

Berlin Conference of 1884

Jason Kong and Emily Zhang
Co-Chairs



GSMUN 2010



GSMUN 2010

Elsa Schultze
Secretary-General

Logan Ferrell
Director-General

Samantha Halle
Undersecretary-General for External Communications

Jessica Chaoul
Undersecretary-General for Logistics

Travis McCall
Undersecretary-General for Crisis Simulations

Susan Ballentine
Charge d'Affaires

Maggie Chambers
Director of Specialized Agencies

Emlyn Crenshaw
Director of Press and Publications

Emily Ko
Director of Technology

Ishani Premaratne
Director of Charitable Giving

Mr. Max Smith
MUN Club Sponsor

Mrs. Sarah Dwelle
MUN Club Sponsor

Willkommen Abgeordneten! (that is, Welcome Delegates!),

We hope all of you are safely making your way, by ship, horseback, or camelback to the magnificent city of Berlin! Enjoy the variety of sausages that our glorious nation has to offer, but as we near the big day, November 15, 1884, make sure to set those sausages aside and put on your game faces. Be ready to carve up the Dark Continent, to acquire new territories at all costs, and to reap as many resources from the land as possible.

Although I am Otto von Bismarck in the world of GSMUN, I prefer to use my alias, Emily, in the real world. Born in Midlothian, I have moved all over the place: once across the river and then once across the street. I enjoy baking as well as hitting the slopes in the winter for some snowboarding. I spend most of my free time playing volleyball, tennis, cello, or watching, yes, Grey's Anatomy. I'm a proud American-born Chinese, and every few years I go back to China to explore those roots that I so love.

Hi, my name is Jason and I'm a junior at Maggie Walker. I prefer to think of myself as the more mature, serious chair, but Emily would not hesitate to disagree. During my free time, I enjoy staring at my computer, sleeping, playing videogames, excelling at school, nerding with math problems, and hanging out with my friends. For extracurricular activities, I participate in a plethora of clubs and play tennis.

Now that you know all about us, it's time for you to get back to work. Saddle up your horses, pack your parkas, and ready yourself. Along the way, if you encounter any bandits, horse accidents, or any other problems, or if you simply have a question or get lonely while traveling through the hills of Germany, feel free to send us a memo (via owl or email). Ready yourselves for this great conference, and expect the conflict, manipulation, and deceit that come with European politics. Now, let the scramble begin.

See you soon,

Jason Kong
jkong@gsgis.k12.va.us

Emily Zhang
edzhang@gsgis.k12.va.us

Committee Information

The Berlin Conference took place from November 15, 1884, to February 27, 1885. Delegations from the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Russia, Sweden-Norway, the Ottoman Empire, Denmark, Italy, Austria-Hungary, and the United States attended the conference. It should be noted that the United Nations was created in 1945, and therefore has no connection with the Berlin Conference. No international law governed the delegates or proceedings of the Berlin Conference.

The Berlin Conference, also known as the Congo Conference or the West Africa Conference, will be hosted by German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, as per the request of Portugal. The conference will begin November 15, 1884, for the purpose of determining who controls the Congo River Basin, establishing a consensus regarding navigation rights of the Congo and Niger Rivers, and taking a stance on the international slave trade. In addition, Bismarck desires that the European powers and the United States agree on a set of regulations to formally divide existing African colonies and acquire new ones.

