Canadian Stephen Lewis has been with the United Nations for many years. He is a UN enthusiast and loves his work, but he also loves Africa and in this book he has taken up the cudgels on behalf of the people of Africa who have been let down by many of the UN’s actions – or lack thereof.

This is a passionate and personal book. Lewis thinks, with evident justification, that he knows what can be done to help Africa beat the AIDS pandemic, and he pleads his cause in strong, colloquial language which moves beyond polished rhetoric on the one hand and internationalist jargon on the other. ‘I’m weary beyond the definition of weariness at the way in which the G8 plays with figures,’ he writes. His rage at the sophistry of bureaucrats in the developed world in the face of the unnecessary deaths of millions annually, the outrageous conditions put on foreign aid, and the self-congratulation over insignificant gestures like cancelling a fraction of Africa’s debt, is salutary and invigorating. This is a harrowing and important book from one who knows what he’s talking about from the inside and knows how to convey his message in the strongest terms.