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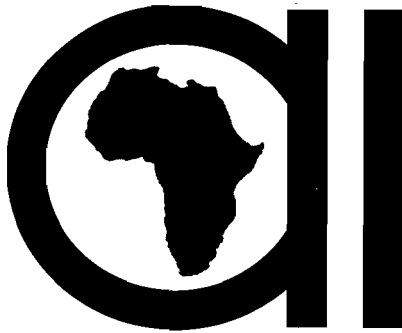
# INSIGHT

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## Contents

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Africa Bulletin



<b>Lost prophets</b> Comment <i>Richard Cornwell</i>	90
<b>The challenges of analysing and building civil society</b> <i>Professor Goran Hyden</i>	92
<b>A foreign policy to die for:</b> South Africa's response to the Nigerian crisis <i>Maxi van Aardt</i>	107
<b>Ghana's return to constitutional rule</b> <i>Dr Joseph R A Ayee</i>	120
<b>Occupational health and safety in Swaziland</b> <i>Dr D M Akinnusi</i>	130
<b>Attracting foreign investment to Africa:</b> The South African case <i>Professor J Marx and Professor J Hough</i>	140
<b>Poverty among blacks in the Vaal Triangle</b> Measured in terms of income indicators <i>T J C Slabbert, J D van Wyk, M Levin and W Coetzee</i>	146
<b>East African tourist trends</b> <i>Professor Denis Fair</i>	156
<b>Regional security in sub-Saharan Africa</b> <i>Dr Denis Venter</i>	162
<b>The Subla and Fwe of Caprivi</b> Any historical grounds for a status of <i>primus inter pares</i> ? <i>Professor Chris Maritz</i>	177
<b>Africa focus</b> <i>Richard Cornwell</i>	186
<b>Africa in transition to democracy</b> <i>Pieter Esterhuysen</i>	188
<b>Bookshelf and Book review:</b> <i>State building and democracy in Southern Africa: Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa</i> by Pierre du Toit	194
<b>Africa Institute news/Africa studies news</b> <i>Dr Denis Venter</i>	197

# Lost prophets

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a common popular perception is that South Africa has the potential to become a rich, industrialized, developed country, comparable to the affluent economies of the northern hemisphere. Brief acquaintance with the major cities, their striking skylines and the suburban shopping malls and mansions cherished by a small class of conspicuous consumers lend a spurious credibility to this picture.

By African standards certainly, the country has reached a high level of economic development. Its GNP is more than three times that of the other eleven members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) put together, is three times larger than that of Nigeria, and twenty times larger than that of Zimbabwe.

In the global context, however, it is a middle-ranking, semi-industrialized economy. Its GNP is only one-third that of the Netherlands, and 6% that of Germany. In addition, and most importantly, it has one of the most skewed patterns of income distribution in the world. Some 51% of annual income goes to the richest 10% of households; less than 4% of annual income goes to the poorest 40% of households.

The gap between the rich and poor in South Africa is a wide one. More significantly, it has tended historically to correlate closely with the racial classifications until recently imposed by white-dominated governments on the national population. This has provided much of the dynamic of South African politics in the past, and attempts to redress these imbalances and create a more equitable society will continue to provide the leitmotif of the political economy for the foreseeable future.

According to many well-informed foreign observers, South Africa has the potential for striking economic success over the next two decades and beyond, though the realization of this potential is by no means guaranteed. As the World Bank noted recently, South Africa must cope with a number of obstacles in its quest for faster growth in output and employment. Its production structure is highly capital-intensive and inward looking; it has a largely untrained and under-educated labour force; and its urban structure inhibits the productivity of unskilled

labour and is not conducive to the growth of the informal sector.

A further inhibiting factor is the general lack of investor confidence arising from uncertainty about future government policy. This hesitancy partly reflects the generally disappointing, if not disastrous, experience of outside investors in Africa following the optimism engendered by the end of colonial rule in the 1960s. With ample investment opportunities available in the Far East, Eastern Europe and elsewhere in the world, South Africa will come under close scrutiny before it receives substantial inflows of private capital. Of course, inflows of capital, though they may be a necessary condition are not of themselves a sufficient condition of economic growth as conventionally measured, let alone of development.

The volatility of the money markets that has now propelled the government into issuing its new macroeconomic blueprint in itself demonstrates the unprecedented mobility of capital, not to mention the overriding importance of sentiment, rumour and anticipated profit or loss which drive the market.

To some degree the new economic policy marks South Africa's adoption of a self-imposed structural adjustment programme. The government obviously hopes that apart from making the proper obeisance to the idols of the free market, it may also preserve the notion that South Africa's government retains control or ownership of the development path to be followed, rather than eventually accepting a similar package imposed by global financial institutions.

What remains to be seen is whether South Africa proves any more successful than other African states at avoiding a slide into more authoritarian political practices during the adjustment phase, with all the distress that this implies for the poorer sections of the society.

Of course, this may be a matter of small concern to the free-market fundamentalists among the local business and banking sectors. Indeed, judging from some of the comment emanating from those quarters, one is entitled to wonder whether big business objected to the old apartheid system because this was cruel



and inequitable, or because it was simply economically wasteful and inefficient. When one looks at the labour practices tolerated in certain countries now the cynosure of foreign investment managers, one also wonders what other socioeconomic policies might be advocated were they still internationally legal.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the new economic plan was its projection of the number of jobs it hoped to create as an adjunct to economic growth of the order of 6% annually. Certainly the employment crisis is the clearest indicator of the socio-political problem confronting South Africa. In the early 1960s, over 80% of new labour market entrants were absorbed into wage employment. In recent years this has fallen to less than 10%.

There has been a steady decline in employment in the formal economy since 1990. By the end of 1994 official estimates of those either registered as unemployed or earning a living in the informal sector amounted to 43% of the economically active population. This proportion will undoubtedly continue to increase as the population is growing at the rate of more than 2% a year. Although an economic upswing appears well under way, the relationship between macro-economic growth and the expansion of employment is by no means as direct as one would wish. Since the beginning of economic recovery in mid-1993 employment growth has been held in check by attempts to improve productivity in an environment of rising labour costs. Thus, from the beginning of the recovery until the first quarter of 1995 only 52 000 additional jobs had been created, a gain that by no means compensated even for the loss of 420 000 jobs during the recession of 1989-93.

Certain stated government policies may also complicate job creation. The removal of protection and implicit subsidies for nascent enterprises falls into this category. The anticipated rationalization that generally accompanies the privatization of state-run enterprises has already led organized

labour to object to the implementation of such programmes. Addressing racial inequalities in terms of remuneration and responsibility in the workplace will also have an initial impact upon productivity levels.

This points to a rudimentary problem facing South Africa. On the one hand, there is the powerful pressure on government to improve black wages and living conditions in general to more or less the levels prevailing among whites; on the other, the economy cannot grow at a rate sufficiently high to finance the desired social spending, and to absorb the fast-growing number of new work-seekers on terms satisfying their expectations.

Perhaps a more fundamental question ought to be raised. That is, whether the economic development path being implied by the free-market strategists is actually available to the mass of underdeveloped countries. A glance at the evidence would suggest that it is not, and that the promise of material progress implicit in the bargain being struck is every bit as historically absurd as that offered by the proponents of "scientific socialism".

A recent report by the UNDP indicates that for all the unprecedented growth of the global economy over the past few decades, the number of people living in appalling poverty has increased. It also points to the ever-widening gap between the very rich and the mass of people, even in the developmentally advanced nations. One of the more rivetting statistics contained in the report was that the 385 richest people on the planet own more than the combined annual incomes of nearly a half of the world's population.

Of "catching up" or "trickle-down" there is little evidence. During the last thirty years the world's GDP has expanded from \$4 trillion to \$23 trillion. Over the same period the share of world income for the poorest 20% of countries has declined from 2,3% to 1,4%. Simultaneously the share of the richest 20% grew from 70% to 85%. A similar progression is noted within countries. On this view one might go

further to ask whether the development trajectory of the wealthy nations will prove viable for them, even in the medium run. The triumphalism of the free-marketeers following the collapse of the Soviet Union and its satellite economies seems somewhat premature if one considers the social blight afflicting many post-industrial nations, the erosion of the welfare state, and the steady growth of a disaffected and often criminalized underclass in those societies.

The current economic and financial forces grouped under the rubric "globalization" certainly have to be recognized. Whether their untrammelled operation within the jurisdiction of the national state should be permitted, however, is another matter. Acceptance of the view that it is, after all, a tough world out there, is relatively easy only for the affluent, besides serving them as a reassuring measure of their own talents and abilities to succeed.

In the final analysis the forces of economic globalization are irresponsible, in that they are responsible to no one. They have all the ethical and moral sensibilities of a computer programme. No democratic government can retain its integrity while abdicating responsibility for the wellbeing of the vast majority of its citizens to essentially impersonal forces.

The South African Minister of Finance has indicated that the basic philosophy outlined in the new economic policy document is no longer open for discussion. I doubt whether Mr Manuel really believed that the policy debate could be terminated unilaterally, and this statement was probably meant to reassure the international business community that the government had decided on the basic thrust of its economic programme. In working out the details of the plan, however, new tensions and differences will have to be addressed, not least those between the plan and the reality. How the government then reacts and takes decisions, will tell us more than the decisions themselves about the prospects for our fledgling democracy.

# The challenges of and building

*Prof Goran Hyden, immediate past president of the African Studies Association, Director of the Center for African Studies, University of Florida, Gainesville, and Fellow of the Africa Institute of South Africa, looks at the philosophical origins of civil society and examines the contemporary issues associated with using the concept of civil society.*

The 1990s have witnessed a marked reorientation of both academic and political discourse on development. For thirty or so years, the development debate focused on the state or the economic forces underlying a country's aspiration to make progress. This was as true for the modernization theorists of the 1960s as it was for subsequent generations of neo-Marxist and neo-liberal thinkers in the 1970s and 1980s. The intellectual trend in the 1990s is new in that it focuses on what generically is referred to as "political culture". This orientation differs from earlier structuralist theories in that it attributes a distinct role to human agency. At the same time, it differs from the neo-liberal "rational choice" theory in that it acknowledges that human choice is mediated by institutions.

More specifically, development discourse has in recent years come to focus on the relationship between democracy and development. An increasingly common premise of what is being said is that "democracy is good for development"; that it may be a causal factor of development. It is in this perspective that the concepts of "social capital" and "civil society" have come to acquire relevance. The former refers to the normative values and beliefs that citizens in their everyday dealings share; what Tocqueville referred to as "habits of the heart and the mind". These habits provide reasons and design criteria for all sorts of rules. It is hard to imagine that constitutional arrangements, laws and regulations would work without being embedded in, and reflecting, particular values and norms upheld by groups and communities making up a given society. "Civil society", therefore, is viewed as the forum in which habits of the heart and the mind are being nurtured and developed. In this sense, both social capital and civil society are analytical categories in their own right, independent of democracy. Yet, it is assumed that investments in both social capital and civil society are necessary to achieve democracy and, by implication, development.

It appears as if analysts have arrived at this view of development from two different directions. One is the perception – based on a broad range of experiences – that a "top-down" approach to development does not work. For a long time, the basic premise was that the state is a rational instrument of controlling and promoting change. The state is indispensable to achieve growth and redistribution in desired directions. By the 1980s, however, confidence in the state's ability to be such a powerful instrument had been replaced by disillusionment. From both a leftist and a rightist perspective, the state was viewed as an instrument of exploitation, preempting popular or individual initiative. As the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction, analysts now maintain that developmental wisdom is lodged not in government bureaucracies but in local communities and institutions. "Indigenous knowledge" and "popular participation" are examples of concepts that have come to occupy increasing prominence in the debate.

The other direction from which analysts of social capital and civil society have come is the problem of political apathy or lack of organization. Democracy requires organization; organization an interest in public affairs. During the 1980s many people in countries around the world had adopted a cynical and distrustful attitude towards politics. Politicians suffered from lack of credibility in democracies and autocracies alike. Robert Putnam's study of the evolution of civic values in Italy is an example of studies in this genre.<sup>1</sup> Contrasting what Edward Banfield<sup>2</sup> had identified as the "amoral familism" of southern Italy with the rich associational life of Emilia Romagna and other regions of northern Italy, Putnam concludes that the general difference in development between these two parts of the same country must be attributed to a difference in the presence of social capital and the strength of civil society. Thus, civil society is more than just society. It is that part of society that connects individual citizens with the public realm and the

# analysing CIVIL SOCIETY

state. Put in other words, civil society is the political side of society.

The literature on social capital and civil society is not new. According to Sabetti,<sup>3</sup> the notion of social capital can be traced all the way back to the 19th century and the democratic currents of the Italian Risorgimento movement, which conceptualized *valor sociale* (roughly translatable as social capital) as the educative feature of the growth and practice of self-governing institutions. Civil society can also be traced back to the period when modern ideas of democracy were beginning to take root. In order to fully understand and appreciate the current arguments about civil society it is important to first take a look at its philosophical origins. Following such a historical review, I shall examine the contemporary issues associated with using the concept of civil society. This will occupy the rest of this article and be divided into separate parts. The first deals with the question of where analysts locate their investigation when examining civil society. The other identifies some of the challenges that analysts and practitioners alike face in operationalizing the concept. What are the practical and political measures that seem to follow from using civil society as the conceptual lens for understanding development in various parts of the world?

## Philosophical origins of the contemporary debate

The emergence of a concept of civil society is historically connected with the rise of capitalism and the evolution of a modern state in the Weberian sense of rational-legal structures of governance. Thus, it seems clear that "civil society" cannot be viewed in isolation from either market or state. For example, a totalitarian society in which the market is rendered inoperative leaves no space for the growth of civil society. Similarly, in societies where the state in the sense described above does not exist, civil society cannot develop. These points are not always considered by participants in the

contemporary debate on civil society. Their significance, however, becomes clear if we take a closer look at the philosophical origins of the concept.

Drawing on the "founding fathers" of the civil society concept, it is possible to distinguish variations along two principal parameters. The first concerns the question whether civil society is primarily an economic or a sociological phenomenon: whether the focus is on the extent to which economic activity is privately controlled or the role which associations play as intermediaries between individual and state. The second concerns the relationship between state and civil society: whether civil society is essentially autonomous of the state or the state and civil society are organically linked. Taking a more careful look at the philosophical pioneers of the debate about civil society, we find that each of the four positions listed above has a master advocate, as indicated in Figure 1.

Locke's position, reminiscent of Hobbes', is that the state arises from society and is needed to restrain conflict between individuals; but he emphasizes the need to limit state sovereignty in order to preserve individual freedoms derived from natural law. In this perspective, the state exists to protect civil society from destructive conflict. Natural rights are not absolute and must be regulated to enable civil society to prosper. A social contract, or some constitutional arrangement, that is respected by both state and civil society, is the cornerstone of liberal democracy. Locke's position might be called social-liberal in that it recognizes the need to balance



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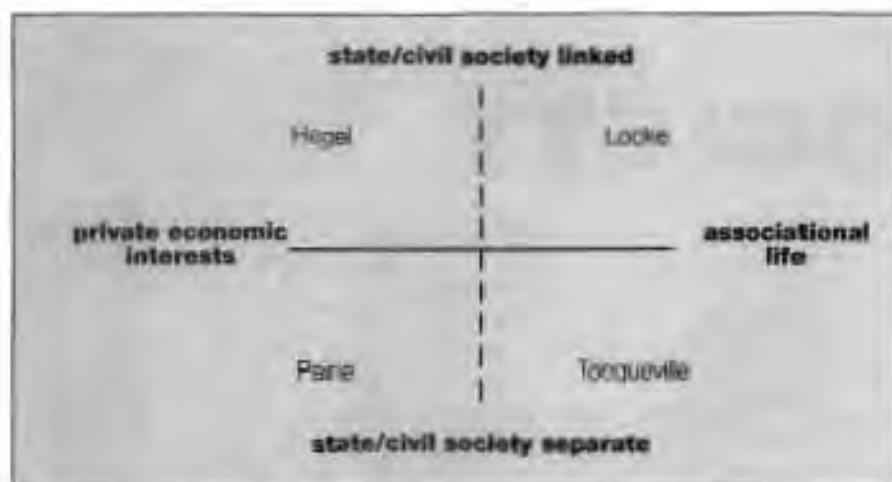


Figure 1: Different perspectives on civil society

the interests among different groups in society.

This is quite different from Thomas Paine's argument that societies become civil as commerce and manufacturing expand through division of labour. Writing in the tradition of the Scottish Enlightenment (David Hume and Adam Smith), Paine's position is particularly anti-state. As the state expands to provide order and reduce conflict, the state may threaten the very liberties that cause civil society to flourish. In his libertarian view, civil society flourishes when individuals are able to freely exercise their natural rights. It is the market rather than the state that provides the best opportunity for the growth of civil society, because the limits of individual capacity to satisfy natural desires can only be transcended by commercial exchanges. Paine's focus on natural rights prevents him from recognizing that the state, even in its minimalist version, may be used by one segment of society to the detriment of another.

Tocqueville was alarmed not only by the prospect of a powerful state but also by the tyranny of the majority and treated associations as the strongest bulwark against such tyranny. Reflecting on the lessons of the French Revolution, he is particularly afraid of an unmediated popular will because it could lead to revolution. To prevent such outcomes, an active civil society made up of self-governing associations is necessary. Such a civil society educates the citizenry and scrutinizes state actions. It facilitates distribution of power and provides mechanisms for direct citizen participation in public affairs.

Without taking such a pro-market stand as Paine, Tocqueville nevertheless adopts a voluntarist view of civil society. It is capable of protecting and promoting the interest of individuals regardless of their socioeconomic position.

Hegel breaks with the tradition of civil society as a natural phenomenon and instead regards it as the product of historical processes. He recognizes that division of labour creates stratification within civil society and increased conflict between these strata. Civil society in his account is made up of the various associations, corporations, and estates that exist among the strata, and the form and nature of the state is the result of the way civil society is represented. Civil society thus stands between individuals and a legislature, which mediates their interests with the state. The conflicts that these processes engender within civil society will lead to its destruction in the absence of a strong state. In Hegel's "organic" perspective, the state exists to protect common interests as the state defines them by intervening in the activities of civil society. Marx picks up on the theme of the destructive influence of the capitalist economic system and arrives at the conclusion that civil society is equated with the bourgeoisie. Antonio Gramsci, the foremost Marxist analyst of civil society, bypasses the economic determinism of Marx by arguing that associations are the mechanisms for exercising control in society. By transferring the focus from the state to civil society as the key arena of conflict, Gramsci comes to the conclusion that the control that the dom-

inant class has over society can be overturned through the development of counter-hegemonic associations that represent alternative norms.

A few general observations on these four philosophical positions may be helpful before trying to demonstrate their links to the contemporary debate. The first is that those writing in the tradition of either Paine or Hegel are essentially trying to retain a political economy perspective. Civil society cannot be viewed in isolation from economic forces. In contrast, those following in the footsteps of either Locke or Tocqueville, believe in the autonomy of non-economic forces. Constitutional arrangements reflect such factors as prevailing norms or the institutional set-up in civil society which, in turn, is viewed as independent of division of labour, technology and capital. Another observation is that discourse on civil society in Europe has been much more influenced by the Lockean and Hegelian traditions. The organic relations of state to civil society have rarely been questioned in the European debate, even with regard to developing countries.<sup>4</sup> The US debate on the same subject, on the other hand, has been much more influenced by the writings of Paine and Tocqueville. It has stressed the importance of the market and the active role of associations. As I shall indicate below, these differences are evident in the contemporary debate. For example, the Europeans have a more instrumentalist orientation towards civil society. Its only *raison d'être* is its ability to reform the state. United States thinkers have a more fundamentalist view of civil society. It is good in and of itself because it is in civil society that democratic norms are lodged. Yet another observation is that the pioneers of the debate about civil society are all Western philosophers. The concept has evolved from the historical experience of European and North American societies and been formulated by individuals reflecting on these processes. Yet, it is today being discussed not only by members of these societies but also by others around the world. Civil society has become a universal concern.

The contemporary debate about civil society, however, also reveals that pretty much the same differences, as existed among the early writers on



the subject continue today. While being a meeting-ground of the political right and left, the discourse is reflective of points of contention that can be traced back to the four philosophical schools identified above. Perhaps the most dominant is the group of authors who emphasize the importance of autonomous and active associations. Examples of writers who reflect this largely Tocquevillean position are Stepan<sup>5</sup> and Diamond.<sup>6</sup> More specifically, civil society is here defined as the "realm of organized social life" standing between individuals and political institutions of representation. For instance, according to Diamond,<sup>7</sup> civil society acts to strengthen democracy by:

- containing the power of the state through public scrutiny;
- stimulating political participation by citizens;
- developing such democratic norms as tolerance and compromise;
- creating ways of articulating, aggregating and representing interests outside political parties, especially at the local level;
- mitigating conflict through cross-cutting, or overlapping, interest;
- recruiting and training political leaders;
- questioning and reforming existing democratic institutions and procedures; and
- disseminating information.

Although the argument of this "associational" approach to civil society accepts that the development of civil society is not sufficient for the consolidation of democracy, its advocates have a generally high expectation of the role that civil society can play in achieving democracy. A critical function of civil society is to promote the principle of citizenship (Sztompka<sup>8</sup> and Calhoun<sup>9</sup> are also reflected in the writings of Robert Putnam<sup>10</sup>). The authors belonging to the "associational" school are generally optimistic about the opportunity for civil society to make a difference to democracy and development.

This assumption is also reflected in the position taken by many non-governmental organizations, whose development agenda in recent years has come to incorporate democratization goals. Whether expressed in

terms of popular participation or human rights (or both), this agenda presupposes an active civil society and thus an expectation that these NGOs themselves can make a difference to the conditions under which a developmental philosophy is being implemented. While the fear of mass politics seems distant in the contemporary debate, the arguments carry a distinct affinity with Tocqueville's view of civil society: active citizen participation is needed for the organization and functioning of development activities; communication of information and ideas is needed to encourage participation and guard against abuses of state power.

The "associational" school can be criticized on at least two principal grounds. The first is that it is based on rather simplistic version of pluralism: groups organize to pursue a shared interest and countered by other groups that mobilize to pursue an opposing interest, policy emerges from the balance of power among groups. The fuller pluralism argument developed by Truman<sup>11</sup> and Dahl<sup>12</sup> and others which recognized that resources are distributed unequally in society, but which also asserted that multiple, *overlapping* interests of individuals would mitigate the impact of inequalities and reduce conflict over policy, occupies a relatively insignificant place in the contemporary debate. The second line of criticism levelled against this school, therefore, is its tendency not to explicitly acknowledge that an associational focus makes its advocates blind to the risks of elite pluralism, ie a society in which resource-rich interests dominate.

A second approach in the ongoing debate draws its inspiration largely from Locke. This school focuses on the nature of the regime and how rules can be made more democratic. It recognizes that the consolidation of democracy may require changes in both state and civil society. The "regime" school, therefore, tends to be concerned specifically with the constitutional issue of how state-society relations can be organized to promote democracy. A constitution by itself, no matter how ingeniously designed, no matter what formal arrangements of checks and balances admirably arranged, will not limit authoritarian rule. To be effective, constitutions must relate to the realities of society. They must intertwine state and civil society

in ways that permit the effective articulation and aggregation of societal interests. Like the American federalists, advocates of this position do not treat the state and civil society as standing apart. They are concerned with instituting constitutional and legal mechanisms that limit the risks of abuse of political power.

Students of regime transitions are particularly prominent within this school. O'Donnell and Schmitter<sup>13</sup> set the tone for much of this writing by evaluating the Latin American experiences of transition from authoritarian to democratic rule in the early 1980s. The specific challenges of regime transition in Africa have been discussed by Bratton and van de Walle.<sup>14</sup> Some of the literature on governance also falls into this category. Hyden,<sup>15</sup> for example, discusses the challenges facing African countries in terms of managing regimes, here defined as the "rules of the political game". The difference between the "regime" and the "associational" schools is that the former concentrates its attention to the framework within which civil society can grow, while the latter focuses on its content. One does not preclude the other, as many organizations working in this field recognize. For example, many human rights organizations tend to spend their efforts on shaping and monitoring adherence to the law of the land without denying the importance of the strength of associational life for democracy. A regime orientation is also naturally prevalent among the many constitutional bodies that have been set up to facilitate the transition to democracy. In several countries, eg Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda in Africa, the government-appointed constitutional commissions have made a special effort to involve civil society in constitution-making by holding special hearings and inviting submissions from societal groups. In all these cases, there is a recognition that while containing state power is important, constitutionalizing relations among groups in civil society may often be equally important. Civil society is not automatically democratic. Many groups may be using the relative freedom of civil society only to pursue anti-democratic objectives. To the extent that state and civil society are viewed as linked to each other, citizens' rights must be balanced by citizens' obligations. Furthermore, not all groups in



civil society are ready to accept the existence of others. Justice and tolerance, therefore, are principles that civil society must learn to accept.

The “associational” and the “regime” schools both share a relatively optimistic view of civil society and its ability to make a difference to development. By largely ignoring the role of social structures, they assume a lot of scope for human agency. In this respect, they differ from the remaining two schools which take a more cautious view of what civil society can achieve on its own. The “neo-liberal” school which draws its inspiration especially from Paine particularly emphasizes the importance of structural reform to enable private property to be strengthened. The historical relationship between capitalism and democracy is well known and has been explored in many different ways ever since Max Weber’s time. The issue became especially important again in the 1980s when development analysts realized that “social engineering” using the state was a failure. The many experiments, based on Keynesian ideas in Europe and Latin America and on Leninist ideas in Eastern Europe and Africa, had proved untenable – more costly than beneficial to society. “Structural adjustment”, as this policy of economic liberalization and financial stabilization has been called in the past decade and a half, while not explicitly being introduced to foster democracy, is seen by many as an important corollary to the ongoing political reform efforts. All the same, this aspect of structural adjustment has received generally less attention than the social costs perceived as associated with this approach. One reason may be that the relationship between market and democracy is by no means decisively clear.<sup>16</sup> For example, economic reforms were initially in the 1980s most successful in countries like South Korea, Chile, Indonesia and Mexico, all of which at that time had authoritarian forms of government. One reason for their success that was often cited was that these governments did not have to cope with the inflationary demands of strong pressure groups in society. A weak civil society, therefore, was a boon rather than a bane.

More recently, some economists have come around to argue that economic freedoms are good for economic growth and, therefore, by implication in the neo-liberal view, for develop-

ment. The clearest lesson from the collapse of communism is to prosper, an economy must be allowed to order itself spontaneously in the main, according to the principles of competition and voluntary exchange. The invisible hand, in other words, works better than the visible boot.<sup>17</sup> On top of that can be added the importance of security of private property, which analysts believe is more easily secured in a liberal economy. The anti-statist view has been particularly pronounced among dissidents under communist rule in Eastern Europe. A liberal economy creates the conditions under which a civil society of associations autonomous from the state can flourish. An interesting twist to the argument of the neo-liberal school is the notion that economic freedoms alone may be worth little unless supported by political ones. For example, Mancur Olson, drawing on the historical experience of Europe, argues forcefully that democracy is far more conducive to long-term economic growth than dictatorship, even of an apparently benevolent kind.<sup>18</sup>

The fourth of the approaches discussed here is the “post-Marxist” school. Like its neo-liberal counterpart, it recognizes the importance of social structures formed by the dominant economy. In contrast, however, it has a more sanguine view of the influence of structural reforms. Such reforms might be feasible but their effect is to reinforce social stratification and thus enhance elite interests. The point made by this school is that the ability to organize and participate is related to socioeconomic status, so that policy-making is usually the province of a select minority with sufficient resources. Lindblom,<sup>19</sup> for example, reminds us of Hegel, Marx and Gramsci when he speaks of government as two separate spheres of authority; business has a privileged position in politics because of the necessity for the production of material needs and its ability to more thoroughly socialize individuals in its norms. Authors like Bayart<sup>20</sup> and Fatton<sup>21</sup> echo this position when they analyse civil society in terms of the power and domination exercised by specific social classes. In general, such writers are skeptical about ongoing economic and political reform processes. For them democratic transitions represent only minor adjustments rather than radical changes. Fundamental relations of power and privilege remain solidified. Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens,<sup>22</sup> for example, examine how

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the capitalist mode of production transforms society and the regimes that result from different power relationships between classes. They emphasize the important role that the working class has historically played in consolidating democracy, but they also point to the important influence of transnational power structures in the contemporary global setting. In general, these authors maintain that only the emergence of strong social movements capable of challenging existing power structures provides hope for a more fundamental change. Although their role in certain parts of the developing world, notably Latin America,<sup>23</sup> should not be underestimated, paradoxically, such movements, eg feminist and ecologist, have been more evident in post-materialist industrial societies than in developing and democratizing societies elsewhere.

In summing up this review of how the contemporary debate relates to the philosophers pioneering the civil society concept, it may be worth emphasizing that inherent in the four schools identified above are also two distinct roles that civil society tends to play in the context of democratization and development. The first is that it helps mobilize resources in ways that the state alone is unable to do. Development benefits from the freedoms that civil society provides because people can take initiatives they would not otherwise do. The second role is that of socializing individuals in a democratic direction. Civil society associations are looking at the power structure from the bottom up and as a result they tend to instill a participatory philosophy in which checks on abuses of power features prominently. A vibrant civil society is a necessary, although not sufficient condition for democracy. To fully appreciate the challenges of building social capital through civil society, it is necessary also to examine the various levels at which the relationship between civil society, democracy and development can be analysed.

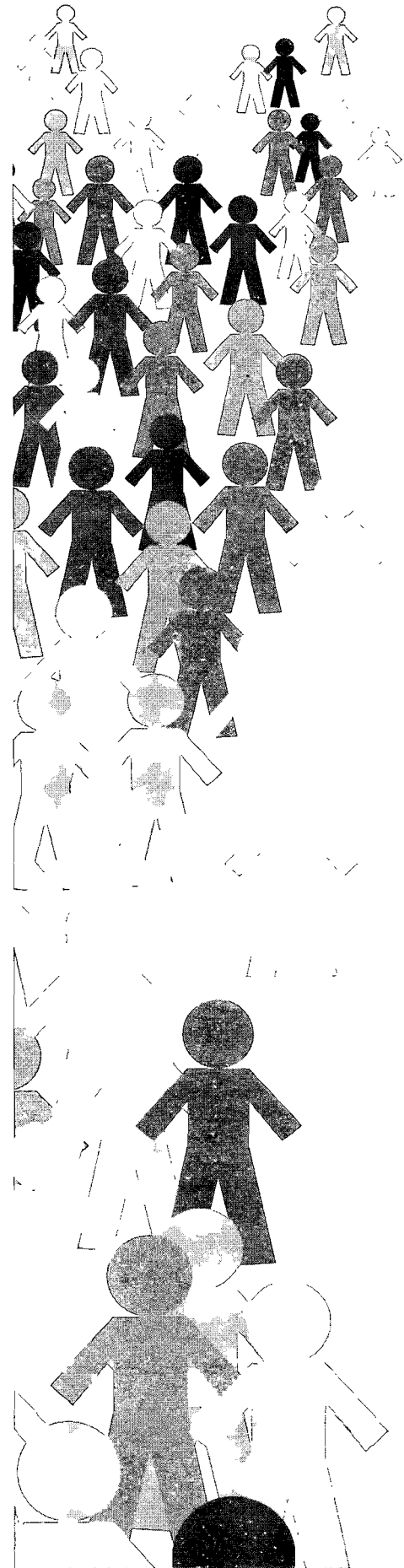
### Levels of analysing civil society and democracy

The introductory section has confirmed that civil society means different things to different people. Although there is no single view of the phenomenon, there is a tendency for most analysts to define civil society as the realm of organized social life standing between

the individual and the state. The consequence of this outlook is that civil society tends to be analysed primarily in the context of a single country. The latter becomes the most common level of analysis. There are, however, at least two other levels of analysis which in the contemporary context of building social capital and strengthening democracy become important. One is the associational level. To fully appreciate the task of building social capital, it is important to know what is going on within civil society associations. How democratic are they? What norms or values do they foster? How do they relate to other associations? The other is the global or transnational level. Many of the organizations that are actively engaged in advocating certain issues operate across national boundaries. They interpret issues in a global context and are interested in fostering civic values that apply to the global arena. For example, many of the strongest development NGOs are international. So what are the implications of this "globalization" of civil society? In this section, I shall explore some of the specific issues that arise at each of these three different levels of analysis.

#### *The country level*

The task of building social capital is always mediated by existing social structures. It is not possible to induce individuals to cooperate or respect each other without first paying attention to the institutions that make up society. Neither pure self-interest nor altruism alone explains why social capital is being formed and why civil society may flourish. One issue that has attracted attention in the development literature is how far traditional institutions can form the basis for the growth of civil society. In their extensive review of the role of local organizations in development, Esman and Uphoff<sup>24</sup> found that they often play a positive role. For example, the Naam movement in Burkina Faso grew out of existing institutions among the Mossi people. Traditional ways of organizing may also serve as a model for new associations, as Dirven<sup>25</sup> shows with reference to rural trade unions in Bolivia. Korten<sup>26</sup> also adheres to this position when he argues that new institutions should as much as possible be made compatible with existing traditions and norms. This cluster of authors all take the position that civil society cannot be created from the top



down. It has to grow organically from below. Lodging development efforts in existing institutions while at the same time adapting them to new tasks and working to make them more democratic seems to be the preferred approach.

There are others, however, who maintain that traditional structures are hindrances to the evolution of a strong civil society. While indigenous organizations do not have to be controlled by elites, Julie Fisher<sup>27</sup> for example, found that new organizations emerging from below are even less likely to be dominated by the already powerful. One of the best concrete examples of how civil society associations can be fostered to overcome traditional patterns of non-cooperation is Uphoff's study of the Gal Oya irrigation project in Sri Lanka.<sup>28</sup> Building on the lowest common denominator – the property they held in common – a group of outside facilitators (a combination of Cornell researchers and government staff from the Agrarian Research and Training Institute) managed to gradually make farmers cooperate to improve the irrigation system so that water distribution dramatically improved and productivity on the land rose. In this case, building social capital involved circumventing traditional norms and authority, which became possible by institutionalizing new, initially informal, relations among the farmers.

Another issue that tends to get prominence in the literature analysing civil society at the country level is how far associations should adopt a confrontational approach or not towards the state. This issue has arisen particularly in the literature on human rights advocacy organizations. Because this type of association's first concern is with the defence of individual liberties against the state, they almost inevitably get into a confrontational relation with the authorities. There is no scope for compromise on these issues; either an individual enjoys these rights or he/she does not. Activist organizations like Amnesty International and various branches of Human Rights Watch uphold the principles of civil and political rights of individuals at any price.<sup>29</sup> Others, however, suggest that taking an uncompromising approach towards the state undercuts the overall objective of building social capital and strengthening civil society.

This position is more common among developmentalist organizations for which the scope for bargaining with the authorities over policy issues is also greater. Although this position is sometimes being criticized as cowardly, it has been common with NGOs working in developing and democratizing countries because it has prevented them from being banned. At stake here, therefore, has been the question of what to do when the associational space is limited and civil society threatened. The most common answer has been that it is better to move slowly and try to enlarge available space without invoking the rage of those in power. As Hadenius and Ugglä<sup>30</sup> argue, however, such a position is also fraught with its own risks. Entering into a relationship that allows the state to influence associational priorities may undercut their autonomy. Civil society leaders, furthermore, may become tempted to join the ranks of "men of the state". What this debate underscores is that civil society associations are likely to have very different perceptions of strategy and tactics in their relation with the state.

Yet another issue of importance in the context of building civil society at the country level has been the question of how the state can be made to loosen its grip on society. Two major strategies have been discussed. The first is associated with breaking state monopoly over resource mobilization and allocation. Strengthening the market economy has been one way of delegating authority to individuals and organizations outside the state realm. This is a conspicuous component of the strategy of the World Bank and other donors in their effort to promote more democratic forms of governance. Although this effort has been couched more often in the terms of limiting "rent-seeking" by state officials, its implications also affect civil society. The other strategy involves decentralization of developmental responsibilities to local self-governing institutions. Elinor Ostrom<sup>31</sup> has been a particularly consistent advocate of the need for building autonomous organizations at the local level. This strategy, however, also requires a corollary devolution of political authority to local government institutions so that these autonomous "grassroots" organizations, many of which are quite limited in geographical scope, have a chance of influenc-

ing public policy-making. The importance of a decentralized government structure that provides opportunity for local communities to make decisions about resource allocation, management and distribution on their own has also been stressed by Brautigam<sup>32</sup> and Fox.<sup>33</sup> As the latter argues: pluralist politics must be learned, and sub-national governments make the best school.<sup>34</sup> Decentralization, however, is not a panacea. If local traditional patrons, for example, are able to control the state apparatus at its lower levels – as they do in many parts of the world – they may actually constitute a strong impediment to the emergence of civil society associations. Decentralization sometimes becomes just another means of strengthening the central government by way of patronage. Instead of being fostered, civil society in this scenario is being choked.

#### *The associational level*

The analysis at this level has largely centered on two questions: what institutions make up civil society? what qualities must associations possess in order to foster the process of democratization? The answers provided in response to the first question can be divided between a "minimalist" and a "maximalist" position. The minimalist argument tends to limit the inclusion of civil society associations to those that are explicitly political or "civic" in the sense of fostering the norms of democracy.<sup>35</sup> In this perspective, there is a tendency to exclude those organizations that are engaged in economic or productive activities. Some make a distinction, once made by Aristotle, between human activities of "work" (*techne*) and "interaction" (*praxis*), suggesting a communicative metaphor of the public sphere juxtaposed against an instrumentalist reading of manipulative work-processes. The latter is not congenial to the development of democratic norms or the evolution of civil society. Hannah Arendt, Juergen Habermas and Simone Weil have argued along this line that politics is a vibrant and unique human activity. Their critique of modern society aims at freeing the subject from the "unnatural" technical domination that they resolutely associate with work. Taken to a practical level, this suggests that explicitly political or "civic" associations possess an autonomous capacity to shape the political sphere that other organizations lack.



The maximalist position, on the other hand, makes no distinction between political and other types of organization. Here the spectrum ranges from small, exclusively local organizations in neighbourhoods to organizations with a national orientation and membership. The groups in question may organize anything from activities mainly of a social or cultural nature, eg drama groups and sports clubs, to profit-making or service provision, eg producer associations, trade unions and private hospitals. Anything that takes place outside the state realm counts as part of civil society and contributes to building social capital. In this context, the work of Robert Putnam is of particular interest. He does indeed show that groups that have little directly to do with politics are all the same instrumental in fostering civil norms and thus building social capital. In his attempt to explain the developmental differences between northern and southern Italy, he arrives at the conclusion that organizations like choral groups may have played an important role in building trust and thus cooperation.

The second question focuses on the qualities of civil society associations. The point here is that not all these associations do necessarily promote democracy. Civil society associations may be places for egotistical pursuits.<sup>37</sup> They may also be places in which authoritarian values are being nurtured. In short, civil society can undercut democracy if its associations pursue values that go against tolerance and respect for others. For example, in many societies currently undergoing democratization, its objectives are being threatened by anti-democratic organizations. Russia is a case in point, where fascist tendencies have cropped up in the post-Soviet period. Many women argue that civil society associations remain sexist and thus hamper participation by women in public affairs. Yet others focus on the racial or ethnic exclusivity of some of these organizations, maintaining that they must be more inclusive in order to promote democracy. Although it is possible, in line with the maximalist position above, to argue that any association regardless of its internal characteristics is part of civil society, the tendency is to assume that these associations must have some distinct qualities in order to qualify as "civil" or

"civic". In other words, there is a definite normative choice made by analysts in favour of those criteria that are typically associated with democracy.

Analysts have identified several criteria that they consider important for understanding what associations qualify to be part of civil society. One is autonomy. A civil society association should be independent of the state in terms of decisional competence, recruitment of leaders and control of important economic and managerial resources. It is no coincidence that authoritarian regimes have tried to curb the activities of civil society by circumscribing the autonomy of its associations.<sup>38</sup> A second criteria is that these associations should internally be democratically structured. They should be microcosms of civil society itself, so that members are socialized to have internalized values that are compatible with democracy. The more horizontal the decision-making structures in the organization, the more likely it will foster democratic values. Organizations with a very hierarchical constitution or those dominated by patron-client relations would be less likely to contribute toward a democratic civil society. Yet another criterion that is important for fostering a democratic organizational culture is accountability. There must be procedural mechanisms for members to hold leaders accountable for their decisions and actions. Procedures, however, are not always enough. Action speaks louder than words and elected leaders must be ready to respect the principle of accountability and voluntarily accept its significance in the context of fostering a stronger civil society. A fourth criterion is open recruitment. This is particularly important for the purpose of social or national integration. Associations that are exclusive and closed tend to be less democratically inclined. They tend to become particularly problematic in societies characterized by cultural pluralism, ie places where many ethnic, racial or religious groups live together in the same nation-state. Organizations that do not transcend these boundaries usually have the effect of polarizing civil society, turning politics into a zero-sum game. Multiple affiliation through open recruitment enables individuals to be members of more than one association. Multiple or cross-cutting membership encourages individuals to seek out common

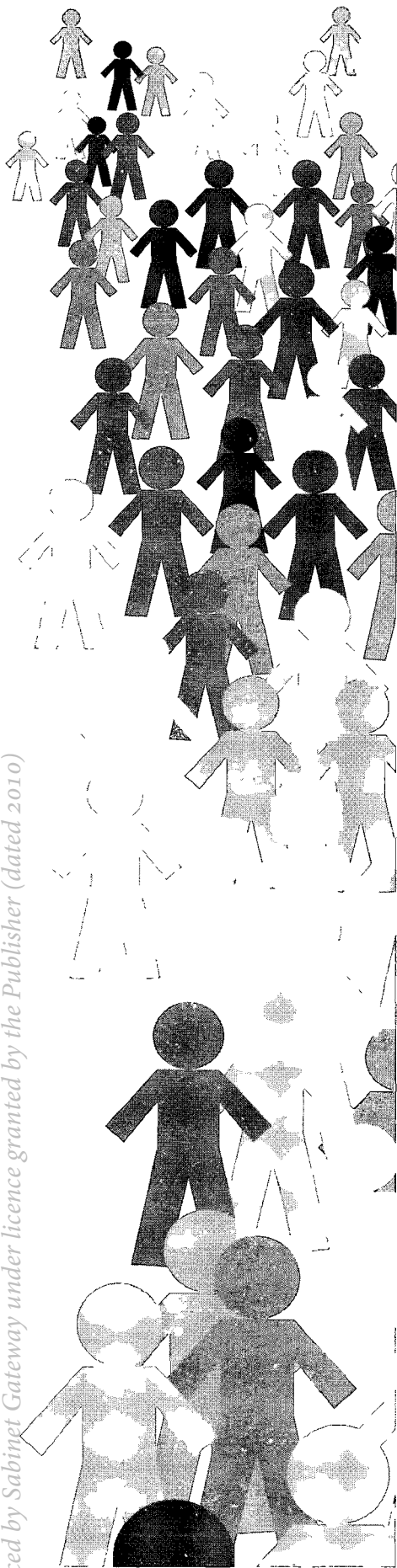
ground in ways that foster tolerance and respect of others. In these respects, open recruitment promotes a democratic culture, one that is also strengthening civil society.<sup>39</sup>

This last point is particularly important to emphasize because there is a tendency to look at non-governmental organizations in developing countries almost exclusively in terms of how their role in development management can be strengthened. For example, the primary emphasis is on creating networks or other forms of linkages. While this is not unimportant, much of the debate on the role of NGOs is too instrumental and overlooks the inherent potential for democratization that is embedded in these organizations. They are not merely resource mobilizers or providers. They are also – at least potentially – serving an important role as socializing agents. If they are democratically constituted, they are likely to make a significant contribution to the formation of a vibrant, but also tolerant civil society, one that fosters democracy rather than autocracy.

In sum, one can argue that civil society is no better than the sum of its associations. The latter make it what it is. Little social capital of value for democracy will be built unless the associations that make up civil society themselves respect and adhere to democratic values in their own internal governance. Values and norms institutionalized at the micro-organizational level are likely to be the strongest bulwark against attacks by the enemies of democracy. We know from the historical experience of many countries that cooperative societies, trade unions and grassroots movements have served as the vanguard of building democracy. It is in such associational contexts that the social capital needed for democracy is being formed.

### *The global level*

One of the most interesting developments in recent years has been the rapid growth of independent organizations that operate on a transnational basis. The building of social capital to strengthen civic and democratic norms no longer takes place at the national level only. There are two aspects of this globalization of the norms of democracy that are particularly important here. The first relates to the "universalization" of specific policy issues and the evolution of organizations



serving as global advocates. Greenpeace and Amnesty International are cases in point in the fields of environmental conservation and human rights respectively. The other concerns the growing role of donor agencies in pushing the democratic agenda in developing countries. In the 1990s, both bilateral and multilateral donors have increasingly stated that development aid will be tied to the readiness of developing country governments to accept democratic norms of governance. On this agenda, the notion of building social capital through strengthening civil society has been very prominent. The consequence of this globalization of the discourse on civil society is that pressures to democratize no longer come only from within a given country but also from outside. The lobbyists for democracy are not only national but also international. This development also has interesting implications for the analysis of civil society.

Important in the context of this article is that the transnational activist organizations are viewed not merely as agencies seeking to change state policies or create conditions in the international system that enhance or diminish interstate cooperation.<sup>40</sup> These organizations also work across societies, ie they help shape norms at the level of society as much as at that of the state. Accepting a definition of civil society which presupposes that it is the arena of social engagement which exists above the individual yet below the state,<sup>41</sup> it is, as suggested above, a complex network of economic, social, and cultural practices based on friendship, family, the market and voluntary affiliation. This concept is increasingly beginning to make sense not only at the national but also international level thanks to the interpenetration, the intermeshing of symbolic meaning systems, and the proliferation of transnational collective endeavours. For example, market forces shape the way vast numbers of people in countries around the world think and act on specific public issues. Voluntary associations or social movements based on religion, eg Christian-based communities in Latin America, represent significant attempts to politicize various public arenas and bring about change. Women organized into movements or fora on an international scale, as for example most recently in the context of the huge NGO Forum associated with the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995, are other cases in

point. There is now in existence a special global alliance for citizen participation, whose aim is to strengthen global civil society.<sup>42</sup> We can see, therefore, that civil society is no longer just that slice of associational life that exists between the individual and the state at the country level but also across national boundaries.<sup>43</sup> When transnational activists direct their efforts beyond the state, they are politicizing global civil society. These efforts involve identifying and manipulating instruments of power for shaping collective life. In short, it is too limiting to think of NGOs in world affairs merely as transnational interest groups. Their political relevance goes beyond this by forging new alliances across national boundaries, reconceptualizing public issues, and empowering local communities. They are building social capital through long-distance relations, thereby helping to promote what amounts to a "global civil society".

The other aspect of this process is that played by bilateral and multilateral donors who, by insisting on democratic conditionalities for dispensing their aid, often through international NGOs, help foster the evolution of a new form of global governance that encroaches on the previously sacred notion of state sovereignty. By contracting funds to these NGOs, donors strengthen their power vis-à-vis national governments, particularly in developing countries, and help provide the political space that enables these organizations to influence not only individual governments, but also civil society in these countries. In fact, it can be argued that the influence of most international NGOs in developing countries tends to be more at civil society than state level. For example, we know that many such NGOs have had a marked influence on how people in these countries view development in new ways that have yet to be adopted by governments. In fields such as public health and environmental conservation, these donor-funded NGOs have helped shape the character of public opinion and public life.

The prominence of the donors, however, is itself problematic in that many of the beneficiaries of their financial support tend to lose their autonomy. They are not rooted in domestic conditions in these countries and therefore their ability to sustain collective activities is often limited. Associational life in many of these places tends to be so dependent on donor funding that civil

society is very fragile. Thus, there is sometimes a conflict between the ambition to foster civil society at the global and the national level. The international NGOs tend to focus on the global level at the expense of their potential contribution in fostering associational life at the national level. There is a limit to how far democracy in developing countries can be built with the assistance of international actors, be they NGOs or donors.<sup>44</sup> This is an issue that needs to be fully recognized and further studied.

**The challenges**

Building civil society, as was indicated in the previous section, takes place at three levels and the various issues associated with this task can be meaningfully studied at the same three levels. It is also important to recognize that efforts at these different levels interact with each other. They do not take place in isolation. For example, the emergence of a social movement like the Greens with a democratic self-governing agenda influences the nature of civil society in a given country but also invites alliances with similar movements in other parts of the world. It would be wrong to assume, however, that civic norms spread evenly throughout the world or that building civil society consists of a linear process from transition to consolidation. Strengthening civil society is essentially a political task and as such subject to constant contestation by those for whom an open and accountable associational life is a threat. The evolution of civil society has always been a long and contradictory process.

Yet, there are more and stronger social forces geared up to fulfil this task than ever before. The past two decades have witnessed remarkable progress for democracy. Since 1972, the number of democratic political systems has more than doubled, from 44 to 107. Three out of five of the world's 187 countries today have adopted a democratic government.<sup>45</sup> With the collapse of communism, moreover, democracy has reached every region of the world for the first time in history. And, as Huntington<sup>46</sup> has noted, it has become "the only legitimate and viable alternative to an authoritarian regime of any kind". Civil society has been both a cause and a consequence of this process. In many places around the world, the rise of civil society has contributed to the emer-

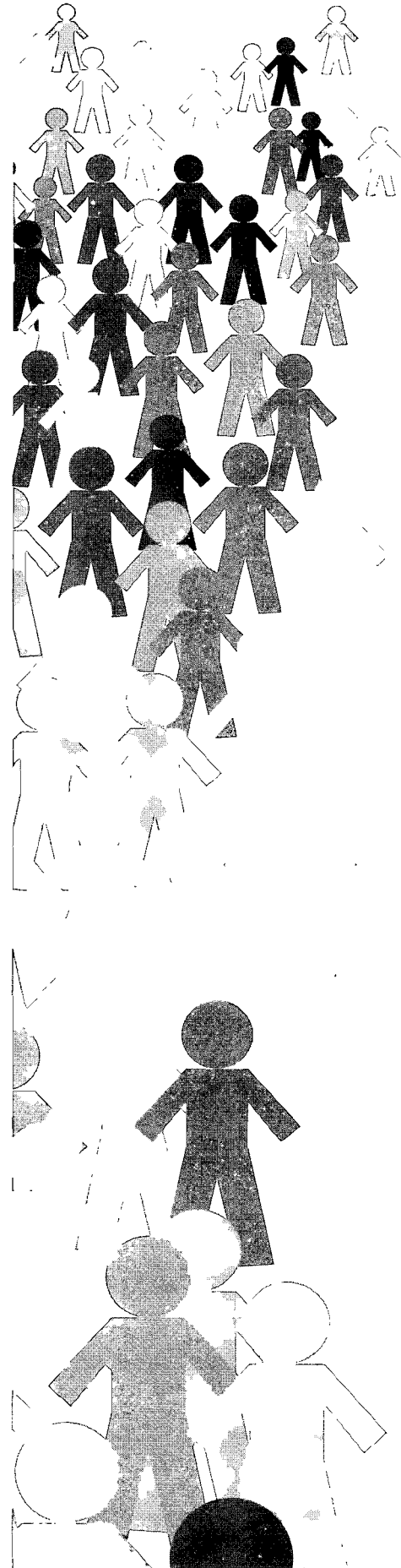
gence of democratic government. In others, its rise has been facilitated by the introduction of a democratically elected government. It has provided the political space in which new forms of social capital can be built. We must recognize, therefore, that the challenges of building civil society are bound to vary from place to place.

There are essentially three scenarios that can be sketched out here as constituting the range of challenges that the world faces as it is moving towards the 21st century. The first focuses on limiting the role of the state in the public realm. In this scenario, civil society is already relatively strong and capable of autonomous action to achieve this end. The second centres on the task of strengthening civil society. Here civic associations are weak and rarely able to challenge state authority. In the third scenario, the challenge is a dual one. Here both state and civil society are weak and in need of development. I shall discuss each one of these in turn.

*Limiting the state*

This scenario takes on special significance in the Latin American context where much of the recent democratization can be attributed to the failure of an authoritarian state to solve economic and other problems in society. In these countries democracy is not a new ideology nor practice. In fact, most Latin American countries have had at least one, in some cases two spells of democratic governance prior to the "wave" that began in the early 1980s. Although the pattern varies somewhat from country to country, the Latin American region has a tradition of relatively strong trade unions. In the past two decades, civil society has also been enriched by the emergence of social movements. These include Christian-based organizations drawing on liberation theology, feminism and environmental conservation, notably of the bio-diverse Amazon basin. The frequent human rights abuses by previous dictatorial regimes have also served as an impetus for the emergence of civil society associations. As can be gleaned from these examples, civil society has continued to grow in strength in opposition to a powerful but illegitimate state.

The "attack" on the state has taken two forms. One has been the effort by civil society associations to constitutionalize power relations in new ways, ie to facilitate the introduction of



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democratic regimes in which civil and political liberties are guaranteed and public accountability effectively secured. Particularly good cases in point here are both Argentina and Chile where the legacy of excessive abuses of power by the military in the 1970s provided a rationale for the calls by civil society associations to delimit the powers of the executive. In both these countries the democratic transition in the past decade has been quite successful while it has been more problematic, yet not unsuccessful, in other countries, eg Brazil, in the same region. Other countries elsewhere, where a strong civil society has played a catalytic role in the democratic transition include the Philippines and South Africa.

The other form has been the effort to privatize the economy so as to reduce the role of the state in development. The Keynesian tradition of an interventionist welfare state was inherited in many Latin American countries, eg Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay for the same reasons as in Western Europe: to manage economic growth and control distribution of benefits and resources. Part of the transition in the past years in that part of the world has centred on liberalizing the economy by reducing state control. Although it has been resisted in many places and gone slow, some countries, eg Argentina and Chile, have created much more opportunity for private business and reduced the opportunity for state officials to seek "rents", ie add to the costs of providing public services. In spite of the strong support in many of these countries for a state-led strategy of development in the past, the failure of authoritarian governments – military or civilian (as in Mexico) – in the 1970s and early 1980s to bring back economic growth, reinforced the demands for regime transition.<sup>47</sup>

This scenario also applies in somewhat different ways to Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. One difference here is that there was no real tradition of a strong civil society, but in the 1980s, in particular, underground movements were developing in many of the communist countries challenging the totalitarian governments in the field of human rights. Solidarity in Poland and Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia are the best known of these organizations. Another is that the

communist economy proved incapable of sustaining itself as division of labour became increasingly complex. Transaction costs simply became so heavy that the economy literally collapsed under their weight. The withering away of central planning and direction paved the way for economic reform which in turn opened the doors for civil society associations to grow in importance.<sup>48</sup> Again, the situation in the mid-1990s varies from country to country in this region, but it seems reasonable to suggest that civil society rests on a stronger foundation in Latin America than in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The prospect of bringing about economic and political reform, and thereby strengthening civil society, seems somewhat easier and brighter in the former as compared to the latter region.

