



Submission No 1

**Review of Australia's Relationship with the
Countries of Africa**

Name: Mr J Sturgess

Organisation: Private submission

Quintus-Bosz, Donna (REPS)

From: Jack Sturgess [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 28 October 2009 5:27 PM
To: Committee, JSCFADT (REPS)
Subject: Australia's relations with Africa
Attachments: stephen smith.doc

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Date Received:	29-10-09
Secretary:	

Dear Foreign Affairs Committee,

The "How to lodge a Submission" instructions do not include an email address. Could you please forward my submission to the right address.

I am firmly convinced that the critical factor hindering African development is an out of control rate of population increase. All other factors are secondary to this. According to UNICEF, the population of Sub-Saharan Africa increased by 25%, from 600 million to 750 million, in the seven years from 1999 to 2006.

I have attached two letters that I have sent to Minister Stephen Smith on this matter. It should be the first and foremost consideration in any enquiry into Australia's relations with Africa.

Please consider.

Jack Sturgess

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

23 September 2008

The Honorable Stephen Smith
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Dear Mr Smith

I read your comments on Africa in the news this morning. I believe that unfortunately you have avoided the main issues. The principal reasons for the state of Africa are exponential population growth and widespread corruption.

In the seven years from 1999 to 2006, the population of Sub-Saharan Africa increased by 150 million from 600 million to 750 million. This figure is available in the UNICEF publications, "The State of the World's Children."

(In the event that you find these numbers rather incredible, let me give another example that supports them. When Bob Geldof held his Live Aid concert in Ethiopia in 1986, the population of that country was 35 million. Twenty years later, surprise! surprise!; there is another famine in Ethiopia and Bob has another concert. The population of Ethiopia was then 73 million, an increase of 110% in 20 years.)

The people of Sub Saharan Africa are disgracefully irresponsible. I think it was Noel Pearson who said, "It is very difficult to help people who refuse to help themselves."

Democracy is not necessarily the answer. The best performers in lowering infant mortality rate and increasing life expectancy in the last 50 years of the 20th century were South Korea, Chile, and Malaysia. The first two were military dictatorships for half of the time, and the last was under the guidance of Dr Mahatir's "guided democracy" for a similar period.

The endemic corruption is well documented; Zimbabwe, Nigeria, South Africa, Sierra Leone are probably the best known. It is so widespread that Western countries are now giving aid to Western NGOs in an attempt to by pass corrupt officials. While this delivers better services to the local populations, it seems to be achieving little or nothing in combating the evils of corruption and out-of-control population growth. In any case, I am starting to believe that foreign aid has the same effect as "sit down money" with our indigenous people. As long as it is available, nothing changes. Foreign aid should be redirected almost entirely to education, especially the education of the females. This is the proven solution to uncontrolled population growth.

Western countries take in refugees in a humanitarian spirit. That is significant to those Western countries, but the impact on the Sub-Saharan disaster is negligible. In 2006 the number of births there was 30 million; 4.8 million children died before their fifth birthdays.

Does the Australian government have any input to family planning and anti-corruption programs? It is in those areas where we might make a less insignificant humanitarian contribution, rather than in accepting refugees.

Sincerely

Jack Sturgess.

14/07/09

Mr Stephen Smith
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade
RG Casey Building
John McEwen Cres
Barton 0221

Reference: The UNICEF Publication “The State of the World’s Children 2009”

Dear Minister

I want to draw your attention to the inevitable connection between out-of-control population growth and human misery. The endeavours of the United Nations and Western aid agencies are misdirected towards providing food (“sit down money” as Noel Pearson so appropriately calls it in this country) and combating AIDS.

Welfare is a tactical problem. The strategic disaster lies in the grossly irresponsible fertility rates in those countries with the greatest need. The tabulation below lists the countries with the highest fertility rates in 2007; ie the average number of children born to each female of child-bearing age.

You will also note that they are a roll call of human disaster, whether it be war, poverty, refugees, or all three. (For Australians, East Timor is especially relevant.)

It is also worthy of note that countries that were regarded a generation ago as basket cases, ie India and China, have their population increases under control and are also seeing the initial benefits of this in improving health and opportunity for their populations.

1. Niger 7.2
2. Afghanistan 7.1
3. Burundi 6.8
4. Liberia 6.8
5. Dem Rep of the Congo 6.7
6. East Timor 6.6
7. Angola 6.5
8. Uganda 6.5
9. Mali 6.5
10. Chad 6.2

India 3.3
China 1.7
Industrialised Countries 1.6

The resources of the UN and other aid agencies must be primarily directed towards family planning and education, especially the education of females. This is a far more important cause for you and our Prime Minister to promote than climate change.

Shakespeare summarised the situation perfectly in his play "Julius Caesar", as follows:

Cassius : "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars but in ourselves that we are underlings."

Julius Caesar (by William Shakespeare); Act1, Scene 2

Sincerely

Jack Sturgess