

JUST ACTION!



AFRICA ACTION STUDENT NETWORK NEWS

DARE TO INVENT THE FUTURE!

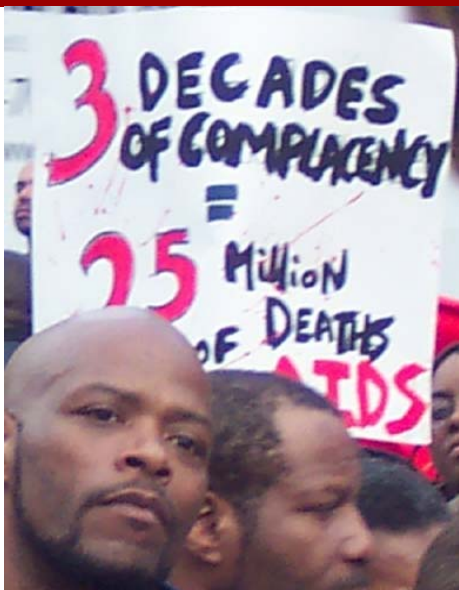
“Every generation, must out of relative obscurity, discovers its mission, fulfill it or betray it.” , Frantz Fanon

Our world today stands on the edge of a precipice, pushed by policies that fail to prioritize people. Today’s biggest problem is that, under the influence of corporate and elite interests, human welfare is relegated to the periphery of policy making where it is merely incidental not the object of policy. The outcome of this misplaced prioritization is an ever intensifying, multi-faceted global crisis: unremitting poverty for the majority, a ticking environmental time bomb, war, genocide, and devastating disease.

Policy failure is tragically evident in relation to the global AIDS crisis. The pandemic claims more than 2 million lives a year, yet our policy makers show no sense of urgency.

The continent of Africa is ground zero in the global struggle for survival. More than two thirds of those living with and dying from AIDS are in Africa.

The U.S. can play a special role in the fight against global AIDS, but it will do so only if there is popular pressure for progressive policies. Successful administrations show complacency in dealing with the pandemic. Today’s young people face the same choice Fanon told us will confront every generation. Do we vegetate in a slumber of indifference and let the world crash and burn or do we stand firm for the cause of justice? In the face of genocide, as in Darfur currently, with 250,000 lives already lost, and 2 million people displaced, do we bury our heads in the quicksand of individualism and pretend that



this does not concern us or do we join hands, organize and stop this atrocity? It is a choice between apathy and fulfilling a historical responsibility.

We have already lost more than 20 million people to the AIDS pandemic. In the face of such a debilitating crisis, it is ...(to page 2)

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FAST AFRICA FACTS

- **Population:** Over 900 million
- **Number of countries:** 54
- **Size:** Bigger than USA, China, Europe, Argentina, New Zealand and India combined
- **Development:** Varies; some places are as advanced as anywhere in the U.S. and others face extreme poverty challenges. For example the first heart transplant was in the world was performed in South Africa in 1967.

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HARNESSING THE POWER OF HISTORY

“Down with Afrikaans,” was the idea painted upon homemade posters in the hands of students on June 16, 1976. It was the principle that they were being forced to learn in the language of their oppressor that drove them out of their classrooms that day in non-violent protest . . . until police

opened fire killing unarmed kids in what came to be known as the Soweto Uprising.

The action taken by the teenagers of Soweto spread across the country. It lit the fuse that blew the powder keg.

Ten years later, the concussion was still being felt as far

away as the USA, where college student protests caused many universities to withdraw all investments from apartheid South Africa. Over time, the students were followed by city councils, state legislatures, major corporations such as GM, and finally by the federal government itself, resulting in the ...(to page 2)

DARE TO INVENT THE FUTURE cont...

an outrage that 30 years down the line, we still have to march the streets demanding comprehensive sex education in all our schools. 30 years later we are still in the streets demanding evidence based approaches to prevention and treatment instead of ideologies. This is an outrage! More than 7 in 10 people living with AIDS have no access to drugs because big pharmaceutical companies stand in the way to universal access to treatment. At a time when our capacity to care for each other is the only thing that can save the world, unbridled corporate greed is cashing in on a global tragedy. Most U.S. money for AIDS drugs goes to "Big Pharma" because of the choking corporate stranglehold on U.S. AIDS policy. U.S. programs rely almost exclusively on expensive brand name drugs when resources could cover

more people through equally effective generic drugs.

