Forum: The United Nations First Committee of the General Assembly

Topic: Finding measures to ensure the stability of African states

Student: Florian David Körner, Gymnasium Meiendorf, Hamburg

Position: Main-Chair of the 1st Committee
           President of the General Assembly

Description of the problem:

The African continent has always been one of the most disadvantaged areas in our world, even though its land is full of natural resources.

Especially in the last couple of years the whole world has been watching an ongoing process of revolutions in the northern regions of Africa: People rioting against their governments, against their leaders, who have governed their people through harassment and oppression, all leading to civil wars.

The 21st century has brought and still brings huge development into less developed countries all around the world. However, since countries, like the GDR and FRG, who had lived in division, managed to overcome division and oppression successfully, the wave of revolution and freedom, coming with democratization spread the LEDC's in Africa.

Even though the world witnessed big governmental changes in some northern African countries (the so called Arab Spring), these changes have only brought stability in parts and briefly (e.g. confer to the situation in Egypt). Many other countries in Africa are governed by a small elite which is often acting more on the grounds of personal interests than acting for the common good of their country.

Ivory Coast in the West of Africa for example, even though it is economically boosted by Coffee Companies from all around the world, it is still full crime, corruption, although the UN has already intervened.

On the other hand, taking the center of the continent into consideration, the Congo and the DR Congo are still facing huge humanitarian crises.

The list of African states, that need essential help in order to become once democratic, economically developed and accept the Human Rights Declaration, is barely long and does not seem to have an end.

Therefore the United Nations have to find a solution, a way, a plan, that can be used as a base for every LDC in Africa.

Historical background:

Some reasons for today's instability and the grounds of conflictsin the countries, can be found in the past.

Originally Africa was not divided into so many different countries - there were tribes ruling a certain area, like it was all around the world before as well.
In the 17th century the British and French fleets settled on African continent starting in south. The British colonial masters ruled over the land and therefore the natives.
The tribes of course did not have any chance to fight against the technologically advanced troops of the British fleet and other European countries, therefore the so called masters met only little resistance when settling on natives' lands and exploiting the newly gained territories. Now, the problem however was, that the colonies and the tribes did not develop parallely concerning time and progress. Because of that reason, the tribes were treated differently. After the colonial powers then left the continent in the early 1960s and the colonies became independent, the tribes met again. The huge gaps between their development as well as the progress they made during the colonial rule collided like worlds.

It was not possible to build new governments or at least to set up basic rules.
Then groups were formed, mostly built because of interest rather than religious preferences. Often they wanted to gain power and rights of land. The tribes were also upset about the borders that divide the continent, randomly putting together tribes without similar traditional backgrounds which led to dissensions and tribal wars.
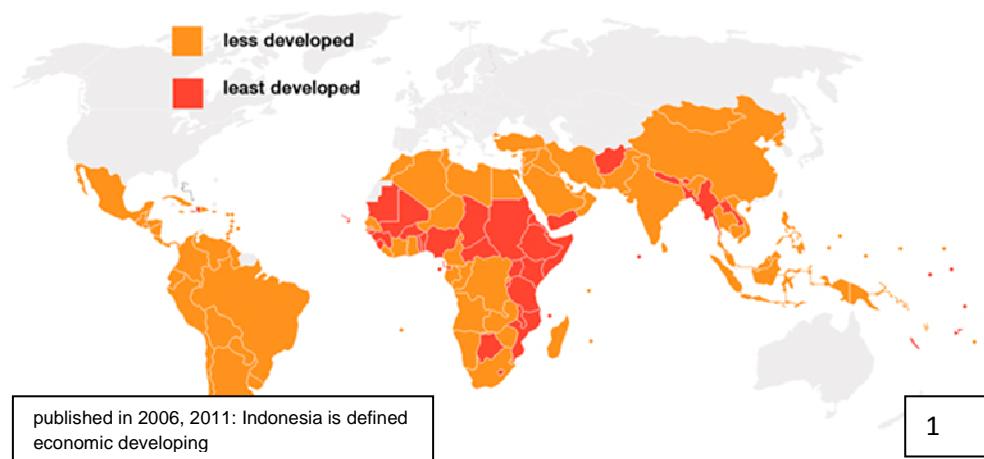
Time leap.

There were terrifying civil wars in the time after World War II, every single one of them caused by non-existing stability in the African countries, except for the state of Morocco, (north-western Africa), etc. which were guided by French colonists even longer than 1960.

An event that topped it all, also being an event of disagreements getting out of hands, was the Rwandan genocide in Summer 1994. Because of a conflict between the Hutu-led government and the Rwandan Patriotic Front, members of the Rwandan Army, the National Guard and the Police murdered 1000000 people including innocent citizens.

