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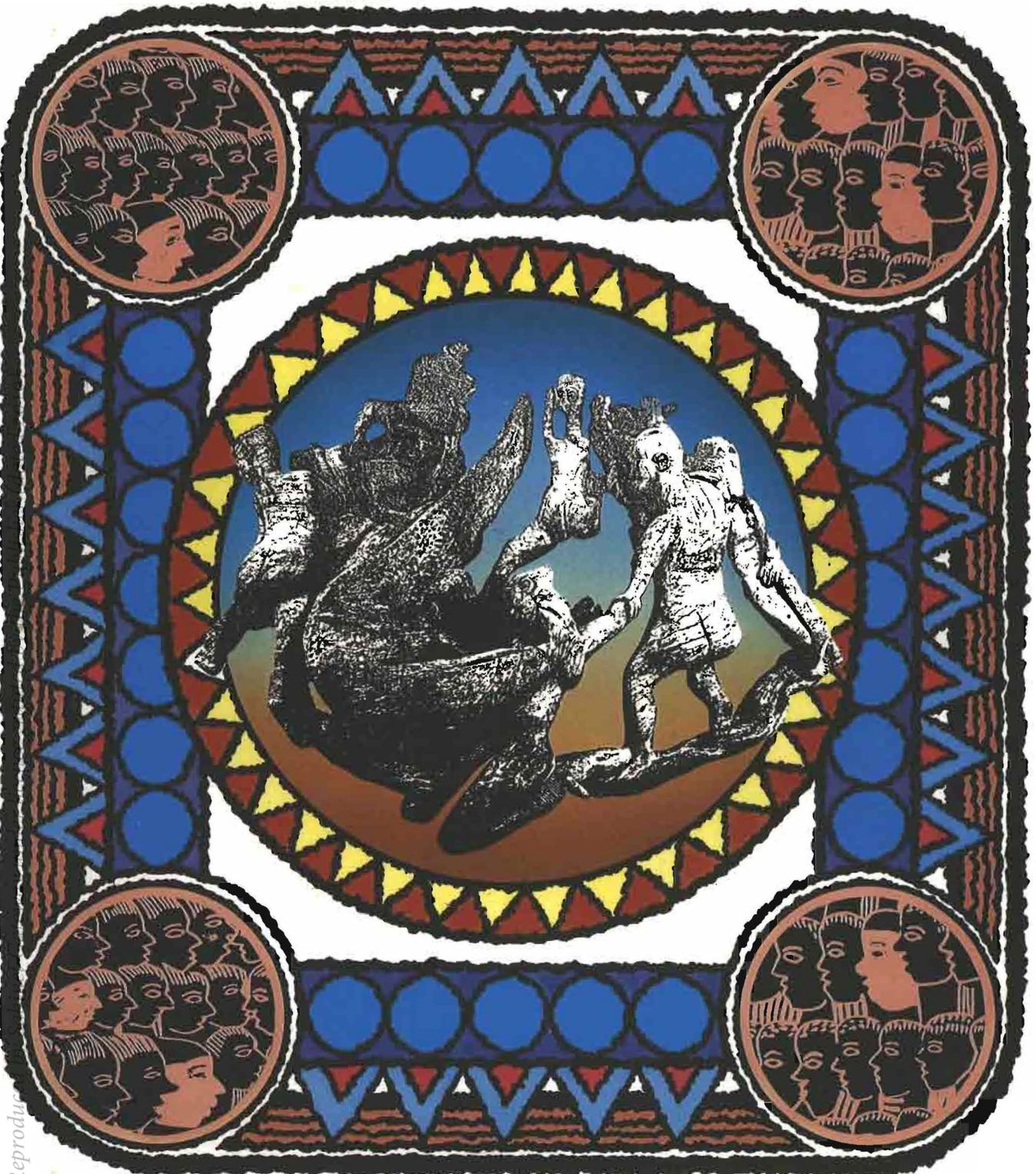
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# INSIGHT

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The Editor  
P O Box 630  
PRETORIA  
0001 Republic of South Africa  
Telephone: (012) 28-6970

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Asst Editor: Marita Snyman

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## Comment

Nationalization and social justice — *Dr Erich Leistner* 2

## Agriculture

The crisis in African agriculture — *Jenny Macgregor* 4

Agricultural development in the developing areas of Southern Africa — *Prof T J Bembridge* 17

## Art

Black artists, white patrons: The cross-cultural art market in urban South Africa — *Prof Elizabeth Rankin* 25

Black artists, white patrons: The cross-cultural art market in rural South Africa — *Prof Elizabeth Rankin* 33

Namibian artist John Muafangejo (1948-1987) — *Prof E J de Jager* 40

## Aid

South African development aid to African countries — *Dr Erich Leistner* 44

## Ports and harbours

West Africa — The mineral ports of Liberia, Guinea and Mauritania — *Denis Fair* 50

## Energy

The energy crisis in rural Ciskei — *Dr G J Steyn* 56

## Africa monitor

— *Marita Snyman and Jenny Macgregor* 60



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# Nationalization and social justice

*Dr Erich Leistner, Director of the Africa Institute, reflects upon the current debate on nationalization as a means of achieving an equitable socio-economic system in South Africa.*

The quest for a broadly acceptable socio-economic system is emerging as a crucial feature of the debate on South Africa's future political order. Nelson Mandela's reaffirmation, shortly after his release from prison, that his organization is firmly committed to the nationalization of banks, mines and "monopoly industries" has led to a flood of arguments for and against.

South Africa is one of the few countries where a high percentage of socialist believers is still to be found. Hopefully most of them will sooner or later realize the economically damaging consequences of nationalization. The real issue, however, is not nationalization *per se* but the objective which its advocates hope to achieve, that is, a socially acceptable distribution of "wealth."

Regardless of the objective rights and wrongs of the redistribution policies envisaged for a future South Africa, the country cannot expect peace and stability unless the new political system is legitimized by a socio-economic order the majority of people accept as fair and just. Let there be no doubt about that. And to devise such a socio-economic order is at least as difficult as to achieve lasting political accommodation between the country's diverse population groups. This is so because it involves all the stubborn developmental problems which the rest of Africa has been unable to overcome in three decades of independence.

Like President Mugabe, most South African socialists blame the collapse of socialist systems in Eastern Europe on mistakes of implementation rather than on the inherent unworkability of a

command economy. Similarly, they blame neo-colonialist machinations, lack of internal discipline and the like for the dismal failure of the socialist experiments in Tanzania, Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia and elsewhere.

What is at stake here is not the scoring of debating points but the future prosperity or impoverishment of South Africa. No effort must, therefore, be spared in trying to clarify the underlying issues and highlight relevant experience elsewhere. South Africans must learn from the ill-fated efforts of newly independent African countries which have sought to gain control over the modern sectors of their economies through the Africanization or indigenization of key posts and the nationalization of foreign assets.

## Nationalization in Africa

The driving force behind the nationalization of foreign-owned companies was much less the new leaders' predilection for socialist ideology than their wish to gain control over all aspects of national life in order to strengthen their own position.<sup>1</sup> Control over the "commanding heights" of the economy was expected to put at their disposal the profits which had hitherto gone to overseas concerns and their shareholders. And the power to appoint indigenous people as directors, managers and so forth provided opportunities for political patronage as well as nepotism.

Whereas the term "nationalization" suggests that the country (or rather the people) as a whole is being enriched by the take-over of foreign assets, it is

effectively the leadership group only that benefits. Marcia Burdette's extensive research into the nationalization of the Zambian copper industry has refuted the assumption "that the governments are acting on behalf of the welfare of the population, rather than for a smaller group."<sup>2</sup> To select only one passage from her article:

Having nationals fill managerial slots can mean simply that local people exploit the natural resources and extract revenue for the benefit of the small political class controlling the state and the overall economic benefit to the metropolitan consumer nations.<sup>3</sup>

Diane Bolton's findings in her study of nationalization in Tanzania are strikingly similar to those of Burdette. She sets down the gist of her investigation thus:

In Tanzania, while the post-colonial state presented its nationalization policies as part of a socialist strategy benefiting the peasants and workers, in reality...it was a form of defensive radicalism...the benefits to the Tanzanian people — whether in the form of wages, conditions of work, advancing consciousness, or participation in decision-making — were minimal.<sup>4</sup>

Both studies show how various segments within the ruling groups battle fiercely for access to the wealth and power to be gained from control over important economic levers. In Zambia, Burdette shows how politicians, civil servants and technocrats vied in turn for control of the economy.<sup>5</sup> She concludes that nationalization can contain the seeds of a struggle for control within the parastatal bodies, ministries, and political parties of the state.<sup>6</sup> The infusion of state participation in the mining industry has given the political class

more access to the "life blood of the country." And whereas the political benefits that stem from popular recognition of the increase of the power of the state are hard to measure, they have surely contributed to the political power of the dominant class.<sup>7</sup> The real losers have been those without political power, the people at large. To quote Burdette again: "The prime losers ...have been the poor, and lower and middle income groups in Zambia."<sup>8</sup>

