Development
Economics
Research
Group

Working Paper Series

12-2021

Buying Security with Charity: Why donors change conditionality

Johnny Flentø

Leonardo Santos Simao

July 2021

University of Copenhagen
Faculty of Social Sciences
Department of Economics
www.econ.ku.dk/derg
#DERGDK

ISSN 2597-1018

Abstract

This paper explores how relations between donors and sub-Saharan countries have evolved since 1961 when ODA was first defined, what drives the dynamics and how this influences poverty eradication. We argue that ODA is a multi-purpose vehicle which tries to combine poverty alleviation in poor countries with financing of the foreign policy objectives of donor countries. Western security concerns have influenced conditionality for ODA, affecting allocations and delivery of aid, and have altered its definition.

OECD countries have been buying security with charity and have been able to align their security considerations with the moral of charity as security threats to Western countries have often also been real threats to Africa.

This is not the case for migration to Europe, which is neither a security nor a welfare problem for Africa. African welfare and poverty alleviation objectives cannot be aligned with Western demands to stem the flow of young people out of Africa. While aid can still help, if the overall envelope does not increase, it will be at the expense of other poor people.

When Europe cannot justify migration control as charity, and there is no common security agenda, donor governments risk using aid as a bribe to buy African governments' assistance to control migration, which is not in Africa's interest. ODA flows are moving to the north of Africa and to Europe's neighbors. This is because some countries can offer security alliances to the West, which it can buy through aid budgets if there is a degree of misery in those countries.

Africa needs unity to undertake well-coordinated trading of services, which Europe is prepared to pay generously for. This would be better for Africa's welfare than having to accept conditional charity with gratitude and would help European countries to address the real problem and stop treating the symptoms. This would also be the better route to follow for Europe's children.

Key words: foreign aid, donors, conditionality, poverty, security, sub-Saharan Africa,

JEL codes: B52, F02, F30, F35, F50

"Unity will not make us rich, but it can make it difficult for Africa and the African peoples to be disregarded and humiliated." (Julius Nyerere, Accra, March 1997)

1.0 Introduction[1]

Official development assistance (ODA) in the form of donor-funded activity in poor countries has existed for more than 70 years. Yet, while it has been helpful, it has not eradicated poverty – far from it. In Africa south of the Sahara, poverty is increasing in total numbers and the number of people living in absolute poverty in sub- Saharan Africa will soon outnumber the entire population of the European Union. In Asia, especially in China, where poverty in absolute numbers has decreased significantly in recent decades, the reduction has largely been brought about by factors other than foreign aid.

Development aid, especially to sub-Saharan Africa, has been met with increasing fatigue and criticism by politicians and scholars, both in donor countries and Africa, who claim that it does not work and is sometimes counter-productive to development. According to official figures, OECD countries continue to spend around a third of their ODA, or 50 billion USD, on development aid to sub-Saharan Africa every year. This is a tiny fraction of their own wealth and does not mirror the regional poverty dynamics. It is also far from sufficient for achieving Social Development Goal no. 1 to eradicate poverty by 2030 (Flentø 2021).

Nevertheless, the OECD countries, and Europe in particular, continue with a business model and a level of effort which are insufficient to meet the target that the world has formally set. Why is that so?

This paper explores how relations between donors and sub-Saharan countries have evolved since 1961 when ODA was first defined, what drives the dynamics and how this influences poverty eradication. It is structured as follows. Section 2 provides an overview of the fundamentals of donor relations, drawing on available evidence and insights. Section 3 describes the evolution of donor relations over time since the 1960s, with a focus on sub-Saharan Africa, and looks at what has motivated the changes that have occurred. In section 4, we take stock of the present state of affairs by looking at the strategies of some influential donors as well as tendencies in the practical application and implementation of aid. Chapter 5 concludes and looks ahead.

2.0 The basic relationship between donor and recipient

ODA is a gift[2] from one sovereign country to another which is supposedly given in charity. Because it is a formal international relationship involving a gift in pursuit of welfare and not reciprocity, the relationship between the donor and the recipient is determined by a very complicated regime.

The relationship between a donor country and a country receiving development assistance is fundamentally a relationship between two sovereign nations and, as such, is governed by international law. Most countries receiving development aid have a long colonial history and sovereignty is an ever-present concern to be treated with a high degree of sensitivity. As is the case

[1] Johnny Flentø: Development Economics Research Group (DERG), University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark, email: johnny.flentoe@econ.ku.dk; Leonardo Santos Simao, Former Minister of Health, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs & Cooperation, Government of Mozambique, Maputo, Mozambique.

[2] Sometimes a concessional loan with a grant element.

for most nations, the struggles related to the birth of the nation and the associated sacrifices are a central pillar of nation building. What is particular to most former colonies is that many of their governments have a good deal of their own legitimacy embedded within their struggle for sovereignty because it took place relatively recent. There is a manifest need for these governments' countries to be treated – very visibly – as sovereign countries and not to be taken for granted.

However, a fundamental question in international relations is whether laws actually do apply to such relations. The most influential line of thought in international relations (neo-realist) says that they do not. Neo-realists (see Walt 1987) claim that the order of the world is fundamentally anarchistic.[3] While there are many laws and conventions to regulate international relations, there is no super-national body to enforce them, no night watchman, as scholars of the neo-realist school put it. In this line of argument, what really regulates international relations is power balancing for security purposes and this entails alliances between nations.

Governments of sovereign states engage in international relations for many reasons, but the most fundamental reason for allying with another country is to preserve sovereignty. According to neo-realist theory, alignment in international relations is motivated by the desire to balance power with the objective of limiting the risk of domination by other states. Traditional theory (Walt 1987) holds that countries will align in order to balance power against a stronger power if this is a viable option. Alternatively, countries can ally with the stronger power (bandwagoning), but this will deny the weaker country influence in the alliance. The balancing choice is dependent on the number of power poles. In a multipolar world, weak countries can try to ally with the second or third strongest power to balance against the strongest power. In a unipolar world, the weaker countries must align with the hegemon and allow them to have some degree of domination.

The fundamental security dilemma in alliance politics relates to entrapment (having to fight an ally's war which could have been avoided if the ally had taken fewer risks) and risk of abandonment. Snyder (1984) and Mearsheimer (2018) explain that the risk of entrapment is greater for a country if its ally is over-confident that it will be assisted in any conflict. If, on the other hand, the ally lacks this confidence, it fears abandonment and may realign, depending on the options and the adversaries.

Alliances are never permanent. As explained by Glaser (1997), the combination of the fundamentally anarchistic nature of international relations, shifting domestic political imperatives and conceptions influence the security dilemma and can cause realignment. According to the neo-realist school, this makes power balancing a never-ending game and makes war unavoidable.

Domination is ultimately by force, i.e. by military means, but coercion is frequently undertaken through softer means such as economic and diplomatic instruments. Whatever the means used, the objective of the stronger power (even a hegemon) is to create dominions which, through realignment, can no longer pose a threat to it. Ultimately, this involves social engineering, as alluded to by Mearsheimer (2018). Sometimes, social engineering needs to be preceded by military action, to pave the way. However, brute force in itself rarely creates sustainable social engineering. Even liberation armies are only popular for so long and quickly become occupying forces. The social transformation sought entails winning the hearts and minds of people in foreign countries, and militaries have a very

[3] Another view is held by the international relations liberal school, which believes that a rule-based world order exists and should be pursued. This line of thinking grew stronger after the end of the Cold War, but obviously lost strength after the invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the "alliance of the willing" without international mandate or verifiable criteria.

poor track record in this field. Economic cooperation does a better job, particularly if it is conceived as charity rather than as a means to profit or dominate.

For most aid-receiving countries, sovereignty is a very sensitive subject. It came at a high cost to many poor countries, often after long struggles for what is normally referred to as independence. For most of these poor countries, independence as a concept is generally related to the ending of colonial rule. Independence really means freedom from domination, oppression and exploitation by colonial rulers. However, independence is not sovereignty, as Brown (2013) shows (see Fig 1).

When poor colonized countries won independence from their colonial rulers, it was because there was international recognition of these countries as sovereign nations. This meant that the location of ultimate authority over their territory shifted from European capitals to African capitals.