#### *Strengthening civil society*

Not all governments in developing countries see democratization as a positive phenomenon. This is especially true for governments in the Muslim world and in many East and Southeast Asian countries. Western attempts to motivate and pressure these countries to adopt democracy have met with little success. A growing sense of solidarity among these countries makes it difficult for the international community to isolate or effectively pressure any single country. Nonetheless, governments in Asia are coming to recognize that popular sovereignty is a key component of political legitimacy. At the non-governmental level, especially in Southeast Asia, there is a growing political consciousness and increasing support for both democracy and human rights. The values of democracy and human rights are thus becoming part of the domestic political discourse and can no longer be excluded by fiat, except in a few places in the Muslim world. Perhaps most important, nearly all governments now embrace the principles of a market economy. Because economic growth frequently leads to greater political openness, economic liberalization is likely to have the greatest potential for inducing democratic change in these countries.

A strong reason for the reluctance of leaders in East and Southeast Asian countries to accept more pluralist forms of governance is that the state has proved to be a catalyst of de-

velopment in ways it has not in Africa or Latin America. Economic growth in the Asian context has been achieved with a strong and interventionist state. The economic successes of these countries were reached with strategies that contradict those that the international finance institutions have been trying to get governments in other regions of the world to adopt. Civil society has played a very minor role in paving the way for economic and social development in these countries. Their trade-based growth strategies have largely relied on state initiatives and regulation. Most Asian leaders would agree that economic reform must precede political reform. That is why, for instance Singapore's senior minister, Lee Kuan Yew<sup>49</sup> has been campaigning against Western democracy for countries like China and the Philippines. Lee and others have been particularly skeptical of Western advice on this issue and have insisted that only incumbent governments can decide on issues like the pace of reform and the sequence to be followed in developing their countries. Strengthening civil society, like democracy, therefore, does not feature on the list of top priorities in these Asian countries. This is clear, for example, from the final declaration of the Asian regional human rights conference in Bangkok, in which government representatives attest to the high premium they place on sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs.<sup>50</sup> The same position is also widely embraced by governments in the Muslim world, where religious dogma is often invoked to prevent the growth of civil society associations.

This reluctance, even outright opposition, among government leaders to the idea of building a stronger and more democratic civil society notwithstanding, there is a small but growing constituency for doing precisely this – even in countries like Indonesia, China and Burma. Despite being labelled a "threat from the left" by the Indonesian government and a "threat from the right" by the Chinese government, democratic governance has become part of the contemporary political discourse in these countries. The Tianamen Square incident in 1989 shows that there is a constituency for strengthening civil society in China, although it is difficult to gauge its size. It is also worth noting here that the



meeting of Asian non-governmental organizations that preceded the regional intergovernmental human rights meeting in Bangkok endorsed the significance of civil and political rights. Their starting point was the citizen, not government, the civil society not the state.

The existence and work of these organizations and individuals, despite grave danger to their lives, families and property refute, at least in part, the position taken by the governing elites that democracy and human rights are Western conceptions with no resonance in Asian political culture. Despite the growing salience of these constituencies, their importance should not be exaggerated. These groups are still relatively small. Through repression, cooptation, and control over the funding and activities of these emerging associations, governments in these countries closely control, both informally and formally, civil society. In the short run, therefore, the prospects of these groups for influencing the system of government are limited. Compared to the state, civil society remains weak and must be strengthened as a means of obtaining greater respect for democracy and human rights in these countries. Over the long run, this may prove possible, particularly during a "crisis of authority". Economic growth, industrialization, higher levels of education, and the accompanying growth of the middle class are likely to sharpen the public's political consciousness and increase their awareness of the importance of popular sovereignty. These, however, are only long-term consequences and there is no guarantee that they will lead to greater acceptance of democracy and human rights unless deliberate measures are taken by non-governmental organizations to strengthen civil society. The latter objective is likely to be a prerequisite for reducing authoritarian tendencies in these countries.

### ***Strengthening both state and civil society***

Civil society presupposes the existence of a public realm in which there is a clear delineation of rights and obligations between individual citizens, on the one hand, and the state, on the other. There needs to be a legal and constitutional framework which applies to every one, big or small, man or woman. A society lacks in civility if

some members believe that they stand above the law. A state in which this is the case is one where the rule of law is in question. In these countries, the task of building civil society cannot be seen in isolation from building the state. If the latter lacks what Max Weber referred to as a "legal-rational" foundation for its authority, building civil society is bound to run into special problems. In the contemporary context, this is the challenge particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

The reason for this complication in the African context is the prevalence of what political analysts refer to as "neo-patrimonialism".<sup>51</sup> Drawing again on Weber,<sup>52</sup> patrimonialism can be characterized as a system of rule in which all governmental authority and the corresponding economic rights tend to be treated as privately appropriated economic advantages and where governmental powers and the associated advantages are treated as private rights. This form of rule has historically existed everywhere. Kings and chiefs alike saw no difference between the public and the private realms. Taxes, or tributes, as they typically were called in those days, were retained by the ruler as part of his household even though they were collected by titular officials. Remnants of the system are retained in the titles of British government officials. By reining in the powers of kings and constitutionalizing relations between different groups or actors in society, a public realm was gradually established. It was in this space that the modern state arose and civil society was being built.

"Neo-patrimonialism" exists in societies where the impact of the modern state has been felt, but where prevailing social norms make no such distinction between private and public realms. Former colonies, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa, where the influence of the modern state was confined temporally to 60 or 70 years and spatially by virtue of the limited number of colonial officers employed in the enterprise, neo-patrimonialism is particularly common. Here modern bureaucratic norms coexist with patrimonial ones. Public policy is mediated by the struggle between these two sets of norms. This situation is different from the patrimonialist society of the past, where there was no such contestation between norms uphold-

ing a public as opposed to a private realm. For example, in seeking legitimation, the neo-patrimonialist state refers to public norms and universal ideologies. These provide a facade behind which patrimonialist values can be pursued. That is why we speak of corruption in neo-patrimonial states, yet what is corruption from the point of view of imported public norms is not by the prevailing private norms in these societies.

At the core of neo-patrimonialism in Africa is the tendency by the ruler to personalize power. This has been going on ever since independence as part of the ambition to indigenize the rule of these societies. For a long time, the rest of the world saw no reason to react to this trend, either because it was believed to be a matter of state sovereignty or there was a belief that African societies must find a way of their own to develop and thus they should be allowed to experiment. In recent years, however, the position of the outsiders has changed. There is no longer the same willingness to let the Africans continue on their own, especially since these outsiders believe that the limited impact of their foreign aid can be attributed to inadequate forms of governance. Neo-patrimonialism, therefore, is an attack from the outside. Many Africans too, however, are fed up with the private accumulation of wealth and power that has taken place in these neo-patrimonialist regimes. That is why there is a growing interest among members of both the elite and the public at large in Africa to bring about the rule of law and the delineation of rights and obligations between state and individuals so that the task of building civil society can become reality also in their countries.

This task, however, is not likely to prove easy. Neo-patrimonialism is a phenomenon that cannot be disposed of overnight because the whole power structure in post-colonial African societies has rested on the assumption of its general acceptance. Thus, calling it into question or attempting to wipe it out is bound to be associated with political instability. The examples of Liberia, Rwanda and Somalia are often invoked – not always correctly – to highlight the dangers of overthrowing neo-patrimonialism. Yet, this process is ongoing across the continent and the political battlelines in the past few



years, and probably in the next ones to come, are not likely to be between the “right” and the “left” but between advocates of neo-patrimonialism and those of constitutionalism. The latter constituency is made up of those who believe that peace and stability, democracy and development are only possible with the creation of a strong public realm in which rights and obligations are known and protected.

We have seen, however, that even in countries that have not collapsed, such as Cameroon, Kenya and Nigeria, neo-patrimonialism is not easily dislodged. At the crucial junctures of elections, there prove to be too many ways that those in power can use to rig elections to their advantage. Electoral monitoring by external or internal groups have not been able to prevent this from happening. The ability of neo-patrimonial rulers to survive and continue their arbitrary rule has caused special concern among donors who disapprove of their behaviour but who wish to aid the people of these countries because they are poor. The tendency has been to apply economic pressures on the governments of these rulers but there is little evidence that this leads to a change of heart. Instead, as the case of Kenya illustrates, the whole exercise turns into a cat-and-mouse game, in which the mouse (Kenya) tries as much as possible to escape the claws of the donors.

Some of the same difficulties apply also to the large number of international NGOs that nowadays work in Africa. Unlike the donors, they cannot escape the whims of neo-patrimonial rule but have to learn how to live with them. Viewing themselves as part of the effort to build civil society, do they try to help reform African societies from within by accepting neo-patrimonialism or do they take a confrontational approach refusing to accept these norms? The tendency among development-oriented organizations has been to work from within, using their development work as a catalyst to achieve change in the right direction. Rights-based organizations, on the other hand, have taken a much more uncompromising stand and have typically ended up accusing the neo-patrimonial regimes of serious human rights violations. Both these stands make practical sense given the agendas of these types of organizations. For no one, however, is there an easy victory because becoming part of local African society in ways that make the latter demand not only

“goods” but also the right to decide on the rules for allocating these goods takes time and requires a type of civic courage that has no precedent in these societies. In Africa, therefore, the task at the turn of the millennium is not to limit the powers of the state but rather to create a public realm in which both a state, in the legal-rational sense, and civil society can be built. This double challenge is likely to be at the root of whether African societies are going to develop or fall further behind in the years to come.

### Conclusions

The rise of civil society is for the first time a global phenomenon. It is no longer confined to a few economically advanced and privileged countries in the West. The idea that even the poor have rights and can exercise them is now being spread to all corners of the world. This is an important aspect of the ongoing process of globalization as we move into the next century. A hundred years ago this idea was being embraced by social groups in Europe, eg workers and women, who until then had been denied the right to participate in public affairs. After years of imperialism and colonialism, the principle that every human being has the democratic right to participate in public affairs through voluntary associations, ie in civil society, is finally being extended to those in the world who have suffered most. To be sure, it is being opposed and contested in many places but by being on the global agenda, it will not easily disappear. Rulers who deny the rights of their citizens are under increasing pressure to change.

The idea that civil society is a Western concept may still be invoked to refuse acceptance of the concept of civil society (or any other aspect of democratic governance, for that matter). There will no doubt continue to be a struggle between the “universal” and the “particular”, ie the ideas that human values and norms are shared by all regardless of race, religion, etc, on the one hand, and that these norms and values are determined by specific cultures, on the other. This article has tried to demonstrate that although the effort to build civil society is global it is characterized by at least four different philosophical strands, it takes place at different levels from the global to the grassroots, and that the specific challenges are likely to differ from region to region, and often from country to country. It behaves

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analysts and practitioners alike, therefore, to adopt a humble approach to the task ahead. It requires conviction but also ability to empathize, ie see the world from the side of those not yet convinced. It requires strategy but also the ability to make tactical concessions. None of this is easy; the risks of mistakes many.

All the same, civil society will never become a global reality unless there is networking and an exchange of ideas. Local perceptions of what is right and wrong or how to do things must be allowed a voice and be listened to by others before they are dismissed. Civil society is not being built by ignoring others or by shouting them down. It comes about through tolerance and the readiness to dialogue with others. This is how the social capital is being formed that help develop countries.

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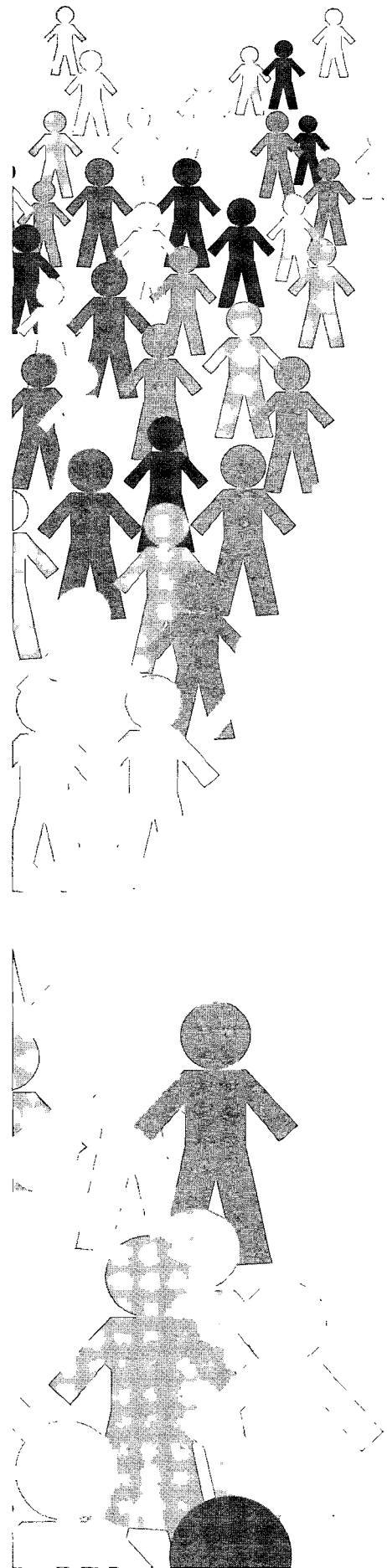
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# A foreign policy to die for:

## South Africa's response to the Nigerian crisis

Events in Nigeria during 1995, and especially the execution of Nigerian writer and human rights activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists at the time of the Commonwealth Summit in November 1995, have highlighted four interrelated problems of South Africa's foreign policy – problems experienced by the new government in formulating and implementing foreign policy, the apparent discrepancy between South Africa's foreign policy ideals, what it considers to be its national interest, and its ability to put these ideals into practice; the difficulty of building coalitions or securing support for initiatives involving criticism of a fellow African state's conduct; lastly, the perhaps unrealistically high expectations by the general public<sup>1</sup> of what foreign policy can achieve.

The aim of this article is to explore and explain the nature of these four problems, using South African-Nigerian relations (up to middle December 1995) as an illustration, but also looking at some other examples. What is clearly illustrated by this analysis is that foreign policy moves cannot be explained in monocausal terms, but have extremely complex roots. Although South Africa's foreign policy forms the main focus of this study, the findings and conclusions drawn are also relevant to the foreign policy of many other states, especially those in transition. They highlight the dilemmas faced by a developing state, one that is part of Africa, in its attempt to base relations with other states on a commitment to human rights and related values such as democratization. The first section deals (in broad terms only) with the "theory" of foreign policy – the What and Who and How thereof, and problems encountered when foreign policy focuses on non-traditional issues (such as human rights) from within a traditional, realist approach to decision making. This section focuses on general, or common, problems faced by most states in formulating foreign policy on what we may call these "new" issues and changing international and global agendas. This discussion provides a back-

ground to and framework for the analysis, in the second part of this article, of the above-mentioned four South African problems.

### Foreign policy: An oversimplified landscape?

The analysis and explanation of foreign policy in the study of international relations are usually presented following one of two broad approaches, either an analytical or a (historical-) descriptive approach.<sup>2</sup> In this discussion, the structure of Holsti's analytical approach to the study of foreign policy is used as it provides us with a useful ordering principle for an overview of what foreign policy is all about.<sup>3</sup> Holsti's framework does not, however, cover an explanation of the output's and outcomes of foreign policy, an aspect of some importance in attempting to analyse South Africa's foreign policy experience with Nigeria. Analysing the implementation of foreign policy is a relatively recent development in foreign

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**President Nelson Mandela defended the policy of quiet diplomacy, saying that there would be "time enough" for tougher measures**

policy studies,<sup>4</sup> but it can go a long way in explaining, and creating an understanding of, the foreign policy process<sup>5</sup> and, in this instance, the reaction in particular of the South African public, or sections of it, to what was perceived to be the incompetent handling of the Nigerian issue by the South African government. I will therefore give attention to the definition of foreign policy, its goals, means and instruments, the actors and targets involved, and the implementation of foreign policy decisions, attempting to show, in the discussion of each, what exactly are the problems when working in the contemporary international system within a realist approach.

Within the realist paradigm, foreign policy is summed up as the objectives and actions, or decisions and policies of a state regarding its external environment, based on certain values which determine these goals. What is *not* contained within this definition is that these decisions and policies are influenced, over time, by the feedback which results from implementation. Neither does this definition allow for the fact that foreign policy is in essence a process over time, only very seldom, if ever, can it be said to be a one-off decision that is taken, is implemented, and is then 'over and done with'. The very nature of the goals that states pursue implies continuity, process and even a systemic character. States are deemed to pursue the selfsame goals, albeit in different ways (arising from differences in capabilities and priorities), those of security, autonomy, welfare, status and prestige.<sup>6</sup> Some states also have other purposes and goals, and these are related to their foreign policy orientations and especially their national roles.<sup>7</sup>

Two points are relevant here. Firstly, the goals we have enumerated are directly related to the view that the international system is anarchic in nature and that every state is concerned first and foremost with its 'national interest', promoting these goals in order to improve or at least maintain its position. This approach makes foreign policy something that is always *directly* related to the concerns of a state – its security, autonomy, welfare, status and prestige – and accords with the basic principle on which the state system is based, namely sovereignty and the rule of non-intervention. The second point is that this view of foreign policy as something that is aimed at (and often originates from) the direct and largely tangible interests of the state does not reflect concerns

with "new" goals or values such as human rights or democratization.

These values – actually, it would be more correct to refer to a respect for and a concern about human rights as a *value*, and democratization as the *goal* through which this value is pursued – came strongly to the fore in the aftermath of World War II, although the nature of the Cold War distorted these concerns at the time. It was thus only in the late 1970s that human rights seriously edged its way on to the international agenda. Holsti<sup>8</sup> states that the "critical norms of the society of states" are those of 'sovereignty, legal equality, territorial integrity, the right to self-defense, observance of human rights, non-threat or use of force in international relationships, and non-interference in other countries' internal affairs (except where those can constitute a threat to the peace).<sup>9</sup> As a result of the contradiction(s) here – in particular that between sovereignty and human rights – implementing resolutions and actualising concerns about human rights are currently a major international problem. The enforcement of international treaties on human rights remains modest in practice, precisely because sovereignty and the rule of non-intervention mitigate against any such enforcement. The implementation of the human rights norm, therefore, stands in sharp contrast to that of the other norms mentioned by Holsti, mainly because the implementation of this particular norm involves the internal practices of states, and because it has opened the door to the involvement of a host of other actors, apart from states, in issues related to it. In this sense human rights issues are similar to those of international economic relations which also increasingly see non-state actors becoming major players in international politics.

Those points reflect a major problem in contemporary foreign policy making, ie that traditional foreign policy decision-making processes, based largely on the realist world view, do not facilitate the making of any policy that is at odds with the basic rules of the international system. Formulating (and especially implementing) policy that in effect violates the rule of non-intervention in the strict sense of its definition is a difficult, often thankless, often unsuccessful process, as South Africa learnt when it tried to intervene in Nigeria. And one of the reasons here is that states often try to formulate policy to take account of "new" goals by using traditional instruments and channels.

The making and implementation of foreign policy is curtailed by the means or instruments available to a state to pursue its goals. These means or instruments in turn determine the power of the state to influence its external environment, even the weak have the potential to exercise influence, depending on the credibility and relevance of the instruments available to them, however few these may be. It is therefore assumed that all states have at least some potential for (wilful) influence on their external environment, provided they know how to use the means available to them. Influence as an expression of power means that one does not necessarily achieve goals through "hard" power such as military force, but that "soft" power such as moral credibility can also be a source of influence. Nevertheless, small (smaller) states have less power than big states and major powers for the simple reason that the instruments through which they exercise influence are more limited, often literally in size (size of economy, for example). For a short period of time, specifically during 1994-1995, for instance, the view was held by some South African academics, politicians and analysts that the moral standing and stature of President Mandela would make it possible for the country not to have to choose between formal relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China, or even that the country would be able to insist on dual recognition. It took some effort to disabuse supporters of this view.<sup>9</sup> The continued refusal of the PRC to discuss the possibility of establishing diplomatic ties with South Africa while the latter still recognizes Taiwan, coupled with the prospect of Hong Kong 1997, will eventually, most probably before the end of 1996, force South Africa to sever formal ties with Taiwan in favour of China.

The sources of power, it would seem, depend largely on the reigning values of the era. At the same time, these values are often only broadly or very generally subscribed to by, or seen as a source of influence upon, the various members of international society, the latter is not a monolithic block. An emerging superpower such as China illustrates the difficulty of enforcing international human rights standards on a powerful country; and small, peripheral states which abuse human rights often go scot-free.

The instruments available to a state to implement its foreign policy, are, according to Holsti,<sup>10</sup> those of diplomacy, propaganda, economic rewards and coercion, and various forms of military intervention ranging from demonstrations of force to full-scale war. Apart from propaganda, these instruments are mostly aimed at state-state relations, even though their use can influence the daily lives of the citizens of the target state/s. Security Council sanctions against Iraq in the wake of the Gulf War provide a good example. These sanctions have resulted in serious shortages for ordinary people in that country over a broad front. The increase in the number of actors involved in the international system now provides, potentially, more instruments and avenues through which foreign policy and attempts to influence international political (and other) events can be pursued, provided that foreign policy decisions are not made within a rigid realist framework which accepts that states are basically *always* the main (if not the only) targets of policy.

Once again, a non-traditional foreign policy issue, such as human rights and/or the promotion of democracy, makes many traditional instruments, or rather, the traditional ways in which these instruments are utilized, largely ineffective. South Africa, for instance, chose 'quiet diplomacy' in its attempts to influence the Abacha government, obviously without much success. The scale of its economic relations with Nigeria precluded the use of economic coercion, at least on a bilateral basis. Military intervention in any shape never formed part of the possible options, as being largely irrelevant to the case. Propaganda seems not to have been considered, neither in seeking domestic support for South Africa's position, nor in targeting the broad African, international or Nigerian internal constituencies. What is of relevance here is the fact that there seems to be very little experience in international relations as to how traditional (and non-traditional) instruments of foreign policy can be utilized in pursuing "new" goals in foreign policy. Linking issues seems to many to be the answer to this problem. Because of the sensitivities and vulnerabilities caused by economic or material interdependence and the consequently more readily ensured success of influence exerted in these areas, it is sometimes thought that linking issues such as human rights with international aid (to



**Chief Tom Ikimi,  
Nigeria's foreign  
minister - not  
perturbed by  
the West's  
condemnation**



give but one example) will automatically guarantee success in the area of human rights.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the evidence that some states are willing to relinquish some measure of economic sovereignty in order to promote wellbeing resulting from international cooperation serves, for some, as proof that states would also be willing to sacrifice elements of their domestic sovereignty in order to protect human rights.

Such linkages and analogies can be misleading, if not downright incorrect, as argued by Donnelly.<sup>12</sup> To impose international human rights policies by using a related instrument, moral suasion is the obvious means, aided by public criticism and instruments such as blacklisting. All were used in the struggle against apartheid.<sup>13</sup> These instruments are seldom effective. So other types of retaliation have to be imported from other issue areas, for instance the economy. This creates potential for an escalation of the conflict, or an increase in repression, or, in the case of severing diplomatic ties, of losing what contact has remained with the transgressor and thereby losing potential influence. Furthermore, the *cost* of implementing human rights policies by making use of instruments imported from another issue area may in the long run damage the interests of the enforcer, as was demonstrated by the high price that apartheid South Africa's neighbours had to pay in the era of destabilization. Using the analogy of material interdependence and the basis it provides for international cooperation, reciprocity and accommodation or a willingness to bargain or negotiate on an issue, do not necessarily hold for human rights issues which are based on a perceived *moral* interdependence: "differing bases for cooperation are likely to lead to significantly different international political processes".<sup>14</sup> Few states are willing to take these risks over an issue that is, however morally repugnant, usually confined to the domestic domain of the transgressor state and does not threaten international peace and stability. Also, the basis of cooperation in the case of moral interdependence may be more perceived (a case of wishful thinking?) than real, and this makes for difficulty in identifying useful, relevant and credible instruments of foreign policy. Clearly, effective



General Sani Abacha

means of implementing international human rights policies are still very much non-existent (or at most in their infancy); an adherence to the principle of sovereignty and the rule of non-intervention actually reinforce the unwillingness of many states to abide by international standards and principles.

International relations theory has found it notoriously difficult to identify *who* makes foreign policy. Ferguson and Mansbach come to the conclusion that "despite our increasing theoretical sophistication and the accumulation of much more data since the heyday of realism, we still are far from *knowing* who or what makes foreign policy – or even how to go about finding out".<sup>15</sup> Over time, a fiction, that of the unitary actor, based on the realist tradition in international relations, has developed and is regularly utilized not only by analysts and international relations scholars, but also by governments themselves, ie the decision makers. The unitary actor fiction posits that states are *the actors* in international politics and assumes that these entities (called *states*) act on behalf of and in the interest and name of their citizens/peoples and territories. Seldom does one find the subtleties of, for instance, a Weberian approach that views the state as "a set of administrative, policing and military organizations headed ... by an executive authority",<sup>16</sup> and much less an acknowledgment that apart from the realist and Weberian approaches, states often contain differing vigorous and highly influential non-state, non-governmental groups and individual

persons who are important foreign policy actors.

International political economy theory exhibits an increasing awareness of the limitations of the unitary actor model as either an analytical tool or an assumption that guides foreign policy actions. Strange<sup>17</sup> and Stopford and Strange,<sup>18</sup> for instance, discuss in their work the "new sides to diplomacy", namely those of state-firm diplomacy and firm-firm diplomacy, implying that international relations are conducted in a vastly more complicated global arena than that suggested by the unitary actor fiction. The rapid growth in the numbers of important and influential foreign policy actors is not only related to the increasingly sophisticated and interdependent global economy, but can also be explained, in the case of Africa, by a matching phenomenon, the persistent ineffectiveness of Africa's numerous weak states. These characteristics have made for the emergence and development of actors in civil society who often play a "critical ... role in African international relations".<sup>19</sup> One furthermore needs only turn to the history of the struggle against apartheid which took place on a global scale to realize the inadequacy of the unitary actor model. Yet these insights are not really accounted for in traditional thinking on foreign policy; and many states, South Africa, ironically, among them (see below), still employ this model in the conduct of their affairs with the outside world.

The unitary actor fiction is of course useful in the sense that it simplifies the making of foreign policy. It limits options that have to be considered in the decision-making process, whether such policy is reactive or proactive. It therefore narrows down the range of instruments and resources to be committed to implementing policy and the number and range of actors to be targeted. The realist "rule of parsimony" argued for by Waltz,<sup>20</sup> is often, when it comes to *explaining* international politics, it would seem, applied by decision makers in the course of *formulating* foreign policy. South Africa's handling of its relations with Nigeria provides a good example. The main, and, largely, only target identified by policy makers throughout the crisis (at least during the period under consideration here) was the Nigerian government of General Abacha, in

particular the General himself and his Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chief Tom Ikimi.<sup>21</sup> Few, if any, other actors, whether states or even other government departments (other than that of Foreign Affairs) or other organizations/interest groups who might have assisted in building a coalition for action, were identified and incorporated into the process (see below). Actors and targets are closely linked instruments and means and, together, account for the options that states consider when formulating foreign policy. The difficulty in linking issues and importing instruments, especially those of retaliation, from other issue areas, also creates problems when identifying actors and targets.

The realist paradigm pays very little attention to the implementation of foreign policy. The *outputs* of foreign policy are only implied, for instance, in Holsti's discussion of the techniques of achieving one's foreign policy goals.<sup>22</sup> This approach is understandable within a framework dealing largely with foreign policy goals related to "the national interest", but gives little if any guidance as to what the expected outcomes of pursuing non-traditional goals, such as human rights, might be. Outputs and outcomes are not the same, and outcomes can and do often differ significantly from the intended outcome of a particular decision or policy. This is particularly true of attempts at influencing sensitive areas of the domestic policies of other states. The intention of the Commonwealth's Eminent Persons' Group's (EPG) visit to South Africa in 1986 was to promote political dialogue among South Africans. An unforeseen, albeit indirectly related, outcome to this visit was the South African Defence Force attack on an alleged ANC basis in Gabarone while the EPG was still in South Africa. The point is that even the most carefully crafted decisions and policies can fail, or create unexpected results, because they are often aimed at *sovereign states* who, should they so wish, fail or refuse to comply with outside attempts to influence them. The result of such a failure, or a perceived lack of progress, is then blamed on some or other wrong/bad/incompetent/foreign policy. This is amply illustrated in any study of the overall South African foreign policy process vis-à-vis Nigeria. It is to a discussion of these issues that I now turn.



Activist Ken Saro-Wiwa

### South Africa's response to the Nigerian crisis: Four problems

Before one can actually analyse and provide a full critique of the South African response/s to and initiatives concerning what has, in a few short months, become popularly known as the "Nigerian problem" or the "Nigerian crisis", it is useful to sketch in the background. At the same time it should be noted that, apart from the Lesotho constitutional crisis of December 1994, the case of Nigeria must surely rank as one of the first serious, or rather, difficult and potentially contentious foreign policy challenges in Africa that has confronted the new South African government (the GNU), and this because it tested the ANC's external policy ideals and goals in a very practical and visible way (see below).<sup>23</sup>

After the annulment of the 1993 presidential elections in Nigeria, General Abacha, minister of defence under General Babangida, took control of the government and put an end to what little movement towards democratization had preceded the elections. The supposed winner of the elections, Chief Moshood Abiola, was arrested (he is still in prison) and in the following months scores of other opposition leaders and their supporters and other critics of Abacha were arrested, among them General Obasanjo and later the writer and activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other activists from Ogoniland. In what can be interpreted as a concession to external pressure on his regime,

Abacha promised in his October speech at the celebration of Nigeria's independence that he would return the country to democratic rule in three years' time. Surrounding the Abacha regime's mistreatment of its critics, and its general disregard for civilian law, civilian courts and human rights, are other issues equally important, but less publicized (and perhaps less understood) by the rest of the world, at least in terms of the potential they have to ignite the whole of West Africa. These problems include the spill-over potential of internal conflict in Nigeria,<sup>24</sup> the deep religious, ethnic and economic cleavages in this society, and the extent of corruption and pillaging within the state bureaucracy which has led to increasing bitterness and disillusionment in the general population. Coupled to these problems are a number of others that impact seriously on the options open to outside forces to exercise influence. The most salient of these are the Abacha regime's apparent belief that Nigeria is a special case that defies a Westminster-type democracy,<sup>25</sup> thereby justifying and rationalizing military rule; the difficulty of dealing with an autocratic, inexperienced leader who does not operate according to "internationally accepted" rules or standards, but who actually openly defies them; and, lastly, a divided opposition.<sup>26</sup> These difficulties, so diverse, and the bloody and unstable history of Nigeria over the past three decades, already provide part of the explanation as to why South Africa and, for that matter, the rest of the world find it so difficult to address the Nigerian problem.

### South Africa's policy: Goals, formulation and problems

According to Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aziz Pahad, in an interview before the execution of Saro-Wiwa and his eight colleagues,<sup>27</sup> South Africa's objectives were to prevent the executions of alleged coup plotters,<sup>28</sup> to secure Abiola's release, and to ensure the success of the democratization process in Nigeria. These goals were all related to attempts to change the domestic policies of Nigeria, not to traditional goals of foreign policy. The instrument chosen to achieve these objectives was that of quiet diplomacy. Different emissaries were sent to Nigeria, while, as noted above, Nigerian government representatives were also given a hearing in South Africa. South





Nigeria

Africa targeted the Abacha regime – other actors were not identified (that is, with the Commonwealth meeting – although indications are that there had been discussions with Commonwealth members). South Africa's policy was therefore very much conducted at state level. Appeals from non-government actors to President Mandela, such as those made by Nigerian author Wole Soyinka, did not elicit any official public response from the South African government.

Abacha's Independence Day speech at the beginning of October lulled policy makers in South Africa into a belief that they had had some success in achieving the desired outcome on at least two of the three counts: Abacha had promised a return to democracy (though this was not unequivocal) and the death sentences on General Obasanjo and others were commuted to life imprisonment. Policy makers obviously hoped for more tangible results to come from peer group pressure on Abacha during the Commonwealth meeting, and Deputy President Mbeki tried (though in vain) to contact Abacha beforehand to ensure his presence in Auckland. In the event, Abacha sent Ikim, and the death sentences, confirmed on 8 November by the Provincial Ruling Council (PRC), were carried out on 10 November. So certain were the South Africans that their quiet diplomacy would succeed, especially in tandem with the Heads of State calls for clemency at the summit meet-

ing,<sup>29</sup> that President Mandela defended the policy on 9 November, saying that there would be "time enough" for tougher measures should persuasion fail.

If one accepts that the execution of Saro-Wiwa and the other activists points to a policy failure on the part of South Africa – and this is a reasonable assumption, seeing that the prevention of executions was a policy objective – it is important to ask why the policy failed. Note that the enquiry is important not only to explain this specific instance of failure, but to attempt to identify aspects of the foreign policy process which might be considered weak or inadequate and which should therefore be strengthened or changed. It is possible to identify a host of problems encountered, consciously or unconsciously, by policy makers in this instance, but owing to limited space I will look at only four – all related directly to the discussion in the first part of this article. Some of the other problems are discussed below as they are more directly related to the broad ideals and goals of South Africa's foreign policy, as envisaged by the ANC as the senior partner in the GNU, and to South Africa's difficulty in reconciling its pan-Africanist aspirations with its moral convictions.

I should say at this point that although the discussion in this section is presented as one of different problems, these difficulties are actually related, the separation is aimed more at structure than at dealing with genuinely separate topics. A measure of overlap is consequently unavoidable.

The first problem has to do with the rather limited response and action on the part of South Africa. At this stage it is unknown which options were considered, but only diplomacy was chosen as an instrument of action. This creates the possibility that a lack of relevant material may have been partly to blame for the narrow response. In other words, the information on which choices were made may have been insufficient. Here criticism has been levelled specifically at Nene, the South African high commissioner, who had had little, if any, contact with opposition leaders in Nigeria and whose access to the leadership within the Nigerian government seems to have been rather limited.<sup>30</sup>

Following Brecher's design for analysing foreign policy,<sup>31</sup> it becomes clear, however, that the transmission of information is but one of the components of the total input entering into

policy formulation. Two other things should also be highlighted. The first is that despite pressure brought about by (especially) the media in the weeks before the executions, government clearly gave it little heed, except to defend its policy of quiet diplomacy (see below), thereby reinforcing perceptions that foreign policy making was continuing in "old style" apartheid era secrecy.<sup>32</sup> Although there may be some truth in these perceptions, this policy-making style has less to do with the apartheid past than with the general operational techniques of policy formulation within a realist paradigm. International diplomatic norms, standards and procedures influence thinking and action perhaps more than most would want to admit or realize, and acquiescence may be viewed as a sign of status, prestige and equality with other states. This would explain why the ANC during its years of struggle employed unconventional foreign policy techniques – it was not a state, but attempting to capture the state. Now it is part of the international club of states and so it plays by the rules – for many reasons, not least of which is self-interest. The second point concerns what is perhaps a more critical issue and one that will have to be addressed, or at least be critically examined by the ANC specifically, that of the attitudinal prism colouring and/or bending input. In this instance the prism is an item of ANC history, for it has been alleged that the ANC did not wish to put too much pressure on Nigeria's regime, owing to the support Nigeria had given it during its years of struggle against apartheid, and also because, it is rumoured, the ANC was given a donation<sup>33</sup> of R15 million for its election fund in 1994. Should these allegations be true, and if a sense of indebtedness indeed influenced policy making, the government has a serious problem: such facts would indicate an inability to distinguish between *party* and *state*, an inability that undermines democracy and points the way to one-party domination.<sup>34</sup>

A further explanation for the failure of SA policy can be found in the choice of targets and allies identified by decision makers, in other words, the actors who were involved in policy making. Scarcely any contact was made with the Nigerian opposition, as we have already mentioned. Archbishop Tutu's warnings and calls for sanctions were played down, Parliament played no role (up to mid-December at least). Other govern-

ment departments and non-governmental organizations were not involved. The issue was not discussed at the SADC summit of late August. And no attempts were made to put pressure on Shell or to enlist its assistance in taking a strong stand on the Saro-Wiwa case. Foreign policy action remained exclusively at bilateral state-to-state level. The process up to 11 November clearly indicates a failure to go beyond the identification of traditionally accepted actors, whether as allies or targets of foreign policy.

A last problem encountered by the South African government that explains its failed policy, and one also relevant to other states and organizations operating in the international arena, is that of ignorance and inexperience in formulating effective policy on issues which, however international in conception and support, are inherently domestic in nature. One might agree with the statement of Weiss, Forsythe and Coate<sup>35</sup> that "because of interdependence involving sensitive relations [such as human rights], some issues that were formerly considered domestic or inconsequential have come to be redefined as international or significant because of the strength of transnational concern – of either a material or moral nature". But this does not tell us how to *deal* with these issues in a system based on the sovereignty of its units. Calls for an international boycott of Nigerian oil, for instance, have not produced immediate results, mainly because such action would have to be based on international consensus, something which takes time to build. (This is a classic example of the practical problems related to importing instruments from another issue area.)

These kinds of argument do not bring one any closer to an answer as to how states could or should deal with another state's domestic behaviour which, for one or another reason, is unacceptable.<sup>36</sup> Two approaches are currently emerging. Both seem, at best, doubtful in terms of effectiveness; and it must be accepted that both demand an extended process of development to be of use. The first of these involves coalition building and multilateral diplomacy at the level, in other words, a form of mass action by states. One example of this is the Commonwealth's creation of a watchdog group (of which South Africa is to be a member), based on the Millbrook Programme, that will examine and monitor the human rights records

## Nigeria

Federal Republic of —

**Independence:** 1 October 1960.  
Former British colony.

**National Day:** 1 October  
(Independence Day).

**Leader:** Gen Sani Abacha, b 1943,  
Head of State since November  
1993.

**Capital:** Abuja. Lagos is the largest  
city and port.

**Area:** 923 768 km<sup>2</sup>. Population: 111  
mn (1995).

**Religions:** Muslim (majority) and  
Christians together about 85% of  
population.

**Languages:** English (official), Hausa,  
Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo, Efik-Ibibio.

**Life expectancy at birth:** 52 years.

**Foreign trade:** Imports: \$6 600 mn;  
Exports: \$10 650 mn (1994).

**Principal exports:** Oil (90%).

**GNP:** \$29 995 (1994). GNP/capita:  
\$280 (1994).

**Currency:** \$1 = Naira (N) 85,4  
(March 1996).

**Background:** Africa's most populous country and leading oil producer has never been a single-party state but has spent most of its independent life under military rule. A heavily regulated transitional programme for the restoration of democratic civilian rule commenced in 1986 but came to naught when on 12 June 1993 the military government cancelled the results of the presidential election. Gen Babangida nevertheless transferred power to an interim civilian government, which was forced to resign by the military when on 17 November the defence minister, Gen Abacha, took over power. Meanwhile, public support for Chief Moshood Abiola, the apparent winner of the presidential election and who demanded to be installed as president, had created a highly unstable situation. Following the imprisonment of Abiola and other leaders, including former head of state, Gen Olusegun Obasanjo, there were local and international appeals for clemency. These appeals were extended to include a group of activists among the disadvantaged Ogoni community in the Niger Delta region, who had been brought to trial before a special tribunal. During the Commonwealth leaders' conference in November 1995, nine Ogoni activists, including well-known author Ken Saro-Wiwa, were sentenced to death and executed. As a result, Nigeria's Commonwealth membership was immediately suspended, while some countries, including South Africa, proposed the imposition of sanctions on Nigeria. Meanwhile, in October 1995, Abacha had announced a lengthy transitional programme that would return Nigeria to democratic, civilian rule in October 1998.

of member states. This committee can recommend punitive action by the organization and its members. It would seem that the underlying principle is that of safety/strength in numbers. Cooperation and compliance, preconditions that are crucial to collective action, will determine the success of such measures. Should African states have to act against one of their "own", it is doubtful whether this approach will prove successful. Furthermore, the strong realist emphasis on the sovereignty, defence and promotion of the national interest of a state (and especially the price of economic sanctions to the enforcers) would seem to present a rather long-term learning curve for the international community.

The second approach, closely linked to the first one – actually a broadening thereof – is one which seems to attempt to (at least partially) accommodate the principle of *and* the problems related to sovereignty. It involves an acknowledgment that external forces can at most facilitate and create a favourable international climate for internal changes, adding that, in essence, "international solidarity can only support action taken by the democratic forces in any country. It cannot be the driving force".<sup>37</sup> This approach involves more actors than the former, and in non-traditional combinations. It implies state/state relations, but also cooperation between states/governments and groups within their societies, between states/governments and groups within other states, between different groups within the same state, and between groups in different states. Whether these approaches will prove to be successful in the long term<sup>38</sup> in addressing "new" foreign policy goals remains to be seen.

#### *Ethics as basis of South Africa's foreign policy*

The most obvious reason for the strong internal criticism of South Africa's "failed" Nigerian policy, and an explanation of this perceived failure, can be related to the difference between the assumptions and declarations contained in the ANC's foreign policy document,<sup>39</sup> the reality of its treatment of the Nigerian issue and its visible prioritization of a number of foreign policy issues. A number of comments are relevant.

The basic assumptions on which the ANC's foreign policy principles

rest are that "foreign policy belongs to South Africa's people"<sup>40</sup> – that foreign policy forms an integral part and an extension of national policy and interests. Again, the "essence of South Africa's foreign policy is to promote and protect the interests and values of its citizens" and to promote, specifically, the "economic interests of all our people".<sup>41</sup> Three of the principles stated by the ANC are of particular importance to this discussion. These are, firstly, a "belief in and preoccupation with Human Rights"; secondly that "just and lasting solutions to the problems of humankind can only come through the promotion of Democracy, world-wide"; and thirdly, a "belief that our foreign policy should effect the interests of the continent of Africa".

These assumptions and principles created two problems for South Africa's Nigeria policy, based on what appear to be inherent contradictions between assumptions and principles, between different principles, and between the theoretical or abstract world of principles and ideals and the real world in which these have to be implemented and goals and objectives have to be prioritized. These problems also underlie broader foreign policy concerns in South Africa (the second one has to do with the country's position in Africa and will be discussed in the next section). The first problem lies in the time-honoured dilemma of reconciling national interest, often materially based and concerned with tangibles, with altruistic concerns that are morality based and involve intangibles and uncertain outcomes. The point was mooted that South Africa would be the party suffering the greater loss, not Nigeria, should economic sanctions be implemented.<sup>42</sup> By implication, this would then serve as an explanation of why South Africa chose quiet diplomacy and why it is still not enthusiastic about introducing sanctions as an instrument through which pressure might be brought to bear upon Nigeria. Yet, as we now will see, this problem goes much deeper than a mere opposition between South Africa's economic interests and what it might perceive as its moral obligation to "play a central role in this [Human Rights] campaign".<sup>43</sup>

Firstly, it has to do with the apparent inability to distinguish between state/government and the ANC as a political organization and with a fur-

ther inability to balance or reconcile economic interests with moral principles. It would seem that the ANC finds it difficult to base policy on principle when financial matters are involved. Apart from the allegation that it received money from Nigeria, there are also allegations that financial contributions from Taiwan play a role in the cautious way the "Two Chinas" issue is approached; that contributions from Morocco have prevented the government from recognizing the Polisario Front's Saharawi Republic; and that economic ties with Indonesia are preventing the government from taking a strong and public stand on the continuing killings in East Timor. These are difficult problems to grapple with when one wants to see as a crusader for "the accomplishment of democratic ideals throughout the world".<sup>44</sup> The conception alone of such a role creates high expectations because the impression it creates is that South Africa, like the Lone Ranger, will, on its own, fight injustice wherever it occurs. Far too little attention is given in the ANC's policy document to explaining that these ideals will be pursued through recognized international channels and fora created for this purpose. A commitment to and active participation in the strengthening of such organizations would be a far more realistic goal. Propaganda techniques – perhaps one should rather use the phrase "efficient communication and information techniques" should furthermore be harnessed in publicizing and explaining the government's standpoint and actions on these issues. The wall of silence that greets every allegation in the press is not contributing to the ideal of transparency and the promise that foreign policy belongs to the people of South Africa.

Secondly – and this is a serious issue confronting the government – there is the fact that foreign policy, despite the ideals of the ANC's policy document, has, it would seem, been conceptualized largely in terms of trade and broader economic policy. Increasingly, the emphasis is on the advancement of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which embodies both moral and material ideals and objectives, but which is very much a blueprint for South Africa's national interests when placed in an international context.<sup>45</sup> This has shifted the responsibility for

the emphasis on, and the prioritization of, foreign policy from the DFA to the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). Foreign policy in general is being overseen by Deputy President Mbeki, and the DFA has to a large extent been marginalized when it comes to driving, coordinating and renewing foreign policy.<sup>46</sup> Now, a department of trade and industry is not geared for, nor does it have the expertise or experience, to conduct foreign policy in such a way that a balance can be found between the economic objectives generated by a concern for the national interests of a country and the moral principles and complex, everyday political nuances of international relations. This is the task of a department of foreign affairs. And such a balance can only be found when a broad foreign policy strategy exists in terms of which specific goals are pursued and specific instruments are identified and developed as key vehicles for implementing the chosen strategy. Of course no overall strategy can cover all eventualities or all the choices open to a country. But it is nevertheless necessary to develop such a strategy<sup>47</sup> in order to create broad guidelines as to how policy *principles* and *ideals* will be transformed into *action* and as to just how much will be sacrificed in pursuing goals based on a perceived moral interdependence and responsibility.

**South Africa in Africa:  
Together we stand**

Point one: certainly one of the most difficult problems South Africa faces when it looks at its international relations is that of its position in and attitude and approach to the rest of the continent. The Nigeria case provides a powerful illustration of this dilemma. One of the basic principles of South African foreign policy is that "it should reflect the interests of the continent of Africa", and in the elaboration of this principle it is further stated that "we will strive to contribute towards improving the basic condition of all Africa's people".<sup>48</sup> What foreign policy makers are confronted with here is the dilemma of pursuing goals which clash fundamentally with many of the practices and customs of African politics. Point two: further problems are the role which South Africa sees for itself within Africa, and the way in which this role is perceived by other

states in Africa. These two problems are closely linked.

Point one above asks that it should firstly be kept in mind that the abuse of human rights is, within a system of sovereign states, inherently a domestic issue. International censure of such practices is therefore fundamentally anti-government. Within the pan-Africanist paradigm, an unwritten law, as it were, has developed over the years creating the tradition that African states do not turn on each other in international fora, such as the UN, but close ranks when attacks are made against one or more of them. The issue of human rights also clashes with the conception of the state as a unitary actor, because human rights abuses pit government and citizens, or certain groups within the state, against each other.

South Africa infringed the solidarity rule to some extent (it was careful not to speak out against Nigeria in the UN) by its having been the only African country, and the only country in the developing world, that recalled its high commissioner/ambassador from Nigeria in protest.<sup>49</sup> South Africa was, and still is, in terms of its relations with Africa, faced with the dilemma that in striving to contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of the people of Africa, and pursuing the human rights ideal, it is perceived to attack "one of its own", thereby proving disloyal to the ideal of pan-Africanist unity.<sup>50</sup> What worsened South Africa's position in Africa, apart from the fact that it had actually gone "way ahead of the position of any other African government",<sup>51</sup> was the perception that South Africa had been set up by Western governments, notably the USA and Britain, to take the lead on Nigeria. It is significant that at the SADC summit called by President Mandela on 11 December to discuss SADC policy towards Nigeria, it was decided that the SADC would not take any further steps against Nigeria but would leave this to the Commonwealth.<sup>52</sup> Before the SADC meeting, the possibility of SADC sanctions was strongly mooted. In the event, the topic was not even on the agenda. South Africa was, it would seem, called into line by its peers: solidarity.

Point two above, it is clear enough, has to do with South Africa's position and role within Africa. The country is striving to overcome the

image of big brother and destabilizer that characterized its continental relations during the apartheid era. This is obviously difficult because, apart from the regime change in the country, it is still an immensely strong, rich and developed member of the African community of states and has to tread carefully not to create an impression of acting like or attempting to become a hegemon. What makes this situation even more difficult for South Africa are its aspirations to a permanent seat on the UN Security Council should a restructuring of the Council take place. Nigeria is of course another strong contender. It would seem that South Africa is battling to reconcile opposing ideals. Taking a strong stand on human rights and other abuses implies taking on a leadership role, criticizing one's peers, and working, in some instances with the North, in pursuit of these goals. At the same time, some of these goals overlap the struggle of South versus North and taking the lead is perceived to be disloyal, un-African, throwing one's weight around and being the lackey of the West.<sup>53</sup> If human rights and other "new" foreign policy goals, especially those that threaten not so much sovereignty as undemocratic regimes, are to be realized in Africa, certain traditions and rules will have to change. South Africa will have to find ways of working *for* such changes – and doing so in a way that undermines the unitary actor fiction.

**Civil society and public opinion: To whom does foreign policy belong?**

In the long run perhaps the greatest gain, or the most valuable lessons to have been learnt, from the Nigeria case will be from the problems it has raised surrounding the relationship between civil society and foreign policy decision makers in South Africa. Although a detailed discussion of the role of civil society, and the expectations of the public in terms of what South Africa might have accomplished is impossible, a number of remarks are relevant.

The South African press in particular (especially when compared to the SABC considered as national independent broadcaster) paid much attention to events in Nigeria in the course of 1995 and clearly made an effort to report on the government's handling of the Nigerian crisis. In this sense it made a huge contribution to

informing the reading public about the situation.<sup>54</sup> At the same time a debate has been taking place within certain sectors of civil society, notably among academics and within institutes such as Idasa, with contributions from the Portfolio Committee and sectors within DFA and the whole coordinated by the Foundation for Global Dialogue, as to how civil society could become involved in foreign policy making, or, at the very least, as to how the process could be structured in a more accountable and transparent way.

The Nigerian crisis highlighted at least two glaring shortcomings in realizing the promise that South Africa's foreign policy belonged to its people. Firstly, it proved that the Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs actually has very little contact with or leverage with decision makers when it comes to influencing decision making, or even in merely extracting information from decision makers or the DFA. Yet this committee represents the very people to whom policy is said to belong. The way in which South Africa chose to handle the Nigerian issue obviously damaged the credibility of the committee, and it is known that the relationship between the committee and DFA is under serious review. The committee now seems to be coming out more strongly in voicing concerns and opinions and suggesting policy actions, not only on Nigeria.<sup>55</sup> The Nigeria crisis has thus perhaps not only jolted the committee into life, but may in the long run prove an important element in the strengthening of the potential (and actual) credibility and influence of the committee itself and of the parliamentary committee system as a whole. It is doubtful whether serious foreign policy issues and crises will be treated so meekly by this body in future.

A second shortcoming involves the relationship between civil society and the state. In this respect two assumptions held by the former became clear in the unfolding of the Nigeria crisis, and especially in the aftermath of the executions.

The first assumption has to do with the high expectations of and the somewhat unrealistic demands for action of some sort in terms of what South Africa could possibly achieve in its Nigerian policy. It would seem that groups and elements in civil society expected a much more prominent and active role for South Africa; but more than this, they were (and in some cases still are) ex-

pecting great changes in Nigeria based on what South Africa is doing/declaring.<sup>56</sup> These expectations and demands stem from ignorance as to how the international system and relations between and among states function. There also seems to be over-confidence in the potential influence that South Africa in particular can wield, drawing on the high moral position it is at present occupying and the international stature and prestige of Mandela. The myriad of other factors influencing foreign policy decisions and outcomes, and South Africa's position as a small – at most, medium – power in the international arena, preclude such grand and great gestures and achievements. This is a lesson for civil society to learn: On its own, and especially as far as new international issues are concerned, where we are actually charting unknown waters, South Africa cannot necessarily exert any serious impact on events and situations. The ANC and its alliance partners were at pains during the first few weeks of December to explain publicly what the limitations on the government were with respect to bringing about change in Nigeria.

The second assumption was that civil society's involvement in foreign affairs was restricted to criticism and demands of government to take certain actions. The government's "lethal miscalculation on Nigeria",<sup>57</sup> however, served to get civil society actively involved in working for change in Nigeria at non-governmental level too. Trade union federations, trade unions, civics, business, sports, religious, cultural, environmental, youth and women's organizations and other interest groups came together and formed a committee for action. Nigerian pro-democracy exiles in South Africa are also involved. This committee targets the Nigerian regime and Shell, and hopes to broaden and deepen contact with and assistance to opposition groups in Nigeria, as well as to build support and involvement in other African countries for their campaigns. It is difficult to assess the potential for success that such activity may have, but what is of importance are (a) the possibility of strengthening civil society in South Africa and in Nigeria, and for that matter in the rest of the continent,<sup>58</sup> and (b) the possibility of forging transnational links for the eventual development of formal, organized regional and continental non-governmental ties between organizations which can share skills, knowledge and capacity, and may in the long run impact



seriously and positively on the lives of Africa's people. This is a development not included in a realist paradigm of foreign policy processes. It might prove, however, able to provide certain answers to questions about the implementation of decisions regarding the internal position and policies of states that disregard international rules and norms in their domestic affairs.

## Conclusion

South Africa's "Nigerian experience" points to a number of challenges and problems facing foreign policy in the contemporary international arena, not only for South Africa but also for other states. Foreign policy is, precisely because it occupies the space between the domestic and the external environments, an immensely complex business which can, because of the almost infinite number of variables involved, produce totally unintended outcomes. States must increasingly face up to the challenges of new actors and new problems without having suitable instruments for dealing with them. Multilateral diplomacy and its concomitants, international negotiation, mediation and conflict resolution, are still evolving; and even when solutions are reached, there always remains the question of responsibility for implementation. Changing regimes or practices *inside* states involves, in many instances, long-term after care in the form of practical assistance and support. This is one of the characteristics of the new foreign policy goals and ideals of the post Cold War era: the issues on the international agenda demand long-term assistance and involvement if the moral basis they are founded upon is to carry any weight. Foreign policy decisions, in turn, therefore demand great care and prudence; otherwise an international concern with human rights, democracy, development, humanitarian relief and good governance will yield little more than Somalia-like intervention, creating more damage than relief.

South Africa, and the rest of the world, are faced with changing foreign policy agendas, while the foreign policy process is still conducted very much within a realist, and often constricted, paradigm that offers insufficient scope for grappling with these new issues. Of particular importance is the development of new, or the adjustment of existing, instruments and skills appropriate to the goals of foreign policy. And hov-

ering in the background is one very real, crucial and ultimately determining factor in international relations: the issue of sovereignty. The challenge is to restructure or re-think the meaning of this concept which – for all the problems, challenges and benefits it has created – is after all, in itself, only a social construct, not a law of nature.

