

**AFRICA**

vol 23 • no 1 • 1993

ISSN 0256-2804

Reg. No. 61/00002/08

# INSIGHT

an independent publication which promotes insight into the process of change in Africa. R15.00 (VAT included)



Reproduced by Sabinet Gateway under licence granted by the Publisher (dated 2010)

ISSN 0256 2804

**Africa Insight** is published quarterly by the Africa Institute of South Africa, an independent study centre concerned with African affairs.

The Institute does not necessarily subscribe to the opinions of contributors.

© Copyright reserved.

Contributions and subscriptions should be sent to:

The Editor

PO Box 630

Pretoria, Republic of South Africa

0001

Telephone: (012) 28-6970

Telefax: (012) 323-8153

For information about the Institute, membership and subscription rates see inside back cover.

### **Council**

Prof P Smit (Chairman), Prof P A Nel (Vice-Chairman), Prof C J A Barratt, Prof W J Breytenbach, Prof C R M Dlamini, Prof W M Freund, Prof J A Heyns, Ms R Kadalie, Prof T Lodge, Sir Richard Luyt, Prof G Maasdorp, Prof E T Mokgokong, Mr E Osborn, Mr D B Sole, Ms N C Tisani, Prof P C J Vale, Prof H J van Aswegen.

**Executive Director**  
**Director of Publications**

Dr Stef Coetzee  
Pieter Esterhuysen

**Editor, Africa Insight**  
Madeline Lass

### **Editorial Advisory Panel**

Dr André du Pisani, Dr Denis Fair, Prof Richard Haines, Frieda Harmsen, Dr Erich Leistner.

### **Editorial Committee**

Dr Simon Baynham, Richard Cornwell, Pieter Esterhuysen, Madeline Lass.

Cover by William Steyn

Graphic arts by AI Graphics cc, Pretoria

Printed by Color Press (Pty) Ltd, Johannesburg



**INSIGHT**

an independent publication which promotes insight into the process of change in Africa

**Comment**South Africa within Africa: Towards a framework for mutually beneficial relations — *Stef Coetzee* 2**Horn of Africa issues**A new map of Africa? Reflections on the Horn — *Peter Woodward* 6Somalia: "Operation Restore Hope" — *Simon Baynham* 17**West African politics**Nigeria's elusive search for nationhood — *Charles Owusu Kwarteng* 24Ecowas: Peace-making or meddling in Liberia? — *Earl Conteh-Morgan* 36**South African issues**Afrocentricity: Implications for South Africa? — *Roger Gocking* 42Industrial subcontracting and home-work in South Africa: Policy issues from the international experience — *C M Rogerson* 47**Agriculture**Aid to African agriculture: Lessons from two decades of donors' experience — *Denis Fair* 55

Reproduced by Sabinet Gateway under licence granted by the Publisher (dated 2010)

# South Africa within Africa: Towards a framework for mutually beneficial relations

*Stef Coetzee*

South Africa's transition to political democracy has been a coveted goal among the disenfranchised of the country and the African community for many decades. The process that was commenced in South Africa on 2 February 1990 has therefore been widely hailed as momentous and courageous.

The above transition is coinciding with a similar transition in the rest of Africa. The past three years have also witnessed a great deal of change in Africa and at present only a few African countries are not engaged in opening up their political and economic systems to democracy and market-oriented policies. During the past three years 25 of the 52 independent and internationally recognized African countries have conducted multiparty elections.

The above events have raised the hopes of millions on the continent, particularly with regard to the possibilities of human and economic freedom and personal betterment. It has also raised the hopes of many African countries as to what a postapartheid South Africa might be able to contribute to the development of the rest of the continent. Some countries are concerned that South Africa could reap most of the benefits of expanded trade with Africa and thereby aggravate the deindustrialization of the continent.

The past few years in Africa have shown that the road to political democracy has been as rich in promise as in uncertainty and instability. The relationship between democracy and development is also not as unidirectional as many analysts have made it out to be. Closer inspection has shown that this relationship is far more complex and varied. However, it is difficult to establish a durable connection between authoritarian rule and economic and social development. Developing countries will therefore find it very difficult to shrug off the megatrends regarding democracy and the market economy, especially since they are made conditional to the loans and aid of donor countries of the North and aid agencies.

Future relations between South Africa and the rest of Africa will be shaped by the above global developments and by Africa's and South Africa's political, economic, social and developmental problems.

## **The effect of global developments**

Africa's position in the new world order has become precarious. The world is more united by some problems (eg the new regional trading blocs) and divided by others (eg the emergence of fourth and fifth worlds). New forms of domination include control of the media and technologies, as well as the rise of US military power.<sup>1</sup> More intervention by the UN and USA could be expected in Africa, as is borne out by the Somalian example, and the dangers of new forms of colonization, à la Johnson, are looming large. This may pose a threat to the nation state in Africa. The nation state is also under threat following the differences in imperatives of national politics and those of global economics.

The globalization of the world economy and financial markets, which is mainly taking place within the "fast track" OECD countries, limits the access of the developing countries to financial markets and they will find it increasingly difficult to mobilize and attract resources.<sup>2</sup> The flow of financial resources from the developed North will continue to favour the former Eastern bloc countries while investments will seek the most profitable outlets in the world. The reduced flow of resources to Africa, which is already discernible, is therefore also likely to continue.

While the fast track countries will benefit from economic and financial globalization, the slow track countries will reap most of the negative effects thereof, such as international debt and the movement of international prices. In addition, the reports of the UNDP on human development<sup>3</sup> have also shown that vast income and socioeconomic

disparities continue to exist between different regions of the world and within countries. Africa is the only continent where poverty will be on the increase during the 1990s. The poverty and socioeconomic problems of South Africa will in turn have a direct bearing on the country's contribution to development of the rest of the continent.

### The transition in South Africa

South Africa's future role in Africa will firstly depend on whether the key actors involved in the process of negotiations will be able to reach a compromise and a sense of accommodation among the parties vying for power and resources. If sufficient political consensus is not reached, it may very well lead to new forms of autocracy and repression.

The outcome of the political negotiations will also determine the nature of the transition – whether it will be stable or unstable. Here some daunting issues will have to be resolved, such as the integration of the armed forces (Defence Force, MK and Inkatha, etc) and reform of the bureaucracy to promote equality of opportunity and affirmative action. However, a new government will have to rely, for some time to come, on the same bureaucrats who served the apartheid state for many decades.

Considerable pressure will also come to bear on a new government to address the poverty, unemployment and socioeconomic problems of a large section of the population. Given the economic decline of the past two decades in South Africa, this will be a Herculean task and policy-makers may succumb to the pressures to address short-term priorities instead of adopting a long-term policy framework. In fact, a complicated balancing act will be required between promoting economic growth and social development, inward and outward-looking policies, urban and rural development, and between centralization and decentralization. Whereas the transition to full political democracy may take between seven to ten years in South Africa, the socioeconomic and institutional transition may take some 15 to 20 years and beyond.

A number of structural economic factors may complicate the task at hand. These include the low savings and investment ratios of the South African economy; the already high level of government expenditure; dependence on external finance for development within the constraints posed by the ability to service debt; the relatively high rate of inflation which impacts very directly on South Africa's competitiveness internationally; the capital intensity of the South African economy; and the oversupply of unskilled labour.<sup>4</sup>

South Africa's response to the above challenge will be based on:

- a diversified economy with the strongest industrial and resource base in Africa;
- well-developed physical and financial infrastructures;
- a skills base supportive of long-term development, the apparent shortages notwithstanding;
- management and technological capacities;

- well-developed research centres and scientific advances in various fields; and
- the capacity to generate electricity for own use and export to other countries.

### Africa's development crisis

Future relations between Africa and South Africa will to a large extent be determined by Africa's development problems and other woes. Africa displays all the pervasive development problems of the developing world: wars, famines, high population growth, dependency on external markets, soaring debt, insufficient economic and industrial diversification, slow progress with science and technology, the systemic collapse of state structures, crisis of Africa's political class, sub-nationalism and the rise of ethnic passions and religious fundamentalism.

In many countries poverty has worsened since independence. Cutbacks in social expenditure, mainly owing to structural adjustment policies, have been undercutting the progress in social development since the 1960s. The droughts, famines, decline in food production and the wars in many parts of Africa have been particularly damaging to development efforts on the continent.

Given Africa's development, poverty and socioeconomic problems and the reduced inflow of international funding, there is an intense debate about whether Africa has indeed become marginalized, delinked or is simply being forgotten. No final conclusion has been reached, though there can be little doubt that Africa's position in the world has weakened considerably and that very little attention is afforded the continent. This is borne out by the recent proceedings at the World Economic Forum.

Before a framework for development co-operation between South Africa and the rest of Africa is considered, cognizance should be taken of the past forms of co-operation between South Africa and Africa.

### Co-operation between South Africa and Africa in the past

Despite the restrictions resulting from past political policies, a great deal of co-operation existed between South Africa and its neighbours when the process of negotiations commenced on 2 February 1990. These include bilateral, multi-lateral, sectoral and technical forms of co-operation. Co-operation with and assistance to Africa therefore span a wide field inclusive of agriculture, water, infrastructure, linkages, trade, medical treatment, conservation, etc. However, South Africa was excluded from the Organization of African Unity, the Southern African Development Community, the Preferential Trade Agreement, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank.

Since 1990 interaction between South Africa and the rest of Africa increased even further. South Africa has ambassadorial and diplomatic relations with four African countries and trade missions with at least 17 others. Numerous

contacts and working arrangements have also been established in the commercial, scientific, technological, social sciences, medical and environmental fields.

Trade with Africa increased from R9 billion to R15 billion between 1989 and 1991, and has probably increased even further since then. Imports from the rest of Africa were only some R1 billion in 1991. Outside the Customs Union countries, South Africa's biggest trading partners are Zimbabwe, Zambia, Zaire, Mozambique and Malawi. Although trade with the rest of the continent was only 10,0 per cent of South Africa's total trade, South Africa had established trade relations with 48 African countries by 1991.

### Towards a framework for mutually beneficial relations

A good starting point for establishing mutually beneficial relations between South Africa and Africa could be to identify the pursuance of common objectives such as:

- democracy, human freedom and a culture of basic human rights;
- an attack on poverty;
- higher and sustained economic growth (without which a successful transition to democracy seems to be unattainable);
- the promotion of environmentally sound policies and sustainable development;
- attainment of the above within a framework of human development (ie improving human capabilities, the range of choices for people and peoples' participation in development).

The above objectives suggest the acceptance of a broad framework for development within which mutually beneficial relations could be pursued. This will allow for a broad range of areas in which such relations could be forged:

- *Politically.* Apart from the expansion of diplomatic relations with other African countries that is very likely to continue rapidly once an interim government is in place in South Africa, South Africa could also become a member of the OAU and participate in its proceedings, deliberations and possible reconstruction to play a far more important role in regional peace initiatives, environmental issues and development.
- *Economically.* Trade relations will continue to expand and an interim/new government in South Africa could establish relations with Africa and countries of the South, in addition to its traditional trading partners in the EEC and elsewhere. Exports to Africa could be based on the principle of comparative advantage, with South Africa exporting those goods which are not produced elsewhere in Africa and therefore imported at a considerable cost, such as machinery, mining equipment, motor spares, chemicals, etc. Although the trade balance will continue

to favour South Africa, African countries will at least have the advantage of cheaper imports.

- *Financially.* Although postapartheid South Africa may not keep the attention of the international community for a long period of time, a number of factors are in its favour. The inherent potential of the country will remain of interest to potential investors, while its developed financial infrastructure could serve as a conduit for mobilizing capital for economic development. Moreover, the "peace dividend" could also secure support for development initiatives in South and Southern Africa.
- *Socially.* South Africa could add muscle to attempts at improving human development in Africa. Although the country has vast backlogs to address, capacity at the tertiary level is still underutilized, while South African research institutions could also play a very important role. Considerable cost savings can be effected if students from Africa elect to study in South Africa instead of the USA or Europe.
- *Regional integration.* Much hope is pinned in Southern Africa on the contribution of postapartheid South Africa to the economic development of the region. The region still has unlocked potential and the added muscle of South Africa could give momentum to the development effort in the sub-continent. However, a number of factors militate against the conventional forms of economic integration – the dominant economic position of South Africa, the real and potential instability in some countries and the destruction brought about by civil wars. Also, the magnitude of poverty and inequality is such that economic integration may not change the lives of ordinary people in situations of extreme poverty.
 

It is not as yet clear whether South Africa will elect to join SADC in future. SACU has fared relatively well and could be a good starting point for evolving a strategy for the future. Here Maasdorp's<sup>5</sup> suggestion of developing a Southern African Common Market (with South Africa and Lesotho at the core), a middle layer consisting of the present SACU countries, and an outer layer consisting of an association leading to free trade and later a merger between the present SACU and other groupings, seems to be the best proposition for preparing the groundwork for regional economic integration in future. In addition, a broader framework of development co-operation will be necessary to address the historical imbalances, which may in turn call for a development programme and the establishment of a development fund/bank for Southern Africa.
- *A regional development programme for Southern Africa.* To give effect to the objectives as stated above, a programme of action for Southern Africa will be required. A strong case could be presented in support of a development programme to rebuild and revitalize the economies of the region, to invest in human development and to strengthen the infrastructure of the sub-continent, and

especially of the war-torn countries of the region. The added capacity of South Africa, its own development problems notwithstanding, could make a crucial contribution in this regard. Such a development programme could include a development strategy for the region and strategies for the individual countries with clear objectives to promote economic growth, human development, policies to combat poverty and unemployment, sustainable development and the strengthening of infrastructural linkages. This would also allow for the international community and aid and development agencies to contribute to the development of the region within a sound framework for regional development.

## References

- 1 Samir Amin, "Africa in the post-Cold War era", Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa, paper delivered, 1992.
- 2 Stéf Coetzee, Towards an anti-poverty strategy for South Africa, in Pierre Hugo, *Redistribution and affirmative action. Working on the political economy of South Africa*. Midrand: Southern Publishers, 1992.
- 3 Louis Emmerij, "Development and democracy in sub-Saharan Africa" paper delivered at conference on *Development and democracy in sub-Saharan Africa*, Johannesburg: Balalaika Hotel, 14 October 1992.
- 4 Gavin Maasdorp, *Economic cooperation in Southern Africa: Prospects for regional integration*, UK: Research Institute for the study of conflict and terrorism, 1992.

# A new map of Africa? Reflections on the Horn

*Peter Woodward, of the Department of Politics at the University of Reading, considers developments in the Horn that may lead to some major re-drawing of the map.*

It seems as appropriate to publish an article on the Horn of Africa in South Africa as anywhere else in the world, outside the Horn itself. There are two regions that have endured longlasting and widespread violence in sub-Saharan Africa, the Horn and Southern Africa. There has been conflict elsewhere, but it has been more contained or less sustained, or both. In West Africa there has been dreadful conflict in recent years in Liberia, earlier in Biafra, and for a longer time, if often with less intense activity, in the Western Sahara. But for the most part none of these conflicts has been a facet of a wider regional scene directly or indirectly linking the conflicts (in the Western Sahara there were elements of regional rivalry, but not other linked wars).

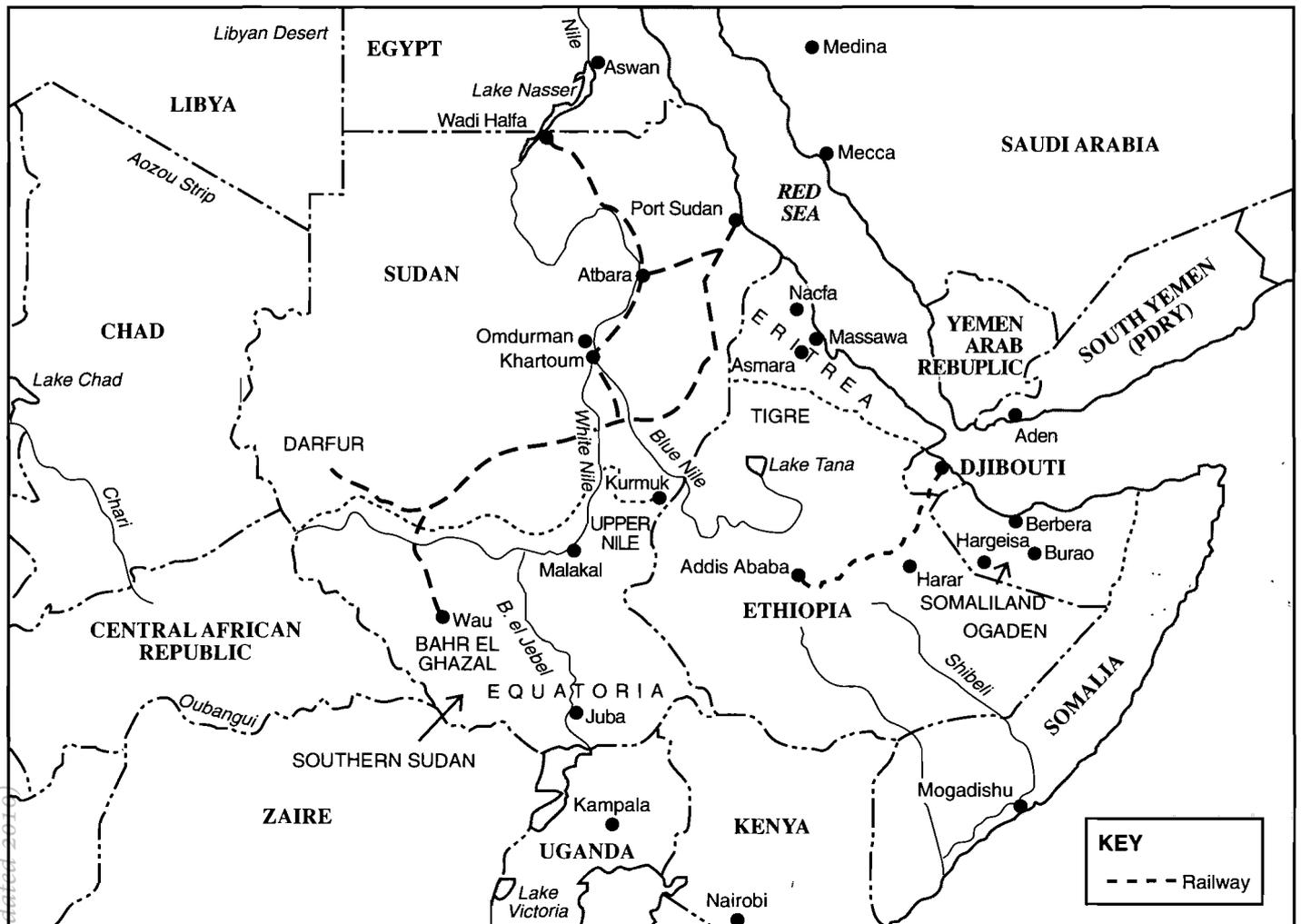
In contrast, in Southern Africa and the Horn wars have involved linkage. Though there were domestic roots of conflict amongst the states involved in both regions, there were also significant regional and great power actors fuelling the wars. In Southern Africa the struggle to attack and defend apartheid provided a dimension to the conflict that indirectly, if not directly, was felt from Cape Town to Dar-es-Salaam. In the Horn, the regional actors in this strategically important fringe of Middle East politics have included various countries from Iran in the east to Libya in the west, and from Syria in the north to Kenya in the south. (The two areas of regional conflict have thus abutted on the Kenya-Tanzanian border.) As for the superpowers, in the age of the Second Cold War these two regions of Africa, together with Afghanistan, were significant areas of rivalry, albeit through various forms of indirect involvement, with Cubans appearing in Angola and Ethiopia being the highest profile manifestation of the superpowers' direct contribution.

It has been the existence of linkage that has developed the concept of the Horn. It consists not of an awareness on the ground – fighters in the areas to be discussed, Eritrea, Somaliland and Southern Sudan, would probably have little recognition of it, their points of reference being a complex mix of ethnic, cultural, religious as well as political identity – but it has emerged as a national, regional and international

concept, in that order. The concept of the Horn politically was born in irredentism as a reference to Somalia's claims after independence in 1960 to territories in neighbouring states that were occupied by Somalis. It developed to include the regional issues that grew in Ethiopia, especially in Eritrea in the 1960s. And it expanded to include discussion of Sudan as rivalry between the superpowers, various involvement by regional actors, and the linkage of successive Ethiopian governments into events in Somalia and Sudan, together with the latter states' connection with conflict in Ethiopia, all developed. Thus by the end of the 1980s the question of the Horn embraced political, social and economic issues from Somalia to Sudan.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the domestic and international factors interconnectedly affecting the Horn and Southern Africa, both have at different times raised questions about the borders of Africa. In South Africa (and of course outside the OAU and its old shibboleth of maintaining Africa's borders) apartheid involved an attempt to change borders through the "independence" of selected homelands, although predictably this never brought international recognition. South Africa's future, too, might include some other territorial re-arrangement: a 1992 newspaper report was headlined "Natal could opt to secede".<sup>2</sup>

In the Horn developments could lead to some major re-drawing of the map to include at least one and perhaps as many as three new states. That possibility is due in part to international as well as domestic factors; and its achievement or prevention will also be influenced by, though not necessarily depend on the behaviour of, various international actors. Whatever the outcome in terms of future status, there is little doubt that the political systems of the countries involved will undergo important changes; for it has been the processes of transformation that have raised the question of future frontiers, and even if only one or no new states emerge, the political systems of the Horn are too far gone to be reversed. (An argument which I suspect is true for South Africa as well.)



## Ethiopia

The most obvious starting point for querying the map of the Horn lies in the area still juridically regarded as Ethiopia, but empirically already the most advanced towards independence, Eritrea. Eritrea was founded as an Italian colony in 1889, but subsequent Italian efforts to penetrate Ethiopia failed, most spectacularly at the Battle of Adowa in 1896, and Eritrea alone remained. Under Mussolini Italy did conquer Ethiopia eventually, in 1936, but the conquest lasted only until World War II when British forces drove Italy out and restored Haile Selassie as emperor once more. Britain remained as the administering power in Eritrea after the war, but now on behalf of the United Nations, until a permanent solution for its future was evolved. In 1952 the United Nations decided to accept the vote of the Eritrea parliament that the former colony should join Ethiopia on a federal basis. The parliament was under heavy pressure, especially from the United States that wanted to establish an important link in her global military communications network called Kagnew, near Eritrea's capital of Asmara. (The US was also

very close to Ethiopia at that time and the base was named after an Ethiopian unit that had fought in the Korean war.)

However, federation soon amounted to Ethiopian domination, and by 1961 Haile Selassie unilaterally ended it, making Eritrea simply another province of Ethiopia. Opposition soon began to grow in Eritrea at first led by the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), which had its main support in the arid north-west of Eritrea, a predominantly Muslim area. However, by 1971 a rival movement had developed, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF). With support from the Christian-occupied highland area of the south, the EPLF was seen as a radical Marxist force, fighting for full independence, and it proved a more highly organized group. The two fronts were rivals, and in the early 1970s had violent clashes before the EPLF emerged as much the stronger of the two.

The level of conflict in Eritrea escalated sharply, especially with the revolution in Ethiopia in 1974. The fall of Emperor Haile Selassie and the eventual emergence of a revolutionary Marxist state under Mengistu Haile Mariam did not, as some had hoped, lead to reconciliation with the EPLF, but

a worsening war. The turmoil of the revolution allowed the EPLF to make major advances, but following Ethiopia's victory over Somalia in the war of 1972 and with massive Soviet military support, the Eritreans were pushed back in the early 1980s. However, from the middle of the decade the EPLF advanced once more, now helped by the victories of a new guerrilla army it had helped to form, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), in the Ethiopian province immediately to the south of Eritrea. As the TPLF made progress it was joined by other groups in what became the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF); and meanwhile the Ethiopian army was weakened by the loss of Soviet support in the Gorbachev era. In the end Mengistu's regime collapsed with surprising speed early in 1991: the Eritrea conflict, the longest guerrilla war in Africa, was over, leaving the EPLF in power in Asmara and the EPRDF ruling through a transitional government in Addis Ababa.

Within this brief outline lie the arguments of the major Eritrean force, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF). Juridically it was claimed that Eritrea had been wrongly incorporated into a federation in 1952. As a completely separate territory and legal entity, the claim was, the UN should have held a referendum rather than leaving the decision to the vote of an allegedly rigged parliament. Eritrea was thus a special case juridically and deserved to be viewed differently to other claims for secession from peoples clearly inside Ethiopia (or other neighbouring states). Arising from this view the EPLF has long emphasized the need for a referendum, which, it was agreed with the victorious Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), would take place two years after the latter's assumption of power in Addis Ababa, ie in 1993. (The EPLF is also keen for UN supervision and cites the latter's willingness to be involved in the Western Sahara.)

The juridical argument underpins a powerful political case. It was the EPLF that spawned the Tigrean Liberation People's Front (TPLF), and the TPLF which has been at the heart of the EPRDF. As such the EPLF has a considerable political claim on the EPRDF, which the latter has generally been willing to recognize.

This is partly due to the similarity of outlook of the two leaders, Issayas Aferworki in the EPLF and Meles Zenawi of the EPRDF. In addition, the EPLF has strong cards. Its army is at least as large, and probably the more potentially effective of the two; it holds the coastline, though allowing Ethiopia priority in Assab; and it faces less domestic political difficulties than the EPRDF.

At the same time the situation on the ground represents the consolidation in power in Asmara of the EPLF. The long struggle did appear to give the EPLF post-war legitimacy. It is difficult to be precise about the achievements of the EPLF, and some of those who were most enthusiastic about its revolutionary achievements have been accused of being Leninist-Fanonist "guerrilla groupies", nevertheless there does appear to be a *prime facie* case for regarding it as one of the most successful guerrilla movements in the world. It did after all take on and eventually play a major part in overcoming the

largest army in Africa, and one which was plentifully supplied with weapons, first by the USA and later by the USSR. Moreover, the EPLF did seem to display greater concern for organizing the rural communities of Eritrea than most other guerrilla armies in Africa. And even when victorious it did not proclaim the independence of Eritrea immediately but chose to seek to demonstrate the legitimacy of its goal by leaving it to a referendum of the people. It also declared that once that task was completed the EPLF would dissolve itself and call for free elections (while also announcing its reluctance to see the emergence of ethnically based parties competing for power in the new Eritrea).

Externally the EPLF is behaving as an independent state in all but name. The EPLF would take no part in the transitional government in Ethiopia; and it set up border posts, refusing entry to diplomats and journalists. However, it also proposes a mutual defence pact; joint committees on security and economic and social contacts; and the free movement of people and goods and services. Internationally it is not recognized, but NGOs and a number of Western governments are starting to provide aid. Little wonder that last summer the EPLF's leader, Issayas Aferworki, remarked that "as far as he was concerned, Eritrea was already independent".<sup>3</sup>

As for Ethiopia, that is at present under a transitional government led by Meles Zenawi of the EPRDF, and thus far willing to go along with the former mentors in Eritrea. But the question is nevertheless being raised in Ethiopia of where that leaves the rest of the country? There are those rather of the old imperial disposition who continue to regard Eritrea as an integral part of Ethiopia, and think that by permitting the present situation to develop towards the former's independence the present transitional government has already committed a grave error. There are others who are less willing to be critical of Eritrea, but ask where that leaves other communities in Ethiopia? It is an irony that resistance that began in Eritrea is thus contributing to what is essentially an issue of ethnicity in Ethiopia, for Eritrean nationalism was a product not of ethnicity but the "colonial" experience of the heterogeneous people of that region under Italian, British and Ethiopian rule. But the EPRDF was something of an umbrella over ethnically identified forces.

The Tigreans have already been mentioned and other "ethnic" groups include the Oromo, Afar and many more.<sup>4</sup> Indeed recent visitors to Addis Ababa have remarked upon the mosaic of ethnic parties springing up around the transitional government, several of them in the names of communities that were never heard of in terms of national political aspirations before 1991.

While not wishing to go deeply into the new regional boundaries that have been drawn up ahead of the constitutional conference that is scheduled for 1993, it has been suggested that it is not simply an "ethnic map" (not that such a map would be simple), but one which reflects the relative political strengths of various ethnic groups as a result of the war of liberation. It thus appears that what the Emperor Haile Selassie and his Marxist successor Mengistu Haile Mariam regarded as a multi-ethnic state has spawned a

successful multi-ethnic revolt; and one which now has a major problem containing the conflicting ethnic elements already displaying their relative power through the regional map, but which is likely to prove so contentious that it could itself provoke further claims either for secession like Eritrea (perhaps among the Afars of the east) or possibly further ethnic rivalry for power within the state.<sup>5</sup>

The Oromo have already spawned armed factions, and others are said to be appearing in the south and east. In the Ogaden the Somalis are speaking of secession, and similar rumblings have been reported elsewhere in the east with possible complex implications for Eritrea and Djibouti, of which more later.

The transitional government talks of eventual democracy and the constitutional conference is likely to point towards federalism based around "constructive" ethnicity, but hitherto the essence of the Ethiopian state has been the capacity of successive indigenous rulers to exercise power over its parts; not the constitutional relations between those parts (as Eritrea's experience testifies). It is this history that has made Ethiopia unique in Africa; and the notion of a democratic "ethnic" federation such a total transformation.

## Somalia

If Ethiopia was a state from which Eritrea at least had long pursued secession, Somalia appeared to be in the opposite situation. Instead of a part of its population seeking to escape from the Somali state, it was the Somali government which pursued irredentism, with apparent support from the Somali population. Claims included the Somali inhabited slices of neighbouring Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti, which Somalia claimed it had been cheated of by the colonial powers, both in their initial division of Africa, and the deals struck in the decolonizing phase.

The basis of this irredentism was that the Somalis were unique in the Horn, and unusual in Africa in appearing to be a culturally homogeneous nation extending beyond the colonially bequeathed borders. As the title of one book put it, the Somalis are "a nation in search of a state".<sup>6</sup> The Somalis are a Cushitic people who all trace their original descent from Samaale, the legendary founder of the nation. In addition to common descent the Somalis are all Muslims; they have a common language; and share a common cultural heritage, which includes a particular love of poetry.

Most of Somalia is relatively flat and barren and this for most Somalis, outside the more fertile south and the ancient coastal trading towns, has meant the evolution of a harsh pastoral migratory way of life. It has been centred on the camel, though other livestock is also herded, cattle, sheep and goats. The traditional routes of the pastoralists have shown little regard for contemporary international boundaries, and indeed the main seasonal migrations are on an east-west axis crossing the Ethiopian border in particular. The adaptation to the hard environment has contributed to the social evolution, so that while Somalis have an overall identity, day to day social life is deeply segmented. Among the pastoralists there are

are four main clan-families, the Darod, the Hawiye, the Isaaq and the Dir; while in the agricultural south there are the Digil and the Rahanwin. But the clan-families are also deeply segmented through descent into numerous clans and sub-clans. The complexity of clan relationships is such that they serve both to unite and divide. Unity is established against those perceived as common enemies, but fierce and if necessary violent rivalry may manifest itself within clans and sub-clans, right down to the level of the family. As a result, "pastoral clan organization is an unstable, fragile system, characterized at all levels by shifting allegiances. Power and politics are exercised through temporary coalitions and ephemeral alliances of lineages".<sup>7</sup>

While this may appear to be a recipe for anarchy, there is also some cohesion provided by *heer*, a form of social contract between families and clans. It is based on a mixture of Islamic law and traditional law and operates through *ad hoc* assemblies known as *shirs*. These are very open and egalitarian and have led to the comment that "all men are councillors, and all men politicians".<sup>8</sup> There may be local leaders – sultans or Islamic leaders – but they do not hold formally constituted offices: "this lack of stable and formally defined political offices thus seems consistent with the extreme fluidity of political groupings".<sup>9</sup>

Between "the nation in search of a state", and this picture of highly segmented politics lay the central problems of Somalia as an independent state. It was a problem recognized by Somalia's new rulers on independence from British rule in the north and Italian in the south in 1960. From 1960 to 1969 Somalia was outwardly one of Africa's longer lasting democracies. In an attempt to keep clan politics out of the arena of parliament, government spoke dismissively of "ex-clans", but the issue would not go away that easily. Although the constitutional provisions prohibited "single tribe" parties, scores of new parties were emerging to fragment the former power of the main nationalist party, the Somali Youth League. Moreover, the main agenda that had united Somali politics initially, steadily proved itself unsuccessful during the 1960s. This was Somalia's attempt to pursue its irredentist claims and re-claim the three of the five stars on the national flag that had not become a part of Somalia at independence – the Somali-inhabited areas of Djibouti (then the French territory of the Afars and Issas), eastern Ethiopia and northern Kenya. A combination of diplomatic and guerrilla pressures had been deployed, but Somalia's neighbours were unyielding, and the growing frustration within Somalia contributed to its political fragmentation. The assassination of the president in 1969 became the trigger for a bloodless coup by the army that installed Mohamed Siyad Barre in power.