In Tanzania, Bolton found that indigenized management (as well as expatriates) were still able to utilize their access to the means of production in order to accumulate material wealth and social privilege. "Such developments...completely alienate bureaucrats and managers from the interests of the producers of wealth."<sup>9</sup> Criticism of these trends by members of the political bureaucracy tended to be based on "envy, rather than on socialist class consciousness."<sup>10</sup>

So far we have illustrated the basic proposition that nationalization does not bring about a more equal distribution of wealth than do the forces of the market. Nothing yet has been said on the effects of nationalization upon the overall volume and quality of production. Now, although the economies of Zambia and Tanzania have severely declined, so many other domestic and external influences have been at work that the blame for this decline cannot be laid at the door of nationalization alone. It is generally accepted, however, that ownership *per se* has no significant effect upon the economic performance of undertakings but that it is the quality of management that is critical. There is little doubt that the economic well-being of Zambia and Tanzania, like that of all other sub-Saharan African countries, has been determined much more by their overall economic and other policies, by the quality of their political leadership, and by the competence of their civil servants and public sector managers than it has by changes in the ownership of business and infrastructural undertakings.

The decline of the Zambian copper industry from the mid-1970s, as one instance, stemmed primarily from falling international demand rather than from nationalization. External

conditions, however, can be held responsible only to a limited extent for the extremely poor performance of Zambia's parastatals or that of most state corporations in sub-Saharan Africa. Sandbrook writes of the disastrous results of their activities — the prevalent "considerable disrepair" of roads, railways and ports; the periodical interruptions of water and electricity supplies; the haphazard operation of telephone systems; the decline of rubbish removal services; the deterioration of educational and health facilities, and so forth.<sup>11</sup> While conceding that a shortage of foreign exchange, and, in some instances, climatic conditions can account for certain problems, he concludes that "...beyond this lies the mismanagement that is so intimately related to the decay of the patrimonial state."<sup>12</sup>

## Conclusion

The facts and findings we have quoted all refer to sub-Saharan African states. But the performance of state-run enterprises even in Western countries such as France or Britain, not to mention East Germany or other formerly Communist states, can leave no doubt that the failings of nationalized industries in Africa differ at most in degree, but not in essence, from those in technologically far more advanced countries. His own socialist party's disappointing experience with nationalization led President Mitterand to declare in 1984: "The French are beginning to understand that it is enterprise that creates wealth, that it is enterprise that creates jobs, and that it is enterprise that determines our standard of living and our place in the world."<sup>13</sup>

However, even if these insights are increasingly accepted and absorbed by South Africans who advocate far-reaching state control over the economy, that in itself will not alter the prevailing highly uneven distribution of income between whites and blacks. As may be seen from the history of today's highly developed countries, change of this sort can come about only gradually, as a result of substantially improved education and training and from increased productivity in general. The educational and training needs of the black population in particular must

receive the highest priority. There is an acute danger that South Africa's blacks, impatient for immediate improvement, may use their growing political power to try and demolish the existing economic system.

All possible opportunities should be utilized to establish non-public discussion forums where South African economists and businessmen can meet with knowledgeable representatives of black political groupings in order to analyse the country's socio-economic needs and jointly identify a sound and practical policy approach by which they may be addressed. Such meetings of minds in a calm and detached atmosphere could contribute to a process of mutual education of a sort to lay the foundation for policies tailored to the actual potential and true needs of South Africa rather than to ideological precepts and wishful thinking.

## Notes and references

- 1 According to Richard Sandbrook, "...there were more expropriations in Africa than in any other region in the period 1960-74....Takeovers were common even in countries with a capitalist orientation. Of those countries with an attractive target, only the Ivory Coast, Gabon and Liberia desisted." Richard Sandbrook, *The politics of Africa's economic stagnation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, p 136.
- 2 Marcia M Burdette. "Nationalization in Zambia: A critique of bargaining theory", *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, vol 11, no 3, 1977, p 473.
- 3 *Ibid*, p 495.
- 4 Diane Bolton, *Nationalization: A road to socialism? The case of Tanzania*, London: Zed Books, 1985, jacket notes, see also p 164 of text.
- 5 See in particular: Marcia M Burdette, "Were the copper nationalisations worthwhile?", in Klaas Woldring, Chibwe Chibaye, and others (eds), *Beyond political independence: Zambia's development predicament in the 1980s*. Mouton, Berlin/New York/Amsterdam, 1984, pp 23-71.
- 6 Marcia M Burdette, "Nationalization in Zambia", *op cit*, p 496.
- 7 *Idem*, "Were the copper nationalisations worthwhile?" *op cit*, p 59.
- 8 *Ibid*, p 58.
- 9 Diane Bolton, *op cit*, p 165.
- 10 *Ibid*.
- 11 Richard Sandbrook, *op cit*, pp 124-125.
- 12 *Ibid*, p 126.
- 13 Quoted after Jerry Z Muller, "The future of capitalism", *Dialogue*, no 85, 3/1989, p 4.

# The crisis in African agriculture

*Jenny Macgregor, Researcher at the Africa Institute, surveys the multifaceted problem of achieving food security in Africa.*

Within the next few years, many African countries will celebrate thirty years of independence. But thinking back to the high expectations of national economic growth cherished three decades ago, any mood of celebration must be dampened by the awareness that Africans, overall, are almost as poor today as they were thirty years ago. Most African states are suffering from high population growth rates, declining per capita food production, severe land degradation, declining export revenues, worsening trade balances and enormous debts. The predominant link between all these factors is agriculture. It is potentially the single most important generator of overall economic growth in Africa: it accounts for 33 per cent of Africa's GDP, absorbs 66 per cent of its labour force, and yields 40 per cent of its exports. Yet despite this dominant role Africa has plunged in the three decades since independence from self-sufficiency to chronic hunger and malnutrition, which are now widespread and escalate quickly into famine in times of drought or national financial crisis. Whereas in the 1960s severe food shortages were exceptional in Africa, today it is estimated that one in four Africans (that is, over 100 million people) in 36 of the continent's 52 countries is directly threatened by famine and malnutrition, sometimes chronic, sometimes transitory, making Africa's population the hungriest in the world. About a quarter obtain on average less than 80 per cent of the daily calories recommended by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and

the World Health Organization (WHO); in drought and other bad years, the numbers are larger. In terms of total food consumption, energy values average 2 100 calories per person per day, about 85 per cent of recommended requirements.

Africa's food crisis is long-term in nature. South of the Sahara it blankets the entire subcontinent. It results primarily from an alarming deterioration in food production which has registered a growth of less than 20 per cent in the last twenty years in the face of a 30 per cent increase in the population

growth rate over the same period. In fact since the 1960s, in practically all tropical African countries, per capita food production has declined by nearly 20 per cent.<sup>1</sup> During the 1960s, the annual growth rate of per capita food production was negative at about -0,7 per cent; this worsened during the 1970s to -1,6 per cent. There was a strong recovery in food production of 10 per cent in 1985, followed by a further increase of 4 per cent in 1986. Thus, annual average growth in per capita food production was -0,3 per cent during 1980-85 (but -1,6 per cent

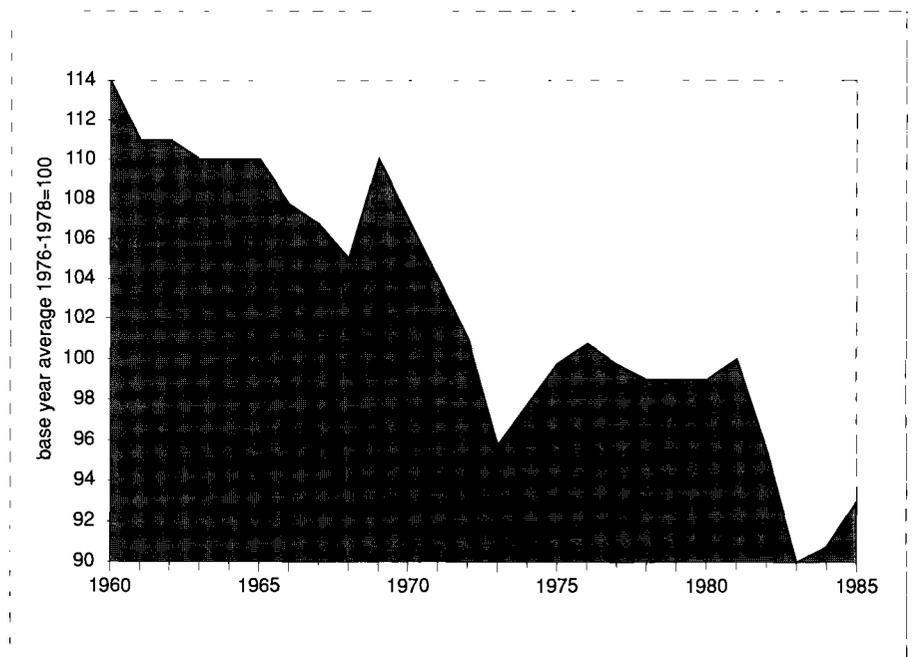


Figure 1. Index of per capita food production in sub-Saharan Africa, 1960-85.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE 1. AGRICULTURE AND FOOD<sup>3</sup>