The purpose of sovereignty is fundamentally to be able to define and implement policy in a territory. However, this ability is never absolute as countries must align those polices with their international engagements in the form of conventions, treaties and other agreements which have a limitative character. Consequently, sovereignty does not end dependency. As Fig. 1 shows, there are many degrees of dependency, while sovereignty is the legal base from which the governments of poor countries negotiate the terms and conditions of their international engagements, including their relations with donors. The solidness of this base is logically important. If a country's sovereignty or the integrity of its territory is under threat, its negotiating position towards its donors can be considerably weakened.

FIG. 1 Degrees of Dependency

	External influence			
	Issues of national control			***Issues of sovereignty***
Type	General external social, cultural, and economic influence on societal development	External influence on state policy, especially macroeconomic policy	External influence over internal constitutional make-up	Abrogation of sovereignty
Examples	Impact of world markets, foreign investment and trade, ITCs, and connectivity	Policy conditionality in aid; bilateral and multilateral negotiations and agreements; lobbying; bribery	Political conditionality; post-conflict reconstruction; and state building	Military intervention; colonization; occupation; non-recognition
Impact	Questions of national cultural, developmental, or economic purity	Extent and exercise of policy autonomy and control over outcomes	The form and bases of 'internal' authority	Loss of politico-legal independence
Is aid a factor?	Indirectly	Directly, to varying extents	In some cases	No

Source: Brown (2013).

Donor dependency by itself cannot officially remove or roll back sovereignty. It can, however, undermine and limit the purpose of sovereignty, the right to define and implement policy. This happens when the recipient country decides to pursue policy prompted and designed by donors which it would not otherwise pursue. Such situations come about because of the conditions that the donor applies to the gift. While donors can legitimately seek to influence economic and social policy, this is not the case with security. The fundamental foreign policy decision that a sovereign country makes is who it should align with.

Because ODA is officially designated as charity, and because the government of the donor country is obliged to try to ensure that the gift is used as such, ODA involves stewardship or agency. The donor country has something in the recipient country that the latter must look after and take care of on behalf of the donor. This relationship consequently involves a principal and a steward or an agent acting on behalf of the principal.

We know from management theory that the difference between stewardship and agency is largely related to the degree of persuasion (or coercion) necessary to ensure that the caretaker pursues the interests of the principal. The relationship is regulated by a contract setting out the conditions of the relationship between the principal and the agent. True stewardship needs fewer explicit conditions than agency and thus a less formal contract.

However, the principal-agent theory of optimal contract cannot fully explain donor relations because they constitute a special form of the principal-agent relationship, for two main reasons: the relationship is unusually multilayered and, more importantly, the normal feedback circle does not always exist. Throughout the layers, different institutions supposedly act on behalf of someone else. Donor agencies meet ministries in recipient countries which act on behalf of a government, which acts on behalf of its poor population. They also meet contractors or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which work for donor agencies, which act on behalf of a donor government which represents the taxpayers in the donor country. Agents have many motives, and they can be manipulative because of distance, limited information and because there is no direct feedback from the poor people to the rich taxpayers. As Dwight and others put it in a few words:

> "*There is considerable slippage throughout these relationships.*" (Perkins et al. 2013)

In ODA, the donor and the recipient act in an international relationship where the recipient government acts as the donor country's agent or steward. However, they both rely on information from the entire chain of agents, who all have their own motives for being involved in the transfer. This influences the degree of confidence between the two countries and thus the nature of agency.

In donor jargon, the distinction between stewardship and agency is often referred to as "ownership," i.e. the extent to which the values and policies that donors would like their donation to promote is shared, truly believed in and actively pursued by the recipient country. The concept of ownership is blurred but, fundamentally, it is appropriated by donors to determine whether conditions for the gift need to be explicit and enforced. This again has an influence on the amount of aid being given and how it is delivered, i.e. what instruments donors apply. There is always conditionality, but conditions are sometimes implicit because they do not need to be explicit or because it is awkward for the donor to have overt conditions. This situation is often referred to in diplomatic language as "an understanding." When donor countries refer to development cooperation being based on shared values, it means that the recipient country is pursuing social transformation in the image of the donor.

However it is framed, the basic nature of the donor-recipient relationship is that the donor can attach conditions to the gift. This is formally legitimized by the donor's wish for the gift to effectively address the challenge the donor wants to help with. Conditionality in development assistance is normally related to the donor's demand that it should reach the poor and help in a sustainable way. It can also be targeted at a specific challenge (water supply or health care) or a group of people (women or children). We can follow the taxonomy of Bourguignon and Gunning (2016), who divide aid into two theoretical parts: aid for finance and aid for reform. In practice, they overlap, but conceptually they are very different.

One purpose of aid is the economic transfer itself. It relaxes the budget constraints of the poor country and makes it possible for its government to finance activities it would not have been able to undertake without the aid. This way of looking at aid stems from the original gaps model, where aid relaxes the foreign exchange or the domestic savings limitations in the poor country. In this situation, it is the size of the transfer that matters, not the source. The activities financed by the extra cash would have been implemented regardless of the source of finance.

The other purpose of aid is to promote reform and change policies and institutions in such a way that the objectives of the donor are more likely to be met (in the opinion of the donor). In this scenario, the reform being financed would not have been undertaken without the aid, which implies that the objectives of the donor and the recipient government differ to some extent, and the sovereignty of the latter is conditioned. Assuming that the donor country's purpose is purely altruistic, i.e. that the reform being financed is for the purpose of alleviating poverty, the donor will consider how and to what extent the government in the recipient country will tax the donation, directly or via fungibility, and will design the reform accordingly. Bourguignon and Gunning (2016) are quite candid about a very central issue in donor relations:

> *"This difference in objectives is the key issue in the literature on conditionality: if the two agents would be in full agreement conditionality would be pointless. In the extreme case aid acts as a bribe."* (Bourguignon & Gunning 2016)

3.0 Evolution of donor relations

Financial assistance from rich to poor countries is as old as international relations themselves and has generally been about domination, harnessing vassal states and dominions, and building new alliances. Both Napoleon and Frederik I of Prussia used this practice in the 18th century, as did the UK, for example in the American Civil War.

Official economic assistance for development and welfare is a part of such flows and was traditionally not separated from other transfers. The level of financial flows from rich to poorer countries increased sharply in the aftermath of the Second World War (WWII), in the context of the Cold War, and during the successful drives for independence by many colonies. It started in Asia,[4] on the eve of WWII, where independence struggles in a dozen countries led to violent conflict and more or less overt interference by China and the USSR in their struggles for liberation from UK and France. Along with military assistance, economic aid became part and parcel of this process as the European states and the USA tried to maintain influence in former colonies and supported regimes that were favorable to the West to bolster them against the expansion of communism. (See e.g. Foley (2007) for a detailed account of aid to Burma between 1948 and 1962). In his inaugural address, President Truman spoke of his commitment to development cooperation and justified it as follows:

> "*More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery…Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas.*" (Harry S. Truman, 1949)

[4] The first large aid for security scheme was the Marshall Plan for US aid to Europe after WWII.

England and France were increasingly assisted, and in some cases eventually substituted, by the USA, which became the major player in the Western alliance in an increasingly bipolar world. This was first felt in Asia, where most countries had human capital and institutional strength which far exceeded what most African nations had at independence. Such things logically influence donor relations, but other strong institutional developments were under way on the donor side which would have a profound impact on international relations, particularly in relation to sub-Saharan Africa.

According to Hynes and Scott (2013), the term “official development aid” can be traced back to US-inspired attempts to share the burden of development assistance. As the OECD was created after completion of the Marshall Plan in December 1960, the term “common aid effort” was agreed by the members of the OECD’s new Development Assistance Group in March 1961. This joint acknowledgment by the USA, Canada and the Western European countries of the need to help the less-developed countries by increasing economic, financial and technical assistance prompted the creation of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) under the OECD from late 1961. The aims of this new body were to expand the flow of resources to less-developed countries, improve the terms and conditions of aid, and increase its developmental effectiveness (OECD 1985).

ODA is thus not a new financial flow invented by donors in pursuit of charity. It is simply a book-keeping definition of how to calculate and account for – and, indeed, separate – the part of overseas resource flows that can reasonably be attributed to development and welfare. It was the donor countries themselves that needed it as a mechanism for monitoring how the burden was shared among them, especially as the USA needed the Europeans to chip in more funds.

Clearly, this drive was not motivated solely by the American desire to increase charity to the world’s poor. It was founded in security considerations at the height of the Cold War and in a firm conviction that charity was broadly seen as a much more noble endeavor than security efforts, especially in relation to interventions far from home. This helped to justify financing it through taxation.