## Notes and references

- 1 One should perhaps use the term *civil society* here in the sense of referring to the "organized" general public.
- 2 The analytical approach is utilized in such well-known textbooks as the various editions of K J Holsti, *International politics: A framework for analysis*, the editions of C Kegley and E Wittkopf, *World politics: Trend and transformation*; and Karl Deutsch, *The analysis of international relations*. Over the years, these textbooks became standard fare in the course work of students, many of whom eventually followed careers in the foreign services of their country. In this way, more than one generation of foreign policy decision makers were trained (and still are being trained) within a realist paradigm. As far as the descriptive approach is concerned, this is followed by Roy Macridis (ed), *Foreign policy in world politics: States and regions*. This text does not cover the foreign policy of a single African country or region. *Politics and society in contemporary Africa*, edited by Naomi Chazan et al., covers the subject matter, but does not purport to give more than a cursory historical overview – it can in no way be described as an *analysis* of the foreign policies of African states.
- 3 K J Holsti, *International politics: A framework for analysis* (7th ed), Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1995.
- 4 M Clarke and S Smith, "Perspectives on the foreign policy system: Implementation approaches", in M Clarke and B White (eds), *Understanding foreign policy: The foreign policy systems approach*, Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1989, p 164.
- 5 In their book on *Understanding foreign policy* (ibid), Clarke and White refer to foreign policy as a system (p vii), basically to emphasize the complicated range and depth of activities that comprise foreign policy action. I prefer to use the term foreign policy *process*, but understand it in much the same way as do Clarke and White, with perhaps the exception that I do not believe that there is necessarily and always a *noticed/acknowledged* feedback that completes the loop of a system. What is of importance is that whether one uses the term *system* or *process*, the essence of foreign policy analysis is that one does not restrict analysis only to questions about the formulation of policy, but that its outputs and outcomes are

- also taken into consideration. See discussion towards the end of this section.
- 6 K J Holsti, *op cit*, pp 184–207.
  - 7 K J Holsti, *International politics: A framework for analysis* (5th ed), Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1988, pp 92–115. It is interesting to note that in the 6th and 7th editions of Holsti's *International politics* he no longer includes the chapter on "Foreign policy orientations and national roles". Yet, "national roles" still seem to be the preoccupation of many states and analysts. One can but turn to the post-Cold War debate on the role of the USA as "only remaining superpower", or to the struggle in the Arab world for leadership (the rivalry between Libya and Egypt, for instance, though this may be an oversimplification of the causes of their enmity), or that in the Muslim world, also for leadership, to realize that Holsti's list of more than 15 role conceptions is still as relevant today as it was during the Cold War era. His exclusion of this discussion in particular results, I think, in the loss of a useful tool for analysing the motives of states in the conduct of their external relations.
  - 8 K J Holsti, *International politics ...* (7th ed), *op cit*.
  - 9 For some views on this dilemma, see SAlIA Research Group, *South Africa and the two Chinas dilemma*, Johannesburg: SAlIA and FGD, 1995.
  - 10 K J Holsti, *International politics ...* (7th ed), *op cit*, pp 84–108.
  - 11 The political conditions that the IMF and other bilateral donors set African states who face serious debt and economic restructuring problems are used as an example. Many studies of structural adjustment programmes, however, place a question-mark over the real effectiveness of these programmes in promoting democratization, human rights and better living standards. See eg E Altvater, K Hobner, J Lorentzen and R Rojas (eds), *The poverty of nations*, London: Zed Books, 1991.
  - 12 J Donnelly, "Human rights in the new world order" in C Kegley and E Wittkopf (eds), *The global agenda: Issues and perspectives* (4th ed), New York: McGraw-Hill, 1995.
  - 13 For an excellent overview of the sanctions campaign against apartheid South Africa, see D Geldenhuys, *Isolated states: A comparative analysis*, Parklands: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 1990.
  - 14 J Donnelly, *op cit*, pp 196–197.
  - 15 Y Ferguson and R Mansbach, *The elusive quest: Theory and international politics*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988, p 185. Emphasis in the original.
  - 16 T Skocpol, *States and social revolutions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979, p 29.
  - 17 S Strange, "Rethinking structural change in the international political economy: States, firms and diplomacy" in R Stubbs and G Underhill (eds), *Political economy and the changing global order*, London: Macmillan, 1994.
  - 18 J Stopford and S Strange, *Rival states, rival firms: Competition for world market shares*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
  - 19 Wm C Reed, "The New International Order: State, society and African international relations", *Africa Insight*, vol 25, no 3, 1995, p 141.
  - 20 K Waltz, *Man, the state and war*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1959.
  - 21 Chief Ikimi was provided with various platforms from which to plead Nigeria's "special case" (as he put it) during an official visit to South Africa in August 1995. The author was invited to two of these meetings, the first of which took place at the South African Institute of International Affairs, Johannesburg, and which was attended by a number of academics and a journalist (apart from the Minister's entourage). Owing to the Minister's loudly proclaimed dissatisfaction with the way in which he was treated by the academics, he cancelled the second meeting.
  - 22 K J Holsti, *International politics ...* (7th ed), *op cit*, Part III.
  - 23 The Department of Foreign Affairs is one of the few government departments, if not the only one, that, by the end of 1995, had not published a White Paper on its policy. It had not published even a Green Paper, which serves as a discussion document on which a White Paper is then based. In order therefore to form an idea of the government's foreign policy viewpoints and to evaluate its actual policy decisions and outputs, one has to accept that, as the majority party in the Government of National Unity, the ANC's document entitled *Foreign policy perspective in a democratic South Africa*, published in December 1994, is the closest one can get to an official statement on foreign policy principles, goals and objectives.
  - 24 There are fears that a boycott of Nigerian oil might result in internal turmoil. Oil represents between 80 and 90% of the country's exports.
  - 25 During Chief Ikimi's visit (see note 21), he was at great pains to explain what he termed "Nigeria's special case and special problems" which he ascribed mainly to the ethnic diversity of that country. One of the academics present remarked to the Foreign Minister that this kind of defence of authoritarianism sounded, to South African ears at least, very much like that given to the outside world during the heyday of apartheid by South Africa's former prime ministers, notably Verwoerd, Vorster and Botha.
  - 26 This last reason was actually cited by South Africa's High Commissioner to Nigeria, Mr George Nene, as one of the problems in formulating their Nigeria policy. See *Mail and Guardian*, 17–23 November 1995, p 4.
  - 27 *Mail and Guardian*, 10–16 November 1995, p 5.
  - 28 And presumably that of other activists, such as Saro-Wiwa and political prisoners.
  - 29 See *Africa Confidential*, 17 November 1995, p 1.
  - 30 *Mail and Guardian*, 17–23 November 1995, p 4.

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- 31 See discussion of Brecher's design in M Clarke, "The foreign policy system: A framework for analysis" in M Clarke and D White, *op cit*.
- 32 *Mail and Guardian*, 17–23 November 1995, p 5.
- 33 The London *Guardian* reported on 8 December 1995 that the ANC had also accepted donations from Morocco and Indonesia. Such reports lead, inevitably, to accusations that foreign policy is not based on principles, but on bribes.
- 34 A similar warning was sounded by the leader of the Democratic Party, Mr Tony Leon, in a press interview after the publication of the allegations in *The Guardian*. See *Beeld*, 9 December 1995, p 10.
- 35 T Weiss, D Forsythe and R Coate, *The United Nations and changing world politics*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1994, p 5.
- 36 Although the case of South Africa and the success of sanctions in bringing about change are often cited, it must be kept in mind that South Africa was considered a threat to international peace and security. Apartheid was not perceived or treated as a purely domestic issue by the international community.
- 37 As explained by Ms Gill Marcus, ANC Member of Parliament and chair of the parliamentary finance committee in *Sunday Times*, 17 December 1995, p 22.
- 38 One is reminded of Bennett's comment that "a rising tide of revolutionary international problems is met with the slow, evolutionary development of international institutions." See A le Roy Bennett, *International organizations: Principles and issues* (3rd ed), Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1984, p 3.
- 39 All references to the ANC's foreign policy principles, ideals and goals are taken from the party's document *Foreign policy perspective in a democratic South Africa*, issued in December 1994. (See also endnote 23.)
- 40 This somewhat jargonist statement is of special importance when one considers public response/s to the government's Nigeria policy in the wake of the execution of Saro-Wiwa and the other activists.
- 41 Emphasis in the original.
- 42 See *Beeld*, 14 November 1995, Business Section, p 2. Trade with Nigeria more than doubled between 1994 and 1995, with the balance in South Africa's favour. South Africa, furthermore, does not import oil from Nigeria.
- 43 ANC, *op cit*, p 5.
- 44 *Ibid*.
- 45 An interesting illustration of this point is a speech made by Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo in the National Assembly in May 1995. He quotes President Mandela: "The great challenge of our age ... is to answer the question, given the interdependence of the world, What is it that we can and must do to ensure that democracy, peace and prosperity prevail everywhere?" and then particularizes this statement to indicate that South Africa will use its now favourable position in the international community to "advance the well-being of our peoples and fulfil their legitimate aspirations as embodied in the RDP". This speech is contained as Appendix 3 in C Landsberg *et al* (eds), *Mission imperfect: Redirecting South Africa's foreign policy*, Johannesburg: Foundation for Global Dialogue, 1995.
- 46 See analysis in *Southscan*, vol 10, no 43, 17 November 1995, pp 333–334.
- 47 A useful framework which could shape ideas around such a strategy, is that of D J Geldenhuys, "The international community and South Africa: Penetration, intervention and isolation", *International Affairs Bulletin*, vol 12, no 1, 1988.
- 48 ANC, *op cit*, pp 4 and 8.
- 49 The other governments who recalled their representatives were all from the developed world. Information provided by Mr Raymond Suttner, MP and chairman of Parliament's Portfolio Committee on Foreign Affairs, 2 December 1995.
- 50 See for instance the report in the *Mail and Guardian*, 24–30 November 1995, p 11, that Ghanaian President Jerry Rawlings "had appealed to his Nigerian and South African counterparts to refrain from public recriminations and personal attacks against each other." Yet the ideal and practice of solidarity on the basis of pan-Africanism have been abused frequently by dictators and authoritarian regimes in Africa.
- 51 A DFA source quoted in *Mail and Guardian*, 24–30 November 1995, p 4.
- 52 *Beeld*, 12 December 1995, p 4.
- 53 It is interesting to note that the Western or at least the American, press seems to be quite unaware of these tensions and how much power (potential influence) they ascribe to President Mandela's "enormous prestige" to get Britain, the USA and Africa mobilized for action against Nigeria. See for example *Time International*, 27 November 1995.
- 54 It would seem that most research institutions in the country, to the extent that South Africa's foreign relations featured in their conferences and workshops, were in 1995 largely preoccupied with the Two Chinas debate. A notable exception was the conference on "Redirecting South Africa's Foreign Policy" convened by the Foundation for Global Dialogue and the Centre for Policy Studies in June 1995. Nigeria as a specific case/issue did not feature.
- 55 See *Mail and Guardian* 1–7 December 1995, p 5.
- 56 The president of the Performing Art Workers' Equity (Pawe), demanded at a public meeting that Nigeria be granted two months instead of two years in which to restore democracy. See *Beeld*, 15 November 1995, p 2.
- 57 As it was referred to in the *Mail and Guardian*, 17–23 November 1995, p 5.
- 58 It will be interesting to see whether these groups and organizations will also, in time, link up with others, such as the American TransAfrica lobbying group which also campaigns for change in Nigeria. See *Time International*, 3 April 1995, p 39.

# GHANA's return to

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Science at the University of  
Ghana, traces Ghana's  
return to constitutional  
rule under Jerry Rawlings  
and the PNDC.*

The Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC), the most durable post-colonial regime (in power from 31 December 1981 to 6 January 1993) returned Ghana on 7 January 1993 to a constitutional dispensation, the Fourth Republic, after twelve years of authoritarian rule. This had been preceded by the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections on 3 November 1992 and 29 December 1992 respectively.

This article examines the formulation and implementation of the programme to return the country to constitutional rule, with special emphasis on the problems encountered and their implications for the building of a democratic culture in Ghana. It first examines the design of the programme. It then analyzes the strategies and procedures devised for the programme's realization. Lastly, it discusses the elections, the performance of the civilian government and prospects for the future.

## Formulation of transition programme

Ghana's transition to constitutional rule under the PNDC began, slowly, with the establishment of the National Commission for Democracy (NCD) by PNDC (Establishment) Proclamation of 1981.

In 1982, PNDC Law 42, Section 32, elaborated on the functions of the NCD, listing them *inter alia*, as follows:

- to create within the society awareness of the objectives of the revolutionary transformation of the society being embarked upon by the PNDC in the interest of real democracy;
- to assess for the information of the government

the limitations to the achievement of true democracy arising from the existing inequalities between different strata of the population, and make recommendations for redressing these inequalities;

- to formulate for the consideration of government a programme for a more effective realization of a true democracy in Ghana.<sup>1</sup>

In the words of Ghana's Information Services Department, the NCD was not only established to design a "true democracy" but also "to take into consideration our tradition, history and culture ... certain socio-cultural values, such as consultation, voluntarism, participation, consensus and self-reliance which we cherish as a people but which we have failed to integrate into the political order".<sup>2</sup> The functions of the Commission were further consolidated in 1988 by PNDC Law 208.

The establishment of the NCD did not change the caution and hesitation with which the PNDC approached the transition to constitutional rule. The regime still asked its rhetorical question, "Hand over to *whom?*" and continued to talk of creating the necessary conditions for the "redundancy" or "withering away" of the PNDC.<sup>3</sup>

Between 1984 and 1987, the NCD invited the public to submit papers/memoranda on the future form of government for the country. Seminars, symposia and durbars were held by the NCD and other government functionaries to discuss with the public the "effective realization of a true democracy in Ghana".<sup>4</sup> These discussions led to the launching of the Blue Book – the document on the "Creation of district political authority and modalities for district level elections in Ghana" – by Ghana's Number Two, Mr Justice D F Annan, on 1 July 1987 at Kumasi. On 11 November 1988, PNDC Law 207, the Local Government Law which concretized the ideals enshrined in the Blue Book, was promulgated. This resulted in the holding of the District Assemblies (DAs) elections between December 1988 and February 1989.

The establishment of the DAs was regarded by the PNDC as an important step in the government's programme "of evolving national political authority through a democratic process".<sup>5</sup>



# constitutional rule

The NCD was also charged with the responsibility of "working out the steps in the programme and also the relationships between the District Assemblies and ultimate national political institutions".<sup>6</sup> Consequently, the NCD organized a series of seminars in all the ten regional capitals from 5 July to 9 July 1990 on "District Assemblies and the Evolving Democratic Process".<sup>7</sup> The main reason for holding these seminars was to "invite the views of the public on what next after the District Assemblies, in fulfilment of the PNDC's commitment to involve the people in working out programmes for the evolution of the country's democratic process beyond the district level".<sup>8</sup> However, as it turned out, these regional fora and consultations failed to do so. They were often presided over by PNDC officials and sympathizers, and were used not only to canvass positions favoured by the government but also as a platform for attacks upon the evils of the multi-party system, the failure of past politicians, and the sanctity of the coups of 4 June 1979 and 31 December 1981.<sup>9</sup> Most Ghanaians remained unsure of the sort of democratic process that was being ushered in. The address of the chairman of the PNDC, Rawlings, on 5 July 1990 during the first seminar, at Sunyani, did nothing to indicate that the seminars were meant to discuss proposals for the return of the country to constitutional rule, but rather that they were to provide an opportunity for an evaluation of the DAs. However the process is regarded, the seminars "metamorphosed into a debate on the future governance of this country ... (which) ... was due to external and internal pressures as well as the government's desire to give its end-product some form of respectability".<sup>10</sup>

Originally the seminars were restricted to members of the District Assemblies (DAs) and invited bodies and "progressive" organs such as the 31 December Women's Movement, the Committees for the Defence of the Revolution and the June 4 Movement. This, plus the virtually identical nature of the constitutional proposals made by

all the DAs, provided clear evidence of the PNDC government's intention to perpetuate its power. The DAs called for a no-party system of government, for the election of members of the national parliament by the DAs (one third of whose members were nominated by the PNDC), and for the election of Rawlings as head of state.

In order to expose the "hidden agenda" of the PNDC, to call for a "proper, open" national debate, and to work for the restoration of multi-party democracy and civilian rule in Ghana, the Movement for Freedom and Justice (MFJ) was formed on 1 August 1990 under the chairmanship of Professor Adu Boahen, who later was to become the presidential candidate of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) in the November 1992 presidential elections. The demands of the MFJ included the release of all political detainees, the granting of an unconditional amnesty to all exiles, the drawing up of a constitutional timetable, and the lifting of the ban on party politics. In order to create a congenial atmosphere for the debate on the country's future political system, the MFJ, other pro-democracy forces such as the Bar Association, the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS), the Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Christian Council demanded the repeal of all repressive laws, especially the Preventive Custody Law (PNDC Law 4), the Habeas Corpus Amendment Law (PNDC Law 91), the Newspaper Licensing Law (PNDC Law 211) and the sections of the Public Tribunal Law (PNDC Law 78) which dealt with execution for political offences. Above all, the pro-democracy forces stressed that the issue as to whether the country should have a multi-party or a no-party system of government should be decided "through a genuine national debate culminating in a national referendum organized by an independent body".<sup>11</sup>

Despite increasing pressure, the government remained reluctant and hesitant to meet the demands of the pro-democracy forces. Continuing as with some personal political agenda,



President Jerry Rawlings



**TABLE 1** Timetable for return to constitutional rule in Ghana

Date	Event
1 November 1988–February 1989	DA elections
2 5 July–9 November 1990	Regional seminars on District Assemblies and evolving democratic process
3 25 March 1991	NCD report on evolving a true democracy
4 5 April 1991	Presentation of NCD report to PNDC
5 17 May 1991	Establishment of Committee of Experts to draft constitution
6 31 July 1991	Committee of Experts presents proposals for a draft constitution to PNDC
7 26 August 1991	Inauguration of Consultative Assembly
8 11 November 1991	Interim National Electoral Commission Law promulgated
9 February 1992	Interim National Electoral Commission begins work
10 31 March 1992	Consultative Assembly presents draft constitution to PNDC
11 28 April 1992	Referendum on draft constitution
12 18 May 1992	Ban on politics lifted
13 30 September 1992	Nominations closed for presidential candidates
14 3 November 1992	Presidential elections
15 29 December 1992	Parliamentary elections
16 7 January 1992	Inauguration of Fourth Republic

Source: Compiled by the author from the *Timeline* column.

Rawlings, in his 1 January 1991 New Year broadcast to the nation, asked the NCD to expedite work on its report on the regional fora and to present it at the end of March 1991 to enable the

PNDC to convene a broad-based national consultative body which would use the report, as well as the 1957, 1960, 1969 and 1979 constitutions, as the basis for further consultations and discussions on the form and content of the future constitution.<sup>12</sup>

The NCD submitted its report in March 1991, which was accepted by the PNDC. It noted that:

The general opinion was that the generality of the population is not against political parties as an ideal instrument that may give the fullest expression to the freedom of association, but the practice of political parties... must eschew some of the unacceptable features of party politics such as when political parties become corporate vehicles of investment which must be redempted.<sup>13</sup>

In spite of this, the GBC/TV started a series of interviews on whether Ghanaians wanted a return to party politics or to a 'no-party' system. The fears of those who believed in the multi-party system were not allayed by the fact that most of the people interviewed on GBC/TV *opposed* the multi-party system. Fears were further exacerbated when the Head of State,

in an interview with a reporter of the *People's Daily Graphic* just before he left for the Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit held in Abuja, Nigeria, in June 1991, stated quite categorically that he did not personally believe in the multi-party system, but that since it was a decision of the entire PNDC, he stood by it.<sup>14</sup>

To summarize, it is possible to suggest that the reform programme had not only been tendentious and half-hearted but that it gave a clear indication that the PNDC had failed to take 'advantage of its longevity... to refine a clear concept of democracy or to otherwise promote democratic practices'.<sup>15</sup>

### Implementation of transition programme

Although the government accepted the report of the NCD in favour of returning the country to constitutional rule, no clear-cut transition timetable<sup>16</sup> had been spelt out (see Table 1). The government's response to the NCD report was to establish in May 1991 an eight-member Committee of Experts chaired by Dr S K B Asante to formulate constitutional proposals under PNDC Law 252. The Committee's terms of reference were wide.<sup>17</sup>

Although there is little evidence to show that the Committee was influenced in its work, certain proposals

such as those on the 'split' executive, citizenship, decentralization and political parties, were believed to have been influenced by the PNDC. The Committee of Experts submitted its report to the government on 31 July 1991.

The next institution created to work towards constitutional rule was the Consultative Assembly (CA) established under PNDC Law 253 of 1991. It was to prepare a draft constitution for Ghana, using

- the proposals for the future constitution of Ghana submitted to it by the PNDC
- the abrogated Ghanaian constitutions of 1957, 1960, 1969 and 1979 and other constitutions
- the Report of the National Commission for Democracy presented to the PNDC entitled 'Evolving a True Democracy'

The CA was to submit its draft constitution for the administration of Ghana to the PNDC not later than 31 December 1991.<sup>18</sup>

As with the Committee of Experts, the functions and composition of the Consultative Assembly came under attack. First, it seemed inappropriate to set up a body to prepare a constitution for Ghana and call it merely 'consultative'. This was interpreted as an attempt by the PNDC – an unelected and unrepresentative

body – to itself have the final say on the nature of the constitution.

The second objection related to the Assembly's composition, for here was revealed a haphazard but very real attempt to pack it with pro-government elements. PNDC Law 253 stipulated that the CA should consist of 117 persons elected by the District Assemblies, 121 persons elected from 62 "identifiable bodies" listed under the Second Schedule of the Law, and not more than 22 persons appointed by the PNDC. It should be pointed out that one third of the membership of the DAs had already been appointed by the PNDC so that it was likely that a majority, if not all of this huge 117-member bloc would be supporters and sympathizers of the PNDC. Nor, anywhere in PNDC Law 207 creating the DAs, had the DAs been assigned constitution-making functions or envisaged as electoral bodies. But it was widely believed that DA representatives would undoubtedly help rubber-stamp whatever the PNDC put before the CA.

A third criticism had to do with the 62 bodies listed under the Second Schedule to elect persons to the Assembly. The definition of "identifiable" bodies was not only fuzzy but almost bizarre.<sup>19</sup> While bodies like the Butchers' Association, Hairdressers' Association and Bakers' Association were included, the Ghana Institute of Management, the Ghana Veterinary Medical Practitioners, the Public Relations Association of Ghana and the Hoteliers' Association were excluded. Twenty such associations queried their exclusion and were turned down.

A related criticism was the over-representation of some bodies in the CA. For instance, the armed forces with a total membership of 20 000 had eight seats while the police service with a workforce of 80 000 were given only two. Again, it seemed manipulative to give the Committees for the Defence of the Revolution (CDRs) ten seats and the Butchers' Association one seat: these bodies had never expressed any interest in a return to constitutional rule. The 80 000 strong Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), however, had but two seats; and the Bar Association, the Christian Council, the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS) and the University Teachers Association of Ghana – bodies which had made persistent demands for constitutional rule – only one seat each.

A final criticism levelled against the Consultative Assembly was that it was not only packed but seemed also to have been gagged. This was evident from Section 13 of PNDC Law 253 establishing the CA which provided that:

Nothing in this section shall be deemed to relieve any person from any action or proceedings ... in respect of anything said or done by him against the Head of State and Chairman of the Council or any member of the Council of a PNDC Secretary.<sup>20</sup>

The Ghana Bar Association (GBA) and the Movement for Freedom and Justice (MFJ), the two institutions which spear-headed the criticism of the PNDC transition programme, pointed out that the refusal to accord unlimited immunity to the members of the CA was a flagrant departure from the established constitutional and parliamentary tradition of Ghana "which would have the effect of gagging all but the most daring members".<sup>21</sup> These fears may have been confirmed when a gagged Assembly inserted Transitional Provisions in the Fourth Republican Constitution that sought to indemnify the chairman and other members of the PNDC and its other appointees from prosecution by any court or tribunal in Ghana for any act or omission during the administration of the PNDC. This PNDC indemnity clause appears to defeat the tenets of accountability and probity preached by the same PNDC.

As a result of their serious misgivings concerning the composition and powers of the CA, the GBA and NUGS boycotted it. And though some assembly members asserted that their deliberations were not interfered with excessively by the PNDC, others claimed that manipulation and interference did take place.<sup>22</sup>

The inauguration of the CA on 26 August 1991 by Rawlings was regarded as part of what the PNDC has often called its "methodical march towards democratic rule":

Any observer who has watched or participated in events in this country over the past nine and a half years will have witnessed a consistent pattern, a sequence moving towards the establishment of a just and lasting democratic system embodying the will of the people. This Consultative Assembly is the next logical step in this process which began on 31 December 1981.<sup>23</sup>

This speech must be seen as an attempt to expedite the changes leading to constitutional rule, a necessity for Rawlings owing to mounting pressures from within Ghana and from international donor agencies.

The CA, owing to the volume of work it had to contend with, presented its report to the government not on 31 December 1991 as scheduled but on 31 March 1992. It recommended an American style executive presidential system of government for the country. (Before the presentation of the report, an Interim National Electoral Commission (INEC) under the chairmanship of Mr Justice Josiah Ofori-Boateng, an Appeal Court judge, had been established on 11 November 1991 to conduct the referendum on the constitution and the presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for November and December 1992.)

On 5 March 1992 in a broadcast to the nation marking the 35th Independence Anniversary, Rawlings, for the very first time, announced a timetable for the transition to constitutional rule. He promised that "this year [1992] will see the culmination of a process towards establishing a new constitutional order".<sup>24</sup> He also extolled the virtue of the PNDC's approach to constitutional rule:

From the onset of the 31st December Revolution, our conviction was that true democracy required the meaningful participation of all Ghanaians in the structures and practice of government. The steps we have taken so far in this process do attest to this conviction.<sup>25</sup>

Rawlings then announced his timetable: a referendum on 28 April 1992, the lifting of the ban on politics from 18 May 1992, the holding of presidential and parliamentary elections on 3 November 1992 and 8 December 1992 respectively, and inauguration of the Fourth Republic on 7 January 1993.<sup>26</sup> This timetable, with the exception of the parliamentary elections which were postponed to 29 December 1992, was faithfully adhered to.

The holding of the referendum was a contentious issue. Rawlings provided four reasons. First, a referendum was considered to be an exercise not only to give the constitution the "stamp of approval" but also to elicit the "readiness of Ghanaians to protect it".<sup>27</sup> Second, the referendum was supposed to educate Ghanaians

## Ghana

Republic of —

**Independence:** 6 March 1957.  
Former British Gold Coast.

**National Day:** 6 March  
(Independence Day).

**Leader:** Jerry J Rawlings, b 1947,  
Military Head of State 1981–1992,  
elected President November 1992.

**Capital:** Accra, largest city. Main  
port, Tema, near Accra.

**Area:** 239 460 km<sup>2</sup>.

**Population:** 17,3 mn (1995).

**Religions:** Christians (majority) and  
Muslims together about 80% of  
population.

**Languages:** English (official), Asante,  
Fante, Ewe, Ga, Dagomba.

**Life expectancy at birth:** 56 years.

**Foreign trade:** Imports: \$1 600 mn;  
Exports: \$1 200 mn (1994).

**Principal exports:** Gold (45%),  
cocoa, timber and manganese.

**GNP:** \$7 311 mn (1994). GNP/capita:  
\$430 (1994).

**Currency:** \$1 = Cedi (C) 1 540  
(March 1996).

**Background:** Economic decline has since 1983 been turned around to moderate growth through structural adjustment programmes guided by the World Bank and the IMF. Gold has overtaken cocoa as the principal export. Other major exports are timber and manganese. Following the lifting of restrictions on political parties in May 1992, the military established a political party the National Democratic Congress (NDC), and the military head of state, Jerry Rawlings, became its presidential candidate. Although less than half of the electorate voted in the presidential election on 3 November 1992, 58% supported Rawlings. As the main opposition parties boycotted the National Assembly elections on 29 December, the NDC obtained an overwhelming majority of seats. The country returned to civilian rule when on 7 January 1993 Rawlings was inaugurated as president. The next elections are due to take place towards the end of 1996.

concerning the provisions in the draft constitution: “[this] must not be seen as an exercise in division but as the creation of a national consensus in line with our traditional principle of arriving at a consensus which binds even the dissenter”.<sup>28</sup> Third, the approval of constitutions by referendum was currently in vogue all over the world, including countries in Africa and Eastern Europe. Fourth, the holding of the referendum was a significant innovation in the constitutional history of the country:

All our previous constitutions have affirmed the sovereignty of the people as a supreme principle, but none has observed that principle with the actual direct endorsement of the people.<sup>29</sup>

The opposition forces led by the MFJ and the GBA saw the holding of the referendum as a dubious aspect of the constitutional process on three grounds. First, they did not see the wisdom in submitting a complex document such as the constitution, one dealing with such a variety of topics and having so many sections, for outright approval or rejection on the basis of a simple “Yes” or “No”. Second, should the outcome of the referendum be “No”, it was likely that the PNDC would use this as an excuse to prolong its rule. Third, the position taken by Rawlings himself on the question of the referendum. When asked by *Africa Report* for his view on the call of the opposition groups for a referendum to decide the simple question of whether there should be a no-party or a multi-party system during the national debate between July and December 1990, Rawlings replied:

A referendum by its nature must be a yes and no affair or must deal with a very limited number of simple options. I fail to see how the complex options presently before Ghanaians can be reduced to such terms.<sup>30</sup>

It was the stand of the opposition forces that if the simple question of whether there should be a no-party or a multi-party system of government should not be decided by referendum, then there was just cause to be suspicious of the PNDC wish to decide the issue of the entire constitution in the same manner.<sup>31</sup>

Despite the protests the government went ahead with the referendum on 28 April 1992. The constitution was overwhelmingly endorsed by 92% of the 3 680 973 voters who turned out,<sup>32</sup> whereafter the ban on politics was lifted with the promulgation of the

Political Parties Law, PNDC Law 281 of 18 May 1992. Two requirements in the law were contested in the Supreme Court without success. The first was the pegging of individual contributions to party funds at 200 000 cedis, a possible tactic by the PNDC to starve the opposition of funds. The law was subsequently amended by the PNDC, empowering the INEC to set a figure – raised, after consultations with potential party leaders, to one million cedis.<sup>33</sup> Higher the INEC would not go. Second, the outlawing of previously established party symbols seemed a setback to the Busia-Danquah and Nkrumahist groups who wanted some counter to the eagle – the nation’s symbol – taken over by the PNDC. Its familiarity to the electorate was considered to give unfair advantage to the PNDC.

### Presidential election

When the ban on politics was lifted, seven political parties emerged to campaign for both presidential and parliamentary elections. They could be divided, superficially, into two groups: pro-Rawlings parties – the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the National Convention Party (NCP) and the Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere (Egle) Party; and anti-Rawlings parties – the New Patriotic Party (NPP) led by Adu Boahen and descending from the Danquah-Busia tradition, and three parties with Nkrumahist inclinations – the People’s National Convention (PNC) led by former President Hilla Limann, Lt General (Rtd) Emmanuel Erskine’s People’s Heritage Party (PHP) and multi-millionaire businessman Kwabena Darko’s National Independence Party (NIP). The NDC, NCP and Egle Party had J J Rawlings as their presidential candidate. This arrangement may have given Rawlings an edge over the opposition parties since they remained fragmented and failed to forge a common front articulating a constructive vision of a future Ghana.

Rawlings had a headstart and continuing incumbent advantages over his opponents. He controlled and manipulated the agenda and the timetable leading up to the elections. In the words of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems which monitored the 1992 referendum, Rawlings and the PNDC “remain the obvious source of political initiatives, retaining their claim to the last word in decisions that affect the forward move-

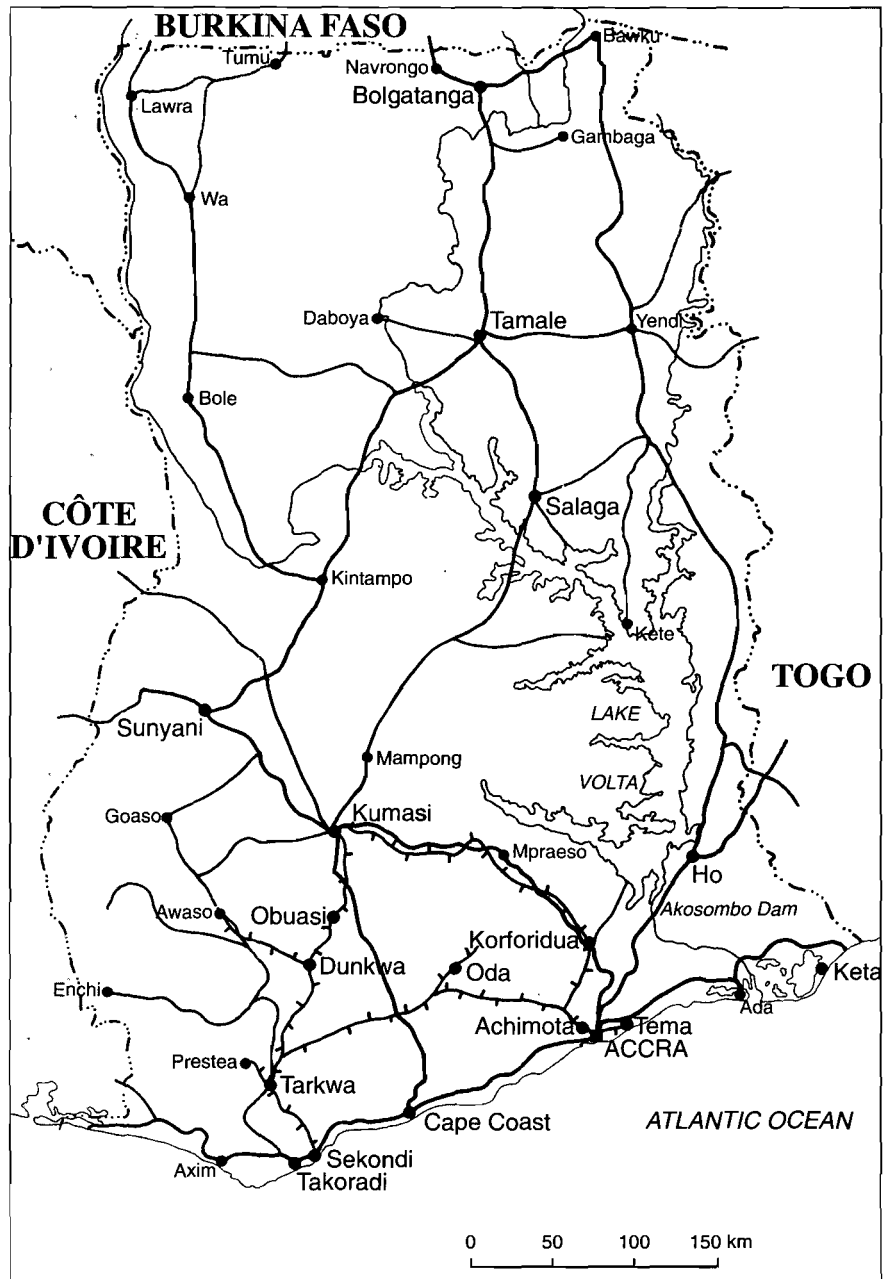
ment of Ghanaian policy".<sup>34</sup> Rawlings used state resources at his disposal for his campaign – money, government vehicles, helicopters, the press – while other parties, starved of funds and resources, could only complain bitterly to INEC of the disparity in resources before being allocated a limited number of vehicles. Rawlings and his PNDC also dominated the state-owned media and influenced the way news and features were to be disseminated. And although the ban on politics was lifted only on 18 May 1992 Rawlings had for long been campaigning, even though he did not declare his intention to run for election until the date for official nominations on 30 September 1992.<sup>35</sup>

The refusal of the PNDC to open up the voters' roll to those who had failed to register for the district assemblies elections of 1988/89, or for the partially updated register in 1991, meant that many opponents of the regime were left without a chance to participate in the elections. This was a source of concern to the International Foundation of Electoral Systems team:

It is imperative that a re-registration of all eligible voters be undertaken as quickly as possible ... The list suffers from deficiencies such as multiple entries, inconsistent name order, failure to record corrections, and ghost entries. No attempt has been made to purge the list of deceased voters.<sup>36</sup>

But Rawlings' greatest advantage, reminiscent of Busia's victory in 1969, was the fact that he had been in power, and not for only Busia's three years but for over a decade. He had built up a support base in the CDRs, the DAs, the 31 December Women's Movement and the Mobisquads who openly campaigned for him. These incumbency advantages, it must be pointed out, are enjoyed all over the world, but their effect in the Ghanaian context may have proved decisive in influencing the results of the elections. Although well known to opposition parties, this one great advantage was taken so lightly by them that it spelt their doom.

No sharp differences on issues separated the manifestoes of the contesting parties during the campaign period. All parties espoused private enterprise, the free market economy and the continuation of the Structural Adjustment Programme. All made promises on health, education, employment and the upliftment of the standards of living of Ghanaians. Rawlings preached the mes-



Ghana

sage of the "continuity" of the PNDC's policies while opposition parties campaigned for changes of government personnel and some implied revenge.

It is pertinent for us here to pause and ask why after eleven years in office Rawlings decided to contest the elections at all? The main reason was that given the revenge threats by some members of the opposition, Rawlings and the PNDC thought they should contest the elections not only to ensure the "continuity" of their policies and to seek legitimacy but also to safeguard the very lives of certain officials and supporters.

As the country approached the elections, there were indications that the

**TABLE 2** 1992 Presidential election region results in Ghana

Region	Turnout (est.)	Valid Votes	Prof A Adu Boahen		Dr Hilla Limann		Mr Kwabena Darko		Flt-Lt J J Rawlings		Lt-Gen E A Erskine		Const Entered
			Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
01 Western Region	45,9	394 286	89 800	22,8	33 700	0,6	21 924	5,6	239 477	60,7	9 325	2,4	19
02 Central Region	45,6	334 031	86 683	26,0	5 368	1,9	1 031	3,5	222 092	66,5	7 312	2,2	17
03 Greater Accra Region	46,2	507 445	187 892	37,0	22 038	4,3	20 721	4,1	270 933	53,4	5 801	1,2	22
04 Volta Region	60,8	478 417	17 295	3,6	7 431	1,6	3 530	0,7	446 365	93,3	3 796	0,8	19
05 Eastern Region	50,9	516 874	198 744	38,5	9 754	1,9	11 730	2,3	292 983	56,7	3 663	0,7	26
06 Ashanti Region	49,1	712 584	431 380	60,5	17 620	2,5	25 298	3,6	234 237	32,9	4 049	0,6	33
07 Brong-Ahafo Region	43,2	392 864	116 041	29,5	20 646	5,3	8 979	2,3	243 361	61,9	3 837	1,0	21
08 Northern Region	47,3	320 973	52 539	16,4	35 452	11,0	4 682	1,5	203 004	63,2	25 296	7,9	23
09 Upper West Region	47,7	129 600	11 535	8,9	48 075	37,1	2 329	1,8	66 049	51,0	1 612	1,2	8
10 Upper East Region	47,5	201 946	21 164	10,5	66 644	32,5	2 791	1,4	108 999	54,0	3 348	1,7	12
COUNTRY TOTAL	48,3	3 989 020	1 213 073	30,4	266 728	6,7	113 615	2,8	2 327 600	58,3	68 099	1,7	200

Based on 200 constituencies out of 200 estimated giving 8 255 056 out of 8 255 056 registered voters

Source: *Office of the National Electoral Commission*, Accra, July 1993

elections would be a straight fight between Rawlings of the NDC and Adu Boahen of the NPP. This again was a manifestation of the two-camp factor, the CPP in its many forms drifting essentially to Rawlings. The Rawlings campaigns drew larger crowds than the opposition presidential candidates, particularly in the rural areas. The press also became highly polarized. The state press supported Rawlings and gave the polls to Rawlings and his NDC since they had "support in the rural communities who see the extension of electricity, the provision of potable water (and) good roads as a way of improving their conditions of living".<sup>37</sup> The private press, on the other hand, was generally anti-Rawlings and heavily tipped Adu Boahen to carry the day. For instance, in a front page headline of the *Ghanaian Chronicle* of 2 November 1992 the paper wrote: "So long Jerry; let's give him a hand, let's try and forgive, but let's save him from the Castle [the seat of government]".<sup>38</sup> Even the renowned Ghanaian astrologer, Dr Baldwin Baddoo, predicted that Boahen had an edge over Rawlings.<sup>39</sup>

The results of the elections gave Rawlings a clear majority – 58,3% of the votes cast in the whole country against Adu Boahen's 30,4% (see Table 2). These results obviated the need for a run-off election. Rawlings (now first President of the Fourth Republic) did very well in the rural areas as well as in most parts of the country (93,3% in the Volta Region; 66,5% and 60,7% in Western and Central Regions respec-

tively; 61,9% in Brong Ahafo Region and 63,2% in the Northern Region). The only region where Rawlings fared rather poorly was in the NPP stronghold, the Ashanti Region, where he polled only 32,9% of the votes against Adu Boahen's 60,5% (see Table 2). The outcome of the election was a personal victory for Rawlings and a humiliating and devastating defeat for Adu Boahen. For Rawlings, despite the austerity measures pursued under the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), was able to divest himself of an unpopular and repressive past and put on the cloak appropriate to the first leader of an African military regime to win a competitive multi-party election.

How are we to explain the success of Rawlings at the polls? The first factor was the incumbency advantages referred to above. The second factor was the lack of unity among the opposition: the three-way split among those who claimed to be the followers of Nkrumah meant a lack of focus for those who would normally vote for an Nkrumahist party. More important was the success of the NDC (and its allies) in presenting itself as the party of Kwame Nkrumah. In the final lap, there were campaign advertisements in the press to drive home this very point. Rawlings visited Nkroful, Nkrumah's birthplace, where he commissioned his nearly forgotten tomb twenty years after his death. What will be debated in the years to come is whether the split within the Nkrumahist party was due to Rawlings' "political savvy or chicanery".<sup>40</sup> The third factor was the

proven ability of Rawlings and the PNDC to deliver the goods by providing roads, electricity and water in the rural areas. The provision of these amenities in the rural areas (despite the corresponding hardships brought by the SAP) remained indelibly in the minds of rural folk. Lastly, some have argued that Rawlings did not win the election: the opposition lost it! This view neatly expresses the notion that after eleven years in office the anti-Rawlings sentiment in the country could have been milked by any well-organized party offering a credible alternative to the PNDC. But, according to Gyan Appenteng:

... the absence of a level playing field in a game in which the ruling junta was player, referee and linesman virtually guaranteed failure for the opposition.<sup>41</sup>

### Rigged presidential elections?

The results of the presidential election were questioned by the opposition parties who cried foul and alleged massive rigging. To them, this November 1992 election was the "most controversial in the nation's history" because it was "fraudulently conducted and its result fraudulently procured."<sup>42</sup> The questioning of the validity of the result led to widespread disturbances in parts of the country such as Tamale, Sunyani and Kumasi. The Kumasi riots led to the imposition of a 6 pm to 6 am curfew for six days which was lifted on 9 November. In the midst of the



confusion over the result that seemed to threaten the security of the country, three bombs exploded in different parts of Accra and Tema while the Kwesimintsi constituency chairman of the NDC in the Western Region was burned alive and later died at a London hospital from third degree burns. Most people doubted if these frightening acts of violence were the work of the opposition. They saw them as yet further attempts to give the opposition a bad name, or as attempts by certain persons to take undue advantage of the precarious post-election situation.<sup>43</sup>

On 5 November 1992 the opposition parties called a press conference to provide proof of their allegations that Rawlings had won the elections through "fraudulent manipulations" as well as "systematic rigging of the ballots". It was attended by Adu Boahen of the NPP, Hilla Limann of the PNC, E A Erskine of the PHP, and Naa Afarley Sackeyfio, who represented Kwabena Darko of the NIP. Adu Boahen showed the press what he said were 32 fraudulent ballot papers found on a rubbish dump in Kumasi by a school child: 29 out of the 32 ballot papers were thumbprinted in favour of the NDC and bore the INEC stamp number 5363. This, to the opposition, suggested that "someone, or a group of persons, within the Interim National Electoral Commission had been deeply involved in a conspiracy to rig the elections".<sup>44</sup>

To provide concrete evidence that the elections were rigged, the NPP came out with a publication, *The stolen verdict* on 7 April 1993. The 89-page publication, with its ten appendices, documents incidents of intimidation, ballot stuffing, impersonation, wrong computation of results, late opening of poll/early or late closing of poll, corrupt and illegal practices/cheating by INEC officials, tampering with ballot boxes and papers, use of defective registers, ineligible voters, non-signature of result forms, and the dubious role of "revolutionary" organs, security personnel and state-owned media. *The stolen verdict* then ended on a sullen and cautious note:

The levelling of the electoral playing field is, then, the litmus test of the commitment of Jerry John Rawlings and his colleagues, who remain in charge of the affairs of the nation, to multi-party democracy and free and fair elections.

Without a level playing field, elections in this country will continue to produce [the] tragic results of 3rd November 1992 – a stolen verdict.<sup>45</sup>

But how justified were the opposition parties in questioning the validity of the results of the elections described by international observers as "free and fair"? To some extent the charges of fraud and irregularities were confirmed externally by the Carter Center Election Mission, which raised serious questions about the dated nature of the voters' register, the absence of a reliable and consistent procedure for identifying eligible voters, inconsistency in determining what should be regarded as spoiled ballots, improper sealing of the ballot boxes, the undue influence exerted by some polling agents, and the inability of security personnel to control voters. However, despite these findings, the Carter Center team observed that:

... despite the occurrences of serious irregularities in the election process, what we have observed does not lead us to question the validity of the results.<sup>46</sup>

The Commonwealth Observer Group also concluded that the election was less than "free and fair", although the errors in the electoral roll, it believed, were the result of misinformation rather than any attempt to affect the results.<sup>47</sup> These conclusions seem to suggest that the international community validated the outcome of the elections more than did the country's opposition parties. This may be construed as an international-community attitude of "get on with the experiment" rather than their putting their weight behind the dangerous alternative of turning the whole business into

a non-starter with ominous consequences that might get completely out of hand.

On 17 November 1992 four of the opposition parties announced their intention of boycotting the parliamentary elections (rescheduled for 29 December 1992 to allow for several efforts at mediation) unless the PNDC government agreed to compile a new voters' roll and issue Ghanaian identification cards. The government's refusal led to a boycott of the parliamentary elections by these four opposition parties (NPP, PNC, NIP and PHP) which now came together to form an Inter-Party Coordinating Committee (IPCC).

This had left the field clear for the "Progressive Alliance" of the three parties which had all presented Rawlings as their presidential candidate – the NDC, the NCP and the Egle Party. The results of the parliamentary elections were a foregone conclusion. The NDC won 189 of the 200 parliamentary seats; the NCP won 8 seats; the Egle Party one seat; and two seats were won by women standing as independent candidates. (Table 3 gives a regional breakdown of the results.)<sup>48</sup>

The boycott of the parliamentary elections by the opposition parties naturally affected the turnout. Of the 7 336 346 registered voters, the number voting in the 29 December elections was 2 059 415. Twenty-three constituencies returned unopposed candidates. The turnout represented 29% of voters in the 117 constituencies. In the earlier presidential elections, 3 989 075 out of 8 255 056 registered voters had voted in all the 200 constituencies, representing a 48% turnout. The votes cast in the parliamentary elections

**TABLE 3** Regional breakdown of seats won in parliamentary elections held on 29 December 1992

Region	NDC	NCP	Independents	Egle
Central	16	1	0	0
Volta	18	1	0	0
Upper East	11	0	1	0
Western	16	3	0	0
Eastern	22	3	0	1
Brong Ahafo	20	0	1	0
Ashanti	33	0	0	0
Greater Accra	22	0	0	0
Upper West	8	0	0	0
Northern	23	0	0	0
	190	8	2	1

were only 51,5% of those cast in the earlier presidential elections.<sup>49</sup>

### Conclusion: Prospects for the future

Ghana's transition to constitutional rule was ridden with controversy at every stage. This arose principally from the PNDC's dictating the democratization process and its timetable. The timetable seemed to be manipulated in such a way as to enhance the electoral prospects of Rawlings. This naturally created mistrust in the mind of opposition forces: they were certainly all aware of the biased nature of the electoral rolls and how the transition programme had been tailored and manipulated to favour Rawlings. Why then did the opposition contest an election they were bound to lose? Was it misplaced confidence? Or foolhardiness? It has been argued in some circles that the opposition parties lost the presidential elections because they were not united. This may be wishful thinking, in the light of the fact that looking at the scale of the Rawlings victory, there was no guarantee that a united opposition would have made any difference to the outcome.

The opposition boycott of the parliamentary elections has undoubtedly made Ghana a de facto one-party state, and this seems to hold some implications for the performance of the NDC government. President Rawlings has on several occasions indicated that the constitution is not sacrosanct and could be amended to make it more workable. Delivering his first session address to Parliament on 29 April 1993, the president emphasized that he would establish regular interaction between the executive and legislature beyond the formal requirements of the constitution. It is this rapport between the two organs of government that has enabled bills to be passed to establish certain institutions such as the Electoral Commission, the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice, the Minerals Commission, the District Assemblies Common Fund and the Commission on Civic Education within six months of the constitution coming into force. Some of these institutions have offered avenues for the redeployment of friends and sympathizers of the PNDC who gave loyal service but could not be accommodated in mainstream governmental machinery.

In both first and second session addresses to Parliament in April 1993 and January 1995, the President made it clear that his government would stick to policy directives chartered by the PNDC government. These include economic liberalization, divestiture of state enterprises, redeployment, provision of basic amenities in the rural areas, decentralization of the machinery of government, and the improvement of productivity in the public sector. In line with constitutional provisions, the President also presented to the Speaker of Parliament in January 1995 the document entitled, *Vision 2020*, which sets out socioeconomic policies programmes to be pursued in order to better the Ghanaian standard of living.

The strained relationship between the government and the opposition appears to have been eased, both parties pledging their readiness to do business with one another. This cooperative attitude was shown when the NPP presented to the Speaker of Parliament its reply to the 1993 budget statement. This cooperation between government and opposition is reflected in the Inter-Party Committee formed under the auspices of the National Electoral Commission in 1993 to deliberate on the revision of the voters' rolls and the introduction of voters' identity cards in preparation for the presidential and parliamentary elections in 1996.

Two issues, however, have given rise to differences between government and opposition. The first issue concerns the choice of day(s) on which both elections are in future to be held. The government insists that the two elections be held on different days; the opposition and the Electoral Commission want both elections to be held on the same day. The second issue has to do with the provision of identity cards to voters. While the government wants cards for all citizens (too expensive to be accommodated before the 1996 elections), the opposition favours the provision of cards to those in urban constituencies (only) before the important 1996 date.

Contrary to expectations, the NDC-dominated legislature has not been a rubber stamp. When the government proposed to raise the price of petrol from 1 600 to 2 200 cedis, it was compelled to retreat. And the passage of bills such as those concerning the

Serious Fraud Office, Value Added Tax, Public Order, Public Holidays and New Courts, generated much debate and controversy. These bills were passed because of the government's majority; but a number of substantial changes had been made to them before they became Acts.

The judiciary has also been alive to its responsibilities. It gave three decisions against the Executive. The Supreme Court ruled that demonstrations could be held without police permits; that the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) be ordered to give equal and fair coverage to the activities of all the political parties; and that the appointments made by the president in August 1993 to the office of District Chief Executive for the 110 districts were unconstitutional. As a result of these legal defeats the Attorney-General resigned (April 1994).

In what appears to have been a dress-rehearsal for the 1996 general elections, the government organized non-partisan district-level elections on 22 March 1994 in order to elect candidates for 103 DAs, four municipal assemblies and three metropolitan assemblies. In the Northern Region and three other districts in the Volta Region the elections were postponed because of ethnic violence erupting between Konkombas and Namumbas on 3 February. Although the elections were non-partisan, party caucuses to support one candidate or another were quietly formed. In Nima East, for instance, the NDC rallied around the incumbent assembly member (a woman), while the PNC and NPP appointed candidates to stand for them. Political parties had every reason to support particular candidates, although illegal, because they wanted to muster the grassroots in their favour in order to boost their chances during the 1996 general elections.

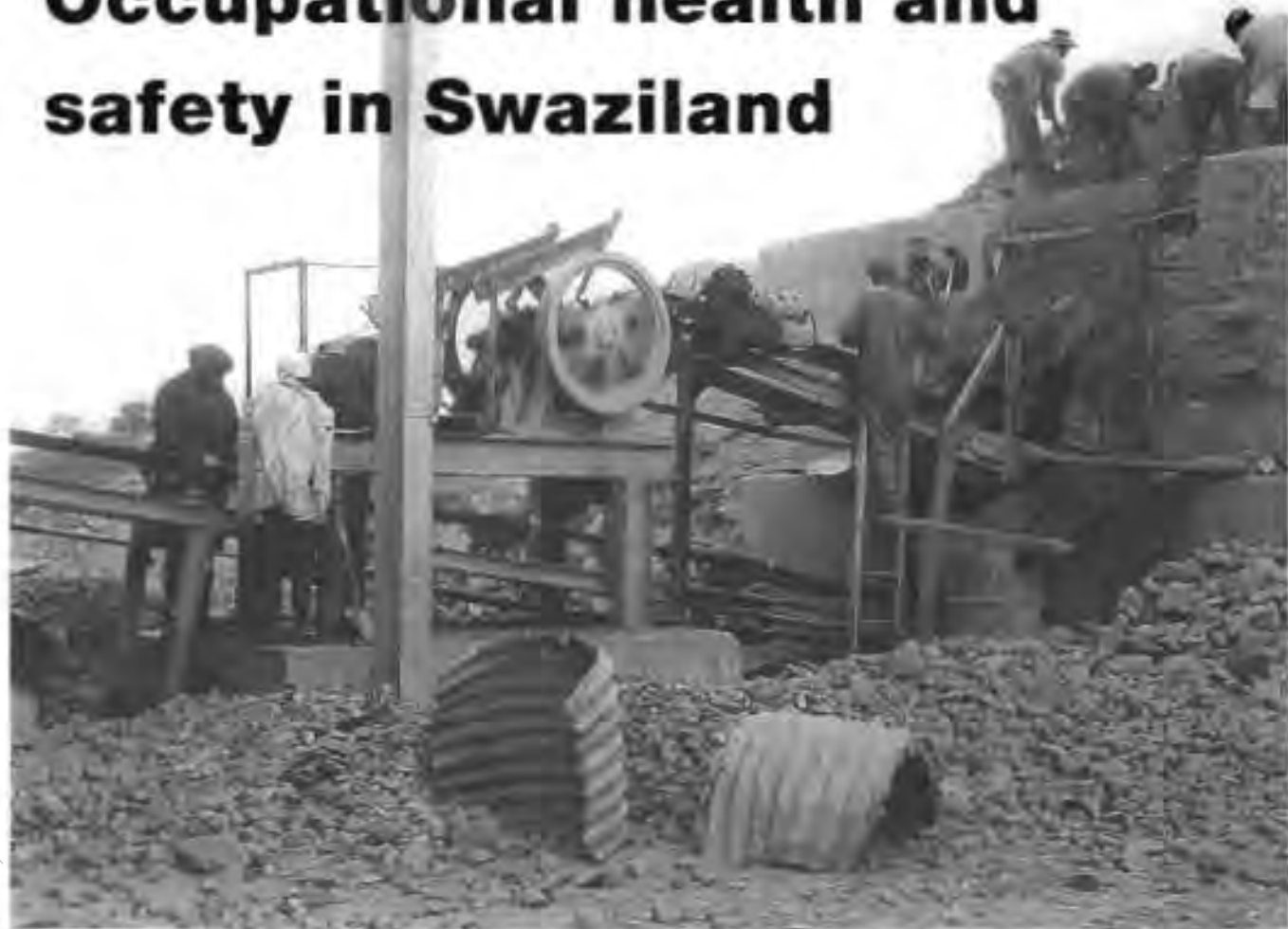
Judging the performance of the NDC government by its adherence to the constitution, we can say that the democratic ethos is gradually being cultivated. The cooling off in tensions between government and opposition, even if only temporary, can also be regarded as a major government achievement. In this light, the prospects for the establishment of constitutional rule are brighter than ever before. During the second session, the Speaker noted that the present Parliament, unlike those of 1969 and 1979, will run its full course.

