

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE EVOLUTION OF AFRICAN  
ATTITUDES TO THE ARAB-ISRAELI  
CONFLICT: 1967-1973

BY

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the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
of the degree of

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DEDICATED TO:

My illustrious Grandfather

His Royal Highness,

OBA SOLOMON ALADEJARE,

The Alaye of Efon-Alaye,

NIGERIA

Also to:

All sons and daughters of Efon-Alaye,

at home and abroad.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

It has often been observed that Africa's emergence into world politics dramatically influenced the international system. The competition between the emerging African states and non-African states to fill the power vacuum created by the departure of the colonial powers and to influence regional politics became a feature of the new sub-system.<sup>1</sup> Among the nations that attempted to play an influential role in Africa were Egypt and Israel.

The Arab-Israeli competition, while certainly not the only factor, is perhaps the most significant aspect of Middle East-African interaction. While the Arabs seek African support in their struggle with Israel, the thrust of Israeli policy is to counter-balance the isolation and hostility of its neighbors and Arab influence in the Third World community.<sup>2</sup>

The Arab-Israeli conflict is an issue of regional politics in which many African states have become involved. In fact, the Arab-Israeli issue has at times seemed to have

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<sup>1</sup>T. Ismael, The U.A.R. in Africa: Egypt's policy under Nasser (Evanston; Northwestern University Press, 1971), p. xi.

<sup>2</sup>T. Ismael, "Israel and Africa," in The Middle East in World Politics (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1974), p. 175.

dominated the region's politics. Perhaps one of the major problems undermining the O.A.U. as an effective instrument of African unity is the Arab-Israeli conflict. For many years, and with many Arab leaders engrossed with the problem of finding a solution to the Middle East conflict, North African Arab states could not but pay lip service to pan-Africanism. The more so, when many Arab leaders felt in the 60's, rightly or wrongly, that some Black African states either by acts of omission or commission, were encouraging Israeli acts of "aggression" in the Middle East<sup>3</sup>--ostensibly, because of the excellent relations or cooperation between the sub-Saharan African states and Israel, especially in the early 60's.

The main theme of this study is the examination of the evolution of the African attitudes to the Arab-Israeli conflict during the period 1967 to 1973.

My interest in this study is threefold. Firstly, the reasons given for the massive severance of diplomatic relations with Israel by the sub-Saharan African states in 1973 or the root causes of the dramatic shifts in the orientations of the African states to the Arab-Israeli conflict in the 1971-1973 period have not been adequately assessed.

To some observers, Black Africa's switch to a pro-Arab stance during the 1971-1973 period was motivated by a

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<sup>3</sup>"Israel and the Afro-Asian World," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 39, No. 3, April, 1959, pp. 485-495. Also in A. Akinsanya, "The Afro-Arab Alliance: Dream or Reality?" African Affairs, Vol. 75, October, 1976, p. 512.

preconceived deal in return for Arab economic aid.<sup>4</sup> To others, the decline in Israeli support during this era was attributed to a desire to obtain cheap oil.<sup>5</sup>

For Uganda, Niger and Mali, economic considerations may have been partly responsible for the break with Israel, but to conclude that economic factors were the sole determinant would be highly erroneous. It will be shown that economic factors are not more important than factors such as religion and ideology.

This study will reveal other factors apart from economic considerations which may have prompted the African states to switch to a pro-Arab position during the 1971-1973 period. By demonstrating the complexity of the factors which account for the pro-Arab attitudes by the African states between 1971-1973, this thesis will be helping to clarify motives which have often been over-simplified.

Secondly, there has been a series of studies done on the sub-Saharan African states' shift to a pro-Arab position in the 1971-1973 period. Focusing on a single or few causal variables, such as economic considerations or Arab pressure, has rendered many of the studies very inadequate.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>See "Afro-Arab Relations: A New Era Begins," African Development, July 1975, p. A.L. 11.

<sup>5</sup>A. Moshen, "Afro-Arab Co-operation," New African, July, 1977, pp. 704-710.

<sup>6</sup>For instance, I. Kenen and F. Eckhard mentioned Arab pressure and economic factors only. See I. Kenen, "Israel's Struggle in Africa," Near East, Vol. XVII, 1973, and F. Eckhard, "Israel and Africa," Africa Report, March/April, 1973.



The most impressive studies were done by A. Mazrui, S. Gitelson, M. Nahumi and J. Miller.<sup>7</sup> The factors identified by them, apart from being numerous, included both external and internal factors. My major criticism of their studies is that apart from failing to classify the variables suggested into internal and external categories, they did not say which of the variables is or are the primus inter pare in terms of importance, or whether the variables had equal weight.

This thesis will proceed a step further, not only by incorporating both external and internal factors, but by classifying the variables and stating which variable(s) had the most and the least impact on the external behaviours of the African states during this period.

Because of James Rosenau's impressive classification and multi-dimensional analysis of nation-state behaviours in international relations, this study will emulate Rosenau's format but with some modifications because of the incremental nature of the changes in attitude toward Israel.

For instance, Rosenau's multi-dimensional analysis will not be consistently applied. It will be applied in

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<sup>7</sup> See A. Mazrui, "Black Africa and the Arabs," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 53, July, 1975; S. Gitelson, "Israel's African Setback in Perspective," in M. Curtis and S. Gitelson (eds.), Israel in the Third World (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1976); J. Miller, "African-Israeli Relations: Impact on Continental Unity," Middle East Journal, Vol. 29, 1975 and M. Nahumi, "New Directions in Israeli-African Relations," New Outlook, Vol. 16, No. 7, September, 1973.

the 1971-1973 period only, when the support for the Arab position had become very pronounced.

In the pre-1971-1973 period, even though there was an incremental support for the Arab cause in the O.A.U., the support was ambivalent, as it was not clear-cut or unanimous. But as from 1971, support for the Arab cause began to gather momentum as manifested in the O.A.U. resolutions, actions (breaking of relations with Israel) or pronouncements of several African leaders. This momentum reached its apogee in 1973 when almost all the sub-Saharan African states broke diplomatic relations with Israel. During this era, the sub-Saharan African states which had prior to 1971 steered clear of the Arab-Israeli conflict, overtly began to choose the Arab side.

Even though Rosenau's format is applied in the 1971-1973 period only, however, the analysis of the variables identified as being responsible for the increasingly pro-Arab trend in the O.A.U. (as from 1971), will encompass all the three periods investigated in this study.<sup>8</sup> Since foreign policy behaviours of nation-states are conditioned or a reaction to both external and internal stimuli or variables,<sup>9</sup> this study will focus on a number of variables (both external and internal) which might have had an impact

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<sup>8</sup>J. Rosenau, "Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign Policy," The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy (New York: Free Press, 1971), pp. 95-117.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 98.



on the orientations of the African states toward the Arab-Israeli conflict during the 1971-1973 period. These factors are: economic, religious, ideology, political changes in African states, international environment, the membership of Arab states in the OAU, non-aligned organisation, Israel's interference in the internal affairs of the sub-Saharan African states, the failure of the OAU peace mission in 1971, Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab lands, Arab pressure, increasing co-operation between Israel and South Africa during the 1971-1973 period, the role of the press and continental solidarity.

Thirdly, the historical, cultural, religious and trade links between the sub-Saharan African states and the Middle East--especially with the Arabs and to some extent with the Biblical Israel, makes this study of particular interest to me.

For instance, the word Africa itself is derived from the Arabic word "Ifrikia" or "Ifriqiyah," the ancient name of the modern day Tunisia. When the name was given to the whole continent (Africa), then the name Tunisia (derived from "Tunis," its capital) was adopted.<sup>10</sup>

Eight of the OAU member states belong to the Arab League. They are: Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Sudan, Somalia and Mauritania. 73 per cent of the Arab land is situated in the African continent and two-

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<sup>10</sup> See C. Legum, Africa: A Handbook to the Continent (New York: Praeger Publishers Ltd., 1966), p. 469.

thirds of all Arabs live in Africa.<sup>11</sup> The eight member-states of the Arab league in the OAU account for about 28% of the total population of Africa, which was estimated in 1975 at 410,560,000 million people.<sup>12</sup>

Apart from the fact that Arabic is one of the four working languages of the OAU,<sup>13</sup> the most widely spoken non-European languages in sub-Saharan Africa are the Arab-influenced Swahili (in East Africa) and Hausa (in West Africa). Swahili has been adopted as the lingua franca in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda.<sup>14</sup> It is widely spoken in Zaire, Somalia, Sudan, Malawi, Rwanda and Burundi. About 35 per cent of the basic vocabulary of Swahili comes from Arabic.<sup>15</sup> Also, there has been a persistent demand in recent years in Nigeria--Africa's most populous nation, for the adoption of the Arab-influenced Hausa language as the national language.

While there are strong cultural and religious affinities between the predominantly Moslem states of sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab world, the same could be said

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<sup>11</sup>T. Ismael (1971), op. cit., p. 70.

<sup>12</sup>A. Moshen, "Afro-Arab Co-operation," New African, July, 1977, p. 704.

<sup>13</sup>Other working languages are English, French and Portuguese.

<sup>14</sup>Ali Mazrui, op. cit., p. 726.

<sup>15</sup>W. Ndege, "Information Gap: Handicap to Afro-Arab Relations," Africa, No. 70, June 1977, p. 50.

of the predominantly Christian states with the contemporary state of Israel. Ethiopia and Nubia (Sudan), the only Christian theocratic states before the rise of Islam, had strong ties with the Biblical Israel. Today, Christianity is the state religion of Ethiopia.

Emperor Haile Selassie was the 225th successive monarch of a dynasty established by a love affair between King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.<sup>16</sup> Christianity was introduced into Ethiopia in 330 A.D. by two Syrian youths, Frumentius and Aedisius. When Frumentius went back to the Archbishop of Alexandria, he was consecrated by the Archbishop and sent back as the first Archbishop of Ethiopia.<sup>17</sup> Right from 330 A.D., it became a tradition for the Ethiopian Archbishop to be appointed among the Egyptian monks. This custom, which dates back to the fourth century, only came to an end on July 13, 1948, when the first Archbishop was appointed among the Ethiopian monks.<sup>18</sup>

While the Christian state of Nubia (the present day Sudan) fell to the overwhelming Arab army in the thirteenth century, the Christian state of Ethiopia won a series of victories over the Muslim invaders. The Ethiopians defeated the Egyptians first in 1876 and in 1887. The

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<sup>16</sup>B. Thomson, Ethiopia: The Country that Cut Off Its Head (London: Robson Books Ltd., 1975), p. 7.

<sup>17</sup>R. Greenfield, Ethiopia: A New Political History (New York: Praeger Publishers Ltd., 1965), p. 24.

<sup>18</sup>R. Hess, Ethiopia: The Modernization of Autocracy (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970), p. 20.

Sudanese Muslim Mahdists were also defeated in 1889 at the battle of Metemma.<sup>19</sup>

Unlike other cultural imports, which disappeared with the demise of the Ethiopian civilization, the new religion was to take root and grow to become the dominant cultural phenomenon in Ethiopia, the only place on the continent of Africa where Christianity managed to survive as a truly indigenous creed.<sup>20</sup> Today, there are close to half a million Black Jews (the Falasha Jews) in Ethiopia. The Falasha Jews have preserved through ages an antique sort of Judaism which was their faith even before the introduction of Christianity in the fourth century.<sup>21</sup>

When King Dhu Nuwas of southern Arabia ordered the famous massacre of Christians in southern Arabia in the 6th century A.D., the survivors of the massacre implored Emperor Justin I for aid, the Byzantine Emperor at that time being regarded as the protector of Christians everywhere. Emperor Justin I wrote to the Ethiopian Emperor, Kaleb Ela Asheba, being the nearest Christian power to the scene of the trouble. The Ethiopian Emperor sent an army of about 70,000 men across the Red Sea in 523

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<sup>19</sup>D. Levine, Greater Ethiopia: The Evolution of a Multi-ethnic Society (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. 12.

<sup>20</sup>Other than the Copt community in Egypt, with which the Ethiopian Christianity is closely related. See J. Markakis, Ethiopia: Anatomy of a Traditional Polity (London: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 13.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 65.



A.D. and 525 A.D. under the generalship of Aryat and Abraha respectively. Apart from the fact that they were successful in both instances, the Ethiopians, who came as liberators, remained as conquerors. The Ethiopians turned Arabia into a colony and remained from 525 A.D. to 575 A.D.<sup>22</sup> Abraha, the Ethiopian viceroy in Southern Arabia, was said to have built in San ā, the capital, one of the most magnificent cathedrals of the age, called by the Arabian writers Al-Qualis.<sup>23</sup>

Again, in 570 A.D., the Ethiopian army under the commandship of General Abraha, was said to have attacked Mecca. The year of this invasion has been dubbed "am-al-fil"--that is, the year of the Elephants, after the elephants which accompanied Abraha and which greatly impressed the Arabians where elephants had never been seen before that time.<sup>24</sup>

In the early years of Islam, Ethiopia occupied a special position in recognition of the asylum which the Ethiopian emperors had granted to some of the persecuted followers of Mohammed. Ethiopia was even spared the "Jihad" (Islamic holy war) for several hundred years. Not until the tenth century did Muslim-Christian rivalry assume

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<sup>22</sup>P. Hitti, The History of the Arabs (New York: St. Martin's Press Ltd., 1977), pp. 60-62. Also in N. Levine, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>23</sup>P. Hitti, op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

fierce proportions.<sup>25</sup> According to D. Levine, Mohammed advised his followers who were being persecuted by the Quraish in Mecca that, "If you go to Ethiopia, you will find a King under whom none are persecuted. It is a land of righteousness where God will give you relief from what you are suffering."<sup>26</sup> This fact is also stated in P. Hitti, "When the infant Moslem community was hard pressed by the pagan Quraish in Arabia, it was to Ethiopia of all lands that they turned for refuge."<sup>27</sup>

In the Holy Bible also, references are made to Ethiopia in 17 places both in the Old and New Testaments. In I Kings 10:1-10, reference is made to the Queen of Sheba's (Ethiopia) visit to King Solomon in Jerusalem. Moses' marriage of an Ethiopian woman is mentioned in Numbers 12:1-16. Also, the conversion and baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch by Phillip and how Ebed-Melech, the Ethiopian eunuch pleaded with King Zedekiah and secured the release of prophet Jeremiah from the dungeon are stated in Acts 8:26-40 and Jeremiah 38:7-13 respectively.

Prior to the advent of the Europeans, the Arabs held a virtual monopoly on economic and cultural exchange with sub-Saharan Africa. This well developed trade faltered as both Islam and Sudanic empires lost their cohesion and autonomy,

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<sup>25</sup>R. Hess, op. cit., p. 32.

<sup>26</sup>D. Levine, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>27</sup>P. Hitti, op. cit., p. 106.

but it did not disappear completely even at the height of European colonial dominance.<sup>28</sup>

It was fashionable in the ancient time for the sub-Saharan African emperors to go on pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. Mai Idris Alooma of Kanem-Bornu and Mansa Musa of Mali built hostels in Cairo and Mecca for the sub-Saharan African pilgrims. Embassies were even exchanged between the Arab kings and the sub-Saharan African kings or emperors.<sup>29</sup>

While Mansa-Musa's pilgrimage was not the first of its kind by a sub-Saharan African emperor, if his pilgrimage is better remembered, it is only because it was so splendidly and extravagantly conducted. Mansa-Musa's pilgrimage in 1324-1325 was conducted on such a scale as to excite considerable interest in Mali in the Muslim world.<sup>30</sup> Mansa-Musa's caravan consisted of an unprecedented 60,000 men. The huge caravan included a personal retinue of 12,000 slaves, all dressed in brocade and Persian silk. He was preceded by 500 slaves, each carrying a staff of gold weighing about 60 pounds (500 mitkal). There was also the baggage train of eighty camels, each carrying 300 pounds

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<sup>28</sup>T. Ismael (1974), op. cit., p. 162.

<sup>29</sup>See J. Fage, A History of West Africa (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969), p. 24.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

weight of gold dust.<sup>31</sup>

Mansa-Musa's generous gifts and expenditure of gold was so enormous that it caused gold to be devalued for several years in the Middle East.<sup>32</sup> Mansa-Musa's pilgrimage was mentioned as the most outstanding event of the year in 1324 by the celebrated Egyptian chronicler Ibn Yasin.<sup>33</sup> From the Arab world, Mansa-Musa's name reached Europe. Mansa-Musa's name appeared on the map drawn by Angelo Dulcert in 1339 as "Rex Melly." Also in 1375, "Mussa Melly" appeared on the map which Abraham Cresques of Majorca drew for Charles V.<sup>34</sup>

On his return journey, Mansa-Musa was accompanied by an accomplished Andalusian poet and architect--El-Saheli whom he had met in Mecca. El-Saheli was commissioned by Mansa-Musa to build the first university in the sub-Saharan Africa in 1325 (the Sankore University of Timbuktu). It was El-Saheli, who introduced the burnt bricks into sub-Saharan Africa. The introduction of burnt bricks brought about improved methods of architectural work.<sup>35</sup>

Apart from Arab involvement in the slave trade from

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<sup>31</sup>J. deGraft-Johnson, African Glory: The Story of Vanished Negro Civilization (New York: Walker and Co., 1954), p. 97.

<sup>32</sup>J. Ade Ajayi (ed.), History of West Africa (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), p. 134.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>J. Ade Afayi, op. cit., p. 134.

<sup>35</sup>J. deGraft-Johnson, op. cit., p. 98.



the ninth through the nineteenth century, the spread of Islam, especially in West Africa, was often accomplished with the sword rather than by peaceful conversion. Also, the conquest of Ghana empire in 1076 by the Almoravids, Songhai Empire in 1591 by the Moroccans and Kanem-Bornu in 1893 by the Arab adventurers from Nubia, might have had extremely damaging effects among the sub-Saharan Africans.<sup>36</sup> Perhaps this might have been partly responsible for most of Black Africa's refusal to support the Arab cause in the 1960's.

However, the introduction of Islam into the sub-Saharan Africa is not without some advantages. The introduction of Islam brought about an increase in education and learning. It undermined tribe and tribalistic loyalties, replacing them with loyalties to the Muslim brotherhood. The heterogeneity of the vast empires of sub-Saharan Africa had to be followed by a policy which would give the empire more cohesion. Islam as a supra-tribal religion, provided the cement needed.<sup>37</sup>

This feeling of brotherhood among Moslems was so great that when the Almoravids from North Africa invaded Ghana in 1059, the Takkur people, who had been Islamized earlier, even though a Negroid race, joined the Arabs in the war

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<sup>36</sup>T. Ismael (1974), op. cit., p. 164.

<sup>37</sup>See J. Ade Ajayi, op. cit., pp. 153-157. Also in J. Webster, A. Boahen and H. Idowu, History of West Africa (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970), pp. 14-16.

against Ghana. It was also this feeling of brotherhood that prompted the King of Mali to hold a memorial service for the late Abu Hassan, the King of Morocco in 1352.<sup>38</sup>

This religious solidarity among fellow Moslems was later rekindled to a small extent in the 1967-1970 period and to a great extent in the 1971-1973 period of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

It will be established in this study that the predominantly Moslem states and the radical Black African states are more likely to support the Arab position than the moderate pro-Western or non-predominantly Moslem states in all the periods studied--that is to say, in the pre-1967, 1967-1970 and 1971-1973 periods.

It will also be shown that of all the factors identified as responsible for the sub-Saharan African states' shift to a pro-Arab stance in 1971-1973 period, ideology and religious factors carry the heaviest weight in terms of importance. In other words, the above named factors are the primus inter pares of all the factors identified.

Chapter One deals with the general historical background and the format of the thesis. It also deals with the salient points which I hope to have established.

The second chapter will analyze the African attitudes to the Arab-Israeli conflict, prior to and after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. Changes that occurred in the African

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<sup>38</sup>J. Ade Ajayi, op. cit., p. 155.

attitudes toward the conflict from 1967-1970 period will be traced. The OAU resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict during the 1967-1970 period will also be examined.

Chapter Three describes the pro-Arab trend in the OAU from 1971-1973. African reactions to the massacre of Israeli athletes in 1972 at the Munich Olympic Games and the downing of the Libyan civilian airliner in 1973 will be examined.

Chapters Four and Five investigate the influence of external and internal factors respectively, to the perception of the African states to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Chapter Six summarizes the evolution of the African attitudes to the Middle East conflict from 1967 to 1973 and the conclusions that can be drawn from this study.

## CHAPTER II

### AFRICAN REACTIONS TO THE 1967 ARAB-ISRAELI WAR

Despite determined efforts by the U.A.R., the Arab-Israeli struggle was not viewed as an African problem prior to the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. This is partly due to the fact that the sub-Saharan African states did not want to be involved in problems that were not strictly African. Instead of taking sides in the conflict, they chose to be friendly with both sides.

After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war there were noticeable shifts on the part of the sub-Saharan African states over to the Arab side. However, the shifts were not rapid or complete. This chapter will outline these shifts and attempt to establish why they occurred.

The Arab-Israeli conflict, intruded into the African political arena from the first conference of independent African states held in Accra in April 1958.<sup>1</sup> In spite of Arab incitement against the recognition of and co-operation with Israel,<sup>2</sup> there appeared to have been a tendency on the part of Black Africa,<sup>3</sup> to steer clear of the Arab-Israeli

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<sup>1</sup>R. Kochan, "An African Peace Mission in the Middle East," African Affairs, Vol. 72, 1973, p. 187.

<sup>2</sup>S. Gitelson and M. Curtis (eds.), Israel in the Third World (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books Ltd., 1976), p. 73.

<sup>3</sup>Somalia and Mauritania refused to establish diplomatic with Israel after the attainment of independence. This apparently was due to the instigation of U.A.R.

conflict.

During the All-African People's Conference, held in Accra in December, 1958, President Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana allowed Mrs. Golda Meir<sup>4</sup> to defend the state of Israel, following a barrage of attacks from the Arab participants. Moreover, a mild resolution was passed at the termination of the Conference which showed the unwillingness of the sub-Saharan Africans to take sides in the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>5</sup> The resolution passed at the end of the conference urged "a just solution" to the Palestinian question. Commenting on the African attitudes to the Arab-Israeli conflict, Professor Ran Kochan said, "In spite of the continuous efforts of African Arab countries to gain support of the sub-Saharan states, the trend, by and large, was to exclude the Middle East as well as other international problems from the deliberations of the African council."<sup>6</sup>

At the 1960 Addis-Ababa summit of Independent African States, the U.A.R. tried very hard to get the conference to impose sanctions against Israel. This not only caused a delay in the final plenary session, but also annoyed some of the delegates.\* Reactions to the announcement by the Arab

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<sup>4</sup>Mrs. Golda Meir, who was then the Israeli Foreign Minister, was on a state visit to Ghana.

<sup>5</sup>Jon Woronoff, "Africa and the Near East," New Outlook, Vol. 15, No. 6, August, 1971, p. 42.

<sup>6</sup>R. Kochan, op. cit., p. 187.

\* There was propaganda against Nkrumah on Radio Cairo in December 1958, because of his "Co-operation with Israel" during the All African People's Conference held in December 1958 in Accra, Ghana.



League that it intended to open information offices in West Africa were an indication that Africans did not want to be entangled in the Arab-Israeli conflict. As one West African stated, "The decision of the Arab League must be resisted because it is a subtle device to involve us more directly with the frenetic politics of the Middle East."<sup>8</sup> The Sierra-Leonian Foreign Minister went even further by stating that "African members of the League will have to decide soon where they stand. Are they in the Middle East or in Africa?"<sup>9</sup>

In spite of enormous pressure exerted by the Arab states for the discussion of the Arab-Israeli issue at the OAU, the issue was consistently ignored on the ground that it was not a strictly African problem.<sup>10</sup> Even when Somalia and Guinea called for an emergency meeting of the OAU at the end of the Six Day War to discuss "Israeli aggression," they failed to gain the two-thirds sponsorship of the OAU members. The failure was apparently on the ground that the matter was being dealt with at the United Nations.<sup>11</sup>

It appeared that President Nasser realized the general

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<sup>7</sup>A. Akinsanya, "The Afro-Arab Alliance: Dream or Reality," African Affairs, Vol. 75, October, 1976, p. 521.

<sup>8</sup>T. Ismael, The U.A.R. in Africa: Egypt's Policy Under Nasser (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), p. 70.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>R. Kochan, op. cit., p. 187.

<sup>11</sup>See A. Akinsanya, op. cit., p. 522.

mood of most sub-Saharan African states, because he decided not to raise the Arab-Israeli issue at the inaugural conference of the OAU in 1963 at Addis-Ababa. In President Nasser's address he said, "We have come here without any selfish intention of discussing the problem which we consider to be our gravest problem--the problem of Israel."<sup>12</sup> Again, at the Cairo OAU summit in July, 1964, the African Arab states of the OAU decided not to press for a formal resolution against Israel. However, they made comparisons between Israel and South Africa, and also between the role of the P.L.O. and that of African liberation movements--ostensibly to evoke the African "conscience." No word of support came from Black Africa.<sup>13</sup>

The circumscribed support of the African states,<sup>14</sup> or their neutrality in the Arab-Israeli conflict appeared not very pleasing to the Arabs.<sup>15</sup> President Bourgiba's statement during the OAU Summit in 1964 is perhaps a clear expression of the Arab' states dissatisfaction with Black Africa's lack of commitment for the Arab cause. The Tunisian President was quoted as saying that "Africans could

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<sup>12</sup>"The Addis-Ababa Conference: As seen from 19 capitals in Africa, Europe, Asia and the United States," Africa Report, Vol. 8, June, 1963, p. 7.

<sup>13</sup>A. Akinsanya, op. cit., p. 521.

<sup>14</sup>The term "African states" is used in the Afro-Arab context. Whenever the term "African" is used, it is in reference to Black Africa.