Truman was not alone in publicly talking about the link between security and charity. Addressing students at Michigan University in a surprise speech in October 1960 during his presidential campaign, Senator Kennedy launched his idea of a volunteer service and asked the students how many of them would be willing to spend some years abroad serving their country and the cause of peace.

> “*On your willingness to do that, not merely to serve a year or two years in the service, but on your willingness to contribute part of your life to this country, I think will depend the answer whether a free society can compete. I think it can! And I think Americans are willing to contribute. But the effort must be far greater than we have made in the past.*” (J.F. Kennedy, The founding moment, Peace Corps)

Six months later, in March 1961, President Kennedy signed an executive order establishing the American Peace Corps. The order was authorized by Congress in September of the same year with the passing of the Peace Corps Act. There was no beating around the bush about the purpose of this service. It was a volunteer service, not altruism, and was explicitly about charity for security and the ability of the free (Western) world to compete with the Soviet Bloc.[5]

The purpose of ODA was broadly agreed on by its founders, who generally shared Christian values and believed in charity, including its potential to promote social transformation. As an international

[5] Volunteer services in other countries followed, as in Denmark, where the “Friends of Peace” association with roots in refugee work after WWII became the government-funded manager of the Danish Volunteer Service for Development Countries.

accounting principle, however, ODA was challenged from the outset. Separating development assistance from other foreign assistance is easy in extreme cases, but there is a significant gray zone. Countries have different views of what constitutes ODA or, rather, what they themselves would like to count as such. When countries want to have their share of the development effort counted in as large a way as possible against an international target set for noble charity, there is logically a discussion about what should rightly count as development assistance and how. This debate is characterized by two fundamentals: it primarily takes place among the donor countries, and it is endless. As Hynes and Scott put it:

> "*The definition is deliberately open to interpretation.*" (Hynes and Scott 2013, p. 12)

Discussion about what constitutes ODA can technically boil down to two basic concepts: development motive and concessionality. It took more than a decade to refine the definition of ODA and the Extended Reporting System (1972), and discussions about what should count as ODA and by how much are still the bread and butter of the OECD's DAC. Requests by some donors in the early days to include the costs of pensions to former colonial officers and compensation to private companies for expropriation may seem curious today. However, the matters of forgiving military credits and maintaining rules about contributions to peace-keeping missions, in-donor refugee costs and the administrative costs of development assistance were more serious. However, this does not change the fundamental motive for development cooperation: charity in pursuit of social engineering and, ultimately, security. What the endless discussion on the so-called DAC's ability criteria does show, however, is that it can be adapted to the new needs and realities of Western security concerns.

In conclusion, donor relations are about a specific area of international relations and a part of economic cooperation that is labeled in a particular way because it gives considerable advantages to the donor country, both in relation to fundraising and the right to influence policy in foreign lands, i.e. to dominate. This label is "charity," and it goes without saying that the separation of charity from other flows must be credible to allow and maintain these special privileges for the donor country.

3.1 Development assistance and donor relations in a bipolar world

Historical events made Africa south of Sahara the first continent where the concept of ODA predated independence.[6] As explained above, this separation is important for the nature of donor relations, and not only formally. The legitimacy of a donor's actions on foreign soil is very different from other interventions which the same (donor) country would undertake. Charity legitimizes conditionality and conditionality affects policy choices, which, in other words, affects independence. The principle of non-interference, anchored in the UN Charter, rooted in the peace treaties of Westphalia in the 17th century and adopted by the Organization of African Unity to protect the new African states, was difficult to challenge overtly, although it could be done through covert support for guerilla insurgencies and overt development aid. As President Nixon squarely put it:

> "*The main purpose of American aid is not to help other nations but to help ourselves.*" (OECD 2012, p. 79)

When ODA came to Africa it was in the context of the Cold War, in which the new sovereign countries had chosen sides. Once development cooperation had been initiated, there was little need for explicit conditionality at the overall policy level. In many ways, these first development partnerships were true

[6] With a few exceptions like Ghana, Sudan and the special case of Ethiopia, which was never colonized.

alliances, as African countries chose their allies and donors based on ideology and the type of society they aspired to. At the same time, the Cold War effectively invalidated Pan-Africanism and put millions of Africans in harm's way.

The implicit coercion of donor countries was in this choice itself. This was not particular to Africa, but the risk of violent conflict there was much higher than in many other places. African countries had to choose sides and became involved in the Cold (sometimes hot) War. The drive for non-alignment was largely unsuccessful; almost all countries had to align for protection. Not even a handful of countries in sub-Saharan Africa managed to stay clear of the big divide. As Snyder (1984) explains, in a bipolar world the alliance problem is mostly determined by fear of abandonment not entrapment. Consequently, African countries went to work fighting somebody else's wars – at home.

Regardless of international conventions and the creation of the Movement of Non-aligned States,[7] almost all African countries became direct or indirect pawns in the Cold War. African politicians with frustrated ambitions easily found support and encouragement for starting an insurgency from the superpower which was not aligned with a country's government. Africans found themselves in the firing line in proxy wars, and sometimes civil wars, as the tactic of supporting guerilla movements in neighboring countries aligned to the other side spread through the continent. Some of the most notorious cases were the complete switch of alignment in the Ethiopian-Somali war in the late 1970s and the indirect support for the apartheid regime in South Africa, including its destabilization of Angola and Mozambique, when there was a risk of an African National Congress (ANC) government re-aligning South Africa with the Soviet Bloc.

The donor community did not operate in line with the fragile states concept during the Cold War. Indeed, great efforts were made to weaken African states aligned to the other pole, including by undermining the integrity of their territory. If the definitions used today in relation to fragile states had been applied in the 1970s, most of the countries in Africa would have fallen into this category. Institutions were weak or absent and many countries struggled to preserve the integrity of their territory due to foreign-supported insurgencies. The same is true for concepts like donor dependency, which strengthened alignment and was often not considered a bad thing at all by the donor countries.

Human rights and democracy were not at the forefront of discussions between donors and African governments, especially if a popular vote could swing the country to the other side of the big divide. Congo is probably the most notorious example, but many other countries in sub-Saharan Africa shared that basic relationship with donors. There was widespread conditionality about harboring guerilla movements as well as donors' access to land and infrastructure for military or mining purposes. It was mostly aligned to the poor countries' own security requirements, but some African leaders refused at times, as they felt it would raise the stakes too high. (See, for example, Jacinto Veloso's (2016) account on Samora Machel's rejection of Soviet pressure for a deep-sea naval base in Nacala, Mozambique, in the 1970s, which would have brought a new dimension of war to the African East Coast).

Overt conditionality was predominantly technical and often centered on "appropriate technology," linking aid and sustainability. The dominant forms of assistance were project assistance combined with personnel assistance and import support, which often financed dual purpose imports, such as fuel and spares, in support of civil as well as military endeavors. Most donor countries created official aid agencies, with varying degrees of operational independence. These new delivery vehicles meant that donor countries appeared differently and they were often represented by officials tasked with

[7] A group of around 100 countries championed by Yugoslavia and including states like Angola, Cuba, Mozambique, Nicaragua, North Korea and Vietnam.

providing good development assistance, not traditional diplomacy, in pursuit of security and commercial gains.

Relations between NGOs and African governments were mostly excellent. The NGOs assisted in service delivery (education, health, agriculture and rural roads) and performed advocacy at home, helping to raise awareness and funds. This work also benefited overall support for ODA, not least as African leaders were generally portrayed in positive terms, although many NGOs had their favorites.

Many projects went well and there was general optimism during the 1960s and early 1970s. Failures were attributed to management issues, cultural differences in work ethics and discipline, and to funding inappropriate technology due to the tying of aid and oversizing projects (white elephants). The fundamental constraint, however, related to the conditionality referred to as "sustainability." Because the economic and human resource base was so limited in the poorest African countries, they soon ran out of counterparts who could be trained by the donors' experts and volunteers as well as the funds needed to run and maintain the donors' infrastructure investments.