Barre embarked on a programme of "scientific socialism" which was backed by the Soviet Union, keen to win a significant strategic ally and build a naval base at Berbera in the north, (but also according to Barre compatible with the country's Islamic tradition). As part of this process all reference to "clans" was banned from public life. With state intervention an ambitious development programme was

initiated; though it was set back by a major drought in the mid-1970s.

Initially Barre had reined in the Somali irredentist movement, but by the late 1970s pressure from it was growing once more. The Ethiopian revolution from 1974 made that state appear wracked by internal conflict and a more vulnerable target. At least that was how it seemed until 1977 when, having moved towards Marxism-Leninism, Ethiopia moved into an alliance with the Soviet Union. The USSR hoped to use its influence with both countries to extend its influence across the Horn, but it had reckoned without the strength of Somali nationalism and the pressure on Barre to strike while Ethiopia was still weak and before the Soviet alliance had a major impact there. With the ground prepared by Somali guerrillas in Ethiopia's Ogaden region, the Somali army was able to sweep across Ethiopia's eastern lowlands and up to the hills around the major city of Harar. But early in 1978 the Ethiopian counter-attack, heavily assisted by the USSR and Cuba, pushed Somalia's forces back.

Following the war, Somali politics went into a lengthy decline. Barre's regime became ever-narrower in scope with the years. He himself came from the south-central area of the country, and he became steadily reliant on the Ogadeni, the Dulbahante and the Marehan, three of the main clans in the Darod clan family. This dependence was reflected not just in political support, but in military recruitment and promotion as well. As the 1980s progressed this base became ever narrower, with the Ogadenis becoming less prominent and Barre's immediate family thrust ever more to the forefront. Now, it was alleged, Barre was building a dynasty within the former socialist republic, and the process of narrowing was to continue until his eventual downfall in 1991.

The corollary of this process was the growth of opposition. It had emerged in the north after the war with Ethiopia, and for understandable reasons the latter encouraged refugees from the northern Isaq clan to pursue opposition from their havens in eastern Ethiopia. From amongst the Isaq refugees the first major opposition movement, the Somali National Movement (SNM), emerged, and it was to be followed by others until there were about six major groups, though their formation was often fluid, reflecting the traditions of Somali politics. Given the nature of the regime and the society it was not surprising that opposition became associated with growing levels of violence. The year 1988 saw a great rise in conflict as Barre and President Mengistu of Ethiopia made a deal designed to end support for each other's opponents (likened to the Hitler-Stalin pact by Somalis). As the SNM were pushed out of Ethiopia, confrontation in northern Somalia flared. The SNM occupied the towns of Burao and Hargeisa, and attacked Berbera. Barre responded with the full weight of his army, killing tens of thousands and forcing hundreds of thousands more to flee back to Ethiopia. In the longer term this only intensified opposition across the country, and in the centre progress was made by the United Somali Congress (USC), based on the Hawiya clan, in particular. Eventually early in 1991 USC forces drove Barre out of the capital Mogadishu, and though the old dictator sought to hang on in

the south of the country hoping to counter-attack, he appeared a spent force. The joy of liberation was, however, short-lived for the USC then split into competing factions struggling for control of Mogadishu, and the violence was compounded in the following months by drought and famine.

Somali analysts in particular are keen to go beyond clan in their explanations pointing to the imbalance created by the state itself.<sup>10</sup> True clans have long been mutual rivals, but there was a rough balance that the post-independence state has collapsed. In particular the supplies of arms to the state as Barre played his country's strategic card ever since the early 1970s, first with the Soviet Union and then less successfully with the United States, have enabled state violence to become one major destabilizing factor. At the same time economic problems and social issues (such as urbanization and refugees), have increased competition for control of the state and its resources.

These factors had a powerful effect long before Barre fell, and contributed much to events in the north of the country that have received far less attention than the battles for control of Mogadishu. Yet while the south appears to have been experiencing violent state collapse, in the north there has been the little heralded, and as yet internationally unrecognized, proclamation of the independence of Somaliland in May 1991.

At first sight the SNM thus appears to be ahead of the EPLF in Eritrea, which has yet to hold its referendum on independence, but Somaliland is in some ways a newer entity. Though its roots, like those of Eritrea, go back to colonial days (the old British Somaliland) its contemporary foundations are less deep. Like Eritrea it has suffered heavily from conflict; but unlike Eritrea it has not had years to build up an organization as the EPLF has done, and through which it has won considerable international respect, if sometimes grudgingly accorded in the West. However, it does have clan unity with its large Isaq core, unless of course that goes the same way as the USC in Mogadishu.

## Sudan

In historical perspective, the most likely area for a new state in the Horn lies in southern Sudan. Historians would point to the importance of at least the Eritrean highlands in the history of Ethiopia, while Somalis are Somalis – north and south. But southern Sudan has little cultural or historic connection with northern Sudan.

Northern Sudan has been linked for centuries to the fringes of world civilization via the Nile and the Red Sea, with consequences for economic development and state formation in the region. The ancient civilizations, especially that of Egypt, influenced development, including Meroitic civilization. Later came the Coptic Christian kingdoms of Nubia, before the civilization of the Arabs, with their religion of Islam, slowly advanced into the area. In modern history it was the Turco-Egyptians in the nineteenth century, and then the British who ruled Sudan before it eventually claimed independence in 1956.

But as far as the south of the new state was concerned these developments had either a minimal or a negative impact. The physical obstacle of the Sudd (the vast upper Nile swamps) and the unwelcoming terrain and climate had combined to keep the south isolated from the north until the mid-nineteenth century. The economic effects on northern Sudan, and the partially homogenizing influences of Arabization and Islamization in the north had passed it by. It was only under the Turco-Egyptians that the penetration of the south took place, and then it proved violent and exploitative, centred as it became on the slave trade. Turco-Egyptian rule was overthrown by the revolt of Ahmed al-Mahdi in 1885, but Mahdist rule did little to alter relations between north and south. British-led reconquest in 1898 brought an attempt to isolate the south. Instead of the spread of Arabic and Islam from the north, the British encouraged English and Christianity among the largely animist southerners; while the economic growth of the north through cotton had no equivalent in the south.

In the circumstances it was inevitable that there were doubts about the position of the south even before independence in 1956, but northern nationalists were determined to resist the country's division, and offered promises to their southern compatriots, though few were later kept. It was a short step from southern frustration to violence, which occurred first in 1955. By 1963 the situation had deteriorated into sustained guerrilla warfare by groups known collectively as the Anya-nya.

Secessionist sentiment was prominent in the Anya-nya, but in 1972 a negotiated settlement of the long civil war was achieved at Addis Ababa, by which regional autonomy was granted to the south. It was a surprising outcome to conflict for negotiated settlement has been rare in Africa's civil wars, and it reflected the outcome of a military coup in Sudan, as well as intense international pressure. However, the political and economic experiences of regional autonomy were to sour relations between the north and the south, and by 1983 sustained civil war had broken out once more. Whereas the Anya-nya in the first war was generally pro-secession, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) has eschewed secession, speaking instead of the formation of the "New Sudan". Under the leadership of a radical officer with a PhD in economics, John Garang, the SPLA proclaimed the need for the oppressed peoples of all the Sudan to rise up and sweep away the reactionary ruling class in the north that had dominated Sudanese politics since independence in 1956, under both civilian and military guises. (Cynics might also point to the support for the SPLA from Mengistu in Ethiopia: as a Marxist seeking to repress secessionism in Eritrea, he would not support overt secessionism.) Partly inspired by the SPLA, Sudan's "modern forces" (secular intellectuals and trade unionists) did lead an *intifada* (uprising) in 1985, in the face of which the Sudan army sided with the revolt and overthrew the then president, Gaafar al-Nimeiry. (His military predecessor, President Abboud, had been similarly removed in 1964.) However, to the disappointment of many *intifada* leaders Garang re-

mained suspicious of developments in Khartoum, especially the role of the army, and decided that the time was not right to join those in power there, in spite of prolonged negotiations. Instead of making a "New Sudan", in 1986 the country returned to its old and sterile system of party politics, and there was soon speculation about when the next coup would come, and in whose interest it would be staged: it duly arrived in June 1989, and revealed itself as an Islamic fundamentalist regime, about as far removed from Garang's vision as possible.

The rise of such a regime inevitably intensified the war in the south, but it also led to some re-thinking in the position of both sides. Among the Islamists were those who appeared ready to write off the often anti-Islamic south and let the region go its own way while concentrating on building their Islamic state in the north. Others, however, were to view the south as ripe for Islamization, and a strategic platform from which to proselytize elsewhere in Africa. The result was the imposition of a federal system apparently allowing for unity in diversity, though it was in any case largely a fiction in the war-torn south.

Among the SPLA as well, the apparent intractability of the fundamentalists in Khartoum, and their determination to hang on to power and not just to wait for the next coup or *intifada*, contributed to rising tension. In the summer of 1991 the first major crack appeared in the hitherto imposingly solid ranks of the SPLA when a small group of leaders in an isolated garrison at Nasir challenged Garang. Publicly the essence of their message was secession. Eight years of war had brought misery to the south and had had little impact on Khartoum, where the existing regime was ever less accommodating. There were also bitter personal charges against Garang; while some observers detected an attack by Nuer and Shilluk on what was often seen as the Dinka-dominated SPLA (the Dinka being the largest ethnic group in the south). The young breakaway challengers called for talks on secession with Khartoum, and a referendum on the issue for the southerners themselves. After the announcement of the breakaway the split deepened, especially with the attack mounted on the Dinka area of Bor (Garang's home), which witnesses have indicated produced one of the worst massacres of civilians in the whole war. There was also, predictably, Machiavellian manoeuvring by the government in Khartoum. Rumours of collusion with the breakaway SPLA proliferated, and there seems little doubt that weapons have been passed. At the same time a new and sudden flowering of relations between Sudan and Iran, apparently ready to support fellow-fundamentalists on the edge of the Arab world, has produced new weapons for the hitherto beleaguered Sudan army. Egyptian sources suggest that as much as \$20 million of equipment has been provided, some from Iran itself and some purchased from China. Thus equipped, the army went on the offensive with some success. (The SPLA also accuses the new Ethiopian government of participation since Sudan long helped the ELF and EPRDF, which, in turn, had led Mengistu to support the SPLA.)

A string of military victories was accompanied by a new agreement with the breakaway SPLA early in 1992.

However, the latter was obtained at the price of ambiguous wording that could be construed as including the breakaway group's original call for self-determination on the issue of secession.<sup>11</sup> With victories underway and a major faction of the SPLA apparently in tow, the Sudan government was then ready for the Nigerian hosted talks in Abuja in May–June 1982, which it approached in a triumphalist spirit. Predictably, however, the talks proved unsuccessful, in spite of an emollient communique, and with the breakaway SPLA re-establishing contacts with the original group, it appears to have served mainly to promote the possibility of re-unification of the SPLA, coupled with a boost to secessionist sentiment within the organization. Against the background of possible renewed talks at Abuja, the SPLA tried to regain the military initiative by tightening its siege of Juba, the old southern capital, a development that has become a major test of strength for both sides.

## Prospects

Thus at the time of writing (late 1992) the Horn seems to have three potential claims for new statehood: one already exists in Somaliland; a second, in Eritrea, is likely after a planned referendum; while the third, in the southern Sudan, appears more obscure but likely to grow. This position is the starting point for the second part of the article, which is an attempt to assess the internal and external factors that are likely to contribute to the emergence or otherwise of a new map for the Horn.

An obvious beginning is the response of the governments of the states from which secession is proposed. By this criterion the most likely case for recognition in the foreseeable future is that of Eritrea. The political debt felt by the EPRDF towards the EPLF has already been mentioned; and while it is not intended by the EPRDF that Eritrea should be regarded as a precedent for other regions within the remaining Ethiopia, its acceptance both of the future referendum and that the 1992 Ethiopian election did not apply to Eritrea were two of the most obvious acts of recognition. In addition to the views of the transitional government in Ethiopia, there is also the question of whether it has the capacity to resist Eritrea, and thus its acquiescence is tinged with recognition of *force majeure*.

In Sudan, as indicated, there have been different views amongst the post-1989 rulers, and although one senior figure appeared to countenance the country's division, the prevailing inclination of the regime appears to be to fight for unity. Far from being ready to write off the non-Muslim south, present thinking in regime circles appears to feel that the region is ripe for Islamization and furthermore that its present federal proposals, including the right to opt out of *sharia* (Islamic law) are sufficient to answer genuine southern sentiment. However, military success in the south is by no means certain, and nor is the longer term survival of the regime in Khartoum (indeed if history is any guide, continued conflict in the south could contribute to a regime change in the capital).

With regard to Somalia, it is virtually impossible to speak of a "government" view on Somaliland's claim, but it

appears that few non-Isaq who have spoken on the issue appear willing to see complete separation. Certainly USC leaders have opposed the claim, and in 1991 tried twice to hold reconciliation conferences, but to little effect. A proposal for a new power-sharing arrangement remains, however, on the table and could be a basis for future talks.

Where there is a claim for secession that is recognized by the existing government of the state involved, the chances of success are obviously strengthened, but it is not guaranteed in full. South Africa experienced a curious outcome when it promoted the independence of four "homelands" only to find that similar recognition was denied by the rest of the international community.

International recognition for new states does not depend simply on the positions at a particular moment of would-be secessionists and the states from which they seek to break away. The possibility of new states being recognized is also a question of potential viability, indeed it is a judgement of double viability: the prospect for a new state succeeding alone; and the prospects for some new political arrangement for the existing states that may appear more viable than secession. On these grounds the Eritreans have the strongest case in the Horn, at least politically. Their's has been the most impressive military achievement thus far, and the onus is on the EPLF to show that it can transform itself from a successful army into a solid platform for the construction of a new state.

The task will not be easy, especially since the EPLF has announced its intention to disband itself, while seeking to prevent the emergence of religious or ethnic-based conflict in a heterogeneous region in which radical nationalism expressed through the EPLF has been the most uniting force hitherto. At the same time the EPLF has abandoned its support for Marxist economic policies and espoused a capitalist future: but while the shortcomings of the former system are now well known, the prospects for the latter will be formidable in such a poor, war-ravaged and modestly endowed region. In Somaliland a year of "independence" has shown signs of intra-clan rivalry among the Isaq of the kind seen so tragically amongst the Hawiye in Mogadishu since Barre's downfall. The establishment of institutions in such a clan-based and war-torn society has proved every bit as difficult as might have been anticipated. In southern Sudan factional rivalry has also been noted. The region is much larger than either Eritrea or Somaliland and has a much larger population (perhaps 6 million, though many are displaced). With numerous different ethnic groups it would be surprising if there had not been past and present tensions in the SPLA. However, it has also been the case that the SPLA has done little to create any political or social infrastructure in "liberated" areas; while both it and the government have armed tribal auxiliaries, thus raising ethnic antagonism throughout the region. The present basis for an independent state in southern Sudan looks probably even less promising than for Eritrea, or even possibly Somaliland.

Alongside assessments of political viability, questions of economic viability are also being raised. All these areas are

desperately poor, and their relative poverty may have contributed to their political emergence. Certainly both civil wars in southern Sudan have been fuelled by a belief that the region has been discriminated against, if not exploited by successive regimes in Khartoum; in the eyes of some, ever since the slave trade of the nineteenth century. As an Italian colony Eritrea was economically more developed than Ethiopia, but after its incorporation into the "federation" in 1952 it saw its relative position decline. Likewise "Somaliland" saw discrimination in favour of the south, especially after Siyad Barre seized power in 1969. However, the concern now would be with the future rather than the past. In the short term all three regions have been enormously damaged by war and famine with great destruction of infrastructure, bridges, etc, as well as dislocation of population both internally and externally (as refugees in neighbouring countries). Beyond that, prospects are mixed. Eritrea has few natural resources, but could re-discover its historic role as an important trading centre between the Red Sea and the interior of the Horn; at the same time its people have proved themselves often to be very adaptable and resourceful during the war. Somaliland has a comparable strategic position, and has centuries of trade links with the Arabian peninsula. Preliminary investigation also indicates that there may be oil reserves towards the present border with Ethiopia. Southern Sudan has a large land area, a considerable part of which has agricultural potential, both rain watered and irrigated from the Nile system, which stretches across the region. It also has substantial proven oil reserves, the exploitation of which has hitherto been blocked only because of the war. But whatever the economic viability of the three regions, its attainment will depend initially on the development of a viable political context.

Yet if there are questions about the internal viability of the three possible states, the prospects of these being viably re-united with the states of which they have been a part hitherto are at least as problematic. Given the scale and length of conflict, the requirements for re-uniting any of the three territories under consideration are daunting. First there is the question of what it is that any effort at re-unification would be with? In this regard Eritrea might appear the most conceivable at present given past relations with the EPRDF, and the latter's apparent regional flexibility. Southern Sudan at present faces a narrow-based Islamic fundamentalist regime in Khartoum that does not appear to have an accommodationist cast of mind. Somaliland appears to have at present little in Mogadishu, or the rest of Somalia, with which to re-unite itself.

However, the issue of re-unification is not just about "with whom", but "on what terms"? There has been much talk from both within and outside the region of federalism and confederalism. Such concepts appear to have a great deal of virtue given the heterogeneity and complexity of the societies involved, but they are no easy panaceas. Effective federal systems (ones that involve a real sharing of power) are complex and involve political maturity and sophistication greater than that which has manifested itself in much of the Horn hitherto.

Beyond the question of relative viability – secessionist states or forms of re-unification of some kind – lies the realization that it may not be a matter of simply whether these existing states end up as four, five, or six in the Horn. Potentially all three could find themselves with more secessionist claims whether the present candidates are successful or not. It is not simply the case that success for, for example, Eritrea's independence would ensure the end of secessionist claims in Ethiopia; but nor is it the case that non-recognition would end it. Independence for Eritrea could lead to more secessionist calls; but the repercussions of non-recognition of a strong claim also keep the whole issue alive for other regions and communities as well.

Another factor in international recognition is the international mood and this is raised on occasions in self-justification by the groups involved. Until the end of the Cold War the great legitimator of recognition of new states was decolonization.<sup>12</sup> Now, the end of that struggle, the replacement of the Soviet Union by the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as recognition of new republics in former Yugoslavia, appear to have put recognition of new states back on the agenda. The latter case in particular appears to indicate that a post-imperial settlement may have gone dangerously wrong and thus appears to offer parallels for Africa.

Yet the Horn is not central or eastern Europe, and the international community is not homogeneous. The self-destruction of a super-power clearly had great advantages (as well as potential problems) for its rival superpower and its allies; while Yugoslavia's implosion had an immediacy to powerful states (and apparently an unexpectedness) much greater than those of the Horn. The level of violence in the Horn has been generated in part by the international community, especially through the level of arms supplied in the past, but that does not now leave a legacy of concern. The region's international significance was, as it has long been, essentially strategic, not only for the sea lanes as in the imperial era, but proximity to the oil-producing Arab Gulf. It was this that made it a target, especially for the superpowers in the 1970s and 1980s and with the demise of their rivalry its importance and consequent interest in it is much diminished. Issues of Middle East stability have shifted back to the core of the region – to the questions of Israel and Iraq – and away from attempts at rivalries on the periphery of a region in which a balance of power had lasted roughly since 1973.

That phase of rivalry had involved not only superpowers, but Middle East actors from Libya to Iran and Syria to South Yemen. But they were mainly bit part players and with the situation changing in the Middle East their concern too will diminish. Thus from the point of view of interests, major global actors now have less concern one way or the other, while Middle Eastern players too have a lesser stake in the outcome of secessionist claims.

That of course leaves African states, collectively and individually. Collectively, Eritreans like to point to the Organization of African Unity's recognition of the Saharwi Republic in West Africa and United Nations sponsorship of

a proposed referendum in that territory. However, the OAU still appears hostile to the prospect of new states emerging.

The OAU's position could, however, be altered. Officially it stands to maintain the borders bequeathed by the colonial powers, and in the case of Eritrea this meant inside Ethiopia since the OAU accepted its version of the voluntary incorporation of Eritrea in 1951, before the establishment of the OAU. (Politically the OAU's headquarters were in Addis Ababa, and the Emperor Haile Selassie was a revered figure within the organization.) However, an agreement between the existing authority in Eritrea and Ethiopia following the former's assertion of independence via a referendum would be difficult for the OAU to resist. (Its escape clause could be that the old colonial boundaries were really those of 1952 and that a referendum in 1993 at long last clarifies the wishes of the Eritreans.)

But while an exception might be made for Eritrea, there would be concern to try to prevent its independence becoming a precedent. That concern would be expressed not just in the OAU, but even by the three major states of the Horn themselves. Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan have not just had coincidental civil wars; their regional relations have fostered conflict for many years. Indeed it has been Ethiopia's involvement in both Sudan and Somalia that has been central to the regionalizing of conflict across the Horn. In this, Ethiopia may initially have been more sinned against than sinning. Cross-border sympathies for Eritrean fellow tribesmen and Muslims appear to have contributed to Sudan's early support for the ELF in Eritrea in the 1960s, and led to Ethiopia's assistance to the Anya-nya in southern Sudan. In the same period Somalia supported guerrilla activities in the Ogaden, before Ethiopia encouraged support for opposition in Somalia. Later this cross-border regional situation was to be made more complex and large-scale as other regional actors and the super-powers became involved, in sometimes bewildering ways in the 1970s and 1980s.

There are repercussions to the past involvements now as well. Not only the EPLF, but the EPRDF had support from or via Sudan; and the EPRDF is now repaying something of that debt. It facilitated the Sudan army's campaign in the south in 1992; knowing that a victory for the SPLA and possible secession in the south would leave a new neighbour with no love for the old EPRDF. At the same time secession for the southern Sudan might encourage secessionism in Ethiopia in the future. In contrast, the present regime in Khartoum sees the victories of both the EPRDF and the EPLF as ones to which it has contributed significantly and the possibility of an independent Eritrea as perfectly acceptable. Moreover it has the capacity to cause trouble in the future, especially amongst Muslims in western Eritrea, and in consequence relations between Khartoum, Asmara and Addis Ababa have been close ever since the downfall of Mengistu's regime in 1991. Ethiopia's view of Somaliland is also relevant. Thus far it has been as reluctant to recognize Somaliland's claim to independence as the rest of the international community has been. While the transitional government in Ethiopia has no wish to see a strong Somalia,

an indefinite continuation of the present situation throughout the country would be a cause of continuing problems in eastern Ethiopia as people and arms flow freely across the long borders, and it appears to have been for this reason that the transitional government has offered troops for peace-keeping.

An outer layer of regional concern consists of states around the Horn that have an interest in the outcome of the recent and current conflicts. Egypt has long been active in the region, for it has particular concern for the Nile waters on which it is totally dependent and which have proved increasingly erratic in recent years; while Egypt's need, with its growing population, rises constantly. Egypt's most immediate involvement has been to preserve the unity of Sudan by trying to encourage the SPLA to make common cause with the opposition to the present regime in Khartoum. A proliferation of states would make negotiation on the development of the Nile waters in the future more difficult and is to be avoided. Kenya and Uganda also have a real interest in developments in all three countries. While their sympathies in southern Sudan clearly lie with the SPLA rather than the Islamic fundamentalist regime in Khartoum, their general disposition is likely to be to discourage secession if possible, fearing the possible contagion effect: Uganda in particular has potential regional fault lines that have already contributed significantly to its unhappy history in the post-independence period. The conflicts in all these countries, but especially Sudan and Somalia have long spilled over in Uganda and Kenya, adding significantly to these countries' internal strains.

But the neighbour with most cause for concern is Djibouti; the tiny "fourth" state of the Horn which has been referred to as the "eye of the hurricane" because of its comparatively untroubled history when compared with its war-torn neighbours. Since its largest ethnic group are Somalis of the Issa clan, it was threatened by Somali irredentism following the latter's independence, but both before and after its own independence in 1977 it has had the protection of France, on whose important strategic base a large part of the tiny country's economy depends. Under President Gouled the country remained stable with an ethnically balanced government, but by 1991 political unrest was growing. In part it was due to Afar feeling (the second largest ethnic group) that the Issas were becoming too powerful, and with conflict in Ethiopia in particular generating a steady flow of weapons and refugees a guerrilla army known as the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD) appeared in the north-west of the country. It was also due to the belief that the re-democratization movement in Africa should lead to the ending of one-party rule in Djibouti, though Gouled responded vigorously to repress his urban critics. At the end of 1991 it also appeared that there was an attempted coup, although the events themselves were rather confused. In response Gouled decided to take the democracy option and with the opposition parties divided is likely to "ride the tiger" in current African parlance.

While conflict in Djibouti was exacerbated by surrounding coalitions (especially the growth of FRUD) the neighbouring countries have backed the existing regime. The transitional government in Ethiopia has been concerned that FRUD could link with the older Afar Liberation Front (ALF) in Ethiopia and Eritrea with its dream of a separate "Afaria". Likewise, Somaliland feels that it has a working relationship with Gouled's regime. Of course much in Djibouti depends on France. A discernible reduction of French commitment to Africa generally could be offset in the case of Djibouti by the portbase's continuing strategic significance when it served as the base for French participation in the Gulf War of 1990–1991.

Throughout the international community the question of mood with regard to the recognition of new states will be tinged with growing realization of consequent problems of responsibility. That has been very clear in Yugoslavia, where recognition of Croatia and Bosnia was followed by growing confusion over the degree of responsibility the international community then owed to those states in the wake of the attacks from Serbia, apparently pursuing irredentist claims. Though experiencing great difficulty in Somalia and southern Sudan in particular, the international community recognizes responsibilities for emergency relief, through the United Nations, individual governments, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). However, further commitment to the region is uncertain, especially at a time when there are other claims on international resources in areas that are judged of greater strategic importance, such as eastern Europe. Recognition of new states, such as Somaliland at present, could clearly lead to an acceleration of further claims. Moreover a failure to assist in development might contribute to new "international" crises, especially if fresh tensions arose within and between any possible new alignment of states that might develop in the Horn. It is with such thoughts in mind that the suggestion has been made that countries of such extreme state collapse as appears to have taken place in Somalia (and in Liberia) might be administered at least temporarily by some kind of United Nations trusteeship agency. The task is fraught with difficulty, and the United Nations has yet to evolve such a resolve in the "new world order", but it could be seen as preferable to continued anarchy and/or claims for independence by new "states" of questionable viability.

At a continental level in Africa the whole question of claims to self-determination has been linked to the debate about "governance", human rights and democracy. One must be cautious here, for there is no direct relationship between encouragement of democracy as a general principle for existing states and the acceptance of claims by various sub-national or ethnic groups for self-determination. This is always the problem of the claims of the particular "entity", but there is also the reciprocal issue of the state as a whole – should a possible referendum for southern Sudan be a referendum of all Sudanese? And if in the future a part of southern Sudan should seek independence, does that area too have an exclusive right of self-determination?<sup>13</sup>

## Conclusion

In discussing the prospects for new states evolving in the Horn it has not been my intention to commend or condemn the prospect. The claims exist in varying degrees in Eritrea, Somaliland and southern Sudan. They have been both a part of and a product of the "disorder" of the Horn, and their resolution, one way or another, will be a part of the making of any new order. And while they are in themselves separate claims, there has been some historic interconnectedness, which is likely to continue in that each claim will be a reference point for the others; thereby justifying some collective discussion of the three possibilities most clearly on the table.

When considering the prospect for new states to be created a number of factors are relevant, relating not only to conditions and attitudes within the existing state system in the Horn, but the international community's important role in granting or withholding recognition. It is possible for a claim to go unrecognized both by the state against which it is being made, and by the international community; and it is also possible for a claim to receive only partial recognition. As for recognition or otherwise contributing to the solution of problems of "disorder" in the Horn, that is a matter for judgement on which there can be no guarantees.

The case of the one territory that has already claimed independence, Somaliland, reveals a certain irony in terms of African politics more broadly. Perhaps Somaliland's unrecognized independence is the ultimate in the collapse of what Robert Jackson called the "empirical" state in Africa.<sup>14</sup> Out of the collapse of Somalia has come a new "empirical" state (if already somewhat unstable), but one which is not accorded the "juridical" blessing of the international community. Instead of Jackson's characterization of the state in Africa as "juridical" more than "empirical" Somaliland finds itself in the reverse position: in seeking to create a new "order" it has unintentionally turned Jackson's perception of the African state inside out.

It is also possible that the interconnectedness of conflicts that has expanded the concept of the Horn in recent years, could be transformed. Instead of conflict it could be peace that becomes interconnected, and whatever the final pattern of states that emerges from present travails, the maintenance of order will depend in part on relations with neighbours in networks extending across parts or all of the region. To some extent that is already apparent, with Ethiopia and Eritrea knowing the importance of their mutual relations, as well as the connections between both and developments in Sudan. If that is to emerge as the pattern, then indeed the international structure of peace will be built on the foundations laid in the long years of war across the Horn.

## Notes and references

- 1 The most substantial study of this broad interpretation of the Horn of Africa is J Markakis, *National and class conflict in the Horn of Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

- 2 *The Guardian* (London), 6 February 1992. There has also been speculation about an independent white homeland in South Africa.
- 3 *Africa Confidential*, vol 32, no 14, 12 July 1991.
- 4 *Africa Confidential*, vol 32, no 22, 8 November 1991.
- 5 A fuller discussion of ethnicity in Ethiopia by Christopher Clapham will appear in Peter Woodward (ed), *Federalism in the Horn of Africa*, Leicester: Leicester University Press/Francis Pinter (forthcoming, provisional title).
- 6 D Laitin and S Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in search of a state*, Boulder CO: Westview, 1987.
- 7 S Samatar, *Somalia: A nation in turmoil*, London: Minority Right Group, 1991.
- 8 D Laitin and S Samatar, *op cit*, p 42.
- 9 *Ibid*, p 43.
- 10 One of these is A Samatar, in a forthcoming Brookings study on the Horn; also A Hussein in Peter Woodward, *op cit*.
- 11 An agreement was signed in February 1992 between the government and the breakaway SPLA referring to a transitional period after which "the people of the South shall exercise their right to freely choose the political and constitutional status that accords with their national aspiration without ruling out any option". *Sudan Democratic Gazette*, March 1992.
- 12 A development in the international community critically reviewed in R W Jackson, *Quasi-states: Sovereignty. International relations and the Third World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- 13 A much fuller discussion is contained in B Neuberger, *National self-determination in postcolonial Africa*, Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner, 1986, especially Ch 5 "The right of secession".
- 14 R W Jackson and C G Rosberg, "Why Africa's weak states persist: The empirical and the juridical in statehood", in A Kohli (ed), *The State and development in the Third World*, Princeton: Princeton UP, 1986.

## Select bibliography

### Horn of Africa

- Paul B Henze, *The Horn of Africa*, London: Macmillan, 1991.
- I M Lewis (ed), *Nationalism and self-determination in the Horn of Africa*, London: Ithaca Press, 1983.

- Samuel L Makinda, *Security in the Horn of Africa*, London: Adelphi Paper 269, 1992.
- J Markakis, *National and class conflict in the Horn of Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Robert G Patman, *The Soviet Union in the Horn of Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Peter Woodward, *War – or peace – in North-East Africa?* London: Conflict Studies, no 219, 1990.