Division of Territory

Age of Exploration

From the mid-15th century to early 18th century, Europeans, fueled by improved maritime technology, traveled the world in search of adventure, new trading routes, and profit. With the discovery of the New World and the Indies, European countries found valuable raw resources and established private markets to sell their processed goods to nations. In a time when emphasis was placed on mercantilist ideals, these colonies represented power and stability for their respective mother countries. With the advent of the Age of Exploration in the last part of the 15th century, Portugal and Spain found themselves at the apex of the European power structure. The Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 gave each country rights to half of the “New World.” Portugal received the land to the west of Cape Verde Islands, namely the coasts of Africa bordering the Atlantic Ocean and coasts of Africa and Asia bordering the Indian Ocean. Portugal soon established the first African colonies, including ports in Luanda, Mozambique, Zanzibar, and Mombassa (Kenya). However, Portugal’s hegemony in Africa did not last, and by the 16th century, Portugal lagged behind other European nations, such as France and Great Britain, which had experienced an Industrial Revolution. The other power, Spain, had been afflicted by heavy inflation due to the mismanagement of gold and

silver imports from New World colonies. In addition, the Spanish had faced many military defeats, including the destruction of their Armada. In 1580, Portugal was forced to merge with the fading Spain, leaving an opening of power in Europe for France, Great Britain, and the Netherlands. These factors caused both Spain and Portugal to become bystanders in European politics for centuries.

Beginnings of Colonialism in Africa

As nautical innovation spread, Northern European countries set their eyes to the seas. France, Great Britain, and the Netherlands all sent ships abroad and built ports along the West Coast of Africa and the Indian Ocean, which further weakened Portugal’s dominance in the area. Portugal’s limited resources prevented it from stopping the encroachment of its power base. On the other side of the world, these nations had all laid claim to areas in the East Indies through their own charter companies. These colonies were established for a variety of reasons, such as the desire to reap profit and the aim of “civilizing” natives by exposing them to Western ideals and Christianity.

For many years, the influence of the Europeans paled in comparison to that of the native cultures of coastal and Sub-Saharan Africa as well as the Islamic influence present in North

Africa. As New World plantations became more profitable and the demand for slaves increased, more emphasis was placed on the African interior rather than small coastal trade settlements.

The influence of Europeans in Africa steadily increased throughout the entire 18th and beginning of the 19th century. Prior to the end of the 18th century, Bantu Africa, a group of tribes in Sub-Saharan Africa connected by the Bantu language, was not directly affected by the changes occurring in Western Africa. The Portuguese were the primary Europeans coming into the Bantu regions, and their activities consisted of trading European firearms and textiles for African gold and porcelain.

At the same time, Britain's colonies in Southern Africa became successful. This led to a gradual decline of British colonialism in Western Africa and the resulted in a concentration of British influence in Southern Africa. Today, much of Western Africa remains in indirect French control.

Prior to the 19th century, the Dutch East India Company held a major foothold in Southern Africa. The Cape of Good Hope, located on the southern tip of Africa, had long been a strategic and commercial asset to sea-going European nations. The Dutch East India Company brought in Dutch settlers to farm in the near Mediterranean climate to maintain high food stockpiles for soldiers and workers at the Company. These settlers became known as the Boers, and they continue to inhabit South Africa today. In 1806, the British occupied Cape Colony out of fear that Napoleon might conquer it. This area has since become one of Britain's prime interests on the continent.

Initially, ventures in Eastern and Central Africa were of scientific and humanitarian interest. However, they soon became imperialistic as well. This was partially due to the international rivalry over foreign colonies. For example, the British colonies in India needed a middle harbor between Cape Colony and India.

The result was the Anglo-French agreement of 1862, which stated that Britain would not disrupt French interests in Madagascar and the Comoro Islands, and France would not disrupt British interests in Zanzibar.

Questions to Consider:

- What requirements should be met for a country to be able to lay territorial claims to a colony, rather than just having an “informal presence?”
- Is holding colonies in Africa feasible and beneficial? What are some possible repercussions of maintaining a presence in Africa?
- Should free trade exist throughout Africa, in certain colonies, or not at all?
- How has partitioning parts of Africa, in the way the British and French have in the past, affected the Africans?
- What did the French occupation and subsequent wars in Algeria show Europe about colonization?
- How should land with diamonds or other natural minerals and metals be partitioned throughout Africa?
- Which nations are currently the most powerful? Which should have the most influence on the policies that are made at the conference?
- What options do the members of the conference have in implementing their goals? What government bodies, if any, must approve measures passed at this conference?