On the other hand, as most of these projects had a short implementation period (2-3 years), the many experts were more motivated to produce results to satisfy the governments who had hired them, thus qualifying them for future projects, rather than investing more time and resources in training their local counterparts. Furthermore, in recipient countries, some projects were perceived more as donor preferences (identified and crafted by consultants), than as addressing local priorities, so the governments did little to ensure their sustainability. In some quarters, there were even serious doubts about the political willingness of donors to support real development of the recipient countries due to a perceived prevailing colonial and patronizing mentality and attitudes manifest in their relationships. This frequently led to rejection of their proposed priorities, as was the case with infrastructures. This began to change when China started to play a meaningful role in Africa's development and prioritized the building of infrastructure building (Executive Research Associates (Pty) Ltd 2009).

Delivering development assistance through project and personnel assistance seriously limits absorption capacity because it is limited to investments only (human and infrastructure). This way of delivering aid is associated with considerations about sustainability, which are narrowly related to the ability of the recipient to finance the running costs of the donor's investments and the idea that most experts and volunteers need to train their own counterparts. Often in sub-Saharan Africa, the trainers became managers and projects became islands of excellence as donors protected and ring fenced their investments with special (duty-free) imports and expatriated management for years on end. Thus, replicability and scaling were often impossible. Importantly, it is the limited absorption capacity that results from this way of delivering aid with counterpart finance requirements for the running costs, and sometimes even the investment itself, that fundamentally causes donor competition because very poor countries cannot satisfy these demands from many donors at the same time. This triggers the need for donor coordination among the donors themselves. The recipient country does not necessarily have an interest in donors coordinating themselves (as was recognized later in the Paris Declaration (2005)) and will often be better off – i.e. able to act more independently – if there is strong competition among donors (as demonstrated by Bangladesh in the 1980s and early 1990s). For alignment purposes, it was also very convenient for donor countries with a very hands-on approach to development cooperation, including the associated massive presence of advisers and experts. Another limiting factor of absorption capacity was the short-term implementation period for most projects, aggravated by changes of government in donor countries, which made it difficult to include them in long-term development plans.

As the second oil crisis hit the world economy in 1979, most developed countries were heavily indebted and the sharp rise in interest rates resulted in massive defaults. The Soviet Bloc was increasingly on its heels in Africa throughout the 1980s and was unable and unwilling to bail out its African allies. As debt payments increased, all donors, including the Soviet Bloc, saw the balance of payments of many poor countries increasingly become transitory accounts. Increasing amounts of export earnings and other foreign exchange earnings, including ODA, were used to service debt. Some countries also used up to a quarter of the government's recurrent budget to pay interest.

However, the rescheduling of debt by the Western creditors, organized by the Paris Club, came with conditionality. These were a rather different type of conditions. They were explicit about economic policy and management and were to be administered by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. As an increasing number of African countries were caught in the debt trap, policy-based lending by the Bretton Woods institutions swept across Africa in the form of the so-called stabilization and structural adjustment programs. Strong neoliberal winds were blowing in the USA and Europe, and these programs were designed to restructure the African economies which had previously been subject to a degree of planning and protectionism around market-based factor remuneration and accumulation in the Western image. While it was likely the underlying structural causes and the Cold War itself that halted development and economic growth in Africa, poor domestic policies, particularly socialism, got the blame.

Policy-based lending through stabilization and structural adjustment programs represents nothing less than the largest realignment ever known of African states to the West. Much of it happened before the Soviet Bloc imploded, and it was therefore true realignment in a bipolar world brought about by the promise of economic assistance, which was overwhelmingly ODA. It was underpinned by the dwindling strength of the Soviet Bloc, which increased the risk of abandonment and obliged African governments to realign with the West to survive. Only in a few African states was the shift provoked by a true change of heart and ideological belief or by a change in party leadership. In most states, it was the ruling governments that aligned for survival, and this left many of the guerilla movements and insurgencies abandoned, with little influence on economic policy and without sharing the spoils of peace and privatizations.

The structural adjustment programs paved the way for debt relief and renewed policy-based lending, but very few of the programs changed the level of misery in Africa. Indeed, some might say that the opposite happened, and this worsening situation was predicted and denounced by a whole range of academics, international organizations and NGOs. The conditionality of the programs obliged African leaders to abandon fixed exchange rates, most subsidies and protectionism in order to reinstall so-called market-based factor remuneration and allocation. It meant a return to producing and exporting primary products and thus the dismantling of much manufacturing industry. Higher farm-gate prices and subsequent productivity increases in the agricultural sector rarely ensued. Additionally, and more importantly perhaps for what followed, the programs called for austerity fiscal measures and reduced both the strength and the reach of most government institutions, particularly for health and education.

3.2 Donor relations during Western hegemony

With the end of the Cold War and bipolar alignment, Eritrea and Namibia became independent and apartheid in South Africa ended as did the insurgency in Mozambique. These events in Southern Africa, particularly the dismantling of the apartheid regime, were widely celebrated. This was arguably the strongest case of international solidarity, uniting political forces in the West with a human rights mission in Africa. It was made possible in 1990 because there was no longer a threat that the popular vote in South Africa bringing the ANC to government would lead to an alliance with the Soviet Bloc.

In most other parts of the continent, war and violent conflict were brewing. Throughout the 1990s a dozen wars involving more than 20 nations erupted across Africa and this might have warranted focused attention from the West. However, as has always been the case with Africa, something else was more important. In the 1990s, the OECD countries' main security concern was the former Yugoslavia, where a massive civil war inside Europe commanded their attention and stretched their resources.

In relation to Africa, Western countries still endeavored to influence developments through diplomatic efforts in conflict resolution. These efforts were sometimes backed by UN peace-keeping activities, albeit often late, with limited budgets and weak mandates.[8] Western donors also directed emergency aid to the territories that were plagued by war and violent conflict, sometimes under extremely difficult conditions.

Because of Somalia's strategic situation on the Horn of Africa (entrance to the Red Sea and Suez), the USA deployed its military for a short time in 1993 in support of a UN peace-keeping operation. However, it soon became clear that the USA was not prepared to suffer casualties in an African civil war. The British also intervened briefly in West Africa, mostly to save their own nationals. France is the only country that has permanently maintained significant military strength and boots on the ground in Africa since the Cold War and the independence of most former French colonies (1956-62).

In a unipolar world, smaller states cannot realign, and the hegemon is not prepared to pay a high price for their allegiance. For the hegemon, it is important that smaller states continue with social transformation in its image, thereby reducing the risk of threats in the future. Here, the hegemon will pay for some of that transformation but not at the military level because there are no urgent security threats as there were in other conflicts, particularly the former Yugoslavia.

Donor relations with more peaceful countries in Africa changed remarkably during the 1990s. Through the stabilization programs in the 1980s, economic conditionality had advanced conditions related to political structure and governance, but as the Soviet Bloc finally crumbled, the OECD donors slowly but surely changed their aid instruments and conditionality. OECD countries also reduced overall ODA significantly, which, together with the disappearing economic aid from the former Soviet Bloc, represented a significant reduction of overall aid flows to Africa in the 1990s. It was only in 2007 that the overall decline in ODA had recovered, as shown in Fig.2, at a time when Western security had again become significantly challenged.

[8] Most traditional peacekeeping missions fall under Chapter 6 of the UN charter which has measures to settle conflicts by peaceful means – including negotiation, mediation and confidence-building measures. Chapter 7 mandates, for peace enforcement, are rare.

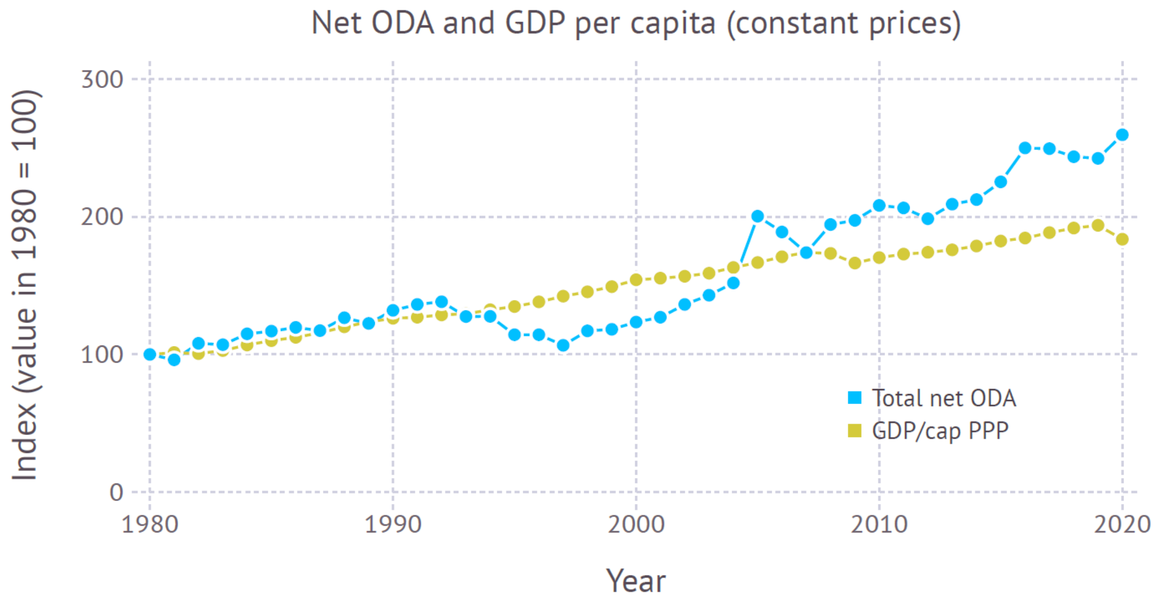

Fig. 2- Net ODA and gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, 1980-2010 (Source: OECD).