This crucial process in the forsakenness of a country influenced the whole world, but certainly also the African continent concerning refugees and crises. (Mentioned later)

The 21st century:

Why is Africa still the least developed continent? Why have so many countries still not accepted the human rights declaration of the UN? Why do countries' leaders not react to the measures and restrictions taken by economic partners (also states) or the UN?

But why do leaders still kill people because they are fighting for freedom?

The list of questions does not end.

less developed

least developed

published in 2006, 2011: Indonesia is defined economic developing

1

The United Nations have published a Report mentioning the exact amount of countries they define as less developed or least developed. This picture makes it it is obvious that the African continent is most affected. The amount of poor countries on the continent is immense.

Most of these countries definitely fall into the category of being instable. There are a few basic examples that can be applied to them.

Examples of instability:

Health-Care System:

On the African continent many regions cannot guarantee basic health standards. Since Africa is one of the poorest continents in the world, there is literally no money.
Now, in order to have a good and well-organized health-care system, a state needs to have numbers of hospitals, that are at least average and can therefore cover huge areas. But without money that is not possible.

Contraception is still an issue when it comes to basic medical care. Unfortunately those medicals are very expensive and can only be donated by NGOs in a very little amount. Victims of civil-wars also need medical supply. By establishing emergency accommodation with medical supply, the situation can be improved.

Education:

If people would also be educated, especially in handling goods (also medicals), it would make things in Africa in lot easier. "Alumni report" published a report, invoking to the UNESCO stating that Africa misses more than 1 million teachers. UNICEF as well as other organizations are funding money to establish schools in villages. Nevertheless, the establishment also comes with problem of construction. There is no money for goods like wood, stone, etc. and in addition: How to get goods carried into to the construction?

Infrastructure:

However infrastructure also belongs to the relevant things which are connected to implementing a well-conceived health-care system. Transporting victims, sick people, etc. would be guaranteed by paved surfaces and roads connecting villages and cities with hospitals and international connection. However, streets are not the only important thing. Electricity is nowadays definitely defined as a basic service. Also water supply comes with the issue of infrastructure. Due to unavailable drinking water, people in a lot of African countries suffer malnutrition.
Furthermore companies are not convinced to
Funding by NGOs as well as member states of the UN would be a good step into the right direction.

Terrorist and rebel groups / availability of weapons:

Some governments, some of which having come into power through military coup d'états, are unable to control terrorist groups, rebels and other militant groups, who conquer large areas using violence against villagers and forcing children to join them as child soldiers, causing even more violence, poverty, famine and people to leave their homes and seek refuge in other regions or neighboring countries.
Affected by this vicious circle were (and are) for example the Central-African Republic, Congo, DR Congo, Uganda, Rwanda, Sudan and South-Sudan.

Founding organizations on a national basis, could control a lot of illegal trade via border control and air traffic control.

Economy and unemployment:

Due to the fact that mostly every African country, which the UN considers to be less or even least developed, has big gaps within their economy and their financially pointless systematic plans, which should originally guide countries into stable economic situations with the prospect of world trade, there is basically only a very small number of inhabitants, who have a job. One of the biggest financial treats for the internal security of countries and the society as a whole, is the high unemployment rate.

No.	Country	Percentage
1.	Zimbabwe	70
4.	Mozambique	60.0
6.	Namibia	51.2
8.	Senegal	48.0 (30.0 among adults aged 24 and under[83])

The table on the right shows a small extract from the official list of countries worldwide listed according to their unemployment rates.

Amongst the "top ten" African nations are mentioned four times. Zimbabwe shows a terrifying percentage rate and in Senegal (in eighth place) especially young adults are unemployed.. There is tension within the population, especially as there is a great social divide in African countries. People are restless because of the lack of food, jobs, weapons, in general property. The government or other financial entities have no chance to control the riots and other encroachments - often police brutality arises and civil unrest becomes even stronger.

Uprisings and its effects on neighboring countries:

Uprisings and rebellions like for example the Rwandan Genocide naturally lead to fear within the population. Especially in Rwanda, but also lately in Syria, we saw mass migrations to neighboring countries when people tried to escape from the conflict zones.

After the Rwandan genocide in July 1994 the surrounding countries were flooded by refugees. Dr Congo, in the east of Rwanda, was certainly influenced in policy, economy and security at that time. The refugees were not only being poor innocent people, also political interest groups and terrorist groups like the FDLR (Rebel group of Rwandan Hutu members) and the M23 (Rebel group founded by the CNDP), were among the refugees and tried to overthrow the government and also to intimidate the UN peacekeepers coming there to secure the innocent population.

In 2011 the Syrian crisis started. When El Assad started an offensive against his population, the Syrian people of course fled to the neighboring countries. The population of Lebanon, western neighboring country to the Syrian Arab Republic, now consists of nearly 45% Syrians.

In order to stabilize African countries refugee-planning has to be taken into consideration.

