Economic Self Determination

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At its sixth special session, the General Assembly adopted the "Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order" (resolution 3201 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974), which contains affirmations and principles of great importance for the present study. For instance, the Declaration states that the greatest and most significant achievement during the last decades has been the independence from colonial and alien domination of a large number of peoples and nations, but that the remaining vestiges of alien and colonial domination, foreign occupation, racial discrimination, apartheid and neo-colonialism in all its forms continue to be among the greatest obstacles to the full emancipation and progress of the developing countries and all the people involved.

INTRODUCTION

Self-determination is recognized as a right of all peoples in the *United Nations Charter, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* and *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, known collectively as the *International Bill of Human Rights*.

The right of nations to **self-determination** (from <u>German</u>: *Selbstbestimmungsrecht der Völker*), or in short form, the <u>right</u> to self-determination is the cardinal principle in modern <u>international law(jus cogens)</u>, binding, as such, on the <u>United Nations</u> as authoritative interpretation of the Charter's norms. It states that nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and fair<u>equality of opportunity</u> have **the right to freely choose their <u>sovereignty</u> and international <u>political status</u> with no external compulsion or interference which can be traced back to the <u>Atlantic Charter</u>, signed on 14 August 1941, by <u>Franklin D. Roosevelt</u>, President of the United States of America, and <u>Winston Churchill</u>, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom who pledged The Eight Principal points of the Charter. The principle does not state how the decision is to be made, or what the outcome should be, whether it be <u>independence</u>, <u>federation</u>, <u>protection</u>, some form of autonomy or even full <u>assimilation</u>. Neither does it state what the delimitation between nations should be — or even what <u>constitutes a nation</u>. In fact, there are conflicting definitions and legal criteria for determining which groups may legitimately claim the right to self-determination.**

On 14 December 1960, the <u>United Nations General Assembly</u> adopted <u>United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV)</u> under titled <u>Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples</u> provided for the granting of <u>independence to colonial</u> countries and peoples in providing an inevitable legal linkage between self-determination and its goal of decolonisation, and a postulated new international law-based right of <u>freedom</u> also in economic self-determination. In Article 5 states: Immediate steps shall be taken in <u>Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories</u>, or all other territories which have not yet attained independence, to transfer all powers to the peoples of those territories, without any conditions or reservations, in accordance with their freely expressed will and desire, without any distinction as to race, creed or colour, in order to enable them to enjoy complete independence and freedom, moreover on 15 December 1960 the United Nations General Assembly adopted <u>United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1541 (XV)</u> under titled Principles which should guide members in determining whether or

nor an obligation exists to transmit the information called for under <u>Article 73e</u> of the <u>United Nations Charter</u> in Article 3 provided that inadequacy of political, economic, social or educational preparedness should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence. To monitor the implementation of <u>Resolution 1514</u> in 1961 the General Assembly created the Special Committee referred to popularly as the <u>Special Committee on Decolonization [8]</u> to ensure <u>decolonization</u> complete compliance with the principle of self-determination in General Assembly Resolution 1541 (XV), 12. Principle of the Annex defining free association with an independent State, integration into an independent State, or independence as the three legitimate options of full <u>self-government</u> compliance with the principle of self-determination.

"National aspirations must be respected; people may now be dominated and governed only by their own consent. *Self determination* is not a mere phrase; it is an imperative principle of action. . . . "

By extension the term self-determination has come to mean the <u>free choice of one's</u> <u>own acts</u> without external compulsion.

The United Nations Charter, ratified in 1945, placed the right of self-determination into the framework of international law and diplomacy. The charter states that one of the purposes of the United Nations is "to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace." China signed and ratified the United Nations Charter in 1945 as the Republic of China, later replaced by the People's Republic of China.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, recognizes that everyone has the right to a nationality and that no one should be arbitrarily deprived of a nationality or denied the right to change nationality. The UDHR also recognizes the right of everyone to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and expression including the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers. China voted in favor of the UDHR.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights(ICCPR) multilateral treaty with two optional protocols, commits its parties to respect the civil and political rights of individuals, including the right to life, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, electoral rights and rights to due process and a fair trial. China signed the treaty in

1998 but has not ratified it, however it is considered binding for the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong.

