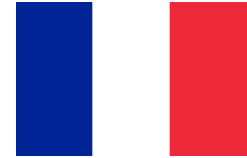


Country: France
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Delegate Name: Conrad Mahony



Topic 1: Access to Education for Women and Girls

With regards to human rights, the French government has said, “the defence of women’s rights, the promotion of gender equality and the fight against gender-based violence are one of the major priorities of France’s external action in the area of promoting and protecting human rights.” As a result, France has in recent years been heavily vested in helping women in underdeveloped nations get access to the most basic of human rights. One of these rights is education. France is of the belief that a more educated female population is one of the keys to development of any nation. To have an entire gender (which also happens to be about half the population of any given country) condemned to spending their lives in the home and not contributing in the economy is not only poor economics, it is a human rights tragedy. As of 2014, 47% of France’s labour force was occupied by women, a stat France is very proud of when compared to most nations. France’s great success in involving women more and more in the workforce (10% growth since 1990) was in large part due to the ability for French women to access education. This is further reflected in France’s female literacy rate of 99%. Time and time again, an increase in female labour force and female literacy has been proven to aid in the development of a nation in a big way. Taking all this into consideration, it is France’s belief that improving access to education for women in Africa is of vital importance. Doing so would solve not only a critical issue of human rights, but would also assist in the resolution of many modern day African problems that arise from underdevelopment.

When attempting to address the issue of access to education for women and in fact, women’s rights as a whole, the question is not whether or not women should have access to education, it is how to improve that access. While many countries are dominated by cultures which support gender stereotypes, that does not mean that there should be no access to education for women whatsoever. Furthermore, even if some countries choose not to buy into a system in which women are treated equal, that does not mean that we as an international community and as the African Union are not still obliged to create a model for what we see as an effective plan to move towards equality. Indeed, whether or not certain countries follow recommendations made by the AU is irrelevant, (and countries can be negotiated with through open dialogue,) what France hopes to achieve is a plan which will be coherent and effective for those who do. With regards to the mechanism to achieving better access to education for women, France’s policy follows a three pronged approach. The first point of the aforementioned approach is the cost of education. It is estimated that private school for grades K to 12 for one child costs an average of \$225,000 USD in South Africa. As a result, seeing as the average wage in most African countries is well below \$1,000 USD per year, citizens have to look for cheaper alternatives. The reality is that any cost of education runs the risk of parents deciding that the cost of education is not worth their investment and putting their child to work instead. The solution is to cut education costs in half so African people can afford education. The concern with this policy is that it makes expanding the education system and upholding the existing one extremely difficult. This is why the access to education prong of France’s policy deals with government budgets and NGOs. France recommends that African governments increase their spending on education. While this may present a red flag for many, African governments should recognize the value in a stronger and more skilled workforce to help development in the future. Furthermore, increased FDI that the AU hopes to produce and more transparent government should lead to better spending. Moreover, France proposes that more developed countries partner with their students and NGOs like Me to We (as stated as well in the FDI section) to send service trips to Africa to help build schools in the regions that need it

most. The final prong of France's three prong approach policy is girl's rights awareness. It is of vital importance that girl's rights awareness be promoted to tear down traditional views of girls as inferior which are preventing many girls from being sent to school. If the epidemic of girls being condemned to a gender stereotyped life at home without education is to be resolved, the root of the problem, sexism, must be addressed.

France hopes that when the AU meets, the previously outlined plan will be implemented with additions from other nations. This will ultimately create a coherent and effective plan which will surely solve the issue in the very near future. In a resolution, France plans to incorporate the following elements in the following ways:

I. Cost of Education

- A. Cut the cost of education in half for all seeing as very few people can afford to pay for education in the nations of the AU
- B. Almost any cost of education in Africa is too much seeing as every single one of the top 10 lowest annual wage nations are African, with the lowest being DRC with \$422 USD, thus it is very difficult for anyone to afford education in Africa even if it is accessible

II. Access to Education

- A. The cuts to education outlined in section I will of course make it more difficult for governments to afford to create new and uphold existing educational institutions, so
- B. Governments should increase their budget for spending on education by at least 10%, this can be supported by concerned nations through FDI
- C. Western nations should partner their students preferably with recognized NGOs like Me to We programs that build schools in sub-saharan Africa so the government doesn't have to worry as much about paying for schools

III. Girls Rights Awareness

- A. Equal rights should be worked into the curriculum of current students to tear down cultural views of girls as less equal than boys in society
- B. Furthermore the AU should launch ad campaigns and attempt to send educators into most effected areas educating people on the importance of equal treatment and education for all, this can be supported and partnered by the UN commission on the status of women
- C. Moreover, the AU should partner with the UN to periodically send supervisors to schools in Africa to ensure that there are no human rights abuses taking place in these schools, these visits would not be scheduled and thus the teachers and students would have no way of knowing when the inspection was coming
- D. African governments should commit to prosecuting the offenders of these human rights abusers to ensure a disincentive for these people because they know they will be punished
- E. Use CAMFED to promote women's rights and send more girls to school
- F. Use UN educators to teach the teachers and leaders in these regions on how to promote women's rights in their communities in the interest of creating a stronger and closer community, educators may also be provided by western nations who can afford to send these educators and speak the same language as local populations
- G. All aforementioned policies can be assisted through support and funding from international donations and the UN commission on the status of women