Websites for Further Research:

- <http://www.britishempire.co.uk/> —Detailed information concerning the British Empire.
- http://www.bruceruiz.net/PanamaHistory/a_ge_of_exploration_time_line.htm —Timeline to the Age of Exploration.
- http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/continent_africa.html —African nation descriptions, with emphasis on the colonial era.

Status of Congo-River Basin

Status of West Africa

Currently, European nations invested in colonies in West Africa face many risks due to West Africa's century-long religious revival. Islamic *jihads* began in the highlands of Guinea and eventually spread across the entire coast. Although the French and British have always been aware of the *jihads* taking place in their respective territories, they have taken no action because these wars provide a steady source of captives to enter into slavery. This has allowed the French and British to maintain control of the coasts and trade goods and slaves.

At this point in time, France is clearly the dominant force in West Africa. Its policies of assimilation and non-intervention with the natives have proven to be successful in peacefully controlling the colonies. By 1880, West African empires, such as the Mandinka Empire led by Samori Touré, became a thorn in the French side. The Empire clashed with French interests on the Senegal River, and battles broke out in 1881. The French avoided a full-fledged war by signing a treaty, but the Mandinka army remains a major opposition force against French colonialism.

By the late 18th century, colonies based on slavery had become less profitable. For example, although slaves working on a French sugar plantation lowered the cost of labor, this, in turn, also lowered the cost of the sugar. At the same time, African merchants and chiefs were increasing the cost of slaves. These factors reduced the profits for European investors. Increased domestic investment and decreased foreign investment by Europeans combined with growing pressure from abolitionists led European nations to start outlawing slavery beginning in 1807. The Europeans then began looking for other profitable industries to keep investors interested in Africa, and they found sizable amounts of raw natural resources in West Africa. By the 18th century, the most important product of West Africa was palm oil, which is mainly used as a lubricant for European industrial machinery. The oil is obtained from trees located primarily in the coastal forests from Freetown in the west to the Niger River delta in the East. Other resources in West Africa are

gold, found in the lands of the Asante Empire; gum Arabic, found surrounding the upper Senegal River and used for fixing colored dyes; and groundnuts, also known as peanuts, found along the western coast from St. Louis in the North to Bissau in the South.

In principle, the Ottoman Empire ruled the entire North African coast with the exception of Morocco. However, the Ottomans had little power over the territories, so they delegated power to local Turkish regents. Algeria was one such territory. The Ottomans would grant power to the ruler, or *dey*, chosen from the ranks of Turkish officers in coastal towns. Outside these towns, the Berbers, a pastoral people of Northern Africa, were virtually independent. Nominal Ottoman rule in Algeria ended in 1830 when the French occupied the coastal towns of Oran and Algiers and sent the *dey* into exile.

Relations between Algeria and France had been under strain for quite some time. As early as the 18th century, Algeria was trading olive oil and grain with the French. French governments, however, refused to pay the debts for the grain bought during the Napoleonic Wars, which led to a break in relations in 1827. The official and controversial excuse for the French invasion was to end corsair piracy in the Mediterranean though some believe it was a purely imperialistic venture. Regardless of the reason, the interior of Algeria gave formidable opposition to French rule from the beginning.

The French invasion prompted one of the hardest fought African resistance wars of the 19th century. Although the Berber communities of interior Algeria frequently battled amongst themselves, their common language, religion, and culture allowed them to unite against a common enemy. The resistance formed into a *jihad* against the infidels which lasted over 50 years. The French could not consider themselves victorious until 1879 at the cost of tens of thousands of French lives and perhaps hundreds of thousands of Algerian lives. However, they could never conquer the sullen resentment that the occupation engendered. After the war, the French put the arable land in the hands of white landowners and made the Arab-Berbers work as underpaid and overtaxed serfs. Additionally,

French law overrode *Shari'a*, or Islamic law, which only added insult to injury for the Algerians.