	Value added in agriculture (Millions of current dollars)			Cereal imports (Thousands of metric tons)		Food aid (Thousands of metric tons)		Daily calorie supply per capita			Average of food production per capita (1979-81=100)
	1970	1980	1987	1974	1986	1974/75	1985/86	1965	1980	1986	1985/87
Sub-Saharan Africa											
Total	15 676	60 937	45 197	4 108	8 084	910	3 107	2 092	2 152	2 097	100
Excluding Nigeria	10 596	34 751	37 818	3 719	7 408	903	3 107	2 062	2 120	2 081	98
1 Ethiopia	931	1 870	2 031	118	609	54	570	1 824	1 807	1 749	89
2 Chad	142	388	418	37	71	20	29	2 399	1 799	1 717	104
3 Zaire	585	2 961	1 857	343	415	1	56	2 187	2 123	2 163	99
4 Guinea-Bissau	37	47	83	33	32	..	..	1 910	1 906	2 186	129
5 Malawi	199	393	411	17	11	0	10	2 244	2 406	2 310	87
6 Mozambique	..	1 129	747	62	406	34	344	1 979	1 810	1 595	84
7 Tanzania	473	2 030	1 882	431	188	148	55	1 832	2 310	2 192	90
8 Burkina Fasso	126	496	626	99	164	28	22	2 009	2 029	2 139	118
9 Madagascar	266	1 179	879	114	140	7	115	2 462	2 491	2 440	97
10 Mali	207	951	1 051	281	86	107	77	1 859	1 720	2 074	101
11 Gambia, The	16	64	60	13	70	..	..	2 194	2 154	2 517	126
12 Burundi	159	532	681	7	13	6	2	2 391	2 304	2 343	100
13 Zambia	191	552	222	93	150	5	116	..	..	..	97
14 Niger	420	1 080	729	155	83	73	11	1 994	2 363	2 432	87
15 Uganda	929	1 216	2 710	36	26	..	..	2 360	2 151	2 344	123
16 Sao Tome and Principe	6	17	9	3	7	..	..	2 186	2 297	2 338	68
17 Somalia	167	415	632	42	343	111	156	2 167	2 099	2 138	102
18 Togo	85	312	354	6	86	11	6	2 378	2 178	2 207	89
19 Rwanda	136	533	784	3	11	19	16	1 665	2 007	1 830	86
20 Sierra Leone	108	334	402	72	152	10	43	1 837	2 034	1 855	98
21 Benin	121	498	726	7	77	9	8	2 009	2 041	2 184	114
22 Central African Rep.	60	300	415	7	37	1	6	2 135	2 136	1 949	94
23 Kenya	482	1 951	2 139	15	274	2	107	2 289	2 225	2 060	93
24 Sudan	757	2 097	3 044	125	707	46	890	1 938	2 417	2 208	100
25 Comoros	..	..	71	19	19	..	..	2 296	2 074	2 109	95
26 Lesotho	23	90	57	48	94	14	32	2 065	2 400	2 303	83
27 Nigeria	5 080	26 186	7 379	389	677	7	0	2 185	2 254	2 146	105
28 Ghana	1 030	2 575	2 568	177	223	33	64	1 950	1 795	1 759	106
29 Mauritania	58	202	310	115	206	48	30	2 064	2 065	2 322	90
30 Liberia	91	359	368	42	117	3	2	2 154	2 375	2 381	96
31 Equatorial Guinea	..	..	..	2	8	..	..	..	..	..	..
32 Guinea	..	748	659	63	203	49	92	1 923	1 806	1 777	93
33 Cape Verde	..	28	..	45	54	..	..	1 767	2 567	2 717	99
34 Senegal	208	568	1 024	341	431	27	80	2 479	2 401	2 350	105
35 Zimbabwe	214	702	570	56	71	0	38	2 105	2 137	2 132	91
36 Swaziland	34	116	89	14	44	..	..	2 100	2 483	2 578	104
37 Cote d'Ivoire	462	2 830	2 728	172	675	4	0	2 360	2 546	2 562	105
38 Congo, Peoples Rep.	49	199	262	34	97	2	0	2 259	2 472	2 619	92
39 Cameroon	364	2 089	3 009	81	290	4	6	2 079	2 130	2 028	94
40 Botswana	28	107	48	21	137	5	44	2 019	2 152	2 201	75
41 Mauritius	30	119	220	160	197	22	15	2 272	2 715	2 748	103
42 Gabon	60	310	379	24	56	..	..	1 881	2 274	2 521	97
43 Seychelles	..	10	13	9	7	..	..	1 735	2 306	2 219	..
44 Angola	685	2 187	..	149	280	0	67	1 897	2 177	1 880	88
45 Djibouti	..	..	..	25	40	..	..	..	..	..	..

during 1980-84) and 0,8 per cent in 1986.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless the growth is insufficient to stem the tide of growing food shortages. The region's annual growth rate in food production during 1980-86 was only 2,9 per cent compared with population growth of 3,06 per cent. Since then, performance has again lagged — in 1986-88, agricultural growth averaged a sluggish 1 per cent a year.<sup>5</sup>

The gap noted above has had to be filled by increased food imports and food aid. These have increased markedly, both in absolute terms and as a proportion of Africa's total urban food supply. Cereal imports, which provide between two-thirds and four-fifths of caloric intake, increased fivefold between 1969-71 and 1984-85 when they reached 28 million tonnes a year (more than 50 kg per capita per year).<sup>6</sup> Imports, which cost nearly US\$8,7 billion in 1979/81, have been absorbing an increasing proportion of agricultural export earnings, some countries experiencing a fourfold or more rise since 1970. In about 22 countries the value of food imports now exceeds that of agricultural exports.

Superimposed upon these deteriorating trends in food supply have been wide variations in food production as a result of droughts, pest attacks or floods, which have led to famine. The 1973-74 drought in Ethiopia and the Sahel focused world attention for the first time on the plight of Africa's hungry. But it was the drought of 1984 and 1985 affecting some 34 countries in western, north-western and southern Africa that produced acute international concern about the scale of suffering caused by hunger and homelessness. There is nothing new about droughts in Africa. But their effects are more devastating than ever before owing to population pressure, the neglect of the continent's natural resource base, and growing poverty. Furthermore, the sensational reports in the media have overstated the relationship between drought and famine. Drought is only a complicating factor, a precipitating factor setting off a chain of events that turn a serious periodic shortfall into famine. One fundamental variable is poverty: it is the poor's lack of income or resources that lies behind their inability to cope with hunger and malnutrition — even in areas where per capita food production is not declining.

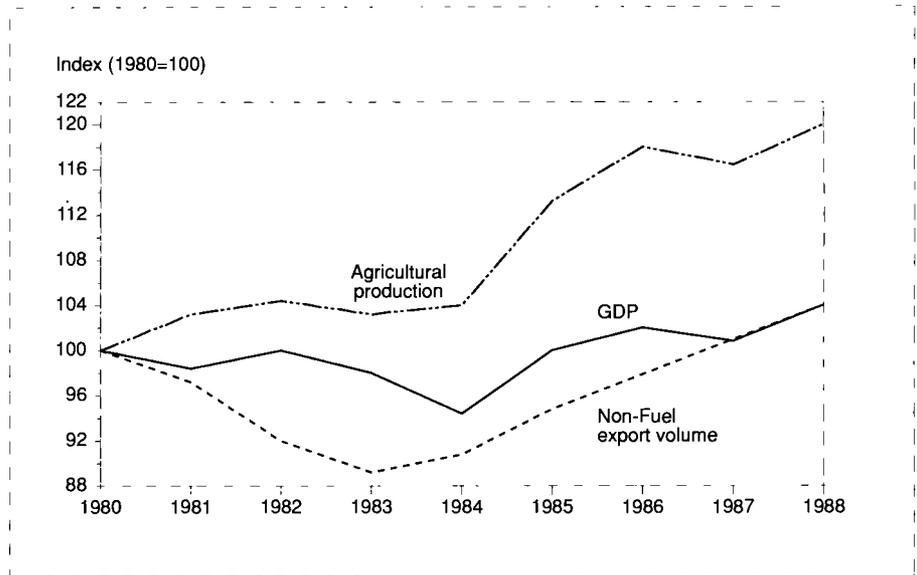


Figure 2. Recent economic trends in sub-Saharan Africa, 1980-88.<sup>7</sup>

Those suffering most are the small-scale farmers who are no longer in a position to produce sufficient food for the family to survive at all because agro-structural conditions are steadily worsening (within this group it is mostly the women and children who are affected); the marginal classes in the cities (those who are not able to buy food); and refugees fleeing from wars or from the loss of their productive assets in the countryside.