We can either watch from the terraces as our leaders dilly dance to a corporate tune or can heed the call of duty and solidarity to fulfill our historical mandate. It is men and women who make history. True, it never feels like history whilst you are living it, but the fact is that the fate of this world lies in our hands. We could still be talking of slaves and plantations today if a previous generation had betrayed its mission. Apartheid South Africa would still be intact today if a previous generation had looked the other way. Blacks would still be unable to vote in this country if a previous generation had not challenged the madness of the times.

When our generation, like those before us,

stands before the impartial justice of history we must be able to say yes, like those before us, we stood up for justice. We want to be able to say that we ran faster than those before us because in our time, the call was more urgent. We must be able to look Fanon in the eye and say "Yes we fulfilled our mission." We must be able to proudly look Thomas Sankara in the eye and say, "We heard your voice, yes, we dared—history, yes we dared—to struggle, yes we dared—to win. Yes we dared—to invent the future" This is our time—we are the ones we were waiting for!

By Briggs Bomba (Africa Action)

HARNESSING THE POWER OF HISTORY cont...

Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986.

The effect of student activism also has precedent in shaping world public debate elsewhere in the 20th century. In May of 1968, a demonstration of only about 150 students at the University of Paris at Nanterre culminated in a general strike that included ten million French workers. This revolutionary energy did not affect France only. On a larger scale, this movement against the "old society" was like an earthquake at the bottom of the sea, sending tidal waves across the consciousness of the planet. Germany saw protests that same year, as did Spain where people pushed against Franco's dictatorship. Mexico City also saw protests, as did Belgium, Pakistan, Poland, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Argentina, Brazil, and the United States.

There is no doubt that the voice of the youth, once they discovered their generational mission, is serious. Sometimes, it does not bring about immediate political change, but the paradigmatic shifts are truly evident. In the case of South Africa, political changes did come round both there and in America, delivering yet another damaging blow to the structure that has for half a millennium exploited the world.

Yet the struggle continues.

In March of 2006, high school and middle school students walked out of Northern Virginia and Maryland classrooms, just as the children of Soweto had done almost thirty years before. They did so in response to proposed legislation that would classify being in the U.S. illegally as a felony. Some of the students, who were natu-

"We want to do something that makes a difference today" - Linda Slape, 14 yr old student organizer.

ralized citizens, had parents who were not legal citizens of the United States. Imagine if these schoolchildren's parents were suddenly imprisoned. A 14-year-old student organizer stated that, she was not concerned about missing class that day because, as she put it: "This is more important...we want to do something that makes a difference today." By Nicholas Carl

LAST CALL. MAKE YOUR MARK. STOP GENOCIDE

Handprints

With these hands, open like compassion...

And a commitment to justice, unyielding like loyalty.

On these pristine banners, white like peace.

We step forward to make our mark...

In red, like a love sign,

Red like innocent blood,

Red like in STOP.

These million marks are our testimony,

As witnesses to genocide.

With this testimony we indict,

Not only perpetrators of this heinous act



But also the complacency of those who could have stopped it.

5 years later, Darfur is still crying

5 years later, blood is still spilling

5 years later, we demand the same

Only, this time much louder

STOP GENOCIDE! PEACE NOW!

(Briggs)

HELP collect handprints. Africa Action will deliver to U.S. mission at the U.N. in May, 2008—demanding U.S. leadership in stopping the genocide in Darfur.