<sup>15</sup>J. Miller, "African-Israeli Relations: Impact on Continental Unity," Middle East Journal, Vol. 29, 1975, p. 396.

not continue to speak of African unity while they ignore the plight of their brethren in the North of the continent who were fighting the Israelis."<sup>16</sup>

However, some African states were more anti-Israel. For instance, in January, 1961, after the end of the Casablanca Conference of radical African states, Presidents Nkrumah, Toure and Modibo Keita joined President Nasser and other Arab leaders in condemning Israel as "an instrument in the service of imperialism and neo-colonialism not only in the Middle East, but also in Africa and Asia."<sup>17</sup> It appeared that Arab diplomacy has had more luck with non-governmental Afro-Asian or Third World forums. At the Afro-Asian people's solidarity conference held in Tanganyika<sup>18</sup> in 1963, Israel was condemned because of what was described as "Zionist infiltration."<sup>19</sup> Also at the 1964 non-aligned conference in Cairo, a resolution was passed urging "the full restoration of the rights of the Arab people of Palestine to their homeland."<sup>20</sup>

During and after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war there were noticeable shifts of alliances on the part of some sub-Saharan African states. The shift of alliances was

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 395.

<sup>18</sup>The Republic of Tanzania was referred to as Tanganyika before its unification with the Island of Zanzibar in 1964.

<sup>19</sup>S. Decalo, "Africa and the Middle Eastern War," Africa Report, October, 1967, p. 59.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.



especially pronounced among the radical states of the Casablanca group. Their show of sympathy for the Arab cause was made manifest not only through their voting patterns on the Middle East issue in the United Nations, but through their pronouncements. Tanzania, Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville, Mali and Guinea which had hitherto had good relations with Israel, unequivocally condemned Israel.<sup>21</sup>

The question that arises is, Why did Israel lose support or, Why did the Arabs gain more support in 1967 for their cause? There are three major factors, suggested by Professor Samuel Decalo, as the contributory reasons. They are: sympathy for the underdog, the perception of Israel as part of the Western world, and Israel being viewed not only as an aggressor but as expansionist.<sup>22</sup> Before dealing with the above factors, I will first of all deal with the Gulf of Aqaba crisis and how African states reacted.

#### The Gulf of Aqaba Crisis

During the Gulf of Aqaba crisis which preceded the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, many radical sub-Saharan African states had unequivocally declared their support for the Arabs. Besides the radical Casablanca charter states of Mali and Guinea, Tanzania, Burundi, Mauritania and Somalia, joined ranks in declaring an overt support for the Arab cause

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<sup>21</sup>Africa Report, May-June, 1973, p. 23.

<sup>22</sup>Samuel Decalo, op. cit., p.

during the crisis.<sup>23</sup>

During the crisis, President Sekou Toure of Guinea made it abundantly clear that the people of Guinea were behind the Arabs. In a communiqué to President Nasser of U.A.R., he declared, "You may be rest assured of our complete solidarity and, if necessary, of our desire to give military co-operation."<sup>24</sup> In another communique issued by President Modibo Keita of Mali, he said, "You should be assured of the Malian people's total support for the U.A.R. and other Arab peoples in their just struggle against imperialism and the defence of their sacred rights."<sup>25</sup>

Tanzania, a non-Casablanca charter state, congratulated President Nasser and King Hussein of Jordan for their co-operation. Also in a cable to President Nasser, President Nyerere of Tanzania offered to give aid, "in defence of your rights against imperialism."<sup>26</sup> In another message sent to President Nasser, President Micombero of Burundi said, "Burundi is closely following U.A.R.'s efforts to safeguard their national sovereignty and territorial integrity by struggling against the enemy of the U.A.R. and of all Arab countries, and against the imperialist powers which are hiding behind Israel."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>African Research Bulletin, June 1-30, 1967, p. 807.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., May 1-31, 1967, p. 787.

25. Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>West Africa, July 10, 1967.

<sup>27</sup>African Research Bulletin, June 1-30, 1967, p. 807.

Somalia and Mauritania,\* as one would expect, joined the chorus of pro-Arab states during the crisis. During the crisis, Somalia requested permission from Ethiopia to overfly its territory for the movement of troops and arms to assist the U.A.R. in its war against Israel.<sup>28</sup> The Somalian Prime Minister<sup>29</sup> also gave instructions to Somali students studying in Saudi Arabia, U.A.R., Sudan and other Arab countries to enlist as servicemen immediately!<sup>30</sup>

The magnitude and rapidity of Israel's victory might have modified the attitudes of some sub-Saharan African states to the Arab Israeli conflict. The magnitude of the Arab defeat appeared to have won them many sympathizers.<sup>31</sup> According to Professor Michael Brecher, "Israel has now achieved a status of being viewed with suspicion by large segments of public opinion in many states which had hitherto supported her and her goals. The drama and rapidity of the victory have raised doubts about Israel's assertion then that she was in mortal danger."<sup>32</sup> Also, Professor Samuel Decalo subscribes to the view that the military victory of Israel was "too perfect and too total" and the Arab humiliation "too

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 807.

<sup>29</sup>Mr. Hussein was then the Somalian Prime Minister.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>R. Simon, "The American New Left and the Middle East," New Outlook, Vol. 13, June, 1970, pp. 43-44.

<sup>32</sup>M. Brecher, "Critique of Israel's Foreign Policy," New Outlook, Vol. 16, June, 1973, p. 13.

\* Both Somalia and Mauritania had refused to establish diplomatic relations with Israel after the attainment of independence in 1960. This apparently was at the instigation of UAR which appealed to them in the name of religious solidarity.

huge" to win much sympathy for Israel.<sup>33</sup> According to him, "the magnitude of Arab defeat, the knowledge of the scale and the completeness of Israel's victory triggered a measure of support and sympathy for the underdog."<sup>34</sup>

The mere fact that Israel was viewed as the aggressor might have contributed to the swaying of some states to the Arab side. For instance, apart from the ideological factor which might have influenced states like Tanzania, Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville and Zambia, in supporting the Arabs, they also denounced Israel for being the aggressor.<sup>35</sup>

Perhaps another factor which prompted the radical Black African states to throw their support for the Arabs was the perception of Israel as part of the Western world. To the radical Black African states, it appeared to be virtually the fifty-first state of the United States, with a massive American commitment to its preservation, and massive American contributions to its maintenance and upkeep.<sup>36</sup>

Commenting on the perception of Israel as part of the western world, Professor Michael Brecher has this to say: "Israel was viewed as an ally or client of the United States. As such, the halo she won as a newly liberated state which

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<sup>33</sup>Samuel Decalo, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Burundi reiterated its condemnation of Israel's "aggression" against the Arabs during her independence anniversary in July 1967. President Micombero's condemnation of Israel prompted the Israeli charge d'affairs in Bujumbura (Burundi's capital) to walk out in protest.

<sup>36</sup>Ali Mazrui, "Black Africa and the Arabs," Foreign Affairs, Vol. 53, July, 1975, pp. 728-729.



has much to offer has been tarnished."<sup>37</sup>

It is possible that Israel was viewed as part of the Western world even before the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. The U.A.R. had without much success tried to use Israel's role in the Suez crisis of 1956, her support for Moise Tshombe during the Congo crisis in the early 60's, and her voting record at the United Nations, against her.<sup>38</sup> The magnitude and rapidity of Israel's victory in 1967, the forcible annexation of U.A.R.'s territory and the support of the Western world, might have modified the attitudes of some sub-Saharan African states, especially the radical ones.

After the 1967 war, President Sekou-Toure of Guinea in an attempt to show more solidarity with the Arabs, broke diplomatic relations with Israel on June 12, 1967. In addition, all Israeli technicians and Jews were ordered out of Guinea.<sup>39</sup> Mauritania also followed suit. Since Mauritania had no diplomatic relations with Israel, she broke diplomatic relations with the United States and Great Britain instead.<sup>40</sup> Mauritanian Mouktr Ould Daddah's move might have been prompted partly by what President Nasser called a "U.S.-British plot." It was believed in many circles in the Arab world that their defeat was due to the U.S.-British collusion with

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<sup>37</sup>M. Brecher, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>38</sup>Ali Mazrui, op. cit., p. 729.

<sup>39</sup>African Research Bulletin, June 1-30, 1967, p. 806.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

Israel.<sup>41</sup>

At the United Nations, the Casablanca states, together with Burundi, Tanzania and Congo-Brazzaville supported the Yugoslavian resolution. The Yugoslavian or non-aligned resolution<sup>42</sup> as it was later called, was considered to be a pro-Arab resolution. From the Black African votes on the resolutions on the Arab-Israeli war at the United Nations in July 1967, one could perhaps draw some conclusions according to the voting patterns (see Appendix I). All the radical Casablanca charter countries with the exception of Ghana, voted in favour of the Yugoslavian resolution. Ghana's reluctance to support the Arabs could be due to the fact that, after President Nkrumah's overthrow in 1966, a moderate pro-West government came to power.<sup>43</sup> Professor Samuel Decalo explained Ghana's support of Israel as follows: "A reflection in part, a penalization of the U.A.R. for its support for former President Nkrumah."<sup>44</sup>

It is interesting to note that while all the radical states voted in favour of the Arabs, moderate states such as Nigeria, Senegal, and Gabon, broke ranks and voted for the

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>The resolution was rejected by Israel. Mr. Abba Eban, the then Israeli foreign minister, said the Yugoslavian resolution was "one sided and unauthorized." See Arab Report and Record, 1-15 September, 1967, p. 287.

<sup>43</sup>Immediately after General Ankrah came to power in 1966 after the overthrow of President Nkrumah, he broke diplomatic relations with East Germany, and expelled numerous Soviet advisors.

<sup>44</sup>S. Decalo, op. cit., p. 61.

Arabs. During the outbreak of hostilities, President Sedar Senghor of Senegal was quoted as saying, "We are on the side of the Arabs; they have been humiliated three times and they need us,"<sup>45</sup> whereas prior to the 1967 Arab Israeli war, President Senghor had been one of the staunchest friends of Israel in Black Africa. Explaining why Senegal had been extremely friendly with Israel in the early 60's, Senghor said, "Israel is the little lamb likely to be devoured by the Arab wolf, and one must therefore protect him."<sup>46</sup>

The support given to the Arab side by moderate states such as Nigeria and Senegal could be attributed to several factors. It could have been partly due to their opposition to forcible annexation of land. It is also possible that their support could have been partly due to their large Moslem populations--that is to say, a sort of religious solidarity. Their support could also have been an attempt to identify with the Arab underdog who had been humiliated three times, according to President Senghor. Gabon's support could be attributed to a combination of identification with the underdog or due to French influence.<sup>47</sup> For instance, President De Gaulle was quoted as saying to Mr. Alex Kosygin that he would deliver the votes of the French speaking

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<sup>45</sup>West Africa, August 5, 1967, p. 1011.

<sup>46</sup>Africa Research Bulletin, October 1-31, 1973, p. 3027.

<sup>47</sup>West Africa, August 5, 1967, p. 1011.

African states.<sup>48</sup> The London Observer of July, 1967, reported the enormous pressure exerted on the French speaking Africans at the United Nations, to vote for the pro-Arab Yugoslavian resolution.

The pressure of the Arab members of the O.A.U. could not be overlooked. Dr. Zinsoy, the Dahomean foreign minister complained, for instance, about President Bourgiba of Tunisia's attempt to rally the French speaking African states to the Arab side.<sup>49</sup> It should be borne in mind also that counter-pressure was exerted from the Israeli side on African states not to vote for the Yugoslavian resolution. For instance, the Malian foreign minister, Mr. Ousman Ba, complained about "intolerable pressure" put on African delegates not to vote for the pro-Arab Yugoslavian resolution.<sup>50</sup> The mere fact that Black Africa's United Nations delegations were in daily contact with their Arab counterparts in the African caucus group might have had some impact.<sup>51</sup>

Congo-Kinshasha (now Zaire) and Cameroon's voting for both the Yugoslavian and a milder Latin American resolution could be interpreted as an attempt to satisfy both sides. Perhaps President Mobuto Sese Seko had been planning to kill

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., July 15, 1967, p. 938.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>S. Decalo, op. cit., p. 60.



two "birds" with one stone. He might have thought that an all-out support for the Arabs might jeopardize his interest with the Israelis. Apart from the economic and technical assistance he was receiving from Israel, his army and the air force were being trained by the Israelis.<sup>52</sup> Also, during the time of the Middle East crisis, President Mobutu was fighting for the extradition of the former Congolese Prime Minister, Mr. Moise Tshombe from Algeria. Consequently, an all-out support for the Israelis might prompt the Algerian President to refuse to send Mr. Tshombe back to the Congo as requested.<sup>53</sup>

On the aggregate, 15 sub-Saharan African states unequivocally supported Israel, while 12 countries unequivocally supported the Arabs.<sup>54</sup> One thing that one notices is that while Israel's support was limited to the moderate Black African states, the Arabs were supported by both radical and moderate states. It is also interesting to note that all the Southern African states--Mauritius, Malawi, Botswana and Lesotho, whose economies are closely linked with the Republic of South Africa--supported Israel.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>President Mobutu himself was trained in Israel as a parachutist.

<sup>53</sup>West Africa, August 5, 1967, p. 1011.

<sup>54</sup>Those that supported the Arabs were: Burundi, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Uganda, Tanzania and Zambia. Those that supported Israel were: Botswana, Central African Republic, Dahomey, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Chad, Togo and Upper Volta.

<sup>55</sup>When the sub-Saharan African states severed diplomatic

The support of such countries as Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Congo-Brazzaville and Burundi for the Arabs could be due partly to anti-Westernism. Also, it could be due to the radicalization of these regimes or an attempt to identify with a member state of the OAU whose territory had been forcibly annexed by a non-African state. As a matter of fact, none of the above named countries belonged to the radical Casablanca charter states. It should be borne in mind also that none of the above named countries had a large Muslim population. As a matter of fact, all these countries were headed by Christians and the ruling classes were predominantly made up of Christians.<sup>56</sup>

The view that the above named countries' support for the Arabs might perhaps be prompted by anti-Western feelings is supported by both Professors Michael Brecher and Ali Mazrui. Professor Mazrui suggested that they might have viewed Israel as "too much a part of the Western world." He added that, "It appeared that Israel was virtually the fifty-first state of the United States, with a massive American contribution to its preservation, and massive American contribution to its maintenance and upkeep. In

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relations massively with Israel in 1973, after and during the Yom Kippur War, Malawi, Mauritius and Lesotho refused to sever diplomatic relations with Israel. Also, Botswana was the last Black African state to sever diplomatic relations with Israel. Botswana broke relations with Israel on November 13, 1973.

<sup>56</sup>See Map 1, for the distribution of Moslems in Africa.

that respect, Israel seemed a piece of the Western world, deposited in the heart of the Third World."<sup>57</sup>

A careful study of the communiqués issued by the radical Casablanca states and the ones issued by Tanzania and Burundi, for instance, gives the impression that they viewed the Arab-Israeli conflict in an ideological context. Also, all these states espouse revolutionary pan-African policies which made them inclined to support the Arab cause.<sup>58</sup> For instance, Professor Samuel Decalo attributed the Ugandan and Tanzania support partly to a reflection of a quest for revolutionary, anti-imperialist image.<sup>59</sup>

The anti-Western feelings might have been prompted as a result of Black Africa's disillusionment with the Western powers. For instance, when the white minority settlers in Rhodesia unilaterally declared independence on November 11, 1965, Britain refused to use force against the illegal regime, whereas Britain had never before hesitated to respond to any "coloured" rebellion by crushing it by force as was the case in Kenya during the Mau Mau rebellion or in India or Aden. Britain ignored appeals of the Security Council of the United Nations to suppress the usurpation of power by Ian Smith's government and opted for economic

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<sup>57</sup>Ali Mazrui, *op. cit.*, p. 728.

<sup>58</sup>S. Decalo, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*

sanctions.<sup>60</sup> The refusal of Britain to suppress the rebellion of Ian Smith by force angered many Black African countries to the extent that Tanzania, Ghana and several other African countries broke diplomatic relations with Britain in 1965.<sup>61</sup>

The arms employed by Portugal in its colonial wars in Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau were supplied by the NATO powers in spite of protests from the African states. Also, France and Britain have been major suppliers of arms to South Africa in spite of the Security Council's ban to that effect imposed in 1963.<sup>62</sup> The Western world's "insensitivity" to African feelings might have been responsible for the anti-Western feelings in several African states. This, I submit, might have had a spill-over effect on Israel because of her close ties with the Western world.

Apart from Burundi's overt support for the Arabs prior to and after the 1967 war, as manifested in its pronouncements and its voting at the United Nations, President

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<sup>60</sup>Z. Cervenka, "The Afro-Arab Alliance," Africa, No. 31, March, 1974, p. 77.

<sup>61</sup>The other countries that broke diplomatic relations with Britain were: U.A.R., Mali, Guinea, Algeria, Mauritania, Sudan, Congo-Brazzaville. For more details, see S. Gitelson, "Why Do Small States Break Diplomatic Relations with Outside Powers?", International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 17 and 18, 1973-74, pp. 472-473.

<sup>62</sup>Z. Cervenka, op. cit., p. 77.

\*The 1970 Singapore Commonwealth Conference for instance was marked by acrimonious controversy because of Black Africa's vehement opposition to Britain's plan to sell arms to South Africa. Uganda even threatened to pull out of the Commonwealth if the arms sale went through.



Micombero of Burundi used the occasion of Burundi's independence anniversary in July, 1967 to reiterate his denunciation of Israel. It was the condemnation of Israel by Micombero that prompted the Israeli chargé d'affaires in Bujumbura (Burundi's capital) to stage a walk-out as a protest.<sup>63</sup>

Among the radical states that supported the Arabs, the populations of countries such as Guinea, Mali, Somalia and Mauritania are predominantly Moslem. In consequence of this, one could suggest that apart from ideological factors, religious solidarity with fellow Moslem Arabs could not be overlooked. According to Professor Samuel Decalo, "The countries have Moslem majorities, that identified closely with the Arab cause."<sup>64</sup>

Some radical African states support for the Arabs may not have been limited to ideological grounds only. It might have been motivated not only by the enormous humiliation of the Arabs alone, but due to their opposition to forcible annexation of land. After all, Israel appeared to have been the aggressor and the winner. In his book, Freedom and Socialism, President Nyerere of Tanzania said, "It is not, and should not be, part of our policy to gloss over an act of aggression because we recognize and have diplomatic relations with the country which commits such aggression. We recognize Israel and wish to be friendly with her as well as the Arab nations. But we cannot condone aggression on any

<sup>63</sup>"Israel, The Arabs and Africa," West Africa, July 8, 1967, p. 906.

<sup>64</sup>S. Decalo, op. cit., p. 61.



pretext, nor accept victory in a war as a justification for the exploitation of other lands, or government over other peoples."<sup>65</sup>

One should hasten to point out that despite the support at the United Nations for the Arabs by both moderate and radical states, some Black African states openly supported and even defended the Israeli actions. The states that declared their support for Israel were mainly the members of the Monrovia and Brazzaville groups which were viewed as moderate states. Among these states were the staunchest friends of Israel.<sup>66</sup>

Before the outbreak of hostilities, some countries such as Ethiopia, Nigeria, Kenya, Liberia, Togo, Cameroon and Dahomey demanded freedom of navigation in the Strait of Tiran. The francophone African states, with the exception of Mali and Guinea, condemned the U.A.R.'s blockade in unison.<sup>67</sup> The Francophone African states' support for Israel before the outbreak of hostilities was particularly interesting because of the strained relations between France and Israel, more so, since there appeared to have been a tendency on the part of most moderate francophone African states not to "rock the boat" with France in international affairs. This apparently

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<sup>65</sup> Julius Nyerere, Freedom and Socialism (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 371.

<sup>66</sup> The states that unequivocally supported Israel were: Botswana, Chad, Central African Republic, Dahomey, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Sierra Leone, Togo and Upper Volta.

<sup>67</sup> S. Decalo, op. cit., p. 59.

was because of their heavy dependence on France for financial aid and technical assistance.<sup>68</sup>

Apart from the fact that most sub-Saharan African states supported Israel during and after the 1967 war, some even ridiculed the Arab claim of "U.S.-British collusion" with Israel. The influential Daily Graphic of Ghana dismissed the charge as nothing but a fabrication. The Daily Graphic drew parallels between Nasser and Nkrumah and condemned them for what it described as "subversive and interventionist policies."<sup>69</sup> The Malawian President, Dr. Banda, also dismissed the charge of Anglo-American air support for the Israeli forces during the war as nothing but propaganda. According to him, "Israel did the right thing. To suggest that Israel was the aggressor was not only a distortion, but a prostitution of the truth."<sup>70</sup> He went further by saying that, "I am ashamed that several countries in Africa had followed this propaganda."<sup>71</sup>

One may ask why have the largely moderate states in sub-Saharan Africa supported Israel? Apart from the fact that the states that supported Israel seemed to have generally been pro-Western or not anti-Western, they might have viewed the

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<sup>68</sup>S. Gitelson, "Why do Small States break Diplomatic Relations with Outside Powers?" International Studies Quarterly, Vols. 17 and 18, 1973-74, p. 461.

<sup>69</sup>S. Decalo, op. cit., p. 59.

<sup>70</sup>African Research Bulletin, June 1-30, 1967, p. 807.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

conflict in the context of East-West confrontation. Most, if not all of them, were recipients of economic aid from Israel. (However, one should point out that Tanzania, Mali, Guinea and several other states that supported the Arabs were also recipients of Israel's economic aid.) Perhaps their support for Israel could also be explained partly due to a sense of gratitude for the selfless Israeli contributions to their development.

Another point that should be borne in mind is that while the support for the Arabs could be said to be broad-based--that is to say, it encompassed both radical and moderate Black African states--Israeli support was limited to the moderate states. While all the predominantly Moslem states supported the Arabs, not a single predominantly Moslem state supported Israel. Also, all the states that supported Israel were predominantly Christian or where Moslems are in a minority. In consequence of this, most of the African countries might have been basing their support partly on religious considerations.

Kenya was the only state in the sub-Saharan Africa to have consistently refrained from taking sides during the voting at the United Nations. Kenya had strong economic ties with Israel and was considered a pro-western state. Kenya during the "Mau Mau" insurrection in the mid-fifties, was said to have been given material, political and propaganda support by the U.A.R. under the leadership of President Nasser. Hundreds of young Kenyans were given scholarships to

study in various universities in the U.A.R. by President Nasser.<sup>72</sup> These, perhaps, might have contributed to Kenya's neutrality. While Israel was at that time giving economic and technical assistance to Kenya, The U.A.R. had in the past contributed immense material support to the Mau Mau during their insurrection against the British colonial government.

Apart from refraining from taking sides during the voting at the United Nations, Kenya also demonstrated her neutrality by refusing to permit her citizens to become involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict. To the Kenyans who volunteered to fight<sup>73</sup> in the Middle East during the 1967 war, Mr. Nyamweya, the Kenyan foreign affairs minister said, "Kenyan citizens should not become involved in quarrels which do not concern Kenya as a non-aligned power."<sup>74</sup>

In considering the shift by some sub-Saharan African states to more pro-Arab positions during and after the 1967 war, one may conclude that generally, the reasons were political and could be explained best in an ideological context. That is, those states that were or had become more radical and anti-Western were more likely than the moderate or pro-Western states to take sides with the Arabs. It is

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<sup>72</sup>For the details on U.A.R.'s material and propaganda support for the liberation movements in Africa, see J. Baulin, The Arab Role in Africa (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1962), pp. 45-47.

<sup>73</sup>The Kenyans that volunteered to fight during the 1967 war I presume were the Moslem minority--apparently on the Arab side.

<sup>74</sup>Africa Research Bulletin, June 1-30, 1967, p. 807.



amazing, however, that Israel still had so much support when one considers some factors which militate against support for Israel. Apart from the fact that some states such as Mauritania and Somalia are almost 100 per cent Moslems, more than 50 per cent of states such as Senegal, Guinea, Mali and Niger are also Moslems. Apart from the pressure exerted on Francophone Africa by France to support the Arabs, the Arab member states of the O.A.U. appealed for continental solidarity. One should also bear in mind that Israel's forcible annexation of Arab lands contravenes the O.A.U. charter.<sup>75</sup>

Taking into account the cross-pressures on all African delegations during the Emergency Session at the U.N., and the general attitudes of small states to any act of aggression, the amount of African support for Israel is impressive.<sup>76</sup> In the words of Professor Decalo, "If diplomatic success is measurable, Israeli diplomacy appears to have paid off."<sup>77</sup>

However, one could suggest that the era of Israel's "honeymoon" in Africa was over--or at least the beginning of the end was in sight. For instance, prior to the 1967 war, Israel had had good relations with almost all the

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<sup>75</sup>See Article III, paragraph III of the O.A.U. charter. The O.A.U. favours the maintenance of the boundaries inherited from the colonial powers. Attempts to change colonial boundaries would bring a lot of confusion, since the boundaries cut across several ethnic groups.

<sup>76</sup>S. Decalo, op. cit., p. 61.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.



sub-Saharan African states. During and after the war, many African states who had hitherto had good relations with Israel condemned her. Guinea even went to the extent of severing diplomatic relations with Israel.

Changing African Perceptions of the Arab-  
Israeli Conflict: 1967-1970

The treatment of the Arab-Israeli conflict, as a Middle Eastern problem, as opposed to an African problem, was to be drastically changed from 1967. Technically, the issue had ceased to be a Middle Eastern affair, because part of Egypt's territory (Sinai Peninsula) was occupied by Israel at the termination of the 1967 war. One could have expected Black African states, especially the moderate ones, to drastically change their attitudes, now that the conflict had become an African affair. Yet, surprisingly enough, their attitudes remained almost unchanged. The only gain that could be credited to the Arab "account" is that, since 1967, the Arab-Israeli issue "qualified" to be deliberated upon during the O.A.U. summit conferences.

In spite of the reluctance of most moderate African states to show some sympathy for the Arab cause, the Arab cause gained more support incrementally. A careful study of the O.A.U. resolutions on the Middle East from 1968 to 1970, reveals an increasing support for the Arab cause. However, the support was not unanimous.