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) multilateral treaty commits its parties to work toward the granting of economic, social, and cultural rights to individuals, including labour rights and rights to health, education, and an adequate standard of living. China signed the treaty in 1997 and ratified it in 2001.

Article 1 of both the ICCPR and the ICESCR reads:

- 1. All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.
- 2. All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation, based upon the principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.
- 3. The States Parties to the present Covenant, including those having responsibility for the administration of Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, shall promote the realization of the right of self-determination, and shall respect that right, in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

Economic self-determination—a people's capacity to disposefreely of natural resources in accordance with democratically-taken decisions—has fallen out of favor in the post-ColdWar era¹. And yet, it is deeply relevant to human rights realizationin resource-rich developing countries today. Resourcediscovery—whether of oil, gold, diamonds, or even bauxite promises to provide streams of funding for economic and socialrights such as education and health care in countries that desperately need aid. But all too often the resource curse strikes, and peoples in these countries find themselves victimsof rollercoaster

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¹See J. Oloka-Onyango, Heretical Reflections on the Right to Self-Determination:Prospects and Problems for a Democratic Global Future in the New Millennium, 15 AM. U. INT'L L. REV. 151, 169-73 (1999) (arguing that economic self-determinationwas seen as a "socialist" form of self-determination and as suchfell in popularity after the perceived socialist loss at the end of the ColdWar); see also Philip Alston, Peoples' Rights: Their Rise and Fall, in PEOPLES'RIGHTS 259, 270-71 (Philip Alston ed., 2001) (arguing that self-determination has declined considerably in the post-Cold War era); MICHAEL IGNATIEFF, BLOOD AND BELONGING: JOURNEYS INTO THE NEW NATIONALISM 12-13(1995) (arguing that the Cold War regulated the proliferation of nationstates, just as other systems of superpowers had in previous eras).

economies, mired in poverty and distanced from the new-found sources of wealth. As resource discoveryand exploitation is increasingly seen as a primary means of reinvigorating economies of poor states, economic self-determinationmust be reincorporated into the mainstream humanrights dialogue. Economic self-determination gives peoples the ability to take control over their mineral resources and use those resources for their own ends. It is a fundamental norm on whichbroader rights realization is based. For decades, however, this fundamental peoples' right has been overshadowed by otherforms of self-determination. Three of the key human rightstreaties written after World War II—the International Covenanton Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenanton Economic and Social Rights, and the African Charter onHuman and Peoples' Rights—articulate in no uncertain termspeoples' right to economic self-determination². However, currenthuman rights movements have largely failed to capitalize on this clear language, and have not incorporated the conceptinto advocacy strategies. It is now time for human rights advocatesto put that language to use, by bringing economic selfdetermination out of the shadows and employing it as a powerfultool for human rights advocacy related to the distribution of wealth from mineral resources.

A reinvigorated notion of economic self-determination isan essential tool for human rights realization in mineral-richcountries. It allows peoples to assert control over their ownnatural resources. It encourages democratic participation inorder to determine the best use of those resources. And itprovides human rights advocates with a foundation for arguingthat those resources should be used for the realization ofhuman rights, particularly those rights such as health, housing, and education that rely on substantial and continuing allocationof public resources. Economic self-determination isalso a natural ally of current discourses on economic liberalism, democratization, and anti-colonialism. Now is the timefor economic self-determination's rebirth. Some have declared self-determination a dying conceptwith little applicability to the formation of new states. Othershave argued that self-determination is fundamentally compromised by the difficulty of defining which groups constitute a

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²See International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, art. 1(2), Dec. 16, 1966, 993 U.N.T.S. 3 (entered into force Jan. 3, 1976)[hereinafter ICESCR]; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 1(2), Dec. 16, 1966, 999 U.N.T.S. 171 (entered into force Mar. 23, 1976)[hereinafter ICCPR] (featuring identical articles that state "all peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources. . ."); African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, arts. 20-21, June 27, 1981,21 I.L.M. 59 (1981) (entered into force Oct. 21, 1986) [hereinafter BanjulCharter].

