2023 WHO World Malaria Report, 94% of global malaria cases (233 million) were in Africa, with 50% of all cases coming from Nigeria (25%), the DRC (12%), Uganda (5%), and Mozambique (4%) alone. Additionally, 52% of the 608,000 deaths occurred in only 4 African countries (with Nigeria leading the group with 31% of deaths).

Technological advancements have improved our ability to predict and monitor the spread of malaria, providing supranational organizations with data on the sub-national level. In the biomedical sphere—only within the past few years—the first generation of malaria vaccines have entered the clinical development, testing, and deployment stages of implementation.⁸

However, as said by Wenhui Mao from the Duke Global Health Innovation Center, “persistent challenges such as the under-investment in malaria programmes and research,

⁶ Bruce A. Wilcox, Pierre Echaubard, Michel de Garine-Wichatitsky, and Bernadette Ramirez, "Vector-Borne Disease and Climate Change Adaptation in African Dryland Social-Ecological Systems," *Infectious Diseases of Poverty* 8, no. 1 (2019): Article 36, <https://idpjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40249-019-0539-3>.

⁷ European Alliance Against Malaria, *Malaria and Poverty*, 2007, accessed August 20, 2024, <https://www.malariaconsortium.org/userfiles/file/Past%20events/factsheet2%20-%20malaria%20and%20poverty.pdf>.

⁸ Pedro L. Alonso 2021. "Malaria: A Problem to Be Solved and a Time to Be Bold." *Nature Medicine* 27 (9): 1506–9. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41591-021-01492-6>.

and emerging threats from evolving parasites and climate change could hinder the progress towards malaria elimination.”⁹

The intensifying effects of climate change threaten to undo the progress made in the fight against malaria. Transmission seasons have and will increase in their occurrence and duration. Changes in temperature and humidity widen the range of Anopheline vectors into regions where malaria is not endemic—regions where the population does not have any immunity to the parasites.¹⁰

Unfortunately, targets to reduce malaria incidence per the Global Technical Strategy for Malaria 2016-2030 are far from being met.

Dengue fever

As a fellow mosquito-borne disease (though its vector is of genus *Aedes* rather than *Anopheles*), the same factors that threaten to exacerbate malaria—urbanization, insecticide resistance, population growth, and climate change—all facilitate the flourishing of dengue fever. However, the difference in vector and disease type (parasite vs. virus), drastically changes the manifestation, preventative measures, and treatments available for the disease. In the past 20 years, dengue fever cases have increased ten-fold, though this is likely an underestimate due to difficulty in identifying inapparent infections and lack of recognition in Africa.¹¹ Additionally, recent findings suggest an increasing prevalence of malaria and dengue coinfection.¹²

Lymphatic filariasis

Caused by the mosquito-borne nematode *Wucheria bancrofti*, lymphatic filariasis (LF) or elephantiasis is a disfiguring and often chronic illness that threatens much of Africa’s population. It is often contracted in childhood, but painful, disabling swelling of the legs (due to blockage of the lymphatic system by “worm nests”) tends to manifest in the victim’s teens and early to mid-adulthood.¹³ Aside from extreme lymphedema and

⁹ Priya Venkatesan, "The 2023 WHO World Malaria Report," *The Lancet Microbe* 5, no. 3 (2024): e214, doi:10.1016/S2666-5247(24)00016-8.

¹⁰ Rachel Chason et. al., "The Malaria Disease Spread with Climate Change Warming," *The Washington Post*, 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/interactive/2023/malaria-disease-spread-climate-change-warming/>.

¹¹ Emily Mary Gainor et. al., "Uncovering the Burden of Dengue in Africa: Considerations on Magnitude, Misdiagnosis, and Ancestry," *Viruses* 14, no. 2 (2022): doi:10.3390/v14020233.

¹² Tewelde T. Gebremariam et. al., "Increasing Prevalence of Malaria and Acute Dengue Virus Coinfection in Africa: A Meta-Analysis and Meta-Regression of Cross-Sectional Studies," *Malaria Journal* 22, no. 300 (2023): doi:10.1186/s12936-023-04723-y.

¹³ Thomas E. Newman and Andrew L. Juergens, *Continuing Education Activity: Lymphatic Filariasis*, StatPearls, last modified August 8, 2023, accessed May 15, 2024, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK556012/>.

lymphangitis (swelling due to lymph fluid buildup and swelling of lymphatic vessels respectively), kidney damage occurs in 40% of sufferers due to millions of small larvae released into the bloodstream by 10 cm-long female worms that can live for almost a decade.¹⁴ People with LF can become chronically ill and the effects of the disease can be permanently disabling.