In 1967, the majority of the O.A.U. members rejected a Somali request for an emergency meeting of the Council of

Ministers to take a stand on the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. The O.A.U. argued that only the United Nations could deal with the situation. At the Kinhasha summit of the O.A.U. in September, 1967, there was an adoption of a "Declaration" rather than a "Resolution" on the 1967 war. African leaders carefully abstained from condemning Israel as an "aggressor", but expressed their concern with "the grave situation that prevails in the United Arab Republic, an African state whose territory is partially occupied by a foreign power."<sup>78</sup>

At the February 1968 O.A.U. Council of Ministers Conference<sup>79</sup> in Addis-Ababa, there was an agreement on an outright condemnation of Israel by acclamation. However, during the Heads of State Conference in September, 1968 in Algiers, the Council of Ministers' recommendation that Israel be condemned by the O.A.U. Heads of State was successfully blocked by the Presidents of Dahomey and Ivory Coast. The resolution was not only blocked, but Mr. Diallo-Telli, the O.A.U.'s Secretary General, was reprimanded. Mr. Telli was reprimanded mainly by the supporters of Israel (which were numerically superior to the Arab supporters) for what they viewed as an attempt to "railroad" a condemnation of Israel.<sup>80</sup>

Some inferences could be drawn from the refusal of the

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<sup>78</sup>A. Akinsanya, op. cit., p. 522.

<sup>79</sup>The Heads of State Conferences of the O.A.U. are always preceded by the Council of Ministers' Conference.

<sup>80</sup>Africa Contemporary Record, 1968/69, p. 621.

Heads of State to endorse the wholesale condemnation of Israel. One could suggest that there were sharp differences between the heads of state and their foreign ministers.<sup>81</sup> It seemed that the foreign ministers tended to be more radically oriented than their heads of state.<sup>82</sup>

It appears to be more than a coincidence that Mr. Diallo Telli, a Guinean national,<sup>83</sup> should be reprimanded for "railroading" a condemnation of Israel. There is the likelihood of not only being sympathetic with the Arabs, but perhaps he might have got some instructions from Conakry (Guinea's capital) as to where he should lean during the conference.

A relatively conservative resolution was passed at the end of the Heads of State Summit in 1968. By 36 to nil, with two abstentions,\* the Heads of State Summit demanded "the withdrawal of foreign troops from all Arab territories occupied since June 5, 1967, in accordance with the resolution adopted by the U.N. Security Council on November 22, 1967."<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup>The foreign ministers are usually younger than their Heads of State. There are also sharp differences between them in terms of their positions on the ideological spectrum.

<sup>82</sup>S. Decalo, op. cit., p. 60.

\*The two countries that abstained were Lesotho and Swaziland. Also, in 1973, they broke ranks with African states and refused to break relations with Israel.

<sup>83</sup>It should be borne in mind that Guinea broke diplomatic relations with Israel in June, 1967.

<sup>84</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1968/69, p. 621.





the Middle East conflict on the agenda as "Resolution on the situation in the U.A.R." The 1970 resolution on the other hand, referred to the conflict as "continued aggression against the U.A.R."<sup>88</sup>

From these observations, one could suggest that there was a growing or incremental support for the Arab cause in the O.A.U.<sup>89</sup> A conflict that was not allowed to be discussed prior to June, 1967 became a topic of discussion as from September 1967 at the Kinshasha summit. The Council of Ministers of the O.A.U. even went to the extent of recommending the condemnation of Israel, only to be turned down by the Heads of State of the O.A.U. However, there was also a lot of resistance to a wholesale shift to a pro-Arab position.

The mere fact that Israel was not directly denounced, or even mentioned in the O.A.U. resolutions could be due to an attempt on the part of Black Africa to satisfy both the Arabs and Israel by staying in the middle of the road. The moderate states' consistent refusal to endorse a wholesale support by the O.A.U. for the Arab cause could be due to the substantial aid received from Israel, or non-alignment preference.

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<sup>88</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1969/70, p. A69.

<sup>89</sup>In April 1970, President Jean Bokassa of the Central African Republic visited Cairo. During his Cairo visit, President Bokassa assured President Nasser "of his country's support for the Arabs and the necessity of a complete Israeli withdrawal from the occupied lands." See A. Akinsanya, op. cit., p. 522.

A careful study of the O.A.U. resolutions from 1968 to 1970 concerning the Middle East conflict, reveals that the O.A.U. conservatism soon began to change. While the 1968 resolution merely called for "the withdrawal of foreign troops from all Arab territories occupied since June 5, 1967," the 1969 O.A.U. resolution not only expressed support for the U.A.R., but it called for the withdrawal of foreign troops. In addition, it attributed the worsening situation to the refusal of the occupation forces to withdraw from the occupied territories, despite U.N. Security Council resolution 242."<sup>85</sup> The 1970 O.A.U. resolution not only included all the aforementioned points, but went as far as to express "opposition to the occupation by force of any part or the whole of one country by another."<sup>86</sup> And, for the very first time, reference was made to U.A.R. as a sister state.

If an analytical study of the three resolutions<sup>87</sup> is made, some blatant noticeable observations could be made:

1. The three resolutions refrained from mentioning Israel. The word "occupation forces" or "foreign troops" were used in apparent reference to Israel.

2. The 1968 and 1969 resolutions merely referred to

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<sup>85</sup>See Appendix II for the U.N. Security Council resolution 242 of November 22, 1967.

<sup>86</sup>Africa Contemporary Record, 1970-71, pp. C9-C10.

<sup>87</sup>O.A.U. Resolutions AHG/Res. 53/V of 1968, AHG/Res. 57/VI of 1969 and AHG/Res./62/VII/ of 1970.



The question that arises is why was the O.A.U. increasingly but not completely moving towards a pro-Arab position? Several factors could be suggested for the growing support for the Arab cause in the O.A.U.:

1. Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab lands, in defiance of the O.A.U. and U.N. resolutions.
2. Increasing solidarity with the U.A.R., a member state of the O.A.U.
3. Increasing radicalization of many regimes in sub-Saharan Africa.

One may also ask, why was not unanimous support given to the Arabs, in spite of the fact that from 1968, the Arab cause had increasingly gained support from the O.A.U.? Some factors could also be suggested as to why there was not unanimous support for the Arab cause despite increasing support for the Arabs in the Arab-Israeli conflict:

1. The ideological divisions among the sub-Saharan African states may have been partly responsible. Perhaps many of the Black African states might have viewed the Arab-Israeli conflict in the context of East-West confrontation.<sup>90</sup> While the radical states appeared to have favoured the Arabs, the moderate states on the other hand appeared to have preferred the Israelis or neutrality.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>R. Fredland, "The O.A.U. After Ten Years: Can it Survive?" African Affairs, Vol. 72, July, 1973, p. 310.

<sup>91</sup>The recommendation of the O.A.U. Council of Ministers in 1968, that Israel be condemned was successfully blocked by Dahomey, Ivory Coast and other moderate pro-Israel states.

2. The tendency on the part of the O.A.U. to operate on a unanimity basis may also have been partly responsible. Even though there are differences in the foreign policies of the sub-Saharan African states, their policies nevertheless on a number of crucial questions could be said to be sufficiently harmonious as to constitute a continental approach to international affairs.<sup>92</sup> For instance, Africa took a common stand on issues such as non-alignment, negotiations with the European Economic Community, white minority governments in Southern Africa, and the preservation of Africa's existing frontiers. In the period up to 1970, no similar consensus had emerged to favour all-out support for the Arabs.\*

### Conclusion

Prior to the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Israel had good or not bad relations with the sub-Saharan African states. The hitherto good Afro-Israeli relations changed to some extent after the war. Some of the factors that contributed to this were: Political radicalism and anti-Westernism on the part of some states. Apart from a little bit of religious solidarity, the very nature of the war made many states sympathize with the Arabs. Apart from the fact that the

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<sup>92</sup>C. Legum, "Africa, the Arabs and the Middle East," Africa Contemporary Record, 1973/74, p. A3.

\*During the 1973 Yom Kippur War, it seemed that there was a continental consensus in favour of support for the Arabs. Hence, between October 6 (when the war broke out), and November 13, 20 African countries had already broken diplomatic relations with Israel.

Arabs were viewed as the underdogs--having lost the war, on top of it--it appeared that Israel was generally considered to be the aggressor.

A careful study of the resolutions passed by the O.A.U. on the Arab-Israeli conflict from 1968 to 1970 reveals that there was growing support for the Arab cause in that body. In subsequent years, this African support for the Arab cause would gain momentum, as the following chapters will show.

CHAPTER III  
AFRICAN REACTIONS TO THE ARAB-  
ISRAELI CONFLICT: 1971-1973

Prior to 1971, the O.A.U. stand in the Arab-Israeli conflict had been that of non-commitment. For instance, up to 1970, Israel had not been mentioned in any of the O.A.U.'s Middle East resolutions. Enormous Arab pressure on member states to show more sympathy for the Arab cause had been successfully resisted, especially by the moderate states which were friendly to Israel.<sup>1</sup>

During this era, it appears that a trend was underway which would make it more and more unlikely that African states could resist the many appeals of an anti-Israeli posture. African votes at the United Nations became more hostile to Israel as from 1971.<sup>2</sup> While the Arabs had been increasing their financial support to the African liberation movements, a similar offer made by Israel's foreign minister Abba Eban in 1971 was rejected out of hand on the ground that it came from "a neo-colonial and imperialist state."<sup>3</sup>

During this era, it appears that the balance had tilted in favour of the Arabs. For instance, there were noticeable

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<sup>1</sup>J. St. Jorre, "The Arab-Israeli Conflict," Africa, No. 6, 1972, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup>See Appendix IV.

<sup>3</sup>M. Curtis and S. Gitelson (1976), op. cit., p. 189.

changes of attitude with regards to the conflict. Many sub-Saharan African states began to show greater interest in the conflict. Greater hostility was shown to Israel, either through the actions or the pronouncements of some heads of state. By November 13, 1973 almost all the sub-Saharan African states had severed diplomatic relations with Israel.<sup>4</sup>

The main theme of this chapter is the examination of the changes of attitude to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Attempts will be made to evaluate the O.A.U. resolutions on the Middle East conflict from 1971 to 1973. The sub-Saharan African states' reaction to the massacre of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games and the downing of the Libyan airliner in February, 1973 by the Israeli air force will be examined.

The Arab-Israeli conflict which was previously viewed as a non-African problem prior to the 1967 war, seemed to have become more accepted as relevant to Africans during this era. The sub-Saharan African states which had hitherto steered clear of the conflict began to choose the Arab side. In this period, a change of attitude had occurred. Not only was the O.A.U. more partisan,<sup>5</sup> African governments began to show more interest in the conflict. Apart from the fact

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<sup>4</sup>See "Arab League and Africa," African Development, July, 1975, p. A.L. 11.

<sup>5</sup>The OAU, which had hitherto been reluctant to become deeply involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict, sent a peace mission to Cairo and Tel Aviv in 1971.



that greater hostility was shown to Israel, there was a greater willingness to participate in overtly pro-Arab and anti-Israeli activities.<sup>6</sup>

There is some evidence which shows that not only were African states beginning to choose the Arab side, but that the Arab-Israeli conflict was accepted as more relevant to Africans:

1. The behaviour of the African states at the United Nations became more partisan in this era. African votes at the U.N. became more hostile to Israel.<sup>7</sup>

2. Breaking of diplomatic relations with Israel by the African states.

3. The O.A.U., through its resolutions became increasingly more sympathetic to the Arab cause. Apart from denouncing and mentioning Israel by name, beginning from 1971 in its Middle East resolutions the Council of Ministers of the O.A.U. became more sympathetic to the Arab cause. In its February 1973 conference in Addis-Ababa, the Council of Ministers praised the African states which had "strengthened their solidarity with Egypt."<sup>8</sup> Apparently the reference was to the countries that had severed ties with Israel.

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<sup>6</sup>For instance, Idi Amin signed an anti-Israeli communique in Libya at the end of his visit in early 1972. President Tombalbaye of Chad condemned Israel in 1972, Generals Gowon and Troari of Nigeria and Mali respectively denounced Israel jointly in 1973, in Bamako.

<sup>7</sup>See Ali Mazrui, op. cit., p. 730.

<sup>8</sup>African Research Bulletin, February 1-28, 1973, p.

Other African states which had not done so were urged to follow suit by "expressing their solidarity with Egypt in concrete terms."<sup>9</sup>

The question which arises is, why was there such a drastic shift in favour of the Arabs during this era? Several factors, both external and internal, have been suggested as contributing to the drastic shift to the Arab camp by the African states. These include Israel's interference in the internal affairs of Black African states, Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories, continental solidarity, Arab pressure, Israel's lack of cooperation with the O.A.U. peace mission, anti-Western feelings, economic factors, radicalization of O.A.U. and African regimes, religious and ideological factors. All these factors will be treated in chapters four and five.

In the remaining part of this chapter, the O.A.U. resolutions on the Middle East from 1971 to 1973 will be analyzed. The sub-Saharan African states' reactions to the massacre of the Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics, and the downing of the Libyan civilian airliner in February, 1973 by the Israeli air force will also be examined.

#### O.A.U. Resolutions on the Middle East: 1971-1973

A careful study of the O.A.U. resolutions from 1971 to 1973 would reveal escalating support for the Arabs in the

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

Arab-Israeli conflict. Resolutions of 1968, 1969 and 1970 refrained from either mentioning or condemning Israel. But in 1971, for the first time in the O.A.U.'s history, its resolution on the Middle East was blatantly partial. Not only was the resolution titled "Resolution on the continued aggression against U.A.R.," but Israel was mentioned and condemned throughout the resolution.<sup>10</sup>

Apart from the fact that Israel's occupation of the Arab territories was viewed as "a serious threat to the regional peace of Africa and international peace and security," it also praised Egypt for her positive reply on February 15, 1971, to the O.A.U. peace mission.<sup>11</sup> The resolution also condemned Israel's intransigence as responsible for the Middle East impasse.<sup>12</sup>

The O.A.U. resolution on the conflict in 1972 could even be classified as more militant and more pro-Arab than the previous ones. The resolution condemned Israel for "its negative and obstructive attitude which prevents the resumption of the Jarring Mission."<sup>13</sup> The resolution also urged Israel to "publicly declare its adherence to the principle of non-annexation of territories through the use

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<sup>10</sup>See Appendix III, for the O.A.U. resolutions on the Middle East from 1968-1973.

<sup>11</sup>Colin Legum, "Organisation of African Unity," African Contemporary Record, 1971/72, pp. C5-C6.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1972/73, p. C.23.

of force."<sup>14</sup> The member states of the O.A.U. were also called upon to show "effective" support for the U.A.R. in accordance with the O.A.U. Charter. The words "effective support" could be translated as a call on member states who had not severed relations with Israel to do so.

The resolution also called on member states to support the U.A.R. in what it called "her legitimate struggle to recover totally and by "every means" its territorial integrity."<sup>15</sup> The word by "every means" could be interpreted as tantamount to an indirect way of instigating the U.A.R. to declare war in order to recover her lost territory if need be. There is also the implication that, should Egypt decide to go to war against Israel in order to recover its territory, the O.A.U. would be solidly behind her.<sup>16</sup>

The 1972 resolution not only called on member states of the O.A.U. to give Egypt "every assistance," but called on U.N. members to "intensify their action, in both international forums and at the U.N. Security Council and the General Assembly." The resolution urged member states of O.A.U. to take initiatives for the immediate and

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>When war broke out between Egypt and Israel in October, 1973, the sub-Sahara African states stood solidly behind Egypt. All the sub-Saharan African states, with the exception of Malawi, Lesotho, Mauritius and Swaziland, broke diplomatic relations with Israel.

unconditional withdrawal of Israel from the Arab territories. The resolution also denounced Israel for her "attitude which impedes the implementation of the U.N. Security Council resolution 242."<sup>17</sup> Finally, the resolution requested U.N. members to "refrain from supplying Israel with weapons, military equipment or moral support, likely to enable it to strengthen its military potential and to perpetuate its occupation of the Arab and African territories."<sup>18</sup>

The O.A.U. resolution on the Middle East was no less militant in 1973. It reiterated most of the points in the previous resolutions. The resolution urged members to "effectively" support Egypt and other Arab states until "the total liberation of their territories, which have been occupied as a result of Israeli aggression of June, 1967."<sup>19</sup>

By referring to the occupied Arab territories as "Arab and African territories," the 1972 O.A.U. resolution is a manifestation of the fact that the Arab-Israeli conflict which was once treated as a non-African problem has now been accepted as an African problem.<sup>20</sup> The acceptance of the Arab-Israeli conflict as an African problem is also

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1973/74, pp. C5-C6.

<sup>20</sup>The 1973 O.A.U. resolution went beyond urging members to support the U.A.R., it called on member states of the O.A.U. to "effectively" support the U.A.R. and other Arab states.



demonstrated by President Sedar Senghor of Senegal's statement in 1972. He declared, "Because we share our continent with Arab Africans, and because we feel that Africa ends at Sinai, we have been deeply disturbed by the fact that, since 1967, a part of Africa has been occupied by an outside power."<sup>21</sup>

In the 1972 O.A.U. resolution, it appears that the blame for the impasse in the Arab-Israeli conflict had been apportioned to Israel. Egypt's positive response in February 1972 to the Jarring peace initiative as opposed to Israel's negative response might have portrayed Israel as intransigent. Hence, Israel was condemned for her "defiance to the initiative of Jarring and called upon to make a similar positive reply."<sup>22</sup>

#### African Reactions to the Massacre of the Israeli Athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games

An evaluation of the reactions of the sub-Saharan African states to the cold-blooded massacre of the Israeli Olympic athletes in 1972 in Munich and the downing of the Libyan airliner in February, 1973, are clear manifestations of an increasing identification with the Arab cause. The massacre of the Israeli athletes produced mixed feelings. Some were sympathetic with the Israelis and some were not.

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<sup>21</sup>"African/Arab Relations," Africa Current, No. 5, Spring, 1976, p. 3.

<sup>22</sup>S. Gitelson, "The O.A.U. Mission and the Middle East Conflict," International Organisation, Vol. 27, 1973, p. 414.

While countries such as Ghana, Kenya, Zambia and so on condemned the massacre, Tanzania and Somalia attributed the killings to the intransigence of the Israelis with regards to finding a lasting solution to the conflict.

While some African countries (especially the moderate ones) unequivocally condemned the massacre, Tanzania, Somalia and other radical states even overtly defended the heinous act. Nigeria, which could not be classified as a radical state under General Yakubu Gowon, showed some sympathy with the Palestinians. Nigeria's sympathy with the Palestinians might have been prompted by the cool relations between Lagos and Tel Aviv because of the alleged Tel Aviv support for the Biafran insurgents during the Nigerian civil war, which ended in 1970.<sup>23</sup>

The Ethiopian authorities called the killing of the athletes "a senseless act of brutality." The Ethiopian authorities' message added, "It would be a grave mistake for the world to continue to condone such acts. Perpetrators of such crimes should be ostracized by the entire world, and whenever such heinous crimes are committed, they should be brought to justice immediately, with as little dilly-dallying as possible."<sup>24</sup> The Ghanaian government criticized the Palestinians for the killing of the Israeli athletes.

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<sup>23</sup>P. Decraene, "Africa and the Middle East Crisis: Is the Romance with Israel Over?", Africa Report, May-June, 1973, p. 24. See also C. Legum, "Israel's Year in Africa," African Contemporary Record, 1969/70, p. A.68.

<sup>24</sup>African Research Bulletin, September 1-30, 1972, p. 2614.

President Ignatius Acheampong of Ghana said, "It is a sad commentary on human conduct that the Olympic Games, which are meant to, and should foster friendly and brotherly relations between peoples, should be the scene of such a tragedy."<sup>25</sup>

Kenya also condemned the killing as an "unwarranted violence." The message sent by the Kenyan government added that "the Arabs might hate the Israelis, the Olympic village in Munich was not the place to stage their attack. The whole world should condemn the violence irrespective of political differences, because the lives of innocent sportsmen had been put in danger for no fault of their own."<sup>26</sup>

Tanzania and Somalia, on the other hand, stated that unless a "just" solution was found to the Arab-Israeli conflict, such violent acts as the murder in Munich were bound to recur.<sup>27</sup> The government of Tanzania stated that "such acts,"<sup>28</sup> brutal and negative though they may be, cannot be ruled out from an oppressed people, and are a demand on the world community for a solution to the problem. The world community and in particular the permanent members of the Security Council, should work fervently to remove the festering sores of injustice, colonialism and racial

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 2615.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>"Such acts" means the killing of the Israeli athletes in the Munich Olympics in 1972.

discrimination in Palestine."<sup>29</sup>

Somalia justified the killing on the ground that similar "acts" or crimes committed by Israel were never given publicity. President Said Barre of Somalia subscribed to the view that such acts would help to call the attention of the world to the Palestinian problem. According to President Said Barre, "the world must understand that it is essential to bring about a solution to the Palestinian problem... Similar criminal crimes committed by Israel are never publicized."<sup>30</sup>

President Idi Amin Dada of Uganda did not only overtly declare his support for the Palestinians, he even sent an extremely horrifying cable to Prime Minister Golda Meir and the U.N. Secretary General in September, 1972. In the cablegram he did not only justify the actions of the Palestinian assassins, but he even praised and admired Adolf Hitler for his genocide against six million Jews! In Idi Amin's words, "Hitler and all the German people knew that the Israelis were not working in the interest of the people of the world, that is why they burnt the Israelis alive with gas, on the soil of Germany."<sup>31</sup> He even said, to the astonishment of the whole wide world, that he would erect a giant statue of the "infamous" Adolf Hitler in Kampala,

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<sup>29</sup>African Research Bulletin, September 1-30, 1972, p. 2615.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1972/73, p. C.73.



Uganda.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps Idi Amin may have studied the trend of events, which apparently had tilted against Israel in Africa before embarking on such incredible statements.

African Reactions to the Israeli Downing  
of Libyan Airliner in February, 1973

Contrary to the African reactions to the massacre of the Israeli athletes in 1972,<sup>33</sup> there were vehement condemnations of the downing of the Libyan airliner by all the sub-Saharan African states. Zaire, one of the staunchest supporters of Israel in Africa, not only condemned Israel, but even threatened to revise its relations with Israel. According to President Mobutu Sese Seko, "there would be a revision of Zaire's relations with Israel, should Israel continue to commit such shameful acts."<sup>34</sup> The message added further, "Israel's action had provoked the disgust and indignation of the whole Zaire nation."<sup>35</sup>

For such a statement to have been uttered by a moderate pro-Western and staunch friend of Israel, shows a drastic shift in orientation to the Arab-Israeli issue. President

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<sup>32</sup>Henry Kyemba, The State of Blood: The Inside Story of Idi Amin, (New York: Ace Books, 1977), p. 240.

<sup>33</sup>The reactions of African states to the killing of the Israeli athletes in 1972 were mixed. Some were against the massacre and some openly supported the act.

<sup>34</sup>"Zaire Condemns Israel," West Africa, March 5, 1973, p. 325.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.



Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, described the incident as "a barbarous, cruel, and indefensible act."<sup>36</sup> Somalia not only condemned the downing of the Libyan civilian airliner, but demanded the "intensification of the war against Israel."<sup>37</sup> General Gowon of Nigeria said, "Downing of an airliner is a wanton act which must be condemned by all men of goodwill."<sup>38</sup> The Tanzanian President, Nwalimu Nyerere, strongly condemned Israel's downing of the Libyan airliner as a "barbarous act," which could serve only to "aggravate" tempers and render the solution of the Middle East problem impossible.<sup>39</sup>

Besides the O.A.U. resolutions on the Middle East conflict during this era which increasingly became pro-Arab,<sup>40</sup> African states appeared to have begun showing greater interest in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Besides showing greater hostility to Israel, through severance of diplomatic relations and condemnations, African states showed more willingness to participate in overtly pro-Arab and anti-Israel activities. For instance, in 1971 the O.A.U. began to take a more active role in the Arab-Israeli conflict. The O.A.U. sent a peace mission to both Cairo and

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<sup>36</sup>African Research Bulletin, February 1-28, p. 2768.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>And also, the reactions of the African states to the massacre of Israeli athletes and the downing of the Libyan airliner.

Tel Aviv in order to mediate in the conflict.\*

On February 13, 1972, President Idi Amin visited Libya and at the end of his visit, he endorsed an anti-Israeli communiqué which runs thus: "We pledge to support the Arabs in their struggle against Zionism and imperialism, for the liberation of confiscated lands, and for the right of the Palestinian people to return to their land and homes by all means."<sup>41</sup> Also, in late 1972, President Sedar Senghor of Senegal gave permission to the P.L.O. to establish an office in Dakar, the capital of Senegal. At the end of General Yakuba Gowon of Nigeria's visit to Mali in March, 1973, General Gowon and the Malian leader Moussa Troari, issued an anti-Israel communiqué condemning Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab lands and Israel's downing of the Libyan airliner.<sup>42</sup>

The sub-Saharan African states' solidarity with the Arabs, which began to gather momentum especially in 1971,<sup>43</sup> reached its apogee during the 1973 Yom Kippur war, when almost all Black African states severed diplomatic relations

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\*The impact of the O.A.U. peace mission's recommendations on the attitudes of the African states to the Arab-Israeli conflict will be discussed fully in Chapter 5.

<sup>41</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1972/73, p. A135.

<sup>42</sup>African Research Bulletin, 1-31 March, 1973, p. 2780.

<sup>43</sup>After the recommendations of the O.A.U.'s peace mission in 1971, which apportioned all the blame for the deadlock of the Jarring Mission and that of the O.A.U., on the intransigence of Israel, increasing hostility was shown to Israel by the sub-Saharan African states.

with Israel. The unprecedented massive support for the Arab cause was even further consolidated and built into political partnership in the subsequent months at the United Nations and other international forums. The political partnership so built enabled the Arabs and the Africans to present a united front, especially at the United Nations, on the issues of white minority governments in Southern Africa, and the Arab-Israeli issue.<sup>44</sup>

When Guinea-Bissau proclaimed unilateral declaration of independence in September, 1973, almost all the Arab States accorded her diplomatic recognition. Also, in October, 1973, the Arab States rallied round the Black Africans at the United Nations when a resolution was adopted condemning the "illegal occupation of Portuguese military forces of certain sectors of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau and acts of aggression committed by them against the people of Guinea-Bissau."<sup>45</sup>

When the Arab oil producing countries imposed an oil embargo on the United States and Western European countries during the 1973 Yom Kippur war, the Arab oil producing states extended the embargo to encompass South Africa, Rhodesia and Portugal--at the instigation of the

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<sup>44</sup>J. Adewole-John, "Africa and the Arabs," New African, July, 1977, p. 114.