### Seeking solutions

Africa's problems are by no means all of its own making, as a broad examination of their causes will reveal. Nor has the past performance been uniformly bad. A few African states have managed to expand their agricultural production by 4 per cent or more a year. Each country faces its own unique combination of problems. But because there are social, economic and political problems common to most of these countries, simplistic panaceas have been sought.

### Government responses

Stimulated by the economic stress which characterized Africa in the late 1970s, African governments formulated in April 1980 the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA). More a declaration of intent than a policy guideline, its principal theme was that the primary user

of Africa's natural resources should be Africa itself and that exports should be limited to whatever surplus production remained after Africa's needs had been met. A further decline in food production during the early 1980s, coupled with severe drought and famine, sparked off a review of the shortcomings of the LPA, and goaded signatory governments into trying to develop an African strategy for development with food and agriculture as its focal points. New expressions of policy intent were set out in the Harare Declaration of 1984, and in the Organization of African Unity's (OAU) Africa Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER) 1986-90. Since the mid-1980s about half the countries in Africa have adopted major policy reform programmes in the field of agriculture. And, with the help of good weather, agricultural production and exports have grown faster since 1984 on average than during the previous two decades.

These improvements, however, are generally small. They could very easily be reversed. Not only do Africa's undiversified economies remain especially vulnerable to external shocks, but increasing food imports and a decreasing ability to pay for them seem to be the immediate prognosis. World Bank projections for the next 30 years suggest that even if grain output rates double — a highly optimistic assumption

— there will still be a cereals gap each year of 110 million tonnes. These figures posit that present population trends continue unchanged. With food production growing at 2 per cent a year and population at more than 3 per cent, Africa's need for basic cereal imports would, on this projection, cost it twice the value of anticipated agricultural export earnings. In less than 25 years the situation could become unsustainable — worse indeed than it was at the height of the 1983/85 famine. The world would be confronted by an ecological, political and human disaster of unprecedented proportions.<sup>8</sup>

### International responses

The causes of and remedies for Africa's agrarian malaise have been the subject of wide-ranging debate among experts and policy makers. Divergent, often contradictory analyses, prognoses and prescriptions have been put forth. In general the debate and the remedial policies suggested are all based upon two simple explanations which appear diametrically opposed to one another: development theory (with its neo-classical economic assumptions) and underdevelopment theory (with its dependency paradigm).

According to the neo-Marxist view,<sup>9</sup> Africa is the unfortunate victim of a world economy geared to serve the interests of wealthy industrial countries. The earliest contacts between European capitalist economies and African pre-colonial, pre-capitalist economies, and the subsequent colonial period are seen as having led to a disintegration of Africa's peasant economies, while the policies of increased extraversion conducted by the newly independent states precipitated the present crisis by systematically orienting their national economies to the world market. More specifically, blame is now placed on the policies of the IMF and the World Bank. The solution is seen to lie in reducing the openness of Africa to overseas economies worldwide in order to correct the excessive vulnerability of African economies to their behaviour.

The liberal view, espoused by international agencies such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), FAO and World Bank, points to the increasing imbalance between population and food supply (rooted in very high levels of population growth, low levels of technology and low rates of development), a

situation worsened by inept and wasteful government policies favouring the urban areas and the industrial sector at the expense of agriculture. The consequent fall in export production and increase in imports are seen as responsible for Africa's increasing indebtedness and economic crisis.

Both approaches offer insights: the neo-Marxists have made a valuable contribution by stressing the need to understand development as a long-term historical process, the need to consider the linkages between national economies and the world economic system, and the importance of structural barriers to development.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand the liberal perspective's focus on the role governments play, has served to identify the necessity of policy reforms and the negative effects of excessive state intervention. But the causes of Africa's contemporary food crisis are complex and deeply rooted. Analytical separation by theorists of the many dimensions of food supply, most notably this apparent need to apportion responsibility between internal and external factors, ignores the interplay between them and also fails to provide more than a partial insight into phenomena such as the nature of the African ruling class and its economic privileges, rural poverty and access to resources, and the prevalence of famine. Only a systemic analysis of food production and supply which analyses the web of political, structural and technical constraints can reveal the interdependence of the crucial issues.

Africa is a continent which is extremely dependent upon its natural resources. In many parts of the continent the productivity of what is for most countries their most important resource base, that is their food and agricultural sector, is being reduced.

### Population growth and urbanization

Sub-Saharan Africa now has twice the population it had in 1965 and over five times its population at the beginning of the century. With an annual growth of well over 3 per cent, outpacing GDP, the population is expected to have risen to over 1 billion by the year 2010. Growth rates of this order, far exceeding those of any other continent (including Asia and Latin America), severely handicap Africa's efforts to raise per

capita food production. But the problem is greater than just one of numbers. More important is the character of Africa's present day population — its distribution, density, age and sex structure, and its patterns of migration and settlement, and how these affect not merely food production itself, but access to resources and food security.

Although the continent of Africa as a whole is not yet overpopulated and has more arable land to cultivate, there are vast desert or desert-like areas which are virtually uninhabited; while in other areas population density is so high as to render it impossible for the land to support its population. These few areas (which include southern West Africa, the East African lakes region, and parts of the Ethiopian highlands and South Africa) account for more than half of Africa's total population. They are areas (low in the food production table) that have grown and developed rapidly at the expense of less populous regions. They are the areas that make the greatest demands upon governments. Africa is also experiencing very high urban growth rates. And the demand for food from these urbanized populations is being increased by the rise in their income levels. According to FAO statistics:

One third of all Africans are already urban dwellers, and by the year 2010 one out of every two Africans will be living in either a town or a city. This influx of rural dwellers is swelling some of Africa's towns and cities by 6 or 7 per cent a year, in addition to the cities' natural population growth.<sup>11</sup>

Furthermore, both urban migration and age distribution (the bulge in young and vulnerable populations) have contributed to a reduction in agriculture's percentage share of the economically active population, while the growing proportions of female and child labour have qualitatively worsened the composition of labour resources. (The agricultural labour force as a percentage of the total labour force dropped from 80,5 per cent for the whole of Africa in 1960 to 69,1 per cent in 1980.<sup>12</sup>) Both these trends have a direct influence upon food production output.

### Physical environment and resources

Although about 90 per cent of Africa is

classified as having climates which are tropical in character, diverse patterns of rainfall, soil, and topography combine to produce a wide range of environments. For the most part a dry continent, it may be divided into about 12 generalized climatic units — of these, 37 per cent may be classified as arid; about 13 per cent semi-arid; and about 23 per cent as subhumid.<sup>13</sup>

Africa's arable areas are separated by vast stretches of country unsuitable (or only marginally suitable) for cultivation. Deserts occupy about 40 per cent of the continent, and dense rain forests along the equator where poor soils, diseases and the absence of a sufficient drying-out period discourage the cultivation of cereals, account for 7 or 8 per cent of the land mass.<sup>14</sup> Even within the arable belts, soils are for the most part generally old, lacking in soluble minerals and easily degraded when their vegetation is weakened or removed. Dry areas are dominated by porous sandy soils lacking nutrients, and many of the humid lowlands have acid soils. An additional restraint is the widespread incidence of tsetse fly which infests over two-thirds of the subhumid zone and has held back the economy of entire regions by preventing the development of what might have been successful stock farming areas.<sup>15</sup>

Rainfall, marginal or erratic over most of the continent, is the primary determinant of agricultural potential. The shortage of rain altogether is a never-ending problem for areas such as the Sahel and the Kalahari. But the more significant rainfall problem for most of sub-Saharan Africa lies in its annual distribution rather than its quantity. Even in years of statistically adequate overall rainfall, rains may start late or finish early, and dry spells may arrive at crucial times in the growing season. The delicate dynamic balance between human population and adequate food supply is thus easily upset by even slight climatic changes. Compounding the problem of water availability is the nature of the underlying rocks which are generally impermeable, resulting in modest groundwater resources only.