Unfortunately, while international trade increased, local African economies deteriorated and became increasingly dependent on foreign powers. The only people benefiting from the trade were a small minority of merchants and rulers. The bulk of the population saw many of their freedoms taken away as their labor was harnessed to increase production. In addition, West Africa's primary imports—cloth, alcohol, and firearms—failed to better the livelihoods of the African people. Cloth exports undermined the traditional African clothing industry, alcohol provided only an illusory sense of well-being, and firearms merely enabled rulers to have a tighter grip over their subjects and neighbors.

West Africa faces another large problem. Due to the coast's abundance of natural resources, it faces possible encroachment by foreign nations. The main players in West Africa are Great Britain, France, Germany, Portugal, and Spain. The challenge lies in attempting to divide West Africa's territory peacefully. Many of these nations already hold claims to the region, and there are several uncooperative native groups in the area. Over the years, France has solidified its presence in the West African inland to such an extent that any attempted incursions would provoke a strong French resistance. Another potential landmine of the West African inland is the presence of the Mandinkas, who are not hesitant about using force against Europeans.

While the coast has a wealth of natural resources, the West African inland faces scarcity. One reason for this is that a great part of the inland region is the Sahara Desert, which has few resources. The British have hold of the gold and palm oil-rich areas of the southern coast of West Africa. Additionally, the British holdings in South Africa may open up the coast to other European powers. The western coast of West Africa is rich in Muslim tradition and has gum Arabic along the Senegal River and groundnuts along the coast. Most of the land is considered as French territory. However, Spain has several colonies here, and its influence is evident in the northern tip of Morocco. The French territory

of Algeria is the final portion of West Africa. Because this land is under French rule, there is little room for outsiders to colonize. The lands that are arable for Algerian cash crops—olive oil and grain—are already under the possession of the white landowners.

Status of East and Central Africa

After the decline of the slave trade, a rapid increase occurred in African populations, leading to food shortages in the region. At the same time, Europeans increased trade of African goods to replace slaves. At the time, the most important goods of West and Central Africa, beeswax and ivory, were exchanged for firearms and cloth. However, Europeans have not been the leading influence in East Africa. Arab and Swahili traders have historically had the most influence in the region.

For many years, Egypt has been a major source of conflict and tension. Throughout history, Egypt has been ruled by various foreign groups. The Ottomans lay historic claims to the area, although it has been occupied by both the French and British. A man named Muhammad Ali rose to power after the chaotic French evacuation of Egypt in 1801. He was an Albanian officer of the Ottoman army who took it upon himself to create an Egyptian dynasty. Unfortunately to his detriment, during his reign, Ali grossly exploited the Egyptian *fellahin*, or peasants.

Later, there was increasing pressure on Muhammad Ali to open Egypt to European traders. Ali dropped his trade restrictions in 1838, and French and British merchants spilled into Egypt. They were particularly interested in expanding the ivory trade to Sudan. In the early 1860s, French engineers began the task of linking the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea by building the Suez Canal. After the initial economic boom subsided, Egypt found itself in great debt to the Europeans. To curtail the mounting debt, the Egyptians sold their share of the Suez Canal for one-third of its original price to the British in 1875. In the following years, France and Great Britain shared control of Egypt using a puppet government. Soon nationalist fervor began in Egypt, and riots ensued in response to a

European blockade. In 1882, while the French were busy quelling resistance in Tunisia, the British occupied Egypt and continued to successfully control the land as the value of the cotton trade from Egyptian Sudan and the Suez Canal make Egypt invaluable to the British.