This is because the "jinx that contributed to the fall of the two previous parliaments has been broken".<sup>50</sup> This is reassuring indeed. We can but hope that the hostility and acrimony which formerly characterised the relationship between government and opposition will give way to a lasting credibility and effectiveness on both sides to ensure, preserve and promote the norms of fair play on which all democratic societies are firmly built. If this happens, then the legitimacy Rawlings has earnestly tried to seek by returning Ghana to constitutional rule may have been achieved – even if only partially. As we look forward to the 1996 elections, what are needed are patience, tolerance and fair play from government, opposition and the general public.

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# Occupational health and safety in Swaziland



*Dr D M Akinmust, of the Department of Industrial Psychology at the University of Fort Hare, critically appraises the status of occupational health and safety in Swaziland.*

Health is defined as physical, social and mental wellbeing and not merely the absence of illness. Safety is defined as freedom from risks and dangers. The promotion of health and safety is one of the goals of any society, as only a healthy and safe society can continue to reproduce and maintain itself. Social and economic development and upliftment all require men and women who are physically and mentally healthy to carry out the tasks involved. Indeed, health, like education, is regarded as one of the fundamental human rights which nations must uphold. The United Nations has earmarked the year 2000 as the target by which date national governments should be able to provide comprehensive and accessible health care for their citizens. A healthy nation is a wealthy nation, too, as the citizenry will be able to contribute maximally to the process of development and will themselves be able to enjoy its fruits.

As the world is becoming a global society of organizations, the work environment poses the greatest threat to

the health and safety of those human beings working in them. Hence the concern with occupational health and safety, which the International Labour Office defines as being concerned with the health and safety problems of "occupied" or employed persons. With an estimated 50 million work-related accidents occurring each year throughout the world, and millions of people falling victim to work-related diseases, many of them resulting in permanent disability or death, the war to improve health and safety at work is now being waged on a global scale. Apart from the human suffering and despair which they cause, accidents and diseases are a severe drain on human resources and place a heavy burden on individuals, organizations and nations as well.<sup>1</sup>

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the aims of occupational health programmes are as follows:

- the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social wellbeing of workers in occupations.

- the prevention among workers of departures from health caused by their working conditions;
- the protection of workers in their employment from risks resulting from factors adverse to health;
- the placing and maintenance of the workers in an occupational environment adapted to their physiological and psychological equipment, and, to summarize,
- the adaptation of work to the person and of each person to his or her job.<sup>2</sup>

### Causes of occupational ill-health

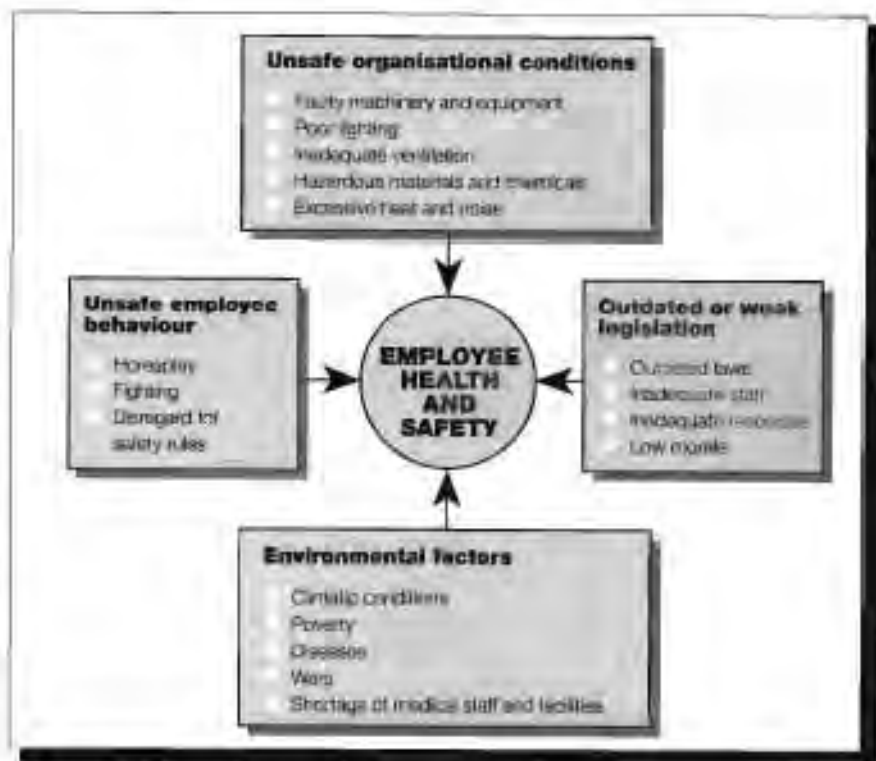
Figure 1 presents an overview of the factors affecting employee health and safety, especially in the context of the developing countries of Africa.<sup>3</sup> Basically, job-related accidents and diseases can be traced to unsafe organizational environments and unsafe employee behaviour. Unsafe employee environments include faulty machinery and equipment, poor lighting, inadequate ventilation, hazardous materials, chemicals, gases, and so forth, excessive noise, and lack of protective equipment. Unsafe behaviour, on the other hand, relates to horseplay, fighting, a disregard for safety rules, alcohol or drug intoxication/abuse, failure to use safety equipment and devices, and failure by supervisors to enforce safety rules.

His or her level of adjustment to the pace and magnitude of industrialization may affect the ability of the worker to withstand occupational health and safety hazards. In Africa, the transition from simple agricultural modes of production to – often complicated – industrial ones brings with it new physical, mental and emotional strains. These strains are more pronounced if the change involves transition from a tribal, sedentary or nomadic way of life to an urban environment with a heterogeneous community. Similar problems may arise from the industrialization of agriculture resulting in large scale seasonal movements of labour, changes in work methods, hours and rhythms and altered living conditions, customs and eating habits. Workers may be required to work with new machines and dangerous chemical substances, necessitating strict protective measures for which they are completely unprepared.

Apart from what is happening in the organizational and working environ-

ment as set out above, external environmental influences, such as the general level of health, geographical, climatic and social problems contribute to or may greatly worsen occupational health and safety problems. For example, certain populations which have long histories of malnutrition, endemic infections, or parasitic diseases may contain large classes of apparently healthy persons who are in fact highly susceptible to particular hazards. As pointed out by El Bazawi,<sup>4</sup> malnutrition, a condition commonly found among workers in developing countries, serves to increase the toxicity of certain chemicals. For example, it has been found that a vitamin C deficiency increases the toxicity of metals such as arsenic, cadmium and chromium.

Other environmental influences such as a debilitating climate, prolonged spells of drought or excessive amounts of rain are associated with particular outbreaks of disease, especially severe in the harsh demanding conditions brought about by structural adjustment programmes, wars or civil disturbance, when lives and property are destroyed and the provision of basic amenities grinds to a halt. What also contributes to this state of affairs is the overcrowding in urban areas and poor



**Figure 1:** An overview of factors affecting occupational health and safety





sanitation. Workers living in these conditions probably arrive at the workplace more dead than alive – that is, if they still have jobs to go to. Occupational health and safety are also affected by the availability or lack thereof of medical personnel, public health and hospital facilities. In most African countries, the provision of these facilities is grossly inadequate; and what facilities do exist are not well distributed and are to be found mostly in the urban areas.

Lastly, the standard of occupational health and safety would improve if appropriate legislation were in place and were enforced. Blunt and Popoola<sup>5</sup> note that in Africa, “legislation is frequently outdated, too general, or in other ways inadequate”. Neither is the responsibility for administering these laws always properly delineated; it often falls confusingly under different organizations or departments of government split between ministries of labour, health, industry and so on.

### **Factors contributing to the problem**

#### *Transition from an agrarian to an industrialized economy*

Much of what is said above applies to the Kingdom of Swaziland. The Kingdom up to the 1930s could be described

as an agricultural and pastoral society; but during the last fifty years it has been transformed into a trading and semi-industrialized country based on forestry and agro-allied industries. It has also developed an urban sector to which the active population drift for employment and the good things of life. Of the 60 444 who were employed in the private sector in 1990, 81% were either semi-skilled or unskilled. This 81% were also semi-literate or illiterate, thus indicating a high probability of encountering job-related stressors, accidents and diseases.

The root cause of the wage economy and the massive migration of younger men to the mines in South Africa was the appropriation of land from the local people by the settler farmers and colonial government which imposed heavy taxation. Thus a people who had been self-sufficient in food production before the 1930s became dependent from the 1940s/1950s on wages and remittances, which were meagre and irregular, exposing them to hunger and deprivation. Their situation worsened when cattle diseases wiped out most of their stock of cattle in the 1980s.

#### *Poor organizational environments*

Forssman<sup>6</sup> has noted the prevalence of small organizations (employing less than 100 persons) in most developing countries and their notoriety in neglecting, among other things, the health and safety of their employees. This is what happened in Swaziland, where about 89% of the registered companies (1992) had a nominal capital of E1 000 or less. Only 2% had a nominal capital of E20 000 and above.

In Swaziland, both small and large organizations are often guilty of poor industrial relations and human resources management. For example, the study by MacFadden<sup>7</sup> painted a deplorable picture of the housing and working conditions in one of the many squatter camps near the country's large plantation estates. These camps were erected by seasonal and permanent workers on the estates. She described one of these camps as a death trap, littered with garbage, lacking in sanitation facilities and, consequently becoming a veritable hot-bed of disease. Matsebula,<sup>8</sup> also concerned about the deteriorating quality of life of the Swazis, remarked on the existence of “make-shift shelters in congested slum areas or squatter settlements that are visible in virtually all of Swaziland's



core areas of economic activity". This is a feature still in evidence as I write.

As will be discussed below, health inspections have shown that workers both in the factory and in the fields are often exposed to health hazards resulting, in some cases, in serious injuries, sicknesses or even permanent disabilities. These conditions, coupled with a lack of job security, poor wages and an absence of social welfare, can only heighten the stress experienced by workers. Either through the absence of unions, or the presence of only weak ones, the hope of major improvement has seemed like a dream.

The industrial unrest of the 1960s and 1970s was a reaction to poor wages, discriminatory practices, unsafe bus services and insanitary conditions in mining and agriculture.<sup>9</sup> The suppression of the trade union movement and the imposition of the Ndabazabantus appointed by the Swazi National Council and assigned to the large enterprises as "the local authority over all workers" improved neither the industrial relations situation nor the conditions of service of the workers. The Ndabazabantus lacked both the skills and the credibility to act as spokespersons for the workers, by whom they were not trusted. The works councils (which were also promoted as alternatives to trade unions) were ineffective, since they were dominated by employers.

Thus, either in small organizations, mostly owned and managed by indigenous businesspeople who are known to run one-person shows,<sup>10</sup> or in medium and large organizations, the standard of occupational health and safety in Swaziland can be said by modern standards to be low. Exceptions are, perhaps, to be found in the few large multinational establishments such as the Simunye Sugar Company, the Mhlume Sugar Company and the Usutu Pulp Company. These organizations provide modern and beautiful housing estates, including well-equipped clinics, for their workers. The majority of the working populace in the Swazi Kingdom, however, depend upon the public health system, the state of which I next review.

#### **Fragile health sector**

The objective of the Swaziland government as contained in the National Health Policy<sup>11</sup> was

to improve the health status of the Swazi people by providing preventive, promotive, rehabilitative and curative health



services which are relevant and accessible to all

Laudable though this objective be, any hopes of its realization have proved illusory, although the efforts of government have been greatly complemented by those of missionaries and industry and a few private individuals. In reviewing the accessibility and affordability of health services, Mhlongo<sup>12</sup> notes that clinics and hospitals are not only insufficient, but that their distribution is most uneven, a situation compounded by the fact that the rural population live in widely dispersed, single, individual homesteads rather than in villages or hamlets where health, education and other facilities could more easily be provided for large groups of people. The result is that two-thirds of the 83 physicians and half of the nurses in the Kingdom work in urban areas which account for no more than a quarter of the total population. In the rural areas, the ratio is one hospital bed to 1 450 people, compared to the national ratio of one hospital bed to 457 people. Some districts with the largest population have no government or specialized hospitals at all, or have the least number of health facility units.

In the matter of affordability, primary health care services are, to a large

**TABLE 1** Occupational injuries and diseases prevalent for the years 1987 to 1992

Year	Occupational Injuries		Occupational Diseases		Total	
	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal	Fatal	Non-Fatal
1987	17	735	0	26	17	761
1988	25	1 070	0	23	25	1 093
1989	29	1 004	0	14	29	1 015
1990	44	1 251	0	73	44	1 324
1991	34	944	1	2	34	946
1992	33	794	0	3	33	797

Source: Department of Labour.<sup>14</sup>

extent, subsidized by government or non-governmental organizations, so patients are usually able to receive such services at no cost or at a minimum charge, but, as Mhlongo<sup>12</sup> notes, the problem arises where the public, in both urban and rural areas, require more modern or sophisticated health services. This places severe pressure on the services of government and mission clinics and hospitals which are themselves already short-staffed. The long journey necessary to reach a clinic or a hospital, and the long queues of people awaiting treatment, often discourage intending patients who resort, albeit with mixed results, to traditional healers who live in their communities. I should remark that the shortage of drugs in the country's clinics and hospitals is also an endemic problem, further weakening the health care delivery system.

No concluding paragraph would be complete without some mention of the fact that nearly 75% of the Swazi population live in abject poverty. Their lack of resources, potable water

and other basic amenities of life renders health very precarious indeed.

**The state of occupational health and safety**

Table 1 shows the trend in occupational injuries and diseases for the period 1987 to 1992. There were altogether 182 fatalities resulting from occupational injuries and diseases and, in addition, 5 936 non-fatal injuries and diseases.

These figures may be only the tip of an iceberg, either through the inability of the inspectorate to cover the country adequately or through the failure of employers to report accidents. Be that as it may, there was a steady increase in non-fatal and fatal injuries and diseases until 1990. There was then a sharp decline as a result of the

**TABLE 2** Accidents, diseases and incapacity by sector, 1987-1990

	Private Sector	Public Sector
<b>Occupational Accidents</b>		
Fatal	96	19
Non-fatal	3 862	175
<b>Occupational Diseases</b>		
Fatal	-	-
Non-fatal	136	-
<b>Incapacity</b>		
Permanent	402	57
Temporary	4 515	131

Source: Calculated from the Department of Labour.<sup>15</sup>

**TABLE 3** Major causes of occupational accidents and injuries 1987-1992

Cause of accident	Comparison of major causes of occupational accidents/injuries from 1987 to 1992											
	1987		1988		1989		1990		1991		1992	
	F	NF	F	NF	F	NF	F	NF	F	NF	F	NF
1. Falling objects	2	96	1	148	1	44	6	150	2	239	1	149
2. Falling persons	1	102	1	125	1	158	0	203	1	110	7	115
3. Moving machinery	0	37	0	84	0	68	0	94	0	51	2	81
4. Hand tools	0	36	0	35	0	47	0	62	0	60	0	50
5. Electricity, chemicals or fire	1	30	0	44	2	44	2	33	13	42	1	57
6. Transport/road accidents	13	100	19	152	23	200	22	168	17	168	21	157
7. Lifting and carrying	0	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	81	0	25
8. Sharp objects	0	120	0	161	1	137	4	141	0	97	0	32
9. Others	0	54	2	89	1	72	5	100	1	35	0	62
10. No cause available	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	66
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>932</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>936</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>1 097</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>794</b>

Source: Department of Labour.<sup>16</sup>

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closure of the Havelock mines and the mass retrenchments which began that year.

Table 2 shows that the incidence of accidents and disease was higher in the private than in the public sector. For example, between 1987 and 1990 there were 96 fatal accidents in the private sector and only 19 (or 16%) in the public. Also, while 3 882 non-fatal accidents were recorded in the private sector, only 175 (or 4.3%) were recorded in the public. Though difficult to believe, no fatal occupational diseases in either sector were recorded during the four-year period under review. There were only 136 non-fatal cases recorded in the private sector, with none at all in the public. The public sector recorded 57 (or 8.4%) of the total cases of permanent incapacity during the period covered by the figures.

The major causes of occupational accidents/injuries are multifarious, as shown in Table 3. The major ones appear under the heading transport/road accidents. Here are to be found most of the deaths. Other causes are falling objects, falling persons, sharp objects and moving machinery.

The records of the inspection unit also shows that the head and the eyes are the most vulnerable parts of the body involved in occupational accidents. This is explained by the inspection unit as due to hard hats and goggles not being provided by employers or, if provided, not being used by employees. Arms and legs are often injured too, because, again, gloves and boots are either not provided or, if provided, either sold for money, or, through mere ignorance, not used.

The distribution of accidents by industry is depicted in Figure 2. This shows that the construction industry has the highest number of fatal and non-fatal accidents, followed by manufacturing and wood products industries, forestry and logging, transport/distribution, mines and quarries, and agriculture. Although the chemical and electrical industries have somewhat high accident figures, no fatalities were recorded in these industries. The financial industry appears to be the safest industry in the economy.

Industrial diseases (as might be expected) are most prevalent in the mines, quarries, textile industry and agricultural sector where employees are exposed to dust and poisonous chemicals.

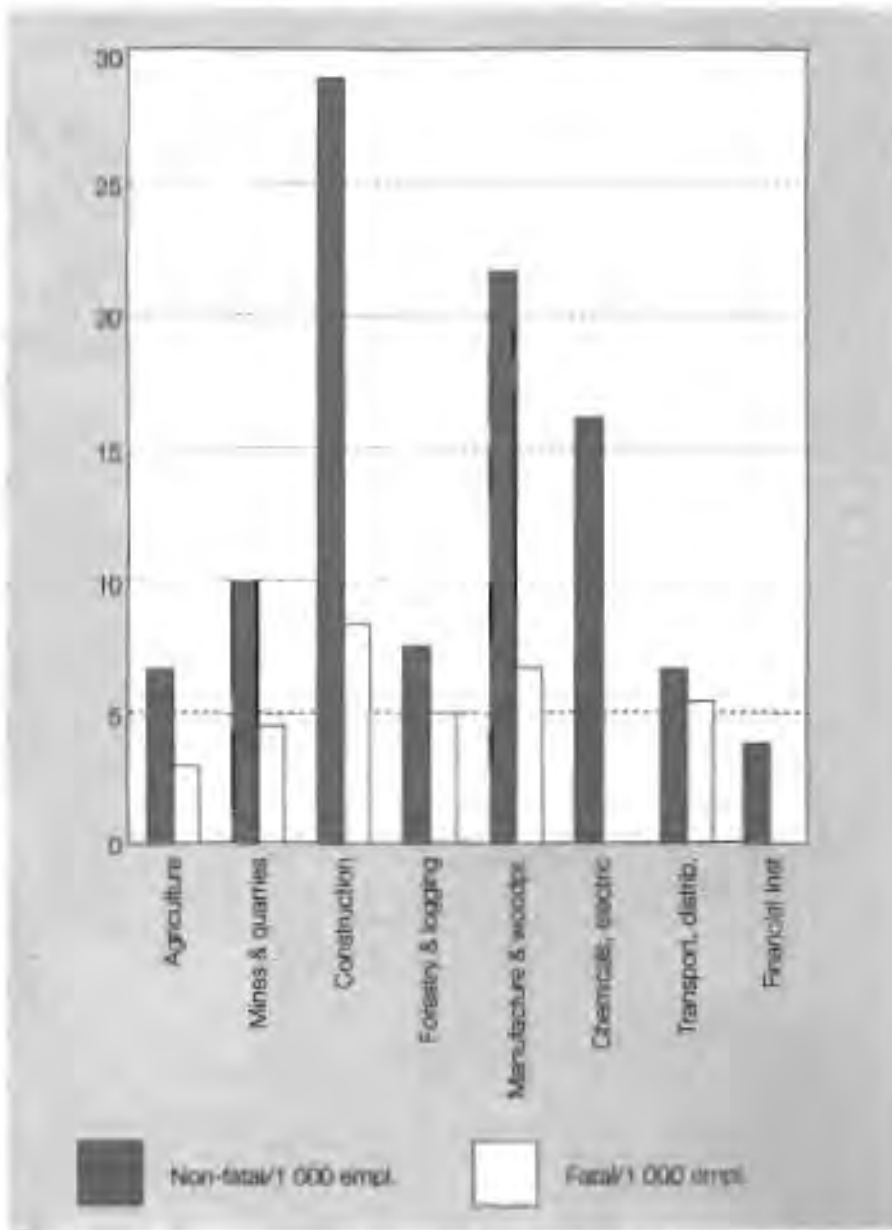
**Legislation relating to occupational health and safety**

The responsibility for maintaining harmonious industrial relations, including occupational health and safety, falls to the Department of Labour which administers the following laws:

- Wages Act 16 of 1964
- Factories, Machineries and Construction Works Act 17 of 1972
- Industrial Relations Act 4 of 1980
- Employment Act 5 of 1980
- Workmen's Compensation Act 7 of 1983

The department has its headquarters in Mbabane, the capital city, and field of-

fices in each of the four regional headquarters. The department produces an annual report covering a wide range of issues such as employment statistics, the state of industrial relations analysed generally and by region, factory inspection, accidents statistics, workers' compensation claims and the activities of the industrial court. In addition, the report often contains feature articles on occupational health and safety. Examples are 'Advice to workers' on the provision of the Workmen's Compensation Act', 'Pneumoconiosis', 'Hearing conservation programme' (all in the 1983 Annual Report), and 'What is workers' education?', 'Health hazard investigations' (in the 1984 Annual



**Figure 2:** Reported accidents by industry, 1992. Source: Department of Labour 17

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**TABLE** Occupational health and safety inspections and follow-up inspections for 1987-1992

Period	First inspection	Follow-up	Total
1987	30	15	45
1988	65	18	83
1989	49	9	108
1990	20	18	38
1991	15	8	23
1992	34	13	47

Source: Department of Labour.<sup>20</sup>

Reports. With the years, fewer such write-ups have appeared.

At Department of Labour headquarters, there are separate sections responsible for factory inspection, and occupational health and safety inspection. The work of these sections has been hampered by insufficient personnel, lack of facilities, including transport, high turnover of staff and low morale. For example, in its 1991 Annual Report, the Department of Labour noted that, while the safety section has a token staff, the occupational health section is completely unstaffed.<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless the Department of Labour as a whole has continued to use what resources are available to carry out factory as well as occupational health and safety inspections, and also mediate in the disputes and strikes which have become so rife in the 1990s.<sup>21</sup> Table 4 shows occupational health and safety inspections and follow-up inspections for the period 1987 to 1992.

The total number of inspections carried out during the six-year period numbered 342, giving a annual average of 47. There was a sharp decline in the number of first and follow-up inspections in 1990 and 1991, but in 1992 the momentum picked up again through the ILO-funded "Strengthening of Factories Inspectorate" project with more inspectors and facilities made available to the department. From year to year, inspections uncovered many gross violations of factory regulations regarding occupational health and safety. Examples include old and dirty protective garments and equipment; ill-maintained machines and compressors; factories operating without registration; poor guarding of dangerous moving parts of machinery; poor housekeeping, etc. What is significant here is that the Labour Department seems to lack the power to bring recalcitrant organizations to book.

### Emerging issues in employee safety and health in Swaziland

Four very serious emerging health problems in Swazi society can be identified: excessive use of tobacco, drunkenness, drug abuse and the scourge of Aids. All four pose dangers to the health of the people in general and to occupational health and safety in particular. In advanced countries these problems have been on the national agenda for some decades, but these problems are only just becoming national concerns in Swaziland. Each will now be briefly discussed.

#### Tobacco

The extent of smoking is not known, but there is no doubt that it is a very serious social problem in Swaziland today. When stripped of its legal debates, smoking is a major threat to all smokers and non-smokers and society at large. The *Swazi News* of 30 May 1992 brought the staggering effects of the economic burden of smoking, especially in the workplace, to the attention of the nation. This newspaper highlighted some of the direct and indirect costs as follows:

- the direct medical care of smoke-related illnesses
- absenteeism
- fire, industrial accidents and the related increases in excess insurance costs
- time spent on smoking
- maintenance costs of environments tarnished by smoking
- costs of air cleaning
- the complication that smoking aggravates other industrial health hazards associated with mining, drilling and farming

Non-smokers are also at risk when living or working with smokers in a

closed or poorly ventilated environment. The feature article referred to above concluded by giving specific guidelines on how to create a tobacco-free workplace by urging organizations to develop a policy on smoking, with the cooperation (among others) of smokers, non-smokers and unions.

#### Alcohol

Excessive drinking is also fast becoming a national problem. It is widespread within the population, involving old, young, men and women, both uneducated and professionals. Swaziland's road accident figures are among the highest in the world, many of the accidents arising from driving under the influence of alcohol. One of the worst road accidents in the history of the Kingdom occurred in 1995, when a drunken bus driver caused an accident that claimed fifteen lives, several other passengers sustaining major injuries. This stirred the anger of the nation. In addition to mass support for the victims, there was also mass condemnation of excessive drinking in general and drunken driving in particular.

The way this problem is eating deep into the social fabric of Swazi society can be seen from the fact that alcoholism is no longer a problem associated with males only but is rapidly spreading to adolescents, women and school children. As noted by Thandile Malepe, a concerned psychiatrist and President of the Swaziland Mental Health Association, "alcohol seems to be the nation's pride".<sup>22</sup>

Although no proper studies have been carried out on the extent and magnitude of this problem, it is commonly supposed that drinking is at its worst during weekends, national holidays, month-ends and, generally, during the season of "masika" (February to April), a time for this locally brewed beer, and other concoctions such as Fokker-400. (This particular brew is so called because anyone drinking it remains drunk for at least two days. Consumers are said to feel "airborne" and to "fly" even higher than the Fokker 100, the most frequently seen aircraft belonging to the national carrier.) The social and economic impacts of alcohol abuse need serious and urgent research.

#### Drug abuse

In a feature article marking World Health Day in *The Swazi Observer*<sup>23</sup>





the WHO representative in Swaziland focused attention on mental health and noted that

The issue of drug abuse is steadily becoming a cause for concern in the Swazi society. There are different illegal substances that are taking root in the Swazi society. There are the drugs such as heroin, mandrax, and the local shrub of dagga. The abuse of these drugs is assuming unimaginable proportions.

Drunkenness and drug abuse have been the major causes of senseless stabbings, horrific murders, and many other criminal activities which make life so cheap and unsafe in Swaziland today.<sup>23</sup> The frightening aspect here is that drug abuse, like drinking, is fast taking root among the most vulnerable class in Swazi society, the school children. The extent of this problem can be seen from the overcrowding and congestion now experienced in the National Psychiatric Centre in Manzini.

#### **Aids**

The last of the emerging health problems in Swaziland is the Aids epidemic. The first Aids infected person was identified in 1986. Government reacted promptly by taking measures to determine the extent of the problem and, in 1990, began a campaign to promote HIV/Aids awareness among the population. The most recent campaigns are being geared to behaviour modification in order to reduce the risk of infection.

Perhaps the most disturbing aspect of this problem is the alarming rate at which it is spreading. Available statistics show that HIV infection increased from 3,9% in 1992 to 21,9% in 1993. This is the figure for pregnant women which is widely used as an indication of the prevalence of Aids in the general population.<sup>24</sup>

The projection appears equally alarming from a draft report prepared by a team of consultants. By the year 2006, it is projected (medium scenario), that Swaziland will have 180 022 cumulative HIV infected persons; 18 324 new Aids cases per annum; 9 000 TB patients; and 18 033 Aids-related deaths per annum.<sup>25</sup> The implications of this for the health sector were raised by the then Minister of Health, D von Wissel, in the following words:

New AIDS cases will increase from 9,500 in 1994 to 21,000 by 2000. Each of these people will spend between 20–40 days in hospital. This means that we have to double the number of beds in the next five years. This, of course, means double staff, double medication and double everything in the health services. The question is: How will the country cope?<sup>26</sup>

The social consequences of Aids can be imagined in terms of the trauma of suffering and death, and also by a moment's reflection upon the many orphans, widows and widowers and other family members whom the Aids victims are leaving, or will be leaving, behind. What also makes the Aids

problem more terrifying is the fact that the group most affected is the most productive group in the population.

When this important group is decimated by Aids, the ability of the nation to reproduce itself and compete economically will be severely impaired. Already it is estimated that by the year 2006 there will be no less than 115 000 Swazi orphans. These orphans will not be able to support themselves at school, neither will they be productive in the workplace.<sup>27</sup> Thus Swaziland will continue to suffer from its chronic workforce and illiteracy problem for a long time to come.

The effects of the Aids epidemic in the workplace have not yet been established. In 1992, the industry-based Family Planning STD/Aids project was initiated in collaboration with eight other non-governmental organizations which carry out Aids/STD activities in Swaziland. This project's goal is, however, limited to promoting children's health and reducing unwanted fertility. Such health oriented organizations have yet, themselves, to come to grips with the imminent disaster of Aids. But it is imperative that they shortly come up with policies which can adequately cope with the tragedy forecast as well as enhance the quality of life of their employees. One way would be to institute employee assistance programmes (EAPs), which have been designed to prevent problems that interfere with an employee's ability to





employing at least five or more people should contribute about 10% of their annual budget to an Aids Relief Fund. The Fund should be used in Aids awareness campaigns and the treatment of Aids sufferers.

- Government has a major role to play in providing for the health of its citizens. Apart from enacting health and safety laws, the health budget must be substantially increased, not only to cope with the immediate disaster of Aids, which will very shortly be upon us, but to arrest the long-term spread of the disease and other health hazards. The distribution of health facilities throughout the Kingdom must also be rationalized.
- People themselves as parents, workers, etc must face reality and refrain from exposing themselves and others to life threatening yet avoidable habits and risks. This requires mass education and support services at grassroots, enterprise and government levels.
- Research into health and safety matters by organizations, labour department, unions and the mass media is urgently required. As suggested by Blunt and Popoola,<sup>29</sup> technical, medical and psychological research is badly needed in Africa. Examples of technical research include the investigation of the properties and characteristics of harmful materials, the study of machine guards, the testing of respiratory masks and so on. Medical research covers the physiological and pathological effects of technological and environmental factors, and the physical (bodily) circumstances in which accidents are likely to occur. Psychological research has to assess psychological factors – the effects of personality, abilities, aptitudes, and so forth on the frequency and nature of accidents.

## Conclusion

The future of Swaziland (and, indeed, any country for that matter) depends greatly upon the health and wellbeing of the Kingdom's citizens which, at the moment, are seriously in jeopardy. To save the situation is a task that must be undertaken. It will demand courage, vision, sacrifice and cooperation from all concerned. It is hoped that the suggestions above will go some way to address the occupational health and safety needs of the Swazi kingdom.

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- 23 A most heart-wrenching, life-long traumatic experience of this sort was when the author's seventeen-year-old son Oluwaseun, in his final year at high school, was fatally stabbed on 30 July 1993 by a schoolmate, Nikwa Dlamini. Nikwa is the son of the then Prime Minister of Swaziland, Mr Obed Dlamini. Nikwa is alleged to be drug addict and is a known psychiatric patient. He pleaded guilty to culpable homicide and the court sentenced him to six strokes of the cane.
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# ATTRACTING FOREIGN INVESTMENT TO

*Profs J Marx and J Hough of Unisa's Department of Business Management surveyed a number of foreign missions to find out whether they consider South Africa to be an attractive investment prospect. Their responses are analysed in this article.*

**"S**outh Africa is emerging from isolation into a period of opportunity" – *South African President, Nelson Mandela.*

It is widely believed that South Africa will become the economic engine of the Southern African region. But, despite opportunities for investment in and trade with South Africa, many international investors are carefully considering their options. South Africa is competing, inter alia, with Eastern Europe; and

Pacific Rim countries for foreign direct investment. Moreover, foreign investors seem to be adopting a wait-and-see position, that is, waiting to see what other big investors do and what happens to the determinants of foreign investment in South Africa. Some investors have even labelled foreign investment in South Africa as "hugely postponable".<sup>1</sup>

In attempting to ascertain what factors would make South Africa a more attractive investment option one might well turn to the ten factors that Jegat-san<sup>2</sup> believes should be considered before investing in any foreign country:

- political stability
- economic strength and performance
- the government's attitude to investors
- government policies, in respect of equity guidelines, employment of expatriates and exchange control
- infrastructure
- labour matters
- banking and finance
- public service bureaucracy
- local business environment
- quality of life (medical facilities, housing, safety and security)

With the above investment factors in mind, we sought to elicit and evaluate the perceptions of foreign (trade) representatives regarding the political, economic and social conditions in South Africa. This article examines the results of our evaluation.

## **Study design and methodology**

The survey was conducted during January and February 1995 among 86 foreign representatives/missions represented in South Africa. These (trade) representatives are the first "links" between foreign investors and South Africa. Their objectives are, inter alia, to promote trade between countries and to inform foreign investors (usually) from their own countries about economic, political, technological and social issues in the host country (in this case South Africa).



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# Africa

## The South African case

Their knowledge and experience of South Africa were perceived to be adequate even if they had been in the country for less than two years.

The representatives/missions were not required to identify themselves and could remain anonymous when returning their questionnaires. The foreign missions of three countries, namely Italy, Britain and Belgium, formally elected not to participate in the survey.

The representative completing the questionnaire was requested to indicate the number of years that he/she had represented his/her country in South Africa. Ninety per cent of the respondents had represented their countries in South Africa for two years. Ten per cent had represented their countries in South Africa for periods ranging from three to six years.

The survey produced 26 completed questionnaires or a response rate of 30.2%.

The data were analysed by means of descriptive statistics such as frequency and univariate analyses. This produced mean, mode and median values. The mode values were regarded as an indication of consensus among respondents on each of the factors involved in a country evaluation. The ratings (on a scale from 1 to 10) were ranked from the highest to the lowest mode value. Below-average ratings were regarded as an indication of factors that are not conducive to investment in South Africa, while the opposite applied to factors with above-average ratings. These variables were then ranked within each group.

### Findings

#### *Overall rating of South Africa as a trade partner and investor attitudes*

Asked how the missions rate South Africa as a trade partner (overall) on a ten point scale, resulted in a mode value of 5. This means that they perceive South Africa as a "fairly reliable" trading partner although the majority pointed out that this perception is based on certain conditions which are described in the following paragraph





### Investment in South Africa and its creditworthiness

None of the missions indicated that they would discourage investment in South Africa. Only 15.4% of the missions who responded would recommend investment in South Africa unconditionally. However, most of the missions (84.6%) indicated that they would recommend investment under certain conditions. The most prominent condition was continued political stability. Other conditions focused on the following aspects (in no specific order):

- more relaxed currency regulations and exchange controls
- international competitiveness
- increased political stability
- a more fair tax system
- a decrease in labour unrest
- a decrease in labour wage demands

Asked for what length of time they would recommend investing in South Africa, 75% of the respondents indicated that they would recommend investment for a period of up to five years. This may be ascribed to the fact that the next national and provincial elections are scheduled to take place in 1999.

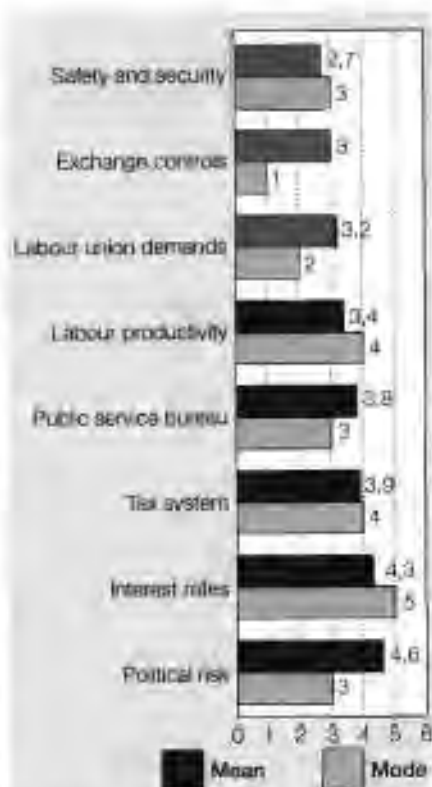
A period of five years also suggests that they do not recommend investment in long-term fixed assets, but rather investment in financial assets (shares and bonds). Medges by foreign countries for development assistance, trade credit, concessionary loans and other non-direct investment suggest that substantial long-term foreign direct investment decisions have not yet been finalized.

### Country evaluation

Various factors influencing investment decisions were identified and representatives were asked to rate 17 considerations influencing foreign investment in South Africa. Rating options were out of 10, where a rating of 1 means undesirable, 5 equals average influence and 10 means a perfect consideration for foreign investment.

### Factors not conducive to investment in South Africa

Figure 1 indicates factors which the foreign representatives indicated were not conducive to foreign investment during early 1995.



**Figure 1:** Factors not conducive to foreign investment in South Africa (1995 Foreign Representative/Mission)

### Exchange control

Foreign missions awarded the lowest value to this factor, resulting in a mode value of 1.0 (see fig 1).

The Government of National Unity gave its approval to the abolition of the financial rand as from 13 March 1995. This is the most significant economic decision by President Mandela's government so far, but one that illustrates its confidence in the economic course it has chosen. The abolition of the dual currency system and the creation of a unitary rand remove any barriers that prevent foreign investors from critically assessing the country's economic and political prospects.<sup>5</sup>

The link between safety and security, political stability and economic factors such as exchange control is evident, and South African political, economic and labour stakeholders still have to learn how to adequately balance these issues.

### The demands of labour unions

Foreign missions awarded the second lowest value to this factor, resulting in a mode value of 2.

It is clear that international investors and their advisers will closely

examine the demands of labour unions and the debate on the new Labour Relations Bill. Clearer still is the fact that foreign investors' perceptions were negative at the beginning of 1995 and that any perceived increase in hostile labour demands will impact more negatively on foreign investment.<sup>4</sup>

### Safety and security

From figure 1 it is clear that foreign missions awarded the third lowest value to this factor, resulting in a mode value of only 3. The third quartile (Q3), which represents the value awarded by 75% of the respondents, similarly was a rating of 3 out of a possible 10.

The above rating can be ascribed to the high crime rate. Police were searching for 210 000 people in connection with crimes committed between 1 January and 30 September 1994. There were 203 955 house burglaries and theft cases over the same period, compared with 166 832 in 1990. Robbery rose from 43 780 cases to 70 321 cases over the same period.<sup>5</sup> On 27 February 1995, President Nelson Mandela ordered the South African Police Service to deploy additional police officers to combat crime, violence and lawlessness.<sup>6</sup>

### Political stability

Foreign missions awarded a mode value of 3 to this factor.

The democratically elected government will have to prove to foreign investors that it is able to perform consistently and that it is irreversibly committed to liberal economic policies, including the abolition of the financial rand and the liberalization of exchange controls.<sup>7</sup>

### The productivity of the labour force

Foreign missions awarded a mode value of 4 to this factor. It is valid to put this value in perspective with other countries, and figure 2 gives an indication of output/employee and unit labour cost in manufacturing for selected countries for 1991/1992.

From figure 2 it can be seen that the South African output per employee (including management) in manufacturing increased at a low rate of 0.6% per annum over a seven-year period, while the annual unit labour cost shown for South Africa over the same seven-year period was about 10 times that of Japan and almost twice that of



Korea. De Jager<sup>9</sup> adds that the competitiveness of Korea is preserved by an increase in productivity which almost matches its unit labour cost increase. South Africa cannot be named in the same class of productivity as these countries, and this fact will impact on foreign investment and international competitiveness.<sup>9</sup>

#### Public service bureaucracy

A mode value of 3 was awarded to this factor. A positive attitude on the part of the state to international projects is important because it can accelerate approval and completion of projects and, of course, new job opportunities. It would seem that foreign representatives are not impressed with South Africa's public servants, and that government agencies, and especially agencies working with foreign investment issues, must take note of these perceptions.

#### Taxation

Foreign missions awarded a mode value of 4 to this factor.

A commission under the chairmanship of Professor M Katz has been appointed to investigate taxation in South Africa. Releasing its interim report on 9 December 1994, the commission's chairman said the government was losing R15 billion a year because of low staffing levels and dismal collection systems. The commission was not in favour of tax incentives for foreign investors, but proposed the scrapping of nonresident shareholders' tax and marketable securities tax. Foreign investors are subject to a non-residents shareholders' tax of 15%, a secondary tax on companies of 25% and a transition levy of 5% in addition to basic corporate tax of 35%.<sup>10</sup>

However, the first budget of the Government of National Unity on 15 March 1995 sent a clear message to foreign investors that South Africa means business. The investment friendliness of the budget was reflected in the following measures:<sup>11</sup>

- the abolition of the nonresident shareholders' tax
- the dropping of import charges

#### Interest rates

Foreign missions awarded a mode value of 5 to this factor.

The Governor of the South African Reserve Bank, Dr Stals, admitted

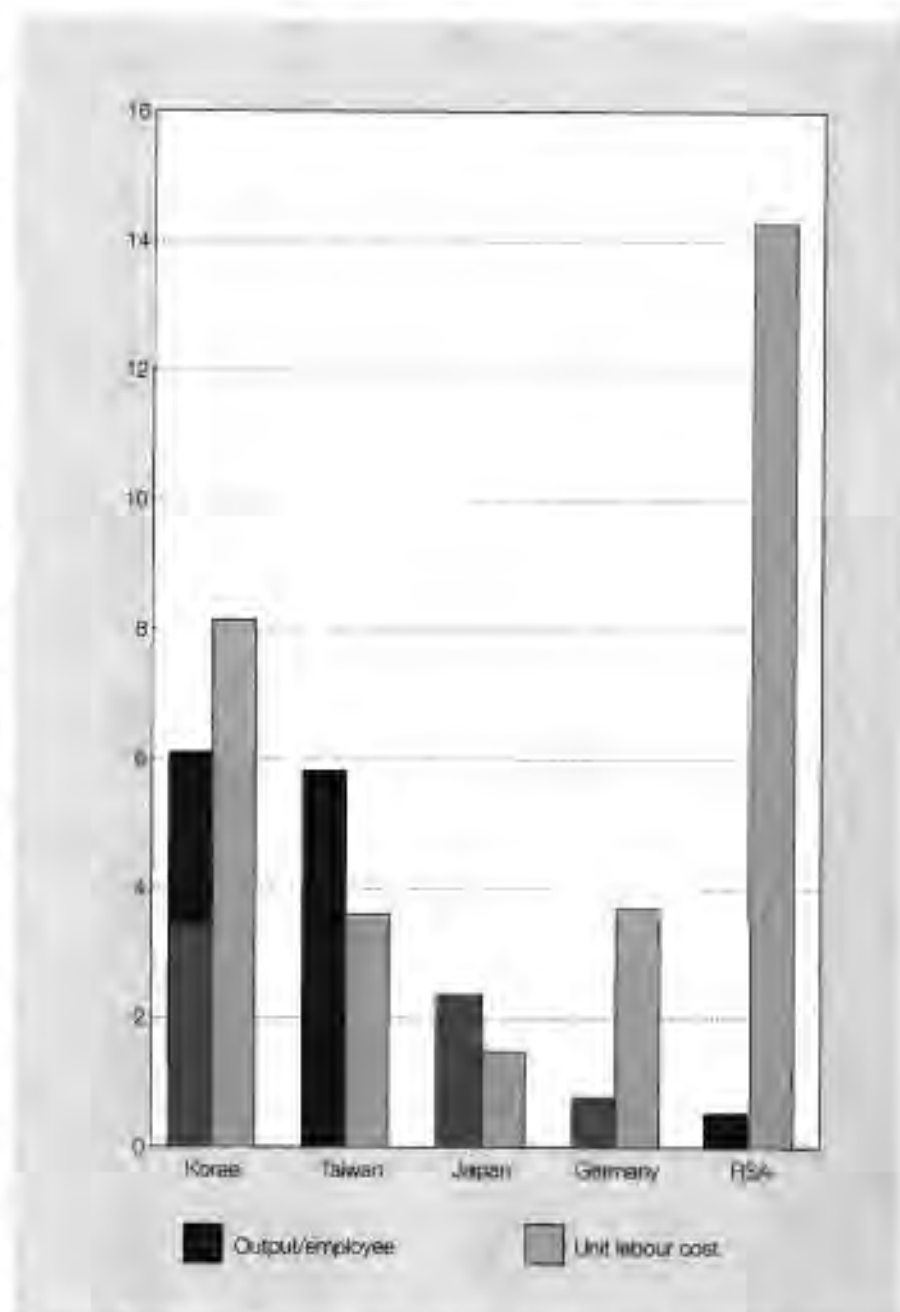


Figure 2: Relative productivity of SA vs selected countries (1985-92)

Source: NPI adjusted

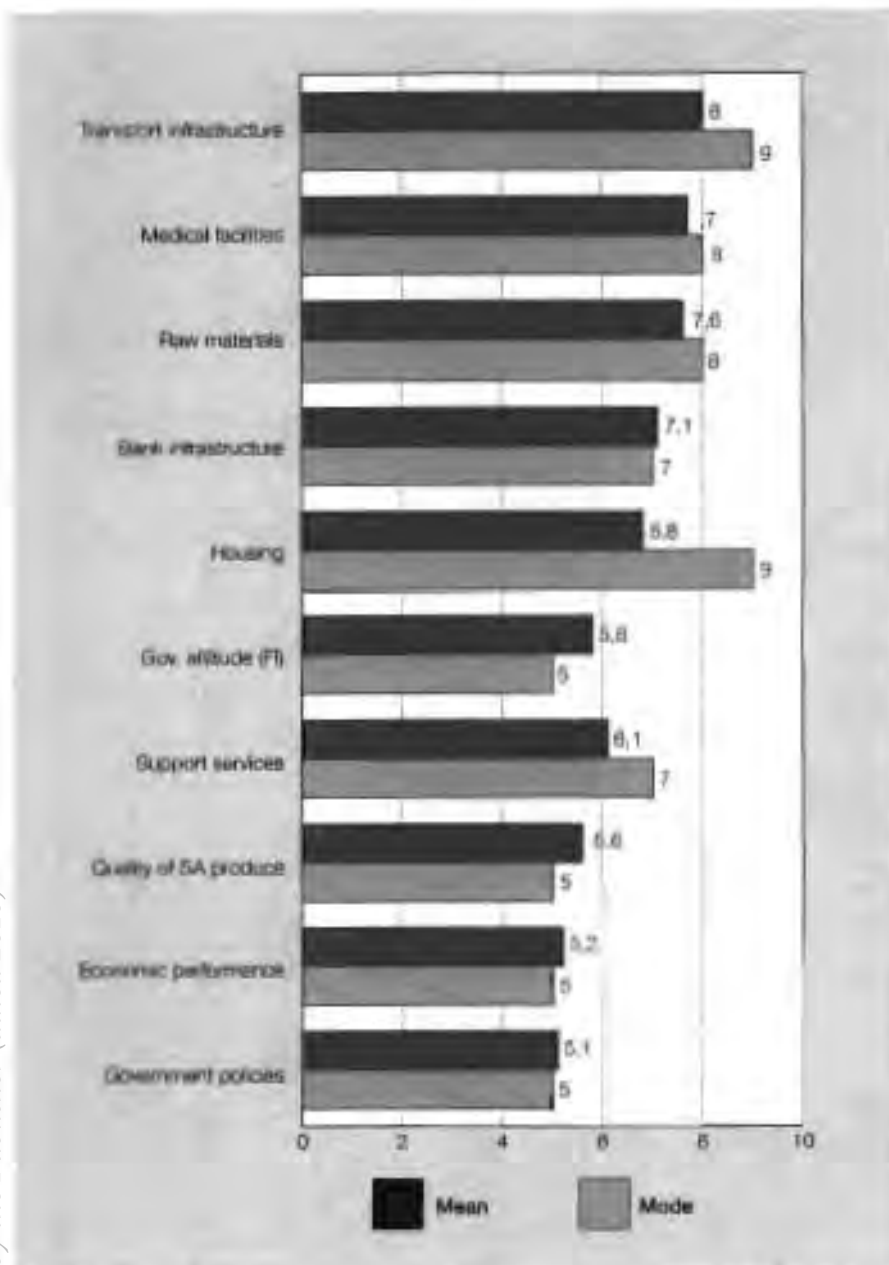
that monetary policy had been too relaxed during 1994. On 21 February 1995, he announced a one percentage point increase, from 13% to 14%, in the bank rate.<sup>12</sup> The bank rate was increased by a further one percentage point during June 1995. The bank rate is the rate at which the Reserve Bank provides credit to banks. These increases were introduced in an attempt to curb credit, combat inflation and protect the balance of payments. Another reason for tightening monetary policy was the objective of relaxing some exchange controls.

#### Factors conducive to investment in South Africa

Figure 3 indicates factors which the foreign representatives indicated were conducive to foreign investment during early 1995.

#### Transport infrastructure

Foreign missions awarded the highest value to this factor, resulting in a mode value of 9. Respondents felt that South Africa's infrastructure, and specifically its transport infrastructure, is of an exceptionally high standard and that this is a positive signal for investment



**Figure 3:** Factors conducive to foreign investment in South Africa  
(1999 Foreign Representatives/Mission)

decisions, and particularly when deciding on direct investments, like setting up manufacturing plants, factories and other value-adding projects.

#### Raw materials

Foreign missions awarded a mode value of 9 to this factor.

In reserves, South Africa ranks first in the world for the platinum group of metals (88%), manganese (85%), chromium (72%), vanadium (44%), gold (40%) and alumina-silicates (37%). It holds second position in reserves of vermiculite (40%) and zirconium minerals (26%). It has the world's

third largest reserves of uranium (13%), fluorapatite (12%), phosphate rock (7%) and antimony (3%).<sup>13</sup>

There is no reason why South Africa cannot benefit from any of the precious metals for export, but this would best be done by an organization such as a mining company riding on the back of a sophisticated international network.<sup>14</sup> Edwards believes that improvements to facilitate value-added industries should include the removal of regulations such as the rule that bullion can be sold only through the South African Reserve Bank. Precious metals, and particularly gold,

should also be discounted to local companies that benefit from them to ensure that the manufactured product is price-competitive in South Africa and internationally.

#### Housing

Foreign missions awarded a mode value of 9 to this factor. Although South Africa is experiencing a desperate shortage of low-income housing, its high-income housing compares favourably with overseas standards – both in quality and affordability.

#### Medical facilities

Foreign missions awarded the fourth highest value to this factor, resulting in a mode value of 8. Medical care is one of the determinants of quality of life. The quality of schools, medical facilities, housing and security is an important consideration for foreign personnel working on international projects, and this relatively high rating should be seen in this context. South Africa's relatively affordable medical cost structure is also a positive factor in this regard.

#### Banking infrastructure

Foreign missions awarded a relatively high mode value of 7 to this factor.

South African banking and financing instruments are excellent to assist international trade through a network of international banking links and the South African government has decided to allow the establishment of branches of international banking groups. Sunter<sup>15</sup> stresses this fact by stating the following: "South Africa probably has one of the most sophisticated financial services industries, eg banking and insurance, in the Southern hemisphere."

#### Support services

Foreign missions awarded a mode value of 7 to this factor, which means that their perception of services like business consulting, auditing, attorneys, et cetera, is above average.

#### The government's attitude towards investors

Foreign missions awarded a mode value of 5 to this factor. Government officials who come into contact with overseas investors must be informed of the job, investment and other opportunities associated with such investments so that they can receive them

favourably and courteously. Government policy on capital transfers to the investor's home country, foreign financing of staff salaries, foreign exchange control and import protection are factors that affect international business. The attitude towards overseas investors may be improved by introducing tax incentives and by relaxing foreign exchange control measures.

#### Government policies

Foreign missions awarded a mode value of 5 to this factor.

The South African government's policies are aimed at improving the quality of life for all its citizens. To this end it has embarked on various policies, for example, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), affirmative action and black empowerment. In terms of the RDP, the water supply to deprived communities will be improved and low-cost housing erected for the homeless, thus opening up opportunities in the construction industry.

#### Economic performance

Foreign missions awarded a mode value of 5 to this factor.

South Africa had a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$120 billion in 1994 and the highest GDP per capita in Southern Africa. In 1994 the GDP rose by 2,3%, the first increase since 1988. South Africa's foreign debt in the year to March 1995 was 15% of GDP, while its national savings rate was 17,5% of GDP. The World Bank is nevertheless of the opinion that the South African economy can grow at a sustainable 5% per year.<sup>16</sup>

Presently, 50% of South Africans do not have formal jobs. To alleviate this problem requires a savings rate of 22%. Encouragingly, domestic investment rose by 7% in real terms during 1994/1995. However, South Africa needs foreign investment, entrepreneurship and an increase in savings if it wants to sustain its economic growth.

#### The quality of South African products

Foreign missions awarded a mode value of 5 to this factor. It is clear that South Africa's products are not always up to the international standard, and

that much has still to be done to produce higher quality products.

### Conclusion

Investment in South Africa will increase significantly only once the factors not conducive to investment have been addressed to the satisfaction of potential foreign investors.

Government has shown a willingness to tackle thorny economic problems and to restructure the South African economy to make it more "investor friendly". Ideology has no place in the world of foreign investment and it is the South African government's responsibility to create the right environment for foreign investment and international business alliances in such a way that perceptions will change from "investment in South Africa is hugely postponable" to "investment in South Africa will add value to our business".

It is, however, not the exclusive responsibility of government to create a climate that is conducive to foreign investment.

Labour unions will have to contribute by tempering their demands for higher salaries and by playing a constructive role in worker forums, as envisaged by the proposed new labour legislation.

The management of South African companies will have to ensure increased productivity and better quality products. A participative management style may enable both management and labour to accomplish this.

South Africa is viewed as a country with investment potential. Foreign missions recommend investment in South Africa, but require that South Africa relax monetary restrictions, temper labour demands, improve safety and security, increase productivity, and maintain political stability, supply information on investment opportunity, free regional trade and involve the private sector in the expansion of affordable infrastructure.