Topic 2: Foreign Direct Investment in Africa

France is one of the most historically and presently influential nations affecting the African continent from the outside in. Due to its colonial history, the cultural ties between France and Africa are evident in that 130 million people in 31 countries speak it and it is the fastest growing language in the continent. The relationship between France and Africa goes far beyond culture and language. France is

the second ranked country in foreign direct investment in Africa with just under 4 billion dollars per year from 2011-2013 inclusive. What's even more remarkable about that fact is that France is only the 4th ranked nation in the world in size of financial institutions. This shows how France is both emotionally and economically invested in African affairs due to its history and its present. Moreover, the sheer size of financial institutions in the three countries ranked about France (China, United States, UK) rivalled with what little they invest for the most part in African nations shows there is potential for an increase in foreign direct investment. As a result of France's connection with African nations and its existing position in financial investment, it is and always has been in France's best interest to see the development of and foreign direct investment in Africa thrive.

As mentioned, France hopes to see foreign direct investment in Africa increase and development improve as a result in Africa. There are many ideas that have been presented as to how to accomplish this. However, France upholds the most coherent and unequivocally most effective policy to increasing FDI and improving infrastructure and development. While France recognizes that improvement of trade relations and an increase in trade (both imports and exports) with Africa is beneficial, the real problem lies in the lack of funding and infrastructure African governments have to exploit their own natural resources for trade. This is why it is France's belief that a more effective approach would be to incentivize the private sector within wealthier nations to invest in African countries, to improve infrastructure, educate the workforce and create government transparency. Incentivizing the private sector to invest will provide African nations with the extra money they need to improve infrastructure and exploit their natural resources, thus increasing their profit through trade export. Improving infrastructure will both help African nations reach their natural resources which they can use to create more profit and will give investors more confidence in the security of African states. Educating the workforce will ensure that solutions are not temporary and that in the future Africa will be able to self sustain, relying on less and less foreign direct investment every decade. Finally, rooting out corruption from governments will ensure that money is more effectively spent on important African issues like infrastructure to increase profits and social services to the many poverty ravished nations. Furthermore, more reliable governments will further increase the willingness for firms to invest in African nations once again raising profits.

In committee, France hopes to address the points of concern with regards to foreign direct investment by working with as many nations as possible to create a coherent solution based on the aforementioned four pronged approach. The details of the approach which deals with incentives, infrastructure, education and corruption are as follows (note: all solutions are with reference to the French government, a such a resolution would recommend all nations follow suit with this plan):

I. Incentives

- A. Government provides investment benefits through an insurance policy by which financial institutions are encouraged to invest in African countries
 - 1. This will take away some of the risk of investment loss which is one of the most significant reasons for which investors are hesitant to put their money in the hands of those who haven't been proven to create profit in the past
- B. The policy states that if the institution loses on their investment, the government will pay some of the loss back to the institution to provide an incentive to invest
 - 1. To be re-assessed after 10 years to see if any more incentive is required or to what extent more or less incentive is required
- C. Amount of loss covered by government to be set at 10% (further investigation by World Bank can be used for recommendation as to if a higher or lower percent may be needed)

II. Infrastructure

- A. On a governmental level, using tax breaks, subsidize French based multinational corporations who work in Africa and whose services are employed by African governments
 - 1. This will increase the supply of development projects in Africa working to improve infrastructure which will also therefore decrease the price of these services

- B. Create a partnership with French schools by which schools will be given financial benefits if they partner with a recognized NGO like Me to We which go to African countries on service trips and build infrastructure
 - 1. Through this partnership more service projects in Africa will take place and thus infrastructure and education will be improved thus improving the ability for corporations to invest and improving education access for all
 - C. This should also provide student incentives in that it provides a unique opportunity to make a difference to those in need, and will help on a resume of a post-secondary, graduate or job application
 - 1. Thus there will be no shortage of students willing and able to go on these trips and take part in the life changing experience
- III. Educating the Workforce
- A. Create a partnership program with young teachers or students training to be teachers as well as professionals in specific fields required for African development by which the French and local governments pays these teachers to teach local populations how to effectively and efficiently do jobs vital to economic development
 - B. These teachers would be sent to Africa to educate the relevant African workers and such a program will be paid in part by the home country of these people but African nations will also help fund the program
 - 1. This will help each job required for further development be carried out to a more efficiently and to a higher quality making for more and better infrastructure in the near future
 - 2. The security of these people will be ensured using the same model that has been used in similar service trips by NGOs like MSF and Me to We
 - C. In most situations this would create a language or cultural barrier, however, seeing as France has colonial ties which make African and French language and culture quite similar, this should not be as much of an issue
 - D. While some nations may run into language barriers, those who can should follow suit, and if language becomes a significant issue translators may be provided by host nations
- IV. Political Transparency and Stability
- A. Political transparency and stability is a big issue for investors. France's position and plan for the future with regards to political transparency and stability can be seen in Topic 3. For transparency and stability with regards to FDI France upholds the same policy and therefore France's plan for resolution with regards to political transparency and stability can be seen in "Topic 3: Promoting Integrity and Transparency in Democratically Elected Governments"