Drought is a recurrent phenomenon in the semi-arid regions of Africa. The term drought refers to an extended and significant drop or decline in rainfall from that which is normal to the area concerned; it can be relatively short

and intense lasting no longer than 1-3 years, or it can be a long dry period of generally subnormal rainfall spanning about a decade, which period may include several intense episodes of drought. Africa has suffered two main droughts in the past thirty years: the Sahelian and Ethiopian droughts of the 1970s, and the more severe drought of the 1980s which peaked in 1984-85. Both these have had a pervasive impact on the countries concerned. Apart from the natural and obvious decline in cash crop and food production and loss of livestock, there have been second- and third-order effects such as price hikes, increased food imports and reliance upon food aid (both the latter leading to distortions in pricing and changes in food preference, as well as putting strain upon the balance of payments), surges in rural-to-urban migration rates, and a shortage of foreign exchange for productive investment.

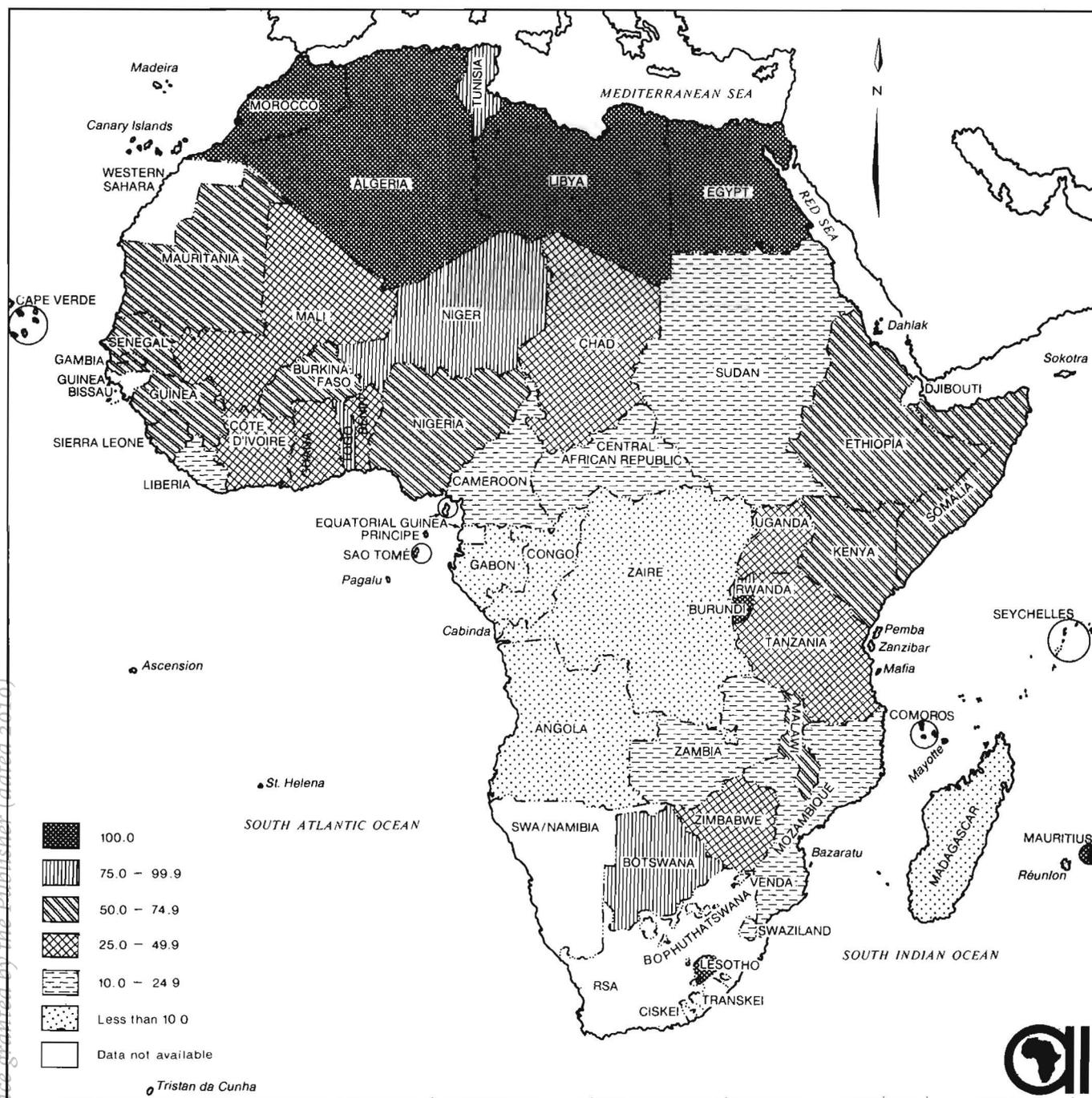
Africa's ecology is fragile. In the first half of the 1980s it was estimated that as many as 7 432 million hectares of land in Africa, equivalent to 26 per cent of the continent's total land area, was in the process of desertification, the Sahara Desert alone expanding at the rate of 1.5 million hectares a year.<sup>16</sup> Population pressures have affected the age-old system of shifting cultivation, and this has brought about declining fertility through the ever more common appearance of undesirable land use patterns such as overcultivation, overgrazing, deforestation and poor irrigation. Marginal lands of more variable rainfall which have been pressed into use are being even more quickly exhausted. The failure of vegetation to regenerate, coupled with an increased demand for wood for fuel and construction,<sup>17</sup> has encouraged deforestation; and this in turn has prompted further erosion and loss of fertility. High population growth rates in the last two decades have also encouraged a rapid growth in livestock of nearly 50 per cent — in the Sahel nearly 75 per cent — which has caused widespread overgrazing.

Speaking broadly, landform patterns in Africa constitute impediments to economic development. Coastal zones are narrow, and transport and communication with the interior are impeded by the high rims to the coastal plateaus. A lack of improvement in

infrastructure has also impeded agricultural progress. Transport systems, developed during the colonial era, were built to facilitate the export of raw materials from the source areas to coastal areas and the importation of manufactured goods; any connections necessary for the distribution of goods internally were generally ignored, or at best poorly developed. With food-producing areas thus lacking adequate transport, internal agricultural markets were not promoted, and farm-to-market links were neglected. Independence has not brought much relief. The reorientation of transport networks since independence has led to the construction of many roads, but all too often at the expense of environmental degradation brought about by soil erosion. Worse, a large proportion of these (and other) roads are surfaced with hard clays which not only become impassable during heavy rains but are a continuous source of sediment.

## The nature of agriculture in Africa

Environment and resources have strongly determined the way in which agriculture has operated in Africa — on a very extensive and (to the Western mind) apparently inefficient basis with considerable use of shifting cultivation. The vast majority of Africa's agricultural producers are still small-scale peasants with the interest and capacity to make use only of a limited selection of outside resources. This sector, which accounts for more than 80 per cent of the land under cultivation, is responsible for most of Africa's food production and a major part of Africa's agricultural exports, but is increasingly unable to provide the surplus required to meet the growing needs of the non-rural population and/or exports to satisfy the demands of national trade. Labour shortages caused by men migrating to urban areas have led to an increasing reliance upon women to supply the deficit, in spite of the existing demands upon their energies and times for socially necessary activities such as fetching water, collecting wood for fuel, and the bearing and bringing up of children. Although 60-80 per cent of Africa's agricultural output is provided by women, they are still largely at a great disadvantage, if not excluded altogether, in the allocation of resources.



Cultivated land as percentage of potential cultivable land: 1982<sup>19</sup>

The small farm sector has also suffered from low technological input. This has meant the continued extensive use of hand tools such as the hoe, and only a limited use of capital equipment, fertilizers, insecticides and other elements associated with modern agriculture. There is also a limited interest in (or the capacity to make use of) outside resources. In addition various procedures which have served African soci-

eties for centuries, such as shifting cultivation, rotational fallow, manuring, and intercropping — all of which are well adapted to the harsh African environment, maintain soil fertility over the long term and are efficient in their use of human labour — are coming under pressure. Because their application requires extensive woodland and assumes a low population density, the growing concentrations of population

have forced farmers and herdsmen to abandon these safeguards that in the past have been vital to the success and continuance of African farmers' customary practices, thereby causing a degradation of the environment — soil exhaustion, deforestation and soil erosion. And the continued traditionally extensive use of land<sup>18</sup> has resulted in ever more marginal lands being used for food production, lands which are

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not only less fertile, but are more vulnerable to degradation.

African farmers have a rapidly growing urban population to whom they could sell their produce. But this apparently captive market is hard to reach and difficult to penetrate because of its poor communications with the hinterland. Furthermore, most of the food produced is never formally marketed but reaches the consumer informally — often through barter.