### Ethiopia

- Z Bahru, *History of modern Ethiopia*, London: James Curry, 1991.
- C Clapham, *Transformation and continuity in revolutionary Ethiopia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- H Erlich, *The struggle over Eritrea 1962–78*, Stanford: Hoover Institution, 1983.
- J Gebre-Medhin, *Peasants and nationalism in Eritrea*, Trenton: Red Sea Press, 1989.
- R Lefort, *Ethiopia: An heretical revolution?* London: Zed Press, 1983.
- Somalia Africa Watch, *Somalia: A government at war with its people*, New York: Africa Watch, 1990.
- David Laitin, *Politics, language and thought. The Somali experience*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1977.
- David Laitin and Said Samatar, *Somalia: Nation in search of a state*, Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1987.
- I M Lewis, *A modern history of Somalia. From national to state*, Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1988.
- I M Lewis, *A pastoral democracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961.

### Sudan

- P M Holt and M W Daly, *A history of the Sudan: From the coming of Islam to the present day*, London: Longman, 1986.
- Tim Niblock, *Class and power in Sudan*, London: Macmillan, 1987.
- John O Voll and Sarah P Voll, *The Sudan: Unity and diversity in a multi-cultural state*, London: Croom Helm, 1985.
- Peter Woodward, *Sudan 1898-1989: The unstable state*, Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner, 1990.
- Peter Woodward (ed), *Sudan after Nimeiri*, London: Routledge, 1991.

# Somalia: “Operation Restore Hope”

*Dr Simon Baynham, who visited Mogadishu, Kismayo and Bardera in March this year, examines the background to the USA/UN intervention in Somalia.*

This article will explore, firstly, the events leading to the deposition of President Siyad Barre two years ago in January 1991. Secondly, it will focus on the factors that led to last August's UN Security Council decision to authorize a food airlift which, in turn, paved the way for the deployment of over 35 000 troops to the stricken state of war-torn Somalia. More specifically: what lay behind the chronic 32-month conflict which climaxed in a rebel encirclement of the capital, Mogadishu, and the virtual destruction of the city's infrastructure and communications in late 1990/early 1991? For as Somalia shuffled off the last remnants of Siyad's political stranglehold, new depths of intercommunal animosity were breached as the country descended into an uncharted abyss of violence, pestilence and famine. “Operation Restore Hope” was the international community's response to the Somali tragedy.

## Introduction

Occupying 637 000 sq km and with a coastline of 2 800 km facing the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, Somalia is bounded by Djibouti to the north-west, by Ethiopia to the west and by Kenya further south. Even prior to the civil war, Somalia had high rates of morbidity and mortality – the consequence, largely, of frequent droughts in this overwhelmingly pastoral society.<sup>1</sup> Crops include sorghum, rice, millet, maize, bananas and citrus fruits. There are also animal products and hides, a fishing industry and some oil, coal, iron, zinc, gypsum and uranium. Economic growth since independence has failed to keep pace with the rise in population.

Although the country is ethnically and linguistically homogeneous (the state takes its name from its population, the Somali, a Muslim Cushitic-speaking people), numerous political cleavages have been generated by complicated interclan rivalries, particularly between northern and southern dwellers.

There are six important clan families: the *Dir*, who live in the north-west; the *Isaq*, who occupy the centre of the

former British northern region; the *Darod*, who live in the north-west but who also extend into Ethiopia and Kenya; the *Hawiye*, based in and around Mogadishu; the *Digil* and the *Rahanwin*, both of whom live in the south, between the Shibeli and Juba Rivers. The country's problems are enhanced by the fact that significant sections of the Somali nation lie outside the frontiers drawn by Britain, France and Italy. As a result, Mogadishu claims that parts of Kenya, Djibouti and the Haud and Ogaden areas of Ethiopia are part of a “Greater Somalia”. Reunification of all the Somali peoples has been a national political pre-occupation and the declared objective of every government since independence.

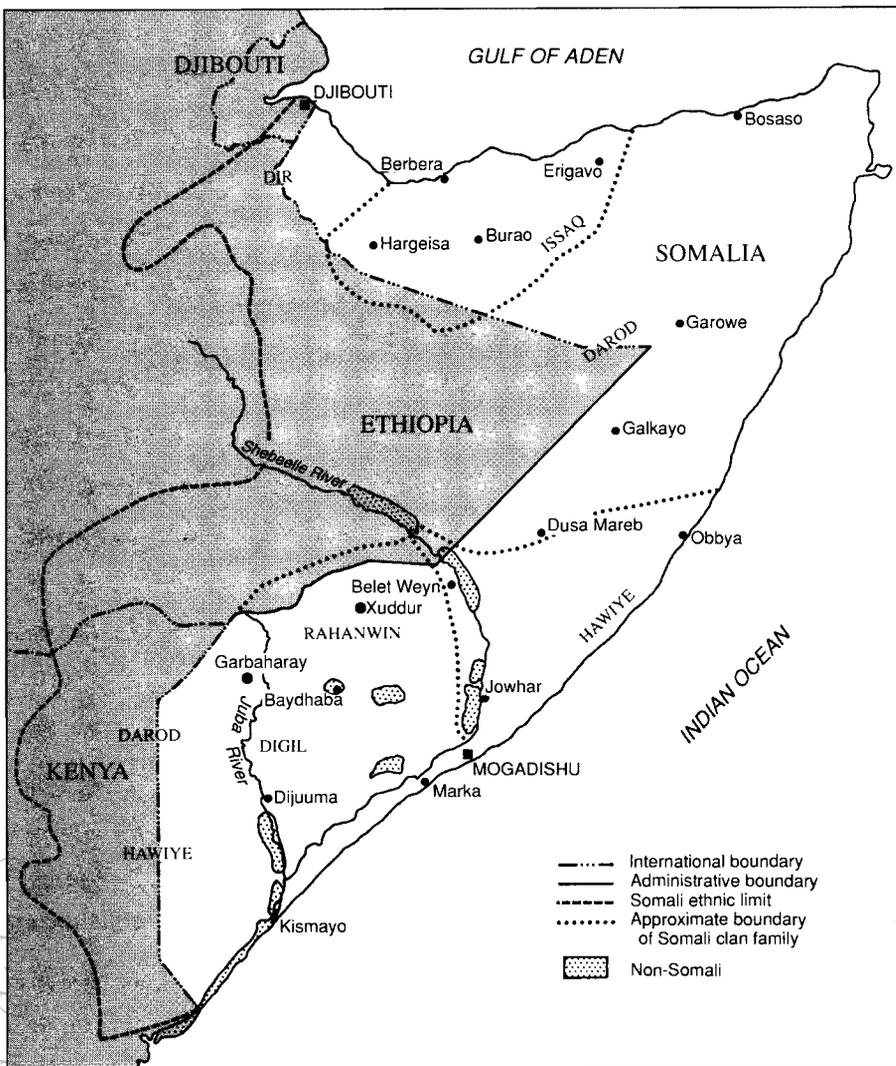
## Somalia profile: 1990

Population <sup>+</sup>	7,3 million	
Land area	637 km <sup>2</sup>	
Cultivated area	1,6% of land area	
Share of GDP	Livestock production	47%
	Manufacturing	5%
Major exports <sup>1</sup>	Livestock products	60%
	Fruit	40%
	Somalia	Africa
GNP per capita	\$120	\$340
Debt/GNP	283,4 %	89,8 %
ODA per capita	\$65	\$41
Daily kilojoule supply	1 932	2 360
Life expectancy	47 years	54 years
Adult literacy	24 %	50 %
Under-5 mortality	215	167
Access to safe water <sup>2</sup>	37 %	44 %*
Access to health care <sup>3</sup>	27 %	52 %*

<sup>1</sup> 1987    <sup>2</sup> 1988-90    <sup>3</sup> 1985-88    + Pre-crisis estimate

\* Sub-Saharan Africa only

Sources: FAO, OECD, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, World Bank



up with Soviet KGB and East German specialist intelligence support to protect the regime through repressive tactics of intimidation, infiltration, arrests, secret security courts and detentions.<sup>2</sup>

However, Barre's regional ambitions, in the shape of his disastrous incursion into Ethiopia, played a pivotal role in undermining his party's authority and control. The quarrel between Ethiopia and Somalia over Mogadishu's irredentist claims to the Ogaden province flared into full-scale hostilities in 1977 when Siyad Barre took advantage of political upheavals in Addis Ababa to overrun most of the Ogaden. But the success of the incursion was short-lived, for in 1978 the Ethiopian Army – backed by vast quantities of Soviet equipment and 12 000 Cuban troops – inflicted a crushing counter-strike on the Somalis at Jijiga.<sup>3</sup> The war had wider international and strategic implications, producing, *inter alia*, a reversal of roles for the USSR and the United States in the Horn of Africa: Addis Ababa broke with Washington in favour of reliance on the USSR; collaterally, Somalia switched its support from Moscow and Havana to Washington, eventually agreeing in 1980 to make port facilities at Berbera available to the American Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) in return for US armaments.<sup>4</sup>

### Siyad's military takeover

The Somali Democratic Republic, formerly the British Somaliland Protectorate (in the north) and the UN Trust Territory (in the south, then administered by Italy), became independent on 1 July 1960. The Somali Youth League (SYL) – with its origins in the south – maintained itself as the most powerful political party from independence until 1969. On 15 October of that year, President Ali Shermarke, the former premier, was assassinated by a member of his police bodyguard. Six days later, Prime Minister Muhammad Egal was ousted by military units in a bloodless coup under the command of Major-General Barre. The National Assembly was suspended and General Barre announced the formation of a Supreme Revolutionary Council – from 1976 the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party (SRSP) – pledged to the abolition of tribalism and corruption and to a restructuring of society along socialist lines.

In the post-coup era, the junta turned to Moscow for military and economic assistance. For 21 years, President Barre's authority rested primarily on the armed forces and on the National Security Service (NSS), an apparatus built

### Creeping civil conflict

As already noted, the border war with Ethiopia had repercussions for Barre's internal political credibility. For while his SRSP managed to survive the 1977–1978 Ogaden debacle intact, the massive military offensive had cost impoverished Somalia dearly. In addition, it had failed in one of its other (undeclared) objectives: to divert public attention from President Barre's increasingly autocratic behaviour at home. Dissatisfied with the course of the war, and resentful of Barre's Marehan Darod clan's political domination, in 1981 disaffected Somalis set up the Somali National Movement (SNM), a predominantly Isaaq opposition group from the north.

The SNM began its campaign against the regime by orchestrating unrest in the north and launching unprecedented attacks against government buildings and offices. By 1988, the SNM claimed to have captured Hargeisa and the Red Sea port of Berbera. In response, the authorities had started a full-scale military campaign aimed at curbing support for the rebels, a process that saw the systematic saturation bombing and slaughter of civilians. Nevertheless, growing popular

discontent against the administration – meshed with renewed speculation that a struggle for the presidential succession was in progress – led to an intensification of attacks on military targets by a variety of insurgent forces. At the same time, food and fuel shortages sparked off anti-government riots in Mogadishu and provincial urban centres.

These developments, together with widespread desertions of Somali troops outside the capital, forced Siyad Barre to announce (in a series of speeches during December 1989/January 1990) a programme of political and economic reform in an apparent effort to create a breathing space for his beleaguered regime. In an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to improve his domestic and international image, a number of presidential relatives were sidelined, a cabinet reshuffle was implemented and multiparty legislative elections were promised for February 1991.

But these belated measures to retrieve order through a cocktail of conciliatory and military means – as well as a ceasefire offer, which was rejected by the opposition – came too late to save Siyad Barre and the SRSP. By December 1990, two other anti-government groupings, the United Somali Congress (USC) and the smaller Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM), had begun to lay siege to the capital.<sup>5</sup> To this decaying situation of near-anarchy was added attacks and looting and pillaging of property by organized gangs of heavily armed bandits. The rebels' military breakthrough came in January as Siyad Barre and loyalist "Red Beret" presidential guards retreated under heavy USC artillery and mortar fire, first to an underground bunker at the international airport garrison, before fleeing Mogadishu in armoured vehicles towards the Kenyan border on 27 January.<sup>6</sup>

Throughout the final weeks of Barre's crumbling regime, European nations stepped up efforts to assist their nationals, diverting warships and moving aircraft into the region for emergency evacuations as fierce fighting continued between mainly USC insurgent forces and government troops.<sup>7</sup> As the jubilant United Somali Congress insurgents inaugurated a new president, Ali Mahdi Mohamed – a hotelier credited with a central role in organizing the USC's uprising in the capital – reports continued to reach the outside world of streets strewn with decomposing corpses; severe shortages of food, water and power; and of citizens fleeing the city on foot for the relative security of the countryside. According to Amnesty International and the US-based *Africa Watch*, Siyad Barre's campaign against the rebels was responsible for the slaughter of some 50 000 to 60 000 civilians during the 32-month conflict.

More than two years have elapsed since then, during which period the war-shattered country has been plunged



Simon Baynham with troops of US Army's 10th Mountain Division, Kismayu, Somalia (currently embroiled in new outbreak of fighting) March 1993.

into anarchy by anti-Barre rebels who subsequently went for each others throats. A bitter power struggle between Mogadishu warlord, General Mohamed Farah Aidid, and his arch-rival, interim President Ali Mahdi Mohamed, sparked a conflict that devastated the capital.<sup>8</sup> The fighting subsided (but did not end) when the pair of protagonists signed a UN-brokered cease-fire in March 1992.<sup>9</sup>

By then, relief experts estimated that some 4.5 million of the 7 million population were at risk of starving to death. At the same time, Amnesty International was calling Somalia a human rights disaster; while the Save the Children Fund said the catastrophe made the Ethiopian famine of the eighties look like "small beer", describing it as infinitely worse than the mayhem in former Yugoslavia. Essentially the country – which became independent in 1960 – has ceased to exist. It has no organized centre of power except for the self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland in the north.<sup>10</sup>

Somalia's severe security problems account for the initial wariness of the international community to get involved. But it soon became clear that unless supplies were increased, food would continue to be virtually the only commodity worth fighting for. As one local observer put it: "People say there can't be food without security, but there will be no security unless there is food."

Eventually – its collective conscience pricked by harrowing footage of skeletal infants and appalling suffering – the UN Security Council last July sanctioned an airlift designed to avert even greater disaster. By that stage, at least a quarter of all children under the age of five had died as a result of the civil strife-induced famine.

As in ex-Yugoslavia, the crisis in Somalia posed (and continues to pose) an urgent and difficult question for the key global players. Should they seek to drive bargains with



US Army "Cobra" combat helicopters, Kismayu, Somalia, March 1993.

locally dominant marauding warlords? Or should they insist on a higher duty to relieve suffering by resorting to the sanction of international force? In Mogadishu, the UN and aid agencies at first went for the former option but as the famine worsened – with much of the food aid plundered by bandits – it quickly became clear that more drastic action was required. Indeed, diplomats at the UN soon began to point out that, since Resolution 688 was passed authorizing aid to the Kurdish population in Iraq, the world body had a humanitarian obligation (if not a right) to interfere in Somalia.

The first batch of 500 (Pakistani) UN peacekeepers was deployed in mid-September, their instructions being not to restore order but simply to guard food shipments in Mogadishu. But bound by strict UN regulations that required the warlords' approval for any troop movements, the Pakistani battalion remained largely confined to barracks. This same fate appeared to await more than 3 500 additional soldiers authorized by the Security Council for deployment to Somalia but still then waiting at home. It was at this point that the world's single superpower decided to step in.

President George Bush broke the aid-jam by making an offer that was not in the event refused: the dispatch of up to 30 000 American ground troops to the Horn. Washington's condition was that the force should be under US command. Although many Third World countries were uneasy about the proposal – for it was not at all clear how accountable an American fighting unit under a UN umbrella would be to the UN – the Security Council gave the proposal its blessing on 3 December.<sup>11</sup>

## US military intervention

"Operation Restore Hope" began before dawn on 9 December when US special forces and marines stormed the airport beach heavily defended by television camera crews. Within weeks, the full international contingent under the Pentagon's leadership numbered roughly 37 000, of whom 26 000 were Americans: 16 000 from the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force and 10 000 troops from the Army's 10th Mountain Division. A score of other states – including six African ones

(Botswana, Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, Tunisia and Zimbabwe)<sup>12</sup> – account for the remainder. Not included are additional military personnel on the aircraft carrier *Ranger* and its escort ships.

From the start, the goal of the US military intervention was described in strictly humanitarian terms: its brief to break the impasse in relief aid and take food to the starving. Washington has insisted its troops are not a police force, that they are there to stop gunmen preying on relief efforts. However, since mid-January, US forces have stepped up raids on gun markets and arms caches and have been seizing weaponry at road-blocks. In one operation, US troops dis-

covered a massive cache of more than 1 000 tonnes of high-technology weapons (including air-to-air and surface-to-air missiles) stashed in a network of desert bunkers outside Mogadishu. These developments coincided with the 15 January ceasefire, signed by 14 Somali factions in preparation for a National Reconciliation Conference which opened in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, on 15 March 1993. But the ceasefire has been frequently breached, casting doubts over talks which are crucial to the success or failure of UN plans to end two years of anarchy.

The main cease-fire breaches have occurred in the area of Kismayo, where, in January, General Mohamed Siyad Hersi "Morgan" advanced to within 40 kilometres of the town, a port 450 kilometres south-west of Mogadishu held by an ally of Aidid, Colonel Omar Jess. According to Aidid, Hersi – the son-in-law and former defence minister of ousted dictator Siyad Barre – is backed by the government of neighbouring Kenya, a charge that is vigorously denied by Nairobi. Hersi's advance was stopped in its tracks on 25 January when American and Belgian troops struck at Hersi's forces. In the process, US army *Cobra* combat helicopters destroyed five "technicals" – all-terrain makeshift battle-wagons mounted with heavy machine-guns and rocket-propelled grenade-launchers.

Seven weeks later, on 16 March, General Hersi launched a major attack on his rivals in war-racked Kismayo, currently (end March) the country's major flashpoint. These clashes saw the arrival of a 500-strong Rapid Intervention Force of US marines which pulled out on 22 March, leaving behind 800 Belgian soldiers equipped with light armoured vehicles. But four days later the Americans were back in force, this time with 2 200 marines (landed from four warships headed by the aircraft carrier, *USS Wasp*) to snuff out a resumption of clan warfare.

## A new multinational force

Such "pacification" duties have catalysed Washington's determination to hasten the transition from a US-led to a UN-headed force as quickly as possible. No date has yet been set

for the transfer (but see Postscript) but the intention is to reduce the American force by some 20 000 – leaving around 5 000 US troops to provide logistical support and a Rapid Intervention Force under the UN flag and a three star (Muslim) Turkish general, Civik Bir. The transition is expected to take several more weeks.

Consensus is currently crystallizing within the UN to make the Somali peace-keeping force very large indeed. According to Boutros-Ghali's special envoy to Somalia, Ismat Kittani, the number may well exceed 20 000 – about 3 000 more military personnel than the UN now has stationed in its largest operation to date: Cambodia. Not since the 1960s Katanga crisis in the Congo (Zaire) has the UN dispatched armed soldiers to an African conflict. If successful, the decision might establish a precedent in the post Cold War era on a continent wracked by war, chaos and famine.

But to be a success, the second phase of "Operation Restore Hope" will have to focus on:

- Bringing Somalia's warlords together and arranging a general programme of disarmament in which all militias will be confined to barracks. This is, in fact, the stated objective of the 15 January accord.
- Creating a new police service from former Somalia policemen who have dusted off their uniforms and taken to the streets of Mogadishu to build up an embryonic police force with the help of European experts.
- Ensuring that the March Addis National Reconciliation Conference results in a new draft constitution for Somalia. A key problem here, however, relates to the status of the self-declared Republic of Somaliland. So far, the UN force has not moved into the north.

But if the emergency situation has stabilized, another crisis looms as those in charge of the relief operation attempt to convince famine victims to return to their villages to sow seeds in time for the April rains. At the same time, achieving a long-term political settlement is likely to prove far more difficult than simply occupying the country and stopping the fighting.

Meanwhile, the scale of the exercise raises new questions for both Washington and those on the receiving end of US intervention. Mr Clinton has described the rescue operation to Somalia as "a clearly defined humanitarian mission" – which indeed it is. Yet there are already concerns that America (and the UN) risks over-extending itself and getting sucked into moral missions to the detriment of its national security.

The point is unambiguously made by a US Air Force officer, Charles Dunlap, in the Army War College's journal, *Parameters*. In a retrospective overview from the year 2012,



USA C-130 Hercules arrives at Badera airstrip Somalia: Duststorm!! (Swedish Air Force Hercules to left) March 1993

he writes: "When several African governments collapsed under AIDS epidemics and famines around the turn of the century, US troops – first introduced to the continent in the 1990s – were called upon to restore basic services. They never left."<sup>13</sup>

Finally, it is clear that responding adequately to the country's crisis has demanded simultaneous action on three separate fronts: first, security; secondly, in terms of humanitarian assistance; and, thirdly, in the arena of political talks and reconciliation:

All three aspects are closely interrelated. Establishing some measure of security had become indispensable for the provision of effective relief aid, while alleviation of famine conditions may in turn help reduce political tensions and conflict. [Also], reconciliation among the warring parties will be essential for achieving lasting security, ending the conditions that bred famine and making it possible to begin rebuilding Somalia's shattered economy and society.<sup>14</sup>

### Postscript: 29 March 1993

Fifteen feuding Somali factions agreed on 24 March the rough outlines of a future government. In Addis Ababa, they agreed to establish a federal-style system under which 18 autonomous regions will send representatives to a central transitional administration. This would have a National Transition Council, which would serve as the supreme authority for a two-year interim period. Details of the plan, mediated by President Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, have yet to be finalized. The agreement clearly rejects the secessionist bid by the breakaway Somaliland state in the north.

On 26 March, the same day as the first wave of 2 200 US troops went ashore at Somalia's troubled southern port of Kismayo, the UN Security Council gave the green light to a large-scale UN operation in Somalia (Unosom II), set to be phased in to replace the current US-led international force. It will be the largest UN operation to date, with 28 000 troops, including the US Rapid Intervention Force, in addition to some 2 800 civilian staff. Unosom II – which will have a mandate until 31 October 1993, unless the mandate is extended before that time (which is highly likely) – will

gradually take over the reins of the operation from the USA. The handover is officially due to take place on 1 May. The huge operation is projected to cost more than \$800 million.

The Security Council has put teeth into Unosom II by voting to allow troops with the operation to use whatever means are necessary to safeguard the peace, disarm Somali nationals and protect humanitarian aid personnel. Unosom II's activities are expected to embrace refugee repatriation, continued assistance in developing a local police service, clearing land mines and encouraging talks on political issues and reconciliation.

In the meantime, it is clear that several regions in southern Somalia visited by this writer in mid-March still suffer from severe famine and will need substantial humanitarian assistance until, and beyond, the harvest season which begins in August.

## Chronology of a crisis

**1960** – Former British Somaliland gains independence 26 June, joined on 1 July by former Italian Somaliland to establish Somali Republic.

**October 1969** – Gen Mohamed Siyad Barre seizes power in military coup.

**1977–78** – War with Ethiopia over Ogaden region, ending in Somalia's defeat.

**1988** – Isaaq-based Somali National Movement intensifies rebellion in northwest. Government bombardments destroy Hargeisa, killing tens of thousands.

**January 1991** – President Siyad Barre ousted by Hawiye-based United Somali Congress (USC). Mr Ali Mahdi Mohamed's faction of USC proclaims interim government, but challenged by other factions. Large-scale violence prompts evacuation of UN and other international personnel from Mogadishu; some relief operations continue mainly in north.

**March** – Unicef team visits Mogadishu to evaluate security and deliver relief supplies to NGOs.

**May** – Somali National Movement proclaims independent state of Somaliland in northwest; not recognized by any country. Limited reopening of UN offices in Mogadishu in May and August.

**May–August** – Limited return of UN personnel to Mogadishu.

**June** – FAO reports depletion of food stocks in urban areas, worsening rural food shortages and starvation deaths.

**November** – Fighting erupts in Mogadishu between USC factions led by General Aidid and Mr Ali Mahdi. New evacuation of UN personnel.

**December** – UN authorizes Unicef to reopen Mogadishu offices.

**January 1992** – Security Council imposes arms embargo on Somalia.

**February** – ICRC warns famine is "on the horizon". Several Somali factions meet under UN aegis in New York to discuss cease-fire.

**March** – Cease-fire between USC factions takes effect in Mogadishu. WFP and Unicef begin joint airlift of supplementary food into Somalia.

**8–9 April** – Summit of heads of state of Horn of Africa in Addis Ababa discusses regional co-operation on famine, refugee and other humanitarian problems.

**April** – Security Council creates UN Operation in Somalia (Unosom), agreeing to deploy 50 unarmed cease-fire monitors and in principle to 500 UN soldiers to protect relief operations.

**31 May–3 June** – Leaders of many Somali parties meet in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, and pledge co-operation with international relief efforts.

**27 July** – Following 22 July report by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Security Council approves urgent UN relief airlift.

**28 August** – Security Council authorizes expansion of Unosom to 4 200 security personnel.

**14 September** – First of 500 Pakistani Unosom troops arrive in Mogadishu.

**12–13 October** – UN's 100-Day Action Programme for accelerated humanitarian assistance to Somalia launched.

**24 November** – WFP ship shelled in Mogadishu harbour. Mr Boutros-Ghali warns Security Council effective relief impossible under such conditions, and presents options for "more forceful action" to Security Council.

**3 December** – Council authorizes dispatch of international military force to Somalia to create a "secure environment" for relief operations.

**3–5 December** – Somalia aid co-ordination meeting in Addis Ababa; Somali participants call for national reconciliation.

**9 December** – First contingents of multinational task force arrive in Somalia; securing port and airport.

**4–15 January 1993** – 14 Somali political groups at UN-sponsored meeting in Addis Ababa agree on cease-fire, disarmament and reconciliation conference.

**15 March** – National reconciliation conference convenes in Addis Ababa.

**26 March** – Security Council authorizes Unosom II to take over from the US-led multinational force on 1 May.

Source: *Africa Recovery Briefing Paper*, no 7, 15 January 1993; and author's Somalia file.

## Notes and references

- 1 During the severe drought of 1982–84, for instance, 100 000 people were reported to have died of starvation. "Famine in Africa", *Background Brief*, London: FCO, September 1991, p 11.
- 2 In format, the system was very similar to the security apparatus established by Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana's First Republic. See Simon Baynham, "Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?: The case of Nkrumah's national security service", in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 23, no 1, March 1985, pp 87–103.
- 3 Somalia's irredentist claims to the Ogaden, together with material on the causes and progress of the 1977–78 war, are discussed in much more detail in Simon Baynham and Richard Snailham, "Ethiopia", and Lawrence Matthews, "Somalia", in John Keegan (ed), *World armies*, London: The MacMillan Press, 1979, pp 206–211 and 630–632. See, too, Keith Somerville, *Foreign military intervention in Africa*, London: Pinter Publishers, 1990, especially pp 49–54 and 128–139.
- 4 In 1990, the Americans did not take the trouble to renegotiate access to Berbera when the lease expired.
- 5 Detailed information on Somalia's political parties and movements during this period may be found in "Somalia", in Arthur Banks *et al* (eds), *Political handbook of the world: 1990*, New York: CSA Publications, 1990, pp 572–574.
- 6 The progress of the fighting during the last weeks of Siyad Barre's administration is charted in several issues of *The Indian Ocean Newsletter*, no 460, 5 January 1991, pp 1–3; no 461, 12 January 1991, pp 1–2; no 462, 19 January 1991, p 5.
- 7 For details of European nations' efforts to evacuate their foreign nationals trapped in Somalia, see *Financial Times* (London), 4 January 1991.
- 8 The course of the conflict has been widely documented in the press and elsewhere. For a clear and concise descriptive analysis of Somalia's descent into chaos after the overthrow of Siyad Barre, however, see Ken Menkhaus and Terrence Lyons in "What are the lessons to be learned from Somalia?", *CSIS Africa Notes*, no 144, January 1993, especially pp 2–3.
- 9 General Aidid and Mr Ali Mahdi belong to different sub-clans of the Hawiye. The general argued that he had done most to topple President Barre, and was angered when clan leaders gave the presidency to Ali Mahdi. Thus the conflict between the two warlords has been essentially a power struggle between rival clansmen for control of the capital – and, they hope, for the rest of Somalia too.
 

The March cease-fire ended a four-month deluge of artillery, rocket and rifle fire that left, according to one relief agency, more than 40 000 people wounded and dead. By then, looting had become a way of life and Somali society had collapsed. Following the cease-fire, the aid agencies were forced to hire thousands of gunmen from both main factions to guard their personnel, premises, vehicles and food stocks.
- 10 For a more detailed analysis of some of the problems confronting the SNM Somaliland authorities a year or so after unilaterally declaring independence from the rest of the country on 16 May 1991, see "Somalia: Chaos spreads to the north", *Africa Confidential*, vol 33, no 7, 3 April 1992, pp 1–2.
- 11 The UN resolution authorizing military intervention in Somalia noted the "unique character of the situation". The unique character of the crisis is critically examined by Philip Johnston, "Mercy for Mogadishu", *Freedom Review*, vol 24, no 1, January/February 1993, p 1.
- 12 Troop numbers dispatched to Somalia by the six African states (as at January 1993) are as follows:
 

Botswana	300	Egypt	250
Morocco	1 250	Nigeria	550
Tunisia	130	Zimbabwe	400
- 13 Quoted in *The Economist*, vol 325, no 7789, 12 December 1992, p 53.
- 14 *Africa Recovery Briefing Paper*, no 7, 15 January 1993, pp 5–6.

# Nigeria's elusive search for nationhood

*Dr Charles Owusu Kwarteng discusses Nigerian politics since independence. The author teaches political science at Morgan State University, Baltimore, USA.*

In the second half of the twentieth century, the "winds of change" blew across the African continent and heralded the beginning of Africa's nationhood. On 1 October 1960, Nigeria attained independence from British colonial rule. Nationalist leaders would soon realize that the task of uniting their nation was not an easy one. Independence meant more than a national anthem to sing, and a national flag to wave. For example, only several years after its independence, Nigeria was on the verge of a civil war.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps, the title of the best-selling novel, *Things fall apart*, which was written by the renowned Nigerian novelist, Chinua Achebe, best captures the political drama and "the contradictions in the Nigerian political system".<sup>2</sup>

The Nigerian military, for the first time (in January 1966), entered the political arena as a "stabilizing" force, in order to maintain political equilibrium. Ironically, the last source on integration, itself, disintegrated, amid a succession of *coups d'état*. In Africa, the case of Nigeria being a prime example, "the mythical belief that the armed forces hold the key to political stability...has been shattered".<sup>3</sup> It was due to the elusive attempt at building a national cohesion that a veteran Nigerian politician, the late Chief Obefami Awolowo, commented that "Nigeria is not a nation, but a mere geographical expression".

This article's main purpose is to analyse the major complexities that militate against nation-building in Nigeria. It is against this background that an assessment is made about the current efforts by the Babangida administration to return the country to multiparty, democratic rule. The timing and the scope of the transition bear important relevance for the future stability of the country. Larry Diamond, for example, has noted some major flaws in the transition programme. As he said:

Nigeria is moving back to civilian rule. Despite persistent ethnic conflict, increased religious tension, continuing economic stagnation and nagging doubt that the military really intends to relinquish power".<sup>4</sup>

The problem of transition, however, needs to be examined within the historical context of Nigeria's long search for nation-building and the ensuing crises of political development.

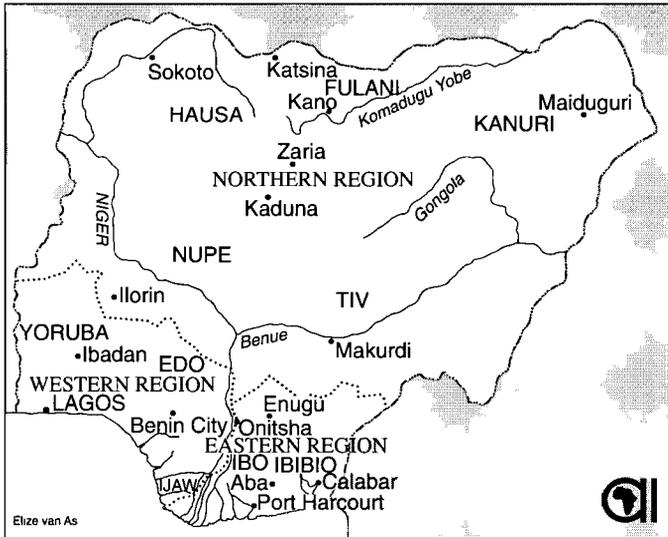
## Crises of political development

For the less-developed nations, the transition to modernity is often fraught with some major crises. Scholars have traditionally taken two major theoretical positions regarding the root causes of development problems in Africa. Those applying the modernization perspective have largely blamed Africa's development woes on "internal" factors, such as ethnic dissension, religion, and lack of democratic culture. On the other hand, dependency theorists analyse the root causes of development crises in terms of external factors, such as the influence of colonialism, debilitating international economy, and the policies of international agencies, such as the World Bank and the IMF.