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# Poverty

## among blacks in the Vaal Triangle

measured in terms of income indicators

*T J C Slabbert, J D van Wyk,  
M Levin and W Coetzee  
of Vista University examine  
the incidence of poverty in  
the Vaal Triangle,  
measured in terms of  
income indicators.*

### Background

Poverty in South Africa has a strong racial dimension. A recent study by the World Bank<sup>1</sup> shows that nearly 95% of South Africa's poor are black, 5% coloured and less than 1% are Asian or white. This article, therefore, concentrates on blacks only. It is a case study of blacks residing in the townships of the Vaal Triangle (VT).

### Geographical area and population

The Vaal Triangle is that area of integrated economic cohesion and interdependence that at the time of the study was under the jurisdiction of the Lekoa Vaal Metropolitan Council, the Sasolburg (Transitional) Local Council and the Deneysville-Refenkgotso Coordinating Committee. Although Sasolburg and Deneysville-Refenkgotso are located in the Free State and the Lekoa Vaal Metropolitan Area in the southern part of Gauteng, these areas form an integral part of an economy that cannot be separated by political boundaries. People who stay in Sasolburg, for example, work, shop or search for jobs in the Lekoa Vaal Metropolitan Area and vice versa. Poverty in the VT can be studied meaningfully only if all the relevant townships are included. (Table 1 gives a summary of the population of the area.)<sup>2</sup>

### Research methodology

The research for this article was done with the aid of questionnaires in 1991 and 1994. Maps of the townships listed in Table 1 were obtained and a sample stratification based on the geographical distribution and concentration of people in the areas was designed. The various townships were divided into zones and questionnaires were apportioned on a basis of approximately one questionnaire for every 164 inhabited sites. A total of 303 and 309 questionnaires were completed in 1991 and 1994 respectively, and on each occasion approximately 0,23% of the households in the area were covered.

About sixteen field workers were deployed in each of the surveys. The initial training was group-based, but some individuals received additional training. A research assistant was also available to help solve problems encountered. The questionnaires were completed from 12 September to 31 October 1991 and from 15 January to 15 March 1994. On receiving the questionnaires from the field workers, supervisors made spot checks on a random basis. Very few errors were found in the checked questionnaires.

Dwellings (houses and shacks) at which field workers were to complete questionnaires were chosen individually from maps. In cases where the

**TABLE 1** Estimated population of the black townships of the VT (1994)

Local authority	Township	Estimated population 1994	Subtotal
Western Vaal Metropolitan Substructure	Sebokeng	268 133	346 333
	Bophelong	48 287	
	Boipatong	29 913	
Vereeniging Kopanong Metropolitan Substructure	Sharpeville	105 046	329 208
	Evaton	224 162	
Deneysville-Refenkgotso Sasolburg Local Council	Refenkgotso	9 363	64 651
	Zamdela	55 288	
Vaal Triangle	TOTAL	740 192	740 192



breadwinner (or the spouse) was not available for an interview, or refused to participate, or where it was impossible to trace a dwelling, one of the next-door households was interviewed.

**Definition and measurement of poverty**

For the purpose of this article, poverty is defined as the *inability to attain a minimal standard of living*.<sup>3</sup> The standard of living is usually expressed in terms of households' income and expenditures; and is determined by the income necessary to buy a quantity of goods that is sufficiently nutritional to ensure survival. Poverty is thus a state of continuous deprivation of basic nutritional and personal essentials owing to insufficient income as measured against the average consumption of the total community.

A proper poverty profile should, in fact, address all dimensions of poverty, not simply income and expenditure, but also other aspects of welfare such as

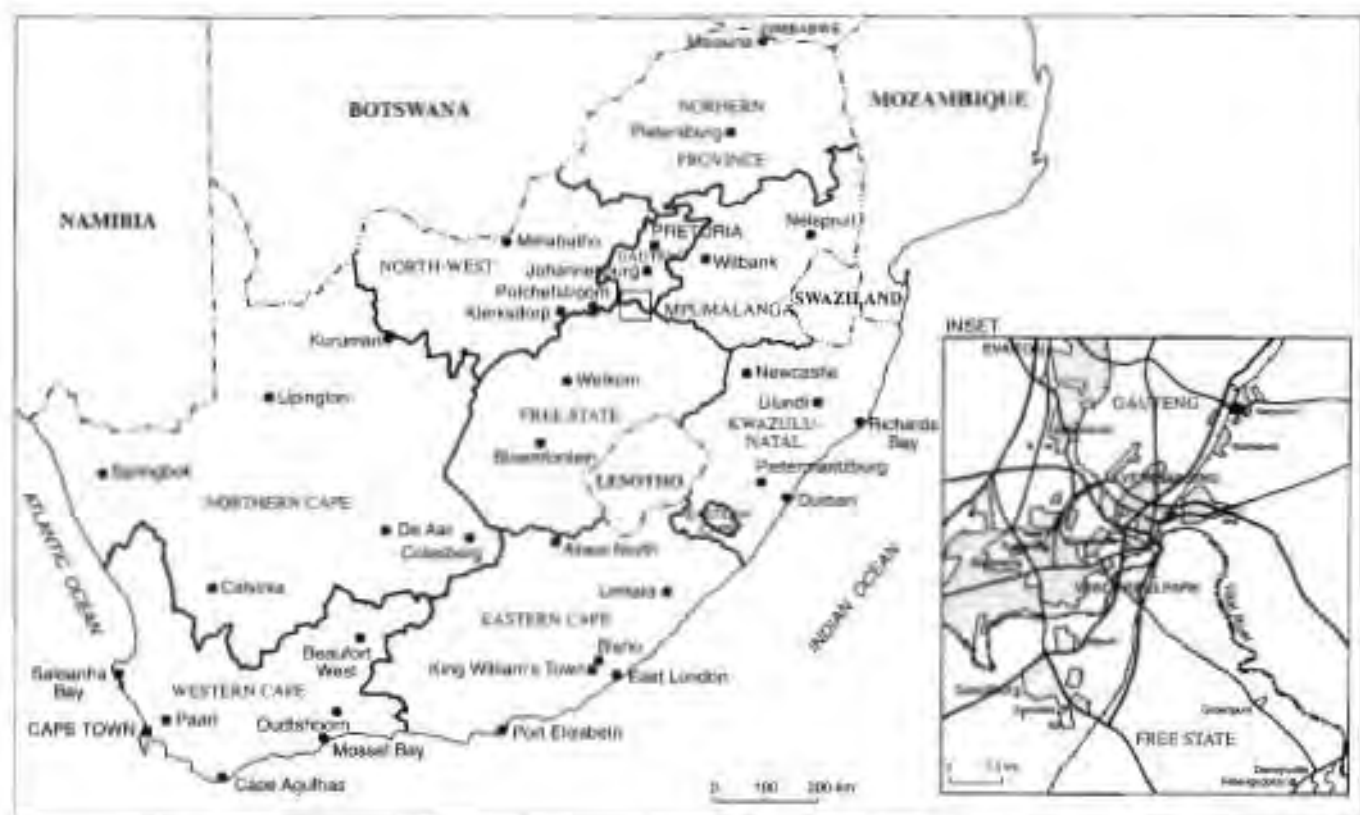
health, literacy and access to public services. Poverty is therefore usually described in terms of income and non-income indicators. This article, however, focuses only on income indicators. Income indicators are analysed in such a way as to attempt to discover the more subtle elements of poverty. Methods of analysis that are more sensitive than those commonly used are employed to describe the extent and magnitude of poverty.

The more common methods which use income as a yardstick to measure poverty are: comparing a household's income with a poverty line income (Household Subsistence Level (HSL) or Poverty Datum Line (PDL) in South Africa); the dependency ratio; the head-count index; the poverty gap index; the income distribution below the poverty line, and the concept of dominance.

*Household income compared to the HSL*

The most frequently used method of measuring poverty involves comparing a





household's income with a poverty line income. These are consumption-based poverty line incomes and calculate the income needed to buy a minimum quantity of nutritional and other basic necessities, including transport and rent. The poverty line is a threshold that separates the poor from the non-poor. The weakness of this method is that average household figures are used to distinguish the poor from the non-poor. A more effective approach would be to compare each household's subsistence expenditure with its total (combined) income. Such an approach also allows for further analysis, for instance, to calculate the extent to which each household falls below or above their own unique subsistence level.

The most frequently used poverty line in South Africa is the HSL as determined by Potgieter. Potgieter<sup>4</sup> defines the HSL as: an estimate of the theoretical income needed by an individual household if it is to maintain a defined minimum level of health and decency in the short term.

The HSL is calculated at the lowest retail cost of a basket of necessities of adequate quality, comprising the total food, clothing, fuel, lighting and washing and cleansing materials required for each person, together with

fuel, lighting and cleansing materials needed by the household as a whole, and the cost of rent and transport. A suitable calculation can thus be made for any household of any given size and composition. Table 2 lists Potgieter's HSL calculations for black households in the VT for 1994.<sup>5</sup>

The components of the HSL are limited to the short-term satisfaction of basic needs and make no provision for such essential requirements as medical expenses, education, savings, hire purchases, holidays, reading materials, entertainment, recreation, insurance, purchases and replacements of household

**TABLE 2** Calculation of the (monthly) HSL for the Vaal Triangle, March 1994

Age and sex	Food	Clothing	Fuel, light, washing and cleansing	Total (Rands)
<b>Children:</b>				
1 - 3 years	58,79	8,14	2,35	69,28
4 - 7 years	69,68	16,29	2,35	88,30
8 - 10 years	82,54	16,29	2,35	101,18
<b>Boys and men:</b>				
11 - 14 years	98,93	24,43	2,35	125,69
15 - 18 years	103,14	34,66	2,35	140,15
19 + years	104,89	34,66	2,35	141,90
<b>Girls and women:</b>				
11 - 14 years	94,52	24,43	2,35	121,28
15 - 18 years	91,24	32,57	2,35	126,14
19 + years	89,94	32,57	2,35	124,84
Household fuel, light, washing and cleansing materials				85,65
Rent per household				41,00
Transport per working member of the household				79,67

**TABLE 3** Percentage of households in different income categories expressed as % of their HSL

	Income as % of the HSL	% Households 1991	Cumulative % 1991	% Households 1994	Cumulative % 1994
A	0 - 50	9,3	9,3	15,2	15,2
B	51 - 100	20,8	30,1	27,2	42,4
C	101 - 150	15,8	45,9	21,0	63,4
D	151 - 200	18,2	64,1	10,7	74,1
E	201 - 250	9,6	73,7	8,1	82,2
F	251 - 300	6,5	80,0	4,9	87,1
G	301 - 350	6,6	86,6	4,9	91,9
H	351 - 400	4,6	91,2	3,2	95,1
I	401 - 450	3,0	94,2	0,6	95,8
J	451 - 500	1,5	95,5	1,9	97,7
K	501 - 550	0,3	95,8	1,7	99,4
L	551 - 600	1,5	97,1	0,6	100,0
M	601 +	2,9	100,0	0,0	100,0
	TOTAL	100,0		100,0	

equipment, and incidental transport. Potgieter<sup>9</sup> therefore argues that: Whilst the Household Subsistence Level indicates the cost of a theoretical budget of necessities, it does not suggest an adequate income because in practice, out of a total income equivalent to that budget, one third will be diverted away from the specified items to other immediate essentials. In this case, the income is not effective in enabling the household to maintain the standards of short-term health and decency specified in the HSL. The Household Effective Level of income is that which, after one third of it has been allocated to other items, is equal to the cost of

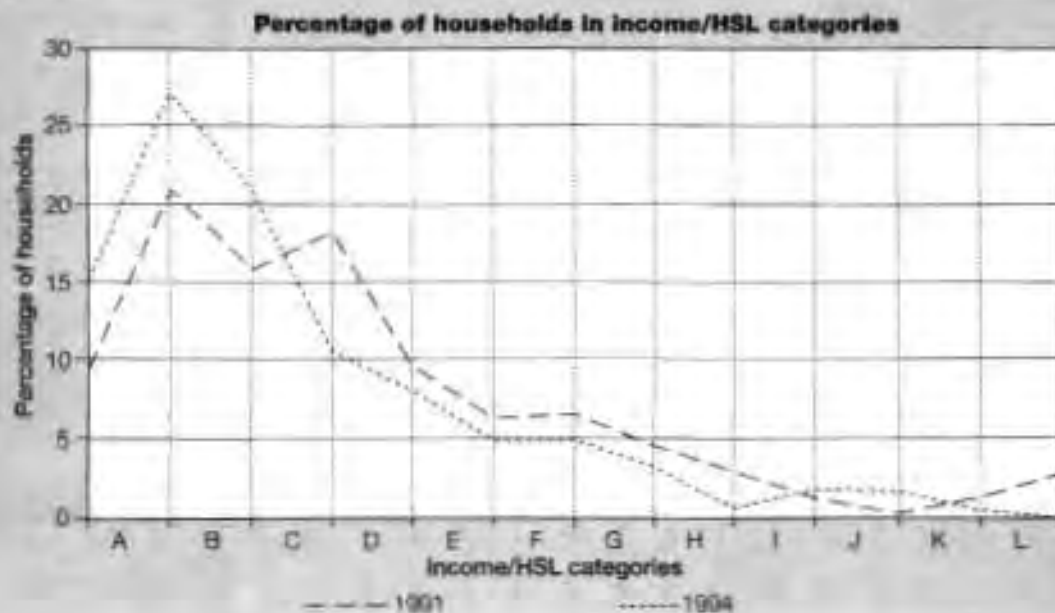
the HSL requirements for that household - i.e. the Household Effective Level = 150% of the Household Subsistence Level.

Table 3 and the accompanying graph show the percentages of households which fell in different categories of incomes expressed as percentages of the applicable HSLs in October 1991<sup>7</sup> and March 1994.<sup>8</sup> Row A and B indicate the percentage of households earning an income below or equal to the HSL. Row C indicates the percentage of households earning an income above the HSL but below or equal to the HEL (Household Effective Level) threshold. Row D to M indicate the

percentage of households earning an income above the HEL threshold.

Table 3 highlights the increase in poverty since October 1991:

- The percentage of households receiving incomes smaller than their respective HSLs increased from 50,1% to 47,4% (row B).
- The percentage of households receiving incomes above their respective HSLs, but less than the HEL increased from 15,8% to 21,0% (row C).
- The percentage of households receiving an income above the HEL level decreased from 54,1% to



**TABLE 4** DRAH and DRAIH: 1991 and 1994

Year	(1) Sample population	(2) Non-earners	(3) Earners*	(4) Dependency ratio: DRAH	(5) Dependency ratio: DRAIH
			(1)-(2)	(2)/(3)	Mean of DRAIHs
1991	1 677	1 143	534	2.14	2.61
1994	1 695	1 197	496	2.41	2.87

\*Note: Pensioners are included as 'earners' as they are able supporting household members with their pension money.

**Example 1** Dependency ratio

Method 1 (DRAH)

Three households under consideration:

Household 1 has 5 members – 4 are income earners and 1 is a non-income earner

Household 2 has 5 members – 1 is an income earner and 4 are non-income earners

Household 3 has 6 members – 1 is an income earner and 5 are non-income earners

Total number of income earners: 6

Total number of non-income earners: 10

Dependency ratio: non-income earners/Income earners = 10/6 = 1,67

Dependency ratio of average of households (DRAH) = 1,67

Method 2 (DRAIH)

Three households under consideration:

Household 1 has 5 members – 4 are income earners and 1 is a non-income earner

Household 2 has 5 members – 1 is an income earner and 4 are non-income earners

Household 3 has 6 members – 1 is an income earner and 5 are non-income earners

Dependency ratio of household 1 =  $\frac{1}{4}$  = 0,25

Dependency ratio of household 2 =  $\frac{4}{1}$  = 4,0

Dependency ratio of household 3 =  $\frac{5}{1}$  = 5,0

9,25

Dependency ratio of average of individual households (DRAIH) = 3 = 3,08

36,6% (subtracting 45,9% and 63,4% in row C from 100%), indicating that 17,5% of the households which previously received an income above their HEL have moved into the categories below the HEL. This represents a deterioration of 32,4% (from 54,1% to 36,6%).

The rise in poverty can be attributed to the fact that the unemployment rate for black people in the VT increased by about 57% (13 percentage points) from 35% to 48% in the same period,<sup>9</sup> shrinking the average income per household from R1 436 to an under-inflated amount of R1 351 per month.<sup>10</sup>

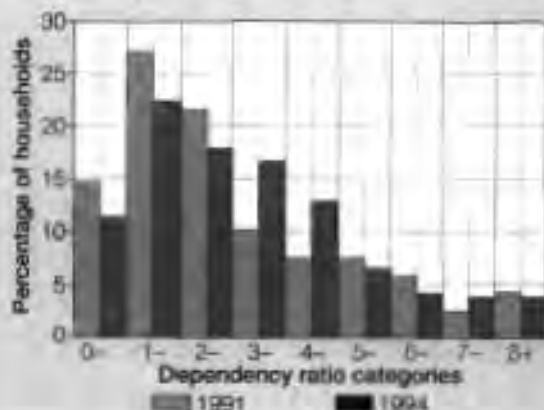
The HSL for an average black household of 5,5 persons in the VT was R876,13 per month and the HEL R1 314,20 in March 1994.<sup>11</sup> If the average income of a black household of a similar size is compared to the 1991 figure, the average income per household is only 52% above the HSL, compared to 91% in October 1991.<sup>12</sup> This further illustrates the erosion of the relative income of households precipitating the high poverty levels listed above.

**Dependency ratio**

One of the causes of poverty is the high rate of dependency in black fam-

**TABLE 5** Dependency ratios, 1991 and 1994

Ratio	Freq 1991	Freq 1994	% 1991	% 1994
0-0,99	45	35	14,8	11,4
1-1,9	82	69	27,3	22,3
2-2,9	65	55	21,5	17,8
3-3,9	51	52	10,2	16,8
4-4,9	23	40	7,6	12,9
5-5,9	22	21	7,3	6,8
6-6,9	18	15	5,9	4,2
7-7,9	4	12	1,3	3,9
8+	13	12	4,3	3,9
TOTAL	303	309	100,0	100,0



**TABLE 6** Headcount indexes of poverty, 1991 and 1994 (DRAIH method)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Year	Sample population	Mean of DRAIHs	HSH (Rand)	HSLIH per capita per month (Rand)	HSLIH for earner and dependents (Rand)	Poor earners	Poor head count	Index %
				(5)/hh size	(4) × (1) × 68		(6) × (1) × 22	(7) × (1) × 100
1991	1 677	2 609	(X <sub>1</sub> ...X <sub>1677</sub> )	(Y <sub>1</sub> ...Y <sub>1677</sub> )	(Z <sub>1</sub> ...Z <sub>1677</sub> )	182	656,84	39,17
1994	1 693	2 871	(X <sub>1</sub> ...X <sub>1693</sub> )	(Y <sub>1</sub> ...Y <sub>1693</sub> )	(Z <sub>1</sub> ...Z <sub>1693</sub> )	229	686,46	52,56

**Notes:**  
 (a) = Dependency ratio of each household individually (DRAIH)  
 hh = Household  
 b = PSH for each household individually (HSH), where (X<sub>1</sub>...X<sub>1677</sub>) refers to the 1991 survey and (X<sub>1</sub>...X<sub>1693</sub>) to the 1994 survey.  
 c = Per capita PSH for each household individually, where (Y<sub>1</sub>...Y<sub>1677</sub>) refers to the 1991 survey and (Y<sub>1</sub>...Y<sub>1693</sub>) to the 1994 survey.  
 d = HSL for earner and dependents of each household individually, where (Z<sub>1</sub>...Z<sub>1677</sub>) refers to the 1991 survey and (Z<sub>1</sub>...Z<sub>1693</sub>) to the 1994 survey.  
 e =  $(Y_1 \times (1 - 16,8\% + 19,2) + Z_1 + 16,8Z_1 + 19,2Z_1) \div (1 + 16,8 + 19,2 + 16,8 \times 16,8 + 19,2 \times 19,2) \div (1 + 16,8 + 19,2)$ , where (Z<sub>1</sub>...Z<sub>1677</sub>) refers to the 1991 survey and (Z<sub>1</sub>...Z<sub>1693</sub>) to the 1994 survey.

lies. Those who earn income, have to support so many non-earners that their incomes are spread very thinly. This means that the food, clothes and shelter they can afford amount to less than the minimum that is regarded as essential.

Dependency ratios are usually calculated by dividing the total number of non-income earners by the total number of income earners. However, this way of calculating the dependency ratio is relatively insensitive because it is based on averages. Example 3 illustrates the point.

Method 1 (DRAH) shows that one income earner is on average supporting 1,67 non-income earners. A far more accurate method is to calculate the dependency ratio on the basis of individual households, and then to calculate the average or mean of the different dependency ratios. This is done in method 2.

Method 2 (DRAH) gives an average figure of 3,08, implying that each income earner is supporting 3,08 non-earners on average. This method of calculation gives a far more accurate result and depicts the situation more realistically. The usual method (method 1) of calculation creates the impression that there are six income earners supporting 10 non-earners, but the true situation is that the 4 income earners in household 1 are *not* supporting non-earners in households two and three.

Table 4 shows the dependency ratios in respect of 1991 and 1994 according to the DRAH method of calculation and the more accurate DRAH method outlined above (column 5).

For 1991 and 1994 the ratio was 2,14 and 2,41 (column 4), respectively, on the basis of the usual method (method 1), and 2,61 and 2,87 (column 5) on the basis of the more sensitive method (method 2).

The mean dependency ratio for all households of 2,61 in 1991 and 2,87 in 1994 implies that the number of persons supported by each income earner has increased, and that the number of earners, relative to the number of persons supported, has decreased. This is an indication that poverty has increased, probably owing to the 37% increase in the unemployment rate during the same period.<sup>14</sup>

Table 5 and the accompanying graph show the frequency of households with various dependency ratios, calculated by means of the more sensitive method, for 1994 compared to 1991.

The top three rows of table 5 show that in the 0–2,9 dependency

ratio categories the percentages were higher in 1991 than in 1994, implying that in 1991 some 58,8% of the dependency ratios were between 0 and 2,9 compared to only 47,5% in 1994. On the other hand, only 43,2% of the dependency ratios were above 2,9 in 1994, showing that there were relatively fewer income earners in 1994 to support a greater number of non-earners.

#### Headcount index

To measure the scope of poverty, a headcount index is calculated. This index expresses the number of poor as a percentage of the total population.<sup>15</sup> In the light of the explanation given above, it was decided to make use of the results obtained by means of the DRAH method for the purposes of this article.

The method based on individual households first calculates the *HSL* for each individual household (HSLIH in

**TABLE 7** Poverty gap indexes: 1991 and 1994

Year	Income of the poor household	HSLIH for earner and dependents	Poverty gap index (mean of poor households)
	(1)	(2)	(3)
			(3)–(1)/(2)
1991	(Y <sub>1</sub> ...Y <sub>1677</sub> )	(Z <sub>1</sub> ...Z <sub>1677</sub> )	0,58
1994	(Y <sub>1</sub> ...Y <sub>1693</sub> )	(Z <sub>1</sub> ...Z <sub>1693</sub> )	0,50

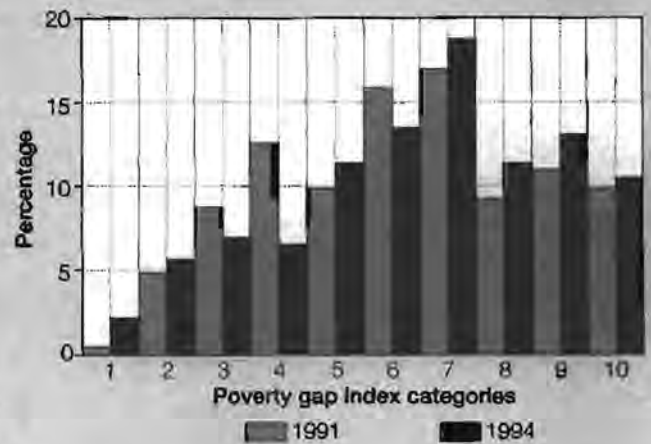
**Notes:**  
 Y = Total income of each household individually, where (Y<sub>1</sub>...Y<sub>1677</sub>) refers to the 1991 survey and (Y<sub>1</sub>...Y<sub>1693</sub>) to the 1994 survey.  
 z = HSL for earner and dependents of each household individually, where (Z<sub>1</sub>...Z<sub>1677</sub>) refers to the 1991 survey and (Z<sub>1</sub>...Z<sub>1693</sub>) to the 1994 survey.



**TABLE 8** Frequency distribution of poverty gap indexes for individual poor households: 1991 and 1994

	Index*	Freq 1991	Freq 1994	% 1991	% 1994
1	0-10	1	5	0,5	2,2
2	11-20	9	13	4,9	5,7
3	21-30	16	16	8,8	7,0
4	31-40	23	15	12,6	6,6
5	41-50	18	26	9,9	11,4
6	51-60	29	31	15,9	13,5
7	61-70	31	43	17,0	18,8
8	71-80	17	26	9,3	11,4
9	81-90	20	30	11,0	13,1
10	91-99	18	24	9,9	10,5
TOTAL		182	229	100,0	100,0

\*A larger value of the Index indicates more severe or deeper poverty.



column (3)), according to the number of individuals, their age and gender, in each household. The HSLIH for each household is then divided by its own household size to find its own *per capita* HSLIH in column (4). The HSLIH for earner and dependent(s) in column (5) is then calculated by taking the *per capita* HSLIH for each individual household and multiplying it by the dependency ratio of the specific household plus one (DRAIH + 1). Column (6) then shows the number of income earners earning an income less than the amount determined in column (5). In other words, poor income earners are those who receive an income less than their specific HSLIH for earner and dependent(s) in column (6).

The poor headcount in column (7) is then calculated by multiplying the number of poor income earners (6) by the mean of the dependency ratios of all households (2). This ratio is based on the mean of individual households (DRAIH). The headcount index of poverty (8) is then calculated by dividing the poor headcount by the sample population (1) and by multiplying it by 100.

Table 6 shows that the samples' poor headcount for 1991 was 656,84, and 886,46 for 1994, compared to 552,64 and 787,71 calculated with the usual method (method 1). The poverty index for 1991 was 39,17 and for 1994 it was 52,36, compared to 32,95 and 46,53 when calculated with method 1. A larger portion of the total population can be regarded as poor when the more sensitive method is used to when

the normal method is used. In fact, the indexes are respectively 18,88% and 12,53% higher.

*Poverty gap index*

The extent of poverty is measured by calculating the poverty gap index and income distribution below the poverty line, respectively.

The method that was used to calculate the poverty gap of each individual household is shown in table 7. To calculate the poverty gap for an individual household, the total income of each individual household (1) is subtracted from its own HSLIH for earner and dependents (column (2)), measured with the more sensitive method (see column 5 of table 6) and then divided by the amount of column (2). In column (3) the mean poverty gap index of all the poor households is given.

This method does not only give a good indication of the depth of poverty, but also captures the severity of poverty, giving a result which also shows the distribution of poverty (see table 8). The larger the value, the larger is the gap between the poverty line income and the income of the poor household, indicating a greater depth of poverty. The mean of the individual poverty gaps can then be taken as a measure to express the depth of poverty in general.

In these terms the overall poverty gap was 0,58 in 1991 and 0,60 in 1994. This means that the gap between the HSLIH for earner and dependents and the total income received by the household increased since 1991.

In table 8, rows 7 to 10 show that in 1991 a greater percentage of households were in extreme poverty compared to 1994. Some 53,8% of the poor households had a poverty gap between 0.61 and 0.99 in 1994 compared to only 47,2% in 1991.

*Income distribution below the poverty line*

The severity of poverty depends on how the poor are distributed below the poverty line income. Clustering of the poor immediately below the line is less serious than a clustering far below the line. In table 3 the income of every household is expressed as a percentage of its own specific HSL. In table 9, households with an income of less than their individual HSL, are analysed further.

It shows the frequencies and percentages of households that fell within specific income/HSL brackets, ie 0% to 10%; 11% to 20%; etc in 1991 and 1994 respectively. It shows that the number and percentage of households that fell in the lower brackets (indicating more severe poverty) had increased since 1991. For instance, in 1994 some 4 (3,1%) households had an income/HSL ratio in the 0-10% bracket. In 1991, only 2 (2,1%) households, were in this bracket. In fact the last column of table 9 shows a significant trend of movement to the lower income/HSL brackets (more severe poverty) in 1994 as opposed to 1991.

Approached from a different viewpoint, *individual income earners and their dependents*, rather than

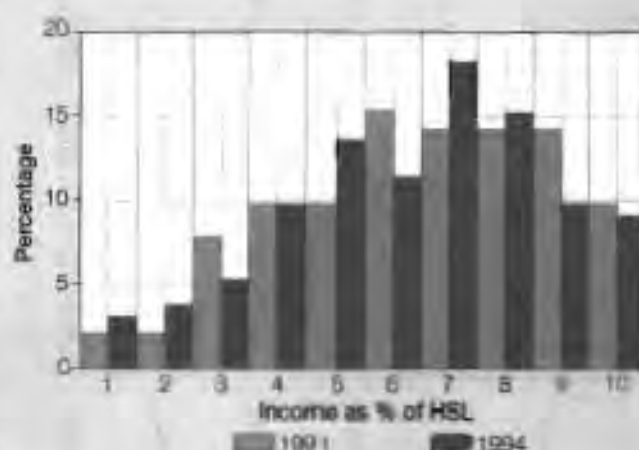
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**TABLE 9** Poor households' income as % of their HSL: 1991 and 1994

Income/HSL brackets*	Freq 1991	Freq 1994	% 1991	% 1994	
1	6-10	2	4	2.1	5.1
2	11-20	2	5	2.1	5.8
3	21-30	7	7	7.8	9.3
4	31-40	9	13	9.9	9.9
5	41-50	9	18	9.9	13.7
6	51-60	14	15	15.4	11.5
7	61-70	13	24	14.5	18.3
8	71-80	13	20	14.5	15.3
9	81-90	15	13	14.3	9.9
10	91-100	9	12	9.9	9.2
TOTAL		91	131	100.0	100.0

\* A smaller value of the Income/HSL brackets indicates more severe or deeper poverty.



households, can be used in the analysis (table 10).

The incomes of poor income earners are expressed as a percentage of the HSL of the income earner and its dependents to obtain an income/HSL ratio in table 10. It shows the frequencies and percentages of poor income earners and dependents that fall within specific income/HSL brackets in 1991 and 1994 respectively. Comparing the 1994 figure with that of 1991, the first two rows indicate that a larger percentage of poor earners fell in the lower (more severe poverty) brackets in 1994 than did in 1991.

**Dominance**

This concept allows for an assessment of whether poverty has increased or

decreased in time, regardless of the poverty line income or poverty yardstick selected. It is based on a comparison of cumulative income distributions at two different points in time. If the cumulative distribution of income for the second year lies nowhere above that for the first year, then poverty has unambiguously decreased. This is called the first order dominance condition.

If the cumulative distributions cross, the issue is more complicated. However, if the crossover(s) appears at an income level at or above the poverty line, first order dominance still prevails. But if the crossover appears at an income level below the poverty line income, the question is which distribution has the larger cu-

luminative frequency. This is called the second order dominance condition.<sup>15</sup>

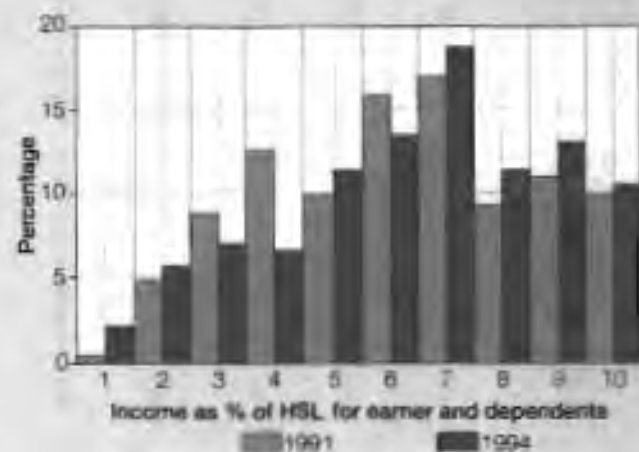
Table 11 show cumulative percentage incomes for 1991 and 1994 for similar income categories. The table shows that poverty has increased.

A crossover does take place at the 301-400 income category, where the distribution of income for 1994 has a larger cumulative frequency than in 1991. This crossover occurs at an income level below the poverty line of R876. (The average size of black households in the VT is 5.5 and the HSL for a household of 5.5 is R876.13 per month). This is an indication that poverty increased since 1991. In 1994 the larger cumulative frequency below the poverty line indicates that more people earn an income below the poverty line.

**TABLE 10** Income of poor income earners as % of the HSL for earner and dependents: 1991 and 1994

Categories	Freq 1991	Freq 1994	% 1991	% 1994	
1	0-10	1	5	0.5	2.2
2	11-20	9	13	4.9	5.7
3	21-30	16	16	8.8	7.0
4	31-40	23	15	12.6	6.6
5	41-50	18	26	9.9	11.4
6	51-60	29	31	15.9	13.5
7	61-70	31	45	17.0	18.8
8	71-80	17	26	9.3	11.4
9	81-90	20	30	11.0	13.1
10	91-100	18	24	9.9	10.5
TOTAL		182	229	100.0	100.0

Note: A smaller percentage (category) indicates more severe poverty.



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**TABLE 11** Income distribution of all earners of an income: 1991 and 1994

Monthly income category	Cumulative percentage 1991	Cumulative percentage 1994	Crossover (*)
1-100	2,8	4,2	•
101-200	9,2	8,5	
201-300	25,5	15,5	
301-400	32,2	39,1	•
401-500	41,6	45,4	•
501-600	48,9	52,0	•
601-700	53,2	50,0	•
701-800	61,4	61,1	
801-1000	71,9	71,1	
1000-1500	89,3	87,1	
1501-2000	95,1	94,8	
2001-2500	98,1	98,0	
2501-3000	99,3	99,2	
3001-3500	99,8	99,4	
3501-4000	99,8	99,8	
4001-4500	100,0	100,0	

**Measures of inequality**

The Lorenz curve is normally used to show the distribution of income earned over a certain period in relation to the cumulative percentage of recipients thereof. The percentage of income recipients (households) is plotted cumulatively along the horizontal axis. The percentage of income received is plotted on the vertical axis. The diagonal line is called the line of equality. The curved line is the Lorenz curve and shows the degree of inequality in receipts of income. The further away it lies from the line of equality, the greater the degree of inequality.<sup>16</sup>

The Lorenz curve for black households in the VT for 1994 is given in table 12 and indicates that 90% of the black households receive only

48,48% of the total income received and that the other 10% receive 51,52% of the total income received.<sup>17</sup>

The Gini coefficient measures the degree of inequality based on the Lorenz curve. The Gini coefficient is given by the area A divided by the total area A and B of the graph in table 12. It can vary anywhere from zero (perfect equality) to one (perfect inequality). The larger the fraction, the more unequal the distribution of income.<sup>18</sup>

The Gini coefficient of black households in the VT was 0,55 in 1991 compared to 0,66 in 1994 and this indicates that the distribution became more equal.<sup>19</sup> Although this figure does not show a large measure of inequality, it would look much higher had the incomes of white earners been included.

If the income of individual recipients are taken into consideration, the Gini coefficient was 0,74 in 1991 compared to 0,47 in 1994. In both cases the distribution became more equal but the coefficient of individual recipients is higher, which means that there is a higher degree of inequality when individuals are considered.

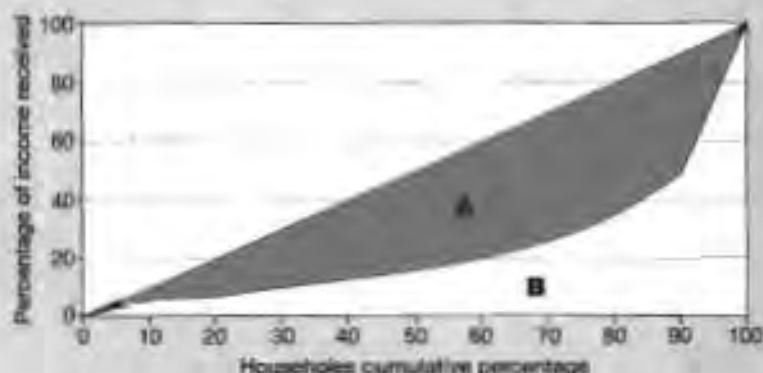
**Conclusion**

Poverty in black households of the VT increased substantially in the 28-month period from October 1991 to March 1994. The percentage of households receiving incomes less than their respective HSL incomes increased from 30,1% to 42,2%. The dependency ratio increased from 2,61 to 2,87 – indicating that the number of income earners relative to non-income earners decreased. The headcount index increased from 39,17% to 52,36%, indicating that the poor section of the population increased. The poverty gap index (an indication of the gap between the income of poor income earners and the HSL income) increased from 0,58 to 0,60 indicating that the extent of poverty increased. Income distribution below the poverty line shows a significant trend to the lower income/HSL brackets indicating a worsening of the position of those who are poor. The dominance concept also indicates that poverty increased. Some 90% of black households receive 48,9% of the income while the other 10% of the households received 51,5% of the total income. The Gini coefficient shows that the poor became more equal in their poverty.

The income indicators analysed above show that both the magnitude and the extent of poverty amongst

**TABLE 12** Lorenz curve: 1994

Households cum %	% of income received
10	5,83
20	7,00
30	10,00
40	13,00
50	15,83
60	20,00
70	25,60
80	34,67
90	48,48
100	100,00



blacks increased in the VT from 1991 to 1994. In as much as the poverty amongst the black metropolitan population of the VT can be regarded as a proxy of poverty among blacks in other metropolitan areas, stimulating the economy is an urgent priority.

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# Tourist Trends

*Denis Fair, Fellow of the Africa Institute, has compiled this account of trends in the tourist industry in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Seychelles from recently published reports.*

In recognition of the important economic contribution that the industry makes to many of the continent's countries, 1991 was designated the Year of African Tourism. In view of the advantages to these economies – tourism is usually measured as an invisible export – the African Tourism Association (ATA) and the Africa Commission of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) as well as national bodies promote the sector worldwide. Tourists are defined as those arriving for leisure/holiday and business purposes, but this excludes day-trippers. Over the past 25 years tourism has been the world's fastest growing economic sector: the lion's share of arrivals accounted for by Europe (60% in 1994) and the Americas (20%). Africa's share, by contrast, was a modest 1.5%, at least up from 2.6% in 1980. Its share of total monetary receipts from tourism, however, was only 1.8% of the world's total in 1994, having decreased, relatively but not absolutely, since 1980. In 1994 tourists to Africa targeted mainly North Africa (45%, 5 countries), Southern Africa (23%, 5 countries) and Eastern Africa (17%, 16 countries). Western Africa accounted for only 7.3% of arrivals to 13 countries and Middle Africa 1.8% to 8 countries.<sup>1</sup>

The main benefits from tourism are economic – increased foreign exchange earnings and employment, stimulation of local tourist goods and services, extra tax revenue for the state, the promotion of peripheral and backward areas and increased economic activity generally. Others, however, are quick to point out the disadvantages. They ask how much of the foreign exchange earned is left over after the high import cost of consumer goods to cater for the needs of tourists and after revenues earned by internationally financed hotels and tour operators are repatriated. Then, too, the majority of jobs created are menial and unskilled, while managerial posts are often filled by expatriates. In addition, the contact of picturesque but poor Africans and wealthy foreigners may have socially disruptive effects and even cause an escalation in crime. Moreover,

could outlays on expensive tourist infrastructure not be better spent on other more urgent development projects? In fact, some critics claim that Kenya's tourist industry "has done little to raise general living standards" in spite of its being a key element in the economy.<sup>2</sup>

Some label Africa's "tourist" countries as those in which the sector contributes 5% and more to the gross national product (GNP). In 1993, on this definition, they comprised only Kenya, Tanzania, Seychelles and Mauritius in eastern Africa, the The Gambia in West Africa and Tunisia in North Africa, closely followed by São Tomé and Príncipe (4.9%) and Morocco (4.5%).<sup>3</sup>

## East Africa

East Africa's tourist attractions are the wealth of its wildlife, the variety and charm of its African culture, its tropical beaches and its scenic diversity. Although Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Seychelles accounted for only 6.3% of Africa's tourist arrivals in 1994, they netted 10.9% of the earnings. The difference lies in the high proportion (67%) of wealthier tourists visiting them from overseas compared with the high proportion of relatively less wealthy tourists visiting from one African country to another (49%). As a result East Africa's earnings per tourist amounted to \$608 as against \$347 for the continent as a whole. The dependence of these four countries on tourism is seen in its contribution to their GNPs (1993), viz. Seychelles 26.1%, Kenya 6.1% and Tanzania 5.3%. Uganda is in the process of rapidly increasing tourism's 1993 share of only 1.4%.

## Kenya

Wildlife attracts 80% of Kenya's tourists. Its game parks and reserves, of which 55 have been gazetted since 1946, now cover 7.7% of the national domain. The most popular ones border Tanzania, viz. Tsavo, Amboseli and Masai Mara, with others west and north of Nairobi. Eight are marine parks covering the popular coastal zone from south of Mombasa northwards to Malindi and Lamu.<sup>4</sup>





Kenya's tourist industry soared after independence in 1963 when arrivals were 110 200 and receipts \$25.2 million. During the 1970s the number continued to grow by an average of 12% a year and the 1980s saw the country as one of Africa's most popular tourist destinations, arrivals rising to a record 814 000 in 1990 and receipts to \$466 million. Overseas visitors accounted for 73% of the arrivals. In that year well over 100 000 persons were employed directly in the industry in hotels, restaurants, lodges, transport and trade, while more than 200 000 depended indirectly upon it. By 1987 tourism had surpassed the export of coffee and tea as the country's chief foreign exchange earner.<sup>5</sup>

Unfortunately the boom was not to last. In 1991 the Gulf War seriously affected tourism in East Africa along with rising oil prices and higher air fares and interest rates. In Kenya itself reports of political instability and criminal attacks on tourists generated negative publicity overseas. As a result cancellations and stay-aways saw arrivals fall substantially, continuing through to 1992 when numbers were down 32 000 on the 1990 figure. Receipts fell in sympathy by \$26 million at a time when tourism was urgently needed to offset depressed coffee and high oil prices.<sup>6</sup>

By 1994 an encouraging improvement in both arrivals and receipts was registered but the 867 000 visitors in that year hardly matched the 1 183 million predicted for 1993 in the National Development Plan 1989-93. Recent estimates, taking into account some still negative perceptions of the country, see earnings recovering gently to \$510 million in 1997 after declining in 1995 and a further decline surmised in 1996.<sup>7</sup>

It is clear that South Africa, since its change in political direction, has become one of Kenya's main tourist competitors. In 1994 Kenya's foreign visitors were not greatly different in number from the 785 000 which alone entered South Africa's leading airports of Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban. Arrivals at these airports in 1995 increased by 42.3% to 1,117 million with earnings rising to \$1.6 billion. Estimates now put tourists arriving by air at 3 million by the year 2000, a figure growing steadily further away from Kenya's more modest prospects. The total number of visitors arriving in South Africa by road, rail and all airports was 3.4 million in 1994 and over 4 million in 1995.<sup>8</sup>



Above: The island of Mahé, which forms part of the beautiful Seychelles

Below: Lazy lions in the Serengeti National Park, Tanzania

The Kenya government has responded in a number of ways to the challenges posed by its tourist industry. In 1992 it introduced a package of tax cuts applicable to the industry followed later by the establishment of a special police force to protect tourists and a tourism board to promote the sector more vigorously. In its National Development Plan 1989-93 it indicated alarm at the growth of mass tourism, ie the expansion of organized package tours. These yielded little in the way of earnings with costs being paid in advance to overseas operators. At the same time they caused parks and beaches to be crowded out, thus threatening the very resources upon which the industry feeds. "Tourism kills tourism" in these circumstances and destroys the charm and enjoyment of those areas that tourists seek. The government, in association with the Wildlife Service, aims to give less encouragement to package tours and to maximize foreign exchange earnings and employment by placing more emphasis on the "quality end of the market", thus ensuring instead "an ecologically sensitive tourism". It launched a beach management programme in 1995 to counter crime and to offset damage to the coastal environment. It is diversifying its tourist resources by promoting deep-sea fishing, scuba diving and foot safaris and by encouraging domestic tourism. Foreign investment in the industry is already considerable and it is being further encouraged by simplifying investment procedures. A new international class hotel has opened in Nairobi and the airport at Mombasa has been modernized.<sup>9</sup>







The Kenyan Masai Mara, with its unforgettable views of Kilimanjaro, remains an irresistible tourist attraction

### Tanzania

Tanzania's tourist potential is considerable. Its very popular northern circuit includes Mt Kilimanjaro, the Ngorongoro crater, the Olduvai gorge and the Serengeti plains, rich in wildlife, scenery and the history of early humankind. Its beaches rival those of Kenya and the island of Zanzibar attracts with its natural beauty and cultural heritage.

Yet, until quite recently, government disinterest and political events saw this potential neglected. The country's earlier socialist policy meant a government monopoly of the tourist industry, an unhelpful bureaucracy and an inadequate infrastructure. From a peak of 178 000 in 1974 the number of arrivals fell to 78 000 in 1985, partly owing to Tanzania's war with Amin of Uganda in 1979. In 1985 visitors to Tanzania numbered only 14% of those going to Kenya and receipts only 8%.<sup>10</sup>

Subsequently the situation improved and, benefitting partly from Kenya's setback in 1991–92, arrivals reached 234 000 in 1994, an increase of 13% per year over the nine-year period since 1985. Beginning in 1992 the government launched its national tourism policy and an ambitious programme to change the country's image. It established the Tourism Board directing publicity heavily towards Japan and Southeast Asia. At the instigation of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund the economy was liberalized. Private investment in the tourist industry was encouraged and an Investment Promotion Centre was established. Government participation was reduced and confined to providing "basic necessities and facilities". In 1996 the World Bank helped to fund the upgrading of the tourist infrastructure. Improvements have been made to accommodation in national parks, road access to tourist attractions and passenger facilities at airports and harbours. An amount of \$70 million was allocated to mainland Tanzania and \$50 million to Zanzibar. As in Kenya, mass tourism is being discouraged and "a high-income, low-volume" environment-friendly approach promoted.<sup>11</sup>

Among the first benefits from the new injection of capital are the Sheraton Hotel opened in Dar es Salaam in 1995 and the Serena Group's construction of three luxury lodges and a tented camp along the northern safari circuit. Warn-

ings have been sounded of the over-concentration on this route at the expense of the underdeveloped south and its Ruaha, Mikumi and Selous parks.<sup>12</sup>

Tanzania's tourism tends to be a subsidiary of the well-developed Kenyan industry with visitors arriving mainly by road and on tours emanating from its neighbour. This situation has not been helped by Lufthansa's, and reportedly Air France's, decision to cease flights to Dar es Salaam and, in view of cost saving, to concentrate their East African destination on Nairobi.<sup>13</sup>

Nevertheless, a tourist master plan estimates that the number of arrivals will more than double to 575 000 in the next ten years and receipts to \$570 million, an achievable target given the recent levels of largely foreign investment in the sector.<sup>14</sup>

The island of Zanzibar provides Tanzania with a real bonus. Receipts from 70 000 tourists a year now account for 25% of the island's gross domestic product (GDP). The hotel and guest house sector is booming with 12 completed in 1995 and a number nearing completion. Zanzibar's beaches, water sports and its cultural attractions are its main drawcards, now made more accessible by a fast hydrofoil service from Dar es Salaam and the upgrading of the island's international airport. Reaction from Muslim fundamentalists who complained of the threat to the Islamic faith of the new wave of Western tourists has been officially countered by the restoration of the island's rundown economy and the gains in employment opportunities that have resulted.<sup>15</sup>

### Uganda

During the 1960s tourism was Uganda's third largest earner of foreign exchange after coffee and cotton, reaching a peak of 88 630 arrivals in 1971. In the ensuing nine years of Idi Amin's disastrous rule it collapsed completely. It recovered slowly to 27 000 arrivals in 1985 (5% of Kenya's arrivals), 69 000 in 1990 and then rapidly advanced to 123 000 in 1994 and a reported 190 000 in 1995. The increase of 18.4% per year in arrivals between 1985 and 1994 was the third highest in Africa and one of 48.9% in receipts the highest. Both are indications of the country's tourist potential and the measures that have been taken to revive the industry.<sup>16</sup>

The potential lies in Uganda's wildlife, including its unique gorilla population, and in the magnificent mountain

and lake scenery bordering the western Rift Valley. It includes Mt Ruwenzori and the Mountains of the Moon, the Murchison (now Kabalengo) Falls on the Nile and the Mulumbiro volcanoes in the Kigezi highlands of the southwest. Access to these sights is by way of ten national parks. The International Gorilla Conservation Programme aims to protect this vulnerable population against poaching in the Bwindi Impenetrable Forest National Park.<sup>17</sup>

A number of factors contribute to the revitalization of the industry. They are the return of political stability since Pres Yoweri Museveni's assumption of power in 1986, a liberalized economy, the promotion by the Uganda Tourist Board established in 1994 of a positive image of the country, a steady but slow improvement in tourist infrastructure (hotels, lodges, access to parks, etc), the abolition of visa requirements for 53 countries and the reinstatement of direct international air links. As in Kenya and Tanzania, the government is aiming rather at 'high-quality ecotourism' rather than at the mass package tourist. The strategy not only yields high returns from small numbers but it also involves local communities in the conservation of wildlife and the environment. In 1993 the

minister of tourism predicted that in the next five years the sector would become Uganda's chief foreign exchange earner.<sup>18</sup>

#### Seychelles

Seychelles is Africa's 'tourist' country par excellence. No other country comes near the 26.1% of GNP that it earns from tourism. Accounting for 85% of its foreign exchange earnings and 20% of its job opportunities, the country's economic fortunes are heavily dependent on the tourist sector.

The country's 'sun-sea-sand' resources along with its mountain trails, unique bird life and a rare vegetation make its granitic and coralline islands, more than 100 in number and spread over 1 million square kilometres of ocean, a magnet for wealthier overseas visitors, 70% of whom come from Europe.<sup>19</sup>

The tourist industry, however, has had its ups and downs. After reaching



Typical latticework of the old Zanzibari homes

#### East African Tourism

	1985	%	1994	%	% + p.a.	Receipts per tourist 1994	Tourist origins 1993 %
<b>Kenya</b>							
all arrivals	541 000	75.2	867 000 <sup>1</sup>	65.0	5.4		Africa 27.5
receipts	\$249 m	77.3	\$451 m	57.1	6.8	\$520	Other 72.5
<b>Tanzania</b>							
all arrivals	76 000	10.9	284 000 <sup>1</sup>	17.5	13.0		Africa 39.1
receipts	\$20 m	6.2	\$148 m	18.7	24.9	\$633	Other 60.9
<b>Uganda</b>							
all arrivals	27 000	3.7	125 000	9.2	18.4		Africa 8.7
receipts	\$2 m	0.6	\$72 m	9.1	48.9	\$585	Other 91.3
<b>Seychelles</b>							
all arrivals	73 000	10.2	110 000 <sup>2</sup>	8.5	4.7		Africa 11.6
receipts	\$51 m	15.8	\$119 m	15.1	9.9	\$1 082	Other 88.4
<b>East Africa</b>							
arrivals	719 000	100	1 554 000	100	7.1		Africa 26.4
receipts	\$322 m	100	\$790 m	100	10.5	\$592	Other 73.6

Source: World Tourism Organization

<sup>1</sup> Kenya: 'Holiday' arrivals 1991 - 676 000 (Kenya Economic Survey)

<sup>2</sup> 280 000 in 1994 & 699 according to 1996 Tourism Board's Tourism Market Plan

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On the island of La Digue in the Seychelles the pace is relaxed

record levels in 1979, recession in the West, high oil prices and an attempted coup caused tourism to suffer a "body blow" from which it began to recover only in the later 1980s.<sup>20</sup> To offset the reverse the industry was substantially reformed in 1981. A tourist board was established and a liberalized and a promotional approach was adopted. This was followed by the 1984–89 development plan which gave considerable emphasis to the sector. But visitor numbers reached over 100 000 for the first time only in 1990, falling again to 90 000 and 98 500 in 1991 and 1992, when the Gulf War hit the industry particularly hard. Recovery in 1993 to 116 000 arrivals was accompanied nevertheless by a fall in earnings both of which further declined in 1994. Blame was laid on an over-valued rupee, over-priced package holidays and "a reputation for charging 5-star prices for 3-star service". Over the period 1985–94 the annual rate of growth in tourists was a modest 4.7%, much the same as Kenya's, and the rate of earnings growth 9.9%.<sup>21</sup>

Government control of, and investment in, the industry has to some extent been relaxed and more private investment encouraged with the provi-

so that it can intervene where the maintenance of standards and damage to the environment is threatened. The 1990–94 development plan imposed a limit of 4 000 hotel beds at any one time on the three islands of Mahé, Praslin and La Digue, with expansion being directed to the outer islands.<sup>22</sup>

In 1995 over 120 000 arrivals were recorded, 150 000 predicted for 1996 and 200 000 for the end of the decade. Government ascribes the increase to the promotional efforts of the private sector. Of considerable importance, too, has been the break from a reliance on foreign air carriers and the establishment of Air Seychelles which now brings tourists directly to the islands from Europe, Africa and the Far East.<sup>23</sup>

The Economist Intelligence Unit states that the future of tourism depends upon the policy of the new government elected in 1993. A freer market economy and greater private investment is favoured, making the overall prospects of the industry "quite bright" and its continued role as the country's "main engine of growth" assured.<sup>24</sup>

## Conclusion

The four countries dealt with are obviously heavily dependent upon tourism for their wellbeing. But the trends in the industry that have been described indicate how "elastic" a commodity it is, subject to world political and economic events beyond the control of African governments and to domestic events, good and bad, of their own making. Kenya and Seychelles have clearly settled into a steady by unspectacular annual rate of growth in both arrivals and earnings. Tanzania and Uganda, by contrast, after some years of ideological and wilful neglect are rapidly making up for lost time.<sup>25</sup>

East Africa has always witnessed a degree of multi-dimension tourism. Visitors, especially to Kenya, go on to some or all of its neighbours. How to share this revenue more equitably on a regional basis without Kenya absorbing the lion's share is a current issue, certainly in Uganda which has "released new guidelines requiring foreign firms to register locally or enter into partnership with a local tour operator". While South Africa is now competing as a destination for tourists, growing numbers of South Africans, in turn, are visiting East Africa since the removal of restrictions on their entry previously imposed upon them.<sup>26</sup>

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A fishing dhow off the Zanzibari coast continues centuries-long traditions



# Regional security

## IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

*Dr Denis Venter, Executive Director and Head, Academic Programmes, Africa Institute of South Africa. This is the edited text of a public lecture given at the Headquarters of the Organization of African Unity, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 30 April 1996. It was also presented at a conference, jointly organized by the Department of African Studies, St Petersburg State University and the Scientific Council for the Problems of Economic, Social, Political and Cultural Development of African Countries, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, held in St Petersburg from 6 to 8 May 1996. Under the general conference title of "Africa: Cultures, Societies, Languages", the presentation was a contribution to the sub-theme, "Political Genesis in Africa and Alternatives to the State in World History".*

**P**rofound structural change in global society, precipitated by the end of the Cold War, provides a compelling reason to rethink the concept of security – now proven to have been ambiguous at best. It has often been defined in terms of a reaction to threats to the state, or to state interests.<sup>1</sup> The conventional military definition ossifies it in geopolitical terms as “the spatial exclusion of threats”.<sup>2</sup> In such circumstances, “state security” or “national security” become mere code words for safeguarding a political regime and its social elite. Traditionally, security has, almost exclusively, involved military issues and threats to the state; but today, in the developing world, the notion of collective security (in the form of traditional interstate alliances) rarely offers peace and security because it is very often non-military internal and regional factors that are of decisive importance – whether they be ecological, ethnic, irredentist, or social.<sup>3</sup>

For many people, security is threatened more often by the very government under whose sovereignty they live, either through oppressive policies or its incapacity to sustain a good life for all.<sup>4</sup> Governments, then, are not the only agents of security; and this is all the more true if a broad or holistic view of security is adopted. Broadening the security agenda to include political, economic, societal and environmental aspects *with* the military is to accept that human security is ultimately more important than the security of the state.<sup>5</sup> Individual security, however, raises a wider set of issues concerning human rights, economic development, and gender, in addition to food security, job security, resource security, and other associated matters; and global security raises issues affecting, for example, the environment.<sup>6</sup> It is therefore clear – as Gowher Rizvi, the South Asian strategist, states – that:

security no longer ... [can] be considered exclusively within the military sphere; it is concerned not only with safeguarding territorial integrity, but also with political,

economic and social welfare, and above all, inter-communal harmony.<sup>7</sup>

This “new thinking” on security goes beyond achieving merely an absence of war to encompass the pursuit of democracy, sustainable economic development, social justice, and protection of the environment. In this new thinking, military force remains a legitimate means of defence against external aggression but is not an acceptable instrument for conducting foreign policy and for the settling of disputes. States should, therefore, mitigate the security dilemma and promote regional stability by adopting a defensive military doctrine and posture.<sup>8</sup>

This article looks at the sources of regional insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa, at some of the possible mechanisms for regional security regimes, at how regional security regimes may be institutionalized, and suggests what possible role there is for South Africa in the region south of the Sahara. Security will be approached from a holistic, human angle and from, essentially, a South African viewpoint.