The Egyptian invasion of Sudan in the 1820s caused few problems with Sudanese nationalists until half a century of capturing slaves for the Egyptian armies and plundering villages for ivory had passed. In 1881, a Muslim holy man, self-named Madhi, “the Guided One,” declared a *jihad* against the Egyptians. Since then, Sudan has become a politically turbulent region. Although these areas offer profits from cotton and ivory trade, the Mahdi attacks against Anglo-Egyptian rule in the area continue to pose a huge problem to any power who attempts to control the region. At this point, with the exception of Khartoum, the capital of Sudan, the Anglo-Egyptian forces have mostly withdrawn from Sudan.

For much of the 19th century, the economic life of East-Central Africa has been dominated by violence rooted in the trade of firearms, ivory, and captives. The persistence of the slave trade provides Europeans with an excuse to intervene in this region. The primary colonizers in Central and East Africa are the French, British, Germans, Portuguese, Italians, and Belgians. The region as a whole is not as abundant in natural resources as West or South Africa, but has nonetheless yielded profits for its investors for many years. The main concern for potential colonizers is whether the economies can remain self-sufficient after the abolition of slavery. The southwest region is abundant in palm oil, copper, and rubber. Despite wars in the southeast region that have hampered investigation, there is also speculation that the coastal area holds underground minerals.

German, Portuguese, and British colonies are located along the east coast of Africa. After the construction of the Suez Canal in 1869, many British colonies in East Africa lost their importance as these colonies have been primarily used as refueling stations. Thus, East Africa is a possible source of land for colony-seeking nations. Aside from a lack of natural

resources, another concern is the legitimacy of rule of the islands off the east coast of Africa, such as Madagascar and the Comoro Islands. Several treaties exist regarding this issue, but conflict continues to brew. In addition to the German, Portuguese, and British, the Belgians have expressed interest in this “Scramble for Africa” through their interest in the Congo River Basin. Since the creation of the *Association Internationale du Congo*, Belgian efforts to acquire this territory have intensified. King Leopold II is working tirelessly for Belgian control in this area, but his claims have been countered by the historic claims of Portugal, claims of the French, and general reluctance by other European powers.

Status of South Africa

For decades, South Africa has been plagued by tribal wars and internal conflict. The power struggle between the Zulus and other tribes, such as the Dingane, was initially spurred by a fight over the limited natural resources in the area. Due to their lack of resources, South Africa is not a region in high demand by the European powers. The area has been mostly controlled by various tribal groups in addition to the British.

Cape Colony is one of the major settlements in the South African region. When the British seized control of the Cape Colony from the Dutch East India Company in 1806, they intended it to be a supply station for ships traveling to India and a naval base to protect ships from attack by rival Europeans. In addition, to maintain a profit, the British instituted a number of economic and social changes to the colony.

At the start of the 19th century, British rule favored the interests of the Boers over those of the South Africans by allowing the Boers access to the lucrative British markets for ivory, wool, and wine, and the protection of the British garrisons at Cape Town. Spurred by the abolition of slavery as well as poor treatment by British landowners, resentment towards the British arose among the Boers. These changes prompted the Boers, the Dutch-speaking settlers

already living in the region, to trek northwards out of the colony in the 1830s and 1840s.

At first, the trade in the interior Boer Republics of the Orange Free State and Transvaal was largely based on hunting. Then, the British had no incentive to intervene. However, the situation changed in the 1870s with the discovery of diamonds in the Orange Free State. The British manipulated a local Boer chief into officially asking the British for assistance, thus giving the British an excuse to annex the territory. This annexation still allowed the Orange Free State to exist under the condition that it would turn over control of its diamond mines to the British. Around this time, a British immigrant, Cecil Rhodes, who had made his fortune from buying diamond fields at the beginning of the rush, began creating his empire. Since his company, De Beers, was the only one with sufficient capital to excavate the diamonds from deep beneath the surface, it grew to dominate other companies. Though the Africans earned very little as laborers, they still made much more working in the diamond mines than they would have made elsewhere in South Africa. At the same time, the Boers became increasingly hostile. By the end of the 1870s, the Boers and native tribes had begun to encroach on the British land.