Western donors increased the aid absorption capacity of governments that complied with economic and political conditionality. They did so by increasingly relaxing the recurrent cost constraint by abolishing the traditional concept of sustainability whereby a host country had to be able to finance recurrent costs if not immediately, then in the medium term. Whereas the structural adjustment programs were openly coercive and prompted governments to pursue unpopular policies, the conditionality of sector support and the general budget support programs were much more subtle. One of the issues created by the failure of coercive policy-based lending was the need for more dialogue and ownership by government ahead of the more complex second generation reforms. Because African countries were no longer able to realign, donor relations could be taken to a new level. In exchange for raising absorption capacity, donors called for stewardship rather than just agency.

Conditionality was referred to as shared values in democracy and human rights. It was called respecting underlying principles and was the de facto qualification for general budget support (and sector budget support, which is a virtual construction needed by some donors). The need to finance recurrent costs was obvious, especially in the social sectors. The structural adjustment programs left a trail of havoc across Africa and were increasingly criticized by the United Nations and so-called "likeminded donors." "Adjustment with a human face" became the slogan, masterminded by UNICEF and at the Social World Summit in Copenhagen in 1995, paving the way for new instruments in the form of sector-wide support and, not least, general budgetary support.

When it took time for the donors to operationalize those programs in the early 1990s and scale up for new donor darlings, it was partly due to the debt issue. Most of the donor darlings, such as Ghana, Tanzania, Mozambique and Zambia, were heavily indebted and if the issue was not addressed, donor countries would be sending money to each other, and sometimes to the former Eastern Bloc, with African governments only acting as transitory accounts. This paved the way for the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC), which succeeded in significantly cancelling debt in the 1990s and again in the 2000s. The outcomes of the debt relief were threefold: firstly, the debt cancellation itself, which for many bilateral donors was a limited operation of internal book-keeping, actually reduced aid flows; secondly, it paved the way for budgetary support; and, thirdly, it introduced a new instrument called poverty alleviation strategies (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs)). These strategies were supposed to be the government's own policies which the donors committed to funding once they had been approved by the boards of the IMF and the World Bank. In reality, however, the PRSPs often did not represent strong policy ownership by African governments, and they entailed more effort in consensus building (see e.g. Holtum 2007). However, only the speed and sequence of reform and social transformation were up for negotiation, not the fundamental conditionality. One of the earliest milestones was an agreement to spend at least 20 percent of government budgets on social sectors and to cap military expenditure.

Many European civil society organizations associated themselves with the drive for debt cancellation and energetically campaigned for it. This was perhaps the last great project that aligned them with African governments. Beneath the surface, the relations between a large number of Western NGOs and African governments were slowly souring. The NGO landscape was becoming more segmented, as many chose to specialize in advocacy. These NGOs provided much less assistance in service delivery (e.g. of education, health, agriculture and small roads) and were increasingly turning to providing advocacy for Africans in Africa vis-à-vis their leaders. The NGOs' bread-and-butter justification became related to disclosing, describing and arguing against poor governance and lacking respect for human rights. In this way, many NGOs were slowly but surely being instrumentalized as watchdogs by the Western governments which increasingly funded them, as their direct fundraising and member base were declining. This work did not benefit overall support for ODA, particularly as African governments were increasingly being portrayed in negative terms and were at times measured against ideals and standards that few Western countries themselves could meet.

3.3. Donor relations in a multipolar world

The wars in the former Yugoslavia ended at the turn of the millennium and, for many reasons including international commodity prices, things looked bright for poverty reduction in Africa. Because the importance of the security agenda had waned and was less present (in Africa), the stated and explicit objective of foreign aid was allowed to dominate the aid agenda and donor relations. Poverty alleviation became an unrivaled objective of foreign aid, and donors focused on assisting recipient countries' governments with policy formulation and holding governments to account for policy implementation.

Although the West was expressing growing concerns over Chinese influence and acquisitions in Africa, China did not present an urgent security concern at the time and came nowhere close to holding the power position in Africa that the Soviet Bloc had held during the Cold War. Western governments increasingly portrayed the advance of China as a challenge but, initially, attempted to enroll China (and other new donors) in the existing aid coordination mechanisms. The EU discussed Africa at its high-level meetings with China (but not the other way around).

All development efforts were to be aligned with the new Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which aimed to halve poverty, among eight other goals. However, as it turned out, neither China nor the MDGs would dominate the security agenda or influence aid flows and conditionality in Africa in the 2000s. Another vacuum left by the Soviet Bloc after the Cold War had been filled during the 1990s by a different force. Al-Qaida, which had bombed the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998, found a new ally in the Taliban, which had taken control of Afghanistan in 1996.

Almost exactly one year after the adoption of the MDGs, the bombing of the Twin Towers in New York changed the alliance game again. Although the OECD Paris Declaration[9] had been signed in 2005, events in Afghanistan and Iraq in the early 2000s had seriously weakened the drive for aid effectiveness in pursuit of poverty reduction and the allocation of more aid to good performers in governance and democracy. The bombing of the American embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998 may already have alerted some to a growing threat but, after 9/11, it was clear that the world was not as unipolar and safe for Westerners as had previously been believed. This meant that the hard security agenda again became important for the relations between donor countries and African countries which received aid.

The re-securitization of aid to Africa came gradually. The downgrading of good governance and democracy as a less urgent priority was done discretely and was never explicit. It took place primarily through a new narrative which directed aid to new places by focusing on the need to integrate development assistance with other foreign policy concerns and introducing the concept of “failed and fragile states.”

It is difficult to ascertain exactly where this label came from, and it is a conceptual hybrid. There was no single concept of fragile states which rested on scientific evidence and definition, and some scholars dispute the heuristic dimension of this notion. Weak institutions are embedded in the very concept of underdevelopment and the nature of poverty. The fragile states concept has been used to describe countries where weak and fragile institutions give way to civil conflict, extreme poverty, terrorism and transnational crime, as well as natural disasters, health and environmental crises. State institutions which fail to provide the goods, services and regulatory tasks expected in Western (Weberian) tradition are, however, not new in Africa. Many such institutions never performed on this scale and were the subject of much development aid. However, although the notion of fragility was obscure, it was very powerfully introduced, particularly by anglophone governments and think tanks. Fragility is described and indexed in a number of different ways, but it largely ignores the past evolution of those societies considered fragile, including the role played by Western colonial powers, Bretton Woods institutions and development agencies, which should all also be held accountable for the challenges currently facing poor and unstable countries. As Nay concludes about the concepts of fragility:

> *“They are shallow, confusing and imprecise policy-oriented labels. They are based on a state-centric, ahistorical and decontextualized perspective. At the same time, they lend themselves to various meanings and interpretations. They are prescriptive, as Western actors have developed them to promote their own security and development strategies. Finally, they are useless in the realm of policy, given their inability to formulate effective policy responses to society-wide challenges.”* (Nay 2013, p. 338)

As we have seen, ODA was always integrated with other foreign policy interests, especially security concerns. Only the accounts were kept separate. States in Africa had also been fragile since independence, aided by the Cold War and structural adjustment programs and, more recently, by the PRSP capping of military expenditure, which meant that it was easier for warlords who were running

[9] More than a statement of general principles, the Paris Declaration lays out a practical, action-orientated roadmap to improve the quality of aid and its impact on development. It puts in place a series of specific measures for implementation and establishes performance indicators that assess progress. It also calls for an international monitoring system to ensure that donors and recipients hold each other accountable – a feature that is unique among international agreements.

drugs or gem operations to buy more weapons than the poorest African governments. The new thing was not the fragility of states in Africa, many of which had been left to fight wars among themselves for a decade after the Cold War ended. Instead, the novelty in the alliance game was that such states and territories could pose a security threat to the West. This created the need to redefine the directions and forms of aid flows through changed conditionality so that terrorists would not have free havens or be harbored anywhere.

