

# Sub-Saharan Africa

2A1



# Notes

- The Land of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)
  - SSA lies to the south of or “under” Saharan Africa (SA).
  - 70% of the people of Africa live in this region.
  - Three physical zones in SSA:
    - Grasslands called savannas in the north
    - Rainforests in the central areas
    - Grasslands and deserts in the south.
  - Two major rivers in SSA:
    - Congo
    - Niger



# Notes

- Great Rift Valley (GRV)
  - Runs from Ethiopia in the north to Mozambique in the south.
  - Ever-widening crack in the earth.
  - Most mountains in SSA there (e.g., Mount Kilimanjaro).
  - Most of the large lakes of Africa found there (e.g., Lakes Victoria, Tanganyika, and Nyasa).
- SSA is rich in mineral resources like oil, diamonds, and uranium.
- SSA is rich in wildlife resources, which are under threat.

# Notes



- A Brief History of SSA

- SSA was cut off for centuries from Europe, Northern Africa, and Asia.
- Arab traders crossed the Sahara starting around AD 1000, bringing Islam to the region.
- Great African kingdoms sprang up in SSA because of this trade (Ghana, Mali, Songhai, Benin, Great Zimbabwe, and the Kingdom of the Kongo).
- Europeans arrived starting around 1400.



# Notes

- Europeans exploited SSA for slaves from c. 1400 to c. 1880. The Africans themselves helped with this trade.
- Slave trade caused damage to people and economy of SSA.
- European powers (EP) took over Africa in the 1800s.
  - Carved it up between the EP without regard for the people of Africa.
  - They took raw material resources out of SSA.
  - Used it as a market to sell manufactured goods.
  - Turned SSA into a “slave continent.”
- Europe could not hang onto Africa after the ruin caused by the World Wars (1914-1945).



# Notes

- European policies had left SSA very poor by the time they left in the 1960s.
- United States (USA) and Soviet Union (USSR) used region as a battlefield during the Cold War (1947-1991).
- SSA suffers from war, poverty and disease because of its history.



# Notes

- The People of SSA
  - Poorest region on earth (\$2,500 per capita GDP compared to U.S. \$48,000).
  - Many hundreds of cultures live together here; hundreds can coexist in a single nation.
  - Languages
    - Hundreds of native languages spoken here.
    - European languages (mostly French and English) used for government and business.



# Notes

- Religions
  - 30% Islamic; 50% Christian; 15% traditional African religions; 2.5% other religions; 2.5% no religion.
- Diversity in population and poverty lead to conflict.
  - Intertribal conflicts
  - Civil war
  - Religious conflicts
  - Genocide (In 1994, the Hutus killed 1,000,000 Tutsis in Rwanda.)



# Notes



- Government
  - Often weak and corrupt.
  - Rule by violence and bribery common.
  - Discourages economic development in the region.
  - Contributes to poverty of the region.

# Notes



- Post-Apartheid South Africa (SoAf)
  - SoAf is one of the wealthiest nations in SSA.
  - 10% white, 90% black or mixed race.
  - From 1948 to 1990 ruled by apartheid, a system which separated blacks from whites.
  - Whites given great economic opportunity, wealth.
  - Blacks treated poorly and lived in poverty.



# Notes

- Decades later, whites still control SoAf's economy.
- Blacks still have little economic opportunity and often live in extreme poverty.
- Problem weighs down SoAf economy and keep it from growing.
- Causes high crime rates and problems with national health, especially the AIDS epidemic.



# Notes

- The AIDS Epidemic in SSA
  - Nearly 20% of the adult population (15-49) is infected in nations like Lesotho, Swaziland, and SoAf.
  - Drugs to control the disease are available, but too expensive for poverty-stricken Africa with limited medical care facilities.
  - Killing off people in their prime working and child-bearing years.
  - Life expectancy dropping in the region.
  - Millions of children are being orphaned to the disease.

# Notes



- May have severe consequences for the economy of SSA.