Paul Anber, for example, saw Biafra's secession from Nigeria as part of the contradictions of Nigeria's modernization. Contrary to prevalent theory that educational and economic development in the emerging nations would inevitably erode tribal loyalties, Nigeria's case repudiates that automaticity. Anber noted that modernization (of Nigeria) led to "reinforcement of ethnic identity rather than to its deterioration, by reviving or creating particularistic cultural attachments to the ethnic group that is in the process of achieving universalistic (or modern) goals".<sup>5</sup>

Ibos in Nigeria compare themselves with Jews who have suffered years of persecution. After independence, there was a revolution of rising expectations among Ibos who aspired to high bureaucratic positions based on their educational advancement. However, there existed a contradiction as evidenced by the elevated economic and cultural status of the Ibos, who were, at the same time, subordinate to the political hegemony of dominant tribes in Nigeria.

According to the dependency analysis, contradictions mainly occur in the process of nation-building because of the uneven way in which the colonial entity is incorporated into the global system. The British policy of indirect rule, wherever it was practised, dampened the feelings of nationalism, by directing loyalty away from local rulers, towards the colonial administration. Thus, Northern Nigeria, the hill tribes of Burma, and the outlying islands of the Indonesian

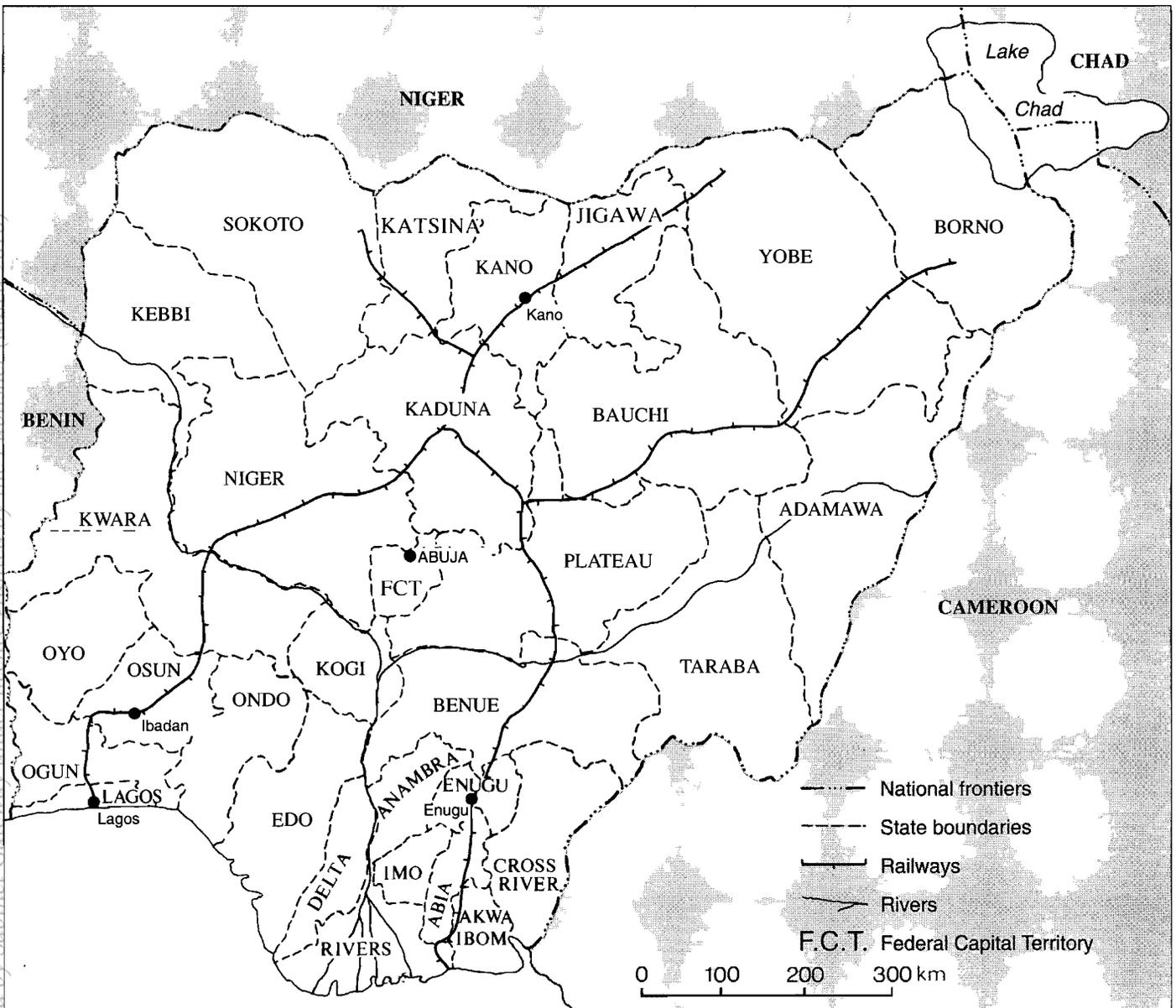


archipelago, were less nationalistic than other parts of the various British colonies.<sup>6</sup>

Development theorists have commented on the major factors that influence nation-building. Attention has particularly focused on the élites, who are navigating the ship of state in the troubled waters of social change. While their role as a “modernizing force” has been acknowledged, the élites have also contributed to the underdevelopment of Africa, through economic mismanagement and corruption.<sup>7</sup> As the Nigerian case suggests, corruption of the political élite often results in the diversion of élites’ attention from the national agenda to particularistic needs.

Left: Nigeria: The original three states (1960–1963)

Below: Nigeria: The present 30 states (since 1991)



Reproduced by Sabinet Gateway under licence granted by the Publisher (dated 2010)

There is a possibility that where there is co-operation among the élites, there could be some measure of national integration, even in fragmented societies. Arend Lijphart has used the concept of consociational democracy to capture this possibility. According to Lijphart, consociational democracy is a “government by élite cartel designed to turn a democracy with a fragmented political culture into a stable democracy”.<sup>8</sup> Lijphart observed that the success of this model of democracy would depend on:

- the ability of the (dominant) élites to accommodate divergent interests of sub-cultures
- élites’ ability to transcend cleavages and join in common effort toward unity
- commitment to national stability and cohesion, and
- élites’ understanding of the perils of political fragmentation.<sup>9</sup>

Lijphart notes that consociational democracy has failed in Nigeria. This is not surprising because, in Nigeria, élite consensus on major development issues becomes elusive where dominant tribal loyalties prevail. Until his death in 1987, Chief Obafemi Awolowo – the legendary Yoruba politician – had little in common with Nnamdi Azikiwe – the veteran Ibo politician, except rivalry and political competition. As if by design, rather than historical coincidence, Awolowo never became a federal head of state, even though his presidential qualities were hailed by his supporters and detractors alike. For example, the leader of Biafran secession, Emeka Ojukwu, eulogized Awolowo’s leadership qualities after the latter’s death, saying that he “was the best president Nigeria never had”.<sup>10</sup>

Roland Oliver and Michael Crowder illustrate the ironies of such personality differences in Nigeria when they observe that:

From the point of view of their [Awolowo and Azikiwe] political philosophies the natural alliance [in government] would have been between Azikiwe’s NCNC [National Council for Nigeria and the Cameroon] and Obefemi Awolowo’s AG [Action Group Party], but personal and ethnic rivalry led to a coalition between the NCNC and the NPC [Northern Peoples’ Congress].<sup>11</sup>

Ojukwu noted that “the élites [in Nigeria] use ethnicity as ladder and as weapon in the struggle for power”.<sup>12</sup> The demand for independence was, more or less, a struggle for the most suitable political framework in which élites from different ethnic and regional backgrounds would bargain for power. The arrival of self-rule unfolded the underlying strata of disunity in the Nigerian political landscape, which had merely been overshadowed by the relative “stability” offered by British colonial hegemony.

In *The black man’s burden*, Basil Davidson provides a prognosis of the causes of Africa’s development crises. Davidson blames the “curse of the nation state” (that was bequeathed to Africa by colonialism). He, nevertheless, also sees internal causes of decay. According to Davidson, the issue is not about whether the African political system is

democratic or dictatorial, it is about corruption of a political class – the “privileged few”.<sup>13</sup> In the heydays of petro-naira politics, a politically corrupt class that ruled Nigeria supervised the building of expensive and unproductive projects that landed Nigeria into debt. One of them was the building of the federal capital of Abuja. Such projects often become avenues for clientelist politics and personal aggrandizement.

Perhaps, the major challenge of nation-building in Nigeria has been the task of burying the “regional lines”. During the constitutional negotiation for Nigeria’s independence, the various regional entities had their grievances as well as their bargaining cards. In view of the size of its constituency, the Northern Region argued for, among other things, respect for the integrity of Islam and, at least, 50 per cent of the constituted representatives at the federal level. Largely conservative, the Northerners were particularly fearful of any secular ideology that would pose a threat to Islam. The Western Region also agitated for regional autonomy. Having profited from a post-war boom in the cocoa industry, the Western Region feared that its resources would be siphoned for the development of other regions.

The Ibo-dominated East, however, did not have the luxury of wealth as in the West, nor the advantage of size like the North. Also, much of its Ibo support was dispersed in a diaspora throughout Nigeria. Thus, the east bargained from a position of relative weakness. Consequently, the Ibos were in favour of strong federal powers, or a centralized system of government that would, among other things, allocate substantial development revenue based on a criterion of need. The British authorities established a compromise among such competing and conflicting demands. Unfortunately, this was to be the fragile foundation upon which Nigeria’s statehood would be built.

Integration of the Nigerian polity became a major national crusade. University graduates serve in a mandatory National Youth Corps that makes it possible for nationals to serve in the civil service across the country, without regard to ethnic origin. This novel ideal is unfortunately being hampered by the fact that certain officials give preference to servicemen from their own tribes or regions.

Any policy of integration must redress the politics of exclusion, by making it possible for minority leaders to rule Nigeria, through “presidential rotation”. Ojukwu suggested that this would mean dividing the country, for example, into six presidential zones. Assuming that a president could rule for the maximum of two terms, then there would be a possibility that at least every 48 years (two terms of four years each multiplied by six), there would be a president from each of the presidential zones.<sup>14</sup>

A true path of national integration would also mean the detribalization of politics, through an active national campaign to recruit other minorities in politics. In 1979, Awolowo, the leader of the United Party of Nigeria (UPN), undertook an extensive national campaign so that he could broaden his power base. His party beat all others in the Western Region, his traditional turf, but fared badly elsewhere except in Gongola state.

## Regionalization and its defects

The independence constitution of 1960 provided for three regions: Northern, Eastern and Western. The adoption of a federalist constitution was a means of creating unity out of diversity, for it explicitly accommodated the political and cultural differences that exist among Nigerians. Nevertheless, regionalism compounded Nigeria's problems because of the pattern of economic development in Nigeria.

Economic polarization was accentuated by the emergence of the oil-dependent economy. Oil, perhaps more than any other factor, intensified the resource-politics in Nigeria, especially since major petroleum-producing areas are also areas with minority ethnic groups.

An article in the *Nigerian Press Review* argued that "if the Nigerian Republic had been governed under a unitary constitution, there would have been no minority problem, at least, in the form it was historically posed".<sup>15</sup> Whether the crisis of Nigerian federation could have been avoided if Nigeria had adopted a unitary constitution is unclear. For one thing, it would be erroneous to equate unitary rule with national unity, and federation, or autonomy, with division. According to K W Robinson:

a federation is the most geographically expressive of all political systems. It is based on the existence of regional differences, and recognizes the claims of the component areas to perpetuate their individual characters....Federalism does not create unity out of diversity; rather, it enables the two to coexist.<sup>16</sup>

Federation, as adopted in Nigeria, was a child of political necessity. It has not, *per se*, solved the national problem – that of unity. Regionalist tendencies in Nigeria have been expressed in a variety of forms: the challenge of federal electoral results; rejection of census figures, military intervention, and more tragically, the Nigerian civil war (1967–1970). In addition, various regions in Nigeria, at different times, played the "secession card". For example, in 1953, the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) used the threat of seceding from Nigeria as a bargaining chip to back its demands in a federal arrangement. What sparked this action was the fear that the South would dominate the North, if a unitary constitution was adopted. The Western-based Action Group Party also used the threat of secession, because of the allegation that the North and the East were forging an alliance against the West. However, part of the resentment expressed by the Western Region was that power distribution at the federal level did not take into account the dominant economic contribution made by the West.

## Ethnicity, identity and national integration

A major challenge faced by the Nigerian state has been reconciling majority rule with the rights of minority groups. The federal system, originally based on three major regions, meant that one political party, one region, one ethnicity would always be excluded from the political arena, and, consequently, from the rewards and patronage available at the federal level of government. In the 1959 national elections, the excluded party was the Western-based Action Group Party.

Another major characteristic of party politics in Nigeria is the competition for the control of state apparatus as a means of acquiring economic and political power. The success of such competition determines influence, especially in one's ethnic area. The struggle for power is often marked by an element of Machiavellianism, since politicians would use both fair and foul means. For example, it was alleged that Awolowo diverted nearly \$12 million from the Western region's marketing boards into the coffers of the Action Group during the 1959–1962 period.<sup>17</sup>

In developing nations like Cuba, China and Tanzania, élites used nationalism as a means of integrating society. In Nigeria, however, politicians largely shied away from a nationalist ideology. Often, ideology was identified with the tribe, or ethnic symbols, not with the Nigerian state. For example, Yoruba irredentism is a result of ethnic consciousness and was institutionalized with the creation of the *Egbe Omo Oduduwa*, a pan-Yoruba movement created in 1945, whose main idea was a single nationalism throughout Yorubaland.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, at its inaugural meeting in 1936, the Ibohood Movement emphasized "tribal unity" of all the Ibos.<sup>19</sup>

A Nigerian intellectual, Chukwuneka Onwubu, has noted that Nigeria as a nation is divided by tribe more than by political philosophy.<sup>20</sup> In *Because I am involved*, Emeka Odumegwu-Ojukwu, former Biafran secessionist leader, also recalls the influence of ethnicity on Nigerian politics. He observes that:

Each leader of the anti-colonial struggle saw himself, first as a substitute governor-general and then as a tribal champion who would strive to become a regional champion, cheered on by his ethnic group wherever it became necessary.<sup>21</sup>

Thirty years after independence, ethnicity still remains a major divisive factor. While Christians have questioned the present government under the leadership of Babangida (himself a Muslim) for secretly developing ties with the Organization of Islamic Conference, Muslims have also complained about Nigeria's new *rapprochement* with Israel, a country most black African nations, in solidarity with the Arab and Muslim world, severed ties with.

Religion, like money, has been used as an instrument to bolster political influence. For example, when he felt that his power base within the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) was at stake during the 1983 re-election campaign, the former Nigerian President, Shehu Shagari, appealed to Muslim sentiments. Himself a Muslim, the President told Muslims in Ilorin and in Sokoto that if they voted for his chief rival (and non-Muslim), Awolowo, the Arabs would not allow Nigerian Muslims to make pilgrimages to Mecca.<sup>22</sup> It was not surprising that during Shagari's presidency, debates about Nigeria restoring diplomatic relations with Israel were never encouraged.<sup>23</sup>

Confronted with the challenge of national integration, many African nations created political structures that could transcend ethnic lines. The integrative role of political parties in forging national unity has been recognized, even in countries that do not allow political parties to participate in national decision-making. Always justifying the rationale

on unity grounds, many African countries adopted single party systems that used party propaganda legitimizing the rule of a single leader (the case of Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana). Nurturing institutions with a pan-national ideology in Nigeria has been a problem, as evidenced by rivalries in the Nigerian military.

### The military factor in Nigerian politics

In many African countries, independence was followed by a policy of Africanization that was meant to put Africans in top positions previously occupied by foreigners. The rapid Nigerianization of the armed forces, after independence, created intense ethnic rivalry in the military. To counter regional divisions, brigades were rotated throughout the regions. There was also the institution of national quotas: 50 per cent from the North and 25 per cent each from the East and the West. Ethnic divisions still remained prevalent, despite the efforts to suppress them. The vast majority of the North's 50 per cent came from the Middle-belt areas, which also opposed Northern dominance. The Ibos came to dominate the officer corps, creating resentment about "Ibo dominance" in the military.

In the literature on military intervention in civilian politics, authors often focus on internal factors, eg promotion, recruitment and retrenchment, and external factors, such as military-civilian relations. Jon Kraus, for example, enumerates some divisive tendencies within the Nigerian army after the Gowon coup in 1966.<sup>24</sup> According to Kraus, these tendencies pitted specialists against combat units, military against civilian officers (eg military state governors); officers from "majority" ethnic groups (who would prefer civilian rule because "their people" had the upper hand) against officers from "minority" ethnic groups (who preferred military rule because it guaranteed rapid promotion for them).

It is a common occurrence for the military to develop allies within the civilian polity, to whom they turn, for advice and support. Military intervention is often the brain work of politicians.<sup>25</sup> Conflicts within the civilian polity normally trigger military intervention. Military officers often justify intervention in politics on nationalist grounds – their role of preserving national unity and integration.<sup>26</sup>

In *Class, ethnicity and democracy in Nigeria*, Larry Diamond stresses the role of ethnicity in the failure of Nigeria's First Republic.<sup>27</sup> Ethnicity alone, however, cannot fully account for the failure of democracy, or military intervention in politics in Nigeria. One of the major factors is the absence of a democratic culture – toleration of differing viewpoints without recourse to violence and acrimony. The absence of a democratic culture in Nigeria has created a major contradiction: the ballot and the bullet exist side by side as the means of executive replacement (see Table). This contradictory phenomenon poses a great challenge to political stability in post-military Nigeria.<sup>28</sup> One observer has noted that "democratic elections ... can only work when the leading actors perceive that adhering to the rules of the electoral game is more important than the electoral outcome".<sup>29</sup>

### Means of Nigerian executive changes: Ballots and bullets

Period	Head of state	Regime	Method of change
1914–60	(British colony)	Colonial	Independence
1960–66	Abubakar Tafawa Balewa*	Civilian	Military coup
1966	Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi*	Military	Military coup
1966–75	Yakubu Gowon	Military	Military coup
1975–76	Murtala Mohammed*	Military	Military coup
1976–79	Olusegun Obasanjo	Military	Military coup
1979–83	Shehu Shagari	Civilian	Multiparty election
1983–84	Mohammed Buhari	Military	Military coup
1985–?*	Ibrahim Babangida	Military	Military coup

\* Assassinated

\*\* The time-table for military hand-over to civilian rule has been changed several times. At the time of writing the hand-over date was scheduled for August 1993

### Politics in the First Republic (1960–1966)

The first civilian regime in Nigeria was plagued by divisive squabbles. Fore example, the 1962 census indicated that the North outnumbered the combined population of the three Southern regions. The next census, in 1964, also indicated a Northern majority of 29,7 million, as against a combined total of 25,8 million in the South.<sup>30</sup> These figures proved controversial since parliamentary seats were allocated according to the number of people in each region. Subsequently, the demarcation of many constituencies was disputed and without acceptable mechanisms to mediate the conflict, Nigeria was brought to the verge of a political crisis. One of the consequences of the conflict was the imprisonment of the leader of the opposition party, Chief Obefemi Awolowo.

### The Ironsi regime (1966)

Nigeria's First Republic was a painful adventure into self-rule. On 15 January 1966, a coup staged by junior army officers ended in the assassination of Ahmad Bello (premier of the Northern region), Chief Akintola (premier of the Western region), two federal politicians Tafawa Balewa (prime minister) and Chief Festus Samuel Okotie-Eboh (finance minister). The coup, stage lagely by Ibo army officers, created political confusion. The civilian administration handed over political authority to the army commander, General Ironsi (incidentally an Ibo), to restore peace and order. Ironsi's regime was seen as an Ibo-orchestrated conspiracy to counter "Northern domination" of major ethnic groups in Nigeria.<sup>31</sup> First of all, Ironsi failed to put the coup plotters on trial. Also, the new military leader ruled with the advice of an inner circle of confidants, composed largely of Ibos. The fact that the Prime Minister, Tafawa Balewa (a Northerner), was killed, while the Head of State, Nnamdi Azikiwe (an Ibo) survived, strengthened the belief that Ironsi was involved in a conspiracy. To the Northerners, this episode demonstrated the "Machiavellian Ibo ambitions" in countering the Northern hegemony.

Perhaps, the last political straw that broke the back of the camel of national reconciliation was the announcement by the Ironsi regime, on 24 May 1966, that the civil service was to be unified. This announcement heightened the fear entertained by the Northerners that the Ibos were bent on a political manoeuvre to dominate the North. Ironsi might have downplayed the political implications of this policy. The imposition of a unitary system of administration meant, among other things, that Nigerians would compete for civil service jobs on an equal footing. However, the more educationally advanced Ibos and Yorubas would naturally have an advantage.

Since electoral politics is based on numbers, minority groups, finding it impossible to seek political change, often resort to extra-constitutional means of change. The Ibo officers who seized power used these violent measures in displacing Nigeria's federal civilian institutions in order to achieve Ibo political aims.

General Ironsi did not stay in power for long, as he became a victim of a coup which resulted in his death in July 1966. After the assassination of Ironsi there was a large-scale massacre of Ibos. The Ibo political establishment was faced with three delicate choices:

- to accede to the compromise proposals offered by the federal government
- to continue the deadlock
- to opt for secession

They opted for the last alternative during the term of the new military government under General Gowon. Ibo separatism – that finally culminated in the declaration of war and the Biafra Republic (within the Federal Republic of Nigeria) – demonstrated one of the major crises of identity in Africa.<sup>32</sup>

Supporters of the conspiracy thesis (about Ibo's national ambition) suggest that the Ibo plot to capture power turned to withdrawal and secession when the July counter-coup robbed them of the opportunity to "take over the country".<sup>33</sup>

On the contrary, the Ibos subscribe to the emotional thesis of "national survival". The Ibo response to the crisis was couched in terms that identified with Ibo nationalism. To the Ibo, the war was a heroic "self-defence" by a "hated and persecuted" people against an act of war declared by Nigeria. Ojukwu vividly explains the symbolism of Biafra:

The concept, Biafra, was a line drawn for a persecuted people to have a beacon of hope, a line drawn so that a fleeing people can at least hope that once they cross it, they have arrived at a goal, a line drawn so that a hated and persecuted people can at least know that once they reach there, they would have love and succour. This is why there was no declaration of that line as a republic until certain acts of war were initiated against the persecuted people.<sup>34</sup>

The Nigerian civil war, apart from its ethnic undertones, could be seen as an example of a developing nation's poor capacity for crisis-management. It also reflected the failure of attempts to force unwilling nationalities and ethnic groups to remain within the boundaries created by the imperial powers. The ex-President of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah,

an architect of pan-Africanism and a critic of balkanization, recalls in his autobiography that he was born on the border of what was the Gold Coast, to a tribe divided by French and British colonial administrations. The implications of such artificial divisions is that:

Because tribal, ethnic, and linguistic groups were divided by colonial boundaries and because the fractured minorities were not sufficiently socialized into the colony, the individual's loyalty often remained with a regional group which cut across the new boundaries.<sup>35</sup>

Tragically, the Biafran war revealed the artificiality of Nigeria's political boundaries, and also magnified the problem of national disintegration.<sup>36</sup>

## The Gowon administration (1966–1975)

After the death of Ironsi, the Nigerian political establishment tactfully mediated the national crisis of disintegration. For example, General Yakubu Gowon, the army chief of staff who was chosen to head the government, was a Christian from a minority tribe in the North, and a non-participant in the coup against Ironsi. In order to foster an atmosphere of political reconciliation, Gowon released jailed political leaders from detention, including Chief Awolowo.

As a leader, Gowon's downfall largely resulted from two major indecisions: the creation of more states and whether to restore civilian rule. Gowon's announcement, in 1974, that he would not hand over power to popularly elected government was the *coup de grace*. On 29 July 1975 he was overthrown in a peaceful *coup d'état* while he was attending the OAU summit in Kampala, Uganda.

## The Murtala-Obasanjo era 1975–1979

General Murtala Mohammed, who succeeded General Gowon, ruled for only six months, when, on 13 February 1976, an attempted coup resulted in his death. Murtala's reformist zeal antagonized some vested interests. It is not clear how effective he would have been in addressing the major issue of corruption. General Olusegun Obasanjo, who was a member of Murtala's administration, agreed to take over the reins of government. He returned the country to civilian rule in 1979.

The major political significance of the Obasanjo regime lies in it being the first military regime in Nigeria to disengage from politics through a planned transition to civilian rule. Having tasted power and being corrupted by it, the real danger existed that the military would not want to leave the political arena. A great political tragedy, however, is the fact that the Obasanjo regime failed to conduct any major "house cleaning" exercise to minimize the possibility of the military re-emerging in politics.

## The Second Republic (1979–1983)

The Nigerian Second Republic (1979–1983) mapped out a strategy of national politics devoid of the bitter ethnic animosities that characterized politics in the First Republic.

The Federal Electoral Commission (Fedeco), which was empowered to conduct elections, instituted measures to ban ethnically based political parties. Using the “representativeness” criterion, only five (out of over 50) parties were certified by the government.<sup>37</sup>

The National Party of Nigeria (NPN) – the ruling party – was headed by Shehu Shagari, a Northern-born, and ex-parliamentary secretary of the former Nigerian premier, Tafawa Balewa, also a Northerner. The party was controlled by politicians who had dominated Nigerian politics between 1960 and 1966.

Even though some constitutional provisions were made to stamp out ethnic cleavages, at the same time, ethnic conflicts were exploited for political advantage. Thus, in May 1982, when the ruling party, the NPN granted amnesty to the former Biafran secessionist leader, Ojukwu, some observers saw it as an attempt to “buy” the Ibo votes and add them to the North’s, in order to defeat the Yoruba-dominated Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN). Reflecting on this political move, Ojukwu maintained that to have joined the Ibo-based NPP would have spurred allegations about an “Ibo conspiracy”. On the other hand, it would also have been politically counter-productive to join the UPN since it would have been interpreted by Ibos as a “sell-out” to Awolowo.<sup>38</sup>

How does the experience of the Second Republic help our understanding of the nature of the political system in Nigeria?<sup>39</sup> One of the major lessons is the fact that Nigeria’s political parties are unable to form coalitions. Yet there is an opportunity for elite coalition-building in fragmented societies. Lijphart’s consociational model of democracy is relevant here. Based on a study in Netherlands, the concept refers to a segmented society that is effectively governed by co-operation at the overarching elite level.<sup>40</sup> In Nigeria, the opportunities for elite coalition-building have been limited thus far. For example, in 1979, when faced with the hegemony of the Northern-based NPN, the UPN in the West and the NPP in the East, could not merge, because of the feud between Awolowo (from the West) and Azikiwe (from the East).

Though not successful, the Second Republic came up with a method of presidential recruitment that would supposedly transcend ethnic lines. The 1979 Nigerian constitution stipulated that the national cabinet must have a member from each of the 19 states. Also, a president of the federation must have won one-fourth of the votes in two-thirds of the nineteen states (or 13 states). More importantly, by the adoption of the American-style presidential system, it was hoped that the leader would be able to act as a strong centripetal force for national unity. This experimentation did not last long, as the Second Republic was overthrown.<sup>41</sup>

### **The Buhari-Idiagbon administration (1983–1985)**

On 31 December 1983, the armed forces seized power in a coup headed by Major-General Mohammed Buhari. One of the aims of the Buhari regime was to wage a “war against

indiscipline”. In addition to tackling corruption, radical steps were made to enforce respect for law and order. The “war” could not root out indiscipline, neither could it eradicate bureaucratic corruption. On 27 August 1985 Buhari was himself overthrown in the seventh *coup d’état* in the country by Major-General (later General) Ibrahim Babangida.

### **Babangida and the transition to civilian rule**

Having been in power since 1985, the military regime of Babangida has promised to return the country to civilian rule. At the same time, doubting Thomases in Nigerian politics have begun asking questions about the sincerity of this promise and the sustainability of the “voodoo democracy” that has been proposed to Nigerians.<sup>42</sup>

The time-table for the transition has been altered on several occasions. Originally scheduled for 1 October 1990, it was extended to 1 October 1992. Thereafter, the date was moved to 2 January 1993. In November 1992, the President dropped a bombshell when he announced in a national broadcast that the “new” change-over date was to be 27 August 1993, which is an anniversary of Babangida’s coup and has a lot of political symbolism.

The government has emphasized that it will not sacrifice the security of the state on the altar of time, and that it does not want to rush into handing over power. The military have tried to retain the patronage of the political class that stand to benefit from continued military rule in Nigeria. This kind of political alliance is promoted by those who favour a “diarchy”, where both the military and the civilians could share power. Prominent among the advocates of such an alliance is Arthur Nzeribe, an Ibo billionaire who has called for the extension of the transition, and has even suggested that President Babangida be “drafted for President”. Critics believe that Nzeribe might be protecting his own interests. Nzeribe has wide-ranging business interests and is reportedly responsible for the supply of ammunition to the Ecomog forces in Liberia.<sup>43</sup>

The idea of diarchy is not new in Nigeria. It was floated as a political option as far back as 1972 by Nnamdi Azikiwe. The rationale behind it is the search for stability. Opponents of this arrangement argue that it is a strategy hatched by the military to co-opt the civilian elite into a transitional government. If accepted, Nigeria may be thrown into a political laboratory of experimental gimmicks. The opponents of the military regime would not settle for anything less than a complete military disengagement from governance.

In Ghana, the regime of General Acheampong (1972–1978) concocted a theory of “union government” – a populist platform whereby civilian representatives (including farmers and artisans) would share power with the military. This strategy, though, was largely seen as a way to perpetuate military rule through staged elections which the military head of state plotted to win in advance!

There is speculation that Babangida may resign from the army and run on the ticket of one of the two newly formed political parties in an attempt to become an elected

President *à la* Jerry Rawlings of Ghana and the late Samuel Doe of Liberia.

Assuming that the military is genuinely committed to retreating to the barracks, other uncertainties remain: Is Nigeria prepared for democratic civilian rule? Recent political developments in Africa, noticeably the electoral defeat of President Kenneth Kaunda in Zambia, have emboldened the clamour for multiparty politics in Africa. At the same time, Nigerians have watched African military leaders and dictators metamorphose into “democrats” overnight through manipulated elections (eg Samuel Doe of Liberia, Compaore of Burkina Faso and Arap Moi of Kenya).

Several factors could determine the pace and direction of democratic transition in Africa. To the extent that pro-democracy revolutions in Eastern Europe impacted on Africa’s current call for democracy, delays in reforms there could also harm the democratization process in Africa. Western pressure and internal opposition to military rule may also influence the pace of transition to multiparty rule in Nigeria.

It is questionable whether party politics promotes stability in multiparty systems because of the close association that the parties have with ethnic groups. When the Nigerian government lifted the ban on partisan politics in 1989, about a dozen political groups submitted their names to the government for official recognition as “political parties”. Not only did the government outlaw these groups, but also created a two-party system, named the National Republican Convention (NRC) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP). In addition, the government wrote the party manifestos of both parties, funded them, and appointed their senior party officials. This unique, if not undemocratic, policy of official endorsement of political parties was designed to remove regional, ethnic and religious influences from civilian politics in the post-1992 era.