So, however the concept came about, the security objectives were clear. In a unipolar world, states cannot realign, and alignment is only useful for the hegemon if the ally can actually rule its territory; otherwise alliance is pointless. With terror movements gaining strength, ungoverned or even loosely governed territory was dangerous for the West. Strengthening states in post-war zones became a priority and, in a much wider context, ODA was intended to flow to fragile African states which might harbor terrorists or become failed states, with their territory being overtaken by terrorists (e.g. Somalia, Mali and Niger).

In most cases, aligning the charity argument was not difficult. An increasing number of poor lived in countries where the governments did not effectively control the territory. This, combined with a level of donor fatigue with donor darlings, harmonized aid, reduced visibility and the long hard pull that was necessary to effect true and lasting changes to welfare, meant the time was ripe in the early 2000s for a new direction of ODA to fragile states.

In some cases, and for a significant part of the funds, ODA went to states that the West itself had made fragile by waging war on them. The hikes in aid as a result of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were very significant, although neither population size nor absolute poverty were the top priority. It was security policy that was the top priority for ODA to these countries, as expressed by President Obama when visiting Afghanistan in 2008:

> "*I am absolutely convinced that you cannot solve the problem of Afghanistan, the Taliban, the spread of extremism in the region solely through military means. … We're going to have to use diplomacy. We're going to have to use development.*" Keeley (2012, p. 68)

However, there is more to the fragile states concept than trying (in vain) to rebuild states wrecked by violent conflict. In Africa, the concept meant that more ODA went to countries which would not have qualified for much aid if the normal underlying principles of good governance and democracy had been applied. In some cases, the selection criteria related more to the ability of countries to govern their territory than to how they governed. The new aid regime also directed attention to the African security architecture which the West wanted to strengthen, so that African militaries would be able to deal with security challenges on the continent. Early conflict resolution by Africans themselves, which would prevent conflicts from escalating and which would save lives and reduce misery, was the stated objective for assistance for early warning systems and creating stand-by brigades.

In terms of donor relations, these double standards were difficult to manage; one group of countries received aid only in exchange for high democratic standards, good governance and respect for human rights, while increasing amounts of aid flowed to another group of countries with totalitarian and extremely corrupt regimes. It became obvious to some African leaders that there was room for a new way of negotiating; it was possible for them to deal with the Western donor countries on both fronts by using the security services demanded by the West to leverage their conditions on the domestic democracy and governance agenda.

Some African leaders may have remembered what President Roosevelt supposedly said in the 1950s about Somoza, Nicaragua's dictator, who received American economic support long before the ODA term was born:

> "*He may be a son of a bitch, but he is our son of a bitch!"* (Cavendish 2011, p.1)

Ungoverned or loosely governed territory was, however, not the only security concern of the West which changed ODA in the 2000s. Migration, especially across the Mediterranean Sea, became of increasing concern, firstly, for southern European countries and, increasingly, for the entire EU and the fundamentals of free movement within a common external border. For OECD countries' ODA, this meant that it was not just the conditionality and the criteria for allocating funds that changed; the very definition of ODA also changed. Just as increased refugee costs in donor countries had triggered a redefinition of the term to include the first-year costs of refugees in donor countries some years earlier, the re-securitization of aid changed the reporting directive for security-related expenses. This took place in what looked like a technical update in the so-called "reporting directive." As Hynes and Scott (2013) put it:

> *"In particular, the United Sates argued that the Committee's attention should be global, focusing on aid requirements that maximize security as well as economic development and welfare."* (Hynes & Scott 2013, p. 11)

The change was significant and responded to donor concerns. From 2006, donors were allowed to report technical cooperation and civilian support for reform of security systems as ODA, along with several other defined items of expenditure in the fields of conflict, peace and security, including 7 percent of their expenses for multilateral peace-keeping. In some countries (like Denmark), this occurred along with a general reduction of the overall aid budget and increased allocations to Afghanistan, entailing a significant reduction of flows to the poor in sub-Saharan Africa.

4.0 Current state of play

As well as China and Russia, the West's three main security concerns are climate change, terrorism and migration. These concerns also feature prominently in the latest EU-Africa strategy and in the new Danish Strategy for Development Cooperation.

The EU-Africa Strategy (European Commission 2020a) establishes five priority areas and ten actions to be taken. The priorities are:

i. A partnership for green transition and energy access;
ii. A partnership for digital transformation;
iii. A partnership for sustainable growth and jobs;
iv. A partnership for peace and governance; and
v. A partnership for migration and mobility.

The EU intends to allocate over 60 percent of the funds available to its new Neighborhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument for sub-Saharan Africa (European Commission 2020b) to fund the following ten actions:

1. Maximize the benefits of the green transition and minimize threats to the environment in full compliance with the Paris Agreement;
2. Boost the continent's digital transformation;

3. Substantially increase environmentally, socially and financially sustainable investments that are resilient to the impacts of climate change; promote investment opportunities by scaling up the use of innovative financing mechanisms; and boost regional and continental economic integration, particularly through the African Continental Free Trade Agreement;
4. Attract investors by supporting African states in adopting policies and regulatory reforms that improve the business environment and investment climate, including a level playing field for business;
5. Rapidly enhance learning, knowledge and skills, research and innovation capacities, particularly for women and youth, protecting and improving social rights, and eradicating child labor;
6. Adapt and deepen EU support to African peace efforts through a more structured and strategic form of cooperation, with a particular focus on regions where vulnerabilities are the highest;
7. Integrate good governance, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and gender equality in action and cooperation;
8. Secure resilience by linking humanitarian development, peace and security interventions at all stages of the cycle of conflicts and crises;
9. Ensure balanced, coherent and comprehensive partnerships on migration and mobility; and
10. Strengthen the international rules-based order and the multilateral system, with the United Nations at its core.

The charity argument for focusing on Africa is excellent. More than two-thirds of people in absolute poverty live in sub-Saharan Africa, a figure that will grow to three-quarters in 2030 when around 400 million people will live in absolute poverty in Africa. This is almost the same number of people who live in the EU. The question is less about whether the EU will allocate more resources to Africa than about where in Africa and how.

A closer look at the budget for the EU's new Neighborhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI), which will also finance the implementation of the EU's Africa strategy, shows a budget of 96 billion Euros for the period from 2021 to 2027. The budget is divided between a geographical pillar; a thematic pillar for human rights, democracy, stability and security; and a rapid-response pillar to provide stability and prevent conflict in crisis situations and to address the EU's foreign policy needs and priorities. Ninety-two percent of the spending will be reportable as ODA and will be subject to horizontal spending targets, including 20 percent on human development, 25 percent to step up efforts on climate change and 10 percent to address irregular migration. The budget also states (page 3) that the EU will increase and ring fence the budget element for strengthening core neighborhood matters, such as regional cooperation, mobility and migration management, security and stability. The NDICI budget also states that the EU (as a whole) will continue to work towards meeting the target of investing 0.7 percent of its collective gross national income (GNI) in ODA and 0.2 percent in least-developed countries (LDCs). Although these numbers are deliberately ambiguous and not exhaustive, together with the names of the instruments, they do give a hint of where and how the EU will use the funds.

The major issue to note is the declared level of ambition, i.e. investing 0.7 percent of GNI. This corresponds to around 140 billion USD a year and is something the EU will work towards, i.e. it will not fulfil the current program before 2027. This level of funding is completely insufficient to effectively deal with absolute poverty in sub-Saharan Africa and less than a third of the funds will go to LDCs. With regard to the NDICI budget, sub-Saharan Africa, which will be home to three-quarters of the world's poor by 2030, will share less than two-thirds of the NDICI funds with the EU's neighborhood countries, i.e. North Africa and the Middle East. Part of the budget is ring fenced to the latter group of half a dozen middle-income countries which can compete for the thematic budget lines, including those related to migration and security where proximity to the EU will also ensure priority.