Other notable vector-borne neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) are:

- Human African Trypanosomiasis aka African Sleeping Sickness
- Schistosomiasis
- Onchocerciasis (river blindness)

Subtopic B: Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Coinfection

Tuberculosis (TB) is an airborne infectious disease that can colonize any part of the body (though typically the lungs) and is the deadliest disease in human history since the bubonic plague. Globally, tuberculosis remains the leading cause of death from a single infectious agent, killing almost 1.3 million people globally in 2022: 1/3 of those deaths occurred in Africa.

As with all successful organisms, tuberculosis has adapted to threats to its fitness. Decades of widespread inconsistent and inappropriate use of anti-TB medications have led to multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) and extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB). MDR-TB does not respond to the most powerful first-line medications for TB—isoniazid and rifampicin—but does respond to second-line treatment. Unfortunately, second-line treatment includes expensive, toxic medications and years of chemotherapy. XDR-TB has no specific treatment and a very poor prognosis.¹⁵

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a potentially devastating infection transmitted through sexual contact, bodily fluids, and from mother to child (during

¹⁴ World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa (WHO AFRO), "Health Topics: Lymphatic Filariasis," accessed May 15, 2024, <https://www.afro.who.int/health-topics/lymphatic-filariasis>.

¹⁵ World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa, "Tuberculosis (TB)," accessed August 20, 2024, <https://www.afro.who.int/health-topics/tuberculosis-tb#:~:text=An%20estimated%20424%2C000%20people%20died,occur%20in%20the%20African%20Region.>

pregnancy, delivery, or breastfeeding). If left untreated, it will quickly develop into Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) which often leads to death 2-3 years later. In addition to tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS patients are more susceptible to Hepatitis B & C and Opportunistic Infections (OIs).¹⁶ With treatment, people with HIV/AIDS can live into their 70's, but the proper medications aren't universally accessible.

71% of HIV/AIDS cases and 75% of global HIV/AIDS deaths occur within Sub-Saharan Africa. At least 90% of people in Africa living HIV/AIDS don't know that they have it due to the inaccessibility and cost of testing. The burden of this disease disproportionately impacts the region to an extraordinary degree.¹⁷ Furthermore, HIV/AIDS is also more prevalent in populations vulnerable due to their socioeconomic status, gender, or age. According to UNAIDS, as of 2023, 62% of new infections in Sub-Saharan Africa were in women and girls. An estimated ~3100 young women and girls became infected with HIV per week that year.¹⁸ HIV/AIDS infection can also carry significant stigma, inhibiting education efforts and already vulnerable people seeking care.

HIV/AIDS and TB are responsible for a combined 10% of all DALYs in Africa. Furthermore, due to the weakening of the immune system in those who suffer from HIV/AIDS, they are more vulnerable to infectious diseases—including active TB. Studies have shown that HIV and *M. tuberculosis* have a mutualistic relationship where tuberculosis is able to easily spread throughout the body of someone with HIV—while at the same time, tuberculosis supports the propagation of HIV-1 in infected immune cells, accelerating the development of AIDS. Additionally, contracting TB while receiving treatment for HIV increases the risk of high-morbidity immune reconstitution inflammatory syndrome (IRIS). IRIS then worsens TB and HIV symptoms and can impact the course of HIV

¹⁶ "HIV Basics: Other Health Issues of Special Concern for People Living with HIV," HIV.gov, <https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/staying-in-hiv-care/other-related-health-issues/other-health-issues-of-special-concern-for-people-living-with-hiv>.

¹⁷ Laura Dwyer-Lindgren et al., "Mapping HIV Prevalence in Sub-Saharan Africa between 2000 and 2017," *Nature* 570, no. 7760 (2019): 189-193, <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-019-1200-9>.