Politics:

Another problem is the way politics work. There is only a very small amount of countries in Africa, which can be found to have democratic structures. After the colonial rules most of the times the ex colonial rulers for the certain areas declared themselves masters or owners of the country and thus became king of that country, so often countries in Africa are still led by monarchy or dictatorship. An example for a brutal dictatorship can be found in the DR Congo after 1964. The people faced a brutal and corrupt government, led by Mobutu. Economic corruption eventually led to the failing of deals with precious resources like diamonds and oil and the government remained instable, fortunately. However, corruption may also influence other governmental types.

A democratically-based constitution is worthwhile also including the rights to vote for the government with multiparty systems. Reforming the way how politics work is with that said solution!

Corruption:

Due to an instable economy matching dictatorships or communistic regimes, "politicians" or members of the high-degree military-staff often make illegal deals among each other or even with neighbored countries, or interest groups.
Happening during the dictatorship in DR Congo (only an example), the economy was influenced by corruption among many high ranked officers., which even ends in an economic crisis.
However due to corruption donated money from organizations from all around the world

Religious extremists

A lot of people consider religion the spirit of life ;it makes them happy, it gives them power. Still religious groups are trying to convince other people of their religion. Unfortunately some turn into religious extremists and use violence and weapons against fellow citizens Furthermore, some religious extremists try to overthrow governments who, in their opinion, are too strongly influenced by the western world. The extremists would prefer governments that are lead by the laws of Islam.

What has the UN done so far?

The United Nations sends large numbers of blue helmet soldiers into crisis areas in order to secure peace for the inhabitants. For example, peace troops have been sent to, The Congo, DR Congo, Uganda, Rwanda, Sudan, and many other countries.

The UN also developed different support plans for certain countries and involved areas in order to guarantee basic medical care, basics for the management of politics, and secure short-term-supplies.

What is missing are plans for long-term development. Often the UN establishes helping schemes, government aid, trade and commercial agreements, negotiating with neighbouring countries and a lot more. However these are mostly short-term sloutions. Long term solutions that implement sustainability both economically and politically in African countries need to be found.

Timeline of events:

- 1800-1900   Beginning of the colonial rule in Africa

  settlers: British, French, Spanish, etc.

  tribes were overruled

- 1900-1945   first attempts of independence of colonies

  World War II forces Great Britain to leave some colonies

- 1960 a lot of colonies are declared independent

- 1960-now   the try of establishing new governments, etc.

  successful in South Africa

- 1990-1994   several UN interactions: Peacekeeping missions in

  Mozambique, Cambodia, Somalia

- 1994 Rwandan genocide influential for whole Africa, especially

  neighbored countries

  -> Blue helmets in Rwanda

- 1996 -> Blue helmets in DR Congo

- 2005 UN founds *United Nations Peacebuilding Commission*:

  working in six countries: main targets for Stabilizing post-

  conflicts through comprehensive engagement are Burundi,

  Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Central African Republic

- 2011 Syrian Civil War: UN Interaction

List of Least Developed Countries in Africa (ECOSOC) from 2006: | 3 |

- Angola
- Benin
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Comoros
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Djibouti
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea

- Ethiopia
- Gambia
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mali
- Mauritania
- Mozambique

- Niger
- Rwanda
- São Tomé and Príncipe
- Senegal
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- South Sudan
- Sudan
- Togo
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- Zambia

2014: http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/ldc/ldc_list.pdf

In order to prepare for the position of your country you should consider the following:

- What is your country's position on the whole issue

- Think about, what your country can do in order to improve the situation in Africa, so ideas of systematic plans being a base for every country, but not the final plans measures, etc. *Solutions must be found as soon as possible!*

- How can the UN fix the problems of the accused mistakes of their helping schemes being non-sustainable

- How to deal with refugee policy, so how to make sure political prosecuted or victims of civil wars are integrated safely

- Think about integration as a whole

- Think about your partners and opponents in the UN. So, whom to cooperate with or not

- Think about how to ensure that this massive problem is solved and how measures can be applied to several states in Africa

- check out African countries' UN articles, check out the UN page for news and updates of the country and the region surrounding it; new and updates for African History Events

- *Since the 1st Committee has three issues on the Agenda, please hand in one Resolution and two Position Papers*

Picture and data sources:
1. http://buddhajeans.com/dictionary/less-developed-countries/
2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_unemployment_rate

3. http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Least_Developed_Countries

Sources:
- http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/africa/index.shtml
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Union
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Union#Role_of_Regional_Economic_Communities
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rwandan_Genocide
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Africa
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rwanda
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Republic_of_the_Congo
- http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2013/sc11004.doc.htm
- http://jds.sagepub.com/content/25/1/1.abstract
- http://pulitzercenter.org/projects/africa/beyond-peace-deals-united-nations-experiment-peacebuilding
- http://www.alumniportal-deutschland.org/jobs-karriere/artikel/lehrergehalt-lehrer-paedagoge-bezahlung.html

Florian David Körner   06.07.2014