The question is: To what extent would the two-party structure serve as a bulwark of stability? Given the history of unstable multiparty politics in Nigeria, the two-party system could be justified, as Babangida has done, on the grounds of stability. However, there is a potential crisis of legitimizing the two-party system after the military hand over the reins of power. The Babangida regime decreed the two-party system, claiming that the five-party system in the Second Republic did not promote national cohesion. Yet, even with the two parties, the country remains more polarized than it was in the First and Second Republics. While political parties in the previous administrations were regional and largely ethnic-based, they were controlled by politicians who were accepted by the rank and file of the parties. The major issue raised now is the stability of political parties whose executives are not accountable to, and may not be accepted by, the rank and file.

The two-party system also falls short of eradicating the underlying causes of disunity in the country. For example, the South’s fear of Northern domination has been worsened by the proposition of the two-party system. For too many Nigerians the two-party arrangement is really six of one and half a dozen of the other. The Northern strategy of control-

ling the presidency was unlikely to change in such a system. As a last resort, if Babangida clings to power, it may not change anything about Northern hegemony because he is closer to the core of Northern leaders than a Southern president would be.

An interesting development in civil-military relations has taken place. The military has assumed a gate-keeper role – disqualifying the political class that plunged previous Nigerian administrations into chaos. Thus 23 former presidential aspirants were disqualified on the grounds that they were individually and severally responsible for rigging the primary (party) presidential elections conducted in late 1992.

Perhaps the greatest uncertainty is the future role of the military. For decades, the military have directly participated in distributing and controlling the spoils of the state. The long period of engagement in politics, particularly during the oil boom era in the 1970s, has endowed the military establishment with substantial political resources and influence. By the end of the civil war in the 1970s the military force ballooned from 11 000 persons to a quarter of a million. Their average pay was about eight times the per capita income.<sup>44</sup> A return to civilian rule could threaten the corporate interest of the military.

The problem in Nigeria, as in other parts of the developing world, is linked to the concept of praetorianism – the failure of the civilians to establish control over the military. Opoku Agyeman, for example, sees praetorianism as a “set-back to political institutionalization” in Africa.<sup>45</sup>

Samuel Decalo puts forward three modalities for civil-military stability in Africa.<sup>46</sup> He observes that African nations could ensure stability by signing military defence agreements with external guarantors (the “external guarantor model”), such as exist between France and some Francophone countries. This arrangement is not coup-proof, however. For example, despite established military and defence pacts, France could not preempt the deposal of African leaders, including Abbe Fulbert Youlou (Congo), Sylvanus Olympio (Togo) and Hamani Diori (Niger).

Based on Decalo’s model, Nigerian civilian élites could extend some benefits to the military in an attempt to buy their loyalty (the “trade-off model”). This could include the provision of more firepower to the military to enhance their prestige, and the donation of duty-free cars. A more substantial concession could be the integration of the military into the political hierarchy as in Gabon, where the officers joined the Cabinet in 1969.<sup>47</sup> Once the military officers become economic potentates, they, it is expected, would defend their class interest by spying on conspirators planning to overthrow a corrupt, albeit, benevolent regime.

However, the way the civilian regime is able to legitimize its rule, in itself, could help prevent military intervention (“the legitimized model”). Decalo suggests that some polities “have been able to develop a measure of systemic legitimacy that serves to discourage praetorian assaults from their armed forces”.<sup>48</sup> Indeed, given the African (and Nigerian) military’s self-imposed role as the guardian of national unity, it is doubtful whether any civilian regime

could ever pass the test of legitimacy with a hundred per cent. President Babangida himself conjured the “custodian theory” of military intervention in politics, conferring on the military the almost mythical responsibility as defenders and saviours against civilian dictatorship, political corruption and national disintegration.

The prospects for a coup-proof transition in Nigeria will be dependent, to a large extent, on how adequately the present military regime addresses the fundamental factors that prompted military coups in the past. The most important ones, to this author, include: the absence of viable civilian institutions with pan-national legitimacy; corruption of the civilian élite; and the “Northern domination” of the federation.

With the creation of 30 states, a two-party system, and elaborate procedures of presidential recruitment, the original three-group, three-state, three-party system has changed, to some extent, thanks to “Babangidization”. The two-party system has neutralized, albeit weakly, the traditional three-party tendency. But the three main tribal groupings – Hausa (in the North), Yoruba (in the West) and Ibo (in the East) would remain dominant. The issue of “Northern domination” still remains, though.

## Complex issues

The events of the past year have shown that the transition to democracy has yet to survive the major challenges. The postponement of the hand-over date has destroyed the credibility of the military establishment. Some critics have used a “chaos theory” to explain why the government aborted the transition scheduled for January 1993. The argument goes that it was in the interest of the Babangida administration to create confusion in the elections so as to justify extending the deadline for transfer of power. Opponents fear he may use that strategy in the future to prolong his rule.

Criticizing what appears to be an undemocratic procedure, observers were concerned that the military regime hijacked the role of the judiciary in the disqualification of the presidential aspirants. Former presidential aspirant in the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Arthur Nzeribe, welcomed the change and suggested that the hand-over be put off for another three years.<sup>49</sup> While some politicians have given support for the new arrangement, others have gone to court to challenge the change.<sup>50</sup>

There are other economic and logistical aspects of the transition that need to be examined. The so-called Option A4 has been supported by the government as the most feasible method of presidential recruitment. Under this option, there will be 31 aspirants for each of the two parties, with one aspirant each from each of the 30 states and the federal capital territory. The irony is: how can the government manage 62 presidential aspirants, if it was unable to manage 23 in the past?

The merits of this option, as the government has explained, is that it opens the nomination process to all the states of the federation, and may provide a greater sense of belongingness and unity. However, the aspirant with a large

amount of money could possibly buy his/her way through the congresses and convention and consequently capture the mantle of leadership.

In opposing Option A4, a former commissioner for information in the First Republic, Chief Anthony Enahoro, suggested that the military government summon a joint meeting of the national and state assemblies to constitute an electoral college to elect a civilian president.

The chaotic manner in which the presidential primaries were conducted has attracted comments from Nigerians. For example, former Nigerian head of state, Olusegun Obasanjo, lamented that a country like Angola that has emerged from 16 years of civil war, has an illiteracy rate of more than 80 per cent and has an underdeveloped infrastructure could conduct a relatively decent, well-acclaimed, free-and-fair election while Nigeria seemed unable to do so.<sup>51</sup>

Even though some segments of the military may be in favour of a hand-over, Babangida, as his critics have charged, might have a “hidden agenda” to remain in power as a “civilian” president. In that sense he will be “the referee, the player and the linesman” for the “transition” game.

Class conflicts in the military establishment make it difficult to describe the Nigerian military as a monolithic group. A secret committee which was set up by the Defence Ministry to consider the question of whether or not to extend the transition programme recommended that the civilians should take over in January 1993.<sup>52</sup>

The spectre of a civilianized Babangida remaining in power has important implications. The fear of Northern Muslim domination of Nigeria will be exacerbated if Babangida remains in power. Secondly, there could be a “Rawlings scenario” (as occurred in Ghana in 1979): a decision to remain in power could alienate some segments of the military, including the junior army officers who might have been disgusted by the corruption and abuse of power among the top hierarchy of the military. In the case of Ghana, retired general and former head of state, Akwasi Amankwa Afrifa, warned the ruling military government that failure to hand over power could have a backlash – a retribution from the junior officers. Flight Lieutenant Rawlings later staged a coup in which General Afrifa’s predictions came true, as he and his colleagues were executed by junior officers.

Supporters of the Babangida regime argue that it deserves some credit for innovative, if controversial, policies about nation-building. It increased the number of states from 19 to 30. In the early years of the Republic of Nigeria, two primary considerations were given for the creation of more states: stability and development. Arguing for the position that more states ought to be created out of the Imo and Anambra states, Ibo élites maintained that this was a true way to ensure “more equitable representation of the Ibos”.<sup>53</sup>

In 1966, General Ironsi took a political risk by adopting the Unitary Decree that abolished the federal system of government. The decree was meant “... to remove the last vestiges of intense regionalism of the recent past and to produce that cohesion in governmental structures which is necessary in achieving and maintaining the paramount

objective of national unity".<sup>54</sup> This decision had political implications. In the first place, it was a challenge to the political power base of the emirs in the North, who prophetically cautioned the government that the abolition of the regions would not augur well for national unity.<sup>55</sup>

Babangida's policy of creating more states has its merits and pitfalls. On the positive side, it is part of the solution to the "national question" – of removing the last vestiges of the old regions, and of consolidating the position of minority groups. The creation of states seemed to have healed the supremacy tussle between local traditional leaders. It has also rekindled other feuds. In the case of the creation of Osun state, the Ifes reportedly mounted a fierce lobby for the capital of the new state to be located at Ile-Ife, the cradle of the Yoruba nation. The formation of many states appears to have redefined the character of ethnic conflicts, rather than solving them. For example, instead of Ibo versus Yoruba, fragmentation is taking place among the various Ibo regional groupings.

While some supporters of state creation were genuinely motivated by considerations of national unity, class interests were also discernible from the agitations. A Nigerian politician and a scholar informed this author that he supported the creation of more states because it would expand bureaucratic opportunities for himself.<sup>56</sup>

Furthermore, there are major economic, financial and administrative implications involved in state-creation. The experience, so far, with Babangida's states is that some of the newly created states have relatively scarce administrative and financial resources. Some local government areas have a population of 50 000, while others have half a million. The controversial issue of equity in revenue allocation will re-surface. This situation will definitely not promote smooth inter-state relationships if these states become the poor relations of the federal government, instead of co-partners in a federal Nigeria.

Opponents of new states speculate that the creation of the new states and local governments could be a ploy to prolong the existence of the Babangida regime.

### Assessment of Babangida's political agenda

One of the major aims of "Babangidization" (of Nigerian politics) is the building a new Nigerian political culture. The Babangida administration established a Political Bureau in 1987, which travelled extensively across the country. It opened hearings in every local government area, conducted seminars on diverse political issues, and received submissions from different segments of the citizenry concerning the structure of the next regime. This is part of a "new democratic culture" that Babangida had earlier promised to offer.

In pursuit of participatory democracy, the Directorate of Social Mobilization (Mamsar) has sought to create grassroots support for the emerging political system. The question that remains is: How long can this be sustained? To sustain the momentum for democratization there will be the need for constant political education. The military, in partic-

ular, need political resocialization in the efforts to create a new Nigerian political culture that would be supportive of a unified Nigeria.

Babangida's democratic populism started earlier when his regime "rejected" an IMF loan, based on popular sentiments. Despite the impression created that the regime would support grassroots and participatory politics, Nigeria is, as Larry Diamond observes, "between dictatorship and democracy".<sup>57</sup> Starting his presidential career as a liberal democratic reformer, Babangida released detained journalists, and nullified the notorious Decree 4 which had crippled the press.<sup>58</sup> Later on, he became intolerant of press criticisms. For example, the editor of *Newswatch*, Dele Giwa, was killed in a letter bomb in 1986, an assassination in which the government was implicated.

Decree 2, which the Babangida government itself enacted, became the constitutional justification for the arrest of journalists and opposition groups on the subjective grounds of "state security". Victims of this decree include a businessman who allegedly paid a \$500,000 bribe into the Swiss bank account of Nigeria's Vice-President Akhomu for assistance with a business deal.<sup>59</sup>

The political architecture of the Babangida polity has some structural deficiencies. The two-party system, which is expected to serve as a major building block of this political edifice, came as a compromise between the cynics, who doubted the multi-party system, and popularists, who argue that it is only a two-party system that would afford an opportunity for entertaining opposing views.

A critique of the two-party system has been made by Nigerian scholars.<sup>60</sup> Those clinging to the institutionalist theory maintain that an executive president would serve as a catalyst.<sup>61</sup> This may not help sustain a two-party system. The incapacity of the Nigerian polity to maintain a two-party system under the executive presidency of Shehu Shagari (1979–1983) was demonstrated by the failure of opposition parties to merge in order to counterbalance the hegemony of the National Party of Nigeria.

Dualist theorists<sup>62</sup> point to the fact that a dichotomy of interests often supports a two-party system. Thus, the emergence of two major camps in the United States before 1787 along economic and political lines was partly a factor for the emergence of a two-party American system. The American political culture that has accepted compromise among competing groups, has been able to bring heterogeneous groups under two major political camps. Ironically, Nigeria has emulated the American two-party model, which may prove incapable of reconciling the multi-faceted divisions that prevail in Nigeria.

### Conclusions

The tortuous and turbulent route to "Nigeria's third quest for democracy"<sup>63</sup> dramatizes the fact that 30 years since its independence, Nigeria is still searching for a viable political system. The "new Nigeria" that is being groomed under the military tutelage would have to overcome two challenges:

- the challenge to make Nigeria democratic enough to consider the interests of minority groups; and
- the ability to de-militarize Nigerian politics.<sup>64</sup>

Four years ago, when the military government announced plans to return the country to civilian rule, many Nigerians responded with cynicism. In an article that was written in the *New York Times*, Kenneth Noble offered some explanation:

They [Nigerians] recalled with bitterness Nigeria's dismal experience so far with democracy: soldiers have run the country for all but nine years since it won independence from Britain in 1960. There have been seven coups and three of the nation's eight leaders have been assassinated. Two brief periods of civilian rule collapsed amid allegations of incompetence and endemic corruption, a situation made still worse by deepening hatred between rival faiths and ethnic groups.<sup>65</sup>

The above observation raises the issue of the prospects of stability in the Third Republic. Perhaps, when faced with tanks, Nigerians would risk their lives to save their nationhood by following President Babangida's advice that if another military coup occurs, the people should resist the Soviet style.<sup>66</sup>

Nation-building in post-independence Nigeria reinforced, rather than reformed, the conflict among the regional, ethnic and religious entities in Nigeria. It is reasonable to state that the prospect for a cohesive national polity in Nigeria would depend on the extent to which these centrifugal factors are neutralized.

Most Nigerians are aware of the major crisis that the country is facing: the crisis of secession which revolves around the question of who will succeed Babangida? There is also an economic crisis. Structural adjustment policies (SAPs) resulted in student riots in Lagos in May 1989. SAPs have "sapped" Nigeria of its economic vibrancy. The devaluation of the naira, decontrol of agricultural prices, and other belt-tightening policies have created social tension.

Furthermore, there is the security dimension of the crisis. The government's decision to act as a national guard for the security of the state has aroused the concern of human rights activists who fear that when operational, the "national guard" would become an agent of presidential terror, instead of fending off coup plots and guaranteeing the security of the state.

According to Pine Jason, "Babangida's role has transmogrified from that of a confessed military democrat to that of a dictator in a barely veiled quest for absolute power".<sup>67</sup> Political crackdown on opposition groups is perceived to be a design to discredit the politicians in order to perpetuate military rule. Jason has noted that the transition programme is only a "war on the politicians and not in any way an effort to install a durable Third Republic".<sup>68</sup>

The disqualification of politicians might have unearthed new problems, without having solved the existing ones. Ideology, to the extent that it exists, still remains basically ethnic-based, not national. The democratic structure, so far, has also remained bourgeois.<sup>69</sup> With the purge, most of the experienced politicians who may be helpful in some ways will be missed. On the other hand, if Emeka Ojukwu and

Yakubu Gowon succeed in re-entering the political arena, as they recently planned to, then the civil war politics of the late 1960s might re-emerge in Nigeria.

The old political game will still continue to be played, perhaps, with new players. There is a resurgence of petronaira politics, amid speculations that there was external funding for some Nigerian politicians. For example, some Muslim candidates were reportedly been supported by Arab countries, such as Libya and Saudi Arabia.<sup>70</sup> Entire party structures are being bought by big spenders who are desirous of acquiring power in order to recoup their "losses". Even with money changing hands in the corridors of power, the government has done little in the area of control of campaign funding and expenditures. It was estimated that Major Shehu Yar' Adua spent millions of naira in promoting his candidacy in the primary elections. Government officials are partly responsible for politicking of the NRC and the SDP, that has also sabotaged the integrity of the transition programme.

A major irony exists in the process of transition. The transition seems to be guided by a "Machiavellian" doctrine that the ends justify the means. Thus, the Babangida regime has taken undemocratic steps in trying to build democracy. The government, so personalized in Babangida, has become an "imperial presidency" that is fanned by cronyism, patronage, fanaticism and sycophancy. Even Babangida's critics secretly admire him for his "Maradonic tendencies"<sup>71</sup> – a metaphor that depicts his ability to dribble his way through a maze of opposition (this is analogous to how the legendary Argentine soccer player, Diego Maradona, dribbles through tight defences on the soccer field).

No concerted effort has been made so far to solve the issue of ethnicity, which, to many close watchers of Nigerian politics is the major factor in the final selection of the President of Nigeria. The question that needs to be asked is not only whether Babangida *will* resign, but whether he *can* resign.

With many complex issues still unresolved, a justification for continued military rule may exist. Indeed, the failure of the military administration to tackle contentious issues that are regarded as vital for the nation can provide a convenient "pretext for the temporary and indefinite continuation of military rule".<sup>72</sup>

## References

- 1 Frederick Schwarz, *Nigeria: The tribes, the nation or the race: The politics of independence*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1965.
- 2 On some of the contradictions, see Richard L Sklar, "Contradictions in the Nigerian political system", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 3, 1965, p 206, cited in Joseph Nye, "Corruption and political development: A cost-benefit analysis", *American Political Science Review*, vol 61, no 2, June 1975.
- 3 Emeka Ojukwu, *Because I am involved*, Ibadan: Spectrum Books, 1989, p 42.
- 4 Larry Diamond, "Nigeria's third quest for democracy", *Current History*, May 1991, p 201.
- 5 Paul Anber, "Modernization and political disintegration: Nigeria and the Ibos", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 5, 1967, p 168.

- 6 Fred R von der Mehden, *Politics of the developing nations*, Englewood Cliff, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1964, p 41.
- 7 See David Gould, *Bureaucratic corruption and underdevelopment in the Third World: The case of Zaire*, New York: Pergamon, 1980.
- 8 Arend Lijphart, "Consociational democracy", *World Politics*, vol 21, no 2, January 1969, p 216.
- 9 *Ibid.*
- 10 Emeka Ojukwu, *op cit*, p 152.
- 11 Roland Oliver and Michael Crowder, *The Cambridge encyclopedia of Africa*, 1991, p 182.
- 12 Emeka Ojukwu, *op cit*, p 19.
- 13 Basil Davidson, *The black man's burden: Africa and the curse of the nation state*, London: Macmillan, 1992.
- 14 On the issue of presidential rotation, see Emeka Ojukwu, *op cit*, pp 177–178.
- 15 *Nigerian Press Review*, June/July 1991, p 2.
- 16 K W Robinson, "Sixty years of federation in Australia", *Geographical Review*, vol 50, 1 January 1961, p 2.
- 17 Richard L Sklar, "Contradictions in the Nigerian political system", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 3, no 2, 1965, p 206, cited in Joseph Nye, "Corruption and political development: A cost benefit analysis". See footnote 2.
- 18 On Yoruba irredentism, see S O Arifalo, "The Egbe Omo Oduduwa and Yoruba irredentism", *ODU: A Journal of West African Studies*, no 34, July 1988.
- 19 James Coleman, *Background to nationalism*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958.
- 20 Chukwuneka Onwubu, "Ethnic identity, political integration, and national development: The Igbo diaspora in Nigeria", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, September 1975, p 17.
- 21 Emeka Ojukwu, *op cit*, p 29.
- 22 *African Concord* (Nigeria), 19 August 1991, p 29.
- 23 A discussion on the influence of Islam in the conduct of Nigeria's policy toward the Middle East is made by Charles Kwarteng, "The Arabs, Israel, and black Africa: The politics of courtship", *Round Table*, April 1992.
- 24 Jon Kraus, "The return of civilian rule in Nigeria and in Ghana", *Current History*, February 1980, p 124.
- 25 Moris Janowitz, *The military in the political development of new nations*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964.
- 26 A classic work on the issue of civilian-military relationship is that of Eric A Nordlinger, *Soldiers and politicians, military coups and governments*, Englewood Cliff, New York: Prentice Hall, 1977.
- 27 Larry Diamond, *Class, ethnicity and democracy in Nigeria*, Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1988.
- 28 Celestine Basse, "Retrospect and prospects of political stability in Nigeria", *African Studies Review*, vol 32, no 1, April 1989.
- 29 Lawrence C Mayer et al, *Comparative politics: Nations and theories in a changing world*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1993, p 312.
- 30 Roland Oliver and Michael Crowder, *op cit*, p 246.
- 31 *New York Times*, 30 January 1966; 31 July 1966.
- 32 Paul Anber, *op cit*.
- 33 *Ibid.*
- 34 Emeka Ojukwu, *op cit*, p 170.
- 35 Fred R von der Mehden, *op cit*, p 37.
- 36 On the Nigerian civil war see, Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Origins of the Nigerian civil war*, Apapa, Nigeria: Nigeria National Press, 1969; Frederick Forsyth, *The Biafran story*, Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969; Raph Uwechue, *Reflections on the Nigerian civil war*, New York: Africana, 1971; Sebastian O Mezu, *Behind the rising sun*, London: Heinemann, 1972.
- 37 Jon Kraus, *op cit*, p 15.
- 38 Emeka Ojukwu, *op cit*, p 178.
- 39 See particularly Richard Joseph, *Democracy and prebendal politics in Nigeria: The rise and fall of the Second Republic*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- 40 Arend Lijphart, *The problems of accommodation: Pluralism and democracy in The Netherlands*; also, his "Consociational democracy", *op cit*.
- 41 Richard Joseph, "The overthrow of Nigeria's Second Republic", *Current History*, vol 83, March 1984.
- 42 Karl Maier, "Voodoo democracy", *Africa Report*, vol 37, January–February, 1992.
- 43 *Tell* (Nigeria), 7 December 1992, p 15.
- 44 Lawrence C Mayer, *et al*, *op cit*, p 307.
- 45 Opoku Agyeman, "Setback to political institutionalization by Praetorianism in Africa", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 26, no 3, 1988.
- 46 Samuel Decalo, "Modalities of civil-military stability in Africa", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 27, no 4, 1989.
- 47 *Ibid*, p 574.
- 48 *Ibid*, p 575.
- 49 *Ibid*.
- 50 "Nigerians react to change in transition time-table", *Nigeria News Update*, vol 1, no 2, 1–14 December, 1992, p 1.
- 51 *Newswatch* (Nigeria), 23 November, 1992, p 37.
- 52 *New African*, January 1993.
- 53 Emeka Ojukwu, *op cit*, p 92.
- 54 Eric A Nordlinger, *op cit*, p 161.
- 55 *West Africa*, 13 December, 1976, p 1923.
- 56 Based on personal conversation.
- 57 Larry Diamond, "Nigeria between dictatorship and democracy", *Current History*, vol 86, 1987. See also his "Nigeria in search of democracy", *Current Affairs*, vol 62, Spring 1984.
- 58 Collen Lowe Morna, "A grassroots democracy", *Africa Report*, vol 34, July/August 1989.
- 59 Cited in Larry Diamond, "Nigeria's third quest for democracy", *op cit*, p 204.
- 60 Anthony Akinola, "A critique of Nigeria's proposed two-party system", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 27, no 1, March 1989.
- 61 *Ibid*.
- 62 V O Kay, *Political parties and pressure groups*, New York.
- 63 Larry Diamond, "Nigeria's third quest for democracy", *op cit*.
- 64 Chudi Nwazurika, "Confronting political breakdown: The Nigerian redemocratization process in critical perspective", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 28, no 1, 1990.
- 65 Kenneth Noble, "Marching to military's cadence, Nigeria moves back to democracy", *New York Times*, 27 May 1991.
- 66 *West Africa*, 30 September 1991, p 1625.
- 67 *West Africa* January 1993, p 22.
- 68 *New African*, February 1993, p 22.
- 69 Ayo Dunmoye, "Ethnic ideology, bourgeois democracy, and Nigerian politics", *The Journal of Ethnic Studies*, vol 12, Spring 1984.
- 70 See *Tell*, *op cit*, p 21.

# Ecowas: Peace-making or meddling in Liberia?

*Earl Conteh-Morgan of the Government and International Affairs Department, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida, considers the role played by Ecowas, and particularly Nigeria, in attempts to bring an end to the Liberian civil war.\**

On 24 August 1990, while the global community was still stunned by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, a significant and unprecedented development took place in West Africa that was largely overshadowed by events in the Persian Gulf. The Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) decided in the wake of abortive peace talks, to end the Liberian civil war by sending ground and naval forces to Liberia comprising contingents from five of its sixteen member states: Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Sierra Leone.<sup>1</sup> This course of action was decided upon in terms of the Ecowas Defence Protocol that was first proposed in 1976, barely a year after the signing of the Ecowas agreement itself in May 1975.<sup>2</sup> The Protocol was four years in the making and was finally adopted in May 1980.

In spite of the obstacles created by France's role in the subregion, and the tensions between the Anglophone and Francophone countries,<sup>3</sup> among others, the adoption of the Protocol provides the first and still the only example of a collective security arrangement on the continent. The main objective of this collective enterprise as stated in articles 1-4 in chapter II of the Protocol, read:

Member states declare and accept that any armed threat or aggression directed against any Member State shall constitute a threat or aggression against the entire community.<sup>4</sup>

In terms of the Protocol, member states "resolve to give mutual aid and assistance for defence" against:

- any armed threat or aggression;
- armed conflict between two or several member states;
- internal armed conflict within any member state engineered and supported actively from outside likely to endanger the security and peace in the entire community.<sup>5</sup>

External assessments of the Ecowas attempt at creating collective security have been both positive and negative.<sup>6</sup> The Defence Protocol could be interpreted in terms of a collective economic self-interest approach. Peace and security are no doubt inseparable from problems of development and regional economic integration, not only in the Ecowas sub-region, but also on the rest of the continent. To assume otherwise would take us back to the orthodox conception of security with its focus on military and strategic rivalries. In a world of complex interdependence coupled with ongoing profound and startling changes, this is misleading. The preamble to the Protocol addresses the issue of change and stability. In essence, it regards collective security as a necessary component of economic development and integration in West Africa because the countries are

convinced that economic progress cannot be achieved unless the conditions for the necessary security are ensured in all Member States of the Community.<sup>7</sup>

Thus, the peace-keeping exercise reflects, to a large extent, the complex changes in the continent, which are underlined by factors that constitute a variegated and interlocking mesh of security problems facing the continent. This reality was further underscored in May 1991 at the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) held in Uganda. Here the security, stability and development of every African country was viewed as inseparably linked with those of other African countries.

## The role of regional and external actors

As increasing pressure was applied against Samuel Doe by the rebel factions – the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) led by Charles Taylor, and the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) led by Prince Yormie Johnson – he paid an emergency visit to Nigeria and

\* This paper was originally prepared for presentation at the International Studies Association – South Annual Meeting, Tampa, Florida, held from 9 to 11 October 1992.

Togo on 7 May 1990, requesting political and military assistance. Although he did not receive any direct bilateral assistance from either country, the visit was diplomatically significant – Samuel Doe had placed the Liberian civil war on the Ecowas agenda. The emergency visit impelled the Ecowas leaders to invoke the Ecowas Defence Protocol. Thus, it was duly placed on the agenda of the thirteenth summit meeting of the Ecowas heads of state a week later in Banjul, The Gambia. Although not included as a formal item on the agenda, the heads of state discussed it and subsequently adopted a resolution that called for a cessation of hostilities and the holding of elections.<sup>8</sup> On the recommendation of President Ibrahim Babangida of Nigeria, a standing mediation committee made up of The Gambia, Ghana, Togo, Mali, and Nigeria was elected. Its function would be to intervene promptly whenever a conflict threatened the stability of the region. The committee did not, however, immediately take action. At the time, it was deemed more practical to await the outcome of the mediatory role of the Liberian Interfaith Council of Churches. Hopes on the council's efforts were, however, dashed when yet another of its attempts to resolve the conflict failed on 16 June 1990 in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

The precipitating factor for direct Ecowas intervention was the collapse of this June meeting in Freetown. Charles Taylor's intransigence, coupled with the alarming death rate, the extent of the human suffering and destruction and the growing number of displaced persons, forced the mediatory committee to reconvene on 19 June in Lagos, Nigeria. As from this time, continued active engagement by the organization to find a peaceful solution to the war was prompted by four factors. First, Liberia was rapidly degenerating into a virtual state of anarchy where mutual genocide was becoming the order of things. The level of violence and ethnic bloodletting was underscored by President Babangida of Nigeria when he observed:

We believe that it would have been morally reprehensible and politically indefensible to stand by and watch while citizens of [Liberia] decimate themselves.<sup>9</sup>

A second reason for the increased and more active involvement by Ecowas was the spillover effects of the war in the region. The massive refugee problem created by the war threatened security and stability in the region. Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone received most refugees. Third, neither the Organization of African Unity (OAU) nor the United Nations saw their way clear to becoming involved in attempts to end the civil war. In fact, the UN considered the Liberian civil war for the first time in January 1991, when the Security Council adopted a resolution on the matter. Fourth, although historically an ally of Liberia, the United States strongly maintained that it had no intention of using direct military intervention to end the bloody anarchy, despite pleas from many quarters for US intervention. Reasons for this non-intervention by the US fall into three categories:

- United States direct military intervention could be interpreted as support for one of the warring factions. Thus a

US intervention was viewed, as a "no-win proposition".

- Some or many African countries might view direct US intervention as a precedent, or a case of disguised imperialism.
- The end of the Cold War removed much of the motivation previous US governments had for intervening in trouble spots.

Building on the experience and efforts of the Interfaith Council of Churches, the committee devised what later became the Ecowas six-point peace plan. The first three points of the plan were basically inherited from the Interfaith Council's proposals. The other three were modifications of the standard OAU formula for peace. The plan called for:

- an immediate ceasefire;
- the deployment of a ceasefire monitoring group;
- the supervision of the ceasefire by this monitoring group;
- the setting up of a broad interim government of national unity (IGNU);
- the leaders of the warring factions to be ineligible to head the IGNU; and
- the setting up of a committee to organize national elections in which the leaders in the IGNU and the warring factions were ineligible to stand as candidates.<sup>10</sup>

The time frame for accomplishing the goals of this July 1990 "peace formula" was twelve months.<sup>11</sup> As part of the requests of the standing mediation committee, Abbas Bundu, the Ecowas executive secretary embarked on a fact-finding mission to Liberia. It would be one of several shuttle diplomatic trips he would make to the warring factions and to neighbouring countries to gain support for the Ecowas peace plan.

Charles Taylor's rejection of the Ecowas peace plan did not deter the heads of state of the mediation committee from meeting in Banjul in early August to formally adopt the organization's broad framework for peace.<sup>12</sup> The provision calling for the intervention of a peacekeeping force was specifically opposed by some member countries. President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, a strong supporter of Taylor's NPFL, openly opposed the intervention because he thought it would undermine Taylor's efforts to oust Samuel Doe. Reservations were also expressed by Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire about the peacekeeping force; and Togo, a member of the mediation committee, declined in the end to contribute troops. This lack of unanimity raised fears about the resurgence of old Anglophone-Francophone divisions and threatened to weaken the Ecowas peace initiative.<sup>13</sup> The differences were thought by many to be quite real, although President Jawara of The Gambia, the current chairman of Ecowas, tried to minimize the differences.<sup>14</sup> Eventually, through tactful diplomacy, the differences were subsumed in the overall interest of preventing Liberia from sliding into anarchy and self-destruction.

A peacekeeping force known as the Ecowas Monitoring Group (Ecomog), under the command of General Arnold

Quainoo of Ghana, left Freetown for Liberia on 24 August 1990. Composed of some 3 000 troops from The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, its mandate was that of “keeping the peace, restoring law and order and ensuring that the ceasefire is respected”. Within a year the number of troops had increased to some 7 000 and by March 1993 the Ecomog forces numbered approximately 16 000, most of them Nigerian. In addition to the countries mentioned, Senegal and Mali had since September 1991 also been contributing troops to Ecomog.

President Doe and Prince Johnson welcomed intervention by Ecomog – the latter having previously taken twelve foreigners hostage in an attempt to provoke external intervention. Charles Taylor’s opposition to Ecomog intervention was common knowledge by now, and he even threatened reprisals against nationals of participating countries in the Ecomog contingent.