South Africa is now a very profitable region for the British, who have nearly complete control over the territory. Although the South African region started out with little to offer, the discovery of diamonds north of the Orange River, and the production of wool and ivory in the Boer lands have made this region very valuable. Some lands to the northeast and northwest of the region may still prove profitable. Currently, these lands are colonized by Germany and Portugal.

Situation in the Congo

The Congo is the largest and most valuable piece of land on the African continent still without an uncontested ruler. Due to overlapping, conflicting claims, the Congo River Basin has become an area of great controversy, beginning with the ambitious king of Belgium, Leopold II, and his determination not to be left

behind in the new era of imperialism. The Belgian king sent Welsh explorer Henry Stanley to the Congo in 1876, in hopes of establishing a colony there to make up for the small size of his own country. During this period, Leopold II also lobbied for other countries' support of his venture. He hired Henry Sanford as a diplomat to the United States in order to ensure President Arthur's approval of Belgium's claims to the Congo region. He also created the *Association Internationale du Congo*, for the stated purpose of making humanitarian progress in the Congo region, in addition to solidifying his claim to the area. Leopold II desperately needed Arthur's support in order to establish this colony. The United States also filled seats of the *Association Internationale du Congo* after English representatives left to avoid an international conflict. Henry Sanford took over one of the seats and wrote back to the United States Senate asking it to recognize the *Association Internationale du Congo* as the governing body of the Congo. The Senate and President immediately recognized it as such.

During this new time of European exploration, the Congo had a tribal system of government. Most leaders ruled for only a short time before being overthrown by another. This quick turnover of leaders led to instability in the Congo until Garcia V ruled for 25 years in the early 19th century. While exploring the region, Stanley successfully signed treaties with natives in the area that placed all of the tribes under the *Association Internationale du Congo*.

There are several issues that make the Congo region so controversial. The Belgian government is attempting to rule a kingdom that it has claimed with little approval from other world powers, as many of the European powers do not recognize the *Association Internationale du Congo* as the body with the right to the land. France has already claimed the city of Brazzaville, which was established by French marine Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza in 1881. Additionally, Portugal has pointed to past treaties with the natives to claim the mouth of the Congo River and surrounding areas. The relatively recent French presence in the Congo has triggered a reaction from the British government, who see

the French as their greatest threat. Consequently, the British began negotiating with the Portuguese, and in the past year, the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty, which recognized Portuguese claims to the territory, was signed by both groups. However, due to a backlash among the British people, this treaty was never ratified. After this development, Portugal accosted the Imperial German Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, and requested a meeting of the European powers regarding control over the Congo River Basin.

Questions to Consider:

- Does Congo currently have a government that could sustain itself as a free state? If not, what changes must be made to the current system to make it a suitable government for a free state?
- What are the benefits of Congo becoming a free state? What are the disadvantages?
- What are some ways to control the Muslim population from rising against the colonial rulers in North Africa?

- <http://books.google.com/books?id=QY82GNNgpcDgC&printsec=frontcover&dq=congo&client=safari#v=onepage&q=&f=false> — “The History of Congo” is a great online book selection that allows you to easily search through chapters and diagrams of pertinent information relating to most events in Congo’s history.
- http://www.historycommons.org/topic.jsp?topic=country_democratic_of_the_congo — This timeline offers an in-depth look at the interests of Belgium in Congo in the years preceding the Berlin Conference.
- <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15240/15240-h/15240-h.htm> — Accounts of a journey through the Congo Free State.
- <http://congostate.blogspot.com/2006/01/international-african-association.html> — Explains how Belgian Congo came to be.
- http://www.experiencefestival.com/boer_republics — More information on the Boer republics.