Topic 3: Promoting Integrity and Transparency in Democratically Elected Governments

In the past decade, France has consistently ranked within the top 25 most transparent and least corrupt governments in the world. Needless to say, France does not face issues around corruption within its own government. That being said, what's evident is that France knows how to prevent and root out corruption. Since many African nations' independence from colonial powers like France, self government and the integrity of it has been a very concerning problem. In fact, by the same corruption index rankings as that which put France in the top 25, 6 of the 10 most corrupt nations in the world are African. Furthermore, the most corrupt nation in the world (Somalia) is located in Africa. Moreover, corruption has had a storied impact in the past on the ability of governments to afford services for their citizens that are so vital considering poverty rates are so high. For example, in Malawi, it is estimated that 30% of the government's budget each year is lost to embezzlement of public funds. The restrictions that corruption places on the ability for governments and the international community alike to aid African citizens makes corruption and transparency one of the most pressing issues in African politics.

Many will say that corruption is simply an issue where it is easy for western nations to chastise underdeveloped states, that the people of Africa have more concerning issues that effect them on a daily basis. However, given that the lack of Foreign Direct Investment and the lack of social services for African people stem directly from issues of misuse of funds due to corruption, France believes that corruption is one of the most important issues to solve as soon as possible. Once corruption is reduced within African governments, other issues will be much easier to resolve. This is due to the fact that the international community will finally be able to trust African governments with funds, resources and other vital factors of development. The delegation of France believes that there a three point plan to address this issue is required. The three points in that plan being; checks and balances, anti-corruption culture and generating more revenue for governments. First of all, checks and balances are key to maintaining the integrity of any government. While France believes that its government creates the best balance to reduce corruption but maintain government efficiency, France also recognizes that many African states will not want to emulate the style of government represented by their colonial rulers. Furthermore, the time and effort that would be required to completely change the structure of a nations government would not be efficient as there are quicker ways to solve the issue. France therefore believes that, seeing as a lack of accountability within government has created many of the core issues with corruption, that better checks and balances within governments are required. Without oversight at the highest levels, money is hard to track and corruption can be carried out relatively easily within governments. Checks and balances would provide the necessary oversight and punishment for criminal action to create a disincentive which will reduce corruption within governments and root out corruption at the source. Secondly, the creation of an anti-corruption culture is vital in ensuring that there will be little corruption in the long term future. If we, as an international community, can change the attitude within African governments from corruption as a norm, to a wholesale rejection of corrupt activity, this will ensure that new cases of corruption will be prevented. This, partnered with the punishment of current corrupt activity through checks and balances will address the issue effectively and efficiently in both the short and long term. Finally, if corruption is to eradicated within governments, revenue must be increased. One of the biggest driving factors behind corrupt officials is that they have a need to make more money because their base salary from being a politician is low. By increasing government salaries the need for politicians to make more money than they get from their salary will be decreased and the incentive to engage in this illegal activity will go down. For obvious reasons this will reduce the amount of corruption within governments in Africa.

While France's ideology and policies sound great in theory, what African nations and the international community really want to know, is how it can be applied by the AU to its member states. The mechanism for the aforementioned three pronged approach is shown as it should be applied in the following way.

I. Checks and Balances

- A. Legislative branches of government and subsidiary bodies (police force) should be required to report dealings and fiscal budgets to a centralized supreme court, the appointment to which should be based on a clear history of fair rule of law and clear of corruption
- B. Failure of the said government institutions to submit the aforementioned items will be viewed as tantamount to corruption itself and shall appropriately be prosecuted in the supreme court of these nations
 1. Note that the supreme court is in no way connected to the legislative branch of government and thus there is no room for collusion

II. Anti-Corruption Culture

- A. New politicians should be subject to a UN run course (using diplomats from supporting nations with little corruption in their recent history and who speak similar languages) regarding how to root out corruption and why corruption is not ok for a politician
- B. Create a set of guidelines for politicians as to what they can and more importantly can not do while they are in office especially with regards to accepting bribes

1. This creates no room for a lack of clarity and ensures all politicians can be held accountable knowing what they were doing was wrong and illegal
2. France is willing to provide these diplomats due to the similarity of language with large demographics of many African countries, however, in certain cases translators may also be used

III. Generating Revenue to Increase Salaries

- A. Foreign governments should help to increase revenue through FDI in order for African nations to be able to afford to pay their politicians good, consistent money to prevent corruption
- B. Furthermore, using similar plans to those outlined in the section on FDI, infrastructure should be increased in any way possible to create better access to natural resources for extraction and thus more revenue for the African Nations
- C. The African Union will assess how much salaries of politicians within specific governments should increase based on how much revenue is increasing
 1. This should also provide an incentive for governments to want to increase their revenue so salaries will increase

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