"people." For the purposes of this Note, however, a "people" is broadly defined to constitute *all* persons within a state. Thus, this Note addresses self-determination claims within currently-existing states, by examining peoples' claims to controland benefit from natural resources.

Allocation of mineralresources, economic self-determination can be very usefulif it emerges from the shadows of secessionary self-determination. Secessionary selfdetermination—or, in other words, theuse of self-determination to establish self-governed nations dominated discussion during the decades following World War II, in part because selfdetermination was primarily conceived as a tool for the liberation of territories held by colonial powers. For practical purposes, economic self-determination was seen as a corollary, a mere accompanying tool for ensuringeconomic independence for the newly independent states, rather than an independent and distinct right. As a "poorsecond cousin" to secessionary self-determination, economicself-determination was not widely considered independenttool for redressing the effects of colonialism. But economicself-determination is applicable far beyond the establishmentof statehood, because it helps human rights advocates define the conversation between a government and its peoples with regard to resource discovery and exploitation.

The anti-colonial movements in Africa and Asia providedmuch of the impetus for the emerging legal character of self-determination during this period. During the early years of the United Nations, the general principle that one *nation* should not exercise control over the wealth of another arose as a corollary to the notion of self-government. However, the United Nations Charter refers to the "self-determination of peoples," establishing self-determination as a principle for *peoples*, not nations. This language, while deeply rooted in states overeignty, provides the foundation for self-determination as a peoples' right.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)demonstrates that the economic self-determination has lifeoutside of secessionary self-determination. Without specifically articulating a right to self-determination, the UDHR establishes both economic and internal self-determination ascorners tones of human rights realization. Article 22 states that "everyone, as a member of society . . . is entitled to realization. . . in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality. In the early 1950s, the General Assembly started to explore more specific concept of economic self-determination that focused on peoples' sovereignty over their own resources in the context of anti-colonialism and global stability. One resolution, written in 1952, delineates economic

self-determinationby balancing the rights of developing countries againstmacro-economic stability, both in the developing countries'economies and in the global economy. The methods suggestedfor helping realize economic self-determination arenarrowly constrained within the framework of foreign investmentused during that period. A second resolution from 1952 demonstrates a common sense among member statesthat economic development was directly linked to stability indeveloping countries. This resolution acknowledges the right to economic self-determination and suggests it is a way toachieve stability. Ten years later, that connection was explicitly spelled out: "Violations of the right of peoples and nations to sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources is contrary to the spirit and principles of the Charter of the UnitedNations and hinders the development of international cooperationand the maintenance of peace." Always mindful ofmaintaining economic order, the Assembly argued that the best way for states to preserve peaceful conditions while exercising economic self-determination was to "maintain the flow capital" and engage in "economic co-operation among nations."

As articulations of economic self-determination gatheredmomentum in the late 1950s, the General Assembly expressed desire to define the right more clearly. By this point, draftsof the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights andthe International Covenant on Economic, Social, and CulturalRights ("Covenants") had been completed. They includedlanguage on peoples' "permanent sovereignty over their naturalwealth and resources" as a "basic constituent" of the rightto self-determination. The General Assembly established acommission to determine "the actual extent and character of this sovereignty," and to provide recommendations for strengthening the right where necessary.

The first major legal documents to feature self-determination prominently were the International Covenant on Civiland Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. The Covenants, whichwere adopted and opened for signature in 1966, provide the framework for a rights-based approach to collectively-held wealth, by establishing economic self-determination as a specificand distinct right. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights ("Banjul Charter"), the regional human rights treaty adopted by the Organization of African Unity in 1981, does even more to define the right to economic self-determination as a powerful advocacy tool. All three instruments

promulgate a strong version of economic self-determination that emphasizes peoples' ability to dispose freely of their ownresources³.

THE CHARTER OF ECONOMIC RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF STATES

The decision to draw up a charter of economic rightsand duties of States was taken by the United Nations Conferenceon Trade and Development in its resolution 45 (III)of 18 May 1972. The preamble to this resolution states, *interalia*, that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the InternationalCovenants on Human Rights make the full exercise of those rightsdependent on the principle of self-determination of peoples and ofthe free-disposition of their wealth and natural resources.

The Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly inresolution 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, contains important provisions which are of particular significance for the development of the right to self-determination. The Charter includes equal rights and self-determination of peoples among the "fundamentals of international economic relations". The others are: sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States; sovereign equality of all States; non-aggression; non-intervention; mutual and equitable benefit; peaceful coexistence; peaceful settlement of disputes; remedying of injustices which have been brought about by force and which deprive a nation of the natural means necessary for its normal development; fulfilment ingood faith of international obligations; respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; no attempt to seek hegemony and spheres of influence; promotion of international social justice; international co-operation for development; and free access to and from the sea by land-locked countries within the framework of the above principles.

In Article 1, the Charter of Economic Rights andDuties of States proclaims the sovereign and inalienableright of every State to choose its economic system as well as its political, social and cultural systems in accordance withthe will of its people, without outside interference, coercionor threat in any form whatsoever. In article 2, it recognizes that every State has and shall freely exercise full permanentsovereignty, including possession, use and disposal, over allits wealth, natural resources and economic activities; andthat each State has the right to regulate foreign investmentwithin its national jurisdiction, to regulate and supervise theactivities of transnational corporations, and to nationalize, expropriate or transfer ownership of foreign property. At thesame time, in article 32, the Charter provides that no Statemay use or encourage the use of economic, political or any

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³Towards a meaningful rebirth of economicself-determination: human rightsrealization in resource-rich countries-alice farmer

other type of measures to coerce another State in order toobtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereignrights. In article 4, the Charter recognizes the right of every State to engage in international trade and other forms of economic co-operation irrespective of any differences inpolitical, economic and social systems and declares that noState shall be subjected to discrimination of any kind basedsolely on such differences. In article 7, it also recognizes thatevery State has the primary responsibility to promote theeconomic, social and cultural development of its people andthat, to this end, each State has the right and the responsibility to choose its means and goals of development, fully tomobilize and use its resources, to implement progressiveeconomic and social reforms and to ensure the full participation of its people in the process and benefits of development; all States have the duty, individually and collectively,to co-operate in eliminating obstacles that hinder such mobilization and use. In article 9, it recognizes that all Stateshave the responsibility to cooperate in the economic, social, cultural; scientific and technological fields for the promotion of economic and social progress throughout the world, especiallythat of the developing countries. In article 17, the Charter states that international co-operation for development is the shared goal and common duty of all States andthat every State should co-operate with the efforts of developing countries to accelerate their economic and social development by providing favourable external conditions and by extending active assistance to them, consistent with their development needs and objectives, with strict respectfor the sovereign equality of States and free of any conditions derogating from their sovereignty. In article 24, the Charterprovides that all States have the duty to conduct theirmutual economic relations in a manner which takes into account the interests of other countries and that, in particular, all States should avoid prejudicing the interests ofdeveloping countries. In article 14, it declares that all Statesshould co-operate, inter alia, towards the progressive dismantling of obstacles to trade and the improvement of theinternational framework for the conduct of world trade andthat, to these ends, co-ordinated efforts shall be made tosolve in an equitable way the trade problems of all countries, taking into account the specific trade problems of the developing countries. In article 31, the Charter proclaims the duty of States- to contribute to the balanced expansion of theworld economy. In article 13, it recognizes that every State has the right to benefit from the advances and developments in science and technology for the acceleration of its economicand development social and that, accordingly, developed countries should co-operate with the developing countries in the establishment, strengthening and development of their scientific and technological infrastructures and their scientificresearch and technological activities so as to help toexpand and transform the economies of developing countries.

<u>Time for a Re-Birth: Emerging Approaches to Self-Determination in the</u> Post-Cold War Era

The conceptual framework of self-determination thatdominated the practical application of the principle duringthe decades following World War II left unanswered many breaches of economic self-determination in sub-Saharan Africa. Claims for internal and economic self-determination canbe (and have been) made across the continent, and these claims are supported by the legal definitions of self-determination that emerged from the Covenants and the Banjul Charter.