### Sources of regional insecurity

Over the past six years, the political environment in sub-Saharan Africa has undergone substantial change. Most of the major historical conflicts in Southern Africa have been resolved or are in the process of being settled: Namibia has attained independence; Cuban and South African troops have been withdrawn from Angola; Mozambique’s Frelimo and Renamo have signed and implemented a peace agreement; and South Africa has transformed itself into a multiracial democracy. Much of this progress has been a direct consequence of the demise of the Cold War, which led to the cessation of superpower contestation on the sub-continent, a brief flurry of joint US-Soviet efforts to resolve long-standing disputes in southwestern Africa, and a more prominent role for the United Nations in regional and national conflict resolution.<sup>9</sup> There has been a concomitant attenuation of ideology as a source



of tension within and among African countries<sup>10</sup> and a significant movement towards political pluralism throughout the continent. As one surveys the broader region of sub-Saharan Africa, the prospects for sustaining some form of democracy in a number of countries seem to be good or, at least, marginally good:<sup>11</sup> these are, Benin, Botswana, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, São Tomé e Príncipe, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. It is, perhaps, significant that 10 of these 17 countries south of the Sahara are in Southern Africa.

Notwithstanding these reassuring pointers, current transitions to democracy in Southern Africa are fraught with uncertainty. In Angola, the ceasefire agreement was thrown into turmoil when UNITA rejected the results of the 1992 elections; despite numerous peace efforts the country remains poised on the brink of civil war. The newly elected government of Lesotho was subjected to a coup in 1994, and reconstruction and development in Mozambique and South Africa are threatened by on-going political and criminal violence.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, the fledgling multi-party systems in Malawi and Zambia, and the sustainability of democracy in those countries, have come under serious pressure as a result of sluggish economies; and in Zimbabwe, political manipulation by the Zanu-PF government has put a question mark against long term prospects for democracy in that country. Swaziland is still frozen in time on the political dead-end of a one-party, feudal monarchy.

As potential conflict arenas, the following must be noted:<sup>13</sup>

- With South Africa's apartheid policies removed from the agenda, many of the sub-region's temporarily submerged conflicts may resurface. The main conflicts are most likely to involve border disputes or territorial claims, such as Lesotho's claim to the conquered territories in the eastern Free State Province of South Africa, Namibia's claim to Sidudu/Kasiki

Island in the Chobe River on the Botswana border, and Nigeria's claim to the Bakassi Peninsula on the coast of northwestern Cameroon.

- Inequitable distribution of resources both within and between countries may be another source of conflict. As a result of economic decay, and the added problems of drought and the ravages caused by structural adjustment programmes, there is bound to be a great deal of social strife and the consequent threat of major conflagrations: for example, such phenomena as economic migration, manifested in illegal immigration from other countries in the region, into South Africa; emerging xenophobia; disruption caused by uncontrollably high rates of rural-urban migration and resultant land-invasion and squatting; pressure of exploding populations on rapidly declining water resources; and interstate disputes over trade, foreign aid and investment.
- The potential for racial and tribal conflict is likely to be a continuing concern, especially in countries with heterogeneous populations. Recent massacres of Tutsis in Rwanda and Hutus in Burundi are pertinent examples.
- Political pluralism may be a source of conflict in countries such as Swaziland or Uganda, where the principle of multi-partyism is not yet accepted, and in Kenya or Nigeria, where authoritarian regimes of a civilian or military nature are trying their best to smother any semblance of democratic practice. Although Zambia and Malawi have managed to achieve seemingly peaceful transitions from one party to multi-party politics, it is not yet certain that other countries – such as Ethiopia, Mozambique and Tanzania – will be as fortunate; even in Zambia and Malawi there are signs of stress as people struggle to accept the ethos of democratic pluralism and tolerance. And it must not be forgotten that rapidly declining economies constitute yet another pressure on the process of democratization.



Southern Africa (and, indeed, Africa south of the Sahara) are characterized by certain strategic features<sup>14</sup> that compellingly motivate the creation of a common security regime in, at least, the sub-region; and also offer pointers to its agenda and orientation:

- Virtually all major threats to the security of the region's peoples and states derive from internal rather than external factors, although domestic crises in some of these countries are severe enough to undermine stability in neighbouring states: examples are Angola, Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Somalia.
- The most serious security problems in the region are of a political, economic, social and environmental nature rather than military in origin and character. Although these problems may give rise to violence, leading to the deployment of police and military forces, solutions lie in socio-economic development and the consolidation of fragile democracies: examples are Benin and Lesotho.
- Certain critical issues (such as refugees and illegal immigrants, environmental degradation, the depletion of and competition over scarce natural resources, the proliferation of small arms, and drug smuggling) are common to many, if not all, of the region's countries and transcend national boundaries: examples are the borders between Rwanda and Tanzania (refugees), and between Mozambique and South Africa (illegal immigrants).
- In the absence of external military threats to individual states, or to the region as a whole, there is now the potential for disarmament (or, at least, a substantial reduction in defence budgets) in order to release resources for development: for example, the defence budget of South Africa fell by as much as 44% in the period 1989 to 1993, reducing its share of gross domestic product (GDP) from 4,3% to 2,6%.<sup>15</sup>

Disarmament and reduction in defence budgets require further amplification. In the Southern African sub-continent, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has resolved to "free resources from military to productive development activities".<sup>16</sup> In

the broader region of sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, large-scale internal repression has required vast sums to be spent on defence at the expense of development and welfare services. The resulting impact on standards of living has further reduced the security of citizens and, in some instances, has intensified popular resistance against the state.<sup>17</sup> This vicious circle has been described thus:

Very often, arms acquisitions by ... countries in the interests of security are made at the apparent cost of primary or basic needs in the area of social and economic well-being. Given the fragile economic base, which cannot sustain the expenditure on arms, and the equally fragile political base, which requires arms acquisition, self-preservation often dictates a choice of defence over development. The non-military threats to security are thus neglected, creating further cause for instability.<sup>18</sup>

But there are two further difficulties. First, there is the difficulty of integrating former guerrillas into civilian society; thousands of guerrillas who were demobilized at independence in Namibia and Zimbabwe (and, after the April 1994 elections, in South Africa) remain unemployed and have resorted to banditry. This particular problem raises an especially frightening spectre for post-civil war Angola.<sup>19</sup> Second, there is the difficulty that defence cuts often lead to lower wages and deteriorating conditions in the armed forces, invoking a crisis of morale which, as in Ghana and Lesotho, is conducive to coups or, as in Nigeria and Mozambique, results in soldiers turning to crime in order to supplement their incomes.

If these features are extrapolated to the whole of sub-Saharan Africa, it is clear that the entire region is racked by a range of formidable problems for which there seem to be no immediate solutions:<sup>20</sup>

- Efforts to redress chronic underdevelopment, and the attendant conditions of poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, malnutrition, and inadequate social services, are inhibited by staggering balance-of-payments deficits, a debilitating debt crisis, a net outflow of capital, and an unfavourable international economic climate.
- The structural adjustment programmes of the World Bank and

the International Monetary Fund, which tie foreign loans and aid to prescribed economic and political reforms, impinge on the independence of states, disadvantage the poorest sections of society, and have given rise to food riots and other forms of protest.

- Regional and national stability are undermined by internal political and ethnic conflict, unstable civil-military relations (compounded by a proliferation of small arms and large numbers of demobilized soldiers who, in a state of destitution, turn to crime), an absence of effective governance (leading to authoritarian rule and a disregard for human rights, and large numbers of refugees and displaced persons).
- And then there are rampant disease, manifested by an Aids pandemic, and environmental degradation, arising from human mismanagement and limited resources (and compounded by natural disasters such as drought).

The first half of the 1990s witnessed Southern Africa's most severe drought in 80 years, threatening several million people with starvation, continuing civil wars in Angola and Mozambique, warlordism and the self-inflicted break-up of the modern state in Somalia, the free-fall of Liberia and Sierra Leone into conflictual anarchy, and human massacres of unimaginable proportions in Rwanda. Here the bases for democratic government, and in some instances even for any kind of government at all, seem to have been so thoroughly undermined that these countries are facing an uncertain and dismal future. These problems are exacerbated by sub-Saharan Africa's growing marginalization in international politics and the world economy. Africa south of the Sahara has never presented an attractive opportunity for foreign investment, and the ending of the Cold War has greatly diminished what little strategic value it once had. This situation has been compounded, too, by the emergence of giant trading blocs in North America, Europe, and the Pacific Rim with which it cannot compete.

This state of affairs leads to some pertinent questions: can sub-Saharan Africa be considered a group of states (47 in all) forming several security communities, where some form of

peace is predictable? Is there any possibility that the region south of the Sahara will develop in such a way that war and the threat of war will be rejected as legitimate or possible instruments of political power? However distant it may seem, is there at least the prospect of common securities developing in the region – the sort of common consciousness which involves the belief that security has to be achieved with others, not against them? “Common security”<sup>21</sup> does not ignore the fact that international relations are characterized by competing national interests and the risk of hostilities. It seeks to minimize these risks by creating an environment in which disputes can be prevented through early-warning mechanisms or be resolved without resort to force; and it recognizes the interdependence of states by engaging in joint problem-solving, by developing collaborative programmes on security issues, and by utilizing the potential for political and military cooperation (building military confidence and stability through disarmament and transparency on defence matters, and negotiating multilateral security agreements).

The acid test of a security community is whether or not the units target each other in a military sense. To what extent does Southern Africa meet these criteria? In the past, because of the offensive strategy employed by South African military forces, these criteria were clearly not met. What will South Africa’s strategy under a non-racial and democratic government be in the years to come? As it drops offensive for defensive doctrines, could the sub-region become an anomaly to Deutsch’s theory: that is, as we move further into the post-apartheid era, will the region’s separate units (while refraining from targeting each other) still not score highly in terms of value compatibility, economic ties, level of transnational links, institution-building, responsiveness, and mutual predictability in behaviour? Although the countries of the sub-region may not, in future, pose any military threat to their neighbours, they do face (as we have seen) an enormous range of regional problems. Is Southern Africa, therefore, not a security community but a community of insecurity?

The essence of community-building seems to be communication. The difficulties involving the cost and

speed of communication channels across sub-Saharan Africa are well known. They result from geographical, historical, economic and political factors; and they will not be easily overcome. But if we believe that ultimately the best route to security is through community-building, then one might consider that cheaper transportation, efficient telecommunications systems, increased cultural exchanges and so on should enjoy priority on the broadened security agenda of governments in sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>22</sup> This argument will sound strange to those for whom security equals defence equals military might. But it is another way of thinking about minimizing the dangers of insecurity.

### **The mechanics of a regional security regime**

The widely held expectation that South Africa will become the economic engine not only of Southern Africa but also of sub-Saharan Africa may be disappointed, partly because the post-apartheid state has to generate wealth by external economic activities in areas as far removed as Western and Eastern Europe, the Middle East and the Pacific Rim. Nevertheless, existing regional economic organizations and relationships seem to provide relatively favourable conditions for the empirical development of mutually advantageous cooperation. And the current progressive status of South Africa’s economic relationships with the rest of sub-Saharan Africa bodes well for cooperation in other fields. The economic dynamic puts a premium on common security arrangements, especially in the areas of power generation, water supply, transport and communications, tourism, trade promotion, and knowledge creation and exchange (especially in agriculture).<sup>23</sup> But, strangely, meaningful debate on novel security mechanisms has lagged behind the diversity of debate on economic and political issues.<sup>24</sup>

For security regimes to be institutionalized in sub-Saharan Africa, several conditions<sup>25</sup> will have to be met, including: first, a strengthening and sustaining of both national and intra-regional civil society; second, a conceiving of peace and security as social and relational phenomena transcending the jurisdiction of individual states (this, in turn, calls for a rethink-

ing of the concept of sovereignty); third, the developing of institutional and analytical capacities within state and other bureaucracies; fourth, an expanding and improving transport infrastructure and other physical communications networks; and last, a moulding of regional identities at both institutional and symbolic levels.

As a beginning, certain administrative and institutional steps could be taken to help accomplish these goals:<sup>26</sup>

- establishing schools of diplomacy in regional centres, emphasizing training in peace-making, conflict resolution, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, and sustainable development;
- recasting military and police training through region-specific military and police academies;
- formulating a new legal basis for environmental protection and sustainable development, and launching initiatives in these areas with non-governmental organizations;
- building a peace-making, monitoring and peace-keeping capability, as well as a conflict prevention, management and resolution capacity,<sup>27</sup> by utilizing the technical skills and political legitimacy of the United Nations (UN) and the Commonwealth (although the Organization of African Unity (OAU) seems increasingly impotent in the face of violence and conflict, it nonetheless encourages regional, organizational commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflicts through the good offices of bodies such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas), under the umbrella of the newly created OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution); and
- promoting regional conventions on the monitoring, reduction, and ultimate abolition of arms transfers, and working towards the de-nuclearization of Africa.

Some elaboration is needed on the issue of the de-nuclearization of sub-Saharan Africa. With South Africa’s full subscription to the conditions of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the safeguards of the International

Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the first critical steps towards a comprehensive regional arms control agreement in Southern Africa have been taken. South Africa's willingness to take this initiative distinguishes the Southern African region (and, indeed, Africa south of the Sahara) from regions such as the Middle East and South Asia, where there are potentially rival nuclear powers. This might provide a useful platform for negotiating regional agreements to regulate the trade in, and supply of, arms in general. The first objective of such agreements should be to restrict the arms trade, thus reducing military expenditure and the risk of fresh militarization.<sup>28</sup>

South Africa became a party, as a non-nuclear state, to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty after having dismantled (to the satisfaction of the IAEA and the main sponsoring powers of the NPT) the six nuclear devices, the existence of which had been revealed by President F W de Klerk in March 1993. This freed other African states to proceed with the de-nuclearization of the continent. Paradoxically, the Treaty on the De-Nuclearization of Africa, drafted in June 1995 at Pelindaba (the seat of the South African Atomic Energy Commission), may transform the South African civil nuclear energy programme into a continental resource and a catalyst for a real African peace dividend in the form of the peaceful application of nuclear energy. Therefore, in drafting the Treaty, a conscious effort was made to balance the non-proliferation commitment by African nations with the possibility of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.<sup>29</sup> Article 8(2) of the Treaty states:

As part of their efforts to strengthen their security, stability and development, the Parties [to the Treaty] undertake to promote individually and collectively the use of nuclear science and technology for economic and social development. To this end, they undertake to establish and strengthen mechanisms for cooperation at the bilateral, sub-regional and regional levels.<sup>30</sup>

But all the measures suggested above will have little meaning (and, indeed, social peace will be impossible) without:<sup>31</sup> first, appropriate programmes for poverty alleviation, migration control, basic food security, primary health care, regional tourism, gender equity, human resource development,

and participatory democracy based on public accountability; second, the development of agro-processing industries and alternative energy sources (such as solar power); third, the stimulation of economic activity and trade-financing facilities; and last, the co-ordination of resource management.

The matter of resource management needs some further amplification. In some countries in sub-Saharan Africa, with their growing populations and meagre agricultural resources, food security is of crucial importance, although the vital political dimensions of food supply (graphically underlined by recent droughts in the Sahel region of West Africa, in north-eastern Africa and in Southern Africa) are less often considered. Food security is important to South Africa, because it cannot be secure or in a position to sustain its exports in a sub-region that is starving. Regional planning requires South African data, especially with a view to the planning of commercial exports or triangular food trade; and both early-warning crop failure and food distribution mechanisms (including work and feeding programmes) are areas in which an exchange of information can be useful to the entire region, not least to South Africa. Water-rights allocation agreements on the Orange River and in the Limpopo Basin, as well as on the cluster of rivers from Swaziland in the east to Namibia in the west, are crucial to medium-term water planning in a region where water is an increasingly scarce resource.<sup>32</sup> Development issues, too, are critical because many types of development are not ecologically sustainable; nor are they in the interests of the poor and other marginalized groups. While ecological crises may be more diffuse than direct military threats, they are central to a more comprehensive understanding of security as they are seldom confined within national boundaries.

Regional security must therefore be conceptualized in terms of: first, coordination at the diplomatic level; second, joint mechanisms for the prevention and combat of crime; and last, exchange of security intelligence and information – not only on criminal matters such as drug trafficking, but also on such potentially explosive issues as uncontrolled (illegal) immigration – in an attempt to eliminate the root causes of conflict at the ear-

liest possible moment. In summary, national security and stability (key elements in regional security) largely rest on the ability of individual countries to improve social and economic conditions for their peoples, their observance and promotion of human rights, and their affording equal opportunity to all ethnic and other interest groups to participate in the process of political and economic decision-making.<sup>33</sup>

### The theory and practice of regionalism

Traditionally, regionalism implies co-operation among states in geographically proximate and delimited areas for the pursuit of mutual gain in one or more issue areas.<sup>34</sup> In most of the successful examples of regionalism, states that are already partners to solid political processes (based on shared and complementary values) devolve collective decisions to structures that supplement rather than supplant national institutions.<sup>35</sup> It is, therefore, no coincidence:

... that the most elaborate examples of regionalism (the EC, NAFTA, ASEAN, Mercosur) have occurred in regions where state structures remain relatively strong and where the legitimacy of both frontiers and regimes is not widely called into question .... Whilst regionalism may over time lead to the creation of new political organizations, regionalism and state strength do not stand in opposition to each other, and states remain the essential building-blocks with which regionalist arrangements are constructed.<sup>36</sup>

If the goal of security in sub-Saharan Africa is to mitigate threats in the domestic sphere, the least that could be expected of institution-building in an era of state collapse would be a security regionalism aimed at problems left unsolved by existing continental institutions. Security regionalism acknowledges that the political infrastructures for cooperation are still in their elementary stages. And as states deal with the outcomes of failed nationhood and are increasingly consumed by primary conflicts of civil and secessionist wars, arrangements for security regionalism need to be modest measures for the prevention and containment of certain conflicts rather than the construction of elaborate institutional mechanisms. The focus needs to be on looser struc-

tures of cooperation, ones which can stabilize relations, prevent the spill-over of conflicts, secure emerging common values and, perhaps, lay the foundation for nascent security regimes.<sup>37</sup> (Experience has shown that "outside Southern Africa, there have been geographical proximities without shared purposes, borders without boundedness, and regions without regimes".<sup>38</sup> In other words, instead of regions in sub-Saharan Africa forming the organizational bases for policy formulation on a whole range of issues, they have become sources of strife and enmity.)<sup>39</sup>

While states in sub-Saharan Africa should remain the central agents of security in their domestic settings, they should be in a position to "sub-contract" certain functions to regional institutions when they run into difficulties. Security regionalism, therefore, flows from a desire to arrest some of the outcomes of state collapse. This sub-contracting of security functions is already happening by default as weak states and their domestic opponents appeal to diverse sources for external help.<sup>40</sup> The participation of Executive Outcomes in the civil wars in Angola and Sierra Leone, and the coup-making of the renegade mercenary forces of Bob Denard in the Comores, serve as reminders. Instead of leaving an opening for bodies like Executive Outcomes, contiguous states should take on the responsibility for separating, isolating and conciliating domestic combatants.

### Regionalism and leadership

#### *Nigeria and South Africa: Regional hegemons, continental adversaries?*

The leadership role in security regionalism points to hegemons assuming the roles of sub-contractors on behalf of their weaker neighbours. All regionalisms thrive on strong leadership supported by political and economic resources; and this feature is even more pertinent in the security realm for providing direction and order. At times, leadership might also serve to mobilize external actors willing to lend much-needed support. Since sub-Saharan Africa is still prone to conflict, leadership as hegemony could best find application in the containment of conflicts within regional sub-systems.<sup>41</sup>

Nigeria's role in the Liberian civil war under the auspices of Ecomog

and the Ecomog Ceasefire Monitoring Group (Ecomog), demonstrates this form of leadership. Though it operated under the many limitations imposed by a constrained multilateral mandate, Nigeria's considerable resources enabled it to contribute disproportionately to peace-keeping and peace-making.<sup>42</sup> South Africa's diplomatic intervention in the Lesotho crisis (albeit in concert with Botswana and Zimbabwe) reveals a related theme of leadership, compelling a return to normality in that country by judiciously using a mix of incentives and disincentives. This case also shows that hegemony works best when it can exploit geographical vulnerability and structural weakness. Equally important, leadership conducted within regional multilateral structures (under SADC auspices, and utilizing some elements of the frontline states concept) avoids the perceptions of diktat, particularly by multilateral partners (like Zimbabwe) who might be future candidates for similar (or other) modes of intervention.<sup>43</sup>

The lessons of Nigeria in Liberia, and South Africa in Lesotho, point to other avenues in rethinking leadership and security. First, there are few regional hegemons in sub-Saharan Africa beyond South Africa and Nigeria – at the minimum, leadership entails the possession of sufficient military power to deploy in external fire-brigade situations, a reasonably viable economy to sustain such deployment, and political elites imbued with a sense of regional mission. Second, through sustained leadership, South Africa and Nigeria could nurture the already existing infrastructure in West Africa (Ecomog) and in Southern Africa (the SADC) for building forms of regionalism lying beyond the realm of security; for the most part, therefore, patterns of prior interaction are conducive to regionalization. South Africa, more so than Nigeria, has the domestic institutional capacity needed for the kind of sustained leadership necessary to effect any enhanced form of regionalism. But without the moral stature that comes from a strong sense of nationhood and domestic legitimacy, regionalism as hegemony has the potential to degenerate into the cruder forms of power over-extension long associated with sub-regional troublemakers.<sup>44</sup>

South Africa's role in the sanctions campaign against the Abacha

regime in Nigeria has implications for future discourse on the domestic underpinnings of regional leadership. The emerging debate marks "an important, though subtle, transition from the continental norm-building of state sovereignty, to a new ... [norm] of sovereignty as domestic responsibility".<sup>45</sup> But while it is understandable that South Africa's multilateral sanctions campaign was targeted at powerful international economic actors, its failure to build a strong constituency for sanctions outside Southern Africa left it exposed to "populist charges of collusion with 'imperialists'". The result was that Abacha emerged, almost by default, as the "champion of the black man".<sup>46</sup> In this regard, the reaction of Liberia's interim government was quite instructive:

To see President Mandela, who had been in jail for 27 years, come out and set out a campaign against Nigeria in such a horrific and terrible manner is very shocking to us. We are calling on Ecomog and other African countries to prevail on President Mandela not to allow South Africa to be used in the division and undermining of African solidarity.<sup>47</sup>

Surely, this comment must rank as the pinnacle of hypocrisy, coming from a country which is experiencing almost total state collapse and appears to be in an unstoppable free-fall to oblivion. How many atrocities, perpetrated by African regimes against their own citizens, have been wiped under the carpet or papered over by invoking this rather handy notion of "African solidarity"? Yet even as the Mandela-Abacha stand-off shows up the limitations and whittles down the remnants of the dubious consensus on "African solutions for African problems", it hardly resolves the demands for leadership in West Africa, particularly in on-going conflicts. Thus the lukewarm response of the Francophone West African countries to Mandela's spirited campaign clearly shows that international economic isolation cannot reduce Nigeria's leadership role in West Africa.<sup>48</sup>

The Nigerian case exemplifies the intimate ties between regional projection of military power and domestic militarization, a relation that might be severed in a post-Abacha Nigeria. The burdens of hegemony might be eroded as regional powers become more accountable domestically, leading perhaps to reluctant hegemons. Thus we should not expect South Africa or



Nigeria to play leadership roles when their taxpayers demand a reduction in what appears to them to be wasteful foreign intervention.<sup>49</sup> In fact, when elites engage their people in foreign policy debates, taxpayers – while generally against grandiose foreign interventions, such as massive airlifts of food and the deployment of soldiers in unfamiliar political terrain – are likely to support a restricted use of resources for judicious contractual security roles. In the short term, through such limited contractual security engagements, regional leaders force their neighbours to take more responsibility for managing their own affairs; and in the long term they create the shared reciprocity for constructing institutionalized regionalism.<sup>50</sup>

**Kenya and Uganda:  
Regional spoilers**

In most regional sub-systems in sub-Saharan Africa, conflicts and insecurity are more often than not the consequence of either pretence to, or the quest for, leadership. As the fulcrum of the larger East African security system, Kenya and Uganda illustrate how the unchecked quest for leadership becomes a source of instability. East Africa once boasted one of the most favourable socio-cultural infrastructures for incipient forms of regionalism, with the prospect of evolving into broad-based integration schemes. Yet these homogenizing and integrative elements fell victim to the fragmentary forces of politics. Since the mid-1980s, ventures to re-establish the many different ties which existed under the now defunct East African Community have fundered on the rocks of the Moi-Museveni conflict. Today, purely domestic insecurities seem to translate into regional power conflicts, stifling the emergence of governments that can be partners in peace and making a mockery of any regional initiatives purporting to settle conflicts.<sup>51</sup>

Proximate states, in their rush to pre-empt conflicts before being affected themselves, may sometimes only exacerbate and expand the range of such conflicts. A glance at the regional mediation of the Sudan conflict, conducted under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), captures some of the pitfalls of local mediators. Comprising Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda,

the IGADD initiative began in September 1993 on the optimistic note of a focused intervention to restore peace to war-torn southern Sudan. Overall, the IGADD process contained some of the salient elements of security regionalism, viewed as pooled leadership. First, it symbolized the spreading recognition of the urgent primacy of security over purely functional issues in regional cooperation. Second, for regional actors it entailed very limited commitments, since the principal task revolved around getting the major parties to the negotiating table. Finally, IGADD sought to build on the proximity of member states to the conflict as a critical means of entry into the process of conflict management.<sup>52</sup> But by September 1994, the IGADD initiative had petered out, caught up and smothered in the intricate web of Kenya-Uganda, Uganda-Sudan, Sudan-Eritrea, Ethiopia-Sudan and Somalia-Ethiopia conflicts: in an experiment to broaden its functional role to also include security concerns, IGADD had veered ever further from its original character and purposes to the detriment of regional security.<sup>53</sup> It is against this background that there have been proposals by some IGADD members to create a frontline of countries against Sudan because of its domestic racial policies and regional destabilization.<sup>54</sup>

**Zaire: Regional troublemaker**

Geographically capable of decisive leadership in the Great Lakes and Southern African regions, Zaire's policies have for long played second fiddle to Franco-Belgian and American interests. But the end of the Cold War coincided with a groundswell of agitation for domestic change away from Mobutu's authoritarianism. Although a collapsed political economy has dissipated the energies of Zairian leadership, and years of political turmoil have left Zaire's transition to democracy in a sad and stagnant state, conflicts in the neighbourhood have not lessened Mobutu's regional relevance. Thus in the Angolan conflict, Mobutu's ties with the Unita movement have been instrumental in his continued influence over the nature of any settlement. In Rwanda, the outcome of the Hutu pogroms of 1994 fortuitously established Zaire's strategic position as a host to countless refugees. Rwandese refugees have become an indispensable Zairian policy tool, which now

reflects the shifts in Mobutu's domestic and international fortunes.<sup>55</sup>

The central question for leadership is how to insulate conflict resolution from mere image-making. When conflicts such as that in Rwanda intensify from elementary concerns about the repatriation of refugees to the secondary ones of rehabilitating and embellishing Zaire's external image, regional solutions become more elusive. And the inclusion of multiple state actors in concerted bids to find solutions to this conflict, points to some of the dangers of conflict actually expanding through the practices of brinkmanship, uncoordinated regionalism and mere summitry: Kenya's initiatives to convene regional summits on Rwandese reconstruction failed, largely at the point when they became Moi-Museveni leadership contests. Where political brinkmanship in exercising leadership infuses regionalism, failures such as these underscore the larger scope of personality-based antagonisms in East and Central Africa, antagonisms that usually have no bearing on the real conflict.<sup>56</sup>

Security regionalism as a matter of sub-contracting should target specific issues that are urgent and amenable to compromise. The formula of most-affected nations (that is, selective management of conflicts by states which regard such conflicts as germane to them), corresponds to issue-based versions of collective leadership. There is no logic, for example, in a regional solution to the Rwanda and Burundi conflicts that should directly involve states such as Kenya; neither does Malawi need to mediate conflicts between Uganda and Sudan (although Malawi was, at the time of attempted mediation, exercising the chairmanship of Comesa). However, the recent meeting of leaders of Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, Uganda and Tanzania in Cairo, under the chairmanship of former US President Jimmy Carter, is a good example of purposeful selective regionalism. The summit, initiated by Uganda, Tanzania and Zaire, had geographical proximity to Rwanda and Burundi as the primary qualification for selection. Apart from their pledge to take joint action to advance regional peace, justice, reconciliation, stability and development, the summit sought to negotiate broad-based governments of national unity in both Rwanda and Burundi. The meeting recognized that a more fruitful

approach to the Rwanda/Burundi conflicts would need to involve only the two principal parties, extra-regional third-party actors merely giving assistance in resolving certain outstanding issues.<sup>57</sup>

### **Institutionalizing peace and security**

It has been postulated that the most likely scenario for future relations in the Southern African region may be neo-regionalism (meaning that centre-hinterland relationships will continue, though with South Africa still the overall centre of gravity), as opposed to the alternatives of regional re-stabilization and regional break-up and peripheralization.<sup>58</sup> This scenario presupposes a negotiated regional regime which would necessitate replacing some South African goods and services by other sources from within the sub-region (for example, Zimbabwe could become an important supplier of manufactured products) and reducing transport dependence on South Africa through the upgrading of infrastructure in Mozambique and Angola. To be meaningful, therefore, neo-regionalism would require that states transcend their national goals and interests by acting and thinking regionally.

### **South Africa, Southern Africa and beyond**

A South Africa that exhibits even minimal calm and continuity is likely to remain the dominant force and the major economic, technical, financial, and military power in the Southern African sub-region, contributing decisively to the sub-continent's security but perpetuating the existing fears of neighbouring states concerning its pre-eminence.<sup>59</sup> Although the states of the sub-region appear to have pledged themselves to cooperation and building harmonious relations, the statistics show exactly how lopsided the regional equation really is.

Militarily and, even more, economically, South Africa is the giant not just of Southern Africa but of Africa south of the Sahara, accounting for 41% of sub-Saharan Africa's gross national product (GNP). South Africa's GNP is 72% greater than that of its nearest sub-Saharan African rival, Nigeria. South Africa's economic dominance of Southern Africa is widely known: it con-

tributes 78% of the total GNP of the region; its GNP per capita is three times that of the average for the other SADC states (only Mauritius has a higher GNP per capita), and is roughly three-and-a-half times larger than that of the average for the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa) and other SADC countries combined (again, only Mauritius and Seychelles have higher GNP figures per capita).<sup>60</sup>

South Africa's economic dominance raises the question of the country's ambitions and, more specifically, the likelihood that it might relish its role as the regional giant and use its position to enhance its own political, diplomatic and economic power.<sup>61</sup> By the late 1980s, "giantism" had developed into one of some ten crises in South Africa's external relations<sup>62</sup> and by now, the mid-1990s, Southern Africa has indeed reached its "unipolar moment".<sup>63</sup> In many ways, this is what the sub-region has always feared. The strong resistance to the infamous Constellation of Southern African States (Consas) idea was mainly about supping with the apartheid devil, but it was also concerned with fear of South African domination. Clearly, pre-1992 SADC planning, which always endeavoured to draw South Africa into its cooperative net rather than the other way around, was aimed precisely at attenuating this very domination.<sup>64</sup>

But no good intentions, no determination to create a mutually beneficial and non-dependent regional economic cooperation system, will prevent South Africa's continuing domination of Southern Africa.<sup>65</sup> The frustration experienced by the small states of the sub-continent brings to mind the lament of Mexican President (1876–1911) Porfirio Diaz: "Poor Mexico, so far from God, so near to the United States". South Africa's domination of its neighbours became even greater during its long and damaging destabilization of the region.<sup>66</sup> Should the unequal distribution of power endure, Southern Africa's unipolar moment might well become a permanent feature of the sub-regional scene. Now, for a number of reasons, South Africa views the sub-region with as much uncertainty and incredulity as its neighbours view it. But as all sides in Southern Africa recall their experiences, their hopes and their fears, any mathematical equation must surely set the sub-continent's colossus beside

the sub-region's many midgets. Reluctant to share the country's comparative advantage, successive South African regimes may in future dominate the sub-region with a carrot and stick approach.<sup>67</sup>

In both economic and security fields, the sub-region will have to find ways to accommodate, manage, even curb South Africa's superior strength. Ultimately, the principal challenge lies in the fact that this strength needs to be creatively channelled in the interests of the region as a whole.<sup>68</sup> remembering, in particular, that several states in the sub-region have suffered directly from South Africa's military might in the recent past. So whatever the character of the South African government, its neighbours will always feel some unease about its aims unless steps are taken to mitigate, or ultimately transcend, the pressures of the security dilemma. A security regime would achieve the former, a security community the latter.<sup>69</sup> With South Africa now a member of the regional fraternity, its role in the sub-region will have to be defined by its own national interests as a "regional superpower".<sup>70</sup>

### **The debate on regional security in Southern Africa**

Peace presents Southern Africa with a paradox. On the one hand, people need to be liberated from the state; on the other hand, it is purely academic to conceive of rudimentary peace, security and development in the absence of strong, legitimate states. Consequently, building institutional capacity seems a necessary though still insufficient condition for peace and security in the sub-region: interstate cooperation and coordination must be strengthened too.<sup>71</sup>

At the time of writing, a formal framework for regional security may not seem as premature as it did some three years ago. Certain scholars<sup>72</sup> have argued the need for confidence-building measures in the region; the legacy left by destabilization seems to necessitate such a strategy. But the end of the Cold War and the resultant disengagement from regional conflicts by the superpowers have left the way clear for local initiatives to fill the power vacuum with negotiated arrangements. Nevertheless, it should constantly be borne in mind that the future of South Africa is still very precariously bal-

anced, as it faces socio-economic problems of gigantic proportions; and that the entire sub-region is in a state of flux, with Malawi seemingly peacefully reconstituted as a multi-party democracy, Mozambique and Angola at quite different signposts on their roads towards democratization, Zambia and Zimbabwe apparently unable to come to grips with the true meaning of democracy, Lesotho racked by unstable civil-military relations, and Swaziland still tied to an essentially autocratic system of government. It would therefore be unwise for any state to leave regional security to chance. There is the danger that, in another year or two, opportunity to properly consider regional security and cooperation may well have passed us by.

Looking at the wider canvas of sub-Saharan Africa, proposals for a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) have been mooted under the aegis of the African Leadership Forum and at the initiative of African leaders such as former Nigerian President, General Olusegun Obasanjo, former Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (Uneca), Adebayo Adedeji, and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Salim Ahmed Salim. Indeed, the Kampala Forum was an attempt to renew the search for endogenous solutions to the continent's crises of insecurity, instability and underdevelopment. In essence, the CSSDCA was a carefully constructed showcase for a concept that in recent years has steadily advanced to the centre of African political thought and strategy: that without democracy, human rights and popular participation, and without an end to cross-border and civil wars, there can be neither security and stability nor economic growth – and, therefore, no release for the continent from the tightening grip of violence, hunger and debt. Without that release, Africa as a bloc will politically and economically become even more marginalized in a new global order – one in which success is determined by economic strength rather than by military power or by ideological affiliation.<sup>73</sup>

But to return to Southern Africa: at a conference held in Maputo, Mozambique in 1990, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) example and other concepts relevant to confidence-building and se-

curity in the sub-region were further explored. Significantly, similar ideas found fertile ground within the SADCC: witness the yearly Conference on Peace and Security in Eastern and Southern Africa held in Arusha, Tanzania. As early as 1991, South African President F W de Klerk expressed the view that thought should be given “to the idea of multilateral regional talks [in Southern Africa] to foster confidence, economic growth, and security along lines similar to the ... CSCE”.<sup>74</sup>

Academics have also contributed to the debate. Weimer<sup>75</sup> sees the value of a CSSDCA process in Southern Africa principally in a social and developmental context. Drawing attention to poverty, hunger, unemployment, and socio-cultural deprivation in the region, he regards a security regime within the framework of something broadly similar to the CSSDCA as the best way forward. Vale<sup>76</sup> reminds us of the new perils and challenges awaiting the region after the end of apartheid, including “near uncontrollable migration” and an imperative to restructure existing regional institutions such as the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and the SADC for “the common good”. He adds that the region as a whole will have to develop and maximize its relative strengths in a world in which Africa (including sub-Saharan Africa) will be increasingly marginalized, and states the underlying logic of, and rationale for, a Conference on Security and Cooperation in Southern Africa (CSCSA) as follows:

By embarking on a series of multilateral talks along the lines of the ... CSCE, Southern African states will enable an exploration of individual fears while simultaneously promoting regional accord. The underlying motive is rudimentary: while economic development in the region is essential, security questions for individual states are paramount. By catering for these at separate but parallel talks, a series of common understandings on the region's future can be reached.<sup>77</sup>

In the security field, as elsewhere, it is necessary for us to think about the extent to which we can generalize and apply concepts from one part of the world to another. For example, how relevant are the traditional concepts of statecraft such as national security or balance of power?; how applicable are they to the different contexts of Southern Africa and sub-Saharan Africa?; and

how transferable are institutions such as the CSCE? Although some ideas and practices may be transferable, they must be transplanted with care and with an eye to regional particularities.<sup>78</sup> Is what is known as the security dilemma relevant to the Southern African context and to the wider sub-Saharan region? Apparently, it is not.<sup>79</sup> The level of external security is relatively high because of geographical remoteness from the centre of world affairs, the indifference of outside powers, and the general powerlessness of states within the region – provided, that is, that there is a clear reduction in the South African threat to the Southern African region as a result of Pretoria's post-apartheid foreign policy, and in the Nigerian threat to the West African region arising from that country's continuing political instability under a repressive and essentially undemocratic military regime.

In terms of international politics, therefore, the states of sub-Saharan Africa are relatively secure legal entities, with no significant external security dilemma pressures. Internally, however, the situation has been much less satisfactory. Sovereignty is threatened more from within than from without: there have been instances of significant domestic instability brought about by tribal and clan-induced anarchy in states such as Sierra Leone, Liberia and Somalia; long-standing irredentist, armed rebellion in Sudan; catastrophic ethnic massacres in Rwanda and Burundi; suppression of human rights and the basic principles of democracy by the military regime in Nigeria, and by civilian variants in Kenya, Cameroon, Zaire and Zimbabwe; clearly undemocratic no-party systems in Uganda and Swaziland (where trades union-inspired civil disobedience is putting the feudal Swazi monarchy under pressure); continuing scars of decades of protracted civil war in Angola and Mozambique; seemingly endemic local political violence in the KwaZulu Natal Province of South Africa; and factional clashes in the Lesotho armed forces, threatening an as yet fragile democratic rebirth.

Now, if sub-Saharan Africa is relatively free of external security dilemma pressures, the implications for security policy are enormous, meaning that priority has to be given to the domestic sources of instability. Security policy must be both more multi-

levelled and multi-faceted: in other words, it must deal not primarily with states or with issues of military strategy but with a whole range of threats to a nation's wellbeing. It follows, then, that traditional security regimes, designed to mitigate security dilemmas, will not be as relevant to the future of sub-Saharan Africa (or, more specifically, to Southern Africa) as some might think.

One of the attractions of the CSCE model may be its non-traditional elements. Although this model was essentially statist in inspiration, its human rights provisions escaped from this bind; and its various baskets approach the security problem in a multi-faceted way.<sup>80</sup> Within the wider sub-Saharan context, the Southern African sub-continent might be good ground on which to experiment with new modes of crisis control and conflict prevention and, in so doing, move away from the traditional emphasis on formal organizations with rigid structures and agendas, which has usually precluded the establishment of an open forum for the discussion of problems, dangers and incipient trends.<sup>81</sup> Thus it may be helpful to think of a complex of different regimes, each one attempting to deal with different but overlapping sectors of the security problem. One advantage of seeking such a combination of regimes is that complex structures are always likely to be able to take more strain. Another advantage is that it may well prove easier to negotiate a series of single-issue regimes than a single comprehensive one. Indeed, progress at one level might ease progress at another as a result of spill-over effects.<sup>82</sup>

A CSCE process involving South Africa on equal terms with other countries in Southern Africa – based on the idea of different baskets dealing with security and disarmament; trade, production and labour; general issues linked to institutional forms for economic cooperation; refugees and migration; and human rights, culture and education – is appealing for a number of reasons.<sup>83</sup> First, it would be an excellent instrument for confidence-building and increased transparency in matters concerning armed forces and threat projections. Second, it could provide a useful framework for regional conflict management and conflict resolution. Third, it could serve as

a forum for the exchange of ideas and comparisons regarding domestic issues related to state-society relationships. And last, it could contribute to the institutionalization of regional structures, the establishment of which could further equity-based regional cooperation over a wide range of issues, including those in the economic field.

Using the CSCE model, Vale<sup>84</sup> suggests eight complementary regional baskets: security, economic development, law and human rights, education and technology, migration, health, gender issues, and agriculture. But he is mute on the tougher question of how, in practice, a CSCSA could be institutionalized. What, if anything, can Southern Africa learn from European experience with the CSCE? And, more importantly, can such a framework be sustained in the context of soft, vulnerable states? Although South Africa may be harder, in relative terms, than the other states of the region, it too is a soft state in view of its doubtful capacity to meet existing and future domestic socio-economic demands, its obvious inability to mobilize sufficient internal resources commensurate with its development needs, and the prospect that it may not be a particularly well-consolidated state for years to come.

A CSSDCA or CSCSA process in Southern Africa will be difficult to institutionalize without due consideration of these imponderables. But this does not mean that it should not be attempted. Clearly, it may prove to be even tougher than the European experience, which had a relatively long genesis. There is also the additional consideration that post-apartheid South Africa might attempt to manipulate regional institutions for its own particular purposes. Then, these institutions might well become an arena for competing social groups; and this would effectively immobilize them and detract from their non-material functions. This is an important consideration, for peace and security are also about non-material, intangible things such as identity, social space and human dignity.

### **Institutions for regional security in Southern Africa and sub-Saharan Africa**

Towards the end of 1989 and during the first months of 1990, calls to review the OAU's role were made against a

backdrop of increasing insecurity, instability and economic decline in many African countries. The realization was indeed spreading throughout the continent that Africa, with the end of the Cold War, needed to respond appropriately to the new challenges facing it, especially in matters such as conflict resolution, economic development and democratization; and, to this end, the Addis Ababa OAU Summit of July 1990 passed the "Declaration on Fundamental Changes in the World and their Implications for Africa". This "paradigm shift", in the words of Thomas Kuhn,<sup>85</sup> was marked by new inter-state and intra-state relations in Africa and led to the creation of the Division for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in the General Secretariat of the OAU in March 1992. This was followed by the establishment of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution at the Cairo OAU Summit in June 1993.<sup>86</sup>

This development is a bold conceptual step towards intervention in domestic conflicts; and the main focus of the OAU Mechanism is, most appropriately, preventive action through early warning.<sup>87</sup> The Central Organ of the Mechanism is composed of states which are members of the Bureau of the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, the current OAU Chairman (Cameroon), the outgoing Chairman (Ethiopia) and the incoming Chairman (Zimbabwe), with the OAU Secretary-General and General Secretariat forming its operational arm. The Central Organ assumes overall direction and coordination of the activities of the Mechanism between ordinary sessions of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, and functions at three levels: annual meetings of its members at heads-of-state-and-government level, biannual meetings at foreign ministerial level, and monthly meetings at ambassadorial level – with special meetings called, if necessary, to deal with crises.<sup>88</sup>

Subsequent endeavours by OAU Secretary-General Salim Ahmed Salim and the United Nations to expand the OAU's capabilities in peace-keeping operations have received only lukewarm support from the majority of African countries. At the June 1995 Addis Ababa OAU Summit on peace-keeping issues, leaders grudgingly agreed to set up peace-keeping units within existing armies for *peace-observer*

vation roles only, instead of the widely anticipated African intervention force for *peace-keeping*.<sup>89</sup> And clearly, the Central Organ will have to coordinate its activities with peace-keeping initiatives in the different sub-regions. For example, the SADC (which has a formal mandate from member states to promote regional cooperation in the areas of politics, defence and security) has, almost simultaneously, begun to assume regional security responsibilities with its proposal to establish forums for conflict resolution, and security and defence.<sup>90</sup> However, there is no evidence that the prevailing apprehension among African states toward enhanced multilateralism in security matters will change in the immediate future.

The past two years have witnessed the OAU's grappling with measures to strengthen the capacity of the Mechanism to respond more rapidly and effectively to the scourge of conflict. These attempts have been made in recognition of the fact that Africa has to bear the primary responsibility for taking charge of its own problems. Concurrently, a firm belief has taken root that early action would contain conflicts and prevent their deterioration to a point where the OAU would be compelled to resort to complex and resource-demanding peace-keeping operations which it would find difficult to finance.<sup>91</sup> It also became apparent that the Mechanism suffered from operational limitations of an infrastructural, logistical, human resource and financial nature and, more importantly, from lack of an early warning capability: an efficient system, by which the Mechanism could be timeously alerted to potential disputes, could inform itself quickly on incipient conflicts, and respond speedily, proactively and decisively to crisis situations.<sup>92</sup>

What has been foremost in the minds of African leaders was the growing conviction that they must strengthen the preventive capacity of the Mechanism by establishing an OAU Conflict Management Centre to act as the focal point of an Early Warning System Network on conflict situations in Africa. Emphasis was to be put on the anticipation (prediction, even) and prevention of conflict, and concerted action in peace-making. Such a coordinating facility would have to be capable of gathering and

analysing information to facilitate decision-making and timely, pre-emptive political action by the relevant organs of the Mechanism. (Early warning is essentially a tool for preparedness, and for the prevention and mitigation of conflict, its efficiency being predicated upon a clear methodology for data collection, analysis and information exchange. And there should be a healthy realization that the poor state of Africa's telecommunications and other high-technology support systems poses formidable obstacles in the way of any efficient early warning capability.)<sup>93</sup>

Turning back to Southern Africa, the SADCC was replaced in 1992 by the SADC. This new institution differs from its predecessor in three important respects: it includes the regional superpower, South Africa; its primary goal goes beyond economic coordination to higher levels of regional integration;<sup>94</sup> and its mandate extends to the political, military and security realms. The following motivation is advanced for this broad mandate:

Good and strengthened political relations among the countries of the region, and peace and mutual security, are critical components of the total environment for regional cooperation and integration. The region needs, therefore, to establish a framework and mechanisms to strengthen regional solidarity and provide for mutual peace and security.<sup>95</sup>

On the grounds that political and military stability are essential prerequisites for development, the SADC's objectives include "the evolution of common political values and institutions" and "the promotion of peace and security".<sup>96</sup> The SADC Treaty identifies "politics, diplomacy, international relations, peace and security" as one of the seven areas of regional cooperation,<sup>97</sup> the others being food security, land and agriculture; infrastructure and services; human resources development, science and technology; industry, trade, investment and finance; natural resources and the environment; and social welfare, information and culture.

In its programme for 1993, the SADC proposed a number of strategies for advancing regional security: the adoption of a "new approach to security" emphasizing the non-military dimensions of security, including the security of people; the creation of a forum for mediation and arbitration; a

reduction in military force levels and expenditures; the introduction of confidence and security-building measures; and the ratification of key principles of international law governing interstate relations.<sup>98</sup> In July 1994, the SADC convened a ministerial workshop on democracy, peace and security which recommended the formation of a human rights commission headed by judges and other eminent persons; a conflict resolution forum, comprising foreign ministers; a security and defence forum, composed of ministers responsible for defence, policing and intelligence; an SADC sector on security and defence; and an autonomous institute for strategic studies.<sup>99</sup> In defending the proposals of this workshop, South African First Deputy President Thabo Mbeki argued that events in Rwanda demanded the existence of a regional security system in Southern Africa which enjoyed the consensus agreement of members to intervene in a conflict situation in the interests of peace and security. South Africa also had to show its neighbours that it was adopting a non-threatening posture. The Windhoek recommendations, therefore, included a non-aggression and mutual defence pact, a new role for military forces and defence industries in meeting civilian needs, and the creation of a security sector in the SADC.<sup>100</sup>

The August 1994 Gaborone SADC Summit was presented with two proposals concerning the establishment of an appropriate forum to facilitate regional cooperation in the security sphere: the SADC Council of Ministers recommended the creation of a "sector on political cooperation, democracy, peace and security"; and the foreign ministers of the frontline states proposed the formation of an Association of Southern African States (ASAS) as the successor to the frontline-states grouping. The summit decided that these proposals should be merged in order to avoid overlap and duplication.<sup>101</sup> In August 1995, the Johannesburg SADC Summit deferred the resolution of this question for a further year. The key arguments for adopting the ASAS option was that it would allow direct access to heads of state and government, it would be more flexible and informal than the other SADC sectors, it would ensure a higher level of confidentiality, and it would facilitate rapid response to a



crisis situation. In a relatively short period of time, the focus of the SADC's deliberations on regional peace and security had thus moved from principles, to strategies, and on to mechanisms.<sup>102</sup>

It was further agreed that the frontline states grouping, formed in 1974, would disband, all its operations being integrated into a yet to-be-established political and security sector. The frontline states had had a strictly political vocation, to be an alliance fighting apartheid and white minority rule in Southern Africa. All its meetings had been off-the-record and held *in camera*. In response to South Africa's policy of destabilization in the region, this informal grouping had functioned flexibly, assembling only when speaking with a single voice on regional and international issues was necessary.<sup>103</sup> Although now formally dissolved, no other joint commission of African leaders had acted with such cohesion, had exhibited such a degree of permanence, and had enjoyed so much respect.

Building on the frontline-states concept, essentially drawing on the experience and expertise of this club of heads of state and government and the SADC's equally long-standing sectoral approach, it was resolved at the January 1996 Consultative Meeting of the SADC in Johannesburg to establish an Organ on Politics, Defence and Security. This Organ will report directly to the annual SADC Heads-of-State-and-Government Meeting, and the chairmanship will revolve alphabetically and annually among the 12 member states. It will, to all intents and purposes, be the political arm of the SADC (working on the troika principle of current, outgoing and incoming SADC chairpersons), will function independently of the SADC Secretariat (the already existing Inter-State Defence and Security Committee (IDSC) will now be the Organ's secretariat), and its main responsibility will be to deal with conflict prevention, management and resolution in the Southern African region. More importantly, it will work in a flexible and informal manner and will be able to respond rapidly to incidents of regional insecurity, its inspiration being the conflict prevention achieved in August-September 1994 in Lesotho and in October 1994 in Mozambique. In the Lesotho crisis, the troika of heads of state (South Africa, Botswana and

Zimbabwe) successfully applied pressure to end the King's coup and restore Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle to power; in the Mozambican case, they were able to muster their number at considerable speed and firmly push mid-election Mozambique back on the road to participatory democracy. In the business of politics, preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution, such speed is necessary. It is to the credit of Southern African leaders that this line of thinking has prevailed and is now incorporated into the procedures for an embryonic regional security regime.<sup>104</sup>

In Southern Africa, the focus in security must be on conflict prevention through preventive diplomacy, a concept popularized by United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali who defined it as "action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts, and to limit the spread of ... [conflicts] when they occur".<sup>105</sup> Preventive diplomacy is more cost-effective than other forms of intervention. It involves information gathering and disbursement for the purpose of early warning, the use of the "good offices" of a particular government leader or international statesman, and confidence-building measures between groups of states.<sup>106</sup>

### Conclusion

Sub-Saharan Africa has acquired a reputation for the intractability of its problems, and outside countries are showing a particular reluctance to be drawn into its peace-keeping operations. Fortunately for South Africa, it assumes its regional and continental responsibilities at a time when a new sense of realism about peace-keeping is emerging in Africa. Something must be done to limit conflict in sub-Saharan Africa, which is more ravaged by civil war and other forms of armed conflict than any other part of the world. Current thinking is shifting towards political rather than military intervention, to conflict prevention (through preventive diplomacy) rather than conflict management or conflict resolution.

South Africa seems poised to play its expected role in regional security, but some observers suggest that it must be cautious about being made the policeman of the Southern African region or the gendarme of sub-Saharan Africa,

and about putting its military capacity at the disposal of warring factions elsewhere on the continent. They argue that South Africa could not, by military involvement, have rescued the massacre victims in Rwanda, or have put an end to the continuing civil war in Angola, or have restored order in a war-ravaged pre-election Mozambique, or have created a semblance of stability in Lesotho – and it did not attempt to do so. Where South Africa's interests do lie is in stabilizing not only the Southern African sub-region but also sub-Saharan Africa – if only to stop the vast and destabilizing flood of refugees and economic migrants across its own borders. But that does not require military adventures or costly, and usually futile, peace-keeping operations.

