

- Experts predict that by the end of this decade, Africa will supply more oil to the United States than the Middle East. While producing oil provides substantial revenue to African governments, the benefits have not trickled down to the vast majority of people in Africa. For example, Nigeria is the world's sixth-largest exporter of oil, but the Niger Delta remains a poor and underdeveloped region. Ethnic tensions have been fueled by competition for scarce jobs in the oil industry. In addition, environmental problems associated with oil production continue to plague the continent. Students may research the social, economic and environmental issues related to oil production in Africa and conduct a roundtable discussion representing the interests of oil companies, Nigerian tribes such as the Ijaw and Itsekiri, and environmentalists.
- In 1994, over 800,000 people were slaughtered in the Rwandan genocide. Over the past decade, millions of people have died in various African countries as a result of war and ethnic conflict, and, according to Genocide Watch, many others are facing similar catastrophes. Ask groups of students to research the history of genocide, civil war and ethnic conflict in a particular African nation in the post-independence era, and to explain the causes of these conflicts and how the international community has responded to them. Students may develop alternative ways the world could have addressed these incidents.
- In 1884, a group of 14 nations met at a conference in Germany and eventually divided Africa into 50 countries. King Leopold II of Belgium made the Congo his own personal colony, treating the people as virtual slaves and contributing to the deaths of millions. In one of his last works, Mark Twain wrote *King Leopold's Soliloquy*, a condemnation of European imperialism. Read portions of the piece with students and ask them to analyze Twain's point of view, use of language and persuasive technique. The full text of *King Leopold's Soliloquy* may be found at this web site: [sourcebook.fsc.edu/history/twain.html](http://sourcebook.fsc.edu/history/twain.html)

### Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at [www.LibraryVideo.com](http://www.LibraryVideo.com)

#### • [www.antislavery.org/](http://www.antislavery.org/)

Anti-Slavery International is the world's oldest human rights organization and works to eliminate the system of slavery around the world.

#### • [rbm.who.int/cgi-bin/rbm/rbmportal/custom/rbm/home.do](http://rbm.who.int/cgi-bin/rbm/rbmportal/custom/rbm/home.do)

The World Health Organization's Roll Back Malaria program offers a wealth of information on the costs and challenges related to this deadly disease.

#### • [web.jjay.cuny.edu/~jobrien/reference/ob45.html](http://web.jjay.cuny.edu/~jobrien/reference/ob45.html)

The John Jay College of Criminal Justice provides the full text of the Berlin Conference's General Act of February 26, 1885.

### Suggested Print Resources

- Bok, Francis. *Escape from Slavery: The True Story of My Ten Years in Captivity — And My Journey to Freedom in America*. St. Martin's Press, New York, NY; 2003.
- Stratton, Allan. *Chanda's Secrets*. Annick Press, Canada; 2004. The harsh realities of AIDS are conveyed through the fictional experiences of a 16-year old African girl.
- Zack-Williams, Tunde, ed. *Africa in Crisis*. Pluto Press, Sterling, VA; 2002.

### TEACHER'S GUIDE

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- AFRICA: CHALLENGES IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY
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- GLOBAL ECONOMIC ISSUES
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- GLOBAL SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY ISSUES
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## AFRICA: CHALLENGES IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

### Grades 9 & up

This guide is a supplement designed for teachers to use when presenting programs in the series, *Global Issues for Students*.

While science and technology have improved the standard of living for many people in the past fifty years, the global community has not been able to find solutions to major issues such as genocide, persistent poverty and environmental degradation. While the current wave of globalization has brought people in closer contact than ever before, it has also heightened our awareness of the tremendous gap in standards of living between the developed and developing worlds. *Global Issues for Students* will help viewers understand the historical causes, enduring effects and possible solutions to complex world problems. Students will increase their awareness of global issues that directly impact their lives, and in learning about these issues from a more global perspective, will become more knowledgeable citizens in our increasingly interconnected world.



## Program Summary

Africa is the second largest continent and is considered to be the cradle of civilization. Many African countries are rich in natural resources, but most — especially those in the sub-Saharan region — are still struggling nations trying to provide economic development, peace and human rights for their people while fighting the scourge of HIV/AIDS.

Many of the causes of Africa's underdevelopment today can be traced to its colonial history, when in the late 19th century European leaders divided and took control of the continent. Colonial powers ruled by force instead of creating popular democracies. They also enforced an economic system that was based on the world's desire for raw materials rather than local necessities. Africans were never encouraged to industrialize or modernize, creating an economic imbalance that has yet to be corrected.

