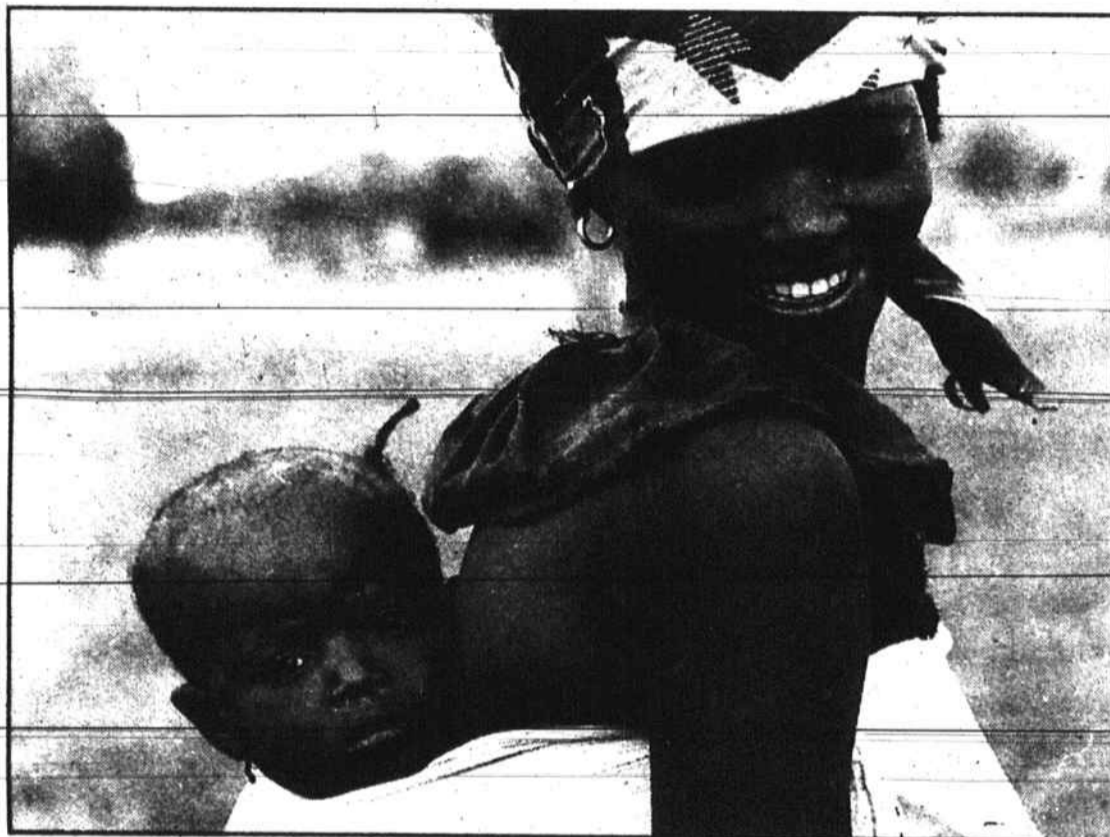


MARIO CUOMO CITES IMPORTANCE OF THE DAY OF THE AFRICAN CHILD IN A LETTER TO HIS FELLOW GOVERNORS

"The commemoration of this "Day", carried out throughout the world, represents a wonderful opportunity for Americans to join forces with people everywhere to celebrate the children of Africa and to contribute to building a better place for children. In the United States the Day of the African Child provides an opportunity to celebrate the heritage of African-American children and connect youngsters of the two continents, while focusing public attention on the need to develop greater understanding of the culture, history and traditions of Africa."



Children and women are the focus of UNICEF's lifesaving work.

White House Recognizes Day of the African Child, 1993

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 15, 1993

On June 16, 1976, freedom lost some of its most ardent supporters when the children of Soweto, South Africa, were gunned down as they attempted to speak out against the injustice of apartheid. Now, we join the Organisation of African Unity, the United Nations Children's Fund, and lovers of liberty around the world in recognizing June 16 as the Day of the African Child. By remembering the children of Soweto, we give special recognition not only to those who have sacrificed for freedom but also to the children who will cement and defend our liberties in the years to come.

Children are our planet's most precious resource. They represent the future, and we bear sacred responsibility for their protection and development. Yet children today are increasingly threatened by violence, illness, and instability.

Every child should have the opportunity to live a healthy and full life. As we recommit ourselves to caring for our future generation, it is fitting that we take the time to celebrate the Day of the African Child. I commend the many dedicated organizations and volunteers in America, Africa, and around the world who have devoted themselves to caring for our planet's young people. The efforts of these groups help to create an atmosphere of support that is so important as our children grow and mature.

The memory of the tragedy that occurred in Soweto 17 years ago can help to bring the peoples of the world together for the sake of our posterity. On this day, I encourage people everywhere to celebrate the Day of the African Child by dedicating themselves to creating a brighter and freer future for our children.

