
Defense Report

AUSA



Africa's Starving Millions—They Need Food, Not Weapons

For the nations of the West, the tormented African continent represents both an urgent major security challenge and an opportunity of significant proportions. Africa's economies are falling apart, its climate is deteriorating, food production declines and populations grow explosively. The Western world's concern at the height of the most recent famine indicates an unwillingness to ignore the misfortunes of a continent four times the size of the United States with more than twice as many people.

Unfortunately, while America and the Western world proffer many millions in famine relief to ease the suffering of millions of hungry Africans, the Soviet Union and other communist countries remain steadfast in their meanness, invariably restricting aid to military assistance to those nations where they can visualize the opportunity for political exploitation.

The United States, in 1985, supplied half of all Africa's food aid, while the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies remained by far the largest suppliers of arms to African governments. American economic assistance to Africa still far outweighs military aid on the order of three to one.

In Northern Africa, the Soviets have delivered approximately \$10 billion in military equipment to Libya since 1970. Despite Algeria's nonaligned status, the Soviets remain the main supplier of military equipment with \$5 billion worth through 1984.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the most important instrument of Soviet influence continues to be military aid through agreements with 21 nations. Some 3,900 Soviet advisors are serving in 16 south African nations most notably Marxist Angola and Mozambique. In ten years, they have furnished Ethiopia with about \$3 billion in military assistance and have promised another billion.

Thus the challenge is painfully visible in this continent with its enormous human and strategic material resources. The West's tremendous efforts to address human want and suffering must be matched with efforts to ensure against further growth of a dangerous global military imbalance. The world may do nothing more now, but it will be harder to stick to the course of inaction as the crisis intensifies and the ultimate cost mounts.