If in the wider world it is in South Africa's interest to make no enemies, to trade wherever it is to its advantage to do so, and to give its modest support to international endeavours, its main interest still remains: to stabilize both Southern Africa and also the broader region south of the Sahara. This calls for patient diplomacy, to play the role of facilitator and mediator as in Angola. It does not require armed excursions, nor does it require South Africa to emulate others in the futile exercise of throwing money at unstable societies. Caution has served South Africa well in the recent past, and it should remain its guiding principle: although South Africa has been called upon to intervene militarily in both Rwanda and Lesotho in recent times, it has wisely resisted, agreeing only to provide humanitarian aid to Rwandan refugees and play the role of facilitator (in concert with Zimbabwe and Botswana) in the political crisis in Lesotho.

Southern Africa is arguably the only part of the African continent that can look forward to a truly regional dynamic. But this dynamic will be forthcoming only if there is genuine and constructive cooperation among the countries of the region. SACU is, significantly, regarded as the most viable and most effective instrument of trade facilitation and customs management, in the Southern African region certainly, if not in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole. South Africa should therefore use its energies to draw its neighbours into a functioning system of security and prosperity which must extend real benefits. Moreover, regional cooperation and development

integration, rather than purely economic integration, should initially guide the future of Southern Africa; policy should concentrate on developing and extending regional technical-functional networks in transport, telecommunications, water management and power generation.

The capability to cope with the aftermath of civil war and violent devastation, economic decline, colonialism, and apartheid in the Southern African region has to be developed. Steps to consolidate security in an holistic sense (much broader than a narrow military interpretation), to restore law and order, and to prevent a recurrence of conflict are, however, likely to demand greater application and persistence than achieving the economic recovery that they will help make possible. Be that as it may, the processes of political change in Southern Africa have made possible the creation of a mechanism to manage a regional security regime: the newly established SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security. This development makes the SADC unique among regional institutions in sub-Saharan Africa.

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- 90 See SADC Secretariat, *Windhoek Communiqué*, Workshop on Democracy, Peace and Security, organized by the SADC Secretariat in Windhoek, Namibia from 11 to 16 July 1994; and Laurie Nathan and Joao Honwana, *op cit*.
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# The Subia and Fwe of Caprivi

Any historical grounds for a status of *primus inter pares*?

Since the beginning of this century there has been periodic conflict in the Caprivi region of Namibia between the Mafwe (Fwe) and Masubia (Subia). A variety of issues have contributed to the struggle between these two ethnic groups: occupational and user-rights on land; appointments, positions and promotions in the joint regional administration; admission to and use of existing facilities; the question of whether the Fwe is a single group or not, and the appointment of certain teachers in different areas. At the heart of this conflict apparently lies what Cohen and Middleton call "indigenoussness": who settled first in the area and, particularly, who was the first original authority in this region, because "... conquest seems to set a baseline in cultural time for indigenoussness".<sup>1</sup>

In regard to the Caprivi, this refers to a repeated claim by the Subia that the Fwe are (or should be) subordinate to the Subia, and that the Subia chief is (or should be) the ruler (*munintenge*)<sup>2</sup> of the Caprivi and its inhabitants. Claims and demands of this nature have been raised many times in the past and were periodically mediated – only to be reiterated more vehemently by the Subia. The latest example of such a peace agreement is what is known as the Katima Declaration on National Reconciliation of May 1993.<sup>3</sup> The repeated Subia claim has already led to numerous official investigations<sup>4</sup> as well as an application in the Supreme Court in Windhoek in 1983 (with appeal to the Appellate Division in Bloemfontein).<sup>5</sup> The Supreme Court rejected the application of the Subia chief to be declared *munintenge* on the grounds that it would not be consistent with the prevailing legislation.<sup>6</sup> The court, however, did not go into historical grounds on which the claim rests, and thus, did not consider the claim from that perspective.

As shown below, since the era of German rule over the Caprivi it has been accepted that Eastern Caprivi (see map) is inhabited by two district groups, namely the Fwe and the Subia.<sup>7</sup> The South African government's Proclama-

tion R261 of 1971,<sup>8</sup> recognized the existence of a so-called "tribal government" (*likuta*) for each of them. But other than usual, the Proclamation did not describe the geographical areas of the so-called "tribal authorities". The reason for this seems to be twofold: on the one hand, documentary proof could not be (and still has not been) found that a competent authority had geographically determined a political boundary between the Fwe and Subia and, consequently, government acted as if the whole of Eastern Caprivi was jointly inhabited and owned by both groups, in spite of the implicit and administrative recognition of "tribal areas". On the other hand, the Subia vehemently deny that there is any such boundary; they claim that the Fwe is not a single group but is made up of different groups, and that these groups are subordinate, or should be subordinate, to the Subia – as the application to the court indicates. Nevertheless: from the government's side the Fwe and Subia have throughout been accepted as equals and treated as such, and it has been accepted that there is in existence a social border, which cannot be legally enforced in geographical terms.

It is, under the circumstances, accepted that the issue of "indigenoussness" (as referred to above) can clarify the merits of the positions of the two groups. To establish this would require that greater clarity be reached about the origin, movement and settlement of the Fwe and the Subia in the region which later became known as the Eastern Caprivi – a region about which little is known before the first Luyi/Luyana/Lozi kingdom was established (in what is now southwest Zambia) and of which the Caprivi formed part.

## The origin of Caprivi

### *The first Lozi kingdom*

Viewed in retrospect, four phases in the historical course can be distinguished to which cursory attention will be given, namely the first Lozi (Luyi, Luyana) kingdom, the Kololo kingdom, second

*Prof Chris Maritz of the Department of Development Studies at the Rand Afrikaans University, Johannesburg, traces the history of the Caprivi as well as the histories of both the Subia and Fwe under various rulers and comes to the conclusion that no grounds exist to substantiate the claim of the Subia to hegemony in this region of Namibia.*



Lozi kingdom and white hegemony (German and South African control).<sup>9</sup>

Jalla notes that, according to Lozi tradition, Mwanasilundu (also known as Mboo) was the first Lozi king.<sup>10</sup> His first village was at Ikuyu, in what today is known as southwest Zambia, from where he moved to Ikatulamwa. His younger brother, Mwanambinyi, moved downstream with the Zambezi and established his kingdom at Senanga.<sup>11</sup> During this process, Mwanambinyi waged war against the Mbukushu at Karima Mulilo<sup>12</sup> and at Longa Island. Liswane and his Subia fled before Mwanambinyi to Kazungula, while Cheete with his followers fled to Butoka.<sup>13</sup> Mwanambinyi's son, Mulia, continued his father's campaigns as far as (old) Sesheke (the present Mwindi) where he subjected the Subia and brought them with their chief, Mwanamwalye, to Senanga, while he settled the Mbukushu on islands like Sitori and Mbeta.<sup>14</sup>

Fwe sources state that Mwanambinyi expanded Lozi authority to include (at least) a part of the present-day Caprivi,<sup>15</sup> and that Ngalama, the fourth Lozi ruler, placed the southern and northern groupings within the Lozi territory (being the nuclei established through, respectively, Mwanambinyi and Mboo) under a single Lozi chieftaincy. With that he prepared the way for a powerful expansion of the Lozi kingdom by the sixth Lozi ruler, Ngombala (1725–1775).<sup>16</sup> Jalla points out that the regiments of Ngombala moved from Nakaywe via Siome to Sesheke and Kazungula, and also plundered the Toka and Leya before they advanced southwest to the Linyanti River.<sup>17</sup> According to the Fwe sources of Pretorius, Ngombala appointed a representative named Linyanti at the present-day

Sangwali (in the southwestern corner of the later eastern Caprivi) to guard the fords through the Linyanti River and thus to ensure Lozi authority in this area.<sup>18</sup> On returning from the campaign that reached to Hwange (derived from the name of another representative of Ngombala, namely Wange/Hwange) Ngombala found that Linyanti had died in the meantime. He then appointed Mwanangombe at Sangwali (for the Linyanti area). Other *manduna* had also been appointed by him "to guard the fords" at the Kwando/Mashi River, namely Sekau, Masiala and Mwambwa Seluka.<sup>19</sup> In this manner the present Caprivi became part of the Lozi kingdom under Ngombala during the first half of the eighteenth century. The groups in this area had a duty to pay taxes to the Lozi ruler.<sup>20</sup>

This situation evidently existed under successive rulers of the first Lozi kingdom, until it was overthrown by Sebetwane and his Kololo in the late 1830s. It is also clear from this set-up that any attack (from outside the Lozi kingdom) on a group within and under control of the Lozi, would have been considered to be an encroachment on Lozi sovereignty and interests, and interference in internal Lozi affairs. It is therefore understandable that the first military clash between the Lozi and the northbound Kololo took place after the latter crossed the Linyanti River from the present-day Botswana to settle in the Linyanti area. The Lozi warriors were defeated by the Kololo, commanded by Mbololo, a few kilometres north of Linyanti in about 1830.<sup>21</sup>

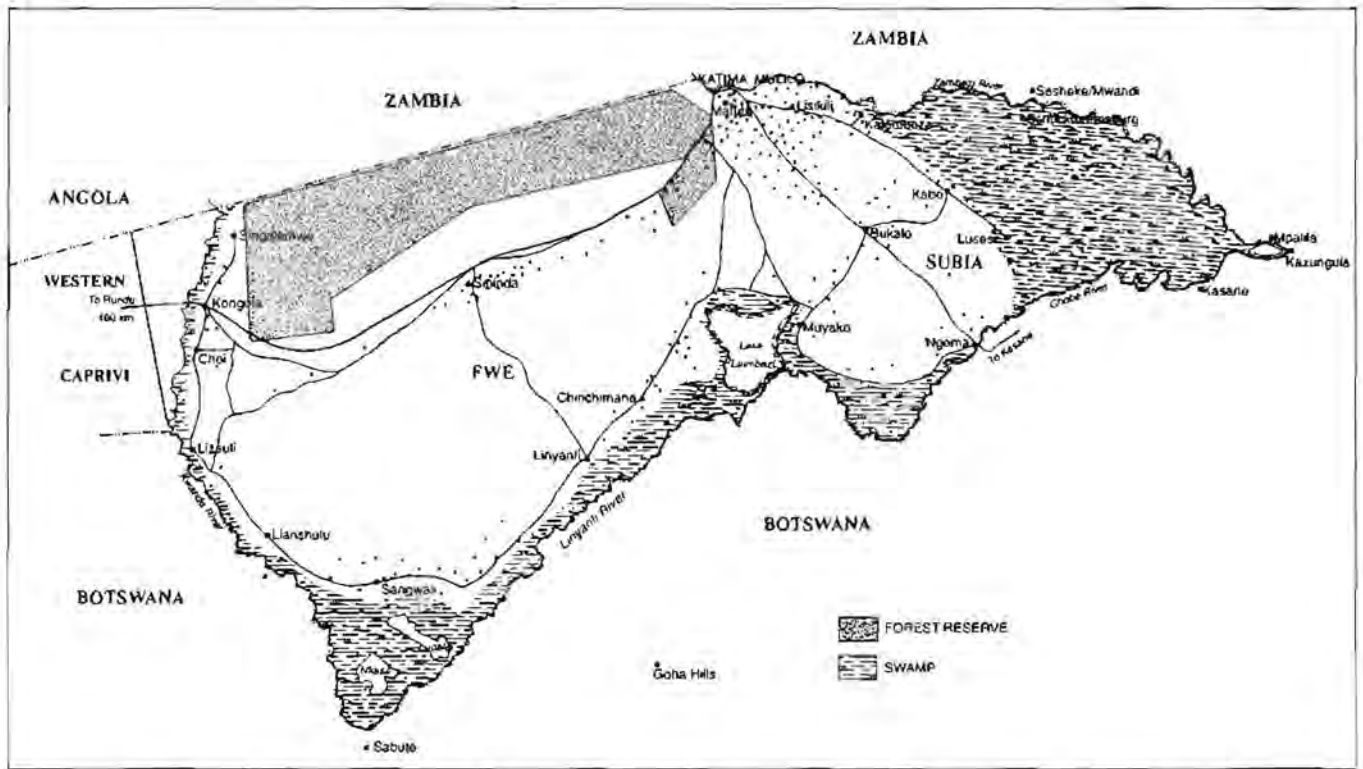
#### The Kololo

More data exist on the northward trek of the Bafokeng of Sebetwane from the present-day Free State, and their eventual settlement in Bulozhi.<sup>22</sup> Stated briefly: Sebetwane and his followers moved northwards from the present southern Free State during the *difaqane* period; in 1823 they participated in an attack on the Tlhaping capital near the present Kuruman; numerous Tswana groupings in the western Transvaal and Botswana were plundered by Sebetwane and there were also clashes with the Matabele of Mzilikazi before he crossed the Linyanti/Chobe and settled in the Linyanti area (where he fought the Lozi and won the battle). Because of malaria and tsetse fly, Sebetwane moved east and northeast along the Chobe River until he reached the confluence with the Zambezi River



The (traditional) courtroom of the *kuta* (tribal council/court) of the Mafwe at Linyanti (1984)

Photo. M W Prinsloo



on his way to the Toka highland. On request of the Subia under Nsundano, he became involved in a tribal dispute between the Subia and Leya, crossed the Zambezi at Kazungula with the help of the Toka of Mosokutwane and started to subjugate parts of Bulozhi north of the Zambezi – a kingdom that was at that point in time weakened as a result of internal dissent and civil war. After conquering the capital of the Lozi kingdom and establishing his authority over the ethnic groups within the kingdom, he again moved southwards, punished the Subia and Toka for helping the Matabele (of Mzilikazi) during an attack on the Kololo, and finally settled at Linyanti (Sangwali) in 1850, where Sebetwane died on 7 July 1851, after meeting Livingstone.

Under the leadership of Sebetwane, the Kololo kingdom was expanded in such a way that it exceeded the borders of the former Lozi kingdom to the north and south. The groupings within the Lozi kingdom and under control of the Lozi during the reign of the Lozi kings (including the Fwe and Subia of the present Caprivi) thus came under the authority of the Kololo. The obligation to pay tribute to the Kololo ruler was maintained.

After the death of Sebetwane, he was succeeded by his daughter, Mmamochisane, who abdicated and transferred the chieftainship to Sekeletu, son (possibly stepson) of Sebetwane. Seke-

letu who was young, unsure of himself, and extremely distrustful, appointed only Kololo in positions of authority and killed all possible rivals within the kingdom.

Within the Kololo, as well as the Lozi and other subordinate groups, resistance against the rule of Sekeletu gradually grew, and this weakened the kingdom from within. Sekeletu died of leprosy in 1863. Leadership was taken over by Mbololo, a member of the ruling group who had defeated the Lozi in 1830. He moved the imperial headquarters from Linyanti to (old) Sesheke (now Mwandu in Zambia) on the northern bank of the Zambezi, and thus to a point outside the present-day Caprivi. At that stage, Sipopa, a Lozi prince who lived for some time at the courts of Sebetwane and Sekeletu at Linyanti,<sup>23</sup> started a campaign to overthrow Kololo rule. Sipopa's *ngambela* (chief councillor), Njekwa, in particular played an active role in the onslaught and the Kololo kingdom was overthrown in 1864. After this, Njekwa and his lieutenants snuffed out all Kololo men in the kingdom and killed them.<sup>24</sup> Kololo women and children were absorbed by the Lozi.

#### The second Lozi kingdom

After the take-over by Sipopa, the Lozi had to reimpose their authority on certain groups (including the Subia) which

were of the opinion that the end of Kololo hegemony meant the end of the empire.<sup>25</sup> The system of Lozi territorial administration was re-established. It meant that Sipopa divided the kingdom under two semi-independent capitals, namely Namuso in the north and Lwambi in the south, with the understanding that a female relative would rule in the south, but would not succeed in the north. The two administrative areas were further divided into provinces, which were subdivided into *lilalo* (wards) under *manduna* (headmen). The practice of paying tribute to the Lozi king was resumed.

Sipopa was killed in 1876 during a rebellion within Lozi ranks and was succeeded by Mwanawina, who had to flee to the Toka in 1878. Prince Lubosi became king, but was overthrown during a rebellion in 1884 and found refuge with Libebe, chief of the Mbukushu at Andara in the present Kavango. The instigator of this rebellion, Mataa, appointed another royal, Tatila Akufuna, as king of the Lozi in September 1884. In November 1885 Lubosi returned from Andara with a military force, defeated the rebels and resumed his position as king of the Lozi. From this point onwards, he became known by the honorary name *Lewanika*, which, freely translated, means conqueror.<sup>26</sup> He ruled over Caprivi as an integral part of the Lozi kingdom, until the arrival of *Hauptmann* Streitwolf in 1909 as representative of the German imperial government in the area.

As mentioned above, representatives were appointed or confirmed throughout the kingdom at the start of the second Lozi kingdom. In essence, this implied the continuation of a practice followed during the first Lozi kingdom and also during the time of Kololo rule. As far as Caprivi was concerned, the governmental system evolved as follows: By the end of the first Lozi kingdom, Mwamba Seluka was the only representative with authority over the southern area, stretching from Bagani (at the Kavango River) to Mpalila Island (Kazungula), thus including Caprivi. He had subordinates (representatives) at the different communities. Shortly after the start of the second Lozi kingdom (1864), Simataa Kabende was appointed by the Lozi ruler himself (not by Seluka) as his representative in the Linyanti area and conferred the honorary title of *Mamili* on him. The nature

of the initial power relationship between Seluka and Mamili (Simataa Kabende) is unclear.<sup>27</sup> Jaba/Chaba, Mayuni and Ingenda were appointed as subordinates of Seluka at the Mashi/Kwando River. Three provincial *likuta* were formed for the outlying areas: at Sesheke, Kaunga and Libonda. At Sesheke the son of Lewanika, Litia (Yeta), was placed in charge, while Kaunga was the seat of authority for the Mashi area under control of Litianyana, son of Lewanika's brother, Wamunungo.<sup>28</sup>

#### White rule

There was no physical German presence in the Caprivi until 1909,<sup>29</sup> in spite of the fact that it was under German authority from 1890 in terms of an international agreement. Apparently, as far as the Lozi were concerned, the *status quo ante* still prevailed.

*Hauptmann* Streitwolf<sup>30</sup> arrived from Gobabis in Caprivi in January 1909 as representative of the German Imperial government. He found the area almost uninhabited. All livestock were taken over the Zambezi on instruction of Lewanika. At Linyanti, Streitwolf met the aged Lozi legate, Mamili, and confirmed his position as head over the non-Subia part of the Caprivi.<sup>31</sup> Streitwolf moved along the Kwando and explained the new situation to the inhabitants, namely that the Lozi would no longer have authority over the Caprivi. To the subordinates of Seluka who lived in Caprivi, the choice was given to either move over the (new) border to Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) and thus remain subjects of Seluka, or to stay on in Caprivi but then under the authority of Mamili. They chose to accept Mamili as their new chief.<sup>32</sup> During his short stay in Caprivi, Streitwolf managed to bring back the livestock, to demarcate boundaries, to appoint a former Subia headman, Chikamatondo, as chief of the Subia, and to establish a rudimentary administration at Schuckmansburg, opposite (old) Sesheke (Mwandi).

German authority over Caprivi was ended by Rhodesian troops in September 1914, during World War I. After the war South Africa was entrusted with the League of Nations mandate for South West Africa. Out of practical considerations, however, it was decided that the Caprivi should rather be administered by the British High Commissioner (as part of the Bechuanaland Protectorate) on behalf

of South Africa. Proclamation 12 of 1922 gave effect to this decision. Proclamation 23 of 1922 (SA) declared the laws of the Bechuanaland Protectorate binding on the Caprivi, a dispensation which remained valid until 31 August 1929. A subsequent proclamation (196 of 1929) transferred control of the area, as from 1 September 1929, to the Administrator of South West Africa, and stipulated that legislation applicable on South West Africa would also apply to the Caprivi. However, in terms of Proclamation 147 of 1939, the administration of the Caprivi became the responsibility of the Minister of Native Affairs of South Africa. This dispensation remained valid until 31 August 1977, when Proclamation 181 of 1977 empowered the Administrator-General of South West Africa to promulgate legislation for Caprivi. The situation remained thus until the independence of Namibia in 1990.

Against this background and within the context of the above-mentioned historical process, the ethnohistories of the Fwe and Subia have to be viewed more closely. Two givens, however, must be underlined in advance: first, that the area which was later to become known as Caprivi was continuously, since the rule of Ngombala (the sixth Lozi ruler – 1725–1775) under Lozi and Kololo control; and secondly, that no sign of domination by the Subia over the Fwe is apparent from the historical record.

#### The Mafwe (Fwe)

The group which is known as the Fwe, is of heterogeneous origin and it is probably for this reason that Pretorius wrote: "The Fwe ... is historically ... the least known tribe".<sup>33</sup> In essence, the group represents a product of fusion between "real" Fwe, Yeeyi, Totela, Mbukushu, Lozi and Kwengo, under Lozi leadership but under the name of the Fwe. C E Kruger, who for many years was the magistrate of the area, explained that when Pretoria took over in 1939 from Windhoek, the group was officially described as Mafwe (Bayeyi). Later the name Bayeyi was left out, apparently with everyone's approval.<sup>34</sup> The catalyst for the fusion process was obviously the Lozi legate at Linyanti from 1865, namely Simataa Kabende (Muyongo) with the honorary name of *Mamili*. He is still remembered by these segments as "our first chief". The

"real" Fwe indicates an origin from the Shanjo;<sup>35</sup> the Totela point to a heartland directly north of Katima Mulilo;<sup>36</sup> the Yeeyi acknowledge ties with the Koba (of Botswana),<sup>37</sup> and the Mbukushu refer to Mwanambinyi and the areas of Katima Mulilo, Kwando and Andara as areas of origin.<sup>38</sup> Before Simataa Kabende, there were thus separate histories for the segments; under his rule they started to flow together. Therefore, the ethno-history of the Fwe "starts" with Simataa Kabende – but with the understanding that the deputy of Ngombala, Linyanti, and his successors, and also the Kololo, played a role in this fusion process.

Sireitwolf reckoned that Simataa was about 10 years old when the Kololo arrived. He lived at the court of Sebetwane at Linyanti; experienced the fall of the Kololo kingdom; stayed true to Lubosi when he had to flee to Andara and fought bravely on the side of Lubosi's forces in the battle of Lealui, through which Lubosi had won back his position as Lozi ruler.<sup>39</sup> According to Fwe testimony, Simataa was a Lozi of noble descent, and was appointed as "sub-chief" (or headman) at Lwena in the present Zambia, after the take-over of power by Sipopa in 1864. Shortly thereafter – probably in 1865 – he was appointed as "chief" in the Linyanti area, partly as a result of the fact that he stayed in the Linyanti area earlier. His task was to guard the southern border of the kingdom against invaders. With his appointment (and in accordance with Lozi tradition), the official (and honorary) name of *Mamili* was given to him by the Lozi ruler, also bearing reference to the earlier resident Kololo sub-chief (or headman) of the Linyanti area.<sup>40</sup> Thus Simataa Kabende was henceforth known as sub-chief or *induna*<sup>41</sup> Mamili. By the end of the previous century, two Lozi provinces enclosed the territory of the present Caprivi: the Sesheke province under Letia with Mamili and (according to Sireitwolf) Tjikamatondo as representatives in, respectively, the southwestern and eastern parts; and the Kaunga province (which included the northwestern part) under Letianyana with Mwamba Seluka as royal representative.<sup>42</sup> Fwe testimony has it that the area over which Mamili was appointed by Sipopa, was henceforth no more under the authority of Seluka.

In the course of time, the identification between the various segments



Mamili V. Richard Temuso Muhinda, fifth Chief (*mtumu*) of the MaFwe (1971-1987) Photo: M.W. Prinsloo

(Fwe, Yeeyi, Totela, Hambukushu and Makwengo) and Lozi representative Mamili (Simataa Kabende) grew stronger. Living together, suffering together and fighting together (against Matabele and Tswana from the south) sustained the process of fusion under Mamili.

In this process, the role of tradition and political culture should not be underestimated, while relative isolation would also have played a part. Because of Lozi dominance, Lozi culture and tradition would have been the frame of reference for non-Lozi elements. Secondly, it is part of the Lozi (and Kololo) political culture that the ruling lineage (tribal head, paramount chief, ruler) had to be of royal origin. Various examples exist in the Lozi history of "non-royals" who unseated kings or rulers (Njekwa and Mataa) but did not take over the kingship themselves – they "recruited" a royal (Sipopa and Tatila Akufuna) to take the ruler's seat.<sup>43</sup> The question of whether Simataa Kabende was in reality a Lozi royal is, under the circumstances, not of great importance: in the minds of those concerned, he was accepted as having the

credentials which are required for chieftainship, namely royal authority.

From Simataa (Mamili) onwards, there is a clear line of succession. Successive Lozi rulers apparently accepted him as their representative in the Linyanti area. With the arrival of Sireitwolf, Simataa was acknowledged as chief of the Fwe (including the Yeeyi, Totela, Hambukushu and Makwengo). Pretorius states that "Sireitwolf confirmed Simataa Mamili's position as chief and extended his jurisdiction over the entire non-Subiya area of Caprivi ...".<sup>44</sup>

After Simataa there was continuous succession in the royal house of the Fwe: Lifasi (1909-1931); Simataa (1932-1938; 1939-1944); Simasiku (1944-1971); Richard Temuso Muhinda (1971-1987) and Boniface Beebi (1987-). After the appointment of Simataa Kabende (Mamili) by Sireitwolf, all further chiefs were apparently selected as such by the Fwe and appointed by the competent authority. Authority was granted to them, which if it did not expressly refer to "the area of the Mafwe tribe", in any case implied the existence of an area of Fwe legitimacy. The record of succession also shows no occurrence or phase in the history of the Fwe from which it can be concluded that the Subia at any stage had authority over the Fwe. The view of Kruger can thus be endorsed: "The conclusion reached is that, as far as we can see, no Subia chief ever put sovereign step in the land of the Mafwe and if perchance one strayed that way all imprint of it will long since have been obliterated by the march of events".<sup>45</sup> Under South African administration the two groups and their chiefs were accorded equal status.<sup>46</sup>

### The Masubia (Subia)

The most comprehensive exposition of the ethno-history of the Subia is to be found in the contribution of Shamukuni in *Botswana notes and records*.<sup>47</sup> The fact that Shamukuni, according to all indications, is a Subia himself, places his contribution in a special context. What he presents can thus be seen as the Subia interpretation of their history.

Shamukuni starts off by stating that the Subia are settled at five dwelling places/areas, namely the Caprivi, Chobe district (Botswana), Sesheke area in Zambia, Rakops (Botswana),





Flat flood plains are the dominant geographical characteristic of most of the Caprivi Strip area

Botswana) and Gomare (Botswana). They accept Goha Hills (or Gowa) in the north of Botswana as their earliest known dwelling place. Here they stayed during the rule of Shanjo (also known as Sancho), while Yeeyi (under Masarasara) and Mbukushu (under Dibebe) also lived there. It is denied that the Subia branched off from the Mbukushu or Totela, but grounds exist to suspect that they are related to the Damara.<sup>48</sup>

From the Goha Hills the Subia moved to the Chobe River. During the journey, Shanjo died and was succeeded by his son, Mafwira I, who after a short rule was succeeded by his brother, Nsundano I.<sup>49</sup> Nsundano I is seen as "the founder of itenge" (kingdom) and it was during his rule that "the Basubiya identified them as an independent tribe".<sup>50</sup> According to the same source, "Nsundano I found the baTotela and the baFwe around the present Katima Mulilo and Linyanti respectively. These small tribes were not powerful and did not have recognised chiefs. Soon they came under Nsundano I. ... Nsundano I had heard of the warlike Matebele to the South-east of Chuengwe-namutitima (the Victoria Falls), possibly from Bushmen. He (Nsundano) then established his Royal Village of Luchindo on the northern bank of the Chobe River about five miles east of Ngoma, in the present Caprivi strip".<sup>51</sup> Here Nsundano I became known as Liberenge/Libelenge and the borders of his kingdom were as follows: Sakapani south of Goha as the most southern point; Nunga to the southeast; Victoria Falls to the east; along the Zambezi upstream as far north as Sioma, and to the west downstream along the Kwando, through Kaunga and Singalamwe, past Sabute (Savuti) and down to Sakapani. These borders embraced a territory which included the whole of Eastern Caprivi (with exception of the part west of the Kwando). According to Shamukuni, Nsundano I was the contemporary of the Lozi ruler, Mulambwa<sup>52</sup> (1780–1830).<sup>53</sup>

Nsundano I was killed by the Leya, and was succeeded by Liswani I, his nephew. Liswani I established himself at Isuswa, colluded with the Matabele, and was later killed by Sebetwane, the Kololo chief. According to Sillery,<sup>54</sup> it was with the blessing of Sebetwane that Nkonkwena (known as Liswani II) succeeded Liswani I. Nkonkwena established himself on Mpalila Island where the Chobe flows into the Zambezi. It is

further understood from Shamukuni<sup>55</sup> that there was a representative of Sebetwane at Nkonkwena's court. After the overthrow of the Kololo kingdom by Sipopa (in 1864), Nkonkwena and his followers fled from his island around 1876 to settle at Rakops near the Makgadigadi Pan in what is now Botswana. Here he stayed as a guest, for it was the area of Khama III of the Ngwato. His son, Mafwira, broke away with a number of followers and established himself at Tlhale, Ngamiland, in the area of Moremi, chief of the Tawana. At the time of the flight of Nkonkwena out of the Caprivi, his sister, Ntolwe, stayed behind at Isuswa, where she "ruled".<sup>56</sup> After her death the question arose "as to who would succeed her as chief of the baSubia in the Caprivi".<sup>57</sup> She was eventually succeeded by a regent, Chikamatondo, after which Liswaninyana took over.

Though unclear when, a number of Subia left Rakops and settled at Munga (northern Botswana, southeast of the Liambezi lake). In 1901 Chika II/Liswani III became head of this group. He retired and was succeeded in 1923 by his son, Nsundano II, who was deposed in 1925. Chika II/Liswani III filled the position again until his death in 1927. He was succeeded by Simvula, son of Nkonkwena, in 1928, who was succeeded in 1969 by his son, Moffat Maiba Simvula, who is seen by author Shamukuni as the *munintenge*, that is the "rightful chief of the baSubia".<sup>58</sup>

As far as the Isuswa group is concerned: Liswaninyana died in 1937, after which Chikamatondo again acted as chief of the Subia in the Caprivi until his death in 1945, and was succeeded by Simvula Maiba. The latter stayed at Kabbe where he died in 1965. He was the biological father of Mutwa Josiah Muhango, who, with his appointment as chief of the Subia in Caprivi, accepted the name Maiba Moraliswani. He is still chief of the Subia in Eastern Caprivi today.

Pretorius' account of the Subia history<sup>59</sup> is consistent with Shamukuni's, and it is also clear that Pretorius relied heavily on Subia sources, especially on the interpretation of a principal of Kanono school.<sup>60</sup> Statements such as that the Subia "who lived between the confluence of the Chobe and Lyambai (Zambezi) and along the northern bank of the Lyambai as far north as Katima Mulilo, was politically and militarily the dominant tribe"; that Nsundano conquered large areas; that (the Subia claim)



"they have always ruled over the entire Eastern Caprivi Zipfel and as far west as the Okavango River", and that they "also provided the present ruling dynasty of the Mafwe",<sup>61</sup> are in line with the (subjective) interpretation that the Subia give to historical events.

### Evaluation

Some of the statements of the Subia have to be questioned.

Firstly, that Nsundano, who is seen as the founder of the Subia kingdom (*itenge*), would have subjected the whole Eastern Caprivi, including the Fwe. Pretorius<sup>62</sup> as well as Mainga<sup>63</sup> refer to the conquests of Lozi King Ngombala (who, according to Pretorius, ruled between 1725–1775) during whose reign the Subia were subjugated. Royal representatives were appointed by Ngombala in all the conquered areas, to guard over Lozi interests. *Since that time (±1750) the present Eastern Caprivi has been continuously under Lozi, or Kololo or ubite control.* The contemporary of Nsundano I, Lozi King Mulambwa, ruled from 1780 until 1830,<sup>64</sup> when he was defeated by the Kololo.<sup>65</sup> The Marabele under Mzilikazi came to the fore as a political force in the Transvaal between 1820 and 1830, but it was only in 1837 that they moved to Bulawayo from where they exerted pressure on the Zambezi region. The references (in the Subia version) to Mulambwa and the Marabele therefore point, at the earliest, to the period after 1800, *at which time the Eastern Caprivi had already been under Lozi rule for roughly 50 years.* No source could be found confirming that the Lozi were attacked and conquered by Nsundano I, or that the area indicated by the Subia as *itenge*, was ceded to the Subia by the Lozi. If it did happen, why did the Lozi (and not the Subia) attack the Kololo of Sebetwane when the latter crossed the Linyanti/Chobe in the late 1820s?<sup>66</sup>

Fwe sources give a different explanation. They suggest that the Subia, after Sipopa defeated the Kololo (1864), did not accept Lozi authority. This fact is confirmed by Mainga: the Totela, Subia and Toka would not pay tribute to Sipopa. "Then Sipopa descended on the Subia headmen implicated in the plot and murdered them in cold blood."<sup>67</sup> The Fwe further maintain that Nkonkwena and his ruling lineage (of the Subia) then fled out of fear to Botswana. After the overthrow of Sipopa (1876),



A Caprivi man with his *mukoro* (canoe) – the essential mechanism for transport over the Zambezi (Lyambai/ Lyambaye) and swamps in the region. Photo: M W Prinsloo

some of these Subia returned under leadership of Chikamarondo and requested Mamili (the representative of the Lozi king in Linyanti) for land. Mamili sent a message to the king (Lewanika), who indicated that Mamili should allocate land to these Subia "who like to stay in the swamps" in the eastern corner of Eastern Caprivi. This was done and thus they (again) settled there.

Secondly, given the circumstances (Lozi control replaced by Kololo control, which again was replaced by Lozi control until German control became effective), it was not possible for the Subia to obtain exclusive political control over the present Eastern Caprivi at any stage – even less over the area as indicated by author Shamukuni and which is referred to as *itenge*.

Thirdly, because of his disloyalty, Liswani I was killed by Sebetwane. According to Subia sources, his death ushered in the disintegration of the "tribe". According to Fwe sources, however, Liswani I was only a headman/*induna* under the Lozi (with the implication that there was or could have been others), while Lozi sources also do not mention that he was acknowledged as the *chief* of the (thus all) Subia. Nkonkwena succeeded Liswani I and established himself at Mpalila Island. If it is taken into account that Liswani was most probably killed before 1850 and that Nkonkwena only fled to Botswana in about 1876, he must have figured somewhere in the period of 26 years – if he was indeed "chief" of the Subia and acknowledged as such. Such evidence could not be found; on the contrary, mention is made that Sipopa in 1865–1866 killed the rebellious Subia headmen.<sup>68</sup> Stals writes that with the arrival of Streitwolf in the

Caprivi, the groups did not have chiefs and that authority was vested in the hands of the different village headmen.<sup>69</sup>

From this it can be concluded that the Subia interpretation of their own history contains a degree of romanticism. All that can be said with certainty, as far as the existence of the Subia as an "independent" group in Caprivi is concerned, is what Kruger wrote in 1963: "Their independence and status as a recognized separate tribe dates back ... to the time the German Resident appointed Chikamkatondo. ..."<sup>70</sup>

Fourthly, with the flight of Nkonkwenwa to the area of the Ngwato (in Botswana), a spatial removal of Subia out of the Caprivi took place. If Nkonkwenwa was indeed the *primus inter pares* amongst the Subia, the senior lineage of the Subia has been *outside* the Eastern Caprivi since 1865/1876. Confirmation of this is also found in a letter of Liswani III of Chobe, Botswana, to the Resident Magistrate of Kasane in 1924. (It was during the time that the administration of Caprivi was seated in Kasane. Thus the Subia of Caprivi and the Subia of the Chobe area – of Botswana – were practically administered as a single unit.) Liswani III wrote, *inter alia*:<sup>71</sup> " ... I am complaining why I am called Headman. If I am Headman who is the proper chief? (of the Subia) ... there is no letter being received from the Government which shows that Sondano (son of Liswani III) is now a Chief; he is also written Headman, if so, who is the proper Chief of the Basubia? ... There is no other big Chief of the Basubia except Sondano. Chika-Matondo (then chief in the Caprivi) is under Sondano". And in closing: "... I wish Sondano (of Chobe) to be known by the Government as the only Chief of the Basubia ..."

Fifthly, as far as the relative status of the Fwe and Subia before the period of German control is concerned, it appears as if the Fwe enjoyed a higher rather than lower status than the Subia, because: "As for the Basubia, they were under the regional supervision of Letia, later named Yeta (the representative of the Lozi paramount chief) at Sesheke (now called Mwandji), with Malozi Indunas at strategic places. Mamili (of the Fwe), Siluka and Mwanota would also have recognised Letia as their superior but were not directly within his regional control but rather under the Paramount Chief Lewanika".<sup>72</sup> It corre-

sponds with the remark of Stals, namely that the Subia were subjects of the Rotse (Lozi) and thus had certain obligations towards Lewanika and his son Letia of Sesheke.<sup>73</sup>

Sixthly, the nature of the basis for the Subia argument that the ruling lineage of the Mafwe had its origins in the Subia,<sup>74</sup> is not clear, but it could be that sisters of Subia rulers were also mothers of Fwe chiefs. Vorster in his genealogy of the Fwe chiefs,<sup>75</sup> does show that the mother of Simataa Kabende (the first Mamili of the present lineage) was a Subia and that the mother of his successor (Lifasi) was also a Subia (of Sesheke). The birth status of these women is not known. If they (or one of them) were from "royalty", their sons would, from the viewpoint of the traditionally stronger matrilineally orientated Subia, have had to be chiefs – and hence possibly the claim. Seen from the patrilineally orientated Fwe viewpoint, however, it is the father (not the mother) that determines the status of the child. Therefore, from the viewpoint of the Fwe, such a possible Subia claim is invalid. Moreover, the patrilineal line was apparently followed in the appointment of the present Subia chief.

### Conclusion

In view of the above, the reason for the "Royal House Declaration" of the Subia on 19 October 1991<sup>76</sup> is difficult to appreciate. The available material on the Caprivi does not point to domination of the Fwe by the Subia at any point. In fact, both groups were throughout treated as groups of equal status. From the ethno-history of the Fwe as well as that of the Subia it is clear that there does not exist known historical grounds which can be cited to support a claim that the present Eastern Caprivi as a whole "belonged" to the Subia and that the Subia chief is – or should be – the only chief (or paramount chief) of the area. No grounds for a claim on "indigenesness" on the side of the Subia *viz-à-viz* the Fwe could be found. That the matter needs mediation though with a view to a solution, is also clear. And in this context, negotiations which could lead to the accommodation of both groups and the demarcation of a boundary between the Fwe and Subia, appears to be the only way out of the present impasse.

### Notes and references

- 1 R Cohen and J Middleton, "Introduction", in R Cohen and J Middleton, *From tribe to nation in Africa: Studies in incorporation processes*, Maynard MA: Chandler, 1970, p 13.
- 2 The concept *munintenge* is often used by the Subia to refer to the sovereign, king, ruler or "owner" of a Subia kingdom (named *itenge*) which, allegedly, included the present Caprivi, and which existed before the Luyana, Kololo and successive white administrators exercised authority over the region. See D M Shamukuni, "The Basubia", *Botswana notes and records*, vol 4, 1972, p 163 *et seq.*
- 3 See *Die Republikein*, 26 May 1993; 28 May 1993. On 19 July 1993, *Die Republikein* reported that the Caprivi peace was on "shaky legs" after the police used teargas on 12 July to bring order in Katima Mulilo between the Fwe and Subia. Apparently the friction was over the interpretation of the agreement of May and its consequences. (See *The Namibian*, 13 July 1995; *New Era*, 8–14 July 1993; *New Era*, 15–20 July 1993.)
- 4 In addition to investigations by local officials at different times, a commission (the Budack Commission) had been appointed on 10 February 1982 to investigate the matter, while Judge Levy had been appointed on 31 October 1991 to investigate protests with reference to promotion of certain officials, and which basically focused on the same issue. See, "Commission of inquiry into the cause of resistance by certain members of the Caprivi community to the appointment of certain senior public servants [Education]", (Levy Report), Windhoek [no dates], as well as *TEMPO*, 18 July 1993; *Die Republikein*, 9 September 1992; *New Era*, 15–22 July 1993; *The Namibian*, 16 July 1993.
- 5 Levy Report, *op cit*, p 15 *et seq.*
- 6 *Op cit*, pp 17–18; M W Prinsloo, "Moraliswani v Mamili: Aanspraak op opperhoofskap in Caprivi", *TSAR*, no 3, 1987, p 379, *et seq.*
- 7 By Government Notice No 2429 of 1972 described as that part of the Caprivi Zipfel which lies east of length meridan 23° 18'00.
- 8 Republic of South Africa, *Government Gazette*, 3 December 1971.
- 9 Data used here are partly derived from field research done by the writer in 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987 in the Eastern Caprivi and published in a monograph entitled Chris Maritz, *Etniese Fusie by die Mafwe van Caprivi* (Ethnic Fusion of the Mafwe of Caprivi), Potchefstroom: Department Central Publications, PU for CHE, 1988. In June/July 1994 a follow-up visit was made to the area.
- 10 See A Jalla, "History of the Malozi", (a translation of the writer's work *Litaba za*

- Sicaba sa Malozi*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1921), p 4; M Gluckman, "The Lozi of Barotseland in North-western Rhodesia", in E Colson and M Gluckman (eds) *Seven tribes of British Central Africa*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959, p 2; M Mainga, *Bulozi under the Luyana kings*, London: Longman, 1973, p 24.
- 11 *Op cit*, p 26.
- 12 A reference to the rapids in the Zambezi close to the present-day regional capital of Caprivi. Here Mwanambinyi apparently had the drums (*maoma*) of the Mbukushu taken from them.
- 13 A Jalla, *op cit*, p 8.
- 14 *Ibid*. M Mainga, *op cit*, p 28.
- 15 Fwe kuta, interview 2 April 1984.
- 16 J Pretorius, *The Fwe of the Eastern Caprivi Zipfel: A study of their historical and geographical background, tribal structure and legal system, with special reference to the Fwe family law and law of succession*, MA dissertation, University of Stellenbosch, 1975, p 26.
- 17 *Ibid*, p 10; M Mainga, *op cit*, p 59.
- 18 *Ibid*, p 26. Apparently the river (Mashi/Kwando) became known by the name "Linyanti" as a result of the name of the representative of the Luyi authority, namely Linyanti.
- 19 A Jalla, *op cit*, p 10; J Pretorius, *op cit*, p 26 also refers to Ingenda, Imusho and others who were appointed as *manduna*/representatives at the Kwando/Mashi.
- 20 See M Mainga, *op cit*, pp 59–60.
- 21 See Hauptmann Streitwolf, *Der Caprivi Zipfel*, Berlin: Wilhelm Susserot, 1911, p 118.
- 22 E W Smith, "Sebetwane and the Makololo", *African Studies*, vol 15, 1956, p 49 *et seq*; D F Ellenberger and J C MacGregor, *History of the Basuto*, London: Caxton, 1912 (reprinted New York: Negro University Press, 1969), p 305 *et seq*; D L Livingstone, *Missionary travels and researches in South Africa*, London: John Murray, 1857; I Schapera (ed), *Livingstone's private journals, 1857–1853*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1960, pp 16–28; M Mainga, *op cit*, p 65 *et seq*.
- 23 M Mainga, *op cit*, pp 93, 102–103.
- 24 E Holub, *Seven years in South Africa*, London: Sampson, Marston, Searle and Remington, 1881, vol 11, p 143; M Mainga, *op cit*, p 96.
- 25 M Mainga, *op cit*, pp 103, 111–112.
- 26 *Ibid*, p 128.
- 27 Conflicting information was received on this: on the one hand that Simataa Kabende was "under" Seluka, on the other hand that they were equals. In Linyanti, seat of Simataa, Streitwolf learned in 1909 that "Ihre Oberindunas Seluka und Sianga (bei Letia njana) hatten sie in Ruhe gelasse" (*op cit*), p 126. At the same time though, we know that not Seluka, but the Lozi king, Sipopa, appointed Simataa. On the other hand, Fwe sources inform us that a representative at the Kwando River, namely Mayuni, was appointed by Seluka.
- 28 M Mainga, *op cit*, pp 135–136. Wamunungo was killed during the rebellion of 1884. Other sources (F Seiner, "Ergebnisse einer Bereisung des Gebietes zwischen Kawango und Sambezi, in den Jahren 1905 und 1906", *Mitteilungen aus den Deutsche Schutzgebieten*, vol 22, no 1, 1909, p 11; and Anonymous "Deutsch-Südwestafrika. Die Expedition Streitwolfs nach dem Caprivi-Zipfel", *Deutsches Kolonialblatt*, vol 21, 1910, p 55) state that Litianyana was a son of Lewanika.
- 29 E L P Stals, *Kurt Streitwolf: Sy werk in Suidwes-Afrika, 1899–1914*, Johannesburg: Perskor, 1988, pp 70–71.
- 30 The Fwe referred to him as "Kataramatunga" – he who measures/counts the land – probably on account of his demarcation of borders. For the Subia he was "Kambungu".
- 31 J Pretorius, *op cit*, p 42. Streitwolf referred to him as "Induna Mamili". See Anonymous, *op cit*, 1910, p 56.
- 32 See Hauptmann Streitwolf, *op cit*, p 57. The choice to move or to live under the authority of Mamili was confirmed by Side Mabata (Sikonsinyana). Silalo: Sebinda, interview on 11 May 1987.
- 33 *Ibid*, p 24.
- 34 C E Kruger, letter to the writer, dated 7 January 1987.
- 35 See Chris Maritz, *op cit*, pp 27–28.
- 36 W V Brelsford, *The tribes of Northern Rhodesia*, Lusaka: Government Printer, 1956, p 14.
- 37 See Chris Maritz, *op cit*, 1988, p 26.
- 38 A Jalla, *op cit*, p 8.
- 39 *Ibid*, p 119.
- 40 Fwe-kuta, Katima Mulilo, interview on 3 April 1984. Also see J Pretorius, *op cit*, p 30.
- 41 Doubt exists over the rank given to him. Fwe sources have it as "chief of the Fwe". F Westbeech, in *Trade and travel in early Barotseland*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1963, p 63 refers to him as "chief of Linyanti", while C E Kruger, unpublished report, 1 April 1940, p 10 refers to him as "headman or sub-chief ... to control the area".
- 42 Anonymous, *op cit*, pp 55–56.
- 43 See M Mainga, *op cit*, p 103. G I Caplan, *The elites of Barotseland*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970, p 11.
- 44 *Ibid*, p 42.
- 45 C E Kruger, *A history of the Caprivi*, unpublished manuscript, chapter 12, p 24. Copies of this are available at the Department of Land Affairs, Pretoria.
- 46 See C J Maritz, "Politieke verandering (ontwikkeling?) in Caprivi", *Politikon*, vol 13, no 1, 1986.
- 47 D M Shamunkuni, "The Basubia", *Botswana notes and records*, vol 4, 1972, pp 161–183.
- 48 *Ibid*, p 161. See also A Sillery, *The Bechuanaland Protectorate*, Cape Town: OUP, 1952, p 190 for a different interpretation, namely that the Subia originated during the rise of the Lozi kingdom and as product of the Mbukushu and (possibly) Totela.
- 49 Shamukuni, *op cit*, p 163.
- 50 *Ibid*.
- 51 *Ibid*, p 163.
- 52 *Ibid*, p 164.
- 53 See M Gluckman, *op cit*, p 2.
- 54 *Op cit*, p 191.
- 55 *Op cit*, p 165.
- 56 Because it was within the kingdom of the Lozi, it thus would have been, at best, as subject of Robosi.
- 57 Shamukuni, *op cit*, p 167.
- 58 *Ibid*, footnote 14, p 21.
- 59 *Ibid*, pp 21–22.
- 60 *Ibid*, footnote 14, p 21.
- 61 *Ibid*, pp 21–22.
- 62 *Ibid*, p 26.
- 63 *Ibid*, p 59. Mainga also makes this meaningful remark in a footnote (p 11), "For Ngombala's (K6) conquests in Sesheke, Batoka and Linyanti areas, see Box 356 8/2/3 (NAZ)".
- 64 M Gluckman, *op cit*, p 2.
- 65 I Schapera (ed), *Livingstone's private journals, 1851–1853*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1960, p 26.
- 66 M Mainga, *op cit*, p 69, after A St H Gibbons, "Marotseland and the tribes of the Upper Zambezi", *Journal of the Royal Colonial Institute*, 1898, p 260 *et seq*.
- 67 *Ibid*, p 112.
- 68 *Ibid*.
- 69 *Ibid*, p 76.
- 70 C E Kruger, "The eastern Caprivi Zipfel", Memorandum dated 4.1.1963, p 4, Department of Land Affairs, Pretoria, F54/1107/3.
- 71 See Shamukuni, *op cit*, p 177.
- 72 Department of Land Affairs, F54/117/3, Memorandum by C E Kruger, 13/5/1976.
- 73 *Ibid*, p 77.
- 74 J Pretorius, *op cit*, p 22.
- 75 For a more comprehensive version, see Chris Maritz, *op cit*, 1988, opposite p 60.
- 76 See Levy Report, *op cit*, pp 15–16.

# AFRICA FOCUS



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Though elections may be one of the vital signs of democratic, or at least accountable, government, they are by no means the only one. A free press and independent judiciary, tolerance of political debate and criticism are also important indicators of the health of the body politic. One may think of any number of elections held in independent Africa that do nothing to demonstrate either that a country is democratic in anything but its claim to be so, or that its government enjoys the support of the bulk of the national population.

Several elections have been held in Africa this year, and more are due over the next few months. Their conduct as much as their outcomes have much to tell us about the democratic project in Africa, a project being promoted in difficult economic circumstances and in an environment made even less secure by the end of the Cold War.

To anticipate: one of the most interesting developments in recent years has been the re-invention of military dictators as civilian politicians. At the beginning of the 1990s a number of writers who had analysed military rule in Africa had probably concluded that, as with authorities on the Soviet bloc, theirs was a speciality suddenly rendered largely obsolete. Such conclusions were premature. In some countries the soldiers have made a dramatic reappearance, as we noted in the last edition of *Africa focus*. Elsewhere, and perhaps more interestingly, they are re-emerging in the guise of civilian politicians, hoping thus to win the acceptance of the international donors and escape the opprobrium of their suited peers.

There is, of course, nothing new in this phenomenon. It is worth reflecting that from its inception in 1910 until 1948 South Africa had only ex-generals as prime ministers, one of whom, Louis Botha, actually commanded a foreign campaign while in office. Nevertheless, we might plead an exception in the cases of Botha, Smuts and Hertzog in that the first was initially a farmer, state official and politician, and the latter two practising lawyers before ever they donned uniform.

What is novel is the deliberate way in which self-demobilized generals now seek to acquire democratic credentials to continue their hold on power in the face of international pressure. It seems likely that Gambia's soldiers will soon attempt this route, and speculation is already rife that Nigeria's General Abacha will also decide that the safest way forward for his regime is as a junta in mufti.

## Benin – not nice for Soglo

One of the most remarkable events in the recent political history of Africa has been the legitimate return to power of an erstwhile military dictator, who returned from five years of obscurity to defeat the man who had ousted him in the country's previous elections. Apart from anything else, this represents an encouraging sign that democratic systems may be taking root in some otherwise poor and unpromising soils. The example is all the more significant in that it comes from Benin, which led the way in the so-called "second wave" of democracy to cross the continent. This raises the faint hope that the example of a politician losing power at the polls only to regain it in a later contest will help counter the zero-sum nature of so much political rivalry in Africa. Alternatively, the fate of Nicéphore Soglo may dissuade other African leaders from taking any chances with the unpredictable swings of popular opinion.

By the early 1950s three clear factions had emerged in the politics of Dahomey, as Benin was then known. Justin Ahomadégbé was undisputed at the head of the Fon and Adja peoples of the old kingdom of Dahomey, from whose royal house he was descended; Sourou-Migan Apithy enjoyed the support of the Goun and Yoruba of Porto Novo; and Hubert Maga could call upon the support of the numerous groups populating the north. The successors to these factions have re-emerged in the multiparty system resuscitated by the national conference of 1989.

General Matthieu Kérékou ruled Benin from 1972 until 1991. His defeat in the presidential election of 1991 and his departure from power had been smoother

than expected. He had campaigned on his introduction in 1989 of the national conference which ushered in multi-party democracy, and had lost the second round vote to Nicéphore Soglo, who returned to the country from the World Bank to consolidate most of the two southern blocs' support behind his candidacy. Having been granted indemnity, Kérékou left office and went to live quietly in Cotonou, eschewing the option of using his support in the army to retain power.

Soglo soon introduced reforms that led to a recovery in Benin's shattered macroeconomic structure. The economic and social costs to the urban population and the civil service were considerable, however, and served as another reminder of the essential contradictions between the democratization project and the imposition of a structural adjustment programme. Moreover, Soglo's gradual adoption of an authoritarian style, the prominence accorded his family and his flamboyant excesses contrasted with the plight of most of the population.

By the time of the presidential elections in 1996, it had become clear that the anti-Soglo mood was as pervasive as the anti-Kérékou sentiment of 1991. Ironically, there were many of the general's old enemies who agreed that Kérékou was the only candidate capable of removing Soglo from office. The ex-dictator had long renounced his rather eccentric and unconvincing commitment to the principles of Marxism-Leninism and now emerged, true to his nickname "Chameleon", as a born-again Christian and champion of the common citizen. Soglo campaigned on the strength of his economic reforms and played on fears of a return to the oppressive past.

The first round of the presidential election was held on 3 March, with a massive turnout of almost 87%, though 23% of the votes were subsequently disallowed by the constitutional court because of irregularities. Of the valid ballots, Soglo managed to win 36% and Kérékou 34%. Adrien Houngbedji ran third with 20% and Bruno Amoussou fourth with 8%, followed by a cluster of candidates who shared the remainder of the vote. Houngbedji and Amoussou pledged their support to Kérékou for the second round, signifying an alliance between the Porto Novo and northern factions against Soglo's Cotonou-based party.

The second round was held on 18 March. Unofficial figures gave Kérékou 59% of the vote, according to national radio. The early release of these figures incensed Soglo's administration, which claimed that their leader had won the poll, albeit by a narrow margin. The electoral commission then released figures showing that Kérékou had taken 54% to Soglo's 46%, and armed men arrested the deputy director of the statistics institute responsible for tallying the results.

Amid fears of disorder and the possibility that the army might intervene to compel Soglo's resignation, the intimidation of the constitutional court continued. The defence minister, Soglo's brother-in-law Desire Vierya, and the president's chief of staff General Basile Dadele were suddenly relieved of their posts, Soglo taking over the defence ministry.