The crisis is yet to be completely resolved at the time of writing (September 1992). As with Chad and many other conflicts in the continent, the common problem with any such peace formula has been convincing the parties to the conflict to accept it. Initially, Taylor and the NPFL would only agree to a formal ceasefire on the condition that Doe resigned. Meanwhile, as the mediation committee focused on making the peace plan politically acceptable to all parties, the warring factions intensified their military campaign. With the exception of central Monrovia and Doe’s last stronghold in the executive mansion, the NPFL and INPFL forces had, by the third week of July 1990 overrun the country, with Taylor occupying 90 per cent of it. He proclaimed himself commander-in-chief and president of Liberia amidst the carnage and destruction on 27 July. Probably because of his dominant position at that stage, Taylor would not, at first, agree to a formal ceasefire. He even vowed to oppose any arrangements that did not make him president.

Initially, even the sixteen member states of Ecomog had divergent views on deploying a ceasefire monitoring group in Liberia because of their individual support for the contending factions. For instance, Nigeria did not support the idea of Taylor becoming president, a notion that some regional actors supported. Burkina Faso continued to throw its support solidly behind Taylor.<sup>15</sup> This is not too surprising since it had backed Taylor’s challenge against Doe from the very beginning. It had served as a military base and training camp for Taylor’s NPFL; and it had supplied the NPFL with arms and military equipment throughout the war.

Côte d’Ivoire and Nigeria were also on opposite sides of the conflict. Initially, Felix Houphouët Boigny, president of Côte d’Ivoire, led Togo, Senegal and Mali in opposition to Nigeria’s idea of deploying a military force in Liberia. As a result, Mali and Togo withdrew their support for the peace plan. Côte d’Ivoire in its support for Taylor, served as conduit and depot for the military supply from Burkina Faso. Thus, while they did not formally endorse Taylor, their divisive posturing seriously undermined the implementation of the peace plan.

Samuel Doe lacked both support and territorial control. Moreover, the United States had abandoned Doe as early as May 1990. The US Congress, citing his human rights record, had passed a resolution cutting off American aid.<sup>16</sup> This was followed by the decision to withdraw US military advisers. Thus, the two things – aid and advisers – that had enabled Doe to cling to power had now been eliminated. Unfortunately, for Doe, the end of the Cold War saw the end of his usefulness as far as the US was concerned. Hence Congress could now publicly condemn his human rights record, which US military and economic aid had perpetuated and nurtured. In a very diplomatic manner, the US refused to play a major role in the conflict. The US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Herman Cohen, is on record as saying that the US was not seeking to “impose an American peace” on Liberia.<sup>17</sup> It was therefore not surprising that Doe was very supportive of the Ecomog peace plan, and most ready to negotiate. In other words, the Doe regime wanted the peace plan as long as Doe remained in office to implement it. But as already noted, this was totally unacceptable to Taylor.

If Doe was marginalized and tenaciously clinging to power, Prince Johnson of the INPFL faced a crisis of relevance. Unlike Taylor, Johnson had neither territory nor a significant military presence. Unlike Doe, Johnson lacked state power with which to bargain. Hence, like Doe, Johnson could only play for time and hope for the best. Similarly, like Doe, Johnson desperately wanted external intervention – to such an extent that he had seized foreign hostages in the hope of forcing the US to intervene. However, the US had by this time become preoccupied with Hussein’s invasion of Kuwait. Thus, the deliberate non-interventionist posture of the United States, coupled with the divisive attitude of the regional governments, and the rigid and uncompromising attitude of the warring leaders thrust Nigeria into a new role, that of a “regional hegemon”.

## From peacekeeping to peacemaking

In the absence of a working consensus to directly deploy troops in Monrovia, Nigeria went on the diplomatic offensive seeking external support for the Ecomog operation. The OAU, with its dismal record in peacekeeping on the continent, readily gave its blessing.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, the OAU was still indebted to Nigeria for the 1982 peacekeeping operation that it had launched in Chad. It is estimated that Nigeria spent between \$110 million and \$160 million on the operation. The OAU was able to raise only \$600 000 of its \$6 million assessment. Similarly, the United Nations solidly endorsed the Ecomog operation. The Ecomog peace plan was endorsed in mid-August by public support from groups of Liberian nationals and politicians in the United States.

The extra diplomatic support gave the mediation committee added confidence to proceed against Taylor and his sponsors and supporters. In support of Nigeria’s leadership role, President Lansana Conte de Guine underscoring the fact that Ecomog did “not need the permission of any of the parties

involved in the conflict to implement the decisions reached in Banjul. Ecomog troops will be in Liberia."<sup>19</sup> The outcome was the deployment of Ecomog troops on 24 August 1990. On the political front, this was followed by the election of Professor Amos Sawyer to head the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) at the All-Liberian National Conference convened by Ecomog on 30 August in Banjul.

Taylor's intransigence and rejection of a ceasefire kept the IGNU in exile in Banjul waiting for Ecomog to determine the next course of action. After Doe's death at the hands of Prince Johnson on 10 September, expectations were that the incident would bring the civil war to an end. These hopes did not materialize, however, because Taylor's objective was not only to get rid of Doe, but he wanted power for himself. It became increasingly obvious that Ecomog would have to subdue Taylor's NPFL if it was to install the IGNU in Liberia. But by going into battle against the NPFL forces, Ecomog would be seen as an interventionist force against Taylor. Prince Johnson, as a result, took advantage of this situation by fighting against Taylor alongside Ecomog. This not only further raised questions about the impartiality and credibility of Ecomog – especially in the light of the kidnapping and subsequent slaughter of Doe by Johnson – but it reopened the issue of Nigeria's leadership role in the whole operation.

This forced Nigeria to reappraise the Ecomog intervention and its role in it. Nigeria went on to assume a more "hegemonic role" taking unilateral action, willing to lead and act without consultation and consensus. On 23 September 1990 President Babangida formally placed Ecomog under Nigerian command and control. He appointed Nigerian General Joshua Dogonyaro to head Ecomog, and unilaterally reassigned the Ghanaian commander, General Arnold Quainoo, to a face-saving administrative post in Freetown.<sup>20</sup> At the same time, the Ecomog operation shifted its emphasis from peacekeeping to peacemaking. In other words, Ecomog now had the mandate to "impose" a ceasefire, doing battle with rebel forces if need be. Joshua Dogonyaro, as new commander, pursued the shift in Ecomog strategy with vigour. It is often cited that Dogonyaro's:

belligerent approach to threats of continued violence in the Monrovia area by Charles Taylor and Prince Yormie Johnson is credited with halting widespread killings and general lawlessness in the city within a short time of his taking charge.<sup>21</sup>

His goal was to push the Taylor forces back to Nimba county. Soon thereafter Ecomog brought Monrovia under the exclusive control of the interim government. Dongonyaro was succeeded by Maj-Gen Rufus Kupolati in February 1991, and Kupolati by Maj-Gen Ishaya Bakut, who served for about a year until he was replaced by Maj-Gen Adetunji Olurin in October 1992. All of these commanders were Nigerian officers.

General Dogonyaro's and his successors' hardline tactics in Liberia have been the subject of criticism in some quarters. *West Africa* summarized it in this way:

Even if a military push against the NPFI produces a quick victory with few human casualties, it would turn out to be a bonfire which

consumes any progress made toward national reconciliation. The political consequence of such an escalation in an Ecomog member country cannot be confidently predicted.<sup>22</sup>

Besides, engaging Charles Taylor with the aim of defeating the NPFL, called into question Nigeria's intentions in Liberia. First, it would further increase the opposition of those states that did not favour the deployment of Ecomog, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire in particular. Second, it would serve to reinforce the opinion that President Babangida went to Liberia to save Samuel Doe. To prevent further opposition to the Ecomog experiment, Nigeria went on the diplomatic offensive seeking support in the international arena, in the continent, and particularly in the subregion.

Nigeria therefore made serious efforts to win the support of Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Togo, Mali and Senegal in favour of Ecomog. It was also necessary to mount an effective campaign to repair the rift which had ensued between Ghana and Nigeria on the replacement of the Ecomog commander. While some problems seem to have been surmounted, political preferences still plague the Ecomog experiment in conflict transformation. Several countries still operate as reluctant participants. Nonetheless, troops from Burkina Faso and Senegal have finally joined the monitoring group.

The internal situation in Liberia has stabilized to a certain degree. As Janet Fleischman of *Africa Watch* rightly notes, the "killings have largely subsided but the war is far from over".<sup>23</sup> Samuel Doe has long left the stage, but Prince Yormie Johnson still faces a crisis of relevance. Charles Taylor is still in control of most of Liberian territory; and he is giving in very slowly to the peace process. As a consequence of the Yamoussokro conferences, hosted by President Houphouët Boigny of the Ivory Coast, Taylor had on several occasions agreed to disarm and encamp his troops under the supervision of Ecomog. This is seen as the first crucial step in implementing point six of the peace plan – organizing and conducting national elections. The most recent target date for the elections, April 1992, came and went by with very little progress. Characteristically, Taylor has often reneged on his part of the agreement.

After Taylor's forces launched an unexpected attack on Monrovia in October 1992, Ecomog began to impose a systematic blockade of all forms of transportation into NPFL-held areas. This move brought to a standstill all forms of economic activity in NPFL areas and thousands of residents fled to areas controlled by Ecomog as well as to neighbouring countries. In the early months of 1993 Ecomog forces were advancing northwards in an all-out offensive against the rebel strongholds, notably Nimba county. Meanwhile, indications were that the inhabitants of Nimba, expecting the defeat of Taylor, had been joined by dissatisfied NPFL troops in a spreading revolt against the NPFL.

## Different views of Nigeria's role

In spite of the difficulties and uncertainties encountered by the operation, the mere fact that the deployment of troops in

Reproduced by Sabinet Gateway under licence granted by the Publisher (dated 2010)

Liberia materialized at all has been highly commended and seen as successful in some quarters. Nigeria's hegemonic role and regional influence have also been seen in this light.

*Africa Confidential* has aptly described this new and evolving security role among African states in general, and in the case of Nigeria in particular, in this way:

The involvement of the Nigeria military in Liberia ... has demonstrated quite clearly that it now has greater confidence in its ability to influence events outside Nigeria's borders. Given Nigeria's aspirations for regional power, this is of significance.

The dispatch of a peacekeeping force by the Ecomog set several precedents. The concept of a peace-enforcement mission was already a major departure from previous techniques used by the OAU and other regional bodies in response to conflicts. Notwithstanding the humanitarian arguments and the lack of a government in Monrovia at the time of the intervention, many see the intervention of Ecomog as contravening the OAU Charter on non-intervention in the internal affairs of member states.<sup>24</sup>

In many ways, Ecomog's role in Liberia could mark the beginning of a new approach to conflict management in Africa. Or in the words of President Ibrahim Babangida: "If Ecomog succeeds it will be a very good catalyst for a stronger union in the sub-region."<sup>25</sup> According to Abbas Bundu, Ecomog took on a military role because:

It is just the realization that here was a problem (Liberia) from which everyone else was running away. If everyone else was running away from the problem, the leaders within the sub-region felt that they had responsibility to the people of Liberia and indeed to the wider international community to try and find a solution to the problem.<sup>26</sup>

In other words, Ecomog is not changing from an economic organization to a military one. The Ecomog decision in fact demonstrated the binding force of economic realities – the motivation that springs from membership in a common economic organization.

## Conclusion

A final settlement of the Liberian civil war has yet to be achieved. So far, the conflict resolution balance sheet is mixed in terms of peacemaking achievements and failures. Sure enough, Ecomog was not quite successful in preventing the spread of the conflict to Sierra Leone. The United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (Ulimo) constitutes a new Liberian armed faction operating from within Sierra Leone against Taylor's NPFL, and is highly critical of the mediatory role played by the Côte d'Ivoire. Yet, the carnage, anarchy, and ethnic bloodletting of two years ago is now a thing of the past. Moreover, there are efforts underway to guide the embattled country towards free and fair elections.

In the context of world politics, certain developments in continental African politics remain to be noted. First, with the end of the Cold War in Africa, the regional organizations are now in a position to meet the new challenges by widening their competence to deal not only with economic matters but with issues of military security and regional stability as well. Africa is no stranger to adaptation and new experiments. This fact is manifested in the continent's

experiment with various political and economic ideologies ranging from Afro-Marxism, African socialism, the single party system, to privatization, among others. The fact that Ecomog now has a standing mediation committee is significant because it can now monitor disputes and take preventive action before they spin out of control. It is, finally, a recognition that events have rendered the practice of non-intervention obsolete.

Moreover, this shift from a practice of non-intervention could mean the institutionalizing of "direct military intervention", or imposed peace on humanitarian grounds in cases of civil strife. Other regional organizations – such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) – could adopt it as a *modus operandum*. Ecomog has thus set a significant precedent for intervention on humanitarian grounds.

On the one hand, the imperatives for change and adaptation, and the need for extra-regional non-intervention brought out the leadership capabilities of Nigeria. A successful outcome of the Ecomog undertaking in Liberia may encourage Nigeria to continue to play the essential role of a regional hegemon in West Africa. On the other, French influence on African events – a corollary of France's close relations with francophone African countries – is a factor to be reckoned with. The French regard these relationships as an essential component of their country's middle power status.<sup>27</sup> France therefore considers anglophone Nigeria a threat to its status and power to influence and maintain its hold in West Africa and other parts of the continent.

Finally, the Ecomog operation has helped to underscore the interconnectedness of economic and military security. Regional economic integration schemes would now view their defence protocols in a new light, especially after fully realizing that the development of a sound regional economic base is often closely linked to a stable politico-military superstructure.

## Notes and references

- 1 Established in 1975, Ecomog (CEDEO in French) has sixteen member countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. The literature on Ecomog is extensive, but a useful introduction is S K B Asante, *The political economy of regionalism in Africa: A decade of the Economic Community of West African States (Ecomog)*, New York: Praeger, 1985.
- 2 See, for example, Babajimi Peters, "The Ecomog defence pact: Problems and prospects", *Nigerian Forum*, October–December 1983, pp 1267–1276.
- 3 The nature of this role and relationship is examined in, among others, Jean-Francois Bayart, *La Politique Africaine de Francois Mitterand*, Paris: Karthala, 1985; and Daniel C Bach, "La Politique Française en Afrique apres le 10 May 1981" in *L'Annee Africaine 1981*, Paris: Pedone, 1983, pp 236–253.
- 4 The full text is reprinted in Ecomog, "Protocol relating to the mutual assistance on defence", *Official Journal of Ecomog*, June 1981, pp 9–13.
- 5 *Ibid.*

- 6 For diverse comments by observers of African politics, see for example, Julius E Okolo and Stephen Wright (eds), *West African regional co-operation and development*, Boulder CO: Westview, 1990.
- 7 See Babajimi Peters, *op cit*.
- 8 *Keesings record of world events*, vol 36, no 5, 1990, pp 37446–37447.
- 9 Quoted in *West Africa*, 4–10 February, 1991, p 140.
- 10 *Africa Research Bulletin*, vol 27, no 9, 15 September 1990.
- 11 *Ecowas Defense Protocol*, A/SP3/5/81.
- 12 Taylor's disapproval of the peace plan was based on several grounds. The main reason was his wish to have Doe resign and leave the country before a ceasefire went into effect. Ecowas feared making a ceasefire conditional on Doe's resignation would result in a power vacuum that would be detrimental to the peace process. Taylor was also displeased that there was no role for him in the transitional government. In addition, he was not receptive to the idea that members of IGNU would be precluded from being candidates in the general elections, as this frustrated his own presidential ambitions. For more on this, see Abiodun Williams, "Regional peacemaking: Ecowas and the Liberian civil war" in David D Newsom, *The diplomatic record 1990–1991*, Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1992.
- 13 Libya also supported the NPFL by providing training for its troops, weapons and military supplies.
- 14 See interview with President Dawda Jaware in *West Africa*, 26 November–2 December, 1990 p 2895.
- 15 "Liberia", *Africa Research Bulletin*, vol 27, no 2, 15 February 1990, p 9559.
- 16 See, for example, "Liberia", *op cit*, pp 9697–9698; and "Liberia: The Nimba War", *Africa Confidential*, vol 38, no 8, 20 April 1990, pp 4–5.
- 17 *Le Monde* (Paris), 24 Sept 1990.
- 18 For an assessment of the OAU's role in peacekeeping, see among others, Bukar Bukarambe, "Conflict and conflict management in Africa: The role of the impact of the OAU", *Survival*, vol 25, no 2, March/April 1983, pp 50–67; Michael C Dunn, "Chad: The OAU tries peacekeeping", *Washington Quarterly*, Spring 1982, pp 182–188.
- 19 *Le Monde* (Paris), 12–13 August 1990, p 5.
- 20 "Nigeria", *This Week* (Lagos), 1 October 1990 p 12. For similar coverage, see the summary of sources in *Africa Research Bulletin*, 1–30 Sept 1990, pp 9842.
- 21 "Liberia: Nigeria facing both ways", *Africa Confidential*, vol 33, no 2, 24 Jan 1992, p 1.
- 22 "Another step on the treadmill", *West Africa*, 15–21 April 1991, p 549.
- 23 Janet Fleischman, *West Africa*, 14–20 October 1991, p 1721.
- 24 "Nigeria: A strategy for the 90s", *Africa Confidential*, vol 32, no 4, 22 February 1991, p 5.
- 25 "Nigeria special: The Babaginda interview", *West Africa*, 1–7 October 1990, p 2579.
- 26 See, *West Africa*, 2–8 March 1992, p 386.
- 27 See, for example, Daniel C Bach, "France and the security of the African Continent: Pressure for reappraisal" in Ibrahim Gambari (ed), *African security issues in the 1990s*, Washington DC: Brookings Institution, 1992.

# Afrocentricity: Implications for South Africa?

*Dr Roger Gocking, of the Department of History and Government, Mercy College, New York, considers an issue that is of great importance for a changing South Africa.*

At the first Pan-Africanist Congress held in London in 1900, the African-American scholar and activist, Dr W E B du Bois prophesied that the problem of the twentieth century would be the problem of the colour line. The century has not let him down. Explosive racial issues have continually demanded attention, and have served to keep the “colour line”, at the centre of world attention. In the United States of America the existence of the “colour line” has been at the centre of what the Swedish sociologist, Gunnar Myrdal, described as “the American dilemma”. It has been even more so the case in Southern Africa, and as the struggle to fashion a “New South Africa” intensifies in the coming years, undoubtedly the “colour line” dilemmas of the apartheid past will metamorphose into new forms and shapes that will be this unique form of racism’s major legacy to future generations both white and black.

Clearly the elimination of *de jure* discrimination, or what Du Bois also prophesied in 1900 would be “advancing integration”, does not prevent this. In the 1950s and 1960s when the Civil Rights movement in the United States gained momentum, integration was very much the strategy for removing the “colour line”. Dr Martin Luther King most eloquently expressed this in his 1963 “I have a dream” speech in which he held out the hope “that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners [would] be able to sit down at the table of brotherhood”. Today, however, almost 30 years after King dreamed of racial harmony in his homeland, the “table of brotherhood” seems more one of rancorous discord where the interest has shifted to asserting one’s own identity, own culture and a separate destiny. The recent upsurge in Afrocentric thought best of all represents this since to both its advocates and to its critics it is a complete “philosophical outlook determined by history”, and like a “religion or an ideology”, emphasizes what separates the sons of former slaves and sons of former slave owners rather than what brings them together. The antagonisms are real enough

for a recent article in the New York Times to ask whether: “Afrocentrism [is]...introducing its own prejudices?”<sup>1</sup>

For radical advocates of Afrocentricity, like Dr Leonard Jeffries, former Chairperson of the African-American Studies Department at the City College of New York, there is little interest in sitting down at the table of brotherhood with those he disparagingly describes as the “ice people – the greedy, warlike inhabitants of the North [and their descendants]”.<sup>2</sup> Instead, the “sun people” – the generous, communal peoples of Africa and the diaspora – he sees as not merely culturally different, but also as genetically distinct owing to the presence of the skin pigment, melanin. In a lecture in July 1991 at the Empire State Black Arts and Cultural Festival in Albany, he emphasized just how antagonistic he felt that the relations between these two groups were by maintaining that there was “a conspiracy, planned and plotted and programmed out of Hollywood” by “people called Greenberg and Weisberg and Trigliani... who with their financial partners, the Mafia, [have] put together a financial system of destruction of black people”.<sup>3</sup>

Not all Afrocentrists stress race or veer in an anti-semitic direction. Dr Molefi Asante, Chairperson of the Department of African-American Studies at Temple University, widely recognized as the leading proponent of the Afrocentric perspective, emphasizes what he describes as the continuing unfolding of a specific African system. According to Asante, this is derived from a common historical experience that links the people of Africa with those in the diaspora, and as a result Afrocentricity is fundamentally Pan-African in its inspiration. He sees the different components of this Pan-African world engaged in a “humanizing function” that will contribute to the replacement of the “insular individualism”, the “aggressive materialism”, and dehumanizing emphasis on efficiency that all Afrocentrists consider are the hallmarks of white, Eurocentric society. To Asante this vision is “only superficially related to colour, it is more accurately a philosophical outlook determined by history”.<sup>4</sup>

As the chairman of the only post-graduate African studies programme that describes itself as Afrocentric, it is not surprising that Professor Asante sees his main task as producing scholars who will "expand the [present] dialogue [in the United States] to include African-American information".<sup>5</sup>

What, if any, is the relevance of this determination on the part of African-Americans "to place Africa and its culture, its images, symbols, beliefs as the central source of their inspiration and as what determines their lives" to the Southern Africa and especially the "New South Africa" that is arising out of the ashes of apartheid?<sup>6</sup> Africans on the continent obviously do not have to contend with minority status, which is the reality for their brothers and sisters in the United States of America. In spite of colonial rule and decades of white settler domination, both institutionally and symbolically, African culture is clearly still vibrant and alive. Undoubtedly this has been the unstated assumption of both university and public audiences in Lesotho before whom I have spoken about the Afrocentric movement in the United States. To these basically middle class members of African society, the integrationist strategies of the 1960s still seem much more realistic for African-Americans than impractical attempts to put Africa at the centre. Others, in seeking parallels, have wondered whether the current concern with Afrocentricity in the United States is not akin to the Black Consciousness movement of the 1970s in South Africa. The implication being that Africans have already passed through this culturally oriented phase of political awareness.

There is some validity in these observations. The situation in South Africa today promises a much more fundamental hand-over of power to the black majority than any possible increase in African-American political representation in the United States of America. At the same time, however, the Codesa process, with its emphasis on political and economic matters, has obscured the cultural dimension that must be a part of this process. Class domination, as the Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci, observes, results as much from the consensus of the dominated as from their physical repression, and "so-called private organizations like the Church, trade unions, or schools" allow "one social group" to exercise "hegemony...over the entire nation".<sup>7</sup> Where class and race joined hands to achieve the economic and political subjugation of a majority, as was in the case in South Africa, it was inevitable that cultural domination would be an even more inescapable component in a system where one social group's hegemony was over a nation made up of a kaleidoscope of different nationalities and ethnic groups.

The African-American academic, Harold Cruse, writing in the late 1960s, recognized how much this was so in the United States of America when he argued that the "crisis" his fellow black intellectuals faced was going to be primarily one of cultural identity.<sup>8</sup> "Free your mind and your arse will follow" was how a younger generation of activists more bluntly expressed this challenge. At this time, however, "freeing your mind" still played second fiddle to the more immediate aims of the then developing Black Power movement. Black Power, as its most articulate spokesman,

Stokely Carmichael, described it, was primarily about blacks taking economic and political control of their own communities.<sup>9</sup> The most pressing challenge was for blacks to create their own independent political organizations, and indeed this was the thrust that the movement followed with considerable success so that today there are over 300 African-American city mayors, 39 congressmen, one senator, one governor and literally thousands of elected officials at the state level.

At the same time African-Americans also began to win acceptance into other institutions in American society, most noticeably the elite universities which up until that time had been predominantly white. The Eurocentric focus of these institutions invariably alienated these newcomers and stimulated them to assert their own cultural identity. As these communities increased in size, they soon reached a critical mass which gave them the confidence to demand that the university become officially part of this process. To combat their sense of alienation and facilitate their search for identity, black students demanded special housing, courses relevant to the African-American experience, black faculty and administrators and more black enrolment that contributed to strengthening their position as a militant interest group on campus. It was more, however, than just demands for special facilities and academic programmes. As these communities gained greater confidence in demanding changes in the way in which the university dealt with its black students, they began to challenge assumptions whites held about their culture in ways that could even provoke hostile white reactions. The recent struggles over the "non", or what should be the essential components of the introductory courses that freshmen in American universities take, is the most significant indication of this trend.

In a similar fashion the previously all-white universities of South Africa have begun to open up to blacks, and already in some of them enrolment has begun to reach a critical mass. It requires no great perceptiveness to recognize that these environments must be at least uncomfortable and in many instances openly hostile to people who come from very different backgrounds. Even more so than their American counterparts, South African institutions are dominated by Eurocentric perspectives. A recent meeting of the albeit conservative Historic Association of South Africa at the University of the Orange Free State in Bloemfontein in January 1992, was a vivid indication of just how much this was so. To even fairly "progressive" educators from Natal the source of inspiration for new ideas about teaching history in these changing times is still Holland and the United Kingdom. It is hard to imagine that this will be the case for South African blacks who also want to see changes. Instead, it is much more likely that they will want to investigate what people who have gone through similar experiences to themselves are doing.

Contributing to their interest in looking for new ideas is the need to fill the intellectual and political vacuum that the collapse of apartheid has created. As a participant at the New Nation writers' conference held in Johannesburg in

December 1991 half humorously expressed it: "With *apartheid* gone what will there be to write about?" The concomitant collapse of the socialist world has clearly compounded this feeling of "adriftness", since anti-apartheid opposition was also very much anti-capitalist and pro-socialist. Here, once again, there are parallels to the United States of America. In the 1960s and 1970s the Vietnam war and criticisms of American imperialism contributed to increasing interest in socialist ideas and inspired organizations like the Black Panthers, the Republic of New Africa and numbers of African-American labour movements. However, these early Marxist-inspired groups have now been replaced by more culturally oriented organizations, such as the Association for the Study of Classical African Societies (ASCAC) and Tu-Wa-Moja (Swahili for "We are one"). The confrontation with the "system" is clearly far more ambiguous than it was in the heyday of the Civil Rights movement. For example, big city police forces, the recent Los Angeles riots notwithstanding, have become much more integrated in their composition than at the time of Huey Newton and Bobby Seale's confrontations with the Oakland Police in California in the 1960s and 1970s.

Perhaps, however, the most subtle reason for this shift to a preoccupation with culture and history is the changing composition of the African-American population. Afrocentricity is very much a middle class phenomenon. As a recent article in *Newsweek* pointed out, "its adherents are mostly middle class and well educated, but they feel themselves alienated from white American society nonetheless. For them the problem is not class. It is white racism".<sup>10</sup> It is no longer the crude exclusion of the Jim Crow era, but a far more subtle attitude that is based on the assumption that there is only one valid cultural orientation in the United States of America, without which successful incorporation into the great American middle class is impossible. As the same article in *Newsweek* points out, "since the passage of the civil-rights acts of the nineteen sixties, the white establishment has tended to redefine the race problem as one of class. This has led to the comforting conclusion that the problem would largely be solved if middle-class values could somehow be imparted to the black 'underclass'".

The manifestations of Afrocentricity are designed to challenge this assumption, but at the same time demonstrate its class background, and indicate where the points of friction between middle class blacks and their white counterparts lie. For example, the discarding of European names has become one way of rejecting the centrality of the Judeo-Christian tradition since most such names are Biblical in origin. Neither do they want Moslem names. To Afrocentrists Muhammad Ali's well publicized switch in the 1970s from his "slave name", Cassius Clay was compromised by his exchanging a Eurocentric name for an Arab one, and a religion that is as contradictory "to the Diasporan Afrocentricity as Christianity has been".<sup>11</sup> Instead, to the contemporary Afrocentrist the search must be for names that as accurately as possible reflect the ancestral origins of African-

Americans have to take if they are to achieve "a new perspective on [their] place in the world".<sup>12</sup> Significantly the movement's most eloquent spokesman, Dr Molefi Asante, has adopted a name that combines both a Southern African (Molefi), and a West African (Asante) component.

Though of important symbolic significance, there are clearly more important aspects to "placing Africa at the centre" than adopting African names, wearing dashikis or plaiting your hair in corn rows. Higher on the scale of Afrocentric concerns is the issue of language. On one level this pertains to an ever-increasing collection of words that Afrocentrists attack as contributing to maintaining a Eurocentric and racist perspective. Some words, such as "ghetto", "minority" and "disadvantaged" are attacked relentlessly since they represent an attempt on the part of white society to disguise the continuing "institutional" and "process" racism that they see as being part and parcel of the United States of America today.<sup>13</sup> Other words that describe aspects of African society in what is seen as a pejorative fashion, such as "tribe", "pygmy", "witch doctor", "bushman", "jungle" and "native" are also attacked. And as knowledge about Africa, its peoples and their culture expands, so does the determination of the Afrocentrists to get away from what is seen as terminology that reflects the Eurocentric conception of a fundamentally "primitive", "sub-Saharan" Africa.

Instead, as Asante puts it, African Americans need "a revolutionary language" which "must not befuddle" and must not be "allowed to confuse". "Critics", he maintains, "must actively pursue the clarification of public language when they believe it is designed to whiten the issues."<sup>14</sup> Just as contemporary Afrocentrists reject the suitability of Islam for African Americans, so too do they reject the revolutionary exclusiveness of Marxist analysis and its language. It is possible "for socialism to find expression in places outside of its original intellectual context, but no context" Asante argues, "is ever the same". He does not deny that "socialism provides us with some possibilities of freedom from class exploitation but our political liberation must come primarily from notions forged from our own social experience".<sup>15</sup>

What he sees as necessary is the development of new terminology to express this reality. On one hand it means redefining words such as "classical", which Eurocentrists have appropriated to describe what they consider the highest expression of their musical tradition, and "universal" which they use to describe that "classic" works of their literary tradition. "The polyrhythms and syncopated eights of Ellington, Coltrane, Eubie Blake, Charlie Parker, Mingus and Gillespie", have just as much right to be described as "classical" Asante argues.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, Afrocentric literature that does not deal with white images, but treats issues (like racism and colonialism) has as much right to be considered "universal". Indeed, the argument is made that such themes actually touch upon the lives of more people in this world than the concerns of white writers operating from an introverted, Eurocentric framework.

New ideas that fall outside of the Eurocentric perspective require entirely new terminology. The term "Ebonics" to

describe what used to be referred to in Eurocentric fashion as “black English” is one such example. “Afrology”, the study of African peoples from an Afrocentric perspective, is another example. In addition to this, the Afrocentrists have incorporated a substantial African vocabulary from primarily Kiswahili into their discourse. *Nija*, for example, a Kiswahili word that means “the way”, is the African term for Afrocentricity. Sacred places and important African and African-American leaders become reference points in the Afrocentric perspective and replace their counterparts in both the European and Islamic world view. Finally, Asante has also devised a new calendar to displace the Christian calendar, which has Christ’s birth as its reference point. Instead, he talks about ABA and BBA, which refer to “After the Beginning Again” and “Before the Beginning Again”. In this Afrocentric system, the landing of the first African-Americans as indentured servants at Jamestown in 1619 becomes the demarcation point in African-American history.