It is time for a new era of self-determination: one that recognizes forms of self-determination which do not necessarilychallenge territorial integrity, and upholds economic self-determinationas a fundamental tool for human rights advocacy. According to MarttiKoskenniemi, present-day law on self-determinationshould fundamentally encompass some notion ofdemocratic participation. Forms of self-determination that do not threaten territorial integrity—including economic selfdeterminationnurture democratic principles while providing the requisite resources to redress economic and social rights violations.

The developing support for internal self-determination provides an excellent foundation for the rebirth of economicself-determination. Internal self-determination the right toparticipate in representative government and to determine the social, economic, and cultural policies of the statediminishes the threat of minority secession by focusing on the importance of democratic participation. Scholars have already begun to recognize non-colonial peoples as legitimate holders of claims for internal self-determination. This awareness that self-determination can apply beyond secession bodes wellfor a greater acceptance of economic self-determination in today's human rights discourse.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER

At its sixth special session, the General Assemblyadopted the "Declaration on the Establishment of a NewInternational Economic Order" (resolution 3201 (S-VI) of 1May 1974), which contains affirmations and principles of great importance for the present study. For instance, the Declaration states that the greatest and most significant achievement during the last decades has been the independence from colonial and alien domination of a large

number of peoples and nations, but that the remaining vestiges of alien and colonial domination, foreign occupation, racial discrimination, *apartheid* and neo-colonialism in all its forms continue to be among the greatest obstacles to the fullemancipation and progress of the developing countries and all the people involved.

The Enduring Competition Between People and States for Control over Natural Resources

Economic self-determination, much like internal self-determination, has at its core a power struggle between peoplesand states. Since self-determination became an articulated legalconcept, states and peoples have gradually become competitors for the resources of the territory. Oloka-Onyangoargues, "states in modern times serve less to facilitate the dynamic of self-determination than they serve to impede it."

With the rise of internal self-determination, commentatorshave become more aware of the relationship between governments and peoples when considering self-determination claims. Economic self-determination in Equatorial Guineaamounts to a struggle between the people and the Obiang government. Realization of economic self-determination can help stabilize the country and prevent claims for secessionary self-determination.

Our post-colonial concept of economic self-determinationmust recognize and empower peoples as rights holders. The deep connection between internal self-determination and economicself-determination is void if states hold the right to economicself-determination. Peoples, as rights holders, can use their ability to participate in the political process to "freely dispose" of their resources. In addition, enshrining people as rights holders of economic self-determination is the only wayto ensure that they are the primary beneficiaries of their resources. There is much dispute in the literature as to what constitutes

a "people" for the purposes of self-determination, butthat is not the subject of this Note.In even the most conservative reading of this debate, the Equatoguineans constitutea "people." The Declaration on Friendly Relations of 1970 emphasized that the concept applies to all peoples, not just to colonially-oppressed peoples.

Article 1 of the Conventionsapplies at minimum to peoples organized as states. Economic Self-Determination and Democratization much of the political support for secessionary self-determinationhas morphed into support for democratization in the post-Cold War era. Economic self-determination supports the modern movement for democratization defined asparticipation in electoral systems as well as the development of

broader liberal democratic institutions such as the rule of law,constitutionalism, and equality before the law. Democratizationand economic self-determination are interlinked on two levels: Not only is democratic participation an inherent part of the "free disposition" standard in the exercise of economicself-determination, but economic self-determination can also provide the necessary resources for universal education that increases and deepens democratic participation.

Emerging support for democratization, motivated in partby the fear of further fragmentation of states, can be seen as replacement for secessionary self-determination. Meanwhile, there has been increasing acceptance of the idea that preventing human rights violations justifies interference in another state's affairs. Together, these two concepts demonstrate a commitment to promoting democratic pluralism and human rights through internal self-determination. Economic self-determination has a symbiotic relationship with democratization, by enhancing economic and social rights to enable people to participate in democratic processes, and by granting people the resources with which to implement their democratically-taken decisions. Conceptually, the rebirth of economic self-determination feeds naturally into the liberal goals that predominate in today's international order.

