Aids In Africa Essay, Research Paper

Horrors in the news Action on AIDS in Africa Imagine 40 million hungry and destitute orphans in sub-Saharan Africa by the year 2010 roaming the streets without schooling and work, prime candidates for the criminal gangs, marauding militias and child armies that have slaughtered and mutilated tens of thousands of civilians in countries like sierra Leone and Liberia in the last decade. This is the kind of nightmare that prompted the united nations security council to convene yesterday for an unprecedented examination of health issue- the global spread of ADIS, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, where experts predict that more people will die off AIDS, in the next decade than have died in all the wars of 20th century. The Clinton administration is wise to use its monthlong leadership of the Security Council to put this devastating crisis, too often hidden by secrecy and shame, at the top of the word security agenda. The sheer scale of Africa’s dais epidemic defies comprehension. South of the Sahara, more than 14 million have died these far. In some countries one in four adults infected, the majority under the age of 25. In South Africa, which has the highest rate of infection in the world, 3.5 million people will die in the next decade. The united nations has called the spread of aids in Africa “The worst infectious disease catastrophe since the bubonic plague,” which killed one- third of Europe’s population in the 14th century. For these people aids is not just a humanitarian problem. It is as Vice president Al Gore argued in a forceful speech to the security council yesterday, a ’security crisis” in attacking the young it saps work forces, undermining economic development and political stability. Aids have killed disproportionately high numbers of teachers, doctors, and nurses. The administration is seeking 325million from congress in next year’s budget to combat AIDS abroad, an increase of 100 million from current levels. The added funding would support education and prevention programs, community based, blood screening and testing, and special care for orphans. Increased funding is surely welcome, but this figure is woefully inadequate when measured against the scale of the problem. The u.s. spends 7 billion a year on aids prevention, treatment and research at home, where 40,000 new cases are diagnosed every year. In Africa 5.6 million new cases appear annually in countries with the most ill equipped health care systems on earth. The stigma attached to ADIS has hampered efforts to curb the epidemic. That is may be where yesterday’s Security Council debate makes its most lasting contribution. By giving this crisis the prominent platform it deserves, the United States is finally providing the leadership needed to overcome what the vice properly decried as the ignorance and indifference that lead to infection.

Bibliography

Chicago Tribune