Websites for Further Research:

Slave Trade

History of Slave Trade

Slavery has a longstanding history in the world. Written accounts of the trade of human beings as property trace back to the Code of Hammurabi in the 17th century BC. At the dawn of the Age of Exploration, Spanish and Portuguese explorers encountered the natives of America and Africa. In the Papal Bull Dum Diversas by Pope Nicholas V in 1452 and Romanus Pontifex in 1455, the king of Portugal, Afonso V, was given the right to enslave "Saracens and Pagans," or Muslims and non-Judeo-Christians. When the Spanish arrived in the New World, they subdued the natives in the West Indies. However, it was found that the Caribbean slaves were unable to work in the labor-intensive sugar cane industry due to high mortality rates, primarily because slaves had developed no immunity to European diseases such as smallpox. In order to facilitate business, additional slaves had to be brought in from elsewhere.

Slave Trade in Africa

Even before the arrival of the Europeans, African tribes practiced slavery. African kings traded slaves for raw goods and resources or took them as spoils of war. African slaves were sent from tribe to tribe and traded to the Mediterranean and Middle East. When the Portuguese arrived on the west coast of Africa, the slave trade escalated. The Portuguese settled in the Cape Verde Islands, a group of volcanic islands just off the northwest coast of Africa. There, African slaves were employed to grow cotton and indigo. The finished cloth was then sold to African leaders around Portuguese Guinea, or the "Slave Coast," for more slaves, thus creating a profitable industry for the Europeans. By the 17th century, most western European nations had a stake in the slave trade. By the 18th century, the British had eclipsed all other nations in profit-garnering ability. Their three-step system, known as triangular trade, was used to maximize profits. Ships from the British cities of Bristol or Liverpool would carry goods such as rum, cotton, and firearms to the Slave

Coast. There, the goods would be exchanged for slaves, who were then herded onto the cargo ships. The ships then made their way across the Atlantic to deposit the slaves in the West Indies. There, they worked on sugar cane plantations to extract valuable molasses. Finally, in the third leg of the triangular trade, molasses was carried back to England, where it was used to make rum. The British accumulated more and more profit as they displaced more and more Africans. In total, over 12 million people made their way onto slave ships and crossed the Atlantic. Of these, one in six did not survive the passage.

Abolitionist Movement

The British at home were aware of these inhumanities. Although traders attempted to justify their profits, resentment towards the slave trade continued to build. Quakers and other evangelist groups were some of the first to condemn slavery in the 17th century. However, no major leaps in the abolitionist movement came until 1772, in the landmark case of *R. v. Knowles, ex parte Somersett*, otherwise known as Somersett's case. The ruling said, "no master ever was allowed here [England] to take a slave by force to be sold abroad because he deserted from his service... therefore the man must be discharged." This was the first significant victory for abolitionists, as it prohibited slavery within Britain. However, there was no ruling made concerning the rest of the great empire.

In 1783, the Quakers founded the first anti-slavery organization. The work of two leaders of the Committee for Abolition of the Slave Trade, formed in 1787, brought about the Slave Trade Act, which received Royal Assent in 1807 and abolished slave trade everywhere in the British Empire. Slavery itself was made illegal in the Slavery Abolition Act of 1833. Since that point, Britain has become a leading force in pressuring other countries to adopt a policy of abolition.

The British have created the British West African Slave Squadron in order to ensure that no British participate in the slave trade. Additionally, the British West African Slave

Squadron hinders other nations from participating. Slaves are still traded worldwide, most notably by the Portuguese to Brazil. While some abolitionists claim that taking slaves from African villages is doing irreparable harm to African economies, others argue that they are essential for the success of European economies. This leads to the problem of an inconsistent stance on slavery by different nations. Although the German and English standards differ regarding the issue, the British continue to punish German ships for breaking British laws. Thus, a universal standard regarding slave trade may be necessary. Such a standard must be agreed upon by all participating nations.