<sup>45</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1973/74, p. A37.

sub-Saharan African states.\* Also, at the Algiers Arab league summit in November, 1973, all Arab states which as at that time had diplomatic relations with the white minority governments in Southern Africa, were urged to sever diplomatic relations with them. At the Algiers Arab Summit was President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, the first non-Arab president to attend the Arab league summit. His unique invitation perhaps was a testimony of the Arab world's appreciation of his "defection" to the Arab side.

### Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to establish the fact that the Arab-Israeli conflict, which was viewed as a non-African problem prior to the 1967 war, became more accepted as relevant to Africans during this era. The sub-Saharan African states, which had hitherto steered clear of the conflict began to choose the Arab side.

It has also been shown that African states began to show more interest in the conflict. Greater hostility was shown to Israel either through the pronouncements or actions

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\*The Afro-Arab political alliance was further utilized at the United Nations in 1974. Numerous anti-Israeli resolutions were passed in 1974. With the help of Black African states, Israel was ejected from UNESCO in 1974, not only was Yasser Arafat invited by the U.N., the P.L.O. was recognized as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. On top of it, the P.L.O. was granted an Observer Status in 1974 at the displeasure of Israel and the Western world. In another controversial decision, the Republic of South Africa was ejected from the United Nations General Assembly on November 12, 1974.

(breaking of diplomatic relations with Israel by African states). There was a greater willingness on the part of the African states to participate in overtly pro-Arab and anti-Israeli activities.

The O.A.U. through its resolutions became increasingly more sympathetic for the Arab cause. Also, at the United Nations, African votes became more hostile to Israel. African states' reactions to the massacre of the Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games and the downing of the Libyan airliner by Israel are clear manifestations of the fact that the balance had tilted in favour of the Arabs.

Several factors may have been responsible for this pro-Arab trend in Black Africa (as will be shown in the next two chapters). They are: Anti-Western feelings among the African leaders, Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab lands, radicalization of the O.A.U. and several African states, religious factors, economic factors, continental solidarity and Arab pressure. The increasing pro-Arab trend in the O.A.U. beginning in 1971, would be almost impossible to reverse in the subsequent years, as the next two chapters will show.



## CHAPTER IV

### INTERNAL FACTORS: 1971-1973

In his analysis of internal influences on the external behaviour of states, Professor James Rosenau identified certain events and tendencies which can influence the behaviour or the foreign policy of states. These factors are: geographical location of a state, the operation of its press and other media of mass communications, the political system of a state, the character of its elites and their backgrounds, economic and cultural factors which limit, enhance or affect the external behaviour of states and governmental organization.<sup>1</sup>

Rosenau's multi-dimensional analysis is applied in the 1971-1973 period--that is to say, in Chapters IV and V as opposed to all the chapters because of the incremental nature of the changes in attitude toward Israel. Prior to this period, support for the Arab cause in the OAU remained ambivalent as it was not clear cut or unanimous. It was during this period (1971-1973) that support for the Arab cause began to gather momentum (beginning from 1971) and reached its climax in 1973 when almost all the sub-Saharan

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<sup>1</sup>J. Rosenau, "Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign Policy," The Scientific Study of Foreign Policy (New York: Free Press Ltd., 1971), p. 96.

African states severed diplomatic relations with Israel.

Having dealt with the African reactions to the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, and the increasingly pro-Arab trend in the OAU in the subsequent years, attempts will be made in this chapter to establish the influence of internal factors on the orientations of African states to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The factors that will be dealt with in this chapter are: economic, religious, political changes in African countries, and ideology.

To so many observers, the sub-Saharan African states' massive diplomatic severance with Israel in 1973 during the Yom Kippur war was prompted by a desire to obtain cheap oil from the Arabs.<sup>2</sup> To others, the move was for the sake of petro-dollars.<sup>3</sup> While it could be suggested that for some Black African states the economic factor was a strong motivation, to conclude that economic factors were the sole determinant would be highly erroneous. It will be shown that economic factors are not more important than factors such as religion and ideology.

Black African states such as Somalia and Mauritania refused to establish diplomatic relations with Israel after the attainment of independence in 1960. Their refusal to establish diplomatic relations with Israel could be

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<sup>2</sup>A. Abdul-Moshen, "Afro-Arab Cooperation," New African, July, 1977, p. 704.

<sup>3</sup>"The Arab League and Africa," African Development, July, 1975, p. A.L. 11.

attributed mainly to a show of solidarity with fellow Moslem Arab countries.<sup>4</sup> Their joining of the Arab league in 1974, despite the fact that they are not Arab states, perhaps explains the point I am trying to make.

It is worthy of note that Guinea and Mauritania broke diplomatic relations with Israel and the United States respectively in 1967, after the termination of the Arab-Israeli war of June, 1967. Mauritania and Guinea's move perhaps could not have gained them anything in 1967. Guinea and Mauritania's move might have been motivated by a combination of religious and ideological considerations.

The mere fact that about nine Black African states had broken diplomatic relations with Israel between 1967 and October 4, 1973 (even before the war), shows that economic factors related to the oil embargo and price hike could not have been the sole determinant. In fact, several factors could be identified which were responsible for the massive diplomatic severance with Israel.

In this chapter and in the following one, attempts will be made to establish that the sub-Saharan African states' massive diplomatic severance with Israel in 1973 could not be attributed wholly to a single factor. It will be shown that, in most cases, more than one factor seems to have been involved.<sup>5</sup> Table 1 below shows the list of

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<sup>4</sup>It should be borne in mind that almost 100% of the populations of Somalia and Mauritania are Moslems.

<sup>5</sup>J. Miller, "African-Israeli Relations: The Impact of Continental Solidarity," Middle East Journal, Vol. 29, 1975, p. 397.

African states and dates when diplomatic relations were broken with Israel.

Table 1: Dates when Diplomatic Relations Were Broken

<u>African State</u>	<u>Dates when Relations Were Broken</u>
Guinea	June 12, 1967
Uganda	March 30, 1972
Chad	November 28, 1972
Congo (B)	December 31, 1972
Niger	January 4, 1973
Mali	January 5, 1973
Burundi	May 16, 1973
Togo	September 21, 1973
Zaire	October 4, 1973
Dahomey	October 6, 1973
Rwanda	October 9, 1973
Cameroon	October 15, 1973
Equatorial Guinea	October 15, 1973
Upper Volta	October 18, 1973
Tanzania	October 18, 1973
Malagasy Republic	October 20, 1973
Central African Republic	October 21, 1973
Sierra Leone	October 22, 1973
Ethiopia	October 23, 1973
Nigeria	October 25, 1973
Zambia	October 25, 1973
Gambia	October 25, 1973
Ghana	October 27, 1973
Senegal	October 27, 1973
Gabon	October 29, 1973
Kenya	November 1, 1973
Liberia	November 2, 1973
Botswana	November 13, 1973

Source: M. Curtis and S. Gitelson (eds.), Israel in the Third World (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1976), p. 312.

### Economic Factors

While the severance of diplomatic relations with Israel by Chad, Niger and Mali could be attributed to a number of factors,<sup>6</sup> the Ugandan diplomatic severance from

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<sup>6</sup>These include religious solidarity, economic factors, and attempts by Chad to put an end to Libya's meddling in its internal affairs.

available evidences could be mainly attributed to economic aid.

Relations between Uganda and Israel have been very warm since the ascension of General Idi Amin in 1971,<sup>7</sup> until early 1972. As late as November 15, 1971, General Idi Amin was even thanking Israel, saying, "We are thankful to the people of Israel for their aid, and their contributions to the development of Uganda."<sup>8</sup>

As time went on, something went wrong somewhere. It seemed that General Amin was annoyed because of Israel's refusal to approve the massive economic and military equipment he demanded from the Israelis. General Amin was said to have requested for military hardware which he would have used in mounting an armed expedition against Tanzania, in an attempt to annex the port of Tonga.<sup>9</sup> According to Foreign Minister Abba Eban of Israel, "We did not respond to all the requests that came from Uganda in this sphere,

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<sup>7</sup>It was even widely believed that Idi Amin was helped by the Israelis during the coup which ousted President Milton Obote from power. It was this belief that might have prompted some radical states such as Guinea, Tanzania, Somalia, Zambia, Congo-Brazzaville, etc., to refuse to extend diplomatic recognition to Idi Amin's regime. Amin's visit to Tel Aviv twice in quick succession, immediately after the coup, and the assurances of economic aid and arms sales by Israel, may have strengthened the belief of Israeli involvement in the coup. (For more details, see A. Klinghoffer, "Israel in Africa: The Strategy of Aid," Africa Report, April, 1972, p. 13).

<sup>8</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1972/73, p. A. 134.

<sup>9</sup>S. Gitelson, "Why do Small States Break Diplomatic Relations with Outside Powers?", International Studies Quarterly, Vol. 17, 1973/74, p. 467.



especially in the past half year. We did not respond on those occasions when it seemed to us that the requests were either beyond the reasonable economic capacity of Uganda, or were beyond reasonable defensive needs."<sup>10</sup>

Having been convinced that the Israelis were not prepared to give the extent of the amount of aid requested, Amin decided to try the Arabs, and off to Cairo he went. In Cairo, he was reported to have been directed to Tripoli.<sup>11</sup> President Anwar Sadat of Egypt might have been aware of the readiness of the Libyan leader, Colonel Gaddafi to aid only those who were ready to show sympathy for the Arab cause.<sup>12</sup> President Amin's move was described by Professor Ali Mazrui (a Ugandan) as follows: "Amin's visit to Libya was because he was already calculating the expulsion of the Israelis, and therefore, it made good economic and diplomatic sense to extract advantages from Israel's enemies."<sup>13</sup>

It was reported that when Amin got to Tripoli, Colonel Gaddafi made it crystal clear that he would agree to aid

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<sup>10</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1972/73, p. C.70.

<sup>11</sup>One should hasten to point out that the Egyptians were themselves being financed by the wealthy Arab states such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Libya.

<sup>12</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1972/73, p. C.70.

<sup>13</sup>Ali Mazrui, op. cit., p. 735.

Amin only if he agreed to support the Arab cause. According to Colin Legum, "Colonel Gaddafi made it clear to Amin Libya's interest in assisting anybody who is ready to join the Arab cause for the restoration of the Palestinian rights."<sup>14</sup>

The question of whether Amin agreed to join the Arab camp appeared to have been a foregone conclusion when one takes into consideration the anti-Israeli communique endorsed by both leaders at the end of General Amin's visit. The communique runs thus, "We pledge to support the Arabs in their struggle against Zionism and imperialism, for the liberation of the confiscated lands, and for the rights of the Palestinian people to return to their land and homes by all means."<sup>15</sup>

Immediately Amin returned to Kampala, several "unfounded" and apparently "fabricated" accusations were levelled against the Israelis in Uganda. The allegations ranged from Israeli collaboration with President Milton Obote, to maintenance of a "hidden army" of 700 men. (The total number of Israelis in Uganda at that time was given at 470, of whom over 300 were children and housewives of Israeli personnel in Uganda.<sup>16</sup>) Amin finally broke diplomatic relations with Israel on March 30, 1972--about three

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<sup>14</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1972/73, p. A.135.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

months after General Amin's visit to Libya.

Amin also accused Israel of collusion with Tanzania in what he called "imperialist-Zionist conspiracy with Tanzania, Britain and America" to invade Uganda. President Amin might have had some problems in having even the most radical anti-Western African states (with the exception of the Arabs) subscribe to his tale. President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia appeared to have been speaking for most of the African leaders by his reaction to Amin's tale: "We have never believed in the Amin myth."<sup>17</sup> Amin's accusations against Israel could be translated as an attempt to woo the radicals, who had in unison hitherto condemned him as "a tool of imperialism" to his side.

From the events that led to the Ugandan severance of diplomatic relations with Israel in March, 1972,<sup>18</sup> one could suggest that the severance of diplomatic relations with Israel was motivated mainly by promises of both technical assistance and economic aid from the Arabs. For one thing, the severance of relations with Israel could not be attributed to religious solidarity, because the percentage of Moslems in Uganda is so infinitesimal to the Christians--even though Amin himself is a Moslem.

To many observers, Uganda's diplomatic severance with

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>And the subsequent bombardment of Uganda with both technical assistance and economic aid and from ultra pro-Arab pronouncements following the severance of relations with Israel.

Israel was motivated by economic considerations. But it is also possible that other factors may have been involved. Attempts to make himself more acceptable to the African radical leaders who had hitherto denounced him as "a tool of imperialism" and the suspicion of the Israelis who were alleged to have helped him in ousting President Milton Obote may have contributed. Israel's rejection of his request for arms may also have been partly responsible. Professor Ali Mazrui holds the belief that the expulsion of the Israelis could partly have been prompted by Amin's fear of the Israelis who helped to bring him to power. In Mazrui's words, "Those that helped to make me can also help to break me."<sup>19</sup> Amin might have thought that the day he ceased to dance to the tune of the Israelis might mean his end.

#### Religious Factors

Islam, although by no means the only factor that made some sub-Saharan African states sever relations with Israel, nevertheless should be considered as one of the most important factors. Today, millions of Africans worship in the religious faith that developed its roots among the Arab people. A pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina means as much to the Moslem in Kano in Nigeria as it does to the faithful in Damascus or Cairo.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>A. Mazrui, op. cit., pp. 734-735.

<sup>20</sup>"Afro-Arab Summit: The Spirit of Cairo," Africa, No. 68, April, 1977, p. 21.



According to W. J. Breytenbach, Islam provides a particularly strong spiritual bond between the Arabs and the nine predominantly Moslem countries of sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>21</sup> For instance, in 1960, when Somalia and Mauritania attained their independence, they refused to establish diplomatic relations with Israel--apparently as a result of religious solidarity with fellow Moslem Arabs. Somalia had proclaimed herself a Moslem state as early as 1960 upon the attainment of independence.<sup>22</sup>

After the attainment of independence in the 60's, with the exception of Somalia and Mauritania, all other predominantly Moslem states established diplomatic relations with Israel. The stand of both the OAU and these predominantly Moslem states was to steer clear of the Arab-Israeli conflict and be friendly with both the Arabs and Israel. In spite of this consensus, Sir Ahmadu Bello, the powerful Muslim premier of Northern Nigeria, stoutly opposed Israel's offer of aid to Nigeria in June 1960.<sup>23</sup> It should be recalled that Sir Ahmadu was the Vice President of the World Islamic League. He was also the grandson of Sultan Uthman Dan Fodio who declared a jihad (Holy War) in the 19th

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<sup>21</sup>The countries are: Somalia, Mali, Djibouti, Chad, Niger, Guinea, Senegal, Mauritania and Gambia. (See Map 1.)

<sup>22</sup>J. Baulin, The Arab Role in Africa (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1962), p. 30.

<sup>23</sup>A. Rivkin, Africa and the West (New York: Praeger Publishers Ltd., 1962), p. 80. Also see C. Phillips, The Development of Nigerian Foreign Policy (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), p. 82.



century and created a Muslim theocratic state in what is now known as Northern Nigeria.

Had Sir Ahmadu not been resolutely opposed by the two premiers of the predominantly Christian Southern Nigeria, perhaps Nigeria would not have accepted the aid and Nigeria would not have established diplomatic relations with Israel. According to Sir Ahmadu Bello, "To my mind, Israel does not exist. And will never exist."<sup>24</sup> The Christian premiers of Southern Nigeria admired and held Israel in high esteem. Before independence, there were already economic ties between the governments of Western and Eastern Nigeria and Israel. During a visit to Israel in 1961, Chief Samuel Akintola, the premier of the Western Region, said: "You can be assured of our friendship and support at any place, and we promise never to withdraw this."<sup>25</sup> The premier of the Eastern Region, Dr. Michael Okpara, was quoted as saying in 1961, "I myself am almost an Israelite. I love and admire Israel. For my part I shall always go to Israel and any aid offered to us would be accepted."<sup>26</sup>

While the Southern Christian premiers wanted strong ties with Israel and pro-Israeli policy, they recognized that the complexity of the situation in the Middle East demanded a non-aligned policy on the issue. On the other

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<sup>24</sup>A. Akinyemi, Foreign Policy and Federalism: The Nigerian Experience (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1974), p. 104.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

hand, Sir Ahmadu wanted the federal government to pursue a pro-Arab and anti-Israeli policy. Because of the pro-Arab sympathies in the North and the pro-Israeli sympathies in the South, the federal government adopted a middle-of-the-road policy towards the Arab-Israeli conflict in order to preserve the unity of the country.<sup>27</sup> Apparently, Sir Ahmadu's actions had been prompted by Northern Nigeria's cultural and religious affinities with the Arab world.

In the early 70's, observers noted the increasing influence of Islam in Africa.\* This has been attributed partly to the increasing solidarity among the predominantly Moslem states in Africa and the Arabs. In 1960, the number of Black African pilgrims to Mecca and Medina was put by J. Baulin as 15,536 from Nigeria, 5,176 from Niger, 2,085 from Sudan, 1,059 from Senegal.<sup>28</sup> In 1968, the number of Nigerian pilgrims had risen to 26,000 and by 1977, the number of Nigerian pilgrims to the Holy Land had risen to a staggering 105,000.<sup>29</sup> The amount of foreign reserve that is being consumed was so enormous that the federal government of Nigeria took drastic steps to considerably

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 105.

<sup>28</sup>J. Baulin, op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>29</sup>West Africa, March 20, 1978.

\*Predominantly Muslim states such as Somalia and Mauritania joined the Arab League in 1974, even though they are not Arab countries.

reduce the number of Nigerian pilgrims.<sup>30</sup>

King Faisal of Saudi Arabia may have sensed the increasing advance of Islam in Africa when he embarked on a tour of African states in December, 1972.<sup>31</sup> All the countries visited by the king with the exception of Uganda are predominantly Moslem states. Uganda, which is not a predominantly Moslem state, was headed by President Idi Amin, a Moslem. From King Faisal's pronouncements during his tour of the five states, one could suggest that the King had come to appeal to the Moslem countries to show more sympathy for the Arab cause in the name of religious solidarity.

There was an attempt on the part of King Faisal to extend the area of conflict beyond the immediate battleground of the Middle East into the entire Islamic sub-system, thus turning the conflict into one between Israel and the Muslim world, and not merely between the former and the Arab states. In Kampala for instance, he appeared to have attempted to whip up Muslim emotions against Israel by calling for war against what he called, "Zionists, who destroy all humanity and all work which good men try to perform."<sup>32</sup>

Since all the predominantly Muslim states in Black Africa are part of the entire Islamic sub-system, all the

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> King Faisal visited Uganda, Niger, Chad, Mali and Mauritania.

<sup>32</sup> Africa Research Bulletin, October 1-31, 1973, p. 3023.

extremely anti-Israeli resolutions adopted during the Islamic conferences are bound to have some spill-over effects on their orientations to the Arab-Israeli conflict.\* The mere fact that the Al Aksa mosque and other sacred shrines of Islam were and still are under Israeli occupation, may have motivated the Muslim states to show more sympathy for the Arab cause.

One could suggest from his tour that since Uganda had already broken relations with Israel, his visit could be an attempt to show gratitude for President Amin's support. He may have promised Amin some economic aid in return for his diplomatic severance with Israel. The promises of economic aid could not be ruled out in the case of Mali and Niger should they agree to break diplomatic relations with Israel.

Following King Faisal's tour in December 1972, Niger broke diplomatic relations with Israel on January 4, 1973. Mali followed suit the following day on January 5, 1973. Chad had already broken relations with Israel on November 28, 1972, but after King Faisal's tour, allowed the P.L.O. to establish an office in the Chadian capital of Ndjemena.

Although religious considerations were by no means the sole factor that motivated the predominantly Moslem states in Africa to break relations with Israel, their orientations to the Arab-Israeli conflict were greatly influenced by

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\* For the resolutions passed on the Arab-Israeli conflict during the Islamic conferences, see M. Curtis and S. Gitelson (1976), op. cit., pp. 263-265.



religious factors. Generally, the predominantly Moslem states and the radical states in Africa are more likely to support the Arabs than the non-Moslem and moderate states.\* (See Appendix V for the voting patterns of the sub-Saharan African states on the Arab-Israeli conflict from 1967 to 1972.)

Apart from the ideological considerations which may have motivated Guinea and Mauritania to break relations with Israel and the United States respectively after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, religious solidarity with fellow Moslem Arabs cannot be overlooked. In spite of economic aid and technical assistance received from Israel by the predominantly Moslem states, none of them supported her at the United Nations in July 1967. It is more than a coincidence that predominantly Moslem states such as Guinea (June 12, 1967), Niger (January 4, 1973) and Mali (January 5, 1973) were among the first sub-Saharan African states to break diplomatic relations with Israel.<sup>33</sup>

#### Ideological Factor

Right from the early sixties, the radical African states appeared to have shown more sympathy for the Arab cause. For instance, as early as January 1961, the

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\*When King Faisal of Saudi Arabia visited Chad, Mauritania, Senegal, Niger and Uganda in December, 1972, he was not only warmly received, but given assurances of support for the Arab cause. On January 4 and 5, Niger and Mali broke relations with Israel respectively.

<sup>33</sup>Although it is equally true that Senegal (a predominantly Moslem state) which broke relations with Israel on October 28, was among the last to break relations with Israel.



Casablanca group of radical African states which includes Ghana, Guinea and Mali, adopted an anti-Israeli resolution which condemned Israel as "a tool of imperialism." Also at the 1963 conference of Afro-Asian people's solidarity in Tanzania (then known as Tanganyika), a resolution was passed condemning "Zionist infiltration into Africa."<sup>34</sup>

One of the principal reasons why the African states were more inclined to support the Arab position was the general perception of Israel among the radical African states as an imperialist or a representative of the northern tier, in the north/south dichotomy. External to the African regional sub-system, Israel was also seen as a major imperialist power.

At the 1964 non-aligned conference in Cairo, when a resolution was passed demanding "the full restoration of the rights of the Arab people of Palestine to their homeland,"<sup>35</sup> all the Casablanca group supported it. Several factors have been suggested as to why Black radical states identified more with the Arabs. These include: (1) Arabs' anti-imperialist policies, (2) perception of Israel as part of the Western world, and (3) Pan-African policies.

President Nasser's commitment to the freedom of Africa is demonstrated from the statement he made in his book, The Philosophy of the Revolution, as far back as 1954. In his

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<sup>34</sup>S. Decalo, op. cit., p. 59.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

book he said that "we cannot in any way stand aside, even if we wish to, from the sanguinary and dreadful struggle now raging in the heart of the continent between five million whites and two hundred million Africans. We cannot do so for one principal reason--we ourselves are in Africa."<sup>36</sup> In December, 1960, President Nasser was quoted as saying, "Our people must accept the historical responsibility that befalls any advanced group fighting for the sake of liberty. Our republic must accept the responsibility of being a launching ground for the cause of liberty."<sup>37</sup>

Right from 1956, President Nasser started to provide Black African freedom fighters with military, financial and political aid. He also endeavoured to persuade other Arab states of the need to co-operate with Black Africa.<sup>38</sup> Several African nationalist movements were allowed to open offices in Cairo. From Cairo, all these nationalist movements disseminated propaganda and agitation to their respective countries. Most of the nationalist movements published their own journals. The Cameroonians in Cairo, for instance, published a monthly journal called The Voice of Kamerun. In addition, the government of Egypt put a radio station called "The Voice of Free Africa" at the

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<sup>36</sup>G. Nasser, Egypt's Liberation: The Philosophy of the Revolution (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1955), p. 109.

<sup>37</sup>J. Baulin, op. cit., p. 44.

<sup>38</sup>A. Abdul-Moshen, "Africa and the Arabs," New African, July, 1977, p. 116.

disposal of the nationalist movements. The radio station broadcasted to various parts of Africa. By 1961, the radio's broadcasts to Africa included 90 minutes in Somali, 60 minutes in Swahili, 75 minutes in Hausa, 30 minutes in Amharic, 75 minutes in English and 60 minutes in French.<sup>39</sup>

Explaining the aim of the African broadcasting service, the director of the radio station said, "Africa is the last bastion of colonialism, so we give our listeners news of the struggles of other peoples and the advantages enjoyed by those who have liberated themselves."<sup>40</sup> However, some observers doubted whether the broadcasts had any real influence in the awakening of Africans as Egypt had claimed. The mere fact that not only did the French and the British governments attempt to jam the station, but the protest of the British Foreign Minister, Selwyn Lloyd, to the Egyptian government about Cairo's broadcasts, showed that the British and French governments took the broadcasts seriously.<sup>41</sup> The New York Times of March 1, 1956, seemed to have given credibility to the Egyptian claim by saying, "The Egyptians made themselves heard everywhere in Africa, and play the role of self-chosen leaders."

After the attainment of independence in 1962, Algeria started to give military, material and moral support to the

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<sup>39</sup>J. Baulin, op. cit., pp. 46-47.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 49.

liberation movements in Africa. The political support given to Algeria during her struggle for freedom by the African states may have contributed to President Ben-Bella's enthusiasm in helping the liberation movements. At the inaugural conference of the O.A.U. in May, 1963, President Ben-Bella promised 10,000 Algerian volunteers "to free those portions of Africa still under colonial oppression and white minority rule. We must all agree to die so that African unity may not be an empty word."<sup>42</sup>

At the 1963 inaugural conference of the O.A.U., President Ben Bella was also said to have resolutely opposed some leaders who wished to keep their roles of supplying and moving arms to the freedom fighters secret. He argued that African leaders' collaboration with the freedom fighters should be made an open secret.<sup>43</sup> He said that "I have not come here because of any special interest in African charters. My primary aim is to help liberate those parts of Africa not yet liberated. If this conference does not share my concern, I will refuse to be a signatory to any charter."<sup>44</sup>

The immense help given to the freedom fighters, and the roles played by the Arab states such as Egypt, Algeria and

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<sup>42</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1972/73, p. A.48.