¹⁸ UNAIDS, *Global HIV & AIDS Statistics — Fact Sheet*, 2023, accessed August 20, 2024, https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/UNAIDS_FactSheet_en.pdf.

treatment.¹⁹ All of these interactions make HIV the greatest risk factor for developing active TB infection and tuberculosis the leading cause of death of AIDS patients.²⁰

The WHO has recognized the danger posed by HIV/AIDS coinfection and in response has proposed the “Three I’s” strategy: intensified case finding, isoniazid preventive therapy, and infection control in clinical settings.²¹ However for overburdened, understaffed, and undersupplied healthcare systems, the “Three I’s” strategy isn’t necessarily feasible. Additionally, many people with HIV and/or TB can be asymptomatic while the disease is latent, which delays the identification of the illness and administration of treatment.²² Even when people show symptoms, they may not have the means nor finances necessary to seek care.

Subtopic C: Neonatal Disorders

1.12 million newborns die annually in Africa, with preterm birth, birth asphyxia, and infection causing 87% of newborn deaths. Two thirds of these deaths are preventable. A child born in Sub-Saharan Africa is 10-11 times more likely to die within their first month of life than a child born in a higher-income country giving the region the highest rate of neonatal mortality in the world.

Neonatal disorders account for ~14% of DALYs in Sub-Saharan Africa, not even including the health effects felt by mothers.²³ Sub-Saharan Africa also accounts for ~70% of global maternal deaths—540 per day.

²⁴Lack of prenatal, delivery, and antenatal care can have permanent effects on the health of mothers and their babies (if they both survive the process). 20%-30% of pregnant

¹⁹ Esaki M. Shankar et al., “HIV–Mycobacterium Tuberculosis Co-Infection: A ‘Danger-Couple Model’ of Disease Pathogenesis,” *FEMS Pathogens and Disease* 70, no. 2 (2014): 110-120, <https://academic.oup.com/femspd/article/70/2/110/549541?>

²⁰ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “HIV and TB: Risk Factors,” last reviewed March 20, 2016, accessed July 11, 2024, https://www.cdc.gov/tb/risk-factors/hiv.html?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/tb/topic/basics/tbhivcoinfection.htm.

²¹ Judith Bruchfeld, Margarida Correia-Neves, and Gunilla Källénus, “Tuberculosis and HIV Coinfection,” *Cold Spring Harbor Perspectives in Medicine* 5, no. 7 (2015): a017871, accessed August 20, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1101/cshperspect.a017871>.

²² Caroline Dufour, Pierre Gantner, Rémi Fromentin, and Nicolas Chomont, “The Multifaceted Nature of HIV Latency,” *The Journal of Clinical Investigation* 130, no. 9 (2020): 3381-3390, accessed August 20, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1172/JCI136227>.

²³ Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), *Global Burden of Disease Compare*, published 2022, accessed August 20, 2024, <https://vizhub.healthdata.org/gbd-compare/#>.

²⁴ Sierra Flake, *Lack of Access to Maternal Healthcare in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Ballard Brief, Winter 2022, accessed August 20, 2024, <https://ballardbrief.byu.edu/issue-briefs/lack-of-access-to-maternal-healthcare-in-sub-saharan-africa>.

women have HIV and 25%-40% of them will pass it down to their infants, further leaving both of them vulnerable to infection and death.²⁵

Poverty, loss of trust in medical care, and distance from medical facilities are major systemic barriers to women receiving obstetric care. X Additionally, in many cultural traditions, unassisted home births are encouraged as a way of showing strength and gaining respect. Obstetric care and complications can bring stigma upon a woman and her baby due to certain taboos and superstitions. In attended births, certain practices such as delivering the placenta before caring for the infant can lead to hypothermia. Varying feeding practices—including delaying or avoiding breastfeeding and giving the baby water and/or solid foods—can cause malnutrition and immune deficiency.

Not all cultural traditions are at odds with modern medical practice. Many cultures practice mother-baby seclusion or “rooming-in”, where mothers are left alone with their babies (from days to months) to bond, eat, rest, and avoid infection.²⁶

Some nations have recently been successful at significantly reducing neonatal deaths and disability through investments in maternal and child health.²⁷

Questions to Consider:

- ❖ How will current policies put in place to combat VBDs need to change in order to address looming climate variability, ecological concerns, and population growth? Is the scope of current policies adequate to build off of or is a new approach necessary?
- ❖ How will preventative measures differ depending on the climate, economic status, etc. of a member state?
- ❖ How will different types of diseases need to be addressed differently? Is there anything that can be done to broadly mitigate the effects of disease?