## Realization of potential

The answer to the question: “Can Africa become self-sufficient in food?” is on paper, yes. Africa’s capacity to produce food has nowhere reached its limit. In Africa as a whole, land is still abundant. Most countries have sufficient land reserves for the next 25 years at least but, given their population growth, the transition from abundance to scarcity is taking place rapidly. On the face of it, more and more land being brought into cultivation would seem to be the solution to Africa’s problems of low output and population increase (land availability has been estimated at least three times that now under cultivation). But this view of the overall situation is misleading. In the first place the distribution and potential productivity of good quality land bears little relation to population distribution — whether because of arbitrary national boundaries, tribal and linguistic differences, or poor trading facilities stemming largely from poor internal communications. Central Africa, humid West Africa and Southern Africa have large cultivable areas and low density populations. In contrast most of the Sahel, parts of mountainous East Africa and the dry belt stretching from the coast of Angola through Botswana, Lesotho and southern Mozambique all support unsustainably large populations. Elsewhere the area of arable land currently in use is approaching the limits of what is potentially cultivable land. In the north of the continent this limit has already been passed.

In the second place much of the land which on paper appears open to cultivation, is already in use for forestry or grazing, and with current technology is only marginally suitable for annual food crops. Although 80 per cent of Africa’s soils are of low fertility and 43 per cent are too dry for any agricul-

ture purely dependent upon rainfall (according to FAO estimates),<sup>20</sup> the contribution of today’s technology, competently administered, could reduce the risks and instability of existing food production systems. But foreign exchange shortages and debt alone loom large in the way of the purchase of high yield seed varieties which, being more vulnerable, require fertilizers, insecticides, and irrigation. The non-technological procedures of traditional African farming require long fallow periods in which the soil can regain its fertility. Today’s population pressures do not allow for this. The scarcity of suitable land is rendered more acute by the fact that Africa is losing a percentage of its land each year through soil impoverishment and the loss of ground cover.<sup>21</sup>

So much for the environment and technologies. The reasons for Africa not having achieved self-sufficiency in food and for its declining prospects of achieving this self-sufficiency in the foreseeable future are much more clearly tied to issues far greater than environmental and technical constraints. If we look at the historical processes leading up to the current crisis, it can be seen that in many instances they interrelate with the processes generating the hunger we witness in Africa today.

For most of Africa the colonial period created an artificial pattern of growth that did little to develop a true foundation for the local economies. And it established some of the basic parameters for the production, distribution, and consumption of food in Africa today, drastically changing as it did the social and ecological organization of agriculture and leadership’s responses to famine and food shortages. What we see today is a legacy which has left the continent structurally vulnerable to macro-economic shocks. During this period, roughly between the 1880s and early 1960s, Africa changed very rapidly and very one-sidedly from a continent of primarily self-sufficient agriculturalists unengaged with the world economy, to a continent inextricably linked to the world beyond. African colonial powers not only needed revenue to make their colonies self-sufficient, but to provide a (limited) market for the home country’s manufactures. This need for hard currency on world markets required the development of a

profitable export sector; and agriculture, being the major resource, became the focus of development.

Although no single strategy adopted by any one colonial power was universally applied throughout the continent to increase agricultural output, three major systems evolved: through market incentives or tax policy the African farmer was encouraged to grow those crops of which a percentage could be exported; a second model was to displace Africans from ownership of their land, or to use land not occupied by Africans for the establishment of large plantations (estates) managed by Europeans and using African labour, in order to produce crops almost solely for export; a third model was either to displace Africans from certain land or take unoccupied areas, and settle Europeans there to farm.<sup>22</sup> What evolved in effect was a land-use in which the best lands were used to grow cash crops, while local foodstuffs were perforce grown in more marginal areas. In addition, government-regulated price controls served to lower peasant family income to the point at which survival depended upon there being some wage income, which in turn benefited those farming for export by providing cheap, migratory labour. The food production sector on the other hand enjoyed little, if any, of the support given the export crop sector: it received none of the assistance modern agricultural sciences generously lent exporting regions; high yield seed varieties, chemical inputs, and irrigated cultivation were almost nonexistent; there was little, if any, governmental assistance with demand prediction, price stabilization, credit assistance or marketing; other services, such as those associated with agricultural extension and infrastructural development, were established mainly to service the production, transportation, and marketing of industrial, export crops. For the first time, agriculture was divorced from nourishment. In the face of steady increases in export crop production, food production itself declined.

## Agricultural policies in post-colonial Africa

Inappropriate macro-economic trade policies and sectoral policies in practice since independence have played a major role in shaping domestic agriculture performance.

## Underinvestment in the agricultural sector

African agriculture does not receive the government support it merits. In many countries, agriculture receives less than 10 per cent of public spending, low in relation to other areas. The numbers of agricultural researchers and veterinary workers are also correspondingly low. The neglect has resulted in little research on food crops, weakly staffed extension services for the farming of food crops, and inadequate investment in local transport, a general neglect which has fostered the continuing exodus to the cities. What investment has taken place has been selective, favouring large-scale, technologically sophisticated developments such as government directed cooperatives, major irrigation schemes and their dams. This in turn has led to an increased dependence upon foreign expertise and to considerable foreign involvement in different ways in capital-intensive production.

## Focus on cash crops

A dependence upon export crops is thus one of the main reasons for the neglect of Africa's food-producing sector. Worse, organizing agriculture for export only has left Africa vulnerable to adverse trends in the international economy and weakened its economic base by lowering its foreign exchange reserves.

At independence, Africa inherited this acute dependence upon agricultural exports, most countries' exports at the time of independence accounting for an overwhelming share of foreign exchange earnings, an extremely high percentage of gross domestic product, and a large portion of government revenue. In most instances export agriculture also employed the largest single segment of the wage-labour force. As Michael Lofchie points out:

Through the remittances of family members engaged as migratory workers on export plantations, this export agriculture provided an indispensable source of financial support for peasant families otherwise engaged in subsistence farming.<sup>23</sup>

For newly independent colonies vigorously pursuing the ideal of nation-building, development and modernization, the arrangement of export-crop earnings supporting urban-biased development seemed a logical

path to travel. As a result, cash crop production was intensified at the expense of food crops; foreign exchange earnings went into importing food crops; an all-out drive for import-substitution industrialization was embarked upon; and state bureaucracies were expanded accordingly. Some three decades later the tropical African state is still heavily dependent upon one or two products: 32 major primary exports account for about 70 per cent of Africa's non-fuel exports to the industrial nations, compared to 35 per cent for other developing nations.<sup>24</sup> Hopeful that the returns from export specialization could be used to promote economic development, African governments have failed to anticipate the constraining effects of market conditions upon the presumed benefits of exports. A decline in output, coupled with ever more unfavourable terms of trade, has resulted in Africa's share of world exports falling from 2.4 per cent in 1970 to 1.7 per cent in 1985.<sup>25</sup> Subsequent foreign exchange shortages have had a serious impact upon economic development, most profoundly in the agricultural sector.

The concentration on cash crops has also been directly linked to famines. Even during the most acute domestic food shortages which often necessitate international food relief, many African countries have pursued a policy of using their agricultural land to earn foreign revenue. During the drought which in the early 1970s so severely effected the Sahelian countries, the total value of their agricultural exports (1970-74) was \$1.5 billion — three times the value of all cereals imported.<sup>26</sup> The foreign exchange earned from these export crops was spent on importing food, plus the fertilizers and pesticides needed to grow more cash crops for export. In the 1980s likewise, agricultural exports from famine-hit areas reached record levels. In 1983 Ethiopia's coffee output was up 10 per cent; Sudan's cotton output grew by almost 350 per cent between 1981 and 1983; and Chad and Mali between them produced record cotton harvests in 1983, 23 per cent up on those of the previous year.<sup>27</sup>

## Macro-economic trade and pricing policies

Excessive state intervention and government policies — both macro-economic

and sectoral, (which latter favour the urban areas) — are to a large extent responsible for Africa's declining agricultural production of both export and food crops, and the continent's growing dependence upon imports. Governments tend not to offer tariff protection to domestic producers in order to offset the effects of overvalued currencies, thus compelling the lower world prices to prevail on the urban market. This effectively cheapens the price of foreign foodstuffs. Export crop producers have thus been subject to a dual price policy. The surplus resulting from the difference between the domestic price paid to the producer and the sale of crops on the world market at prevailing international prices, is channelled into the urban-industrial sector. Tantamount to a form of taxation, this has contributed to declining production and a shortage of foreign exchange reserves.