THE LOCAL IS GLOBAL

FACTSHEET



THE BIGGEST GLOBAL THREAT

To date, the AIDS pandemic has claimed over 20 million lives worldwide. There is a clear link between AIDS and 'global apartheid' - a system of unequal access to resources that marginalizes and impoverishes Black people and people of color globally. This is evident not only because Africa is the epicenter of the AIDS pandemic, but also in the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on Black people in the U.S. Washington DC is both the nation's capitol and it has the highest HIV prevalence in the country. Global policies that marginalize Black people's access to health care, prevention and treatment leaves the black community most vulnerable to the AIDS pandemic. Fight global apartheid to end AIDS!

Take Action!

**If You Don't
Who Will?**

LEARN!

TEACH! &

LIVE!

Plan an event with your church, on campus or in your community to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS in Africa.

Africa Action can provide speakers and other educational resources.

ORGANIZE!

Join Africa Action's Campaign to End HIV/AIDS in Africa and take action to change U.S. policies.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV GLOBALLY IN 2007

Total	-	33.2 million
Adults	-	30.8 million
Women	-	15.4 million
Children	-	2.5 million

PEOPLE NEWLY INFECTED WITH HIV GLOBALLY IN 2007

Total	-	2.5 million
Adults	-	2.1 million
Children under 15 years	-	420 000

GLOBAL AIDS DEATHS IN 2007

Total	-	2.1 million
Adults	-	1.7 million
Children under 15 years	-	330 000

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

- ◆ 22.5m (68%) of people globally living with HIV
- ◆ More than three quarters (76%) of all AIDS related deaths in 2007
- ◆ Only 28% have access to treatment

WASHINGTON, DC

- ◆ 1 in 20 residents are HIV positive, 86% are African American
- ◆ 80.7% of infections between 2001 and 2006 were African American
- ◆ 90% of HIV positive women are African American

STILL AN INADEQUATE RESPONSE GLOBALLY

- ◆ Less than 20% of people at risk of infection have access to prevention
- ◆ Only 11% of pregnant women have access to prevention of mother to child transmission
- ◆ Less than 30% of those in need have access to treatment

From DC to Johannesburg, Johannesburg to Mumbai, Mumbai to Nairobi, Nairobi to Porto Alegre, The Whole World—WE ARE ALL CONNECTED!

DIFFERENT PLACES.

SAME POLICIES.

SAME POWER STRUCTURE.

SAME IMPACT!



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Dare To Invent The Future!

Join AASN :
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The Africa Action Student Network is a community of student activists across the country committed to mobilizing and advocating for U.S. policies that promote political, economic and social justice in Africa. The fact that students have historically played a pivotal role in advocating for change was most evident in the South Africa anti-apartheid movement, when students mobilized to divest university funds from the apartheid regime and press for U.S. sanctions against that white minority government. Africa Action was actively involved with students in fighting apartheid in South Africa, and is now engaged in countering Global Apartheid, an international system of minority rule by a handful of rich countries, in which wealth and power, and access to basic human rights, are determined by race and place. Students still play a pivotal role in this movement.

Africa Action is running 3 campaigns: (1) to stop genocide in Darfur, (2) for comprehensive cancellation of Africa's debt and (3) to end HIV/AIDS in Africa. For more information visit www.africaaction.org

INSPIRATION CORNER

"You, me, us." ~ Poem by Muhammad Ali

"Be realistic, do the impossible". ~ Che Guevara

"Chairman Mao once said that political power comes from the barrel of a gun. He was only partly right: power that comes from the barrel of a gun can be effective only for a short time. In the end, people's love for truth, justice, freedom and democracy will triumph. No matter what governments do, the human spirit will always prevail." ~ His Holiness the Dalai Lama

"There is a vitality, a life force, an energy, a quickening, which is translated through you into action. And because there is only one you in all time, this expression is unique and if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and the world will not have it." ~ Martha Graham

"One of the great liabilities of life is that all too many people find themselves living amid a great period of social change, and yet they fail to develop the new attitudes that the new situation demands. They end up sleeping through a revolution." ~ MLK, Jr.

"When spider webs unite, they can entangle a lion." ~Ethiopian Proverb



Martin Luther King, Jr.