²⁵ World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa, "Newborn Health," accessed August 20, 2024, <https://www.afro.who.int/health-topics/newborn#:~:text=In%20the%20African%20Region%2C%2012,deaths%20in%20this%20age%20group.>

²⁶ Khathutshelo G. Simane-Netshisaulu, Rachel T. Lebesse, and Patience M. Tulelo, "Chapter 7: Provision of Neonatal Care: An African Indigenous Perspective," in *Working with Indigenous Knowledge: Strategies for Health Professionals*, ed. John A. Osei et al. (Cape Town: 2022), accessed August 20, 2024, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK601352/>.

²⁷ Ibid.

- ❖ How do age, sex, culture, etc. affect the approach necessary to properly address disease?
- ❖ What changes need to be made to healthcare systems to better utilize resources, prevent brain drain, and address epidemics?
- ❖ How should conflicts between traditional beliefs and modern medicine be reconciled? Can they be reconciled? Where is the line drawn regarding the prioritization of public safety or personal liberty?
- ❖ How can member states benefit from NGOs and foreign aid while avoiding dependency on outside intervention?

Topic 2: Foreign Corporations and Contractors

Though the more traditional age of colonialism ended in the mid-20th century, neocolonialism has risen to take its place. Neocolonialism is generally defined by Oxford Languages as “the use of economic, political, cultural, or other pressures to control or influence other countries, especially former dependencies.” It can manifest through military and sub-military presence, predatory development loans, bribes to government officials, and exploitation of natural resources. African countries must recognize the value and detriment to their nation’s development and sovereignty brought by different international agreements.

Subtopic A: Private Military & Security Companies (PMSCs)

The OAU Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa was adopted over 40 years ago but has been seldom enforced and rendered largely obsolete. With mercenarism on the rise and legislation scarce, the issue deserves revisiting.

Private military and security companies (PMSCs) or private military contractors (PMCs) are independent organizations that provide military services ranging from small private security units and logistics to large military forces. PMSCs are often hired by governments to fill gaps in national security that they do not have the personnel or training to address using their armed forces. Economic issues, coups, corruption, and terrorism all hinder a country’s ability to protect itself from internal and external threats that can be exacerbated or minimized via PMSCs.²⁸

PMSCs grew in prominence in the 1990s as many African states experienced civil wars and foreign states began to outsource military operations. The model for the “modern” PMSC was developed largely by Executive Outcomes (EO), a member of the South African-British multi-conglomerate Strategic Resource Corporation (SRC). Through SRC, EO was connected to major media campaigns and mining operations. In its first major international outing, EO assisted the Angolan government during the Angolan Civil War in

²⁸ Nina Nama-Ama Adorable Enos, "Analysing the Evolution of Private Military Companies in Africa Since the 1990s" (thesis, Stellenbosch University, December 2023), <https://scholar.sun.ac.za/server/api/core/bitstreams/3a3a717a-2ebb-4b75-a73a-f683b66c4582/content>.

exchange for cash as well as oil and diamond mining rights.²⁹ Not too long after in 1995, EO became involved in the Sierra Leonean Civil War, reclaiming mineral fields and defeating the Revolutionary United Front—eventually forcing them into signing the Abidjan Peace Accord in 1996. Though EO successfully fulfilled their contracts, they didn't cooperate with conventional forces and arguably contributed to the strife and resentment within Sierra Leone's military that would lead to a coup in May of 1997.³⁰ Executive Operations was dissolved in 1998 after South Africa passed legislation requiring government oversight; it would be revived 22 years later in 2020.

Russia

Perhaps the most notorious of the currently active PMSCs is the Kremlin-linked Wagner Group. There are an estimated 5,000 Wagner troops spread throughout Africa's geographic regions. In exchange for money and mineral rights, Wagner has aided several members of the African Union by suppressing insurgent movements, trafficking arms, enacting disinformation campaigns, and supporting military juntas. According to The Blood Gold Report, Russia has gained 2.5 billion USD from the African gold trade since February 2022.³¹ However, there are numerous instances (confirmed and reported) of the company committing war crimes including looting/robbery, summary executions, sexual violence, and mass killings of targeted civilians.^{32 33} To name one example, Wagner has been implicated by the Human Rights Watch in significantly aiding in the 2022 Moura massacre that killed ~300 people.³⁴ They have also been involved in major propaganda/disinformation campaigns to obfuscate their own crimes, interfere with democratic elections (threatening their credibility), and sway policy decisions.

²⁹ Khareen Pech, "Executive Outcomes – A Corporate Conquest," in *Peace, Profit, or Plunder? The Privatisation of Security in War-Torn African Societies* (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 1999), chapter 5
<https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/1999-01-01-book-peace-profit-Plunder.pdf>.