This confirms the line of argument pursued above and indicates that the EU's ODA is not designed to effectively assist Africa to deal with absolute poverty. It is the EU's foreign policy instrument which will primarily finance governments to 1. help Europe fight terrorism; 2. assist in reducing migration into Europe; and 3. buy European technology for climate change and digitalization.

The new Danish Strategy for Development Cooperation (2021): *Fælles om Verden* generally sets out the same priorities. It has only just been published and has no budget or financial framework attached to it, as yet. It is primarily a statement of objectives and intentions which does not show how Denmark will deploy its resources between the stated objectives and actions.

From the text, however, it is relatively clear that Denmark shares the EU's priorities, particularly on stabilization and migration, although it argues more around rights and democracy as the foundation for development cooperation. The priorities can be illustrated by the following. As stated in the strategy, Denmark will prevent and combat poverty and inequality, conflict and displacement, irregular migration and fragility.

Objective 1

Denmark must: Prevent poverty, fragility, conflict and violence and create sustainable alternatives to irregular migration and displacement.

Objective 2

Denmark must: Combat irregular migration and help more along central migration routes.

Denmark will:

• Work for innovative approaches and for a fairer and more humane asylum system. The weaknesses of the international asylum system need to be addressed so that better protection is granted to more refugees and to curb irregular migration.

• Provide better help to more people along central migration routes and thereby also prevent refugees and irregular migrants from ending up in vulnerable situations, exposing them to inhuman violations and assaults.

• Strengthen cooperation with countries in, e.g. North Africa and the Western Balkans, so they can handle irregular migration in accordance with human rights.

• Strengthen the capacity of developing countries to manage their borders, following a rights-based approach, provide protection and deal with irregular migration, in full compliance with the international criteria for development aid as defined by the OECD.

• Strengthen cooperation on voluntary repatriation of rejected asylum seekers without legal action residence in Denmark.

In conclusion, both strategies address the fact that the fight against terror is becoming more widespread and occasionally more intense in Africa due to the quasi defeat of the most prominent

Sunni terrorist groups in their lands of origin. Ungoverned territory in resource-rich parts of Africa continues to be a main concern, and Western governments worry that Africa is becoming the new base for terrorist groups. Several European countries now have boots on the ground in sub-Saharan Africa, in cooperation with the USA, supporting UN peace-keeping missions which would soon be overrun if left alone.

Climate change has become the second policy priority, with a 25 percent budget allocation. This would be good charity if it fundamentally addressed concerns about the plight of millions of Africans who are enduring by far the worst effects of climate change created by production and consumption in the West and, increasingly, in Asia. It does not. The lion's share of the allocation is likely to be spent in Asia and Latin America, where energy consumption is much higher and holds more promise for European industry.

What worries the West is not Africa's contribution to global warming. The continent only accounts for less than 3 percent of CO_2 emissions. The challenge is that Africans may begin to be wealthier in the same way that Europeans did. Having another half billion middle-class African citizens following a European lifestyle (including 600 million new electricity consumers) could create a serious climate footprint and contribute to global warming.

In relation to Africa, however, the EU's primary climate concern is linked to its main security concern: migration. Climate change will increase misery in Africa and push more migrants towards Europe. In the medium term, migration represents the most important security policy issue for the OECD, and, as far as Europe is concerned, it is prominently related to Africa.

Refugees have rights that migrants do not have, but European countries can no longer administer the UN Refugee Convention of 1951. However, as architects of the Convention and declared stalwarts of human rights, Europe is not prepared to make an outright assault on the Refugee Convention, at least not just yet.[10] It is being contemplated in certain quarters which advance the argument that the Convention was conceived in a different world where wars ended within a few years and refugees returned home voluntarily as soon as it was safe. Blurred language like "fair" and "safe" migration is used, as is the concept of the perverse structure of motivation for migrants, which prevents Europe from helping many more refugees, if they would just stay in their regions and seek protection in neighboring countries. However, there is, as yet, no practical way of separating refugees from migrants. Living conditions in many African countries are such that it is difficult to refuse asylum and respect the Convention, and increasingly so.

In the meantime, ODA will probably have to shoulder the bulk of the challenges through pressure on the DAC's ability criteria, which have already been changed in this regard, and conditionality, which decides donors' allocation of aid to different countries and how the aid is delivered. Until now, it has been possible, to a large extent, to align the objectives of Western security with charity, but that will be difficult in relation to migration control. ODA is defined as aid flows that promote and specifically target the economic development and welfare of developing countries. It must be charity, not necessarily pure altruism, although such labeling gives conditionality a great deal of legitimacy. However, as long as there are multiple objectives for giving aid, there will be a risk of conflicting objectives. The underlying security concern of the West, which is driving aid flows, must not be in direct conflict with its humanitarian objective.

[10] An increasing number of parliamentarians in European countries, including Denmark, are already challenging the ruling of the European Court for Human Rights, encouraging national governments not to abide by its rulings.

There are only two ways that Europe's wealth can be shared with Africa: one is to invite Africans to come to Europe and share its wealth; the other is to transfer funds, goods and expertise to Africa in pursuit of welfare and development.

If Europe conditions the continuation of one of the flows on the elimination of the other and freezes the overall aid envelope, it cannot be called charity. It is just another realignment of Europe's African alliances to a new security situation in Europe.

If Europe buys migration control from African states, it is only charity if this endeavor itself addresses a welfare problem in the cooperating countries. It does not. African migration to Europe is neither a security nor a welfare problem for Africa – on the contrary. Remittances from diaspora and the flow of unemployed, restless and often frustrated younger men and women away from their territories are good things for Africa. The language used by European politicians of safe, fair and predictable migration in respect of international norms is a decoy. The charity angle is supposedly based on humanitarian concern for those migrants who perish or suffer on the journey, including those who do not make it because the EU will not assist them to reach European shores. That is a hoax for two reasons. Firstly, there are other dangers to African lives and safety that are massively more pronounced and widespread. Hundreds more Africans succumb to preventable diseases which are of less concern to EU leaders as long as they are not transmittable to Europe.[11] The focus on the suffering of migrants is completely out of proportion to the real levels of misery in Africa and serves to try to align Western security concerns with humanitarian concerns. The other reason is that, with the exception of human trafficking, the decision to migrate, including exposure to danger, is made through people's own choice. (Many migrants perished and suffered on their journey to America.) If African governments help Europe to control and limit migration, they are not acting in the best interests of their people. They are betraying their people by denying them the opportunity to escape misery at home. No European governments have worked with the US government during the last two centuries to limit migration or have cooperated to "improve return and readmission, and effective return rates" as is set out in the EU-Africa strategy.

The EU can classify migration control as charity if it establishes a cross conditionality through an understanding that European donors will help with aid programs in countries that cooperate with Europe on migration control. In this case, aid acts as a bribe. If Europe also buys it using funds that would have been given to poor people in other African countries which may be poorer, it could easily end up implying an overall reduction in charity.

The new EU-Africa strategy begins by stating that the strategy is within the European Security and Defense Policy and that the relationship must go beyond the donor relationship. In its comments on the strategy (review six months on), the EU parliament insisted that substantial funds should be allocated to invigorate the strategy.

Although a contradiction in terms, this could very well be the core issue. Will Europe as a donor (member states and jointly) buy migration control from African states with money reallocated from other African states or will they seriously increase the size of the envelope?

[11] 400,000 Africans die of malaria each year, whereas approximately 4,000 refugees and migrants are estimated to have lost their lives every year on the move to Europe during the last 27 years (UNITED 2020). Water-borne disease such a cholera kills more than a million people a year in Africa and 4000 youngsters contract HIV every week in SSA (Flentø 2021).

5.0 Looking ahead

It is arguably the issue of migration that brings Africa to the top of the European security agenda. This is sad because migration is a symptom of extreme inequality in living conditions, but it is also an opportunity for Africa to negotiate financial assistance instead of begging for charity. Perhaps it is time for African leaders to help the donors to go the last mile and start calling financial flows by their proper name: foreign policy instruments for dealing primarily with security concerns. For now, Europe has chosen to continue to focus on the symptoms of the underlying security problem, which is poverty and extreme inequality in living conditions. The fight against terror and migration are, at best, a short- and medium-term security issue, as their root causes are not being properly addressed. The underlying drivers of European security concerns are poverty and climate change, and they are intimately related.

