**Position Paper**

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**African Union**

Introduction

It is as a matter of great honour and pride that Guinea takes its seat at the African Union once again. We feel a strong bond, both as geographic neighbours and international friends, with our African counterparts. As a citizen of the world and a country that has known both strife and prosperity, we feel obliged to offer help in finding solutions to these issues. Many of the values that the solutions espouse are expressed in doctrines in place in our modern Guinea. We will take it deeply to heart to expedite the positions that we now present.

Topic 1: Education

The first topic for the committee’s discussion is that of Education: specifically, that of Women and Children. We feel that this is a very important issue, as the long-term impacts of improving education in African nations could be quite dramatic. Women are half of the population of the world, and harnessing their potential in the workforce is something that has enormous economic ramifications. Guinea feels that significant progress has been made to date on this issue, thanks to the work done with the Millennium Development goals. While this work is certainly not enough, we feel as though there are mechanisms in place to continue the progress that it has made, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the MDGs’ successor; in short, we feel that the limiting variable there is time, and not the methods themselves.

Guinea recognizes the positive influence that the West has had on the development of Africa, but we feel that the best way to come up with a solution for an African problem is for it to come from an African mouth. This is noted in how most educational development focuses on using traditional academic methods. While this is important, and skills such as literacy and arithmetic are essential in developing a modern and advanced workforce, we also believe that it is important for the governments of West African countries to put effort into using more traditional methods of education as well. Guinea would like to suggest a different approach, one that we learned from our friends in India. Gandhian philosophy states that each village should try and achieve relative self-reliance using its indigenous resources, including Human Capital. There is an organization based in Tilonia, India called Barefoot College that has found a very successful model that promotes vocational education, of which literacy is not an essential component, in rural settings. Villagers, usually unemployed women, come to a central location to learn some fairly advanced skills. They then return to their home communities, where they practice those skills. We believe that using such techniques in educational advancement strategies could have massively positive effects on these nations.

Topic Two: Foreign Direct Investment

Guinea recognizes that Foreign Direct Investment has its detractors. Concerns that it can bring about the signing of exploitive free trade agreements and potentially bring about long-term economic stagnation are valid opinions. However, they are not universal truths, as there are examples of nations where Foreign Direct Investment has yielded massive growth (Western Europe after the Second World War is a particularly prominent example). Notwithstanding this, we believe that there is nothing that an economy needs more than liquidity, and in a poor nation, investment brings in both cash and valuable infrastructure. For this reason, we are very supportive of Foreign Direct Investment.

Guinea believes, however, that a major paradigm shift in the whole business of FDI could better countless African Countries for a very long time. As of right now, the African nations usually provide nothing more than raw materials; it is the richer nation where the skilled manufacturing and industrial jobs are placed. Guinea believes that African nations should move to bring more of these higher-end jobs to domestic locations. This will have a massive benefit; industrialization means that the ‘value-added’ component of consumer goods that sees the become more than just raw materials will happen domestically, stimulating the economies of African nations, as opposed to our export partners. We believe that a tougher outlook on negotiating is the key to making this happen, but we believe that the corporations and governments of the foreign countries will be willing to co-operate. This shift will allow them to bring a great deal more value per unit of product volume in their imports, as well as give them a chance to outsource their least eco-friendly heavy industry. We believe that this is a proposal that will appeal to many of the nations in this committee.

Topic Three: Integrity and Transparency in Governments

With the election of our honourable and wise colleague Alpha Condé as President in 2010, Guinea became a true democracy. We do not want to fall back into the trap of totalitarianism, and we feel that this is a goal that we share with any of the nations represented in this committee. That being said, all nations have to deal with problems that undermine true democracy, and Guinea is no exception to this. We grieve just as greatly for nations like Angola and other victims of the ‘resource curse’ just as much as we feel the pain of those nations that do not enjoy a wealth of riches to export. At any rate, we recognize that corruption is a massive problem with many of these nations, and we believe that eliminating this practice safeguards more than just a democratic system: it promotes advancement and stability in a nation.

Guinean diplomats have studied the financial world’s Human Resources policies to see how they deal with similar issues: not only corruption, but insider trading, as well as general foul play and malaise. We have noticed that in high finance, all employees need to take a ‘risk vacation’: a window where they must completely leave work, and not have and control of matters related to the business, as well as provide direction through email and other methods to their coworkers. This is to ensure that should they be harbouring malicious activities within their workings, they would have a chance to be fleshed out without the employees’ being able to mask them. Ensuring that all government employees in positions where corruption could be a possibility take part in this procedure could be enormously effective in combating this problem, and the promise of increased vacation time would certainly be a popular one. Complimenting this, Guinea believes that having term limits for both elected officials and bureaucrats promotes transparency and eases investigations into potentially corrupt activities. This would have the same effect as above. Guinea believes that a combination of these two methods would offer a new perspective how to ensure integral and democratic governance.

Conclusion

The positions outlined by the delegation of Guinea on the issues of education, foreign direct investment, and government democratic integrity are important, but they are not as paramount as the fundamental truth that the Republic of Guinea prizes co-operation above all else. This is a virtue that stems from the mind of all members of our government, and it has allowed us to work our way up the ladder, to use an analogy, to emerge from a totalitarian past into a free nation that is rapidly progressing towards advancement. We believe that a compromising committee that accomplishes things is entirely better than a deadlocked committee of spoilt ideologues who cannot agree. It is this spirit that we bring to the committee; that, and the desire for a better world.