The landing at Jamestown plays the important role in Afrocentric thought of demonstrating the longevity and essential role of African-Americans in American history. Even more important to Afrocentrists is the role of Egypt. Reflecting this, undoubtedly the most important figure in the Afrocentric pantheon of major thinkers has been the Senegalese, Cheikh Anta Diop.<sup>17</sup> His challenging work that seeks to show the black, African origin of “classical” Egyptian civilization on the banks of the Nile, and by extension the origin of all human civilization, has been eagerly seized upon by Afrocentrists as evidence of the historical “centrality of Africa”. As one of the fundamental tenets of Afrocentricity, it has spawned considerable spin-offs. Martin Bernal’s two-volume work, *Black Athena*, which seek to show how fundamental this “black” African civilization was in influencing the flowering of Hellenic civilization, is a direct example. More indirectly affected by this assertion of the centrality of Africa, and more controversial, has been Ivan Sertima’s claim that West Africans arrived in the “New World” before Columbus.<sup>18</sup>

Obviously not all of this is applicable to Southern Africa or even South Africa. There is little need for “authentic” names since apartheid did not strip Africans of this part of their culture like slavery did in the United States of America. Nevertheless, it requires little imagination to see many parallels. African studies, though far better developed than in American universities in the 1960s, deals almost exclusively with South Africa. Some of it is quite radical, but the focus is primarily on the impact of white colonization on South African society – with little room for much else. Mostly this was a negative experience for blacks, rather like slavery in the United States of America, which significantly for the Afrocentrists in the United States plays a far more scaled down role in their scholarship than it does for more mainstream historians of the African-American past. Instead, the former have emphasized African achievements both in Africa and in the Americas. Now that South Africa has begun to establish contact with its African neighbours north of the Limpopo, African studies will no doubt

parallel this development and expand to include not only an interest in African civilizations that are relatively near at hand, such as Great Zimbabwe, but also those of the Sudanic zone and undoubtedly the Nile Valley.

The issue of language, which to Afrocentrists in the United States of America is such an important issue, promises also to strike a powerful cord in the South African setting. It was one of the most emotionally sensitive issues that was discussed at the New Nation writers’ conference, but with an important twist. It was not just a question of white versus black. On both sides of this divide there are in turn major divisions in the South African context, and attempting to resolve this will clearly provoke a great deal of antagonism. Afrikaans-speaking whites have a serious chip on their shoulder *vis-à-vis* their English-speaking counterparts, and, ironically, through the language of “baaskap” often close links with blacks and particularly with “coloureds”. On the other hand, the multiplicity of languages on the African side makes it impossible to talk in terms of a South African counterpart to “Ebonics”. Nevertheless given the historical dominance of both Afrikaans and English, South African blacks will also have to actively pursue the clarification of public language when they believe it is designed to whiten issues. Clearly more than just changing place names will be involved as the struggle intensifies to make the “New South Africa” at least sound blacker.

Judging from the American experience, the struggle over Afrocentricity has been primarily in the realm of education where its main manifestation, the battle over a “multi-cultural” curriculum, stretches all the way from primary to tertiary institutions of learning. So far it has generated little political momentum. However, the 1988 Democratic presidential candidate, the Reverend Jesse Jackson, has pointedly started using the term African-American, which has annoyed a number of the old guard who are still struggling with the name shift from “negro” to “black”. How long this will remain the case is unclear. With the recently established festival of *Kwanzaa* capable of attracting over 30 000 celebrants over three days in New York City, it is hard to imagine that African-American politicians will not soon catch on that they too must “Afrocentrize” their image if they are to keep in step with their constituencies. *Kwanzaa*, which was established by Dr Maulana Karenga in 1966, is patterned after African harvest festivals, but pointedly is celebrated starting on the day after Christmas and ending on the first day of the new year. In 1984 it was estimated that over 13 million African-Americans were celebrating this festival, and by now it has metamorphosed into having its own Afrocentric Santa Claus (*Nia Umoja*), special songs to be sung as part of the celebration and much of the frenzied merchant activity that we associate with Christmas.

There is clearly even greater inspiration in South Africa for changing the public calendar. Apart from Christian holidays such as Christmas and Ascension, celebrations like Republic Day and the Day of the Vow still cast a shadow over contemporary claims that apartheid has been finally laid to rest. To sanitize the memory of this past there will

undoubtedly be a call for a Mandela Day similar to Martin Luther King Day in the United States. Judging, however, from the recent celebration of the ANC's eightieth anniversary in Bloemfontein, which the town's white population studiously ignored, there clearly is the potential for friction over the celebration of what will be seen as black South African holidays. Even in the United States of America, the celebration of Martin Luther King's birthday can still rally conservatives to oppose what they see as excessive concessions to the country's African-American population. How much more so will this be in the case for white South Africans who have grown up linking the ANC with godless communism? We can speculate that this opposition will also give rise to the determination on the part of the black population to use such holidays to make cultural as well as political statements. African-American history month in the United States of America is now more an opportunity to both criticize what is seen as the continuing racism of American society and an Afrocentric celebration rather than a simple remembrance of the civil rights victories of the 1960s.

In the long run all of these rather esoteric concerns may seem pretty small potatoes, especially when compared with the visionary dreams of the civil rights period or the grand designs of the anti-apartheid struggle. To a large extent this reflects of the tenor of the times in which the old ideological divides that served to exaggerate the importance of social conflicts, no longer apply. The Cold War predisposed us to see social change in cataclysmic proportions, but in reality change in the complex societies of today is much more subtle than this orientation assumed. The Afrocentric movement in the United States is an excellent example of this. In the long run perhaps its most important legacy will be in the field of education, where it has already forced a broadening of current educational horizons. Significantly, however, not only does this include space for Africa and African-American contributions, but also opportunities for other previously suppressed groups to assert their cultural identities. Indeed, seen in the context of American history, we can argue that there is nothing really revolutionary about this in the sense that it represents a departure from the norm. *E Pluribus Unum* may be the inscription on the Great Seal of the United States, but the reality is the hyphenated American who attests to the society's basically immigrant origin.

The uniqueness of the South African scene with its Zulu-centric, Xhosa-centric, Tswana-centric, Sesotho-centric, etc perspectives that the apartheid state fostered as part of its divide and rule strategy will undoubtedly add a very special dimension to the development of Pan-Africanist Afro-

centricity in that country. While, on the other hand, the division among the country's black population may be the single most compelling reason for its development. I have argued for a special role for African-Americans in promoting this movement. It was Marcus Garvey's dream in the 1920s that African-Americans would be able to "redeem Africa" through the medium of the universal negro improvement association, headquartered in Harlem. By being resident in the world's most powerful country, in spite of their second class status, they were in a position to be the *avant-garde* of the black world. Today, in many respects, this is even more the case since now real links between the black diaspora and Africa are possible. In the 1940s the "polyrhythms and syncopated eights" of African American jazz found a resonance in the township *shebeens* of South Africa. As these two societies evolve in ways more similar to one another than the rest of the continent, their paths seems likely to converge in other Afrocentric ways as well.

## Notes and references

- 1 *The New York Times*, 11 August 1991.
- 2 *Newsweek*, 23 September 1991.
- 3 *The New York Times*, 7 August 1991.
- 4 Molefi Asante, *Afrocentricity*, New Jersey: Africa World, 1988, p 27.
- 5 *Newsweek*, 23 September 1991, p 46.
- 6 Molefi Asante, *op cit*, p 53.
- 7 Antonio Gramsci, *Letters from prison*, London: 1975, p 204.
- 8 Harold Cruse, *The crisis of the negro intellectual*, New York, 1967.
- 9 Stokely Carmichael, "Toward black liberation", *The Massachusetts Review* 7, Autumn 1966, pp 639-651. Reflecting his own increasing identification with Africa, in the 1970s he changed his name to Kwame Toure as a way of identifying with the two most inspirational Pan-Africanists of the 1960s, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Sekou Toure of Guinea.
- 10 *Newsweek*, 23 September 1991, p 43.
- 11 Molefi Asante, *op cit*, p 2.
- 12 *Ibid*, p 28.
- 13 By "process" racism Asante means that rather than institutions having blanket rules against blacks joining them, special committees screen potential black members to see if they are suitable so that an exception can be made in their case.
- 14 *Ibid*, p 32.
- 15 *Ibid*, p 33.
- 16 *Ibid*, p 46.
- 17 Two of his most important works in English are: *The African origin of civilization*, New York: L Hill Books, 1974, and *The cultural unity of black Africa*, Chicago: Third World, 1978. Diop died two years ago.
- 18 Ivan van Sertima, *They came before Columbus*, Random House: 1976.

# Industrial subcontracting and home-work in South Africa: Policy issues from the international experience

*C M Rogerson, of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, looks at some of the international literature that debates the relationship between subcontracting and home-work in the context of industrial restructuring.\**

## Introduction

In South Africa during the past decade much interest has attached to the prospects of fostering close linkages between large and small enterprises by developing industrial subcontracting and home-work relationships as means to support small enterprise development.<sup>1</sup> The developmental experience of East Asia and Pacific Rim nations is applauded by many observers as offering a "model" of close co-operation between large and small enterprises through subcontracting networks. For example, Sunter envisions the future development in South Africa of a "dual logic economy" structured in terms of a "first logic economy" of large business enterprise which subcontracts work to a "second logic economy" of small-scale enterprises.<sup>2</sup> The expansion of this form of subcontracting is seen as especially important as a potential trigger to boost the growth of black small-scale enterprises.<sup>3</sup>

During 1989, official concern was expressed concerning the "inadequately developed subcontracting sector" in South Africa.<sup>4</sup> A report by the President's Council noted that subcontracting "played and still plays a very important role in the Japanese industrial development strategy. The dynamic development of a similar sector in South Africa could

create important opportunities for potential entrepreneurs".<sup>5</sup> Likewise, the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) argues South African manufacturing has "much to learn from the symbiotic relationship found between big and small businesses" in East Asia and maintains that subcontracting "can be successfully applied" to spur local industrial development.<sup>6</sup> The SBDC actively sought to foster a built environment to facilitate industrial subcontracting in South Africa, providing a network of appropriate low-cost rental facilities or individually owned premises.<sup>7</sup> Initially, this effort took the form of establishing a series of township industrial park estates, coupled with other forms of assistance and support services for infant or expanding enterprises. In a later and highly innovative programme designed to catalyse black entrepreneurs, beginning in 1985, the SBDC founded commercial and industrial "hives" which function as incubators for small enterprises. This new built environment of industrial parks and hives is seen as central to encouraging new subcontracting relations between large and small business enterprise in South Africa.<sup>8</sup>

Beyond creating a built environment designed to foster subcontracting networks, the SBDC also set up a special unit that functions as an intermediary between major industrial groups and small suppliers seeking to facilitate greater business partnerships. Several large South African companies, such as Barlow Rand and the Anglo-American Group, are investigating the feasibility of contracting out certain operations to small-scale enterprises.<sup>9</sup> Currently, "strong

Earlier versions of material in this paper were presented at a meeting of the International Geographical Union Commission on Industrial Change and prepared for the Urban Foundation, Johannesburg. Completion of this work was made possible by a grant from the Centre for Science Development, Pretoria, whose research support is gratefully acknowledged. Opinions expressed in the paper are those of the author.

growth" is claimed for SBDC's sub-contracting programme, which, at end-1991, involved 57 large businesses contracting work to 120 small business concerns.<sup>10</sup>

In broad terms, however, co-operation between large- and small-scale enterprises historically has not developed to a great degree in South African manufacturing. In the recent extensive national investigation on the small-scale and informal economy conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council, it was revealed that subcontracting takes place only on a minor scale.<sup>11</sup> There has not evolved in South Africa an extensive network of subcontracting relations between large and small enterprises facilitating the latter's development in a mutually symbiotic relationship. Instead, a pattern emerged whereby the highly concentrated structure of the South African economy encouraged large enterprises to deal mainly with each other. Limited evidence of large firm to small enterprise subcontracting surfaced in Cape Town where there has been an expansion in subcontracting linkages between formal sector garments firms and groups of informal producers. Subcontracting is manifest in the growth of communities of women home-workers involved in clothing production in Mitchells Plain.<sup>12</sup> A similar growth has been noted in the Chatsworth area of Durban.<sup>13</sup> On the Witwatersrand small amounts of subcontracting are occurring through the putting out of work by larger enterprises to small-scale businesses at certain township industrial parks or hives.<sup>14</sup> In the case of small (almost exclusively black) subcontractors situated at township parks, entrepreneurs are a group of relatively skilled and well-educated former workers who often were encouraged by former employers to set up "independent" outwork operations. This subcontracting relationship represents therefore a case of the "informalization" of existing formal enterprise, which are seeking to reduce their labour costs in the face of a strengthening trade union movement in South Africa.<sup>15</sup>

Against the background of heightening interest in promoting subcontracting and home-work in South African manufacturing it is useful to examine policy issues emanating from the international experience. The objective in this article is to dissect a segment of the vibrant international literature that debates relationships between subcontracting and home-work in the context of industrial restructuring. Three sections of material are presented. First, attention centres on a general framework for interrogating the relationships of industrial subcontracting, home-work and restructuring. Second, discussion turns to explore these issues in the developing world context where a number of important studies have been undertaken concerning subcontracting and industrial home-work, particularly in Latin America and Asia. Also of interest for South African policy analysts are works discussed in section three which unpack the relationships of subcontracting, home-work and industrial restructuring within the setting of the "semi-peripheral" economy of Spain. The Spanish experience of industrial restructuring, Benton<sup>16</sup> points out, is particularly "relevant to the plight of a middle group of countries caught between dependency and development", such as South Africa.

## Subcontracting, restructuring and home-work

Over the past two decades, conditions of economic recession, the internationalization of production, the debt crisis in the developing world and the application of structural adjustment programmes combined dramatically to re-define conditions for industrial organization and production. For reasons of improving efficiency and enhancing growth prospects, governments were pressed to remove labour market regulations so that in one way or another employment security has been progressively eroded in the global search for "flexible labour".<sup>18</sup> Accordingly, a very important and noticeable trend in industrial restructuring has been towards more "flexible, low-risk production structures which assume one of several forms including less rigidly dedicated production technologies, more flexible labour processes and/or new forms of inter-enterprise linkages".<sup>19</sup> One manifestation of this global trend in industrial restructuring has been an expansion in subcontracting and of home-work activities in many countries, most notably in the developing world, but also in many parts of Western Europe.

What is important to understand about the current wave of industrial restructuring is that it has taken various forms and exerted varying impacts in different places. This variety has led to researchers calling for studies towards a "regional geography of subcontracting".<sup>20</sup> Of compelling interest has been the rise of "flexible accumulation" in parts of Italy and Germany. In the cases of Emilia-Romagna and Baden-Württemberg it is suggested that agglomerations of small producers clustering in "industrial districts" may have a competitive edge in international manufacturing.<sup>21</sup> In these two areas, specialized and relatively independent firms subcontract to industry and in so doing provide skilled and well-remunerated jobs to "informal" workers. The Italian and German experiences challenge the findings of other research which points out that in many countries, unregulated labour (often women home-workers) is incorporated into modern industry via off-premises subcontracting with the simple objective of reducing labour costs and by-passing labour unrest.

In seeking to explain the varying experiences and record of subcontracting in different contexts, it is important at the outset to differentiate and disaggregate the nature of subcontracting itself. Lawson<sup>22</sup> recognizes two principal forms of subcontracting, namely capacity subcontracting and specialization subcontracting; each of these forms are seen as having differential implications for employment.

In the first case of capacity subcontracting there occurs a putting out of overflow work that might normally be done by the parent company. The subcontracted work will be undertaken according to detailed specifications and plans laid down by the parent. Since the parent and subcontracted firm engage in similar kinds of production activity they are inevitably in direct competition. Hence, economic cycles of boom and decline determine the volume of capacity subcontracting work available, making for little stability or security for the subcontractor(s) involved in this arrangement.

Indeed, capacity subcontracting is an ideal buffer arrangement to guard against boom and bust cycles in demand for products and is a form of "production smoothing" with fluctuating demand taken up in the subcontracting firms.

The employment outcome of this arrangement is most probably one of tight control from the parent firm to conform with in-house production as arrangements are typically short-term or unstable. Accordingly, workers would enjoy little autonomy or flexibility under this form of subcontracting arrangement.

Under the second case of specialization subcontracting there occurs a vertical disintegration of the production process with the shedding of certain parts of that production process to subcontracting enterprises. This form of subcontracting is extremely popular in the sectors of electronics, clothing and footwear production where, for example, the stitching of the shoe uppers can be subcontracted out to workers with a machine in their home and sometimes with a machine provided by the factory. In this latter instance, the role of subcontractors is essentially one of providing a cheap, unregulated labour supply and of maintaining a highly flexible production system that can accommodate rapidly to changes in fashion styles and demand. Nonetheless, it is pointed out that under specialization subcontracting a potential does exist (with certain conditions) for subcontractors to enjoy greater autonomy over production design and organization of production. Moreover, there is also a greater degree of reliability in terms of the market, assuming that the parent firm(s) remain viable.

The employment outcomes of specialization contracting may vary considerably and especially so as compared to those of capacity subcontracting. For specialization subcontracting there exist two differing employment scenarios which relate to differing rationales for such subcontracting. First, there will occur situations in which specialization subcontracting is undertaken due to the fact that certain capital-intensive production technologies have a minimum efficient scale of operation that often exceeds the needs of a single firm. Thus, for example, a subcontracted parts supplier of tyres may produce large volumes and supply several manufacturers. In this case the linkage between parent firms and subcontractors is one of interdependence and the subcontractor enjoys "autonomy in the organization of production and this may translate to her/his employees having considerable autonomy and control over their work".<sup>23</sup> In addition, the technologies used often result in jobs which involve considerable skill.

Another scenario in specialization subcontracting arises when the impetus derives from the minimization of labour costs per se. In these conditions the subcontracted work is normally undertaken off-premises either in backyard workshops or in homework. This subcontracted work may involve the putting out of production without providing raw materials (horizontal subcontracting) or through the provision of raw materials and other inputs (vertical subcontracting). The nature of work consists primarily of very simple, unskilled tasks in which workers gain few marketable skills, are easily replaceable and have few new opportunities opened up to

them. Labour costs are typically minimized through the payment of piece wages which compel high productivity and long working hours. The labour process and output of these home-workers is therefore highly controlled so that workers have little flexibility or autonomy in their work.

This broad framework allows a first level appreciation of different outcomes of subcontracting arrangements in different countries. Nonetheless, this first level appreciation must be augmented by understanding the relationship between industrial organization and particular places. As Lawson argues: "While we can theorize various forms that industrialization might assume, the particular forms which *actually emerge* depend on the local creation of certain industrial structures".<sup>24</sup> Moreover, Benton<sup>25</sup> offers the important observation that "if sweatshops and economic backwardness would result from industrial restructuring in one place, while technological innovation and the revival of craft might emerge in another" there is a challenge to understand the factors responsible for shaping different patterns and geographical outcomes relating to subcontracting. It is to examine the particular experience of subcontracting and home-work in the developing world and then in the semi-peripheral economy of Spain that attention now shifts.

### Subcontracting and home-work: The experience of Asia and Latin America

Subcontracting arrangements through the channels of small producers and "invisible home-work"<sup>26</sup> have been widely noted in studies throughout Latin America and Asia. In both regions the internationalization of production activities has resulted in complex subcontracting networks that utilize the most vulnerable sections of the workforce as a means for cost reduction.<sup>27</sup> In many parts of Latin America emphasis is placed upon the plight of women industrial home-workers "tied to subcontracting networks via an exploitative intermediary system" as well as "subject to patriarchal control by employers, intermediaries and husbands".<sup>28</sup> Subcontracting of production to home-workers, who often are women workers in small towns or rural communities with little or no alternative employment opportunities, is a very common feature of Brazil's clothing and textile industries.<sup>29</sup>

Equally, in many other parts of the developing world, such as Mexico or India, the growth of subcontracting and industrial home-work represents a clear shift of production in search of cheap labour.<sup>30</sup> Sometimes, the growth of such arrangements occurs, as in Uruguay, in the context of the expansion and strengthening of trade unions and is a defensive response by industrial capital to a need to reduce labour costs in the face of intensified international competition.<sup>31</sup> In Uruguay an enormous growth occurred of "informal shoe factories" as formal enterprises subcontract parts of the production process to communities of women home-workers. The result has been the "development" of small-scale informal enterprise at the lower echelons of subcontracting, albeit at a cost of low earnings, vulnerability, and precarious work conditions.

The kinds of production activities in which subcontracting arrangements have been found range from the “low-tech” manufacture of textiles, clothing or footwear to the more “modern” sectors of metals, plastic goods or electronics; the markets for these products vary and include international and domestic markets. Subcontracting linkages may encompass firms of different types and sizes – from small family workshops to large enterprises – involving both national and international capital.<sup>32</sup> The network of subcontracting may take complex forms which approximate pyramid type structures in which working and wage conditions deteriorate down the hierarchy.<sup>33</sup> In Mexico City, for example, four different tiers of subcontracting arrangements have been found in the electronics sector, which provide a link from multinational capital to home-workers.<sup>34</sup> In this case production is subcontracted from a large multinational to increasingly smaller firms. Those producers at the bottom of the hierarchy function as home-workers with women working at home undertaking production tasks similar to those at a level three basement sweatshop, albeit at lower levels of remuneration. Indeed, at level three in Mexico City, workers would be paid minimum wage without fringe benefits while home-workers receive an average (piece work) wage equivalent to only one-third of minimum wage.<sup>35</sup>

What is a striking trend, not only in Mexico, but also in many parts of Asia, is for the small firms at the bottom of the subcontracting chain to be highly feminized in their workforce composition.<sup>36</sup> This feminization is practically complete when reaching down to the final layer of subcontracting to industrial home-workers.<sup>37</sup> The types of industrial homework consist mainly of very simple and unskilled tasks, labour-intensive and with minimum use of capital or production tools. Such work would be distributed to home-workers daily, weekly or by quota. The channel for work distribution could be either a jobber or direct distribution from a factory or small workshop.<sup>38</sup>

Overall, this increasingly common form of industrial home-work in developing world cities is unskilled and is generated by the fragmentation of the labour process; the tasks required are extremely simple, repetitive and monotonous, and represent a small step in the broad production process. Moreover, much home-work is unstable without any type of security and creates a precarious dependency by workers on the jobber or the firm that assigns work without any assurance that work will be forthcoming. Such “invisible” work is undertaken on the fringes of illegality, not because domestic piecework arrangements are illegal but because legal productive arrangements (regarding for example, fringe benefits, taxes or other legislated work regulations) are unmet. This lowering of costs of production implies correspondingly both higher profits and higher rates of exploitation of particularly women home-workers.<sup>39</sup>

The expansion of subcontracting and home-work across Latin America and Asia must be interpreted as part of the broader worldwide trend towards more flexible forms of production. Growing instability in world industrial markets is impelling producers to adopt new industrial forms which

manifest themselves as flexible low-risk production systems.<sup>40</sup> Across the developing world subcontracting is a flexible production structure “through which growing proportions of workers are incorporated into production through a variety of legal and illegal off-premises arrangements”.<sup>41</sup> In India large industrial enterprises have engaged in, what Harriss styles, the “disorganization of the organized sector” with ancillarization and subcontracting to small-scale and informal producers.<sup>42</sup> Further, there is evidence of the splintering of formerly integrated production processes in large factories falling within the ambit of Indian labour legislation, of the putting-out of work to small informal workshops in which workers are unprotected by legislation and of how some owners choose to expand their businesses by forming a string of small firms rather than setting up a larger formal plant. All these complex new forms of organizing industrial production are increasing dependencies between “formal” and “informal” sector producers across the developing world. |

Mixed assessments are offered on the developmental implications of subcontracting in the developing world. At one level, the shift of production toward informal sector enterprises accords the system a great deal of flexibility in terms of expanding and contracting productive capacity.<sup>43</sup> In addition, this flexibility may be important to building an infrastructure of small firms that might provide a basis for growth and future development. The positive aspect of this new form of industrial organization is that it stimulates the activities of small businesses that are adaptable to prevailing economic conditions in the developing world. In addition, it furnishes “the basis for fostering and channeling entrepreneurial skills and developing productive forces in general”.<sup>44</sup> In one of the few available African studies on industrial subcontracting, Manning records that in Nairobi small wood and metal manufacturers were eager to be subcontracted by larger firms or the state “because of the stability that this would bring to production, and the guarantee of stable incomes implied”.<sup>45</sup>

Against this optimistic view on subcontracting, however, must be set some cautionary comments. First, for the small business sector associated with subcontracting its development will be highly dependent on the large firms to which it is linked and it will be self-sustaining only to the extent that general development is so. Second, the permanence of many small businesses will be at risk of being constantly threatened by competition offered by large firms. The obstacles faced by small, informal operations are several and include lack of access to credit, poor marketing information and limited access to new technological developments.<sup>46</sup> Third, taking a perspective “from below”, the position of labour is greatly weakened by the proliferation of these new production arrangements. Indeed, at the lowest levels of subcontracting, namely home-work, it produces precarious working conditions, piece work wage levels far below designated minimum scales, and a high degree of work instability.<sup>47</sup> The invisibility and vulnerability of these (largely female) industrial home-workers makes them a group which is politically

as well as economically marginal across the developing world.<sup>48</sup> Despite the exploitative nature of industrial home-work and of the difficulties in improving their lot<sup>49</sup> from the perspective of the women themselves, engagement in home-work is not viewed as totally negative. It produces a wage which, albeit pitifully low, may be used as a lever to secure some autonomy within the household as well a means of pursuing goals of household well-being. From a long-term developmental perspective, however, Beneria and Roldan conclude that "it is difficult to be optimistic about the possibilities offered by this type of paid work".<sup>50</sup>

### Subcontracting in the semi-periphery: The Spanish record

Productive decentralization, as evidenced by an "explosion" of subcontracting, an increase in the numbers of home-based producers and a proliferation of small-scale enterprises, has grown considerably in momentum in Spain over the past decade. A number of important studies by Benton<sup>51</sup> and Ybarra<sup>52</sup> afford insight into restructuring and the emergence of new forms of Spanish industrial organization.

In Spain, pressures in the 1970s to reduce costs and increase flexibility in the face of economic crisis precipitated a phase of restructuring which reshaped both the "scaffold" of the industrial structure and altered the organization of industrial labour. Indeed, as in the developing world experience, in Spain industrial outwork "is now the dominant feature of many production processes".<sup>53</sup> This enormous expansion of the informal manufacturing sector was inseparable from the strengthening of organized labour and growing international competition. Strong motives therefore existed for the advance of "informalization" as manifest in the break-up of established formal enterprises and the reorganization of production into small underground workshops "in many cases with the same machinery and some of the same workers".<sup>54</sup> Several key questions are raised by the rise of this "new informal sector" in Spain. In particular, two important issues are addressed in Spanish research:

Does the continued growth of small and informal enterprises reflect the special dynamism of small-scale industrial development, or does it simply arise from the defensive strategies of industrialists in the face of persistent adverse political and economic conditions? Will the process result in a general degradation of labour conditions and a return to autocratic control over the labour process, or can it generate entirely new relations of production and greater worker autonomy in ordering the production process?<sup>55</sup>

The growth of industrial subcontracting in Spain as a mechanism for siphoning cheap unprotected labour into modern processes with the consequence of substandard working conditions, low pay and unstable employment for outworkers is documented for two regions. Ybarra<sup>56</sup> describes the expansion of informalization as a "model for underdevelopment" in Valencia. In this part of Spain many firms replaced employees with informal outworkers, lowering their wage costs, and enhancing their ability to adjust cheaply and quickly to shifting demand. In Valencia spontaneous restructuring and reliance on informal manufacturing

"has been due, to a large extent, to the pressure exercised by newly industrializing countries".<sup>57</sup> The response of industrialists has not been to modernize machinery or improve the quality of manufacturing skills, rather "the trend has been toward maintaining traditional manufacturing schemes while intensifying the use of cheap unskilled and semi-skilled labour".<sup>58</sup>

A similar process of informalization is recorded for the shoe industry in the Alicante region. Here, an enormous growth has taken place in home-work, particularly for the sewing of uppers and, to a lesser degree, in the final stages of shoe production.<sup>59</sup> Although home-workers have long been a feature of the Alicante region, two new elements were introduced into the shoe production system. First, is the expanded putting out of tasks that had normally been done inside firms. The second is the growth of specialized informal cutting and sewing workshops which serve both established firms and new, restructured factories. The common denominator among the different types of informal enterprises in the Alicante region "is that they produce shoes or parts of shoes cheaply".<sup>60</sup>

The small subcontractors in Alicante compete both with each other and with other factories, mainly on a basis of reducing wage costs through non-payment of social security. Because quality and design considerations are of secondary importance, while the new structure of shoe production is extremely flexible (in that labour supply to established firms can readily fluctuate), it is at the same time extremely rigid as "adjustments to market changes involve shifts in employment rather than qualitative changes in strategy adopted by the firms themselves".<sup>61</sup>

The experience of the Alicante region parallels that of the "Valencian path to development" to the extent that restructuring has not generated an Italian-style emergence of flexible specialization with inter-enterprise co-operation, instead fostering a very different process of transformation.<sup>62</sup> The absence of a more dynamic pattern of industrial restructuring in the sphere of shoe production is explained by two factors. First, the ability to contract home-work labour reduces incentives for all producers in the shoe industry to introduce any innovations. As Benton observes:

So long as they can continue to use the informal sector as a mechanism for lowering wage costs to competitive rates internationally, producers will choose to imitate Italian designs and postpone technological change. While highly profitable in the short run, such a strategy hardly solves the industry's long-term problem: how to confront increased competition from developing country producers with reliably lower wage costs and the same or steadily increasing technological capacity.<sup>63</sup>

The second major constraint on a dynamic growth model relates to the nature of home-work, which limits the potential contributions of producers to innovation and growth. The isolation of women home-workers, gruelling work hours and low remuneration "make it extremely difficult for them to play the part of creative entrepreneurs".<sup>64</sup>

Restructuring of industry in a setting of small firm expansion, however, has taken a different development trajectory in other regions of Spain. On the outskirts of Madrid

there has occurred since the 1970s a blossoming of new small enterprises which have been generated by restructuring. As large firms made substantial cutbacks in their workforces a host of small and medium-sized firms were started by professionals and skilled workers from the industry.<sup>65</sup> The new firms adopted a novel structure of specialized subcontracting amongst themselves. Although the subcontractors do make use of unregulated labour to cut costs, the ability to produce cheaply is only one element of their competitiveness; the key is emphasis on high standards of quality of their work. Accordingly, in the small firms that constitute the Madrid electronics sector, restructuring to introduce greater flexibility has produced a different pattern of change to that in Valencia or Alicante. In the electronics firms the emerging industrial structure approximates a system of flexible specialization with “multiple layers of interconnected but independent industrial producers”.<sup>66</sup> Within this system small subcontractors are able to reduce their dependence on a single firm and their ability to attract clients “depends more on the equality or newness of the goods they produce than on the lower prices they can offer”.<sup>67</sup> This stands in marked contrast to the position in Alicante or Valencia where flexibility comes from firms’ ability to respond to market shifts by altering the cost, size and make-up of the workforce.

### Concluding remarks

The argument in this article is that South African policy makers can draw important lessons from examining the international experience of home-work and industrial subcontracting in terms of framing future strategic initiatives regarding small enterprise development. Several issues emerge in this international literature and offer fruitful policy and research directions for local analysts.

First, the contrasting international experiences of subcontracting and home-work underline the imperative to unpack the nature of subcontract relationships and distinguish at least between the outcomes of capacity and specialization forms of subcontracting. It is evident that a system in which small subcontract producers begin to specialize and have access to markets independent of a few clients is one that is in a better position to meet demand shifts by re-orienting production. In other words, small producers must begin to innovate and anticipate – instead of merely respond to – the needs of established firms and create, rather than follow, trends in the demand for finished goods.

A second important point is that a process of spontaneous restructuring in the informal sector could be boosted by institutional support by the state (both central and local) rather than merely being left to unfold through measures of deregulation. Undoubtedly, subcontracting and informalization will not always produce a growth model of flexible specialization.<sup>68</sup>

Third, it is important to recognize that the existence of home-work does not constitute an incipient phase within the industrialization process nor does it represent a pre- or non-

capitalist mode of production; on the contrary, it is an integral element of the modern capitalist production process.<sup>69</sup> Even if informal home-work implies that labour is unprotected and vulnerable and that the character, extent and dynamics of informal production are determined by its relations both with the state and larger enterprises, “this does not mean either that informal activities necessarily have no potential for expansion or that workers in them cannot obtain adequate and expanding livelihoods”.<sup>70</sup>

Development flexible specialization does not involve the strengthening of small industrial enterprise per se; instead, it focuses on firms of different sizes and different functions in relation to “a system of firms embedded in a production process”.<sup>71</sup> One form of flexible specialization characteristically involves the clustering geographically of firms to constitute closely knit “industrial districts” within which enterprises engage in horizontal subcontracting relationships. Sabel<sup>72</sup> speculates that “some parts of the informal sector could under some conditions develop into a Latin American (or Brazilian, or Colombian) variant of the small-firm model of flexible specialization”. It is stressed that intensified conditions of labour repression and exploitation may not always arise; indeed, many of the “same steps required to build a network of reliable subcontractors... are identical to those required to switch some parts of the informal economy onto the track away from sweating and towards technological innovation”.<sup>73</sup> The potential for promoting industrial districts and their associated subcontracting relations is an issue that merits the close attention of South African policy analysts in the 1990s.