## Policy reforms and the political economy

Recent reappraisals by African governments of their macro-economic and sectoral policies have led to reforms: at the macro-economic level, trade liberalization, exchange rate adjustment, and deregulation of prices; at the sectoral level, favourable priority for the food and agricultural sectors (particularly the small-scale farmers) in government's allocation of resources and the drawing up of domestic policies. These have included institutional changes, particularly in agricultural marketing boards; increased producer prices; reduced subsidies on food and agricultural inputs; and the privatization of some parastatal functions.

Policy reforms are easier to theorize on and introduce than to practise, and there is controversy about their benefits. Many countries face complex additional problems which make productivity increases far more difficult to achieve. We might instance growing population pressures on limited land resources (such as Kenya is experiencing); a poor resource base, declining rainfall; and the limited export market prospects for certain crops. In summary, while policy reforms of the sort we have been considering may have achieved a growth in productivity, they have often failed to assure any reliability in food supplies, and at their worst have exaggerated inequalities. (This

will be treated more fully below.)

Many governments have also found it extremely difficult to institute desirable reforms and have persisted in pursuing policies inimical to growth. The reasons here are largely to be found in an analysis of the power relationships and ideologies that have shaped the background to decisions made in agricultural policy. African states, coming to independence in an economic and political power vacuum, and under pressure to develop their economies, have sought to enlarge their state bureaucracies, and have adopted an interventionist stance to economic activities and institutions. Urban-biased policies furthering the economic and political interests of urban elites, most conspicuously those of the political class, have been adopted at the expense of the producer. Even when equitable allocation and results have been clearly declared goals, the ability of the state to combat sources of inequity has been limited because the political culture of government in Africa is such that for many, government is seen as an arena in which ethnic and regional interests compete for scarce resources. With the power of the state both extensive and weak, this pattern has been difficult to break.

### Access to reliable food supplies

The World Bank (and other related institutions) and African governments have more recently been faulted for focusing on increasing production levels as a way out of Africa's food crisis. But there is an entirely different view: that instituting policies which work to increase food production is only part of the solution — malnutrition and hunger often have less to do with declining food production than they have with problems of access to assured supplies of food: whether people, on the whole, can each day consume the minimum amount of food they need, having been able to obtain it from reasonably reliable sources. There are many sections of Africa's population who experience hunger seasonally, or most of the time, without there being any physical shortage at all. What turns a drought into a famine is not so much the availability of food but political factors — the way in which scarcity interacts with what people have, and do not have, and their

ability to surmount, or not surmount, the obstacles to purchasing or growing adequate food. Both dependency theorists and the World Bank, whose solutions are both primarily economic, are guilty of failing to appreciate that the reasons why people die of starvation or go hungry are not because there is no food in their country, but because they cannot afford it and have no other means of access to it.

What we are saying here is that the true causes of "food insecurity" are to be found in a broad analysis of the political economy of African agriculture, both internal and external. This will show that the lack of assured food supplies is caused by a vulnerability to factors such as political instability, related to the centralization of power, which has caused economic and political disruption (we may instance the civil wars in Mozambique, Angola and Ethiopia<sup>28</sup>); by a poor infrastructure which gives rise to problems of logistics, marketing and distribution (examples Zaire, Uganda); by large poor urban populations; and by poverty, a major cause of food insecurity, which is fundamentally related to the powerlessness of the African peasant. The ways societies are structured — the social and economic inequities reflected in unequal patterns of national income distribution and the political institutions that maintain them — are the root causes of poverty and malnutrition. As Keith Griffin points out:

...hunger tends to be associated with particular classes and occupational groups: landless agricultural labourers; small tenant cultivators; deficit farmers with too little land to be self-sufficient and who consequently must supplement their incomes with part-time, off-farm jobs; pastoralists living on or beyond the fringes of arable land; and fisherpeople and petty artisans supplying traditional goods and services in traditional ways.<sup>29</sup>

The distinguishing mark here is that the poor do not have sufficient purchasing power or effective demand to enable them to acquire enough to eat. More particularly, they are excluded by what Amartya Sen has called "entitlements systems".<sup>30</sup> People are "entitled" to food through their own labour, through trade, production, return of assets, gifts and so forth. For the poor we are considering, this set of entitlements, either chronically or episodically, is not large enough to permit adequate nutrition. There may be a

number of reasons: the productivity of the smallholding farmer may be permanently low because of primitive technology, inadequate institutional support, unreliable transport and credit facilities, a lack of extension and marketing services, and little training to improve skills; employment opportunities in some particular locality may be scarce; food aid may not reach those in rural areas at all because of poor infrastructure or corrupt officials who have sold the food in their urban areas; in addition Africa's peasants have been politically isolated and economically oppressed by policies which in turn have undermined their capacity to resist and have therefore changed (for the worse) their structural location in the political economy.

### The macro-economic environment: External events and the role of foreign donors.

External forces acting upon the area under debate are not necessarily dominant, but they are important; and their influence is increasing as African economies become more acutely dependent for survival upon external credit.

Several elements have combined to undermine further the basis of African economies: world prices have slumped, world trade has grown slowly, other countries have become more competitive, interest rates have risen. Because of the resulting restriction upon imports, African governments have found themselves caught in an economic trap from which there appears to be no possibility of escape.

Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s African economies declined in almost every measurable way so that by 1989 per capita GDP was about 15 per cent below its level a decade earlier, and per capita income down by over 20 per cent, lower than it was in 1970. This deterioration in economic and social conditions, matched by declining food production, was to a major degree caused by the difficulty African countries experienced in weathering international economic shocks. These created burdens of adjustment. The latter in turn exacerbated domestic policy weaknesses, simultaneously making appropriate policy responses more imperative yet

more difficult to implement.

Africa's vulnerability to macro-economic forces, in a world in which it has no voice and little influence, may be seen as symptom and part of its long-term underdevelopment. In parallel, its lack of flexibility may be looked upon as symptom and part of its extreme backwardness.

With the first oil price rises in 1973-74 it was necessary in the short run to offset the extra foreign exchange demands now placed on African nations, suddenly faced as they were with current account deficits which between 1973 and 1982 averaged 9 per cent of GDP. Africa was able to borrow on the international money market with relative ease, because commercial lenders were awash with money and tended to see the situation as temporary. Low interest rates and easy money encouraged spending, most of it tied to development projects requiring great amounts of foreign exchange. The consequent increase in recurrent expenditures and import spending increased the level of indebtedness just in time for the world-wide recession of 1980-83 which followed upon the oil price shock of 1979.

Africa's weak performance during the first recession made it more vulnerable to the second which, although not as sharp, lasted longer and affected low-income sub-Saharan Africa more severely than it did any other developing region. Tighter monetary and financial controls were instituted by creditors and interest rates were raised; numerous development projects suddenly ceased to be viable; inflation rates jumped; and the rise of the dollar and decline in export commodity prices were further blows to the export sectors, adding to Africa's severe foreign exchange shortage. The results were large external payments deficits and economic dislocations, including a drop in per capita income of up to 25 per cent for many low-income countries.

Why this crisis generally spelled disaster for the exports and balance of payments of African countries was because of the exceptionally high concentration of African exports in primary products. International market conditions have moved against African exports; world demand has waned as substitutes have been found; protectionist pressures in importing countries have mounted; and volatile prices have

induced new competitors to enter the market, devastating the less competitive markets of Africa during periods of downturn. Agricultural protectionism, subsidized prices and the dumping of surpluses are widespread and deeply entrenched in industrialized countries. Thus it is that Africa's agricultural products face import barriers and tariffs abroad, while Western surpluses — often induced by subsidies — are dumped on world markets. The adverse effects are numerous: the export of these surpluses further constrains the surpluses of African farmers; over-supply drives down prices and along with them the export earnings of poor countries; and the depressive effect on world market prices discourages African governments from adopting incentives and free market mechanisms for their own agriculture. In 1986 the World Bank made out a strong case against agricultural protectionism, noting that in 1985 alone this had cost the world about \$64 billion in foregone revenue — more than twice the entire flow of concessional aid from the OECD to the developing countries. Despite this evidence, the political will has not yet emerged among Western countries to effectively roll back the protectionist tide.

During the decade 1970-80, nineteen African countries showed negative rates of export growth and the continent's share of non-fuel trade with developing countries fell by more than half. Between 1980 and 1986 trade earnings fell by 20 per cent. By the early 1980s not only had balance of payments deficits risen to between \$4,6 and \$6,4 billion, but the net flow of direct foreign investment in developing countries had become negligible. The flow of private bank lending had, by 1984, dried up altogether. Overall, financial transfers to Africa have fallen in real terms since about 1979/80, the main reduction having occurred in non-concessional transfers and especially in lending by the private sector. In general terms net transfers had moved away from Africa. Because of the virtual cessation of private lending and rising interest charges on debt, net resource flows declined sharply from \$10 billion in 1980 to \$4,9 billion in 1985. What is worse, aid to agriculture started to decline in 1980, just as debt and drought calamities began to hit Africa, and by 1984 had dropped by 10

per cent.