³⁰ Mateusz Maciąg, "Engagement of Executive Outcomes in Sierra Leone: Utility Assessment," *Security & Defense Quarterly* 21, no. 2 (September 2019): 48-70, <https://doi.org/10.35467/sdq/112110>.

³¹ "The Blood Gold Report 2023," December 2023,
<https://bloodgoldreport.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/The-Blood-Gold-Report-2023-December.pdf>.

³² Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), "Wagner Group Operations in Africa: Civilian Targeting Trends in the Central African Republic and Mali," August 30, 2022, accessed August 20, 2024,
<https://acleddata.com/2022/08/30/wagner-group-operations-in-africa-civilian-targeting-trends-in-the-central-african-republic-and-mali/>

³³ Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), "Moving Out of the Shadows: Shifts in Wagner Group Operations Around the World," August 2, 2023, accessed August 20, 2024,
<https://acleddata.com/2023/08/02/moving-out-of-the-shadows-shifts-in-wagner-group-operations-around-the-world/>.

³⁴ "Mali: Massacre by Army, Foreign Soldiers," last modified April 5, 2022, accessed July 11, 2024,
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/04/05/mali-massacre-army-foreign-soldiers>.

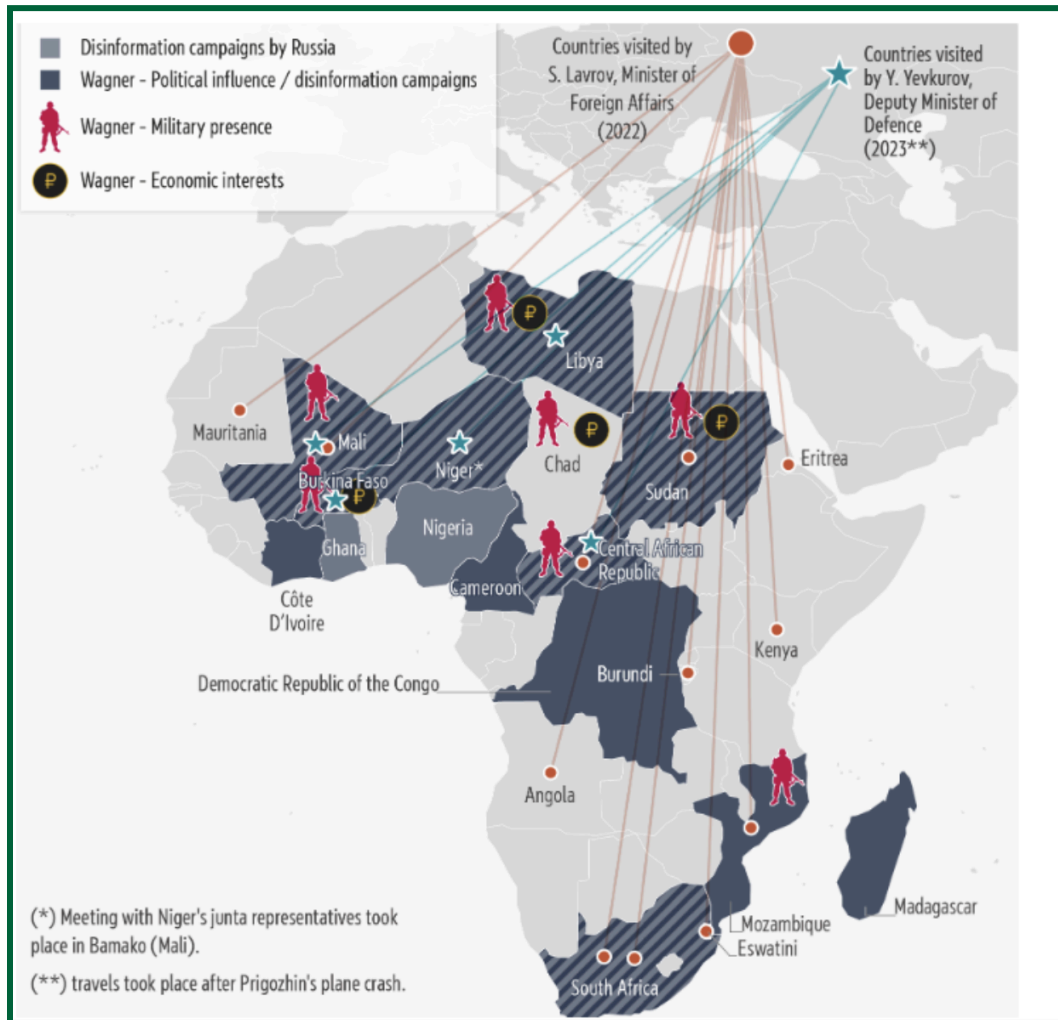


Figure #. Wagner and Russian interference in Africa. *Epthinktank*

The United States

As lightning follows thunder, where Russia seeks to exert its influence so does the United States. PMSCs have been a crucial element of the U.S.'s military and security aid operations for years, including as a part of AU and UN peacekeeping missions (as well as for U.S. programs the Africa Crisis Response Initiative and African Contingency Training Assistance).³⁵ Bancroft Global Development, an American PMSC, has been training soldiers in East Africa for over a decade (including as a part of the A.U. and U.N.-backed transition mission in Somalia). However, Bancroft has independently begun dialogues with other

³⁵ Emma Holager, *The Impact of the Private Security Industry on Peace-Building Efforts in Africa: An Assessment of Executive Outcomes, MPRI, and DynCorp*, Stellenbosch University, 2023, accessed August 20, 2024, <https://scholar.sun.ac.za/server/api/core/bitstreams/a0c8a661-4ef4-4c6e-8deb-9d32c2aad02c/content>.