While Africa has suffered from the legacy of colonialism, internal issues in the post-independence era, such as political instability and poor economic policies, have played a major role in the continent's lack of development. For example, land reform policies of Zimbabwe's dictator Robert Mugabe have displaced hundreds of thousands of farm workers, thereby stifling food production and reducing economic activity. Also, many corrupt African leaders have not been able to convert wealth derived from natural resources such as oil into prosperity for the majority of their people.

Despite the bleak picture that many associate with Africa, the continent has enormous potential, and efforts are underway to improve the standard of living for millions of people. Most experts would agree that global partnerships will go a long way toward helping the nations of Africa meet this goal.

## Vocabulary

**Industrial Revolution** — The movement toward replacing animal and water power with machines, which dramatically changed the way people lived and worked. The Industrial Revolution began in England in the 18th century.

**Berlin Conference** — A conference of European nations held in 1884-1885 under the leadership of German leader Otto von Bismarck. Here, the European powers made a plan to colonize Africa in order to take advantage of its natural resources.

**King Leopold II** — A Belgian monarch who acquired colonial possessions in Africa in the 19th century. He made the Congo his personal colony, treated the people as virtual slaves and contributed to the deaths of millions.

**Cold War** — An intense hostile rivalry during the second half of the 20th century between communist nations, particularly the Soviet Union, and the democratic nations of the world, led by the United States.

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**Afrikaners** — White South Africans of European descent who established the policy of racial segregation, or apartheid, starting in 1948.

**apartheid** — The policy of forced racial segregation practiced by the government of South Africa until 1994.

**Middle Passage** — The horrific slave ship journey that enslaved Africans were forced to take from Africa to the Americas.

**chattel enslavement** — The most common form of slavery, in which one person is considered the property of another person.

**United Nations (U.N.)** — An organization founded in 1945 that works to ensure world peace.

**Anti-Slavery International** — An international human rights group which works to end slavery and related abuses.

**human trafficking** — A modern form of slavery in which people are sold, coerced or forced under threat of violence to work against their will, for little or no pay.

**malaria** — A disease transmitted by the bite of an infected mosquito that kills approximately one million people a year in the developing world.

**colonialism** — The policy of a dominant country conquering and ruling a weaker country, usually for the purpose of exploiting the weaker country's natural resources.

**World Bank** — A group formed to help poor countries develop and to provide financial assistance for countries to reconstruct after World War II.

**International Monetary Fund (IMF)** — An organization created at the end of World War II to help countries whose economies are in trouble.

## Pre-viewing Discussion

- Imperialism is defined as the activities of one nation to control the affairs of another, often accompanied by colonialism, or direct conquest and occupation. Ask students to offer historic and modern examples of imperialism or colonialism.
- Who is Nelson Mandela? Ask students to discuss Mandela's role in the history of South Africa.
- The AIDS crisis is particularly devastating to people in sub-Saharan Africa. Ask students to discuss various ways of preventing the spread of this deadly disease.

## Focus Questions

1. What was the purpose of the 1884 Berlin Conference?
2. How did King Leopold II manage the Congo?
3. When did many African countries achieve independence?
4. How did the Cold War affect Africa?
5. What was apartheid?

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6. Why did the United Nations launch an effort to remember the history of slavery?
7. Describe several causes of food shortages in Africa.
8. What is a practical solution to malaria?
9. Why did several nations walk out of trade talks in Cancun, Mexico in 2003?
10. Why is oil described as both a blessing and a curse for Africa?

## Follow-up Discussion

- Globalization is described as bringing the world together in increasingly interconnected ways. Ask students to speculate how Africa's underdevelopment can affect their lives as American citizens.
- Famine is a major problem in sub-Saharan Africa, but has been described by experts as preventable. Ask students to discuss the various causes of famine and food insecurity.
- For much of Africa's population, life is still a day-to-day struggle to survive, and millions face unemployment, poverty, hunger and disease. Ask students to list the internal and global forces that continue to prevent much of Africa from joining the developed world.

## Follow-up Activities

- Africa has been stereotyped as a predominantly rural continent. However, it is projected that by 2025 more than half of Africans will live in cities where there are better opportunities than exist in rural villages. Assign groups of students to provide a social, economic and demographic analysis of a major city in Africa and discuss the problems related to this urbanizing trend in their assigned area. Students may propose possible solutions to these problems.
- Soon after independence in the 1960s, many African leaders borrowed large sums of money which they used to enrich themselves or to build large projects such as airports and stadiums — contributing heavily to today's debt crisis. Simply paying the interest on the debt takes valuable resources away from social and economic development. Ask students to research the mismanagement and corruption involving African leaders such as Mobutu Sese Seko, Charles Taylor and Sani Abacha. Students may also research the arguments associated with alleviating the African debt crisis, and debate whether or not these loans should be forgiven.

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