<sup>43</sup>The Addis Ababa Conference as Seen From 19 Capitals in Africa, Europe, Asia and America," Africa Report, Vol. 8, No. 6, June, 1963, p. 6.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

Syria in the forefront of anti-imperialism and anti-colonialism, may have impressed the radical states of Black Africa. The radical African and Arab states' identical anti-western feelings may have drawn them closer together than to the moderate pro-Western states of Black Africa. Radical regimes in Black Africa tended to support the states with similar political orientations. Consequently, the radical African states almost automatically supported Egypt, a foundation member of the Casablanca group of radical African states. The moderate, more pro-Western regimes tended to support Israel because of her close ties with the West.\*

On a number of African issues the radical African states and the Arabs seemed to have presented a united front. For instance, in February, 1960, when France tested nuclear bombs in the Sahara, Ghana, Egypt, Mali and Guinea formally protested to the French government. Ghana even went to the extent of confiscating French assets in Ghana. At the January, 1961 conference of radical states in Casablanca, France was condemned. Nigeria was the only moderate state that protested against the French tests by severing diplomatic relations with France. The Brazzaville and Monrovia groups of moderate states did not even mention the tests. In sharp contrast to the Casablanca group which also strongly denounced France on the question of Algeria,

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\*M. Curtis and S. Gitelson (1976), op. cit., p. 309.



the moderate groups of Monrovia and Brazzaville took a more cautious position on Algeria.<sup>45</sup>

On the question of the Congo crisis, in sharp contrast to the general pro-Western attitudes of the moderate states of Black Africa, the Casablanca group's attitudes were anti-Western. Apart from the fact that the Casablanca group together with other non-aligned countries such as India pulled out their troops serving with the U.N. in the Congo, Ghana and Egypt broke relations with Belgium. Egypt even went to the extent of confiscating the Belgian assets in Egypt.<sup>46</sup> When Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba was assassinated in January, 1961, President Nasser immediately granted Lumumba's wife and children political asylum in Cairo.<sup>47</sup>

Britain's refusal to suppress the Ian Smith's unilateral Declaration of Independence by force of arms in 1965 prompted the Casablanca charter states (Guinea, Ghana, Mali, Algeria and U.A.R.) to break relations with Britain. Congo-Brazzaville, which was a member of the Brazzaville group was the only non-Casablanca charter state that broke relations with Britain. This is perhaps because of the increasing radicalization of the Congolese regime in the mid-60's.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>S. Gitelson (1973-74), op. cit., p. 469.

<sup>46</sup>Kwame Nkrumah, The Challenge of the Congo (London: Panaf Books Ltd., 1967), pp. 88-89.

<sup>47</sup>J. Baulin, op. cit., p. 50.

<sup>48</sup>S. Gitelson (1973-74), op. cit., p. 472.

Some observers have attributed the increasing pro-Arab trend in the O.A.U. in the 70's partly to Black Africa's disillusionment with the western world on many sensitive African issues. The stand taken by the Western world with regard to the U.D.I. in Rhodesia, arms sale to South Africa, employment of NATO weapons by Portugal in its colonial wars in Africa, were in sharp contrast to the interests of Black Africa. It is against this background that Africa began to look for new allies which they found in the Arabs.<sup>49</sup>

Since Israel is closely related to the Western world,<sup>\*</sup> some African states might have felt more comfortable breaking diplomatic relations with Israel rather than with a super power such as the United States or great powers like Britain or France. It could be argued that their breaking of relations with Israel was an attempt in a way to show their increasing disenchantment with the Western world. Ambassador Yaacov Shimon of Israel had this to say about the snowball effect of African disenchantment with the Western world on Israel: "Most African states are deeply frustrated and resentful, and are not very happy with the results of the first fifteen years of independence. The responsibility for that is largely ascribed to the rich, white, industrialized developed world. It became apparent

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<sup>49</sup>Z. Cervenka (1974), op. cit., p. 77.

<sup>\*</sup>When Prime Minister Ben Gurion visited Holland in 1966, he even argued that Israel ought to be included in the European Common Market because he said Israel was a European state.

that Israel also suffered from this resentment since she is also classified as being part of the developed and industrialized world."<sup>50</sup>

Another factor that prompted radical Black African states to identify more with the Arab cause was the mystique of Pan-Africanism. This made radical states view the African continent as a whole. For instance, leaders like Sekou Toure, Modibo Keita and Kwame Nkrumah may have genuinely regarded the Algerians or the Egyptians, for example, as fellow Africans.<sup>51</sup> Symbolically, President Nkrumah of Ghana even married an Egyptian woman and named his first son Gamal, apparently after President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt.

The pronouncements and actions of both radical African and Arab leaders were clear testimony to the fact that they viewed the continent of Africa as a whole. It was perhaps because of this that President Nasser was prompted after the 1961 Casablanca conference to declare, "This conference means the collapse of all imperialistic manoeuvres to divide Africa into two parts--North Africa and Black Africa. This conference, instead of showing the Sahara as a barrier, reveals it as a connecting link."<sup>52</sup> Speaking at the conference of independent African states in Accra on April

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<sup>50</sup>Y. Shimoni, "Israel, the Arabs and Africa," Africa Report, July/August, 1976, p. 53.

<sup>51</sup>A. Mazrui, op. cit., pp. 729-733.

<sup>52</sup>J. Baulin, op. cit., p. 43.



15, 1958, President Nkrumah said, "Today we are one. If in the past the Sahara divided us, now it unites us and an injury to one is an injury to all."<sup>53</sup>

The strong belief in pan-Africanism may have prompted the radical states to start identifying with the Arabs as far back as 1961--even before the formation of the O.A.U. Guinea, a member of the Casablanca group, was the first sub-Saharan African state to break diplomatic relations with Israel. Mali, another Casablanca group member, was among the first to break relations with Israel (January 5, 1973). Perhaps the possibility of Ghana (another member state of the charter) breaking relations with Israel earlier than when it did (October 27, 1973), had Nkrumah remained in power would not have been slim.

#### Radicalization of African Regimes and the O.A.U.

The increasing radicalization of many African regimes may have contributed to the strained relations between the African states and Israel. The severance of diplomatic relations by countries such as Congo-Brazzaville, Burundi, Zaire and Togo could be attributed partly to this factor.<sup>54</sup>

It has been suggested by some observers that the severance of relations was in part a way of appeasing the

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<sup>53</sup>K. Nkrumah, The Axioms of Kwame Nkrumah (London: Panaf Books Ltd., 1967), p. 8.

<sup>54</sup>All the above countries had broken diplomatic relations with Israel even before the commencement of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

young radicals at home, which became disenchanted and upset about their countries' reliance on the Western world. For instance, radical elements in Ethiopia were said to have been highly critical of Emperor Haile Selassie's close ties with both America and Israel. The severance of relations with Israel was considered to have had lower cost than severing relations with a country like the United States.<sup>55</sup>

The foreign ministers of the sub-Saharan African states (who usually are relatively younger than their heads of state) appeared to have put immense pressure on their "bosses" to change their attitudes to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Right from the 1967 war, they had shown their solidarity with the Arabs by condemning Israel and recommending same for the Heads of State Conference in Algiers in 1968, only to be turned down. At that time, the African Heads of State were not ready to go that far in their commitment to the Arab cause. The fact of the pressure exerted on the Heads of State by the Ministers is acknowledged by Professor Samuel Decalo, who declared that, "While Presidents' offices in Africa are often sympathetic to Israel, this is not always true of foreign ministers and the U.N. delegations who are in daily contact with their Arab counterparts."<sup>56</sup>

The pressure exerted on the Heads of State was not

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<sup>55</sup>S. Gitelson (1973-74), op. cit., p. 460.

<sup>56</sup>S. Decalo, op. cit., p. 60.



limited to the foreign ministers and the radical elements in the sub-Saharan African states alone. The mass media, especially the press, usually put pressure on the governments to change their orientations. In 1970 for instance, the Nigerian press, especially the influential Daily Times, put stupendous pressure on General Gowon of Nigeria, to break diplomatic relations with Israel after the end of the Nigerian civil war. This is because of the alleged Israeli support for the "Biafrans" during the civil war.<sup>57</sup>

The Ghanaian press exerted a lot of pressure on General Acheampong of Ghana to break diplomatic relations with Israel, especially during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. According to the Daily Graphic of October 6, 1973, "African countries which maintain relations with Israel do so at the grave danger of undermining their own security--and selling their dignity and birthright to anti-African racist regimes which aim at exterminating us from the continent."<sup>58</sup>

There was a general increasing militancy on the part of the O.A.U. with regards to the question of Southern Africa beginning from 1970. In 1971, the O.A.U. rejected out-of-hand Israel's offer of financial aid to the African liberation committee because of reports of increasing links between South Africa, Portugal and Israel. The official reason given by the O.A.U. for the rejection of the offer

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<sup>57</sup>See S. Gitelson (1973-74), op. cit., p. 466.

<sup>58</sup>Daily Graphic, October 6, 1973.

was that the fund came from a "neo-colonial and imperialist state." The rejection was brought about by the militant African states and the Arabs who solicited the rejection.<sup>59</sup>

The increasing militancy of the O.A.U. was also manifested in 1970, when President Houphouet Boigny of Ivory Coast's proposal of Dialogue with South Africa was resoundingly defeated in the O.A.U. The move brought a lot of criticism from African leaders who were even viewed as moderates.<sup>60</sup> At the end of the 1970 O.A.U. Conference, a militant resolution was passed which condemned dialogue as "a manoeuvre by South Africa and its allies to divide Africa, confuse world opinion, relieve South Africa from international ostracism and isolation and obtain an acceptance of the status quo in South Africa."<sup>61</sup>

The increasing militancy on the question of the liberation of southern African sub-continent was demonstrated by the O.A.U. resolution on the Portuguese colonies in 1972. The resolution called for the liberation of the colonies "through concerted and practical actions of all kinds and at all levels." This can be interpreted as tantamount to direct military involvement by African states on behalf of the liberation movements. The previous stand of the O.A.U. was that the liberation of the territories was the

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<sup>59</sup>M. Curtis and S. Gitelson (1976), *op. cit.*, p. 189.

<sup>60</sup>For instance, moderate leaders such as Emperor Haile Selassie and General Gowon of Nigeria opposed Ivory Coast's proposal of dialogue with South Africa.

<sup>61</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1971/72, p. A.85.

responsibility of the freedom fighters concerned.

This drastic shift in orientation is also noted by Colin Legum, an expert on African affairs: "The decision, in principle, to involve African armies directly in the liberation struggle constitutes one of the major policy shifts of the O.A.U. Previously, the O.A.U. had strictly upheld the doctrine that national liberation movements should wage their own guerrilla wars with no greater support than the assurances of material and moral backing of independent African states."<sup>62</sup>

In the 70's, most of the sub-Saharan African states became increasingly impatient to find a solution to the liberation of parts of Africa still under white minority control. In the process, they were more than ready to trade off Israel for Arab support.<sup>63</sup> This increasing impatience of the African states was demonstrated by Mobutu's emotional speech at the United Nations in October, 1973. In President Mobutu's address, he stated, "We can no longer accept a situation where throughout the world, all races are free except the black race of Africa. And this is why we are determined to do everything in our power to change this state of affairs. The domination and exploitation of the black on the soil of its ancestors by the white foreigners must

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. A.50.

<sup>63</sup>S. Gitelson, "Unfulfilled Expectations: Arab and Israeli aid as political instruments in Black African United Nations Voting Behaviour," Jewish Social Studies, Vol. 38, 1976, p. 160.

cease."<sup>64</sup>

President Mobutu Sese Seko might have surprised the whole world, when after his speech at the United Nations on October 4, 1973, his country broke diplomatic relations with Israel and condemned Israel's territorial expansionism.<sup>65</sup> Hitherto Mobutu had been viewed as a moderate and implacable pro-Western leader. His action was, perhaps, a testimony of the prevailing mood in Black Africa.

### Conclusion

In this chapter, it has been demonstrated that several internal factors might have brought about the increasingly pro-Arab attitudes within the sub-Saharan African states and in the O.A.U. during 1971-1973. These factors include: economic factors, radicalization of the O.A.U. and the African regimes, religious factors, ideological factors and attempts by some states to appease young radical critics at home, who were upset about their countries' dependence upon the Western world.

It has also been shown that the increasing pro-Arab trend in the O.A.U. in the seventies could be partly attributed to Africa's disillusionment with the western world on many sensitive African issues such as the sale of arms to South Africa, refusal to extend diplomatic recognition to Guinea-Bissau in 1973, and U.D.I. in Rhodesia. It is

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<sup>64</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1973/74, p. A.35.

<sup>65</sup>A. Mazrui (1975), op. cit., p. 735.



against this background that Africa began to look for new allies which they found in the Arabs. Hence, Israel was traded off for the Arab support at the United Nations and other international forums.

Since Israel is closely related to the Western world, Africa's disenchantment with the west had a spill-over effect on Israel. Most of the African states may have felt more comfortable breaking relations with Israel rather than with their former metropolises, since they were still closely linked through trade preferences, financial and technical assistance. Hence, it could be argued that their breaking of relations with Israel was an attempt to show their increasing disenchantment with the Western world.

The radical Casablanca charter states and other radicalized states such as Tanzania, Burundi and Congo-Brazzaville, which had been pro-Arab all along, appeared to have gained an upper hand in the O.A.U. during this era with the movement of the O.A.U. from the right to the left of the ideological spectrum. It should be recalled that it was the radical states that successfully whipped up emotion against Ivory Coast's proposal of dialogue with South Africa in 1970. The rejection of Israel's offer of financial aid to the African liberation committee in 1971 was also brought about by the militant African states and the Arabs who stoutly solicited the rejection. The increasing influence of the radical African states in the O.A.U. coincided with an era when most of the African states became disenchanted



with the attitudes of the Western world on many sensitive African issues.

This chapter has attempted to establish the fact that the predominantly Moslem states and the radical states of Black Africa, are more likely to support the Arab cause than the moderate states. The two groups were the first to choose the Arab side in the Arab-Israeli conflict and they are more likely than any groups to be consistent in their support for the Arabs as events in the post-1973 era show.

## CHAPTER V

### EXTERNAL FACTORS: 1971-1973

Professor James Rosenau defined external factors as "any non-human aspects of a society's external environment or any actions occurring abroad that condition or otherwise influence the choices made by its officials."<sup>1</sup>

The membership of Black African states in the non-aligned organization, in the Islamic sub-system, and in the continental organization of the O.A.U. which encompasses the Arab states of Africa, appeared to have had a very strong impact on their attitudes to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The international environment in Third World forums<sup>\*</sup> in the seventies became increasingly anti-Israel. For instance, at the 1973 non-aligned conference in Algiers, member states not only adopted an extremely anti-Israeli resolution, but members were urged to break diplomatic relations with Israel.<sup>\*\*</sup> While attending the 1973 Summit conference of the non-aligned nations, Fidel Castro broke

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<sup>1</sup>J. Rosenau, op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>\*</sup>These include the non-aligned conferences, the Islamic conferences and the O.A.U. conferences.

<sup>\*\*</sup>For the anti-Israeli resolutions at the Islamic conferences--1970 in Karachi, Pakistan, 1971 in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and 1973 in Tripoli, Libya. See also the non-aligned states' resolutions 1970 Lusaka, Zambia, 1972 Georgetown, Guyana and 1973, Algiers, Algeria in M. Curtis and S. Gitelson (1976), op. cit., pp. 247-267.

diplomatic relations with Israel. He gave Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab lands and Israeli "imperialist aggression" as partly responsible for Cuba's severance of relations with Israel. Castro also stated that the severance of relations with Israel was "in response to the demands and sentiments of the nations represented at the Algiers Conference."<sup>2</sup>

The extremely hostile international environment at the September, 1973 non-aligned conference in Algiers--where a strongly worded resolution was passed condemning the continued Israeli occupation of the Arab lands was partly responsible for the diplomatic severance between Israel and three African states (Togo, September 21, 1973, Zaire, October 4, 1973, and Dahomey, October 6, 1973).<sup>3</sup> West Africa of October 15, 1973, blamed the diplomatic severance with Israel by Togo, Zaire and Dahomey on the hostile anti-Israeli atmosphere that prevailed at the Algiers non-aligned conference. According to the West Africa, "The strong anti-Israeli atmosphere at the non-aligned conference in September, 1973, attended by many African leaders had some influence."<sup>\*</sup>

The membership of the Arab states in the O.A.U. enabled them to put direct pressure on member states to

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>3</sup>T. Ismael, The Middle East in World Politics (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1974), pp. 179-180.

<sup>\*</sup>West Africa, October 15, 1973, p. 1443.

identify with the Arab cause. The interactions of the Arab and African officials within the O.A.U., at the United Nations and other Third World gatherings may have had some impact on the orientation of the African states to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Commenting on the impact of external variables on the foreign policy formulation of Nigeria, Professor Olajide Aluko<sup>\*</sup> said, "Pressure and demands arising from the subordinate (regional) level cannot but affect Nigeria's foreign policy. While it is recognized that the O.A.U. is not a supranational organization, the obligations arising from Nigeria's membership in the organization cannot but influence her external posture."<sup>\*\*</sup> Professor Aluko pointed out that Nigeria had been unable to take a stand over the Middle East conflict largely because of her relations with Egypt and other Arab countries who are members of the O.A.U.<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

In this chapter, attempts will be made to deal with several external factors which might have influenced the pro-Arab attitude between 1971 and 1973. These factors are: Israel's interference in the internal affairs of the sub-Saharan African states, the failure of the O.A.U.

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<sup>\*</sup> Professor Olajide Aluko is a senior lecturer and Head of Department of International Relations at the University of Ife, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

<sup>\*\*</sup> O. Aluko, "Options in Nigerian Foreign Policy," an unpublished paper presented during the Canadian Association of African Studies Conference, held on May 1-4, 1979, at the University of Winnipeg, p. 11.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

peace mission, Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab lands and Arab pressure on African states.

Israel's Refusal to Withdraw from  
the Occupied Arab Lands

One of the cardinal motivating factors that prompted the sub-Saharan African states to break diplomatic relations with Israel (especially in 1973) was Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories. In the first place, it was the occupation of the Egyptian territory that drew the O.A.U. into the conflict. Prior to 1967, most African states, if not all, remained indifferent to the conflict. But as from 1967, there were noticeable shifts of alliance especially manifested by Guinea's severance of diplomatic relations with Israel. The voting patterns of the African states on the Arab-Israeli issue after the 1967 war at the United Nations is also a clear testament of this fact.<sup>4</sup>

By having acquired territories by force, Israel was seen to have violated one of Africa's most cherished continental principles, the integrity and sanctity of existing borders. The fact that part of these occupied territories belong to an African state (Egypt) added to the gravity of this violation, especially since Israel was not perceived to have declared itself committed to withdrawal

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<sup>4</sup>See Appendix I for the voting pattern of African states on the Arab-Israeli issue in the U.N. in 1967.



from the territories. It should be borne in mind that Black African states have been increasingly insistent on the territorial issue since 1967.<sup>5</sup>

The issue of "territorial integrity" has been a very sensitive issue in Africa. Hence it was entrenched in the O.A.U. charter (Article III, paragraph 3) by the founding fathers of the O.A.U. The issue has been very sensitive because when Africa was partitioned at the Berlin Conference of 1884, the present international boundaries in Africa cut across many ethnic groups. African states have no alternative than to accept the sanctity of the existing borders because according to Dr. Haile Minassie, the Ethiopian foreign minister, "Once the floodgate of territorial claim was opened, there was no way of closing it."<sup>6</sup> This view is also shared by President Nwalimu Nyerere; "None of the nation states in Africa are natural units. Our present boundaries are the result of the European decisions at the time of the scramble for Africa. They cut across ethnic groups, often disregard natural physical divisions, and result in many different language groups being encompassed within a state."<sup>7</sup>

The increasing concern of African states in the 70's about Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied lands

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<sup>5</sup>M. Curtis and S. Gitelson (1976), op. cit., p. 311.

<sup>6</sup>Africa Research Bulletin, May 1-31, 1973, p. 2845.

<sup>7</sup>J. Nyerere, op. cit., p. 208.

might have been related to fears that that could serve as a precedent for South Africa and Rhodesia in encroaching on Zambia, Angola, Mozambique and other front-line states.<sup>8</sup> Since all the front line states might be attacked on the pretext that they provide bases for the freedom fighters, from which they infiltrate into South Africa and Rhodesia.

From all the messages sent to Israel when the African states broke diplomatic relations with her in 1973, all of them stated that diplomatic relations were broken because of Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab lands. In its message, Ghana stated that "Until such a time as Israel withdrew from Arab lands, relations would remain broken."<sup>9</sup> Liberia states that "Since Israel has persisted in its refusal to surrender the Egyptian territory in contravention of the U.N. Security Council resolutions, Liberia hereby severs diplomatic relations with Israel and the severance will continue as long as Israel illegally occupies the Arab territories."<sup>10</sup> Kenya stated that, "As long as Israel continues to occupy Arab lands taken by force of arms which is not only against the U.N. Charter but against the principles of Kenya, Kenya has decided not to maintain diplomatic relations with Israel."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>M. Curtis and S. Gitelson (1976), op. cit., p. 190.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

One could suggest that the consistent defiance by Israel of O.A.U. and U.N. resolutions urging that she withdraw from the occupied Arab territories, might have angered many, if not all, the African states. Israel's defiance of African and world opinions might have been equated with South African contempt for U.N. resolutions.

A careful study of the table of the times when diplomatic relations were broken with Israel by African states would reveal one thing. Most of the countries that broke relations with Israel actually did so when there were reports that not only had Israeli military forces encircled a whole division of the Egyptian army, but that the Israeli troops were on their way not only to Cairo but to Damascus. The Israeli forces' movement towards Cairo appeared very disturbing to Africans. Mordechai Nahumi\* pointed out that Israeli forces' movement to both Cairo and Damascus was translated to be tantamount to the fact that not only was Israel not ready to part with the occupied territories, but she was even prepared to occupy and annex more lands.<sup>12</sup>

Nigeria, like many African states, reacted sharply to the news that Israel had crossed the Sinai peninsula into the West Bank of the Suez Canal during the 1973 Yom Kippur war. General Yakubu Gowon of Nigeria declared, "Nigeria

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\* Mr. Mordechai Nahumi is the political commentator for the Israeli Daily Al Hamishmar.

<sup>12</sup> M. Nahumi, "New Direction in Israel/African Relations," New Outlook, Vol. 16, No. 7, September, 1973, p. 19.

will never accept a situation whereby Israel attempts to consolidate its presence on the West Bank of the Suez Canal. Now that the extent of the Israeli penetration inside Egyptian territory has been proved, it has become necessary for the government to reconsider its relations with Israel."<sup>13</sup>

The importance of this factor could be seen from the fact that all the African states that broke diplomatic relations with Israel in 1973 made it abundantly clear that relations with Israel would remain broken as long as Israel occupied the Arab lands. The conditions given by the African states that relations would remain broken as long as Arab lands were occupied showed how seriously the African states took the issue of "territorial integrity." It is interesting to note that none of them specifically mentioned the Palestinian issue.

#### The Failure of the O.A.U. Peace Mission

As from 1971, the O.A.U. began to play a more active role in the Arab-Israeli conflict. After the 1971 O.A.U. conference in Addis-Ababa, a committee of ten Heads of State were appointed to mediate in the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>14</sup> At the first meeting of the committee of ten,

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<sup>13</sup>J. Miller, op. cit., p. 401. Also in African Research Bulletin, October 1-31, 1973, p. 3023.

<sup>14</sup>The ten countries appointed were: Nigeria, Senegal, Zaire, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Liberia, Tanzania, Mauritania, Kenya and Ivory Coast.



held in Kinshasha, Zaire, a sub-committee of four heads of state was appointed to hold talks with Israeli and Egyptian leaders.<sup>15</sup> The Committee of Ten was appointed carefully to include pro-Israel states such as Ethiopia, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Kenya and Zaire. Those that were pro-Arab include Tanzania, Mauritania and neutral states such as Nigeria, Cameroon and Senegal.<sup>16</sup> The "four wise men" as the sub-committee was later referred to, visited Tel Aviv and Cairo respectively between the 2nd and 9th of November, 1971.<sup>17</sup>

The "four wise men" were to report their findings to the United Nations during the debate on the Middle East in December, 1971 and to the O.A.U. in Rabat, Morocco, in June, 1972. The O.A.U. peace mission's principal objective was the re-activation of the U.N.'s Dr. Gunnar Jarring's peace initiative which became deadlocked in February, 1971 as a result of Israel's refusal to respond positively to Dr. Jarring's questionnaire.<sup>18</sup> It may be recalled that Israel had earlier been condemned in the 1971 O.A.U. resolution on the Middle East for what was considered as

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<sup>15</sup>The sub-committee of four heads of state appointed were Presidents Sedar Senghor of Senegal (Chairman), Ahmadu Ahijo of Cameroon, Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire and General Yakubu Gowon of Nigeria.

<sup>16</sup>S. Gitelson, "The O.A.U. Mission and the Middle East Conflict," International Organisation, Vol. 27, 1973, p. 414.

<sup>17</sup>R. Kockan, "An African Initiative in the Middle East," African Affairs, April, 1973, Vol. 72, p. 190.

<sup>18</sup>Israel refused to withdraw from the occupied Egyptian territories to the former Palestinian international boundary.



"Israel's defiance of the Jarring proposals,"<sup>19</sup> and called upon Israel to make a positive reply like Cairo to the Jarring initiative.

During the O.A.U. peace mission's visit to Cairo in November, 1971, Cairo agreed to the re-activation of the Jarring initiatives and to peace talks without an explicit prior commitment from Israel to total withdrawal.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, Israel refused to commit herself to withdraw from all Egyptian and Jordanian territories occupied in the six-day war.<sup>21</sup>

The refusal of Israel to agree to withdraw from the occupied Arab lands perhaps may have portrayed her as "unreasonable" and an "impediment" to the solution of the Middle East problem. For instance, President Senghor of Senegal warned in February, 1972, that Israel's refusal to respond positively to the reactivation of the Jarring mission might endanger her position in Africa.<sup>22</sup>

During the debate on the Middle East at the United Nations, in December, 1971, Senegal, Cameroon, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Mauritania and Tanzania (all members of the Committee of Ten) joined other African states in sponsoring the Afro-Asian resolution which called on Israel to

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<sup>19</sup>S. Gitelson (1973), op. cit., p. 414.

<sup>20</sup>J. De St. Jorre, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>22</sup>R. Kockan, op. cit., p. 195.