Soglo's efforts to reverse the electorate's decision proved fruitless. On 24 March the constitutional court announced that Kérékou had indeed won the election, with 52.49% of the vote in a 77.6% poll. Thousands of people took to the streets of Cotonou to celebrate the return of the Chameleon. Soglo's subsequent appeals were also rejected and he then concentrated his efforts on securing a blanket amnesty for himself, his family and his ministers for any misdeeds in office. He then left with his family for the USA.

On 4 April Kérékou took the oath of office and four days later named his cabinet, with Adrien Houngbedji as prime minister, although the constitution makes no provision for such a post. Eight parties are represented in the new cabinet. The question now is how long the anti-Soglo coalition will preserve its unity, especially in its dealings with a fragmented parliament whose mandate still has three years to run. A great deal will hinge upon the political succession to the south-west region now that Soglo has gone. This area is under-represented in the cabinet. It also remains to be seen how far Kérékou will be able to depart from the unpopular economic policies of his predecessor, given Benin's continued dependence upon foreign aid.

An encouraging aspect of the Benin experience, however, is the example of a constitutional court that refused to be cowed by threats or convinced by blandishments.

## Uganda is no party

Uganda is running an interesting experiment in the transition from military to democratic rule, albeit of a novel sort. On Thursday 9 May, Ugandans went to the polls to elect their president. While there was broad agreement among the 8.5 million registered voters that the exercise ought to confirm the essence of the past decade's transformation in the country's political and economic fortunes, there were stark differences of opinion about the constitutional framework under which the voting was to take place. President Yoweri Museveni's supporters had secured the passage of a constitution entrenching a no-party democratic system for the next five years. In terms of this novel arrangement, which has attracted the interest of a number of other African rulers, presidential nominees stand as individuals, as do candidates for the parliamentary elections. Parties are allowed to exist, but may not campaign or hold rallies. The ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) was apparently exempted from the ban on the specious grounds that it is a broad-based movement and not a political party, though increasingly it has functioned as one.

According to Museveni, the multiparty system advocated by Western democrats is fatally flawed in circumstances where the population divides too easily along religious, ethnic and regional lines. In support of this controversial thesis he cites the Ugandan experience.

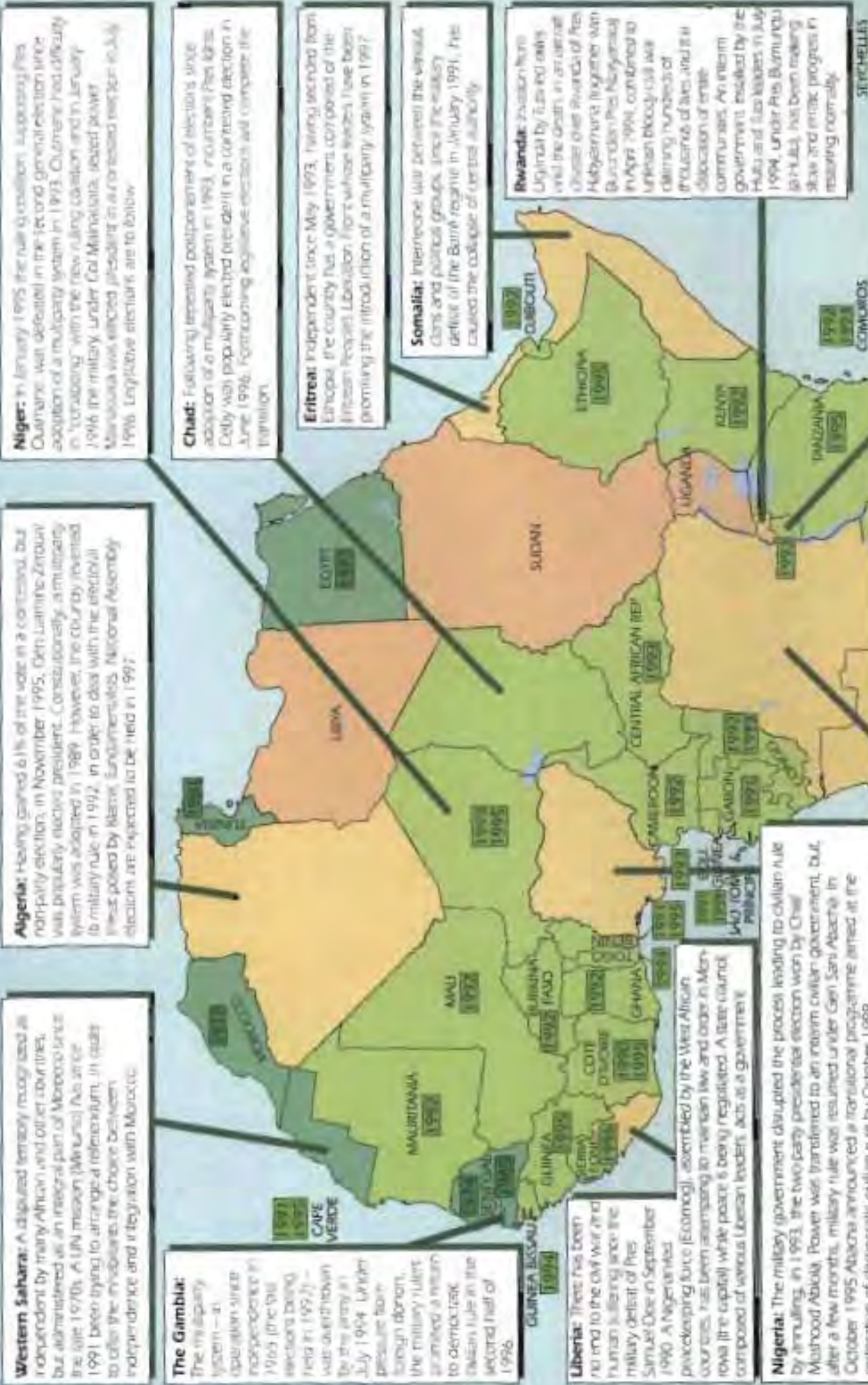
When Uganda came to independence in 1962 it was widely regarded as one of the most promising of Africa's new states. Within a few years, however, political upheaval, civil war and economic mismanagement had begun a process of apparently irreversible decline. In the period preceding Museveni's seizure of power in 1986 at the head of the National Resistance Army (NRA) more than half a million Ugandans lost their lives in ethnically-defined political massacres.

Museveni's presidential candidacy rested firmly upon his record since 1986 – a fine one in comparison with that of any of his predecessors. His slogan was "peace, unity and modernization", and after the horrors of the Obote and Amin years, it was widely accepted that the majority of Ugandans



# Africa in transition towards democracy Oct 1990 - June 1996

Compiled by Pieter Esterhuysen





**Zaire:** Pres Mobutu has succeeded in blocking and manipulating the constitutional process that had been set in motion during 1990-1991. In order to avoid a crisis, he has rejected the election outcome and the consequent resignation of civil war. Another peace accord was signed in Lusaka in November 1994, but since then the formation of a national unity government has been delayed by UN's reluctance to disarm its forces, despite UN's intervention.

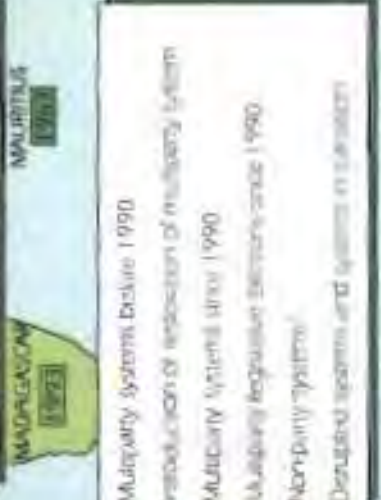
**Angola:** Constitutionally a multiparty state since 1992, the transition was disrupted at the time, owing to UN's rejection of the election outcome and the consequent resumption of civil war. Another peace accord was signed in Lusaka in November 1994, but since then the formation of a national unity government has been delayed by UN's reluctance to disarm its forces, despite UN's intervention.

### CHANGES OF GOVERNMENT (MULTIPARTY STATES)

Country	Date?	New president	Ruling party % of vote	Former president
Cape Verde	1991	Mascareñas Martins	73%	Anastás Pereira
São Tomé	1991	Miguel Trovoada	54%	Manuel de Costa
Benin	1994	Comblain <sup>1</sup>	Coalition	Madracu Kpélou
	1991	Ndourou Sogbo	Coalition	Nicéphore Sogbo
Zimbabwe	1992	Mwesi Nkomo (1996)	Coalition	Karimath Kukuza
	1992	Ferdinand Chikwa	76%	Mitsy rule
Malawi	1992	Alfred Konani	48%	China Sarsou Njunctua
Congo	1992	Félix Anzobazo	Coalition	Alfred Ndjindji <sup>1</sup>
Cote d'Ivoire	1992	Said IM Djibril (1990)	Coalition	Sani M. Djalor
	1992	Muhammadu Tobi (1996)	Coalition <sup>1</sup>	Chéler Bissaraka
Madagascar	1993	Albert Zafy	Coalition	Military rule
Lesotho	1993	Ntsu Mokhehle <sup>2</sup>	75%	Pierre Buyeje
Burundi	1993	Micahira Ndirakobuca <sup>2</sup>	71%	André Kolingba
CAR	1993	August-Félix Pastus	Coalition	F. W. de Klerk
South Africa	1994	Nelson Mandela	63%	Karmela Banda
Madawi	1994	Bakill Mukli	Coalition	Mungira Ntse Mnyam <sup>4</sup>
Ethiopia	1995	Mesq. Zenawi <sup>5</sup>	Coalition	Arwehood Julyaull
Mauritius	1995	Nalin Ramgoolam <sup>6</sup>	Coalition	Military rule
Sierra Leone	1996	Tejan Kabbah <sup>7</sup>	Coalition	

**Notes:**  
 1. Former party executive committee leader (1991), dismissed (1996), Sudan, March 1998 in original table (1998).  
 2. Legislative was presidentially elected, but subsequently elected by parliament (1993).  
 3. Elected in advisory polls. 27% of all voters eligible.  
 4. President (1992) elected in 1993 (1991/1992).  
 5. Democratic Unionist Party leader. Subsequent the president in April 1991, and in 1993, the ruling party in May 1991.  
 6. See for details (1994).  
 7. Former military President (1996).

**Burundi:** Two parties, Nkoko and the Hutu majority after the first multiparty elections in 1993. Following increased fighting between the Hutu majority and the Tutsi minority, Pres Nkurunziza (a Hutu) was deposed, in July 1996, by the Tutsi-dominated army which brought back to power former Pres Pierre Buyoya (a Tutsi).



### NO CHANGE (MULTIPARTY STATES)

Country	Date?	President	Ruling party % of vote
Côte d'Ivoire	1990	F. Houphouët-Boigny	82%
Gabon	1991	Hilmi Konan Bongo	96%
Burkina Faso	1992	Omar Bongo (1993)	Coalition
Mali	1992	Blaise Compaoré <sup>7</sup>	
Cameroon	1992	Abidjoud Tsogo <sup>8</sup>	67%
Ghana	1992	Jerry Rawlings <sup>9</sup>	Coalition
Kenya	1992	Daniel arap Moi	58%
Djibouti	1992	Hassan Gouled <sup>10</sup>	36%
Senegal	1993	Abdou Diouf	61%
Mozambique	1993	Murthy	57%
Eg Guinea	1993	Omara Moussogo (1996) <sup>11</sup>	Coalition
Jordan	1993	Abdullah	50%
Togo	1994	Ben Ali	58%
	1994	Christophe Eyadéma (1993) <sup>12</sup>	Coalition
Gambia	1994	Yahya Jammeh	46%
Sierra Leone	1994	Koroma	54%
Mali	1994	Joseph Konaré	44%
Niger	1994	Sani Umaru	73%
Zimbabwe	1995	Robert Mugabe (1996)	84%
Gambia	1995	Lamin Barrow (1993)	52%
Tanzania	1995	Benjamin Mkandawire	62%
Egypt	1996	Hosni Mubarak (1993)	

would endorse this programme, for all the limitations that have been placed on the democratic process. The insurgency of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and of the West Nile Bank Front (WNBFB) in the sparsely settled northern districts acted as a reminder of what could happen should Museveni's protective embrace be withdrawn from the rest of the country.

Standing in opposition to Museveni were Dr Paul Ssemogerere, the leader of the Democratic Party since 1980, who resigned from cabinet in the middle of last year, and a Muslim teacher, Muhammed Mayanja Kibirigge, who sought to mobilize the votes of his co-religionists, some 10% of the population. Ssemogerere's candidacy was endorsed by most of the parties outside of the NRM. Central to the opposition platform was the promise to reform the constitution to restore democratic party politics. Ssemogerere also undertook to reintroduce federalism, a proposal favoured by the recently restored kingdoms of southern Uganda: Buganda, Toro, Ankole and Bunyoro.

The opposition coalition proved more cohesive than historical experience would have suggested, and Museveni seemed at one stage to face a sterner electoral test than he would have predicted six months earlier. That said, the incumbent enjoyed several telling advantages over his principal opponent. His supporters controlled most of the media and were able to deny Ssemogerere a great deal of publicity while continuing to cover the daily activities of the head of state. Opposition rallies were interrupted by young NRM supporters, with the apparent connivance of the local authorities, and in the face of police apathy. Scarcely veiled rumours were also circulated that no alternative to Museveni's presidency was tolerable to the security forces, which would intervene in the case of his electoral defeat, thus threatening a resuscitation of Uganda's old cycle of political fragmentation and intolerance.

Despite early misgivings about the democratic limitations of Uganda's new constitution, the international donor community, whose generosity provides Uganda's government with some 40% of its income and underpins the structural reforms central to Uganda's macro-economic recovery, also apparently supported the candidacy of Museveni, who had proved a

model pupil of World Bank and IMF prescriptions. He has liberalized the economy and created as friendly an environment for foreign capital as circumstances allow. As a result, Uganda boasts one of the best economic growth rates in Africa, averaging 6% since 1986. Inflation has been slashed from 300 to 10% per annum. Macroeconomic indicators and long-term structural reforms do not always translate into tangible benefits for the ordinary citizen, however. The rationalization of the civil service and the privatization of state enterprises has eroded the effectiveness of the health and education sectors, besides costing some 170 000 jobs.

In the event, Museveni won a massive majority in the 9 May polls, securing 76% of the vote in a 73% turnout. Ssemogerere took 22% and Mayanja 2%. Despite opposition protests, international observers pronounced their satisfaction with the conduct of the elections. Almost all opposition politicians subsequently boycotted the parliamentary contest on 27 June, leaving the NRM to consolidate its victory.

Museveni's next challenge will be to restore order in the north of the country, while keeping a watchful eye on his southern borders, which would be severely threatened by any major outbreak of violence on the Zaïre-Rwanda border.

### **Chad – Déby comes home**

By the end of last year, French pressure on President Idriss Déby to complete the promised transition to legitimate civilian government had become irresistible. Of all the countries comprising the Franc Zone, only Chad had not held multiparty elections. French assistance had been vital to Déby's seizure of power five years earlier, and now pushed the Chadian government towards holding a round-table conference with all the rebel and opposed political groups that had enmeshed Chad in a series of overlapping civil wars for the last thirty years.

The conference eventually took place in January in Franceville, Gabon, but soon foundered on procedural points and questions of representation. Since Chad has 58 legal political parties and some 15 external armed groupings perhaps this was not altogether surprising, though it again brought into

question the timing of Chad's transition to democratic rule as a plethora of political parties and rebel groups all continued to manoeuvre against a background in which northerners and southerners regard each other with profound apprehension.

Déby, however, used the breakdown in Franceville to divide his opponents, coming to an agreement with those parties ready to renounce violence. This cleared the way for the holding of a constitutional referendum on 31 March. Despite some administrative confusion, and with the assistance of the French garrison, the operation was carried out successfully, and 63.5% of voters approved the new constitution in a 71% turnout of registered voters. This provides for an executive presidency with substantial powers, to be elected for a maximum of two five-year terms. Government insistence that the new dispensation provided for a good deal of regional decentralization failed to win the support of many southerners, who voted against the measure.

Attention now refocused on the organization of the much-postponed presidential elections, which were eventually scheduled for 3 June. There were fourteen candidates besides Déby, which proved a great advantage to the incumbent, who took nearly 44% of the vote in the first round. He was therefore the clear favourite to win the second round against the second-placed contender, Abdulkader Wadal Kamougue, who had taken 12%. Turnout was reported as 76%.

Opposition protests about irregularities, and calls for a boycott delayed the holding of the second round until 3 July, by which time Déby had concluded an agreement with the third-placed candidate, Saleh Kebzaboh. The absence of most of the regionally-based candidates and the very nature of so lop-sided a contest contributed to voter apathy, for the turnout was far lower than the first round. Déby claimed a comfortable victory, with 68% of the vote. His rival Kamougue secured a creditable 32%.

Legislative polls are to be held before the end of the year, in the next phase of the democratization process, but it seems improbable that this will signify the end of Chad's inherent political conflicts, despite relations with the neighbouring states of Sudan and Libya being happier than in years past.

## Niger - IBM's programme stalls

As noted in the last *Africa focus*, on 27 January this year the Nigerien army seized power in what appeared to be one of the most popular coups in Africa's recent history. Donor response followed France's lead in immediately suspending aid, then restored it equally quickly once the deposed rulers had admitted the error of their ways and reassurances had been given that the military intended to accelerate the return to civilian rule.

In a certain sense the soldiers were, indeed, better than their word. On 7 April the consultative forum on democratic renewal approved a new draft constitution and electoral code, providing for a presidential system to replace the French-style semi-presidential system which proved so disastrous over the past year. Under the new constitution the president appoints a prime minister to run the government. Delegates also recommended the formation of a second chamber, and the introduction of question time in the national assembly, when ministers may be required to answer questions.

A referendum on 12 May overwhelmingly approved the new arrangements, though turnout was low, at about 35% of registered voters – perhaps on account of popular expectations that the measure would pass virtually unopposed. Attention now shifted to the possible presidential ambitions of the leader of the coup Brigadier-General Ibrahim Baré Maïnassara (known popularly as IBM), who suddenly emerged as a candidate in the forthcoming elections.

When it came on 24 May, Maïnassara's announcement that he would campaign as an independent in the presidential elections due for early July still came as a surprise to the old political class. As the two major parties began to work out a united strategy to oppose the general, he was busy securing the support of a number of prominent and popular Nigeriens, including General Ali Saïbou, the head of state from 1987 to 1993. He soon emerged as clear favourite to win against ex-president Mahamane Ousmane, Mamadou Tanja, Moumouni Djermakoye Adamou and Mahamadou Issoufou.

Maïnassara shrewdly broadened his appeal by rehabilitating tradition-

al chiefs and the youth movement. He also organized the distribution of famine relief and found the money to pay civil servants their three months' pay arrears, in a demonstration of effectiveness that contrasted markedly with the paralysis that characterized the old regime. He also placed himself on the Reserve, since the constitution prohibits serving officers from running for president.

The National Independent Electoral Commission announced on 13 June that it was postponing the polls for three weeks because of problems with the electoral register, a delay welcomed by Maïnassara's opponents. Their relief was short-lived, however, for the National Salvation Council overruled the commission and insisted on 7 July as polling day, an early sign that there were limits to the junta's tolerance of opposition. There was also a row over the exclusion of Nigerien citizens living abroad, which the Commission declared a violation of their civil rights.

Worse was to come, for voting, extended to two days proved as chaotic as the short period of preparation would have suggested. Opposition complaints of gross irregularities were shrugged off, and before the polls had closed the junta announced that the Independent Electoral Commission was abolished and replaced by a new National Commission for Elections. Observers disagreed about the reasons for the sudden decision. Some agreed that the old commission was riddled with corruption and represented the interests of a political class resentful of the emergence of an outsider as leading candidate. Others were of the opinion that the move demonstrated uncertainty that Maïnassara would win an outright victory in a poll describe as shambolic.

In one stroke the goodwill recreated with the international community was dispelled. Maïnassara had to deny that the independent commission's abolition, the cutting of international communications links and the alleged house arrest of his presidential opponents amounted to a *coup d'état*. Shortly afterwards the results were announced giving Maïnassara a 52% victory in the first round of the voting, thus sparing him the possible consequences of a second round in which the ousted politicians might have extracted a united revenge.

The US and French governments' initial reaction has been one of angry disappointment and it will be interesting to see how the latest of Africa's soldier presidents manages to cope with an exercise in legitimation that has gone so horribly wrong.

## Equatorial Guinea - a miracle too many

Equatorial Guinea's recent electoral history is included here as an exemplar of how deformed an ostensibly democratic process can become. It may also suggest that the analysis of this country's political economy would be best captured by the mordant wit of a Graham Greene or even an Evelyn Waugh.

Colonel Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who has ruled Equatorial Guinea since 1979, when he overthrew and executed his uncle, the murderous "Unique Miracle" Francisco Macias Nguema, was compelled by donor pressure to concede to multiparty competition. He decided to test the political waters in local elections, which were held in September 1995. By way of insurance his government arrested the leader of the opposition Progress Party, Severo Moto, on charges of plotting to kidnap the head of state. He was subsequently sentenced to death, a punishment commuted to 28 years imprisonment following foreign pressure. Further direct pressure from France's President Chirac regained the "plotters" their freedom, though Moto prudently went into exile in Spain.

In September's local elections, the ruling party eventually took some two-thirds of the seats contested, and although the opposition took some urban centres, including the capital Malabo, neither they nor Madrid believe that the results reflect the ballots cast. Indeed, the opposition had claimed some 62% of the vote prior to the announcement of the official count, and the Spanish foreign ministry remarked upon the stark contrast between the final tally and the provisional results.

The near-disastrous experience of the local elections evidently persuaded President Obiang that more extreme measures were called for. In prospect was a tenfold increase in the country's oil production by the middle of 1996, after Mobil's offshore Zafiro field comes on stream. Some 40 000

barrels a day could become 160 000 by the end of 1998. This would provide both the wherewithal and the incentive for the President to extend his term of office regardless of the popular will, and was a prize too valuable to be risked in a free election. Not least, the flow of oil money could relieve Equatorial Guinea's rulers of their embarrassing dependence upon donor funding, with its attendant conditions.

On 12 January, Obiang suddenly announced that he was calling early presidential elections for 25 February. This effectively seized the political initiative from his opponents, and was unconstitutional, in that elections may be held only within the two-month period prior to the expiry of the president's mandate in June. He also decided that the voters' roll drawn up with donor assistance in 1995 would be ignored in favour of one prepared by the government. This roll allegedly excluded huge blocks of names from areas where the opposition had fared well in September. Detentions and harassment of known opposition supporters followed, and Obiang underscored his view of the democratic process by declaring publicly that anyone who did not vote for him was a bastard. It was also decided that voting should be transparent in the sense that voters had to mark their ballots in full view of officials. A South African consultancy, previously associated with Jonas Savimbi's Unita, provided the logistics and technical assistance to manage this charade.

The opposition dithered, failed to agree on a strategy or a candidate, and entered the election in total disarray. Their five candidates eventually withdrew from the contest on 21 February and called for a boycott, though their names remained on the ballots. The results showed a landslide for Obiang, who was finally credited with almost 98% of the vote in a national turnout of more than 82%.

The international community expressed contempt and outrage, and even the oil companies were probably embarrassed by so crass an exercise, though their contracts are so lucrative that they will be easily mollified. Obiang also hopes to ease tensions, and on 18 March met with a number of opposition leaders, including Moto, prompting speculation that he would inveigle some of them into accepting cabinet appointments. As yet, nothing

of the sort has happened, but 2003 must seem a long way off to politicians identified as enemies by president with a vivid imagination.

A few years ago, Robert Klitgaard wrote an excellent book on Equatorial Guinea, based on his own experiences there as an aid consultant. He called it *Tropical gangsters*. The gangsters of the title were not the corrupt politicians and officials of this internationally insignificant state, but the foreign businessmen and consultants who connived at their antics in the pursuit of profit.

### Ghana – JJ's last stand

This year will provide a number of indicators as to the general direction of Ghana's political and economic system. All observers agree that the outcomes of the presidential and parliamentary elections due in November this year are less certain than in 1992. In those elections President Rawlings secured a victory, winning 58% of the votes to his nearest rival's 30%, but this followed considerable manipulation of the voter registration process. In protest at this blatant rigging, the opposition parties boycotted the parliamentary elections, leaving Rawlings's National Democratic Congress (NDC) and its partners in the Progressive Alliance to make a clean sweep.

This time the registration process appears to have been conducted far more impartially, leading the ruling party to request an extension, which was refused by the Electoral Commission, though late registration and alternative means of voter identification will be allowed after the rolls have been opened for public scrutiny.

Rawlings's problems as he seeks a second (and final) four-year mandate are manifold. The opposition will not hand him victory by default, and there is growing public anger that after 13 years of austerity and structural adjustment, there is little sign of the promised economic take-off to compensate for the deteriorating living-standards of most urbanites. Job losses following the rationalization of the state sector, and the failure to pay promised severance settlements on time have also alienated voters. The free press is almost entirely anti-NDC, which will also have an impact in the towns. Even in the rural areas, whence the NDC draws most of its support, the farmers appear to have

benefited only modestly from economic reform. The government has tended to neglect its traditional support base in the Volta Region in recent years, and its indecisive handling of severe ethnic conflict in the north will cost the NDC votes there.

The attempt to introduce VAT last year led to widespread public protest and street violence in which five people were killed by Rawlings's supporters. Shortly afterwards Rawlings lost the services of his key technocrat, Kwesi Botchwey, the widely-respected finance minister, who resigned after failing to curb the free-spending Ghana National Petroleum Corporation, which is run by one of the president's closest associates. Botchwey's replacement, Richard Kwame Peprah, is relatively untried, although he served previously as minister of mines and is chairman of Ashanti Goldfields.

Peprah's budget, announced in February, seeks to achieve real GDP growth of 5%, and to reduce inflation to 20%. It posits a balance of payments surplus of \$83 mn. There can be few people who believe these targets to be realistic. Economic forecasting is difficult, not only because of the paucity of reliable statistics, but because there appears to be no effective check on government expenditure or the printing of money to cover this (money supply growth currently exceeds 50% per annum). The public sector unions are also aware that an election year provides the ideal opportunity to press wage demands. In the run-up to the 1992 election, they won pay awards of 80%, throwing money supply targets well off track, and leaving a structural legacy that has yet to be corrected.

The maintenance of macro-economic stability is far from assured. The inflation rate now exceeds 70% annually, and 1995 saw the *cedi* devalued by more than 27% against the dollar. Unemployment is rising and subsidies for essential social services have been withdrawn. The receipts from the divestiture of part of the state's shareholding in Ashanti Goldfields cushioned the shortfall in donor aid in 1994, but this will hardly be repeated even if government earns \$100 mn by further reducing its stake in Ashanti from 28.6% to 20%, and by privatizing more of the almost 200 companies in which it still holds the major share.

Despite concerted efforts to attract further foreign investment to



Ghana, including modifications to the investment code, there seems little interest outside of the lucrative mining sector. For all the praise heaped upon Ghana by the IMF and World Bank, for whom the country was once a model student, economic take-off seems as distant as ever, with a distinct move back to traditional primary products – gold, cocoa and timber – clearly discernable. Ghana's economic reforms have failed to broaden the country's economic base and create jobs, and the country's economic health appears to be predicated upon continued annual foreign aid flows of around \$300 mn.

It is little wonder, then, that the ruling NDC's morale is wavering. Recent corruption allegations against some of Rawlings's closest advisers will aggravate grassroots' resentments that senior party men are enriching themselves, and there are signs that incumbent MPs may face nomination challenges from local party officials who want their share of the spoils of office.

The opposition remains fragmented, and prone to internal faction-fights, though efforts are being made to present a united front to prevent Rawlings's re-election. The principal party is the New Patriotic Party (NPP), which has finally agreed upon J A Kuffour as its presidential hope. The NPP has traditionally been the party of Ashanti business, advocating *laissez-faire* economic policies. Having boycotted the 1992 parliamentary elections the NPP has been able to adopt opportunistic positions outside the usual party line. It campaigned successfully against the introduction of VAT, has called for pay rises and won over some union support as a consequence. It has also played upon nationalist sentiment to oppose the massive inroads made by foreign capital with the flotation of the Ashanti Goldfields Company. (It is interesting to note the very different – and often emotional – line taken by some indigenous capitalists where expendable natural resources are concerned.) The NPP is tipped to make inroads into the NDC's parliamentary majority in Ashanti, Accra Central, and the Eastern, Brong Ahafo and Central regions.

There are various other parties with an Nkrumahist orientation following a broadly populist tradition. Chief among these is the People's Convention Party (PCP) composed principally of left-leaning nostalgics and po-

litical romantics, including students, unionists and academics. Their agenda appears to favour urbanites adversely affected by structural adjustment, and emphasizes higher spending on education and health and a relaxation of fiscal discipline. Prior to the 1992 election, Rawlings encouraged the divisions in Nkrumahist ranks by having some of his confederates launch the National Convention Party (NCP), which subsequently joined the NDC in the Progressive Alliance government. In May 1995, however, the NCP left the Alliance following bitter arguments over the introduction of VAT. The NCP's leader, Kow Arkaah, insisted on retaining his position as vice-president, but relations between himself and Rawlings deteriorated steadily, culminating in allegations that the President had actually assaulted Arkaah in a cabinet meeting. Quite apart from the damage this incident has done to Rawlings's image, it obviates any hope of using the same tactics to split the Nkrumahist vote in 1996.

The NCP and PCP are now looking to form an Nkrumahist alliance to fight the elections. There are also signs that a broader opposition front, including the NPP, could be patched together. In 1995 the opposition managed to cooperate in organizing successful demonstrations against VAT and in mobilizing voters for registration, but whether the NPP and the Nkrumahists can solve their own internal differences and then unite behind a single presidential candidate remains uncertain, for this would require a number of sizeable political egos to be submerged for the common good.

Some observers talk of the rise of a new opposition grouping under the banner of the Alliance for Change (AFC), comprising a generation of young politicians drawn from the NPP, PNC, PCP and People's Party for Democracy and Development (PPDD). This coalition initially emerged between March and June 1995, and held its first rally on 10 August. The AFC has stressed the need for a national consensus to address the national crisis, and has called for the blending of past traditions and the burying of personality differences. The divergent ideological orientations of the various parties raises unanswered questions regarding a common policy agenda, though this would have to be based largely upon the NPP's pro-market po-

sition. Rawlings's campaign will concentrate on the inability of the opposition to put forward coherent policy alternatives, particularly in an environment in which it is imperative to retain the support and sympathy of the IMF and World Bank. The opposition concedes it has no clear economic policy, but suggests one alternative to structural adjustment – greater fiscal discipline and the ending of corruption.

The presidential and parliamentary contests must be seen separately. Voters do not necessarily follow the party ticket when selecting the head of state. Rawlings should still win even if his party fails to obtain a parliamentary majority, not least because he has enhanced his reputation as an international player during his chairmanship of the Economic Community of West African States. Unless a presidential candidate receives more than 50% of the vote, there has to be a run-off between the leading two contenders within 21 days, and a second round of voting could place him at risk.

There are also those who believe that Rawlings will not permit defeat at the polls, through gerrymandering of some sort. Such manipulation will be much more difficult in the parliamentary contest, and some predict that the NDC's parliamentary representation could be cut back from 189 to 110–130 seats out of 200.

Should the NDC fail to secure an overall majority, Ghana would face the awkward prospect of a personally volatile president ruling with a parliament dominated by an opposition determined to root out Rawlings's corrupt courtiers – a recipe for paralysis and confrontation. Should such a situation arise, even a military politically neutralized for the past decade might feel itself compelled to intervene, as in other states in the region, though this remains a remote possibility. The likelihood of this happening, however, would be increased as forces' pay falls further behind the inflation rate. Such an intervention might be deterred by the realization that it would invite immediate condemnation from the donor community and could hardly be sustained economically, though soldiers have been known to overlook such considerations.

In the event of victory, this must be Rawlings final presidential candidacy, which also heralds a time of division as the ruling party falls prey to disputes about the succession.

# BOOKSHELF

- **Africa's choices: After thirty years of the World Bank** by Michael Barratt Brown. London: Penguin, 1995. 433 pp. ISBN 0 14 024771 8

For thirty years, the World Bank has proposed policies which have produced few economic benefits but eroded the traditional strengths of African society – even the Bank itself now admits this. But, while African leaders, many propped up by the West, are often corrupt or incompetent, an impressive range of regional initiatives and small-scale cooperatives, fledgling industrial projects, women's organizations and peasant associations all represent major signs of hope. These countless initiatives, now springing from the grassroots of African life, embody the realities of an *African* road to development. They speak for good sense and great courage against the failed miseries of today: against the World Bank dogmas left over from the Thatcher/Reagan era, against pricing abuses, against uncancelled debts owed to the rich by the world's poorest countries, all of which have led to economic breakdown and war; and they challenge the North's failure to open up its markets to African exports and its minds to African expertise.

This book examines that which Africans themselves are saying and doing and shows that it can serve as the basis for this continent's self-transformation and an agenda for the kind of support that Africa needs.

- **Uganda: Landmarks in rebuilding a nation** edited by P Langseth, J Katorobo, E Brett and J Munene. Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 1995. 354pp. ISBN 9970 02 070 6

This book examines the steps taken by the Ugandan government under the National Resistance Movement in

rebuilding institutions of state that were destroyed during the years of political turmoil. It studies the economy, civil service, constitution making, the politics of decentralization and other policies that have formed the foundation of the new Uganda.

- **A history of Africa** (3rd ed) by J D Fage. London: Routledge, 1995. 595 pp. ISBN 0 415 12721 1

This long-established history of Africa has now been updated by J D Fage to include:

- the effect on Africa of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the ending of the Cold War
- the rise of Islamic fundamentalism
- the continuing problems of famine, foreign debt and warfare throughout the continent
- the tumultuous changes in South Africa leading up to the 1994 elections

- **Africans: The history of a continent** by John Iliffe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995. 232 pp. ISBN 0 521 48422 7

In this study of Africa, from the origins of humankind to the South African general election of 1994, John Iliffe refocuses its history on the peopling of an environmentally hostile continent. Africans have been pioneers struggling against disease and nature, and their social, economic and political institutions have been designed to ensure their survival. In the context of medical progress and other twentieth-century innovations, however, the same institutions have bred the most rapid population growth the world has ever seen. The history of the continent is thus a single story binding living Africans to their earliest human ancestors.

■ **The radical motherhood: Namibian women's independence struggle** by Iina Soiri. Research report no 99. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1996.

The study analyses the participation of the northern Namibian Ovambo women in the Namibian independence struggle. It aims to present why and how women in the northern areas participated in the struggle which led to the independent Namibia.

Women were essential supporters of the liberation struggle in spite of their multiple burden as single mothers and main food producers in agriculture while the men had left the area as migrant labour, for the army or for Swapo.

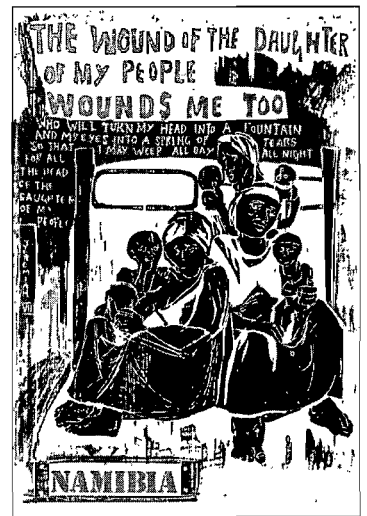
The study also examines the changes in women's lives caused by the arrival of Christianity, colonialism, the cash economy and modern values. Using the life story method it allows women to tell their stories themselves and present their own understanding of their situation. The study also tries to outline women's position in the independent Namibia where gender equality is guaranteed by the constitution but not in practice.

three countries. In this, therefore, Pierre du Toit has managed to combine the best of North American political science with a shrewd sense that in the understanding of real politics, one must conceptualize historically.

As outlined by the author himself: "The study examines two related propositions: that democratic institutions are embedded in the wide-ranging institutional network of state and societal institutions; and that the institutions that make up this network must be robust and resilient if effective democracy is to be achieved" (p xii). The focus of the book is, then, squarely on the strength and efficiency of the institutions which form the state – that is, how effectively the state manages to control society and to discharge its duties. This is a welcome, and eminently sensible, move away from what has recently been a tendency (particularly in North America) to focus on the political vitality of civil society, as though democracy could be achieved without the kind of modern state with which civil society can engage politically.

The book concludes that "a particular kind of strong autonomous state is a necessary, but still insufficient condition for sustaining democracy" (p xii) – a conclusion which may appear obvious enough to historians of democracy but which will instil some realism into the sometimes exceedingly jejune political analysis of contemporary Africa. What the author is saying, quite simply but also quite to the point, is that democracy is impossible where the state is not both strong and reasonably effective. By strong and effective, he means that the state is able to ensure that laws and regulations are enforced fairly and efficiently across society regardless of social pressure on the holders of state power.

The interest of this book, however, lies more in the actual case studies of the three Southern African countries than with the conceptual framework which it employs. Indeed, it is in the analysis of the political evolution of these three vastly different nations that Pierre du Toit shows how effective a well set up and adroitly handled comparative framework can serve to illuminate an issue as slippery as that of democracy. In each case study, the author seeks to understand the emergence of the modern state and society in historical context. The value of the book consists in showing how important to the quality of democracy is the relationship between a capable state and a vigorous but cohesive society.



## Book review

**State building and democracy in Southern Africa: Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa** by Pierre du Toit.

Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995. ISBN 1-878379-50-X

*State building and democracy in Southern Africa* asks a simple, yet crucial, question: is it possible "to construct" democracy in Africa? The book is in the line of many studies recently undertaken by North American scholars (most notably Larry Diamond) about the pre-conditions to, and the conditions for, the viability of democracy in what are generally labelled Third World countries. However, this book is noteworthy for two sets of reasons. The first is that it is resolutely comparative, seeking here to bring together the experience of three vastly different Southern African countries: Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa. The second is that, unlike much North American political science, it is firmly grounded in the understanding of the history of these

In the case of Botswana, one of the few democratic success stories on the African continent, du Toit concludes: "The strong society was created by historical and geographical good fortune as well as sound public choices. It maintains rules of social control that embody the norm of consensus, which is sought through public debate and participation; communication and consultation; and tolerance for diverse opinion. These rules of social control strengthen the democratic process and emphasize respect for public authority, deference to hierarchy, and restraint in demanding public goods" (p 73).

In Zimbabwe, on the other hand, the author points out that crucial political and policy mistakes by the Zanu-PF leadership led to the gradual weakening of the state's power and health, thus undermining the prospect for democracy. He writes: "The effects of these miscalculations has been the state's gradual but cumulative inability to muster the resources it needs to sustain its goal of socialism for the blacks. By drawing more resources from the economy than could be sustained in the long term, it's progressively undermined the basis of its own solvency .... By the end of the first decade of independence, both the economy and the state had been weakened by the inability to generate wealth" (p 146). ... "The political cost of these combative economic policies has been a decline in legitimacy, that vital component of social control and indicator of state strength" (p 147). Within this context, the move to an ever tightening one-party political system is merely an indication of political weakness.

But it is the section on South Africa which readers will quite naturally consider the linchpin of the book – the test, as it were, of the analytical sharpness of *State building and democracy in Southern Africa*. Many will want to argue that South Africa is simply too historically different from its two neighbours to make for a meaningful comparison. Others will point to the disparity in wealth and population to deny the possibility of learning lessons about democracy in Botswana and Zimbabwe. Be that as it may, du Toit has set up an intriguing conceptual framework with which he is perfectly entitled to draw up such comparisons. And the comparisons are more revealing than might reasonably have been anticipated.

First, the analysis of the development of South African society – and its associated discussion on the extent to which ethnic or class factors are decisive – is admirably managed. The author's ability to present a clear and concise summary of what appears like an exceedingly complex pattern of social change enables him to focus attention on the key question of the extent to which the South African state's efforts to control society have created divisions fatally inimical to the flourishing of democracy. He shows clearly that the contest for hegemony between the apartheid state and its enemies has resulted in an explosive situation. Writing as he does at the time of the first democratic elections, he cannot say much about the transitional period which has followed.

His conclusion, however, is sensible: "The study thus far supports the proposition that the superior democratic character of democracy in Botswana over that of Zimbabwe can be accounted for in part by the strength of Botswana's state and society. The analysis ... has shown that in the contest for hegemony that resulted from the revolt against the apartheid state, both society and state have been substantially weakened ... [T]o secure democratic stability and viability, both the state and the society of post-apartheid South Africa will have to be strengthened" (p 213).

The reader will turn with profit to chapter 4 (Toward sustainable democracy) to see how du Toit brings together the strands of his analysis and how relevant his analysis indeed is to the understanding of the potential for democracy in South Africa. This reviewer will merely note here that *State building and democracy in Southern Africa* is to be recommended not only because it provides a clear and convincing inquiry into the nature of "democracy" in the three neighbouring Southern African countries but also because it shows how the use of a suitably modest and efficiently managed conceptual framework of the type presented here can be a help to the understanding of complex contemporary political issues. The author is also to be applauded for having provided an historical and analytical link between the study of "black" Africa and South Africa.

*Patrick Chabal, King's College London*

## Africa Institute

### Seminars and visiting scholars

**Mr Ami R Mpungwe** (High Commissioner of the United Republic of Tanzania to South Africa) addressed a public seminar on 'Prospects for sustainable peace and stability in the Great Lakes region' on 23 April 1996. High Commissioner Mpungwe was chairman of the Arusha peace negotiations on Rwanda and also chaired the international conference on Rwanda held in The Hague, Netherlands in October 1994. He gave a short historical overview of the conflicts in the Great Lakes Region, the current characteristics and dynamics of the situation, and suggested a set of political, diplomatic, military and economic measures to achieve stability in that part of the continent.

#### **Professor Richard F Weisfelder**

Fulbright-Hayes Professor, Department of Political and Administrative Studies, National University of Lesotho, Roma) conducted an internal seminar on 'US policy towards Africa' on 18 June 1996. Dr Weisfelder has been teaching in the Department of Political Science at the University of Toledo, Ohio since the mid-1970s. He has done extensive research work in the general area of foreign policy and has published widely on Southern African issues. His talk centred on the dwindling interest in Africa after the end of the Cold War, the prospects for sustainable democracy in the light of failed economies, and ways in which Africa can place itself back on the international agenda.

**Professor James J Zaffiro** (Department of Political Science, Central College, Pella, Ohio) presented a public seminar on 'Botswana's Africa policy into the next century' on 27 June 1996. Dr Zaffiro visited South Africa under the auspices of the Centre for Cultural and Media Studies at the University of Natal, Durban. He has published widely on Botswana's foreign policy, and his talk covered Botswana's

role within the Southern African Development Community (SADC), bilateral relations with South Africa and the changing nature of these relations, and Botswana's larger continental role within the context of the OAU and in UN peace-keeping operations.

**Dr Heather Deegan** (Department of Comparative Politics, School of History and Politics, Middlesex University, London, UK), working on South African civil society, will be attached to the Institute as a visiting foreign research fellow during September 1996. Her research is being funded by the Nuffield Foundation.

### Fellows and research fellows

Recently, **Ambassador Ahmed Haggag**, Assistant Secretary-General of the OAU, Addis Ababa; **Ambassador Bethuel A Kiplagat**, former Kenyan High Commissioner in London, and retired Permanent Secretary in the Kenyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Nairobi; **Edouard J Maunick**, former Editor of *Jeune Afrique*, and retired Mauritian High Commissioner to Pretoria; and **Olara A Otunnu**, former Ugandan Foreign Minister, and President of the International Peace Academy, New York were invited to become *fellows* of the Institute. **Professor Richard Haines**, Department of Sociology, University of Port Elizabeth; **Professor Wilfred Ndongko**, Senior Regional Adviser, Multi-disciplinary Regional Advisory Group, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; **Professor Guy Martin**, HDI Project Coordinator, School of Government, University of the Western Cape, Bellville; and **Professor Margaret Vogt**, Senior Associate, Africa Program, International Peace Academy, New York accepted appointments as *research fellows* of the Institute.

### Staff honours

**Pierre Botha** (Library Resources Specialist) obtained a doctorate (international politics) in the Department of Political Sciences, University of Pretoria with a



*Dr Denis Venter,  
Executive Director and  
Head of Academic  
Programmes, Africa  
Institute of South Africa*





dissertation on "Soviet development theory in the national liberation movement". The degree will be awarded at a graduation ceremony in September 1996.

## Staff movement

**Dr Simon Baynham** (Research Specialist) decided to return to the United Kingdom, after having spent a period of six years with the Institute. He left South Africa on 12 July 1996.

## Conferences, study/liaison visits abroad, lectures

**Dr Simon Baynham** attended a conference on "Conflict and violence", organized by the Institute for Strategic Studies, University of Pretoria, on 5 March 1996; and a conference on "The UN, peace-keeping and development", jointly organized by the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and the Institute for Defence Policy, held in Pretoria on 13 and 14 March 1996. He also participated in a roundtable workshop on 26 April 1996 on the British Military Advisory and Training Team (BMATT), organized by the Institute for Defence Policy in Midrand.

**Dr Denis Venter** (Executive Director and Head, Academic Programmes) paid a brief visit to Malawi from 7 to 12 April 1996 to discuss two book projects on Malawi with academics at Chancellor College, University of Malawi, Zomba, and to conduct interviews in Lilongwe with the World Bank Mission to Malawi, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Office in Malawi, and the European Community (EC) Delegation to Malawi.

On 24 April 1996, he left on a month-long visit to Ethiopia, Italy, Russia, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom and France. While in Addis Ababa, he conducted interviews at both the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and presented a public lecture on 30 April 1996 in the Congo Hall at OAU Headquarters on "Regional security in sub-Saharan Africa: What role for South Africa?". In St Petersburg, Russia, he presented a keynote address on 6 May 1996 at an international conference on "Africa:

Cultures, societies, languages", jointly organized by the Department of African Studies, St Petersburg State University, and the Scientific Council for the Problems of the Economic, Social, Political and Cultural Development of African Countries, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow. Again, the topic of his address was "Regional security in sub-Saharan Africa: What role for South Africa?"

In London, he participated on 16 and 17 May 1996 in the Annual Council Meeting of the International African Institute, of which he is vice-chairman; and attended a talk on 15 May 1996 by Dr Christopher Hill, Emeritus Professor of Political Studies, University of York on "South Africa's reintegration into world sport", held at Chatham House under the auspices of the Southern Africa Study Group of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, and a lecture on 16 May 1996 by Dr Thurston Shaw, Emeritus Professor of Archaeology, University of Ibadan, Nigeria on "The contemporary plundering of Africa's past", held at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London under the auspices of the Royal African Society. In Bordeaux, France, he presented a seminar talk to the research group on regionalism at the Centre d'Etude d'Afrique Noire (CEAN) on "South Africa and the Indian Ocean region: The emergence of a new relationship", and conducted preliminary discussions on a planned cooperative research project on "Sustainable democracy in sub-Saharan Africa: A comparative analysis of the experiences of select anglophone, francophone and lusophone African countries".

He also participated in the consultation on "Civil society and conflict management", jointly organized by the International Peace Academy (IPA) and the OAU, and held in Somerset West from 29 May to 2 June 1996; and he was invited to join a meeting of experts to consider proposals of the Joint OAU-IPA Task Force on the operationalization of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution.

## Publications

**Dr Simon Baynham** published "Landmines in Africa", in *African*

*Armed Forces Journal*, April 1996; and "Death-blow to the arms industry?", in *Pointer* (Special Supplement to *Jane's Intelligence Review*), and in *Jane's Sentinel*, vol 3, no 6, June 1996.

**Dr Denis Venter** published book chapters on "Regional security in Southern Africa in the post-cold war era", in Edmond J Keller and Donald Rothchild (eds), *Africa in the New International Order: Rethinking state sovereignty and regional security*, Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996; and "South Africa and the Indian Ocean region: The emergence of a new relationship", in *L'Afrique Politique 1996*, Centre d'Etude d'Afrique Noire, Bordeaux, 1996.

## Other activities

**Dr Simon Baynham** was appointed by the Danish government to independently evaluate the 1995/96 Defence Management Programme, Graduate School of Public and Development Management, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. He was also asked to assess the executive course in peace operations, which took place at the Technikon RSA.

# African studies

## New journal

**Passages: A Journal of Transnational and Transcultural Studies** is a new interdisciplinary journal concerned with the burgeoning literature on transnational phenomena and cross-cultural encounters. For more information, contact Mohammed A Bamyeh, Department of Sociology, University of Massachusetts, Lowell MA 01854; tel: +1 508 934 4305; fax: +1 508 934 3023; e-mail: bamyeh@woods.uml.edu.

## Forthcoming conferences/colloquia/symposia

The biennial conference of the **African Studies Association of the United Kingdom** will take place at Wills' Hall, University of Bristol from

9 to 11 September 1996. For further details, contact Professor Richard Hodder-Williams, Department of Politics, 12 Priory Road, Bristol BS8 1TU; tel: +44 117 928 7898; fax: +44 117 973 2133; e-mail: richard.hodder-williams@bris.ac.uk.

The biennial conference of the **Development Society of Southern Africa** on "Conflicting challenges in development" will be held at the University of Stellenbosch from 25 to 27 September 1996. For more information, contact DSSA 1996 Conference Organizer, c/o Private Bag x7, Goodwood, Cape Town 7460; fax: +27 21 591 8987.

The biennial colloquium of the **South African Political Studies Association** will take place at Hunter's Rest near Rustenburg on 10 and 11 October 1996. For further details, contact The Conference Organizer, Department of Political Studies, Rand Afrikaans University, P O Box 524, Aucklandpark, Johannesburg 2006; tel: +27 11 489 2896; fax: +27 11 489 2797.

The 41st Annual Meeting of the **Society for Ethnomusicology**, jointly with the **Canadian Society for Traditional Music**, will be held from 30 October to 2 November 1996. For more information, contact Beverly Diamond, Department of Music, York University, 4700 Keele Street, North York, Ontario, Canada M3J 1P3; e-mail: bdiamond@yorku.ca.

An international conference on "Land tenure and administration" is to be hosted by the **Department of Civil Engineering, University of**

**Florida**, Gainesville from 13 to 15 November 1996. To submit abstracts, or for further details, contact Grenville Barnes, Surveying and Mapping Program, Department of Civil Engineering, 345 Weil Hall, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida 32611; tel: +1 352 392 4998; fax: +1 352 392 4957; e-mail: gbarn@ce.ufl.edu.

An international symposium on "Art and rituals of divination in Central and West Africa", hosted by the **Department of Religion, Amherst College**, will be held in Amherst, Massachusetts from 15 to 17 November 1996. For more information, contact John Pemberton III, Department of Religion, Amherst College, Amherst, MA 01002; tel: +1 413 542 2211; fax: +1 413 542 2727.

An international symposium on "Benin: Its past, present and future", organized by the **Great Benin Centenary Celebration**, will be held in Benin City, Nigeria in February 1997. For further details, contact The Secretary, Symposium Committee, Great Benin Centenary Organizing Committee, c/o Benin Traditional Council, PMB 1025, Benin City, Nigeria; or Flora Kaplan, Suite 308, 19 University Place, New York University, New York, NY 10003-4556; tel: +1 212 998 8080; fax: +1 212 995 4185; e-mail: edouwaye@nyu.edu.

A conference on "Images in Africa that bear the mark of Empire", hosted by the **Department of History, Yale University**, will take place in New Haven, Connecticut in mid-February 1997. For more information, contact Paul S Landau, Depart-

ment of History, P O Box 208324, Yale University, New Haven, CT 06520; e-mail: plandau@minerva.cis.yale.edu.

A conference on "National Identity and Democracy", jointly organized by the **Nordic Africa Institute**, Uppsala, Sweden, and the **Mayibuye Centre, University of the Western Cape**, Bellville, South Africa, will be held in Cape Town from 14 to 16 March 1997. For further details, contact Mai Palmberg, Nordic Africa Institute, P O Box 1703, 751 47 Uppsala; fax: +46 18 695 629; e-mail: mai.palmberg@nai.uu.se.

A conference, sponsored jointly by the **Drama Department, University of Bristol** and the **Colston Research Society**, on "New Approaches to Theatre Studies and Performance Analysis" will take place in Bristol from 21 to 23 March 1997. For more information, contact Günther Berghaus, Department of Drama, University of Bristol, Cantocks Close, Woodland Road, Bristol BS8 1UP; tel: +44 117 928 7833; fax: +44 117 928 8251; e-mail: mark.sinfield@bris.ac.uk.

The 11th biennial congress of the **African Association of Political Science** on "Peace and Security in Africa" will be held from 29 May to 1 June 1997 in Mauritius. For further details, contact Professor Kwame Ninsin, Administrative Secretary, AAPS, P O Box MP 111, Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe; fax: +263 4 736 306; e-mail: aapp@harare.iafrica.com.

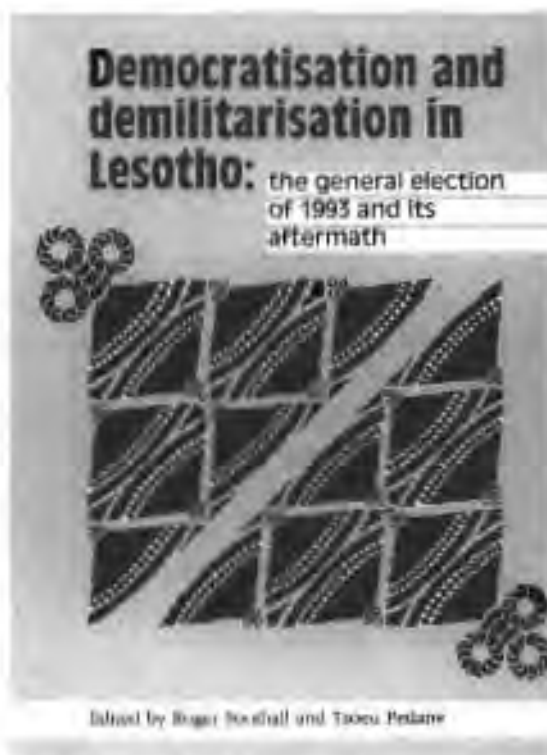
## Democratisation and demilitarisation in Lesotho

*The general election of 1993 and its aftermath by Roger Southall and Tsoeu Petlane (eds)*

In April 1995 Lesotho completed its first multiparty election since independence. The kingdom's return to civilian rule under the government of Dr Ntso Mokhele was to be fraught with difficulty, however, as first the security forces and subsequently the leading opposition party and the royal house threatened Lesotho's fledgling democracy.

In this book a group of Lesotho specialists supply the background and analysis essential to an understanding of these dramatic events in this tiny mountain kingdom. They also provide a fascinating insight into the origins and aspirations of Lesotho's political class, and the obstacles they face in satisfying popular expectations as they attempt to guide this impoverished democracy through its 'second liberation'.

**Price:** R60 (\$30)



Edited by Roger Southall and Tsoeu Petlane

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# AFRICA



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