Questions to Consider:

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of the slave for your country?
- Should the slave trade be abolished internationally, or should that choice remain with each nation?
- What actions should be taken in order to maintain/prohibit the trade of persons as property? How would your country go about this?
- Who should be in charge of enforcing the ban on the slave trade? Should it be countries closest to Africa or the world's strongest countries?
- What options are currently available to combat the inconsistencies of the enforcement of the ban on the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade? What past compromises have seemed to work?

Websites for Further Research:

- <http://slavetrade.parliament.uk/slavetrade/index.html>—UK Parliament site dedicated to the slave trade and the abolition of slavery.
- http://www.pdavis.nl/Background.htm#WA_S—This site offers in depth looks into various aspects of British involvement in the slave trade, from the Royal Navy to the Slave Squadrons.
- http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/tsis/hd_tsis.htm—Relates East-African trade with the spread of Islam.

Selected Bibliography

- “Africa: 1830-1990.” 1998. <<http://emazine.com/lectures/africa1830-1990.html>> (accessed August 23, 2009).
- Aronson, Goran. “The Berlin Conference: 1884.” 1999. <<http://www.thenagain.info/WebChron/Africa/BerlinConf.htm>> (accessed August 12, 2009).
- BBC News. “Timeline: Democratic Republic of Congo.” July 31, 2009. <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1072684.stm>> (accessed August 31, 2009).
- Boddy-Evans, Alistair. “Countries in Africa Considered Never Colonized.” 2001. <<http://africanhistory.about.com/od/eracolonialism/tp/AfricaNotColon.htm>> (accessed August 24, 2009).
- Boyer, Paul S. “Colonization Movement, African.” 2001. <<http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O119-ColonizationMovementAfrcn.html>> (accessed August 24, 2009).
- Burchill, Shirley. “The ‘Scramble for Africa’.” 2009. <<http://www.saburchill.com/history/chapters/empires/0048.html>> (accessed August 28, 2009).
- Davis, Peter. “William Loney - Background.” <<http://www.pdavis.nl/Background.htm#WAS>> (accessed August 31, 2009).
- Fage, J.D. *A History of Africa*. 1st ed. New York City: Albert Knopf, Inc., 1978.
- Gascoigne, Bamber. “History of Slavery.” 2009. <<http://www.historyworld.net/wrdhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ac41>> (accessed August 28, 2009)
- Hanlon, Edward. “The Industrial Revolution, 1750-1850.” March 22, 1999. <<http://web.jjay.cuny.edu/>> (accessed August 31, 2009).
- Henry, “New Imperialism (1870-1914).” <<http://www.wpunj.edu/history/study/>> (accessed August 30, 2009).
- History Commons. “Democratic of the Congo: Timeline.” <http://www.historycommons.org/topic.jsp?topic=country_democratic_of_the_congo> (accessed August 31, 2009).
- Koeller, David W., “The Berlin Conference.” <<http://www.thenagain.info/webchron/africa/berlinconf.html>> (accessed August 31, 2009).
- Lamprecht, Jan. “Destruction of Africa Since de-Colonization.” 2007. <<http://www.globalpolitician.com/23413-africa>> (accessed August 21, 2009).
- Loosemore, Jo. “BBC - Devon: Abolition.” February 28, 2007. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/devon/content/articles/2007/03/20/abolition_navy_feature.shtml> (accessed August 31, 2009).
- Luscombe, Steven. *The British Empire*. 1999. <<http://britishempire.co.uk/>> (accessed 29 August 2009).
- MacDonnell, John de Courcy. *King Leopold II: his rule in Belgium and the Congo*. Cassel, 1905.
- Magstadt, Thomas M. *Nations and Governments* 2nd Edition, New York: St. Martins Press., 1994.
- Nosotro, Rit. “Europe’s Colonization of Africa.” 2008. <<http://www.hyperhistory.net/apwh/essays/>> (accessed August 23rd, 2009).
- “Parliament and the British Slave Trade 1600-1807.” 2007. <<http://slavetrade.parliament.uk/slavetrade/index.html>> (accessed 30 August 2009).