"withdraw from territories occupied in the recent conflict."<sup>23</sup> Israel was also called upon to reply affirmatively to the February, 1971 Jarring memorandum and condemned her for the stalemate which had overtaken the Jarring mission.<sup>24</sup>

The general belief that Israel was responsible for the failure of the O.A.U. peace mission by refusing to accept evacuating the occupied Arab territories may have been responsible for the extremely militant and anti-Israeli resolution passed in June, 1972 in Rabat, Morocco. At the Rabat Conference of the O.A.U. in 1972, the blame for the impasse of the Middle East conflict was apportioned to Israel. At the Rabat summit, the Chairman of the Committee of Ten President Daddah of Mauritania reported to the O.A.U. that the failure of the O.A.U. peace mission was due to Israel's "strong rejection of any peace settlement and was even more strongly opposed to anything that might lead to the withdrawal of its forces from the occupied territories."<sup>25</sup>

In view of the recommendations of the O.A.U. peace mission, it is not surprising that such a militant and anti-Israeli resolution was adopted. The mere fact that the resolution was moved by Ivory Coast, perhaps the most

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<sup>23</sup>S. Gitelson (1973), op. cit., p. 417.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>25</sup>A. Akinsanya, op. cit., p. 523.

pro-Israel African state, demonstrates that Israel may have alienated many states because of her intransigence. The resolution condemned Israel's "obstructive and negative attitude" towards the Jarring peace initiative.<sup>26</sup> At the end of the conference, the resolution adopted, apart from being extremely anti-Israel, it lauded Egypt's positive attitude towards the Jarring peace initiative. The resolution condemned Israel's intransigence as responsible for the impasse and urged members to back Egypt in order to recover its lost territory "by all means." The words "by all means" could be translated to mean that the African states would stand by Egypt should Egypt decide to go to war in order to recover its territories.<sup>27</sup>

The non-conciliatory and flagrantly pro-Arab stand taken by the O.A.U. at the 1972 Rabat Conference may have had some spill-over effects on member states of the O.A.U. Right from the time when all the blame for the deadlock in the Middle East conflict was apportioned to Israel, some O.A.U. members overtly became increasingly hostile to Israel. It became fashionable in Africa to denounce Israel--perhaps in order to be able to identify with the radicals. It appears that the Arabs had won many African states to their side by accepting the reactivation of the Jarring peace initiative. According to Professor Susan

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<sup>26</sup>R. Kockan, op. cit., p. 195.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

Gitelson, "the balance seems to have tilted against Israel at the time of the failure of the 1971 O.A.U. peace mission, in which several leaders not ill-disposed to Israel (Senghor, Gowon and Mobutu) were persuaded that the Arabs were being more reasonable about peace initiatives because of Israel's refusal to reactivate the U.N. Mission of Dr. Jarring."<sup>28</sup>

After the failure of the O.A.U. peace mission, one could notice as from 1971 increasingly hostile anti-Israeli resolutions adopted by the O.A.U. Perhaps staunch friends of Israel such as the Presidents of Ivory Coast, Liberia, Kenya, Chad, Upper Volta, etc., which had hitherto resisted anti-Israeli resolutions might have succumbed to the general continental consensus. From December 1971 to October 4, 1973, eight African states had broken diplomatic relations with Israel.<sup>29</sup> While one could not attribute all these diplomatic severances to Israel's intransigence alone, still the inflexibility of Israel to the O.A.U. peace proposal may have contributed immensely.

#### Israel's Interference in the Internal Affairs of Sub-Saharan African States

It is possible that Israel herself was responsible for

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<sup>28</sup>M. Curtis and S. Gitelson (1976), op. cit., p. 191.

<sup>29</sup>The countries were: Uganda, March 30, 1972; Chad, November 28, 1972; Congo-Brazzaville, December 31, 1972; Niger, January 4, 1973; Mali, January 5, 1973; Burundi, May 16, 1973; Togo, September 21, 1973, and Zaire, October 4, 1973.

the diplomatic hostility of some African states because of her policy of interfering in the domestic affairs of some African states. There are two reasons for this:

1. The question of maintenance of the colonial boundaries and non-interference in the internal affairs of African states had been sensitive issues in Africa even before the formation of the O.A.U. in 1963.<sup>30</sup> It is not surprising that they were incorporated into the O.A.U. charter by the founding fathers. The sensitivity of these issues might have been motivated by apprehensions of the radical states by the more conservative ones. Their (the moderate states) fear might have been based on the notion that the radical states' aggressive foreign policies might lead to expansionist tendencies.<sup>31</sup>

2. It appears that Israel did not meet with much luck in her choice of parties she had supported. The separatists supported by Israel--the Anyanyas of the southern Sudan and the "Biafrans" of Eastern Nigeria, both lost their wars against their central governments. Israel also

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<sup>30</sup> See Bulletin of the African Institute of South Africa, Nos. 6 and 7, 1977, p. 156.

<sup>31</sup> Countries such as Ghana and Egypt under Presidents Nkrumah and Nasser respectively were often criticized for aiding and abetting subversive elements whose aim was the overthrow of governments they viewed as too pro-Western. For instance, President Nkrumah was involved in the dissident Action Group Party of Nigeria with the view of overthrowing the Balewa government in 1962. When the planned coup d'etat leaked out, he granted some of the leaders of the planned coup political asylum in Ghana.



supported the Katangans during the attempted secession of Tshombe in the Congo in the early 60's. On the other hand, while the Israelis backed the "wrong horses" in the three civil wars, the Arabs appeared to have had more luck by backing the victorious sides.

Unfortunately, the sides that were backed by Israel--Katangans, Biafrans and the Anyanyans, were also backed by South Africa, Portugal and Rhodesia, which were resented and viewed (and still are viewed) as number one enemies of Black Africa.<sup>32</sup> Many states might have grouped Israel in the same category with South Africa and Portugal in spite of the superb developmental job done in Africa by Israel.

The Arabs used the Israeli support for Moise Tshombe,<sup>33</sup> to discredit her. Ali Mazrui has this to say about the Arab capitalization on the Israeli support for Tshombe, "If the Israeli chiefs really supported the Africans, why did they not support the legal power in the Congo--Lumumba's government, the body on whom depends the victory of the Congo over her imperialist enemies. Instead, the Israeli chiefs supported Moise Tshombe, the Prime

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<sup>32</sup> Since so many African states have now established relations with Portugal after granting independence to her African colonies, one could assume that Portugal must have ceased to be viewed as an African enemy. Although some Arab African states have got ground to grudge Portugal for allowing the United States to use the Azores base in supplying arms to Israel during the 1973 war.

<sup>33</sup> Moise Tshombe was viewed in many quarters of Africa as a lackey of Western imperialism.

Minister of Katanga."<sup>34</sup>

It has been suggested that while Israel had always been eager to help the forces that wanted to Balkanize Africa,<sup>35</sup> she had never offered prior to 1971 to aid the freedom fighters, fighting against the oppression and injustice of the white minority regimes in the southern sub-continent. It should be recalled, however, that Israel did offer to aid the freedom fighters in 1971--perhaps after a realization of the bankruptcy of her policy of aiding separatist movements. The offer was, however, turned down as soon as it was made, by the increasingly militant O.A.U.

A question may be asked as to why did Israel decide to interfere in the internal affairs of African states? The reason could be attributed mainly to political expediency. Israel sided with "Biafrans" and Katangans partly because Nigeria and Lumumba's Congo were supported respectively by the Arabs. Israel might have thought that a united Congo, for instance, being supported by the Arabs would make Lumumba too pro-Arab. Ideological considerations might have prompted Israel to support Mr. Tshombe of Katanga, since Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba appeared to have leaned more toward the socialist camp. The Casablanca group of radical states' unequivocal support for Lumumba

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<sup>34</sup>A. Mazrui, "Africa and the Egyptian's Four Circles," African Affairs, Vol. 63, April, 1964, p. 134. Also in A. Mazrui (1975), op. cit., p. 729.

<sup>35</sup>Especially when the general consensus appeared to have favoured integration and co-operation.

might have given credibility to this. Israel's support of the Katangans could also be based on identification with the Western world whom Israel has had close ties with since her birth.

Israel's interference in the internal affairs of Chad (two Israeli soldiers were even killed in 1967 while fighting alongside the Chadian army against Frolinat)<sup>36</sup>, could also be explained as an attempt to deny the rebels, who were wholly Moslems and Arabs, control of the reins of power in the then Fort Lamy. Since the rebels were financed by the Arabs, the possibility of the rebels being too pro-Arab if they came to power or seceded, was not slim.

The Israeli interference in the war between the central government in Addis Ababa and the Eritrean rebels might have been prompted by two main factors: (1) Attempt to prevent the pro-Arab and Moslem North from taking control of Addis-Ababa--the capital of the continent of Africa and (2) the strategic importance of Ethiopia could have motivated Israel to interfere in the Ethiopian conflict.

The Eritrean liberation front, which was and still is bankrolled by the Arabs, is Moslem. It should be recalled that the territory which the rebels hoped and still hope to pull out of Ethiopia, would have made Ethiopia a landlocked country. The success of the Eritrean liberation front

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<sup>36</sup>R. Stetler (ed.), Palestine: The Arab-Israeli Conflict (San Francisco, Calif.: Ramparts Press, 1972), pp. 104-105.



would have meant that: (1) The base given to Israel in Danak Island on the Red Sea would have been lost--a base that had proved to be of paramount importance both strategically and logistically to Israel and (2) the Red Sea would have been turned into an "Arab lake"--since Somalia, which occupies the entrance of the Red Sea had consistently been hostile to Israel.<sup>37</sup> This situation would have been serious in case of an outbreak of hostilities between the Arabs and Israel.

If General Gowon of Nigeria had not been very "cautious," he would have been coerced by the Nigerian press to break diplomatic relations with Israel because of the alleged aid given to the "Biafrans" by Israel long before the termination of the Nigerian civil war in 1970. Perhaps leaders like Presidents Kwame Nkrumah, Sekou Toure and Modibo Keita might have severed relations with Israel because of their radicalism and because of the immense pressure exerted by the press that diplomatic relations be severed with Israel.<sup>38</sup>

The widespread belief that General Idi Amin Dada of Uganda was aided and abetted by the Israelis during the coup that brought him to power in 1971 prompted many African states, especially the radical ones, to withhold the

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<sup>37</sup>See "Conflict in the Horn of Africa," Africa Currents, pp. 2-5.

<sup>38</sup>S. Gitelson (1973/74), op. cit., p. 466.

recognition of Idi Amin's government.<sup>39</sup> Echoing the views of many states, especially the radical ones, President Sekou Toure said about the 1971 Amin coup, "The Guinean government refuses categorically to recognize the military junta of Uganda and strongly and indignantly condemns the usurpers of the Ugandan people's power who are meekly carrying out the directives of imperialism, the sworn enemy of all the African peoples."<sup>40</sup>

The timing of the coup appeared to have given credibility to the belief that the coup was engineered by Israel and Britain. At the 1971 Commonwealth Conference in Singapore,<sup>41</sup> President Milton Obote of Uganda had been extremely critical of Britain's plan to sell arms to the Republic of South Africa. President Obote decried what he called Prime Minister Edward Heath's "insensitivity to African feelings." Dr. Obote was said to have threatened to pull Uganda out of the Commonwealth if the sale of arms to South Africa went through. The withdrawal of Uganda from the Commonwealth according to Mr. Wamala would have "set the ball rolling for the disintegration of the whole

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<sup>39</sup>President Said Barre, Sekou Toure, Nwalimu Nyerere, and Kenneth Kaunda of Somalia, Guinea, Tanzania and Zambia respectively, condemned Idi Amin's coup.

<sup>40</sup>C. Legum, "Uganda's Coup d'Etat: African Reactions," African Contemporary Record, 1971/72, p. C63.

<sup>41</sup>The 1971 January Coup in Uganda took place while Dr. Obote was attending the Commonwealth Conference in Singapore.



organization."<sup>42</sup>

By the time of the coup d'etat in January 1971, the Ugandan-Israeli relations, which had been one of the warmest on the continent, had become strained. President Obote had become increasingly critical of Israel's refusal to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories.<sup>43</sup> Relating the coup to the strained relations between Israel and Uganda, Mr. Wamala stated, "Amin overthrew ex-President Obote at the very moment when Obote was preparing to paddle Uganda's foreign policy across the Rubicon."<sup>44</sup> Professor Ali Mazrui attributed the success of Idi Amin's coup, in spite of his having only a minority of Ugandan soldiers on his side, to "the advice of sophisticated Israeli tacticians."<sup>45</sup> Arthur Klinghoffer even claimed that Israeli airmen participated in the coup by flying Ugandan air force planes in support of the coup. He added that, "This would signify Israel's approval of Amin's coup and could conceivably imply some deeper involvement in the coup."<sup>46</sup>

The trend of events in Uganda immediately after Idi Amin's takeover of the reins of power, appeared to have strengthened the belief of British and Israeli collusion

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<sup>42</sup>I. Wamala, "Amin Steers Uganda on Erratic Course," New Outlook, May, 1972, p. 29.

<sup>43</sup>See A. Klinghoffer, op. cit., p. 13.

<sup>44</sup>I. Wamala, op. cit., p. 29.

<sup>45</sup>A. Mazrui, op. cit., p. 734.

<sup>46</sup>A. Klinghoffer, op. cit., p. 13.

with Idi Amin. For instance, Britain recognized the Idi Amin government immediately.<sup>47</sup> Idi Amin visited Israel twice in quick succession immediately that he came to power, and he was promised massive economic and military aid.<sup>48</sup> Amin also made it perfectly clear that Uganda would not pull out of the Commonwealth over Britain's arms sale to South Africa.<sup>49</sup> Condemning Idi Amin's coup, President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia stated, "The recent coup in Uganda is the work of reactionary elements, whose only motive was to further their own interests. Idi Amin was acting as an agent of the enemies of African independence, progress and unity. Africa as a whole, could see today's British recognition of the Amin regime as a clear indication of who Africa's enemies were."<sup>50</sup>

From the above explanations one could suggest or conclude that Israel's interference in the internal affairs of the sub-Saharan African states was motivated mainly by political expediency. After all, Israel had not interfered in the inter-state armed conflict such as Uganda vs. Tanzania, since she had no vested interest in the conflict. The Israeli strategy appears to have been "The enemy of my friend is my enemy, and the friend of my enemy is my

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<sup>47</sup> Britain recognized the Amin regime on February 5, 1971-- about 10 days after the coup.

<sup>48</sup> A. Klinghoffer, op. cit., pp. 13-14.

<sup>49</sup> I. Wamala, op. cit., p. 30.

<sup>50</sup> C. Legum (1971/72), op. cit., p. C63.

enemy." But apparently this strategy seemed to have backfired, since Israel found herself most of the time in the unenviable position of supporting the same factions that were being backed by South Africa and Rhodesia, which were, and still are, highly resented as implacable foes of Black Africa.

#### Arab Pressure on African States

One of the most important factors which helped to change the attitudes of the African states toward the Arab-Israeli conflict was the stupendous pressure exerted on the African states by the Arab member states of the O.A.U. It should be recalled that right from the first conference of independent African states in April, 1958, in Accra and in subsequent years, the Arabs had made determined efforts to exert pressure on Black African states to refrain from establishing economic and diplomatic relations with Israel.<sup>51</sup>

The escalation of the Arab pressure on African states in the seventies to show more sympathy for the Arab cause coincided with an era when the Arabs began to show more enthusiasm in aiding the liberation movements in Africa. For instance, King Hassan of Morocco made a personal contribution of \$1 million in 1971 to the African Liberation Committee. In this era, the Arabs time and again reminded

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<sup>51</sup>With the exception of Somalia and Mauritania, which refused to establish diplomatic relations with Israel, the trend in the O.A.U. in the 60's was to steer clear of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

the sub-Saharan African states how they have in unison backed the African liberation struggle in southern Africa. Consequently, the Arabs wanted the Black African states to reciprocate by identifying more with the Arabs.

During the 1973 Conference of the O.A.U. in Addis Ababa, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt said, "We have constantly supported Black Africa in its struggle against colonialism and racialism, the O.A.U. members should also give the Arabs the same sort of support in return."<sup>52</sup> President Boumedienne of Algeria also urged the African states to alter their attitudes to the Middle East conflict and be more sympathetic with the Arabs. In his speech, the President said, "It is inconceivable that the O.A.U. should have a single stand on South Africa, Portugal and Rhodesia, but be divided over Zionism."<sup>53</sup>

Apart from the pressures exerted during the O.A.U. conferences, other methods such as aiding and abetting separatist elements in the neighbouring African states were employed by the Arabs. For instance, an attempt to stop the financial and military aid being given to Chad's separatists by Libya was mainly responsible for the diplomatic severance between Chad and Israel in November, 1972.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Africa Research Bulletin, May 1-31, 1973, p. 2848.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>P. Decraene, op. cit., p. 20.



The escalation of the aid given to the separatist elements in Chad, and the formal recognition of Frolinat (Chad's National Liberation Front) in 1971, brought about strained relations between Ndjamena and Tripoli, to the extent that Chad broke diplomatic relations with Libya on August 27, 1971. Explaining why Libya had recognized and aided Frolinat, Colonel Gaddafi declared, "Francois Tombalbaye has become the enemy of the struggling people of Chad, after selling his country to the enemies of the peoples and humanity--world imperialism and Zionism. It is natural that Libya should recognize Frolinat after the exposure of the intentions of the agent Tombalbaye and his open collusion with the United States and its protege, Israel."<sup>55</sup>

The Chadian reply to the overt support of Libya for Frolinat was to break diplomatic relations with Libya on August 21, 1971. Besides the overt support of Libya for the separatist movement in Chad, the abortive coup d'etat of August, 1971, was believed to have been engineered by Libya. Libya's move might have been prompted by a desire to topple President Tombalbaye, who was regarded as an implacable supporter of Israel, and install a pro-Arab regime.

Libya's strategy of putting pressure on Chad in order to obtain more sympathy for the Arab cause seemed to have

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<sup>55</sup>African Contemporary Record, 1971/72, pp. C56-57.



paid off when Chad succumbed to the Libyan pressure and broke relations with Israel on November 28, 1972. Chad's severance of relations with Israel has been seen by many observers mainly as an attempt to reduce Libya's meddling in its internal affairs. Philippe Decraene subscribes to this view: "Chad's desire for normal relations with Libya sprang from the desire to end Tripoli's financial and military aid to Dr. Abba Siddick's Frolinat on the one hand and to the Tobbou dissidents on the other."<sup>56</sup>

Following King Faisal of Saudi Arabia's five country African tour of Niger, Chad, Mali, Uganda and Mauritania in December, 1972, Niger and Mali broke diplomatic relations with Israel on January 4 and 5 respectively.\* Shortly after the King's visit, Chad, which had already severed relations with Israel before King Faisal's visit, allowed the P.L.O. to open an office in Ndjemena, Chad's capital.

From all these developments since the end of King Faisal's visit, some observers suggested that the breaking of relations with Israel by Niger and Mali was brought about by a combination of pressure and promises of economic aid. It seems that Saudi Arabia's efforts merely capped the substantial efforts made by Libya, which had been using

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<sup>56</sup>P. Decraene, op. cit., p. 20.

\* With the exception of Uganda, all the countries visited by King Faisal in December, 1972, have predominantly Moslem populations.

a combination of pressure and an appeal to religious solidarity on the African states which are contiguous to the Arab north.<sup>57</sup> In January, 1973, Libya claimed responsibility for the deterioration of diplomatic relations between Israel and two African countries (Niger and Mali).<sup>58</sup>

The proximity and the identical religious belief of states such as Mali, Chad and Niger to the Arab states of the north perhaps might have enabled the Arabs, especially Libya, to exert enormous pressure with considerable success. Perhaps Chad would not have succumbed so early to the Libyan pressure had it not been because of its geographical location. Because of Chad's location, Libya was able to move arms and financial aid to the Chadian dissidents who are right on the border of Chad and Libya. Also, the acute Sahelian drought of the early 70's, with the concomitant economic problems, may also have mellowed Chad's ability to resist the Arab pressure.<sup>59</sup>

Besides Uganda and Guinea, the three African countries which are contiguous with the more powerful Arab states like Algeria and Libya, were the first to break relations with Israel. Their decisions to break relations may have

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<sup>57</sup>F. Eckhard, "Israel and Africa," Africa Report, March/April, 1973, p. 3.

<sup>58</sup>See Arab Report and Record, January 1-15, 1973, p. 12.

<sup>59</sup>See F. De Villiers, "Israel's African Wounds," Bulletin of the African Institute of South Africa, No. 10, 1973, p. 371. Also in African Contemporary Record, 1973/74, pp. B519-B531.

partly been prompted by an attempt to be on good terms with their Arab neighbors. The predominantly Moslem states of Black Africa which are not contiguous with the Arabs do not appear to have been as vulnerable to Arab pressure as the ones that are contiguous with the Arab countries in North Africa. For instance, predominantly Moslem states such as Gambia and Senegal were among the last to break relations with Israel.

At the February, 1973 Conference of the O.A.U. Council of Ministers, the Arab foreign ministers exerted great pressure on their sub-Saharan counterparts to break relations with Israel. The Arab foreign ministers praised the African states that had already done so. For the first time in the history of the O.A.U., the resolution adopted by the Council of Ministers implied that African states which had not broken relations should follow suit. The resolution urged all African states to express their solidarity with Egypt in concrete terms.<sup>60</sup> This type of resolution was made possible because of the pressure exerted on the sub-Saharan African foreign ministers by their Arab colleagues.

In 1973, Libya attacked Ethiopia because of her alleged close ties with Israel. In Colonel Gaddafi's words, "Ethiopia is an instrument of the enemies of Africa, collaborating with American and Israeli

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<sup>60</sup>Africa Research Bulletin, 1-28 February, 1973, pp. 2747-48.

spies."<sup>61</sup> At the Council of Ministers' conference in May, 1973, Libya moved that Ethiopian-Israeli relations be placed on the agenda of the O.A.U. Heads of State summit to be held in September, 1973. This unprecedented move by Libya was ruled out of order by Nigeria's Dr. Okoi Arikpo, who was the chairman of the Council of Ministers in 1973. In spite of that, Libya refused to give up. Gaddafi sent cables to all Heads of State in Africa to boycott the forthcoming 10th anniversary celebrations of the O.A.U. in Addis Ababa, unless the venue was changed to Cairo, or unless Ethiopia agreed immediately to sever relations with Israel and close the Israeli embassy before the celebrations.<sup>62</sup>

The impact of the pressure exerted on Ethiopia by Libya was such that Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia paid a secret visit to Cairo in an attempt to persuade President Anwar Sadat of Egypt to attend the O.A.U. Conference. The Emperor also sent delegates to other Arab and African states to persuade them to attend the conference. Eventually there was a full turn-out at the summit, but the resolution adopted was the toughest and the most militant ever to be adopted by the O.A.U. on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

This could be regarded as at least partly a

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<sup>61</sup>Z. Cervenka, "The Tenth Anniversary of the O.A.U.," African Contemporary Record, 1973/74, p. A30.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

consequence of the stupendous pressure exerted by the Arabs on African states to unequivocally declare their support for the Arab cause. The adoption of such a tough anti-Israeli resolution could be interpreted as tantamount to a sort of compromise between the increasingly militant Arab states and Black Africa. On the one hand, it appears that the increasing concern of the Arabs on the Israeli issue was acknowledged by adopting such an extremely anti-Israeli resolution. On the other hand, the removal of the O.A.U. headquarters to Cairo would have reduced the prestige of Ethiopia (respected throughout Africa as a bastion of independence) and increased the influence of the Arabs in the continental organization.

The pressure exerted by the Arabs, especially by Libya on Ethiopia, appeared not very pleasing to the Africans. For instance, General Gowon of Nigeria said, "It is regretted that some states tried to dictate to others how they should conduct their internal affairs."<sup>63</sup> But it appears that the "coercive pressure" exerted by the Arabs may have had some impact on the orientations of some African states to the Arab-Israeli conflict. It is doubtful whether the extremely anti-Israeli resolution in 1973 would have been adopted had it not been for the increasingly militant stand of the Arabs on the issue of Israel.

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<sup>63</sup>Africa Research Bulletin, May 1-31, 1973, p. 2848.



The impact of the increasing Arab pressure on African states was even acknowledged in 1973 by Mr. Abba Eban, the Israeli foreign minister. According to him, "Most of the regrettable troubles which have recently hit us in Africa were not the result of direct relations. They were the result of pressure applied by foreign elements<sup>64</sup> on certain African states."<sup>65</sup>

### Conclusion

In this chapter, it has been demonstrated that the membership of the sub-Saharan African states in the OAU, in the non-aligned organization and in the Islamic sub-system, which became increasingly anti-Israeli in the 70's, may have influenced the orientations of the African states to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Other factors such as Israel's retention of the seized Arab lands, Arab pressure on the African states, the failure of the O.A.U. peace mission and hostile international environment to Israel may have had immense influence on the African states.

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<sup>64</sup>The words "foreign elements" were used by Mr. Abba Eban in apparent reference to the Arabs.

<sup>65</sup>Arab Report and Record, January 1-15, 1973, p. 20.

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

This study has been devoted to showing the evolution of the African attitudes to the Arab-Israeli conflict between 1967-1973.

There are three principal reasons why my interest is kindled in this study. Firstly, the reasons given by many observers for the massive severance of diplomatic relations with Israel by the sub-Saharan African states in 1973, have not been adequately assessed. By revealing that other factors apart from economic considerations contributed to Black Africa's switch to a pro-Arab stance in the 1971-1973 period, it is my hope that this thesis has clarified motives which have often been over-simplified.

Secondly, there has been a series of studies done on the sub-Saharan African states' shift to a pro-Arab position in the 1971-1973 period. While some focused on a single or a few causal variables such as Arab pressure or economic considerations, some did a more thorough job by identifying numerous variables. My major criticism of these studies is that the number of variables cited are either insufficient or they were not classified into external and internal categories. Also, references were not made to the relative importance of the variables identified. This thesis proceeded a step further by incorporating both external and

internal factors, classifying the variables and stating which variables had the most and the least impact on the external behaviours of the African states during this period.