nations (CAR), supposedly interested in providing services to support the military and defend natural resource sites.³⁶ The United States also hosts 13 drone bases in Africa fueled by PMCs (such as Northrop Grumman and General Atomics), to surveil and deter terrorism— though it has been argued that they may actually encourage terrorist activity due to their presence leading to backlash.³⁷

Other PMSCs from a variety of nations are actively filling various roles across the African continent.

PMSCs have the capability to be extremely helpful in anti-terrorist and anti-insurgency measures, military training, and security support services; this is especially true for the African continent, where many nations struggle to recover from major conflicts and defend against hostile forces. Yet their checkered history of effectiveness and convenience mixed with corruption and instigation of violence.

Subtopic B: Corporations

Corporate interests have long guided exploitative colonialism. Africa's wealth and variety of natural resources present a monumental opportunity for economic advancement, but also for violations of human rights and environmental health.

Mining

Africa contains large reserves of some of the most valuable minerals in the world. ~92% of the world's platinum, more than 75% of cobalt, 60% of manganese, and 40% of gold are all mined in Africa just to name a few. Other extracted minerals include diamonds, lithium, copper, chromium, manganese, nickel, coltan, and uranium. The recent boom in mining is partially due to the growth in the popularity of electric vehicles; revenue from

³⁶ Óscar Gutiérrez, "US Security Company Challenges Wagner Group's Hegemony in Its African Stronghold," *El País*, March 20, 2024, accessed August 20, 2024, <https://english.elpais.com/international/2024-03-20/us-security-company-challenges-wagner-groups-hegemony-in-its-african-stronghold.html>.

³⁷ Michael Amoah, "Private Military Companies, Foreign Legions and Counterterrorism in Mali and Central African Republic," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 48, no. 2 (2023), accessed August 20, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03043754231155754>.

battery metals production reached over 20 billion USD in 2020.³⁸ The International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates that the value of Africa's copper, nickel, lithium, and cobalt outputs will reach \$16 trillion by 2050.³⁹

