

10 A RESOLUTION CONCERNING
20 ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STABILITY IN AFRICA

30 WHEREAS: Sub-Saharan Africa is the world's second poorest region; only South Asia is
40 poorer. In 2002, per capita income in sub-Saharan Africa was only 29 percent of
50 that in North Africa and the Middle East, 15 percent of that in Latin America
60 and the Caribbean, and 60 percent of that in East Asia and the Pacific; and,

70 WHEREAS: The average sub-Saharan African country had a per capita GDP of \$568 in
80 2000; and,

90 WHEREAS: To reach middle-income status of \$1,500 in GDP per capita, a typical country in
100 sub-Saharan Africa would have to average a growth in GDP per capita of more
110 than 5 percent a year for the next 20 years; and,

120 WHEREAS: The average sub-Saharan African country with a per capita GDP of \$568 must
130 average growth in GDP per capita of approximately 5 percent for over 80 years
140 to become as wealthy as the United States is today, with a per capita GDP of
150 \$31,996; of the more than 100 developing countries for which data are available,
160 only two achieved this rate of growth during the past 20 years: by contrast, 40
170 averaged a compound per capita growth rate of 0 percent or lower; and,

180 WHEREAS: In Africa, promise and opportunity sit side by side with disease, war, and
190 desperate poverty; this threatens both a core value of the United States—
200 preserving human dignity--and our strategic priority--combating global terror;
210 and,

220 WHEREAS: American interests and American principles, therefore, lead in the same
230 direction: we will work with others for an African continent that lives in liberty,
240 peace, and growing prosperity; and,

250 WHEREAS: While poverty, in itself, does not cause terrorism, the lack of economic freedom
260 causes both poverty and the resultant resentment that breed terrorism as well as
270 the instability and violence that have plagued Africa; and,

280 WHEREAS: Poverty is a condition that is imposed on a people through ill-conceived and
290 repressive economic policies. A major step toward alleviating poverty is to
300 provide greater economic freedom, because only economic freedom can create
310 the opportunities that lead to greater growth; and,

320 WHEREAS: As noted in The National Security Strategy of the United States of America,
330 "Ultimately the path of political and economic freedom presents the surest route
340 to progress in sub-Saharan Africa, where most wars are conflicts over material
350 resources and political access often tragically waged on the basis of ethnic and
360 religious difference"; and,

370 WHEREAS: The President announced several initiatives focused on Africa, among them
380 increasing funding for education, addressing epidemics of HIV/AIDS, reducing
390 trade barriers, increasing economic liberalization, and bolstering peace and
400 security; and,

410 WHEREAS: Regrettably, with an estimated 14 million people facing starvation in southern
420 Africa, some countries refused food assistance offered by the United States,
430 citing concerns about genetically engineered agricultural products; as recently

440 as October 29, 2002, Zambia refused to distribute U.S. grain, citing the
450 "precautionary principle" as U.S. grain often is modified through biotechnology;
460 and;

470 WHEREAS: America's strategy in Africa should focus on two priorities: increasing economic
480 freedom and strengthening the region's ability to address political instability;
490 and,

500 WHEREAS: Free trade benefits the consumers of all nations involved in the agreement;
510 Southern African Customs Union countries are among the freest in Africa and
520 are therefore well-positioned to reap the benefits of free trade with the United
530 States; and,

540 WHEREAS: Congress and the Administration should cooperate to expand the successful
550 trade preferences initiated under the African Growth and Opportunity Act; this
560 would benefit African entrepreneurs, promote growth and development, and
570 increase America's access to the region's vast oil and gas resources; and,

580 WHEREAS: Africa's competitive advantage includes low-cost agricultural products;
590 however, this advantage has been substantially diminished by enormous
600 subsidies that developed countries give to their own farmers; and,

610 WHEREAS: In forthcoming WTO negotiations, America should follow the ambitious agenda
620 set forth by U.S. Trade Representative Zoellick at the Doha WTO negotiations—
630 particularly his efforts to liberalize agricultural markets and press for the
640 elimination of barriers to genetically modified foods that have served as a
650 protectionist barrier to trade; and,

660 WHEREAS: Africa's greatest challenge is political instability; America should focus on
670 strengthening the region's capacity to police itself with support from outside
680 stakeholders through a strategy focused on bilateral diplomacy and coalitions of
690 the willing, anchored by regional powers such as South Africa and Nigeria; and,

700 WHEREAS: As noted in The National Security Strategy of the United States of America,
710 America should work with its allies to "help strengthen Africa's fragile states,
720 help build indigenous capability to secure porous borders, and help build up the
730 law enforcement and intelligence infrastructure to deny havens for terrorists".

740 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Maryland Student Legislature urges Congress and
750 the Administration to work together to pass a free trade agreement with the
760 Southern African Customs Union; and,

770 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Maryland Student Legislature urges Congress to
780 Authorize the President to negotiate a free trade and investment
790 agreement with sub-Saharan Africa; and,

800 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That Congress and the Administration should press for free trade
810 through the World Trade Organization (WTO), including elimination of
820 agricultural barriers; and,

830 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That the President and Congress should work together to
840 increase the capacity of the region to deal with political instability.

850 MANDATES: President George W. Bush
860 Vice President Richard Cheney
870 Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist

880 Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle
890 House Majority Leader Tom Delay
900 House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
910 Congresswoman Sue Kelly
920 Department of State Secretary Colin Powell
930 Supachai Panitchpakdi Director-general of the World Trade Organization
940 Walter H. Kansteiner III Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs
950 Department of Commerce Secretary Don Evans

Sponsor:

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