Thirdly, because of my subscription to the fact that the understanding of the past is necessary before one can fully understand the present, or venture into the future; hence, I have dabbled into the historical links between Black Africa on the one hand, and the Arabs and the Israelis on the other hand.

This study has shown that during the pre-1967 period, with the exception of the predominantly Moslem states such as Somalia and Mauritania, which refused to establish relations with Israel, the trend in Black Africa was to steer clear of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Determined efforts made by the Arabs against the recognition of and co-operation with Israel met with little or no success.

Apart from the fact that the Arab-Israeli conflict was viewed in the early 1960's as a non-African problem, the trend in the OAU was to exclude the Middle East as well as other international problems from the deliberations of the OAU. The vehement opposition to the Arab League's intention to open information offices in West Africa in the mid-60's is an indication that Africans did not want to be entangled in the Arab-Israeli dispute.

The 1967 Arab-Israeli war added new dimensions to the perceptions of the sub-Saharan African states about the Middle Eastern conflict. The hitherto good Afro-Israeli

relations became strained to some extent after the war. Some of the factors that contributed to this were: political radicalism and anti-Westernism on the part of some states. Apart from evidences of religious solidarity mainly among the predominantly Moslem states in sub-Saharan Africa, the very nature of the war prompted many states to sympathise with the Arabs. Apart from the fact that the Arabs were viewed as the underdogs (having lost the war), the magnitude and the rapidity of Israel's victory and the general consideration of Israel as the aggressor, modified the attitudes of many Black African states.

However, the OAU endeavoured to refrain from taking sides during the 1967-1970 period. In 1967, Somalia and Guinea's efforts shortly after the end of the Middle East hostilities, calling for an emergency summit of the OAU to discuss "Israeli aggression," failed to gain the required two-thirds sponsorship. At the Kinshasha Summit of the OAU in September 1967, there was an adoption of a "Declaration" rather than a "Resolution" on the Middle East conflict. In subsequent OAU summits (up to 1970), African leaders carefully abstained from condemning or even mentioning Israel's name in any of its resolutions on the Middle East.

The largely pro-Arab OAU foreign ministers' recommendation that Israel be condemned in 1968, was successfully blocked by the numerically superior moderate pro-Western states. On top of it, Mr. Diallo Tello, the OAU Secretary General, was severely reprimanded for what the supporters of Israel viewed as an attempt to "railroad a condemnation

of Israel."

If one uses the resolutions adopted by the OAU concerning the Middle East conflict as a yardstick of support for the Arabs or Israel, then some conclusions can be drawn from the resolutions of the OAU in the 1967-1970 period. Firstly, the resolutions reveal that there was no clear-cut or unanimous support for the Arabs in the OAU. Secondly, however, the Arab cause gained more support incrementally.

The resolutions adopted by the OAU from 1968-1970 reveal that the OAU conservatism soon began to change. While the 1968 resolution merely called for the "withdrawal of foreign troops from all Arab territories occupied since June 1967," the 1969 resolution not only expressed support for the U.A.R., but it called for the withdrawal of foreign troops. In addition, the 1969 resolution attributed the worsening situation to the refusal of the occupation forces to withdraw from the occupied territories, despite the U.N. Security Council resolution 242. The 1970 resolution not only included all the aforementioned points, but went as far as to express "opposition to the occupation by force of any part or the whole of one country by another." For the first time, reference was made to U.A.R. as a sister state.

Some noticeable observations could also be made, if the resolutions are studied very carefully. Firstly, the three resolutions refrained from mentioning Israel by name. The words "occupation forces" or "foreign troops" were used



in apparent reference to Israel. Secondly, while the 1968 and 1969 resolutions merely referred to the Middle East conflict on the agenda as "Resolution on the situation in the U.A.R.," the 1970 resolution on the other hand, referred to the conflict as "continued aggression against the U.A.R."

In the 1971-1973 period, the balance had already tilted against Israel. The resolutions adopted during this period became extremely anti-Israel. Not only was Israel mentioned in all the resolutions, but time and again, it was resoundingly condemned (see Appendixes III<sup>D</sup>-III<sup>F</sup> for the OAU resolutions on the Middle East from 1971-1973). The Arab-Israeli conflict, which was previously viewed as a non-African problem, became more accepted as relevant to the Africans. The sub-Saharan African states, which had hitherto steered clear in the conflict, began to choose the Arab side.

More interest was shown in the conflict. Greater hostility was also shown to Israel either through the pronouncements or actions (breaking of diplomatic relations with Israel) of the African states. There was a greater willingness on the part of the African states to participate in overtly pro-Arab and anti-Israeli activities. At the U.N., African states' votes became more hostile to Israel. The African states' reactions to the massacre of the Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympic games and the downing of the Libyan airliner by Israel in 1973, are

clear manifestations of the fact that the balance had tilted in favour of the Arabs. At the February 1973 OAU Council of Ministers' Conference, African states which had already broken relations with Israel were overtly praised. Other African states, which had not done so, were urged to follow suit by "expressing their solidarity with Egypt in concrete terms."

Contrary to widespread belief, this study has demonstrated the fact that it was a combination of factors (both external and internal) that shifted the orientations of the African states to a pro-Arab stance in the 1971-1973 period. Economic factors are important, but they were not the sole determinants of the policy shifts to a pro-Arab stance in the 1971-73 period.

For instance, Nigeria and Gabon, which severed relations with Israel in 1973 were and are still, oil producing members of OPEC. As a matter of fact, Nigeria was, and is still, the leading oil exporter in Africa. Secondly, the mere fact that nine Black African states had already broken diplomatic relations with Israel between 1967 and October 4, 1973 (before the commencement of the Yom Kippur war), shows that economic factors related to oil embargo and price hike could not have been the sole determinant. Thirdly, at the outbreak of hostilities in 1973, Nigeria and Tanzania offered Egypt financial assistance, while Somalia offered food supplies to the Egyptian

war efforts.\*

It should be recalled that Somalia and Mauritania refused to establish relations with Israel after the attainment of independence in 1960. It is very doubtful whether Somalia and Mauritania's refusal to establish relations with Israel, or Guinea's breaking of relations with Israel as early as June 1967, would have gained them anything at that point in time.

One thing which I found out about Black Africa's switch to a pro-Arab stance in the 1970's, is that no single factor could be pin-pointed as being solely responsible for any of the states breaking with Israel. For instance, it appears that an attempt to stop the financial and military aid being given to Chad's separatists by Libya was mainly responsible for the diplomatic severance between Chad and Israel in November, 1972. Promises of economic aid by Libya and a desire to be on good terms with a more powerful neighbour (Libya) in the interest of national security were also involved. An attempt to appease the young radicals and the Moslem separatist Northern elements may also have been involved.

To many observers, Uganda's diplomatic severance with Israel was motivated wholly by economic considerations. While economic consideration was undoubtedly the major reason, other reasons were certainly involved. Attempts

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\* See Africa Research Bulletin, October 1-31, 1973, p. 3024.

to make himself (Idi Amin) more acceptable to the radical African leaders, who had hitherto denounced him as "a tool of imperialism" and the suspicion of the Israelis, who were alleged to have helped him in ousting President Milton Obote, may have contributed. Ali Mazrui, a renowned authority on African affairs, holds the belief that the expulsion of the Israelis was partly prompted by Amin's fear of the Israelis who helped to bring him to power.

The implication of all these is that since the foreign policy behaviour of nation-states is a reaction to both external and internal stimuli, hence it would not be wise of students of internal relations to leave any stone unturned, when it comes to the analysis of foreign policy behaviour of states. Some factors which one may be tempted to ignore could turn out to be of vital importance. For instance, perhaps few people would have given a very serious thought to the importance of geographic location of states when analyzing why Black African states shifted to a pro-Arab stance in the 1971-1973 period. Yet, this study has demonstrated that the sub-Saharan African states which are contiguous with the Arab countries north of the Sahara, are more likely to succumb to Arab pressure than the non-contiguous states. Besides Uganda and Guinea, the three African states which are contiguous with the more powerful Arab states such as Algeria and Libya were the first to break relations with Israel.

Whereas predominantly Moslem states such as Gambia and

Senegal (which are not contiguous with the Arab North) were among the last to break relations with Israel. One of the reasons why this is so, is that they (Senegal and Gambia) are not as vulnerable to Arab pressure.

It has also been demonstrated that the predominantly Moslem states and the radical Black African states are more likely to support the Arab position than the moderate pro-Western or non-predominantly Moslem states. There are several reasons for this. They are:

(1) The strong spiritual bond and the cultural affinities between the Arab world and the predominantly Moslem states of sub-Saharan Africa. Religious solidarity with fellow Moslems, prompted many sub-Saharan African states with Moslem majorities to be more inclined to support the Arab cause.

The only states to have refused to establish relations with Israel in 1960 were the predominantly Moslem states of Somalia and Mauritania. Also, when Nigeria attained her independence in 1960, the Premier of the predominantly Moslem Northern Region of Nigeria--Sir Ahmadu Bello, fought tooth and nail against the receipt of aid and the establishment of relations with Israel as if Nigeria was a Moslem state.

It is worthy of note that during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, while all the predominantly Moslem states supported the Arabs at the U.N., all the states that supported Israel were predominantly Christian or where Moslems were in a minority. In consequence of this, there is the likelihood



that most of the African states based their support partly on religious considerations.

(2) Generally, radical regimes in Black Africa tended to support other states with similar political orientations. Hence, the sub-Saharan African radical states almost automatically supported Egypt, a foundation member state of the Casablanca group of radical African states.

(3) The moderate, more pro-Western regimes, tended to support Israel because of her close ties with the Western world. Undoubtedly, the Arab-Israeli conflict was and still is viewed to a very great extent in an ideological context.

(4) The mystique of pan-Africanism, which prompted the radical states on both sides of the Sahara to view the African continent as a whole, drew the radical states south of the Sahara to the Arab cause more than the moderate and more conservative states of sub-Saharan Africa. For instance, in 1961 (even before the formation of the OAU), the radical Casablanca charter states (which encompassed Black African and Arab states) had already denounced Israel as a "tool of imperialism."

If one considers which of all the variables or factors that would make the African states to identify with either Israel or the Arabs in all the periods investigated, ideology and religion stand out strikingly among all other factors. However, we cannot dispute the importance of economic factors. It has been proven that Uganda, Mali,

Niger and Chad's shift to a pro-Arab stance in the 70's were partly influenced by economic considerations.

Perhaps, if the pro-Israeli states (such as the United States, France and Britain) on whom most of the African states rely for economic assistance, had threatened to impose economic sanctions on the African states that intended or changed to a pro-Arab stance, perhaps this would have prompted the African states to view ideological and religious considerations as being secondary to their national interests.

For instance, when almost all the sub-Saharan African states broke relations with Israel in 1973, the only states that retained diplomatic relations were Lesotho, Swaziland, Malawi and Mauritius, whose economies are closely linked or have a high degree of integration with the economy of South Africa. It has been suggested by observers that their refusal to break relations with Israel may have been prompted by an attempt to avoid economic reprisals from South Africa which had been a major backer of Israel.<sup>1</sup>

Another embarrassing truth is that, in spite of the front-line states' uncompromising stand on the South African conflict, almost all of them--including radical states such as Mozambique and Zambia, do business with the hated land of apartheid (South Africa).<sup>2</sup> A number of countries in

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<sup>1</sup>See "Front line States: Strategies for a new war," Africa, No. 96, August, 1979, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. See also, Time, August 13, 1979, p. 22.

Southern Africa--Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Malawi and Mozambique--have a fairly large population of their nationals working as migrant labourers in South Africa in the mines and on agricultural estates.<sup>3</sup> Most of the land-locked states in Southern Africa rely in varying degrees on South Africa's transportation system for the conduct of their external trade.<sup>4</sup>

The implication of this is that national interests, rank well above ideological or religious considerations in the formulation of foreign policy of the African states. In other words, if there had been threats of economic reprisals against the states that switched to a pro-Arab stance, the economic powerlessness of most of the African states would have prompted them to allow economic considerations to take precedence over ideological or religious factors.

In the post-1973 era, when few sub-Saharan African states switched back to a neutral or even pro-Israeli position--despite the fact that they had severed relations with Israel, the radical and the predominantly Moslem states stood behind the Arabs.

At the 1975 OAU summit in Kampala, Uganda, Libya's move to have the O.A.U. endorse the expulsion of Israel

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<sup>3</sup>V. Ndovi, "Arusha: Breaking dependence on South Africa," New African, September, 1979, p. 66.

<sup>4</sup>Africa, No. 96, August, 1979, p. 37.

from the U.N. was stoutly and successfully resisted by Zaire, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Senegal. Senegal, even though a moderate state, was the only predominantly Moslem state to have broken ranks with others in opposing the move.<sup>5</sup>

Also, in the United Nations General Assembly debate on November 10, 1975, on the resolution equating Zionism with racism, while all the predominantly Moslem and radical states (with the exception of Zambia) supported the resolution, all the states that opposed the resolution were non-predominantly Moslem states and considered moderate.<sup>6</sup>

Another important point which I found is that Africa's increasingly pro-Arab position in the 1970's was by no means unique to the African sub-system alone. It was more or less a Third World Phenomenon. A careful study of the voting patterns on the Middle East conflict at the U.N. General Assembly reveals that other Third World regional groups (Asia and Latin America) switched from a neutral or

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<sup>5</sup>Z. Cervenka and C. Legum, "The Organisation of African Unity in 1975," in C. Legum and E. Clements (eds.), Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents 1975-76 (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1976), p. A.69.

<sup>6</sup>The states that supported the resolution were: Somalia, Mauritania, Burundi, Cape Verde, Chad, Congo, Benin, Mali, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda and Cameroon. Five were opposed. They were: Central African Republic, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Malawi and Swaziland. Twelve abstained. They were: Botswana, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Togo, Upper Volta, Zaire and Zambia.



a pro-Israeli stance in the 60's to a pro-Arab stance in the 1971-1973 period. During this period, the Arabs had such enormous support at the U.N., that the era has often been referred to as an era of "automatic majority" for the Arabs. In other words, the Arabs had enough support to pass virtually any and all its resolutions on Israel.<sup>7</sup>

The Third World's increasing shifts to a pro-Arab stance in the 70's seemed to have been prompted by two main factors. Firstly, the similarity of the Arabs' global position in the north-south dichotomy. Secondly, the third world's similar perceptions of Israel as an imperialist state or at least a representative of the industrialized western world in the north-south dichotomy.

Radical states such as Tanzania, Burundi and Guinea, which had been pro-Arab all along appeared to have gained an upper hand over the conservative elements in the OAU in the 70's. It should be recalled that it was the radical elements in the OAU which successfully whipped up emotion against Ivory Coast's proposal of dialogue with South Africa in 1970. They were also responsible for the rejection of Israel's offer of aid for the Liberation Committee of the OAU in 1971, "achievements" which would have been unthinkable in the more conservative days of the OAU.

The implication of this is that, since the radical

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<sup>7</sup>See J. Mynaski, "The Changes in the Character of the Issues and the Voting Related to the Middle East Dispute at the U.N.G.A.: 1967-1976," an unpublished University of Manitoba M.A. thesis, 1979, p. 129.



states had been pro-Arab all along, the role played by the radical elements in the OAU in shifting the official OAU stand during the 70's, should not be under-estimated.

Despite the fact that some African states had no diplomatic relations with Israel, it is interesting to note that they still supported Israel both at the U.N. and in the OAU. At the July, 1975 OAU Summit in Kampala, they successfully resisted Libya's move to have the OAU endorse the expulsion of Israel from the U.N. Also, in November 1975, they voted against an Arab resolution which equated Zionism with racism. In 1976, Kenya co-operated with Israel during its "Operation Thunderbolt" which freed Israeli hostages in Entebbe, Uganda. It should also be borne in mind that the states that supported Israel in the post-1973 era were among the last to sever relations with her (Israel).

The inferences which one could draw from all these are: (1) countries such as Ivory Coast, Botswana, Liberia, Ethiopia and Kenya, may have severed relations with Israel partly in an attempt to avoid breaking ranks with other members of the OAU. For instance, in the message sent to Israel when Liberia broke relations with her, Liberia made it abundantly clear that to maintain diplomatic relations with Israel would not be in harmony with African unity and solidarity.<sup>8</sup> The mere fact that Ambassador Yaacov Shimoni

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<sup>8</sup>S. Gitelson (1976), op. cit., p. 195.

of Israel confessed in an interview in 1976 that Israel still maintained economic relations with some undisclosed African states,<sup>9</sup> is an indication that some African states would have behaved differently to the Arab-Israeli conflict in 1973, had it not been for the pressures and obligations which arose from their membership in the OAU.

It is very fascinating to note in this study how the membership of the African states in a supranational organization such as the OAU and the pressures exerted by the Arabs had considerable impact on the posture of the African states. It is also interesting to note that despite the fact that a peace treaty has now been signed between Israel and Egypt, no African state has ventured to re-establish relations with Israel. This is mainly because the OAU has not taken any official stand on the issue.

There are other examples which demonstrate that actions which occur abroad can have considerable impact on nation-states' external posture. For instance, one of the election promises of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of Britain was the recognition of the Muzorewa government and the lifting of economic sanctions against Rhodesia. The costs of the execution of all these promises prompted the Thatcher administration to back down.

Nigeria made it abundantly clear that she would nationalize all British assets in Nigeria should Britain

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<sup>9</sup>See Africa Report, July-August, 1976, p. 54.

lift the economic sanctions and accorded the Muzorewa government official recognition. To show Britain that she meant business, on the eve of the 1979 Commonwealth Conference in Lusaka, Zambia, Nigeria nationalized the British BP Oil Company. Nigeria also made it perfectly clear that she would withdraw from the Commonwealth should Britain move ahead and lift the sanctions or recognize the Muzorewa government.

Nigeria's withdrawal from the Commonwealth perhaps would have meant the end of the Commonwealth because the Black states in the organization would have followed. Also, bearing in mind how strongly the Asian members of the organisation, especially India and Sri Lanka (Ceylon), felt about the Rhodesian issue, it would not have been a surprise if they had decided to withdraw from the organisation. In view of all this, it is extremely doubtful if Britain would have allowed Nigeria to nationalize her billions of dollars worth of assets in Nigeria just for the sake of executing election promises.

Also, the Joe Clark administration's "diplomatic" backing off from the removal of the Canadian embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem is another good example. The Carter administration's inability to lift sanctions on Rhodesia because of Nigeria's threats despite the recommendations of the House of Representatives and the Senate is also very fascinating. Apart from what the nationalization of American assets in Nigeria would have meant in terms of

costs, the acute shortage of gas at that point in time when Nigeria threatened to stop the shipment of oil would have made lifting of sanctions on Rhodesia, to say the least, very "unwise."

A protracted oil shortage would have further worsened the "diving" popularity of President Carter at that point in time. Also, lifting of sanctions would have alienated the Black Americans (one of the major supporters of President Carter). Ambassador Andrew Young had even threatened to resign should Carter lift the sanctions on Rhodesia.

From these examples, one does not need to be told how important pressure is in international diplomacy. It is interesting to find out how minor actors in the international arena, such as Nigeria and the Arab states, could considerably influence not only on a middle power such as Canada or a great power such as Britain, but a super power such as the United States, on issues which they considered of national interest.

The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that the complete freedom of action of states in making foreign policy decisions is greatly circumscribed by events occurring abroad, such as exertion of pressure or obligations arising from states' membership in a supra-national organization such as the OAU.

This study has also demonstrated that the failure of the OAU peace mission in 1971, the blame for which was apportioned to Israel's intransigence, marked the end of



the beginning of Israel's political honeymoon in Africa. The OAU recommendations which stated inter alia that Israel "strongly rejected any peace settlement and was even more strongly opposed to anything that might lead to the withdrawal of its forces from the occupied territories," this portrayed Israel as "unreasonable" and "intransigent" and hence, an "impediment" to the solution of the Middle East problem.

Israel's refusal to respond positively to the reactivation of the Jarring peace proposals was a "big mistake" which cost her many of her friends in Africa. For one thing, Israel's refusal gave credibility to the Arab propaganda stunt in Africa, which blamed Israel's intransigence for the Middle East impasse.

During the debate on the Middle East at the U.N. in December, 1971, Senegal, Nigeria, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Mauritania and Cameroon (all members of the Committee of Ten) joined other African states in sponsoring a resolution which called on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territories. The resolution, apart from condemning the continued occupation of the Arab lands by Israel, also blamed Israel for the deadlock of the Jarring mission.

The general belief that Israel was responsible for the failure of the OAU peace mission brought instant anti-Israeli feelings in Black Africa. President Senghor of Senegal (the Chairman of the Peace Mission) even warned in February, 1972 that Israel's refusal to respond positively



to the reactivation of the Jarring mission might endanger Israel's position in Africa.

In view of the recommendations of the OAU peace mission (which favoured the Arabs), it is not surprising that such a militant and anti-Israeli resolution was adopted in 1972 at Rabat, Morocco by the OAU. The mere fact that the resolution was even moved by Ivory Coast, perhaps the most pro-Israel state on the African continent, demonstrates the damages which Israel's intransigence may have done to her interests in Africa.

Undoubtedly, the non-conciliatory and flagrantly pro-Arab stand, taken at the OAU conference in Rabat, had a snowball effect on member states of the OAU. Right from the time of the failure of the OAU peace mission, some member states of the OAU became increasingly hostile to Israel. It became fashionable in Africa to denounce Israel. From December 1971 to October 4, 1973, eight African states had already broken relations with Israel.

Susan Gitelson has this to say about the impact of the failure of the OAU peace mission:

The balance seems to have tilted against Israel at the time of the failure of the 1971 OAU peace mission, in which several leaders not ill-disposed to Israel (Senghor, Gowon and Mobutu) were persuaded that the Arabs were being more reasonable about peace initiatives because of Israel's refusal to reactivate the U.N. mission of Dr. Jarring.

While one could not attribute African states' severance of relations with Israel from 1971 to the time of the

commencement of the Yom Kippur war of 1973 to Israel's intransigence alone, still the inflexibility of Israel to the OAU peace proposal may have contributed immensely.

This study has also revealed that Black Africa's frustrations and disenchantment with the western powers because of their stand on many sensitive issues such as the sale of arms to South Africa and white minority regime in Rhodesia, had a spill-over effect on Israel because of her close ties with the Western world.

Because of Black African states' unwillingness to break relations with either the former metropolises or the super powers--whom they knew they can neither effectively oppose nor do away with, hence Israel was made the "sacrificial lamb." Since Israel had close links with the Western world, it can be argued that Black Africa's severance of relations with Israel was an attempt to show their increasing disenchantment with the Western world.

Behaviour like this is not without precedent in Africa. In the early 60's, because of the frustrations of how things turned out during the Congo crisis, radical states such as Egypt and Ghana broke relations with Belgium. President Nasser of Egypt even went to the extent of nationalizing all Belgian assets in Egypt. Presidents Nasser and Nkrumah did not break relations with the United States in spite of President Kennedy's overt support for the moderate pro-Western Kasavubu. Also in 1966, when Nkrumah was overthrown by a pro-Western General Ankrah, in

an attempt to disassociate himself from the radical policies of Nkrumah, General Ankrah broke relations with Eastern Germany. In spite of the Soviet Union's strong support for the regime of President Nkrumah, General Ankrah retained relations with the Soviet Union.

Situations like this recall the African adage which states that "where two elephants fight (or even play), it is the grass that will suffer." In this case, I have viewed Israel and East Germany as the "grasses" and the great or super powers such as France, Britain and the U.S., and in this context the African states, as the "elephants." I have viewed the African states and the Western powers as "elephants" because it was the Black African disenchantment with the Western world that had a snowball effect on the state of Israel.

There are two lessons to be learned from this. Firstly, it shows that events which have no bearing on an issue can influence the behaviours of nation states. Secondly, it shows the bankruptcy of offering single dimensional explanations for the behaviours of nation states.

APPENDIX I

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN VOTES  
ON THE  
TWO MAJOR U.N. RESOLUTIONS  
ON THE ARAB-ISRAELI WAR  
JULY 1967

Group One. Voted "yes" on Latin American, "no" on Yugoslav resolution. (Total: 8)

Botswana	Liberia
Gambia	Malagasy Republic
Ghana	Malawi
Lesotho	Togo

Group Two. Supported Latin American resolution, but equivocally. (Total: 12)

Voted "yes" on Latin American, abstained on Yugoslav resolution:	Same vote on both Latin American and Yugoslav resolutions:
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C.A.R.	Congo-Kinshasa
Chad	Cameroun
Dahomey	Kenya
Ethiopia	Niger
Ivory Coast	Rwanda
Sierra Leone	
Upper Volta	

Group Three. Supported Yugoslav resolution, but equivocally. Voted "yes" on Yugoslav, abstained on Latin American resolution. (Total: 2)

Nigeria  
Gabon

Group Four. Voted "yes" on Yugoslav, "no" on Latin American resolution. (Total: 10)

Burundi	Senegal
Congo-Brazzaville	Somali Republic
Guinea	Uganda
Mali	Zambia
Mauritania	Tanzania

Source: Africa Report (Washington, D.C.: African-American Institute, 1967), p. 60.

## APPENDIX II

Security Council Resolution 242 Concerning  
Principles for a Just and Lasting Peace in the  
Middle East, November 22, 1967

The Security Council,

Expressing its continuing concern with the grave situation  
in the Middle East,

Emphasizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of  
territory by war and the need to work for a just and  
lasting peace in which every State in the area can live in  
security,

Emphasizing further that all Member States in their  
acceptance of the Charter of the United Nations have under-  
taken a commitment to act in accordance with Article 2 of  
the Charter,

1. Affirms that the fulfilment of Charter principles  
requires the establishment of a just and lasting peace in  
the Middle East which should include the application of both  
the following principles:

- (i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from territories  
occupied in the recent conflict;
- (ii) Termination of all claims or states of belliger-  
ency and respect for and acknowledgement of the  
sovereignty, territorial integrity and political  
independence of every State in the area and their  
right to live in peace within secure and recog-  
nized boundaries free from threats or acts of



force;

2. Affirms further the necessity

(a) For guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area;

(b) For achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem;

(c) For guaranteeing the territorial inviolability and political independence of every State in the area, through measures including the establishment of demilitarized zones;

3. Requests the Secretary General to designate a Special Representative to proceed to the Middle East to establish and maintain contacts with the States concerned in order to promote agreement and assist efforts to achieve a peaceful and accepted settlement in accordance with the provisions and principles in this resolution;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Security Council on the progress of the efforts of the Special Representative as soon as possible.