If African leaders want to escape from the donor relations which will always disadvantage them, as donations in the name of altruistic charity legitimize conditionality, they should accept the offer[12] on the table from European nations to trade migration control for financial aid. However, this should be done in a coordinated way and at much higher prices than is common today. It will only be when African leaders base their dealings with donor countries on real security politics and start to trade toughly and relentlessly in the services and goods Europe really wants that the relationship will be on a more level playing field. It is, however, vital that such trade be done in a structured and coordinated way by the African Union. If not, Europe will continue to divide and rule and could strike a deal with a dozen countries in north Africa and the Sahel to get the job done. Those countries will be handsomely rewarded with funds reallocated from other poor countries, overwhelmingly African ones.

If African leaders start to sell control of migration, financial flows from Europe will come to Africa in a fair exchange, not as charity. Europeans may want to call the flows development assistance and target the funds, for example, for health, education, agriculture and infrastructure investments, as outlined in the EU-Africa strategy. That matters little to African leaders as earmarked flows can be used in many ways. Funds are fungible and African governments can, to some extent, use their own revenue to pay what the donors will not. The important thing is that the funds will come without much enforceable conditionality around ring-fencing.

If the African Union could agree on a mechanism to regulate and control the flows of people (African countries host the lion's share of migrants anyway), they could hold a very strong position vis-à-vis Europe and be very well paid for it, as President Erdogan of Turkey has clearly shown.

As argued throughout this paper, Western security concerns have a much stronger impact on aid allocation than on poverty. The major historical lesson for African leaders is that they will receive more aid if they are perceived by the West to represent a security problem. Throughout history, the West has been able to align its security considerations with the moral of charity, as security threats to Western countries were – at least to some extent – also real threats to Africa. This was the case during the Cold War, and it has often been true in relation to the fight against terror.

This is no longer the case as migration has become the key security concern of OECD countries. It means that aid will increasingly be used as a financial inducement to make African governments assist Europe's limits and controls of migration. In this situation, welfare and poverty alleviation objectives in Africa cannot be aligned with Western demands for stemming the flow of young men out of Africa

[12] We are not referring to this phenomenon in general as a bribe in the Bourguignon-Gunning sense of the term, although frequently it will fit this definition, ref page 7.

or – in extreme cases – storage of Asian and Middle East refugees in camps in Africa. However, aid can still procure such assistance.

For individual African governments, a deal with Europe to help to control northbound migration may initially seem sweet. The benefits of the exchange will be tremendous, as European donor countries will be generous to African leaders to help them with key challenges (and sometimes re-election). This is partly because it is almost free for European governments to give aid to "friendly nations." European governments can finance aid in exchange for migration control within their existing aid budgets by substituting other forms of aid to other countries. This move is dividing Africa and moves aid to North- and West Africa and the Sahel at the expense of Central Eastern and Southern Africa. Former donor darlings, like Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe, will fall out of fashion in exchange for countries like Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia. Arguably, this has nothing to do with where the poor people live or good governance, democracy or any other of the formal criteria that donors have applied in aid allocation. It is because these countries have security services to offer the West and are willing to trade them, and because European governments will use aid budgets to buy them. For Africa the key is to unite internally and balance the powers of the big poles against each other. The West, China, Russia and increasingly India (which may have less military and economic power, but some very influential connections) all have ambitions in Africa. These ambitions are about security and commerce, including, not least, access to mineral resources and, increasingly, infrastructure for military use. All will apply de facto cross conditionality and, implicitly or covertly, will demand something in exchange for their economic aid. However, the West, especially Europe, has much more at stake than China and Russia: a massive security challenge in the form of migration from Africa. Such migration is of little concern to India, China and Russia.

This is why Africa, if united, can bargain and extract more aid from the OECD than any of the other blocs. With a little effort, the OECD could significantly help eradicate absolute poverty in Africa by financing cash transfer schemes to all people living under the 1.90 USD poverty line in low-income countries in Africa. It would cost around 100 billion USD per year, which is a small effort for the EU which has a combined GDP of around 20 trillion USD. If the EU doubled its present efforts and just shared 1 percent of its annual income with Africa, it could finance such cash transfers alongside its existing development assistance.

Such cash transfers and social safety nets in Africa would not stop migration altogether, but they could be the starting price for African governments to negotiate with Europe on controlling northbound migration. After all, the whole issue of migration is deeply rooted in the issue of sharing wealth. Europe can either welcome migrants or send funds to Africa. It can no longer continue to drip in charity and ask Africans to stay home and endure misery. Africa has once again reached the top of the European security agenda, which is the real lever for foreign aid. By standing united, Africa can negotiate unprecedented levels of economic aid, with little policy conditionality apart from migration control.

A related issue is pandemics. The Covid-19 pandemic has opened OECD countries' eyes to the common interest they have with Africa in health care. Large reservoirs of virus in non-vaccinated populations in Africa will produce mutations that will eventually travel to Europe and other Western countries. The EU-Africa strategy mentions pandemics in relation to cooperation on peace and security rather than as an integral part of cooperation in human development and health care. African leaders should insist that assistance for vaccination campaigns cannot be financed from within existing ODA budgets but through additional funds for primary health care.

In concluding, Africa has a unique opportunity to change the quality of its relations with the OECD countries, particularly with the EU. Africa can and must take advantage of Western concerns about the northbound migration of poor young Africans, the risk of Covid-19 and other outbreaks spreading to Europe, and about the increasing influence of China and Russia on the continent to negotiate better deals to ensure its development. For the strategy to be successful, the African Union should take the lead with strong support from the Regional Economic Communities.

List of References

Bourguignon, F. & Gunning, J.W. (2016). "Foreign Aid and Governance: A Survey." Paris: APER.

Brown, W. (2013). 'Sovereignty Matters: Africa, Donors, and the Aid Relationship'. African Affairs, 112: 262–82. https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/adt001

Cavendish, R. (2011). "General Somoza takes over Nicaragua." *History Today*, 61(6).

European Commission (2020a). "Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa." Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council. Brussels: European Commission & High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

European Commission (2020b). "EU Budget for the Future: The Neighborhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument." Factsheet. Brussels: European Commission.

Executive Research Associates (Pty) Ltd (2009). "China in Africa: A Strategic Overview." Available at: https://www.ide.go.jp/library/English/Data/Africa_file/Manualreport/pdf/china_all.pdf

Flentø, J. (2021). Ending Poverty in all its Forms Everywhere. What does it mean and why is it not happening. DERG working paper. Copenhagen University.

Foley, M. (2007). "Post-Colonial Transition, Aid and the Cold War in South-East Asia: Britain and the United States in Burma 1948-1962." Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Nottingham: University of Nottingham.

Glaser, C. (1997). "The Security Dilemma Revisited." *World Politics*, 50(1), 171-201.

Holtum, D. (2007). *The Challenge of Consensus Building: Tanzania PRSP 1998-2001*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hynes, W. & Scott, S. (2013). "The Evolution of Official Development Assistance. Achievements, Criticisms and Way Forward." OECD Development Co-operation Working Papers No. 12. Paris: OECD Publishing.

Kroller, E. (1985). "Refining ODA." Memo to Helmut Führer, 28 October, held in OECD Archives, Paris.

Mearsheimer, J.J. (2018). *Great Dilution: Liberal Dreams and International Realities*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2021). *Vores Fælles Verden*. Danish Strategy for Development Cooperation. Copenhagen: Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Nay, O. (2013). "Fragile and Failed States: Critical perspectives on conceptual hybrids. *International Political Science Review*, 34(3).

OECD (1985). *DAC Chairman's Report*. Paris: OECD.

OECD (2012). "Insights. Development Goals and Motivations." In B. Keeley (ed.), *From Aid to Development: The Global Fight Against Poverty*. Paris: OECD Publishing.

Perkins, D.W., Radelet, S., Lindauer, D.L. & Block, S.A. (2013). *Economics of Development Seventh Edition*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company.

Snyder, G.H. (1984). "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics." *World Politics*, 36(4), 461-495).

UNITED (2020). “Fatal Policies of Fortress Europe: Updated Refugee Death List 2020.” Available at: http://www.unitedagainstracism.org/blog/2020/06/19/updated-refugee-death-list-2020/

Veloso, J. (2016). “Memorias de voo rasante.” Lisbon: Papa Letras.

Walt, S.M. (1987). *The Origin of Alliances*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.