Most abundant resource, by country



Source: EIU, World Mining Data 2022

Share of world production, 2020

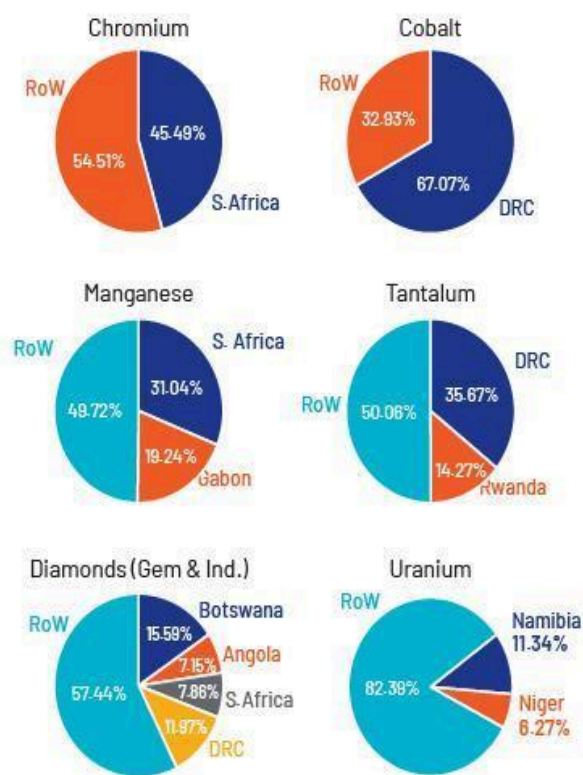


Figure #. Most abundant mineral resources by country, African share of global production

To retain their grip on natural resources, companies are known to engage in further unethical practices that fuel violence and corruption. Chinese mining companies in countries such as Nigeria and CAR have come under fire for allegedly utilizing connections

³⁸ Zero Carbon Analytics, "Developing Africa's Mineral Resources: What Needs to Happen," accessed July 11, 2024, <https://zerocarbon-analytics.org/archives/netzero/developing-africas-mineral-resources-what-needs-to-happen>.

³⁹ "With Growing Demand, Proceeds from Critical Minerals Could Rival Revenues from Fossil Fuels in Sub-Saharan Africa," IMF.org, International Monetary Fund, April 29, 2024 <https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2024/04/29/cf-harnessing-sub-saharan-africas-critical-mineral-wealth#:~:text=With%20growing%20demand%2C%20proceeds%20from,%2C%20in%202023%2Ddollar%20terms>.

to militia groups to claim reserves and facilitate illegal mining.^{40 41} Furthermore, many contracts for mining rights are alleged to have been obtained through bribing government officials with exorbitant amounts of money. Similar tactics are used to encourage politicians to avert their gaze from the deleterious impact of unsafe mining on workers, communities, and the environment. The Swiss-American Glencore has a substantial track record of bribing government officials and poor conditions in their nickel and cobalt mines. Many companies (Vedanta, First Quantum Minerals) also evade paying taxes, hindering the ability of governments to clean up their messes and improve citizens' quality of life⁴².

Unfortunately, mine workers are frequently subject to meager pay, dangerous working conditions, and various forms of abuse. Many workers are children as young as 5 years old. Throughout 12-hour work days, workers are exposed to radioactive or toxic materials while being physically and verbally abused, only to make a few dollars (if anything).^{43 44} Across Africa there have been reports of injuries and deaths due to unsafe working conditions in mines run by foreign companies; rock falls, chemical burns, cave-ins, and clouds of toxic dust are commonplace. Personal protective equipment is rarely provided (and tends to be low-quality), further leaving workers vulnerable to acid burns, amputations, and pneumoconiosis.⁴⁵

Entire communities face the ramifications of unregulated foreign corporations' resource extraction. A recent report from Amnesty International details how the companies Chemaf, Ivanhoe, Zijin Mining, and Eurasian Resources Group all contributed to the prompt evictions of hundreds of households in the DRC to make way for large mining

⁴⁰ Jean Fernand Koena, "China-Linked Mine Resumes Operations in Central African Republic after Rebel Attack," *AP News*, June 9, 2024, <https://apnews.com/article/central-african-republic-china-mining-armed-groups-b40e9bcfdf264c5d5c9e603a9b3d7c4f>.

⁴¹ Richard Assheton, "Chinese 'Bribed' Nigerian Militants for Access to Vast Mineral Reserves," *The Times*, April 15, 2023, <https://www.thetimes.com/world/asia/article/chinese-bribed-nigerian-militants-for-access-to-vast-mineral-reserves-wlghq7d2j>.

⁴² Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, "Transition Minerals Tracker," accessed August 20, 2024, https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/from-us/transition-minerals-tracker/?related_by=company.

⁴³ "Chinese Mining Wrecking Lives in DRC," *ADF Magazine*, October 2023, accessed August 20, 2024, <https://adf-magazine.com/2023/10/chinese-mining-wrecking-lives-in-drc/>.

⁴⁴ "Chinese Mines in DRC, Zimbabwe Accused of Violating Human Rights," *ADF Magazine*, August 2023, accessed August 20, 2024, <https://adf-magazine.com/2023/08/chinese-mines-in-drc-zimbabwe-accused-of-violating-human-rights/>.