Adopted unanimously at the  
1382nd meeting.

Source: J. Moore (ed.), The Arab-Israeli Conflict, Vol. III: Documents, Sponsored by the American Society of International Law (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 1035.

## APPENDIX IIIA

1968 OAU RESOLUTION ON THE  
ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African Unity, meeting in its Fifth Ordinary Session in Algiers, from September 13 to 16, 1968;

Having heard the statement of the UAR Minister for Foreign Affairs on the situation in the Middle East in general and the UAR in particular,

1. Takes note of the statement by the UAR Minister for Foreign Affairs;
2. Reaffirms in this respect its support for the UAR;
3. Calls for the withdrawal of foreign troops from all Arab territories occupied since June 5, 1969, in accordance with the resolution adopted by the Security Council on November 22, 1967, and appeals to all Member-States of the OAU to use their influence to ensure a strict implementation of this Resolution.

Source: C. Legum and J. Drysdale (eds.), Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents, Vol. 2, 1969/70, p. A71.

## APPENDIX IIIB

1969 OAU RESOLUTION ON THE  
ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICTResolution on the Situation in the United  
Arab Republic

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organisation of African Unity, meeting in its Sixth Ordinary Session, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from September 6 to 9, 1969;

Having heard the statement by His Excellency the Minister of National Guidance, Head of the UAR delegation, on the situation prevailing in the Middle East and more particularly in the UAR, having regard to fresh developments and events in that area;

Deeply concerned at the worsening of the situation in the area, owing to the fact that the withdrawal of the occupation forces has not been carried out, despite the Resolutions of the Security Council (Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967) and of the OAU (AHG/Res.53(V) and AHG/St.2(IV));

Recalling resolution 242 of November 22, 1967, of the United Nations Security Council;

Reaffirming its opposition to the occupation by forces of any part or the whole of one country by another;

1. TAKES formal note of the statement by His Excellency the Minister of National Guidance and of the determination of the UAR, which it has reiterated, to implement

Resolution 242 of the Security Council dated November 22, 1967;

2. REAFFIRMS its solidarity with the UAR;
3. REAFFIRMS emphatically the contents of Resolution AHG/Res. 53(V) adopted at the Fifth Summit Meeting in Algiers, in September 1968, by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU.

Source: Africa Contemporary Record, Vol. 2, 1969/70, p. A70.

## APPENDIX IIIC

1970 OAU RESOLUTION ON THE  
ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICTText of Assembly of Heads of State  
and Government Resolution on the  
Continued Aggression Against UAR

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU, meeting in its Seventh Ordinary Session, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 1 to 3 September, 1970:

Having heard the statement by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Head of the United Arab Republic delegation, on the situation prevailing in the Middle East in general, and in the United Arab Republic in particular;

Recalling its Resolution AHG/Res.53(V) of September, 1968 calling for the withdrawal of foreign troops from all Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967 in accordance with the Security Council Resolution 242 of 22 November 1967, and appealing to all Member States of the Organization of African Unity to use their influence to ensure a strict implementation of that resolution;

Recalling further its resolution AHG/Res.57(VI) of September, 1969, reaffirming emphatically the contents of its previous resolution AHG/Res.53(V) of September 1968;

Reaffirming its opposition to the occupation by forces of any part or the whole of one country by another;

1. Takes formal note of the statement by the



Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Head of the United Arab Republic delegation;

2. Expresses its grave concern that for over three years a part of the territory of a sister African State is still under occupation by foreign troops, which will threaten world peace;

3. Reaffirms its resolutions AHG/Res.53(V) of September, 1968 and AHG/Res.(VI) of September, 1969, calling for the withdrawal of foreign troops from all occupied Arab territories to the lines of 5 June, 1967, in implementation of the Security Council Resolution 242 of 22 November, 1967;

4. Expresses its solidarity with the United Arab Republic and appeals to all the Member States of the OAU to support the present efforts of the United Nations special representative to implement the Security Council Resolution 242 of 22 November, 1967, taking into account that it cannot be implemented conditionally or partially;

5. Requests all Member States of OAU to use their influence to ensure the full implementation of that resolution.

Source: Africa Contemporary Record, Vol. 3, 1970/71, pp. C9-C10.

## APPENDIX IIID

## 1971 OAU RESOLUTION ON THE

## ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT

Resolution on the ContinuedAggression Against UAR

The Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the OAU meeting in its Eighth Ordinary Session, in Addis Ababa, from 21 to 23 June 1971;

Having heard the declaration of H E the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Head of the delegation of the United Arab Republic;

Recalling its previous resolutions AHG/Res. 53(V) of September 1968, AHG/Res. 57(VI) September 1969 and AHG/Res. 62(VII) September 1970, concerning the situation prevailing in the Middle East in general, and in the United Arab Republic in particular, calling for withdrawal of foreign troops from all Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967 in accordance with the Security Council Resolution 242 of 22 November 1967 and appealing to all Member States of the OAU to use their influence to ensure a strict implementation of that resolution and support the present efforts of the United Nations Special Representative of the UN Secretary General.

Mindful of the constructive efforts of the United Arab Republic aiming at the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, especially the positive position recently taken in response to Ambassador Jarring's

peace initiative of 8 February 1971.

Seriously concerned that the present grave situation resulting from the continued Israeli occupation of the territories of three Arab States, one of them is a member in this Organization, constitutes a serious threat to the regional peace of Africa and to international peace and security.

Determined that the territory of a state should not be the object of occupation or acquisition by another state resulting from threat or use of force, which is a basic principle enshrined in the UN Charter and reiterated in Security Council resolution 242, as well as the Declaration On the Strengthening of International Security 2734(XXV) adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December, 1970:

1. Takes note of the declaration of H E the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Head of the Delegation of the UAR;

2. Reaffirms emphatically the contents of its resolutions AHG/Res.53(V) of September 1968, AHG/Res.57(VI) of September 1969 and AHG/Res.62(VII) of September 1970, and calls for immediate withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from all Arab territories to the lines of 5 June, 1967, in implementation of the Security Council resolution 242 of 22 November 1967;

3. Expresses its full support to the efforts of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, to

implement the Security Council resolution 242 of 22 November 1967, and to his initiative for peace of 8 February 1971, in particular;

4. Reaffirms its solidarity with the United Arab Republic and appreciates the positive attitude reflected in its reply on 15 February 1971, to the Special Representative's initiative for peace as a practical step for establishing a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

5. Deplores Israel's defiance to that initiative and calls upon it to make a similar positive reply to the Special Representative's initiative for peace of 8 February 1971,

6. Requests the current Chairman of the OAU to consult with the Heads of State and Government so that they use their influence to ensure the full implementation of this resolution.

Source: Africa Contemporary Record, Vol. 4, 1971-72, pp. C5-C6.



## APPENDIX IIIE

1972 OAU RESOLUTION ON THE  
ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICTOn the Continued AggressionAgainst the Arab Republic of Egypt

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU:  
Having examined the report of the outgoing Chairman of OAU  
on the implementation of Resolution AHG/Res.66(VIII);

Having heard the declaration of the Head of the  
Delegation of the Arab Republic of Egypt;

Recalling all the previous resolutions relating to the  
Middle East and in particular Resolution AHG/Res.66 (VIII)  
entitled 'Continued aggression against the UAR' calling  
for the immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from all  
the Arab territories to the pre-5 June 1967 lines;

Reaffirming its solidarity with the Arab Republic of  
Egypt;

Taking into consideration the UN General Assembly  
Resolution 2799 (XXVI) of 13 December 1971;

Deploring Israel's rejection of Resolution 2799 (XXVI)  
of the General Assembly of 13 December 1971, as well as its  
refusal to respond favourably to the initiative of the OAU, in  
particular OAU's demand concerning the reaffirmation of  
the principle of non-annexation of the occupied Arab  
territories;

Considering all the efforts exerted by the OAU  
Committee of Ten for the implementation of Resolution



AHG/Res.66(VIII);

Considering the substance of the Egyptian and Israeli replies to the memorandum of the OAU Committee of Ten;

1. Takes note of the report of the outgoing Chairman of the OAU and keenly appreciates the efforts exerted by the Chairman and members of the Committee of Ten;

2. Congratulates Egypt for its co-operation with the Committee of Ten, its positive attitude and its continuous efforts for the restoration of peace in the region;

3. Deplores Israel's negative and obstructive attitude which prevents the resumption of the Jarring mission;

4. Invites Israel to publicly declare its adherence to the principle of non-annexation of territories through the use of force;

5. Invites Israel to withdraw immediately from all the occupied Arab territories of pre-5 June 1967 lines in accordance with the Security Council Resolution 242 of 22 November 1967;

6. Reaffirms in the name of African solidarity and in pursuance of Article II, paragraph C, of the OAU Charter, its effective support to the Arab Republic of Egypt in its legitimate struggle to recover totally and by every means its territorial integrity;

7. Urges all member-States of the OAU to give

Egypt every assistance and calls on all members of the United Nations Organization to intensify their action, in both international forums and the UN Security Council and General Assembly, to take all initiatives for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Israel from the Arab territories and the condemnation of Israel's attitude which impedes the implementation of Security Council Resolution 242 based on the UN Charter which forbids, under any pretext, the acquisition of territories through the use of force;

8. Requests all member states of the United Nations Organization to refrain from supplying Israel with any weapons, military equipment or moral support likely to enable it to strengthen its military potential and to perpetuate its occupation of Arab and African territories;

9. Decides to follow closely the development of the situation in the Middle East.

Source: Africa Contemporary Record, Vol. 5, 1972/73, pp. C23-C24.

## APPENDIX IIIF

OAU'S SOLEMN DECLARATION  
ON GENERAL POLICY IN 1973Twenty-first Ordinary Session of the Council  
of Ministers, Addis Ababa, May 1973

We, the Heads of State and Government of the independent African countries, meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 24 to 25 May 1973, on the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the Organization of African Unity, have solemnly decided to make the following Declaration:

Ten years ago, on 25 May 1963, the Organization of African Unity was founded in an atmosphere of enthusiasm, hope and fervour. In establishing this Organization at the level of our continent, we, the Heads of State and Government of the independent African countries were expressing our unshakable faith and our determination to pool our resources and energies for the progress of the African peoples, in order to promote their well-being in a free, united and peaceful Africa.

To take account of the basic aspirations of our peoples and in conformity with the purposes and principles defined in our Organization's Charter, we have taken a solemn pledge to promote unity and solidarity among our States, to co-ordinate our efforts and to intensify our co-operation with a view to ensuring a better life for our peoples.

We have likewise pledged ourselves to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of our States and to settle our dispute by peaceful means in order to promote the advent of an era of peace and harmony between our States--a sine qua non of any progress.

In order to safeguard the dignity of man, we have proclaimed our total dedication to the emancipation of those parts of our Continent still subject to foreign occupation and exploitation. To this end, we have affirmed our determination to eradicate all forms of colonialism and racial discrimination from Africa.

We have re-affirmed our faith in the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and have decided to foster international co-operation by co-ordinating our action with that of the United Nations.

In order to help reduce the tension between blocs, we have subscribed to the policy of non-alignment and, to give meaning to this commitment, we have expressed our deep desire to see Africa rid itself of all foreign military bases and stand aloof from any military alliances and from the armaments race.

For ten years we have worked with patience and perseverance to achieve these objectives which, we are convinced, are indispensable for the establishment of a better world order based on justice, equality and human dignity.

In Africa we have faced major contradictions resulting from the aftermath of the colonial period, neo-colonialist manoeuvres and the obstacles which imperialism strives to raise between our States.

Nevertheless, guided by the supreme interests of our peoples, we have succeeded in solving in a genuine African spirit the divergencies resulting from Africa's historical circumstances, and we pledge ourselves to maintain the same spirit in solving any other disputes which may arise between our States. In the face of imperialist manoeuvres aimed at undermining our unity, we pledge ourselves to remain united.

We have worked to promote peace and concord between our states, and this has helped to consolidate our Organization.

We have, more than once, given concrete expression to the solidarity among our States by coming collectively to the aid of those of us who have been victims of the subversive manoeuvres of colonialism and new-colonialism. We have also demonstrated our support in concrete form for those of our States which have suffered natural disasters.

Because of our deep concern about the alarming situation prevailing in the Middle East--a situation which constitutes a serious threat to the independence, security and unity of the African continent--we have, in conformity with Security Council Resolution No. 242, supported the Arab Republic of Egypt and the other Arab countries



occupied by Israel in their legitimate struggle to recover all their territories.

To that end we have set up a Committee consisting of ten Heads of State in order to help find a solution to the problem and thus helping to restore the legitimate rights of the Palestinian peoples. In conformity with the responsibilities stemming from the basic principles of the Organization of African Unity and from those of the United Nations, we shall continue with the same concern for peace and in the same spirit of equity and efficacy, to support effectively the Arab Republic of Egypt and the other Arab countries until the total liberation of their territories which have been occupied as a result of the Israeli aggression of June 1967.

On the international scene, the active participation of a large number of member-States of our Organization in the Conferences of the Non-aligned Countries has helped to strengthen the anti-imperialist front and to consolidate the progressive forces of the world, thus contributing to the advent of an era of international detente.

At the United Nations, thanks to the co-ordination and concertation of our member-States, we have been able to adopt a common stand on various political and diplomatic issues. In this respect, the African Group has exercised considerable influence over decisions on important problems affecting peace, security, progress and self-determination in the world.

With regard to the problems of decolonization, we have since the creation of our Organization devoted very special attention to the liberation of the whole of Africa. Ten years later, at a time when we are entering a new decade, we must perforce realize that African countries have been subjected throughout the past years--and, indeed, are still being subjected--to the vilest form of colonialism and the most infamous oppression. On this historic occasion, we solemnly reaffirm our unconditional and unequivocal pledge to continue the struggle against colonial and racial domination of the continent, which is still the greatest challenge to African unity.

This policy was adopted in 1963 in response to the legitimate and profound aspirations of our peoples, and should be viewed less as a circumstantial or sentimental community of interests than as an awareness of the common destiny of all peoples of the African continent. Indeed, the successes scored in the armed struggle being waged by the peoples of territories still under colonial and racial domination constitute one of the most important factors in consolidating the independence of African States. Likewise, the victories won by those States, in addition to strengthening their independence, will reinforce and guarantee the pursuit of the liberation struggle.

During the decade that has elapsed, we have noted with satisfaction the accession of some countries to independence. In the countries still under colonial and racist

domination and oppression such as Angola, Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands, Mozambique, South Africa, Namibia, Rhodesia, the Comoro Islands, the so-called French Somaliland (Djibouti), the so-called Spanish Sahara, the Seychelles Islands and the Islands of Sao Tome and Principe, the enemy has been driven by force of arms to abandon vast areas where a new, dignified way of life is now being organized.

We express our deep satisfaction at the establishment of these vast liberated areas of new political, socio-economic and administrative structures which, as a result of military successes, testify to the sovereignty exercised by the movements which are leading the struggle in those countries.

Both within the international organizations and at the level of world public opinion, the justice of the cause of national liberation and the successes won have prevailed over the obstinacy and defiance of the colonial Powers. This has been demonstrated by the affirmation of the legitimacy of the armed struggle being waged by the liberation movements and by the recognition of those movements as authentic representatives of their struggling peoples.

Nevertheless, as the armed combat progresses, it has become increasingly notorious that only the massive aid given by the allies of colonialism and racism--especially certain NATO countries--is enabling the colonialist and racist regimes of Portugal, South Africa and Rhodesia to



continue their odious domination. This multiform assistance is now the main obstacle on the path to independence.

Despite this massive aid, the colonialist and racist regimes are powerless to dam the swelling torrent of the struggle for national liberation, and are obliged to resort to manoeuvres and attempts to divide the dominated peoples, of which the creation of Bantustans and the 'Africanization' of the war are the most outstanding examples.

These regimes, in their panic, resort to acts of genocide, mass bombing of the liberated areas, the use of dangerous chemicals and defoliants, the internment of thousands of people in concentration camps, political assassinations and premediated aggression, both military and economic, against African countries bordering on the territories engaged in fighting.

At the level of the international organizations, and especially at the United Nations, it is the activities of those very countries which are implicated in exploiting the wealth of the oppressed countries, which are responsible for the inability of the United Nations to have its resolutions and decisions implemented.

Yet despite so much hostility towards our peoples we remain confident of ultimate victory in the struggle. Faithful to our principles, we adopted the Lusaka Manifesto in which we clearly set forth our aims and our political philosophy for a genuine era of racial harmony and social justice and for establishing the dignity and respect of Man

in Africa. Our position, thus defined, was accepted by the United Nations. We have undertaken goodwill missions with the aim of influencing the Powers which are supporting our enemies to cut off their aid to the regimes which are perpetuating the odious systems of colonialism and apartheid.

In the face of the stubbornness and the intransigence of the colonialist and racist regimes on the one hand, and the complicity of some Western Powers on the other, we have come to the conclusion that the liberation of the rest of our continent requires an intensification of the armed struggle being waged by the liberation movements, as already clearly affirmed in the Mogadishu Declaration.

Consequent, today more than ever before, we are firmly convinced that armed struggle is the main form that efforts to achieve liberation must take. On behalf of all the African peoples, we reaffirm our determination to increase the moral support and material assistance to the fight which our brothers are waging for the common ideals of justice, dignity and independence.

In the same spirit, we will intensify the fight to consolidate our independence and the economic and cultural development of our States with the aim both of achieving the well-being of our peoples and of speeding up the struggle for liberation.

We further re-affirm our conviction that, for the struggle to be effective, the liberation movements must



present a united front against the common enemy.

In the light of experience acquired over the past decade, and in view of the spirit which presided over the establishment of OAU, the more effective participation and association of the liberation movements in the collective quest for solutions to the problems facing our continent have become imperative.

We pledge ourselves to provide all material, financial, and other assistance, both multilateral and bilateral, with a view to carrying our programmes for the reconstruction of the liberated areas, particularly in Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique.

We also pledge ourselves to take the necessary measures in our States to mobilize still further the masses of people, particularly young people and students, so as to make them more aware of the liberation struggle.

Realizing the burden borne by member-States bordering on the territories engaged in the struggle, we once again proclaim our determination to aid and support them against any form of aggression.

It is gratifying to note that the legitimacy of the liberation struggle has been recognized by the international community. This recognition lays an obligation upon that community to play an effective role in eliminating the scourges of colonialism and apartheid from Africa. Accordingly, we appeal to the international community to extend through the liberation movements all possible moral

and material assistance to millions of Africans to help them rid themselves of oppression and exploitation.

The struggle to eradicate the last vestiges of colonialism and racism--those scourges which are a constant threat to world peace and security--is the greatest contribution by the peoples of Africa to the efforts being made by the peoples of the world to establish Justice, Freedom and Peace.

On the threshold of a new decade, we once again solemnly affirm the basic purposes and principles to which we subscribed at the birth of our Organization, and proclaim our determination to persevere in our joint efforts to achieve them in their entirety.

In that perspective, we adopted the Declaration of Abidjan on economic and financial questions, convinced as we are that the struggle for the liberation of our continent and the development and enhanced well-being of our peoples are indissociably linked.

Source: Africa Contemporary Record, Vol. 6, pp. C5-C8.

APPENDIX IV  
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN VOTES AT THE 28th  
(1973) U.N. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

No. & State	Res. 3089 Displaced Inhabitants and Gaza	Res. 3090 Palestinian Rights	Res. 3092 Territories	Res. 3151 Apartheid and Zionism
1 Botswana	X	Z	X	Z
2 Burundi	X	X	X	X
3 Cameroun	X	X	X	X
4 Cent. Afr. Rep.	X	X	X	Z
5 Chad	X	X	X	X
6 Congo (B)	X	X	X	X
7 Dahomey	X	X	X	Z
8 Eq. Guinea	X	X	X	X
9 Ethiopia	X	X	X	X
10 Gabon	X	X	X	X
11 Gambia	X	X	X	Z
12 Ghana	X	X	X	X
13 Guinea	X	X	X	X
14 Ivory Coast	X	X	X	Z
15 Kenya	X	X	X	X
16 Lesotho	X	Z	X	Z
17 Liberia	X	X	X	X
18 Madagascar	X	X	X	X
19 Malawi	Z	Z	Z	Z

20	Mali	X	X	X	X
21	Mauritius	Z	Z	Z	Z
22	Niger	X	X	X	X
23	Nigeria	X	X	X	X
24	Rwanda	X	X	X	X
25	Senegal	X	X	X	X
26	Sierra Leone	X	X	X	X
27	Swaziland	Z	Z	Z	Z
28	Tanzania	X	X	X	X
29	Togo	X	X	X	X
30	Uganda	X	X	X	X
31	Upper Volta	X	X	X	Z
32	Zaire	X	X	X	X
33	Zambia	X	X	X	X

X Vote: When the Sub-Saharan African state voted in support of Egypt and opposed Israel's designation.

Y Vote: When the Sub-Saharan African state voted in support of Israel and opposed Egypt's designation, or else voted differently from Egypt.

Z Vote: When the Sub-Saharan African state abstained or was absent.

Source: R. Kochan, S. Gitelson and E. Dubek, "Black African Voting Behaviour in the U.N. on the Middle East Conflict: 1967-1973," in M. Curtis and S. Gitelson (eds.), op. cit., p. 313.

# APPENDIX V

## SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN VOTING BEHAVIOUR IN THE U.N.

### ON THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT: 1967-1972

Vote: State	X Votes		Y Votes		Z Votes	
	No. of Votes	%	No. of Votes	%	No. of Votes	%
1 Botswana	3	7.6	18	46.2	18	46.2
2 Burundi	31	79.5	1	2.6	7	17.9
3 Cameroun	20	51.3	3	7.7	16	41.0
4 Cent. Afr. Rep.	0	0.0	2	5.1	37	95.0
5 Chad	15	38.5	3	7.7	21	53.8
6 Congo (B)	31	79.5	0	0.0	8	20.5
7 Dahomey	3	7.7	18	46.2	18	46.2
8 Eq. Guinea*	19	70.3	2	7.4	6	22.3
9 Ethiopia	14	35.9	4	10.3	22	53.8
10 Gabon	5	12.8	8	20.5	26	66.7
11 Gambia	8	20.5	15	38.5	16	41.0
12 Ghana	6	15.4	11	28.2	22	56.4
13 Guinea	37	94.9	0	0.0	2	5.1
14 Ivory Coast	3	7.7	14	35.9	22	56.4
15 Kenya	11	28.2	4	10.3	24	61.5
16 Lesotho	6	15.4	22	56.4	11	28.2
17 Liberia	5	12.8	27	69.2	7	18.0
18 Madagascar	9	23.1	21	53.8	9	23.1



19	Malawi	0	0.0	27	69.2	12	30.8
20	Mali	37	94.9	0	0	2	5.1
21	Mauritius*	9	33.3	2	7.4	16	59.3
22	Niger	16	41.0	2	5.1	21	53.8
23	Nigeria	26	66.7	2	5.1	11	28.2
24	Rwanda	5	12.8	16	41.0	18	46.2
25	Senegal	26	66.7	3	7.7	10	25.6
26	Sierra Leone	9	23.1	11	28.2	19	48.7
27	Swaziland*	4	14.8	8	29.6	15	55.6
28	Tanzania	36	92.3	0	0.0	3	7.7
29	Togo	12	30.8	13	33.3	14	35.9
30	Uganda	26	66.7	3	7.7	10	25.6
31	Upper Volta	9	23.1	10	25.6	20	51.3
32	Zaire	4	10.3	7	17.9	23	71.8
33	Zambia	35	89.7	0	0.0	4	10.3

\*Three states, Equatorial Guinea, Mauritius and Swaziland, began to participate in UN sessions only from 1968 and continued thereafter. They could take part, therefore, in only 27 roll call votes, although the other states participated in 39 votes.

X Vote: When the sub-Saharan African state voted in support of Egypt and opposed Israel's designation.

Y Vote: When the sub-Saharan African state voted in support of Israel and opposed Egypt's designation, or else voted differently from Egypt.

Z Vote: When sub-Saharan African state abstained or was absent.

Source: R. Kochan, S. Gitelson and E. Dubek, op. cit., p. 292.

## APPENDIX VI

1973 NON-ALIGNED NATIONS' RESOLUTION  
ON THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT

NAC/ALG/CONF.4/P/Res.23

The Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of  
Non-Aligned Countries:

1. Demands the immediate and unconditional evacuation by the Israeli forces of all Arab territories occupied since June 1967,
2. Reaffirms its total and effective support to Egypt, Syria and Jordan in their lawful struggle to regain, by all means, all their occupied territories,
3. Calls upon the non-aligned countries to pledge their support for the Arab people of Palestine in their struggle against zionist, racist and colonialist settlements for the recovery of their full national rights, emphasizes that the recovery of these rights is a fundamental prerequisite for a just and lasting peace, and declares its recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and of their just struggle;
4. Demands that all States forbid emigration to Palestine and the occupied Arab territories;
5. Denounces all those powers, and in particular the U.S., which affords military, economic, political and moral support to Israel, and calls upon them to desist

forthwith from such aid;

6. Affirms the necessity for strict application of the Geneva Convention, and considers that all the illegal measures taken by Israel in the occupied territories to change the geographical and demographical aspects of those territories and the consequences of such measures are null and void, and should under no circumstances be recognized,

7. Condemns Israel's violation of human rights in the occupied Arab territories and its refusal to apply the 1949 Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, further condemns the Israeli policy of changing the nature of the occupied territories, and considers that such actions constitute war crimes and a challenge to humanity as stated in the resolution adopted by the Committee on Human Rights at its twenty-eighth session;

8. Welcomes the decision of certain member-countries to break off relations with Israel, and requests the other member-countries to take steps to boycott Israel diplomatically, economically, militarily and culturally, as well as in the field of sea and air transport, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

9. Invites the Foreign Ministers of member-States to present the views of the non-aligned countries on this question to the forthcoming session of the UN

General Assembly in accordance with the terms of this resolution.

Source: Africa Contemporary Record, Vol. 5, 1973-74, pp. C58-C59.

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