Economic self-determination comports with principles of liberalism by giving substance to democratization. The Covenantsemphasize that "all peoples have the right of self-determination";economic self-determination has a fundamentallyongoing nature.Democratization does not necessarily replacepolitical self-determination; rather, it provides the foundation for effective realization of the principle of self-determination. Political empowerment without economic contentis an unbalanced system of democracy. Alston argues that the decline in prominence of self-determination during the post-Cold War era has led to the concept being "all but supersededby the discourse of civil and political rights." But selfdeterminationis more than just its civil and political dimensions; self-determination as detailed in the Covenants also encompasseseconomic aspects. Democratization has replaced the political aspects of self-determination; now is the time tocomplement that movement by resurrecting the economic aspects.

Economic self-determination, as an integral part of an effectivedemocracy, can help mineral-rich countries avoid rentseekingcycles and promote good governance. Karl argues that oil exploitation in the developing world is often accompanied by the destructive cycle of rent-seeking, state disorganization, and regime decay. Norwaya robust democracy with a good degree of wealth distribution one of the few exceptions to this pattern. Karl identifies various factors that would help offset or reverse this cycleincluding diversified tax structures,

professionalized civil services, and more representative and equitable institution all of which could be bolstered through economic self-determination. Economic self-determination cannot solve the massive governance problems associated with oil discovery. But it can provide valuable support for democracy-building efforts that can stabilize the country.

Effective realization of economic self-determination helpsincrease female participation in democracy; Women are disproportionatelyimpacted by violations of economic self-determination, because they are hit worse by ongoing poverty. Natural resource exploitation exacerbates this impact. For instance, the destruction of the natural environment can causedislocation and disruption of subsistence agriculture for manywomen. Furthermore, women are frequently unable to participate in the job opportunities created by new exploitation of natural resources, and so are more vulnerable to the povertycreated by the changing economy. The participation of women and girls is key to full democratization: they can bolstereconomic development, civil society, and good governance.

Realizing economic self-determination helps women participatein democratization. And yet, self-determination in theera of decolonization marginalized women's concerns by placinggreat emphasis on a state-centred application of the doctrine. That imbalance can now be redressed through therebirth of economic self-determination in a manner that stresses the importance of women's participation in the democratic process. Women's ability "to exercise rights of self-determinationin a political sense is inextricably connected to economic and cultural integration." Using economic self-determination when advocating for women's rights is a way topromote democracy; Economic self-determination is therefore a natural ally of the emerging trend for democratization. It calls for a more democratic decision-making process on the use and distribution of natural resources. Economic self-determination givespeoples the resources to make democratization a reality.

CONCLUSION

Certain United Nations instruments dealing with the principles governing international trade relations and tradepolicies conducive to development, with the establishmentof a new international economic order and with the economic rights and duties of States are of special importance asregards the creation of conditions that assist peoples in thepursuit of their economic development as a fundamental element of the right to self-determination. Economic self-determination gives peoples the ability to take control over their mineral resources and use those resources for their own ends. It is a fundamental norm on which broader rights realization is based. For decades, however, this fundamental peoples' right has been overshadowed by other forms of self-determination. Three of the key human rights treaties written after World War II—the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights-articulate in no uncertain terms peoples' right to economic selfdetermination Economic self-determination—a people's capacity to dispose freely of natural resources in accordance with democratically- taken decisions—has fallen out of favor in the post-Cold War era⁴. And yet, it is deeply relevant to human rights realization in resource-rich developing countries today.

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⁴See J. Oloka-Onyango, Heretical Reflections on the Right to Self-Determination:Prospects and Problems for a Democratic Global Future in the New Millennium, 15 AM. U. INT'L L. REV. 151, 169-73 (1999) (arguing that economic self-determination was seen as a "socialist" form of self-determination and as such fell in popularity after the perceived socialist loss at the end of the Cold War); see also Philip Alston, Peoples' Rights: Their Rise and Fall, in PEOPLES' RIGHTS 259, 270-71 (Philip Alston ed., 2001) (arguing that self-determination has declined considerably in the post-Cold War era); MICHAEL IGNATIEFF, BLOOD AND BELONGING: JOURNEYS INTO THE NEW NATIONALISM 12-13 (1995) (arguing that the Cold War regulated the proliferation of nationstates, just as other systems of superpowers had in previous eras).

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