Finally, the above discussion points to the crucial need to discern the diverse conditions of small-scale industrial production and avoid blanket generalizations about growth prospects.<sup>74</sup> Subcontracting relationships that occur between large and small informal enterprises or between different small industrial enterprises are neither entirely detrimental nor entirely beneficial as their effects can be quite specific to branch of industry and to place.<sup>75</sup> Therefore, in policy terms what is needed is to understand (and support) more fully the new sets of linkages between formal and informal enterprise that are forged in a process of restructuring. This conclusion underscores a major research void in South Africa where little, if anything, is known of patterns of subcontracting in the 1990s and of changing linkages between formal and informal producers in the context of industrial restructuring. Policy initiatives for small business development in South Africa therefore would be greatly enriched by empirical research which advances the development of a local regional geography of subcontracting.

### Notes and references

- 1 Among many statements, see: Small Business Development Corporation, *Contactmaker*, vol 3, 1988; “The need for subcontracting”, *RSA Policy Review*, vol 2, no 4, 1989, pp 48–51; C Chapman, “Sub-contracting: Unlocking the potential of small business”, *Black Enterprise*, 12–13 May 1990; and “Hand in hand: How David made peace with Goliath”, *Worknet*, 1, 21, 1992.

- 2 C Sunter, *The world and South Africa in the 1990s*, Cape Town: Human and Rousseau, 1987.
- 3 See C M Rogerson, "Re-balancing racial economic power in South Africa: The development of black small-scale enterprise", *Geo-Journal*, vol 30, no 1, in press 1993.
- 4 South Africa, Republic of, *Report of the Committee for Economic Affairs on a Strategy and Action Plan to Improve Productivity in the RSA*, PC 1/1989, Cape Town: Government Printer, 1990, p 269.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 B Vosloo "SMEs – Our economic muscle of the future: Interview", *Engineering News*, 13 December 1991.
- 7 See B Vosloo, "A strategy for entrepreneurship and SME development for the new South Africa", *SBDC Courier*, vol 9, no 1.
- 8 For an account see C M Rogerson, "Deregulation, subcontracting and the '(in)formalization' of small-scale manufacturing", in E Preston-Whyte and C M Rogerson (eds), *South Africa's informal economy*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1991, pp 365–385.
- 9 G Penny, "Subcontracting with and purchasing from black small business", unpublished paper, Small Business Unit of Anglo-American Corporation, Johannesburg, 1989; and BMI (Pty) Ltd, *A profile of small business in South Africa and ways of stimulating the sector*, Johannesburg: BMI, 1992, especially pp 112–115.
- 10 See Small Business Development Corporation, *Annual Report 1990–91*, Johannesburg: SBDC, p 32.
- 11 R Hirschowitz, J Acutt and A Koch, *The NTB-HSRC Investigation into Training for the Informal Sector: Main Report*, Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, 1991, p 156.
- 12 B R Koch, *The informal sector: Small clothing manufacturers in Mitchells Plain*, Working Paper no 80, Cape town: Southern African Labour and Development Research Unit, 1991.
- 13 See M R G Reibstein, "'The home as a work space': An exploration into the subject of home industries – with special reference to Chatsworth", Unpublished Masters of Town and Regional Planning Dissertation, Durban: University of Natal, 1989, especially pp 78–95.
- 14 For accounts see D Miller, "Deregulation in practice in SA", unpublished paper prepared for the National Seminar of Economic Support Groups hosted by Labour Research Service, 23–26 March 1990, especially pp 24–27; and D Simon and S Birch, "Formalizing the informal sector in a changing South Africa: Small-scale manufacturing on the Witwatersrand", *World Development*, vol 20, 1992, pp 1029–1045.
- 15 See E Preston-Whyte and C M Rogerson, *op cit*.
- 16 L A Benton, *Invisible factories: The informal economy and industrial development in Spain*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990, p 8.
- 17 V A Lawson and T Klak, "Conceptual linkages in the study of production and reproduction in Latin American cities", *Economic Geography*, vol 66, 1990, pp 310–327, (quote on p 314).
- 18 See G Standing, "Global feminization through flexible labour", *World Development*, vol 17, 1989, pp 1077–1095.
- 19 V A Lawson, "Industrial subcontracting and employment forms in Latin America: A framework for contextual analysis", *Progress in Human Geography*, vol 16, 1992, pp 1–23, (quote on p 4).
- 20 *Ibid.*, p 3.
- 21 For accounts of industrial districts in Italy and Germany see the following: S Brusco, "The Emilian model: Productive decentralization and social integration", *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, vol 6, 1982, pp 167–184; A Amin, "Flexible specialisation and small firms in Italy: Myths and realities", *Antipode*, vol 21, 1989, pp 13–34; C F Sabel, G B Herrigel, R Deeg and R Kazis, "Regional prosperities compared: Massachusetts and Baden Wurttemberg in the 1980s", *Economy and Society*, vol 18, 1989, pp 374–404. F Pyke, G Becattini and W Sengenberger (eds), *Industrial districts and inter-firm cooperation in Italy*, Geneva: International Institute for Labour Studies, 1990; and H Schmitz, "Industrial districts: Model and reality in Baden-Wurttemberg", in F Pyke and W Sengenberger (eds), *Industrial districts and local economic regeneration*, Geneva: International Institute for Labour Studies, 1992, pp 87–121.
- 22 See V A Lawson, *op cit*, which is the source for the discussion on capacity and specialization forms of subcontracting.
- 23 *Ibid.*, p 11.
- 24 *Ibid.*, p 12.
- 25 L A Benton, *op cit*, p 7.
- 26 E Bhatt, "The invisibility of home-based work: The case of piece rate workers in India", in A M Singh and A Kelles-Viitanen (eds), *Invisible hands: Women in home-based production*, New Delhi: Sage, 1987, pp 29–33.
- 27 For examples see L Beneria and M Roldan, *The crossroads of class and gender: Industrial homework, subcontracting and household dynamics in Mexico City*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987; R Rao and S Husain, "Invisible hands: Women in home-based production in the garment export industry in Delhi", in A M Singh and A Kelles-Viitanen (eds), *op cit*, pp 51–67; and M Crummett, *Rural women and industrial home work in Latin America: Research review and agenda*, WEP 10/WP46, Geneva: International Labour Organization, 1988.
- 28 M Crummett, *op cit*, p 14.
- 29 *Ibid.*, pp 3–5.
- 30 For Mexico see L Beneria and M Roldan, *op cit* and for India see I Baud, "Industrial subcontracting: The effects of the putting out system on poor working women in India", in A M Singh and A Kelles-Viitanen (eds), *op cit*, pp 69–91.
- 31 J C Fortuna and S Prates, "Informal sector versus informalized labor relations in Uruguay", in A Portes, M Castells and L A Benton (eds), *The informal economy: Studies in advanced and less developed countries*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp 78–110, 1989.
- 32 M Crummett, *op cit*, p 14.
- 33 L Beneria, "Subcontracting and employment dynamics in Mexico City", in A Portes, M Castells and L A Benton (eds), *op cit*, pp 173–188.
- 34 *Ibid.*
- 35 L Beneria and M Roldan, *op cit*, p 33.
- 36 *Ibid.*, p 43.
- 37 For examples see I Baud, *op cit*; C Bhatt, *op cit*; R Rao and S Husain, *op cit*; and M Crummett, *op cit*.
- 38 See L Beneria and M Roldan, *op cit*, for Mexico; and E Bhatt, *op cit*, for India.
- 39 L Beneria and M Roldan, *op cit*, p 65.
- 40 This point is elaborated by G Standing, *op cit*; and V A Lawson and T Klak, *op cit*.
- 41 V A Lawson and T Klak, *op cit*, p 314.
- 42 J C Harriss, "Vulnerable workers in the Indian urban labour market", in G Rodgers (ed), *Urban poverty and the labour market: Access to jobs and incomes in Asian and Latin American cities*, Geneva: International Labour Office, 1990, pp 250–251.
- 43 V A Lawson, *op cit*, p 7.
- 44 L Beneria and M Roldan, *op cit*, p 54.
- 45 C Manning, "A review of international experiences of the informal sector, and the emerging policy issues", paper presented to the Industrial Strategy Project Workshop, Somerset West, 8–13 November 1992, p 27.
- 46 L Beneria, *op cit*, p 185.
- 47 L Beneria and M Roldan, *op cit*, p 54.
- 48 See I Baud, *op cit*; M Crummett, *op cit*.
- 49 On this point see U Jumani, "The future of home-based production", in A M Singh and A Kelles-Viitanen (eds), *op cit*, pp 251–266.

- 50 L Beneria and M Roldan, *op cit*, p 169.
- 51 L A Benton, "Homework and industrial development: Gender roles and restructuring in the Spanish shoe industry", *World Development*, vol 17, 1989, pp 255–266; L A Benton, "Industrial subcontracting and the informal sector: The politics of restructuring in the Madrid electronics industry", in A Portes, M Castells and L A Benton (eds), *op cit*, pp 228–244; and L A Benton, *Invisible factories...*, *op cit*.
- 52 J A Ybarra, "Informalization in the Valencian economy: A model for underdevelopment", in A Portes, M Castells and L A Benton (eds), *op cit*, pp 216–227.
- 53 L A Benton, *Invisible factories...*, *op cit*, p 2.
- 54 *Ibid*, p 38.
- 55 *Ibid*, p 39.
- 56 J-A Ybarra, *op cit*.
- 57 *Ibid*, p 221.
- 58 *Ibid*.
- 59 L A Benton, *Invisible factories ...*, *op cit*, p 85.
- 60 *Ibid*, p 96, emphasis in the original.
- 61 *Ibid*.
- 62 *Ibid*, p 100.
- 63 L A Benton, "Homework and industrial development...", *op cit*, p 264.
- 64 *Ibid*.
- 65 L A Benton, "Industrial subcontracting and the informal sector ...", *op cit*, p 233.
- 66 *Ibid*, p 240.
- 67 *Ibid*.
- 68 C M Rogerson, "Policies for South Africa's informal economy: Lessons from the international experience", in E Preston-Whyte and C Rogerson (eds), *op cit*, pp 207–222.
- 69 See M Crummett, *op cit*, and L A Benton, *op cit*.
- 70 J C Harriss, *Linkages between the formal and the informal sector in developing countries: A review of literature*, WEP 2–19/WP.50, Geneva: International Labour Office, 1990, p 4.
- 71 M Storper, "Industrialization and the regional question in the Third World: Lessons of postimperialism; prospects of post-Fordism", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, vol 14, pp 423–444 (quote on p 439).
- 72 C F Sabel, "Changing models of economic efficiency and their implications for industrialization in the Third World", in A Foxley, M S McPherson and G O'Donnell (eds), *Development, democracy and the art of trespassing: Essays in honor of Albert O Hirschman*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986, pp 27–55 (quote on p 48).
- 73 *Ibid*, pp 49–50.
- 74 H Schmitz, *Manufacturing in the backyard: Case studies on accumulation and employment in small-scale Brazilian industry*, London: Frances Pinter, 1982, p 192.
- 75 See H Schmitz, "Growth constraints on small-scale manufacturing in developing countries: A critical review", *World Development*, vol 10, 1982, pp 429–450.

# Aid to African agriculture: Lessons from two decades of donors' experience\*

*Dr Denis Fair, Senior Research Fellow at the Africa Institute, provides a brief summary of the main findings of this important evaluation which has significant implications not only for sub-Saharan Africa's agriculture but also for its economic development as a whole.*

This volume is a worthy companion to the World Bank's 1989 report entitled *Sub-Saharan Africa: From crisis to sustainable growth*,† for it is agriculture, according to many analysts of long-term economic growth, that plays a crucial role in the structural transformation of a country in the early stages of development. The book, of 627 pages, is derived from in-depth research, commenced in 1984, into managing agricultural development in Africa (Madia), followed by extensive discussion and document preparation on the part of the participants and other contributors.

The evaluation project springs from the realization that the malaise in African agriculture may be due, not only to external factors and internal domestic policies but also to the nature, the allocation and the implementation of aid on the part of donor agencies and countries. A widespread view is that aid has done little to stimulate growth, alleviate poverty or create human and institutional capacity; that donors have no sense of priority; that they lack an overall economic development strategy centred on Africa's own vision of its development and the harnessing of its own abundant physical and human resources; and that they adopt bandwagon and top-down approaches, however well-meaning their intentions may be. As for the role of African governments the tendency, it is said, has been simply to maximize aid flows regardless of their quality.

Eight donors contributed to the project and to the evaluation of their own aid programmes. They are the World

Bank, Denmark, Sweden, United States, the European Community, France, Britain and the former West Germany. They are responsible for 60 per cent of the aid flowing to Africa and contribute not only financial and technical assistance but also policy advice. Six sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries were selected for this country and cross-country project. They are Kenya, Tanzania and Malawi in East Africa and Cameroon, Nigeria and Senegal in West Africa. These countries accounted for 40 per cent of the population of SSA in 1987 and for nearly half its gross national product (GNP), excluding South Africa. They were selected for evaluation since they had registered a level of agricultural development greater than most countries in the region.

Eight chapters, contributed by different authors, outline the sources of agricultural growth in the chosen countries and assess the extent to which domestic policies, the external economic environment and donor assistance contributed to this growth. A further chapter is devoted to food aid and a final one to the lessons learned from the study.

In an overview of the Madia countries, the editor outlines their inflows of aid and their policies and economic performance up to 1987. After earlier swings in development fashions, such as the World Bank's previous concern with growth and efficiency, emphasis now is upon equity and sustainable growth, and the solution to such problems as poor governance and management, the shortage of human and institutional capacity and technological stagnation in the recipient countries. Total aid or official development assistance (ODA), both bilateral and multilateral, to the six countries by the eight donors has been substantial over the period 1970–1987. But they were not the only contributors. Between 27 and 32 donors in all made contributions to each of the six. Assistance covers conditional or tied aid,

\* A World Bank book, edited by Uma Lele and published for the Bank by the Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1992.

† For a summary of the report see "Frameworks for African development", *Africa Institute Bulletin*, vol 30, no 4, 1990, pp 1–8.

concessional aid or soft loans, and outright grants. The share of ODA in government expenditure was as high as 70 per cent in the case of Malawi and Tanzania, indicating the degree of dependence on external resources and the potential pressure that some donors could exert upon their development policies if they wished to do so. The World Bank's share of total ODA to five of the six countries did not exceed 10 per cent over the period but acceptance of its leadership and its influence in promoting important development ideas has been greater than its financial share suggests.

The growth in gross domestic product (GDP) of the Madia countries since their independence has been largely a reflection of the performance of their agricultural sector. This, in turn, depended upon three major groups of variables. The first is the luck factor or advantages with which a newly independent country starts out, ie, its natural resource endowment, its physical and social infrastructure, and the level of its institutional development. Important is the capacity of a country to take advantage of its good luck and its ability to withstand the bad, such as oil price rises, adverse terms of trade, drought, wars, etc. The second group is the impact of macroeconomic policies, which include the exchange rate and price policies that determine explicit or implicit taxation of agriculture, and the levels and quality of public expenditures. The third group covers sectoral policies that affect the mobilization of land, labour, capital and technology as well as the provision of physical, human and institutional infrastructure such that productivity, in addition to price levels, is a function of non-price factors such as the quality of agricultural services of all kinds. The high level of services offered to successful tea and coffee farmers in Kenya, cotton farmers in Cameroon and Senegal, and cocoa growers in Nigeria are good examples. By contrast, pressure on land and land policy have been critical factors determining other types of agricultural performance in Kenya and in Malawi. The study aims to answer the question: To what extent have donors been able to grasp the complexity of macroeconomic, sectoral, microlevel and physical resource factors in framing their strategies for smallholder development? In this review one can highlight only distinctive aspects of each donor's aid experience but which, taken together, contribute to the overall evaluation.

## The World Bank

Despite two decades of support for smallholder agriculture and broad policy reforms, the Bank finds that its efforts have had only limited effect. Part of the problem lies in its operational style, notably the centralized structure of operations at its headquarters in Washington and its regional offices in Nairobi and Abidjan. Not having a large staff in the field makes for a lack of flexibility in the implementation of projects and programmes. As a result, although policies are formulated in response to changing circumstances, they nevertheless represent a more or less top-down way of decision-making. Other criticisms refer to a decline in the Bank's technical expertise and the change from its compre-

hensive regional and country economic studies of earlier years to narrower specific issues. Moreover, its increased dependence on trust funds provided by donors has reduced its flexibility to draw on the best international expertise as it did previously. However, as is pointed out, the responses of many recipient governments, lacking the necessary capacity for policy planning and the political will to assist smallholders hardly improves matters.

## Denmark

Via the Danish International Development Agency (Danida) support for agriculture in SSA between 1962 and 1985 went mainly to Tanzania and Kenya. Agriculture, however, was never considered a major source of assistance. Social services were, especially health, education and water supply. Agricultural aid focused on the poorer, more marginal smallholders, including women, and upon what the Danish economy had to offer in technology and inputs. Of its three leading interests, multilateral aid supports foreign policy objectives, untied grants maintain its philanthropic concerns and tied aid its commercial interests. The last is reflected in project identification and procurement for industrial and engineering projects and for the hiring on contract of teams of Danish technical experts.

The choice of Tanzania as the chief African recipient was originally motivated by the way in which that country's earlier socialist ideology fitted well Denmark's own sociopolitical philosophy. But support for Tanzania's crop activities was less successful than that for Kenya's dairy and meat industries owing not only to Kenya's greater livestock potential but also to Denmark's particular expertise in this field. The study found that in addition to the three constituency-generated interests of Danish aid, a fourth was necessary, ie, one that emphasized the development objective.

## Sweden

Of the two Madia countries supported by the Swedish International Development Authority (Sida), Tanzania's socialist policies, again, made it originally attractive as an aid recipient while Kenya's less equitable society was considered ripe for policy reorientation. After 1983 Sida noted that Tanzanian negligence and its inappropriate pricing, trade and exchange rate policies were hampering its aid efforts. These constraints have since been largely rectified.

Since 1975 aid has been entirely in grant form but the proportion that is tied is high. Sida's rural water, health and soil conservation projects have revealed that the problem of financing recurrent costs for the maintenance and operation of the facilities installed, points to the importance of identifying these costs before new aid ventures are launched and seeing that the technology for operating them is simple and cheap enough for local communities to handle and afford. Other findings were that projects should be avoided that are commercially useful to the donor but which conflict with the real aims of development. Nongovernmental organizations

(NGOs) should be encouraged since their less bureaucratic and more flexible character are useful qualities for making aid work.

## United States

More than half of the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) contribution to the Madia countries was accounted for by agriculture and rural development, including infrastructural projects. USAID's work, however, is hindered by the way its country missions are oriented more towards Washington than the host country. Organizational structures comply with changing pressures from headquarters and from Congress for new objectives, regulations and directives. Without a strong supportive constituency it is vulnerable to faddish policy shifts and to conflicting viewpoints. Its most successful operation has been in agricultural education and training through support for agricultural colleges and faculties in association with American higher educational institutions, especially its land grant universities.

Rural infrastructure projects, notably the improvement of transportation networks, has also been successful. Less so has been its extension-based production projects using technology transfers, and its integrated rural development and seed multiplication projects. Especially difficult has been attempting to adapt agricultural development projects to SSA's diverse and complex agroclimatic environments in the face of inadequate data and research, and unfamiliar social institutions. The authors suggest that less time should be devoted to designing and managing new and complex projects and more to analysing country needs in collaboration with recipient governments.

## The European Community

European Community aid for agriculture in SSA dates to the Treaty of Rome (1957) which founded the European Economic Community (EEC) and set up the European Development Fund (EDF) to assist in trade matters and infrastructural investment in territories that were colonies at that time. Subsequent trade and aid agreements by way of five-year conventions took the study up to the third Lomé Convention (1986–1990) signed by 66 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and the twelve European Community members. Particularly valuable has been the Stabex system designed to compensate for shortfalls in export earnings for tropical products on the European Community market.

Projects focused on export crops have been more successful than those aimed at food production, probably because it is easier to attract progressive farmers to a new venture than to upgrade traditional crops for a large, dispersed group of subsistence producers. Integrated rural development projects have been disappointing since their complex activities tended to overstretch local management capability. Greater success was achieved where targets were relatively modest.

## France

French aid to its colonies in Africa was supported by a number of official development organizations so that at independence these instruments, like those of Britain, were already in place. Economic links with Africa have since weakened so that today only 3 per cent of France's external trade is with the region and its share of total aid to the countries within its sphere of influence has fallen sharply from 75 per cent before 1970 to less than 25 per cent. France has moved toward some "burden sharing" with other bilateral and multilateral donors so that it is now guesswork, state the authors, to apportion credit among donors for development successes or failures. The French contribution has, however, involved raising productivity by applying the results of research, by disseminating information by a continuous communication with farmers and managing projects through an implementing agency.

## Britain

Understandably, assistance to Madia countries has changed from the previous long-term presence and commitment in colonial times to Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi and Nigeria, aimed at establishing important development institutions, to the new shorter-term and task-specific assistance which marks current donor associations with recipients. Since their independence, bilateral aid to the first three countries has covered project aid, technical co-operation and grant support for tropical agricultural research and other services based in the United Kingdom. In addition, concessionary finance is available to promote commercial investment in agriculture and other sectors by the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) established in 1948.

Project aid on the part of the Overseas Development Authority (ODA, UK) and the CDC covered four main areas. Integrated rural development has had mixed results. Smallholder export crop farming has been reasonably successful as have agricultural research projects based on long-term institutions and experience, often dating to colonial times. The fourth, training in agricultural technical services and the supply of inputs, has proved the most successful provided always that both are appropriate to the capabilities of existing field services.

More recently there has been a shift in emphasis to programme or non-project aid owing largely to difficulties experienced in identifying suitable opportunities for agricultural project investment. More appealing is fast-spending programme aid to support economic policy reform in support of agriculture, the strengthening of public institutions via personnel and aid training, as well as aid packages to rehabilitate vital areas of the economy. Multilateral aid, too, has increased since 1975, when contributions to EEC aid first began.

## Germany (the former West Germany)

In recent years German bilateral and multilateral aid has shifted in favour of Africa because of the region's special

and severe problems. Kenya and Tanzania have received the bulk of Madia aid with emphasis rather on rural development than on agricultural production alone. Of the latter, technical co-operation, aimed at improving smallholder food production, has proved the most successful. Two features characterize the funding of projects. First, the procedure is interactive, both partners co-operating closely from the outset and, secondly, a number of standardized procedures have emerged to help speed up the identification of projects and the negotiation process.

The authors admit that the aid process is a risky exercise since nobody knows exactly the right direction for African agriculture to follow. They pose a number of open questions among them “are African countries overaided?” to the point of exhausting their absorptive capacity, and “does Germany need a new aid concept?”. If it does it must grow from below on the basis of a learning-by-doing, error-embracing methodology.

## Food aid

Food aid, the authors claim, should not only be used for alleviating poverty in times of famine and food shortages but as food-for-work programmes it should contribute to rural development. A recurrent theme in the Madia study is the importance of rural infrastructure to agricultural growth and the deficiency of it in these countries. Rural road construction, for example, is not only a prerequisite for the effective input and output needs of farmers but labour-intensive methods of road-building have a high employment and food intake content as well. Labour and food costs for these projects in four Madia countries, for example, have thus far amounted to 50 and 25 per cent, respectively, of total costs. Thus food aid (food-for-work) can make an effective contribution to a critical element of rural and agricultural development. However, the overall record of projects supported by food aid in SSA has been as “dismal” as that of other aid projects directed at agricultural development in general. The problems are numerous and result from poor commodity and project management, institutional shortcomings in both donors and recipients and infrastructural and resource constraints. Actions recommended boil down to improving planning and management skills so as to ensure that all components of food-for-work projects are properly co-ordinated and implemented. In particular, project employment needs to be restricted to periods of labour surplus in order not to interfere with periods of high labour demand during planting and harvesting.

## Lessons from experience

The challenge of the 1990s is to give priority to long-term development aid commensurate with recipient absorptive capacity. There are, however, a number of constraints. Donors have often leaned towards visible and short-term results as an easy means of ensuring accountability to their constituencies. Donors do not always have the in-house

capacity to engage in comprehensive macroeconomic or sectoral analysis as a preliminary to project investment. Nor is project evaluation adequate owing, in part, to a weak learning process among donors and recipients. The effectiveness of assistance is sometimes considered in terms of its volume rather than its quality. Constituency pressures, especially in the United States, have contributed to erratic funding and policy shifts while in Denmark, Sweden and Germany aid has been founded on a wide and sometimes confusing mix of philanthropic, political and commercial interests. Tied aid is one of the more pernicious forms of constituency pressure placing obligations on the recipient governments to purchase the donor’s goods and services rather than seeking out the most economic and efficient sources of materials and expertise. Finally, donors have shied away from providing for recurrent costs because of their never-ending commitments. Thus, too much emphasis has been placed on physical structures and too little on provision for their operation and maintenance.

While donor countries have certainly laid some important foundations in the provision of physical and social capital in SSA, their contribution to the development of human and institutional capacity in order to effectively manage these resources on a long-term sustainable basis has been far from satisfactory. Several broad lessons emerge from the Madia study:

- A flexible, balanced, long-term strategy set in a favourable macroeconomic and sectoral policy framework is essential for broadly based growth. These conditions generally prevail in Kenya and Cameroon, which have seen the performance of agriculture and the economy characterized by growth with equity. In Malawi macroeconomic policies were sound but sectoral policies weak so that the benefits of growth went largely to the estates rather than to smallholders. In Tanzania, Nigeria and Senegal, where both policy levels were adverse, little growth resulted.
- Building human and institutional capacity is crucial for planning and implementing strategies for long-term growth and for maintaining a supportive policy environment. Centres of excellence on African issues should be established in both donor and African countries; donors must provide high-quality expertise that explicitly ensures the gradual transfer of technical and managerial skills to African nationals on a long-term basis; and donors should help recipient governments set up viable national systems for collecting and analysing data over the long term.
- Donors must help African countries to revive the production of those traditional export and food crops in which they still have a clear comparative advantage and to strike a balance between them.
- Raising factor productivity is essential in view of rapidly increasing population pressure, deteriorating natural resources, and low rates of agricultural intensification. More research is required and extension efforts broadened beyond plant breeding to soil management as Sida and Danida projects have demonstrated.

- Programmes for increasing agricultural production should focus on areas of high potential. The employment and consumption needs of populations in resource-poor regions, by contrast, should be conceived in the context of a wider long-term development strategy which includes welfare-oriented activities.
- Donors should address microeconomic constraints such as weak research, transport, credit, marketing and information networks, in conjunction with macroeconomic reform and privatization. Traditional crops, for example, will be difficult to revive in Africa unless such non-price constraints are alleviated at the same time that price incentives are being restructured. In many cases this requires public sector efforts to complement private sector input so as to ensure a regulatory but sustaining environment.
- Donors should emphasize their own comparative advantage in developing assistance strategies by funding those activities that reflect a strong correspondence between their own internal strengths and expertise and the interests of recipient countries. Such an emphasis should also provide a basis for greater co-ordination of donor activity.
- Multilateral agencies may have a comparative advantage in assisting recipients with economic and policy research and analysis for developing tailor-made, country-specific strategies in addition to large financial transfers for ensuring macroeconomic and sectoral policy reforms. In contrast, smaller bilateral agencies are likely to be better at promoting the development of local human and institutional capacity which requires fewer financial resources but much more intensive nurturing over a long period.

# ZIMBABWE IN TRANSITION

edited by Simon Baynham

- Published by the Africa Institute in collaboration with Almqvist & Wiksell International, Stockholm.
- A 280 page survey of political and socio-economic developments since 1980, with material focusing on trends and prospects.
- Ten chapters by leading American, European, South African and Zimbabwean experts on the political system, the 1990 elections, ideology, public finance, economic sectors, the land question, urban development, transport and communications, domestic and regional security and foreign relations.

Copies are obtainable in Southern Africa from:

Africa Institute of South Africa  
PO Box 630  
Pretoria  
0001

**Price:** R40 (VAT included) in South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia, and Swaziland; US\$30,00 in Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

and elsewhere from:

Almqvist & Wiksell International  
PO Box 4627  
S11691  
Stockholm  
Sweden

# AFRICA INSTITUTE OF SOUTH AFRICA

(Company registration number 61/00002/08)

- An independent non-profit association, the Africa Institute has established itself as an internationally-recognized research and information centre concerned with African affairs.
- The Institute's mission is to collect, process, interpret and disseminate information on African and especially Southern African affairs. It focuses primarily on the political, economic, international and developmental issues facing contemporary Africa.
- Information is made available through publications, a specialized reference library, conferences and non-Institute media. A small expert research staff answer enquiries and provide comment on topical developments. Apart from their regular studies, the researchers undertake commissioned research.
- In addition to its own researchers, the Institute appoints associates in the field of African studies, runs a programme for visiting researchers, and conducts seminars and workshops. Serving the public as a whole (both professional and lay), the Institute nevertheless devotes particular attention to educational institutions as well as decision-makers in the business and public sectors.
- The Institute was established in 1960 and is controlled by a council composed of representatives of the South African universities and other experts. Because it therefore has a broad-based academic character, the Institute is funded mainly through a grant from the Department of National Education.

## Senior staff

Executive Director	Dr Stef Coetzee
Director, Academic Programmes	Dr Denis Venter
Director, Administration	Barnie Fisher
Director, Current Affairs	Richard Cornwell
Director, Publications	Pieter Esterhuysen
Director, Research	Dr Simon Baynham
Resident Research Fellow	Dr Erich Leistner

## Publications

Africa Insight (Quarterly)  
Africa Institute Bulletin (Monthly)  
Africa Review (Annually)  
Africa at a Glance ( Two-yearly)  
Research Papers (Irregular)  
Occasional Papers (Irregular)  
Country Surveys (Irregular)  
Wall Maps (Irregular)

## Membership

Membership of the Institute is open to everyone who supports its aims and functions, and entails the following advantages:

- Receipt of Africa Insight
- Receipt of Africa Institute Bulletin
- Discount on other Institute publications
- Access to the reference library
- Consultation with professional staff
- Invitations to conferences
- Participation in Annual General Meetings.

In addition to the above services to individual members, **corporate** members receive **all** Institute publications free of charge and are briefed on African trends and events of special interest to them.

Additional information available on request.

See inside front cover for telephone/fax numbers.

## Membership fee

Individuals in South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland: **R70,00** per annum (VAT included).  
(Elsewhere: US\$ 70 per annum)

Corporations in South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland: **R1000** per annum (VAT included).  
(Elsewhere: US\$1000 per annum)

## Subscription Africa Insight

**Africa Insight** is also available on subscription to non-members.

Annual rate for South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland: **R60,00** (VAT included).  
(Elsewhere: US\$40,00)

Overseas airmail rate: US\$80,00

Single copies (also back copies) available at **R15,00** or US\$10,00 outside South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland.

I/We support the objectives of the Africa Institute and undertake to pay the annual membership for individual/ corporate members.

I/We enclose the amount of ..... being the membership fee for the first year.

Surname: ..... Title and initials: .....

Company\*: .....

Postal address\*\*: .....

..... Postal code: .....

Signature: ..... Date .....

\* Corporate members only

\*\* The postal address must be exactly as you wish it to appear on the Institute's mailing list.

**Application for membership**  
The Secretary  
Africa Institute of South Africa  
PO Box 630  
0001 Pretoria