⁴⁵ Human Rights Watch, *"You'll Be Fired if You Refuse": Labor Abuses in Zambia's Chinese State-Owned Copper Mines* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2011), <https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/zambia1111ForWebUpload.pdf>.

projects.⁴⁶ Anglo-American company Rio Tinto has been accused of contaminating bodies of water in Madagascar with uranium up to 52 times above the safe drinking water limit.⁴⁷

The Belt and Road Initiative

Many of Africa's mines and refineries are controlled by Chinese corporations as a part of the Chinese government's Belt and Road Initiative. 46 African nations have agreed to participate in the BRI, attracted by the opportunity for major economic growth and greater connectivity within and to those outside Africa. According to an analysis by the UN Economic Commission for Africa, the BRI could increase welfare in East Africa alone by \$1 billion.⁴⁸

China has grown increasingly involved in Africa's economics and politics in the 21st century. According to Boston University's Chinese Loans to Africa Database, from 2000-2023 Chinese lenders issued \$182.3B USD in loans to African governments—mainly in the energy, transportation, technology, and finance sectors.⁴⁹ This has led to China becoming the largest bilateral lender in Africa, holding 12% of Africa's debt (~ \$87 billion USD). For some countries, China is their biggest creditor, owing them billions of dollars.⁵⁰ These large dollar amounts give China significant influence over natural resources (especially oil, natural gas, and minerals), government operations, and the job market.

Major infrastructure projects have been integral to the BRI, including the Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway, Ethiopia-Djibouti Railway, the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, port expansions, and digital infrastructure, improving Africa's international and intercontinental activity connectivity. However, these costly and time-consuming projects run the risk of stalling due to lack of funds. These projects tend to

⁴⁶ Amnesty International, *DRC: Powering Change or Business as Usual?*, Index Number: AFR 62/7009/2023, September 11, 2023. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/AFR62/7009/2023/en/>

⁴⁷ Saul Jones, "After 150 Years of Damage to People and Planet, Rio Tinto Must Be Held to Account," Mongabay, April 20, 2023 <https://news.mongabay.com/2023/04/after-150-years-of-damage-to-people-and-planet-rio-tinto-must-be-held-to-account-commentary/#:~:text=For%20instance%2C%20the%20company%20has,livelihoods%20and%20local%20aquatic%20life.>

⁴⁸ Rodgers Mukwaya and Andrew Mold, *Modelling the Economic Impact of the China Belt and Road Initiative on East Africa*, United Nations, September 2018, accessed August 20, 2024, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327572478_Modelling_the_economic_impact_of_the_China_Belt_and_Road_Initiative_on_East_Africa.

⁴⁹ Boston University Global Development Policy Center, "Chinese Loans to Africa Database," accessed August 20, 2024, <https://www.bu.edu/gdp/chinese-loans-to-africa-database/>.

⁵⁰ Sara Harcourt and Fiona Robertson, "African Debt," ONE, accessed August 20, 2024, <https://data.one.org/topics/african-debt/>.

only be beneficial if they are finished, therefore nations must realistically consider their grave financial cost.

Questions to Consider:

- ❖ How can the OAU Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa be used as a foundation to develop new policies that address the role of mercenarism in international and intranational conflict as well as the rise of PMSCs?
- ❖ What are the possible ripple effects of agreements with non-African businesses and countries on countries and regions uninvolved in negotiations?
- ❖ What are some ways nation-states can leverage their wealth of natural resources in economic agreements with more economically and militarily powerful nations?
- ❖ How can member states determine how to sustainably invest in development across multiple sectors without falling into dangerous amounts of debt?
- ❖ What are the effects of partnerships with foreign nations on African Union citizens?
- ❖ How does the involvement of certain foreign nations and companies affect the legitimacy of the government as perceived by citizens, NGOs, and possible trade partners?

Research Recommendations & Helpful Materials:

- The African Union has a great website! They have a ton of resources and everything is very organized. I've referenced materials from the website in working to build this committee and I highly recommend checking it out, if nothing but because it's cool and informative.
- I have cited ALL of my sources—they should all be open-access or accessible through your university. If you cannot access a specific source, please send me an email to let me know which source you are interested in and I will send you a pdf.

Here's a Euler diagram (I love a good diagram) displaying the membership of different African countries in different supranational African organizations:



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Supranational_African_Bodies-en.svg

I put this here as something to think about in terms of the individual policy and cooperation goals of each state and how that affects their involvement in supranational affairs.

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