Rui Clinton

BALANCE SHEET OF HUMAN PROGRESS IN AFRICA

ACHIEVEMENTS

Average life expectancy in Africa has risen to 54 years, an increase of 13 years since 1960.

The current under-five mortality rate of 180 per 1,000 live births is half that of 1960.

Two thirds of African countries have immunized 75 percent of their children against the six major childhood diseases.

In urban areas, more than 80 percent of children have safe drinking water.

In the 1980's African governments provided access to safe water and adequate sanitation to an additional 120 million of their citizens.

Primary school enrollment rose dramatically during the 1970's from 65 to 90 percent for boys, and from 44 to 69

Secondary school enrollment jumped 5 times, from 3.5 percent in 1960 to 18.7 percent in 1980; it grew to 22.7 percent in 1985, before falling back to 19.8 percent in 1990.

If the year 2000 goals are achieved, more than 90 million girls and women will have access to basic education and literacy and 100,000 pregnancy-related deaths will be avoided a year.

African women are key actors in local development and are increasingly represented in formal decision-making and national life.

CHALLENGES

Africa's life expectancy still lags 20 years behind that of the industrialized world.

Children in Africa still die at 10 times the rate of industrialized countries.

Half of all Africans have no access to basic health care.

About 29 million African children, or one quarter of those under five, are underweight.

In rural areas, only 40 percent of children have access to safe drinking water.

Today 310 million people still lack access to safe drinking water, and 385 million lack adequate sanitation services in Africa.

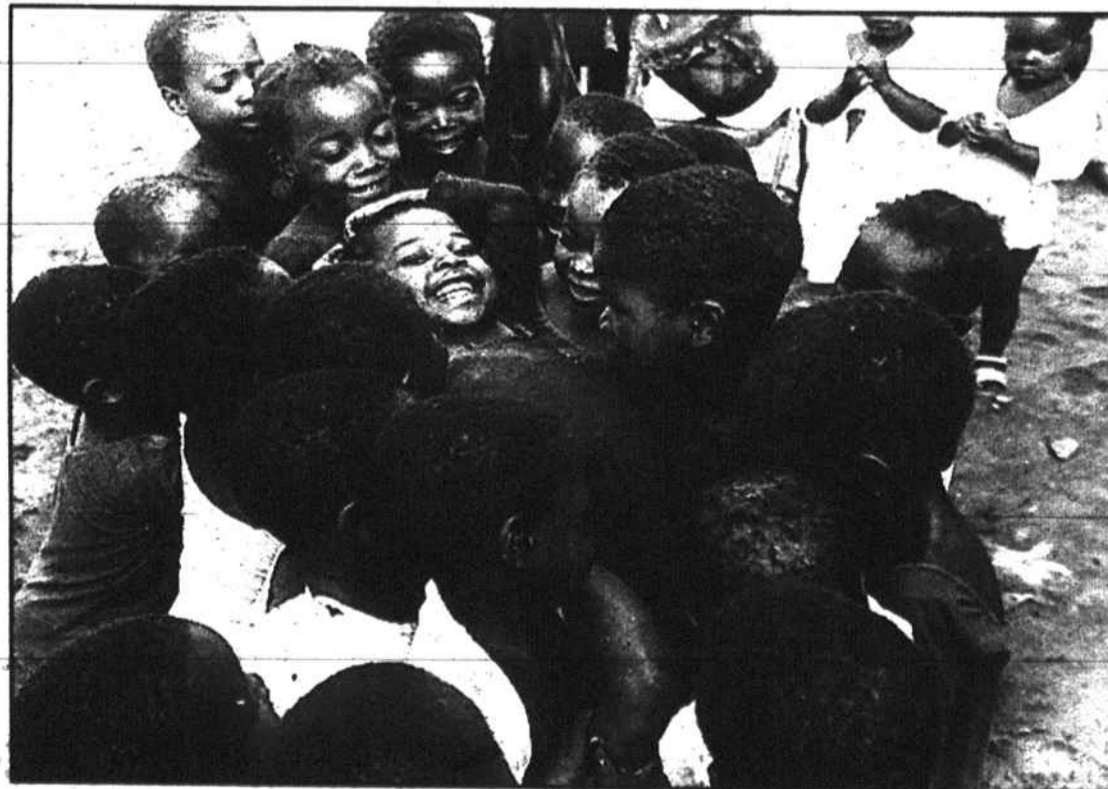
Primary school enrollment rate for boys and girls fell by roughly 7 percent in the 1980's.

Education spending per capita in industrialized countries is roughly 20 times that of Africa, and in Asia almost twice as high.

Nearly 65 percent of African women over the age of 15 are illiterate, compared to 40 percent of males.

African women have the second highest maternal mortality rate in the world, with an average of 626 deaths per 100,000 live births.

An estimated 7.5 million Africans are HIV-infected, among them 750,000 children.



UNICEF conducts psychosocial programs for children traumatized by war. Here, children play a game of trust and friendship.