Faced with declining commodity prices and reduced financial transfers, many African countries have resorted to heavy external borrowing in order to sustain levels of expenditure made possible by earlier booms. The result is Africa's huge and growing indebtedness, now central to its current economic crisis. As late as 1974, the total outstanding debt for Africa's low-income countries was only about \$7,5 billion and the debt-service ratio was only slightly more than 7 per cent. In just one decade, the total foreign debt of these countries almost quadrupled to more than \$27 billion, and the debt-service ratio increased more than four-fold to over 31 per cent.<sup>31</sup>

African debt as we write is around \$230 billion, with debt service at about \$33 billion annually — devouring 40% of the continent's export earnings.<sup>32</sup> Many African nations are in fact paying more to the North than they receive from the North in loans, investments and grants. Most of them can scarcely even cover debt services from their total exports, and thus have to borrow more and more simply to survive, forcing many countries to curtail not only food imports but the materials required to sustain and expand their agricultural output.

Since African countries in the position sketched above are increasingly considered to be credit risks, the adjustments in many of them to the different external shocks (such as the increase in the oil price) have had to be met not through borrowing, but by transmitting the burden much more directly and immediately to the people at large in the form of an enforced decline in their living standards, impacting most strongly upon the level and security of income of those at the bottom of the pile. This has resulted in a sharpening of class differences and, as governments increasingly lean towards greater repression, the further alienation of people from the state. This, like the other consequences we have traced, translates directly into Africa's growing problem of food security.

The debt crisis has also led to a pre-occupation with current finance. Debt relief and development funds are conditional upon cutting budget deficits, upon devaluation, privatization and upon increasing exports to overcome

balance of payments deficits. Such austerity measures, including the elimination of food subsidies, forced upon African states by the IMF as a condition of loans, entail political repercussions few governments are able to face; while the tendency to rely on direct foreign investment has meant that financial decisions are largely made in accordance with the global interests of multinational companies rather than the needs of African peoples. The breaking up of monopolies and privatization, where they do occur, are likely to take forms which preserve much of the monopoly power and thus the capacity of the well-placed to continue extracting a revenue surplus from the process. The current swing in ideology towards an emphasis on private enterprise and the working of the free market has also influenced the shift against aid, just at a time when Africa is furthest away from having its basic needs met.

## Aid

Africa's persistent food crisis has resulted in massive foreign assistance to the continent, with African countries overrun by a great number of donors with a wide variety of views and interests. As official aid agencies have come to play increasingly dominant and influential roles in the determination of national policies, so African leaders in turn are increasingly looking beyond their borders for solutions to their problems. The result has been a multiplicity of uncoordinated aid activities which have tended to weaken any overall coherence in agricultural strategies for Africa.

## Policy dialogue

Donor organizations have lacked understanding of the physical, social and cultural realities of the continent, and shown a tendency to let their own organizational imperatives determine the flow and nature of aid. There has been an excessive desire to shape Africa.

International bodies such as the World Bank and IMF, whose prescription for reducing the food crisis has as its principal ingredient the strengthening of agricultural production, have not been sufficiently aware that increasing the aggregate food supply does not necessarily ensure people regular access to assured supplies of food: the

notion of national self-sufficiency bears no necessary relation to the availability of food to those who need it. And where projects to promote agricultural growth have succeeded, they have often failed to improve the availability of food to those most in need, because the ways adopted to increase production in the aggregate by their very nature often render the problem of food security more acute than ever. A policy aimed at the development of large, highly capitalized farms may very well lead to an increase in food production, but this can only remotely improve the lot of the poverty-stricken masses if that food is produced at competitive prices, and if the benefits are passed on down the line to consumers. But what most often happens is that neither of these occur, and the predictable effect is the loss of land and/or opportunities for wage labour in farming areas. In addition to reducing soil fertility such policies, by pushing peasants and pastoralists off their land, have often tended to exacerbate increasing class differentiation. Every bit as important as growth are the socio-economic relations under which production is increased — who gets to control the process and product, how labour is allocated, by whom, and to what ends.

Aid agencies have also exerted an unfavourable influence in advising countries to diversify their agricultural production without adequately forecasting the decline in prices which must inevitably follow widespread acceptance of their advice. For both agricultural and industrial sectors in most tropical African countries, there is plenty of evidence of a focus on capital-intensive (and thus import-intensive) techniques. These not only consume foreign exchange directly but increase the developing country's vulnerability to shortages of foreign exchange. This certainly reflects the choices made by African governments and by the state-classes controlling them; but it most certainly also reflects external and aid-donor pressures too. Scarcely one of these capital-intensive projects could have been implemented without finance, approval and technical assistance from aid donors. To quote a speaker at the First Pan-African Conference on the Food Crisis in Africa, held in 1988:

...agricultural development in Africa has

become a capital-intensive proposition because of the orientation of African economies towards raw material exports. The World Bank and its ancillaries only provide loans on projects which guarantee quick returns. This pressure tends to force the beneficiaries into industry, construction and other trade and commercial ventures, to the neglect of agriculture....<sup>33</sup>

Donors for example, have tended to provide subsidized loans (and sometimes even grants) for the building of wheat mills, bakeries, dairy plants and abattoirs, on the grounds that these were "developmental" and required for reasons of good health. Where wheat and dairy products have been concerned, the effect has been almost exclusively to increase imports, though the rhetoric surrounding such development projects has nearly always stressed an increase in local production. In almost all instances, however, such projects have had the effect of further increasing demand for the products in question — and this has often led to pressure for further subsidies.

A more recent problem is that of conditionality. Problems of political stability in certain African states have been raised; and there has been a growing related insistence upon tying long-term development aid to sweeping political changes recommended by the donors. (Strong reformers have seen considerable aid diverted their way. Weak reformers or non-reformers have seen their aid cut.)

In summary, although foreign assistance to Africa has entailed the mobilization of millions of dollars in aid, it has been largely ineffectual in increasing domestic food production, frequently misallocating capital in the non-agricultural sector and starving the food sector. While there is no denying that Africa has benefited from aid, there is also no doubt that — be it food aid, project aid or technical assistance — it has also done much harm, directly and indirectly.

## Technological aid

It is widely acknowledged that technology could be a critical factor in transforming African agriculture. But attempts over the past 30 years to introduce technology to African farming have been disappointing. This may be traced to the lack of labour, capital and land resources necessary to use the technology properly, to the remoteness

of many smallholders, to the complexity and variety of prevailing farming systems, and to inappropriate application.

Both African governments and international agencies are (like so many others) guilty of equating "development" with "modernization", and have therefore striven to introduce methods, equipment and organization from more "advanced" countries. Many of these techniques have proved not only unviable and wasteful of foreign exchange, but have compounded the social problems of underdevelopment by accentuating inequality and further impoverishing the weakest sections of the rural population. Although there is increasing recognition by aid agencies of this, such projects continue to be funded. Increased agricultural productivity obtained by expensive, newly-acquired materials and equipment has indeed reduced labour requirements for a given level of production. Mechanization has also reduced labour requirements per hectare. All this has resulted in labour being driven out from rural to urban areas. At the same time, advances in industrial technology have vastly reduced the capacity of industry to absorb this labour fleeing agriculture — there is no longer any world to migrate to. There is a further point here. Modern methods, generally superior in the conditions for which they were developed, have not always been successful in Africa because the infrastructure and back-up services upon which they depend are often lacking (or cost so much to provide that they have diverted resources from other, more important areas). They also tend to enhance efficiency rather than resilience. Yet in Africa's fickle climate the latter is the more important. There is abundant evidence that modern crops and production techniques tend to concentrate resources both geographically and socially, and that there is a clear tendency for programmes of agricultural modernization to concentrate control of resources among the wealthier farmers (and non-farmers) in the continent's most climatically favoured areas. What is worse, the high cost of many of these projects has meant that foreign exchange-earning export crops must take the place of staple food crops to pay for construction costs — leaving the local people hungrier than before.<sup>34</sup> Technological imports have not always been suitable in practice for

other reasons, partly because they require both technical and political skills lacking in Africa. The choice of donor projects, particularly in the 1970s, increased the demand for scarce human, institutional, and technological resources without helping commensurately to increase their supply. And because technical packages do not correspond with the managerial and technical needs of African agriculture, donors justify the need to use their own consultants. As a result there is almost no transfer of technical know-how, thereby perpetuating and increasing Africa's dependence upon donors.

Technical advancements such as irrigation have been linked to the spread of waterborne diseases and salinization of the soils. The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned that bilharzia is spreading as a result of new irrigation schemes and water management projects that were ill-conceived and ill-planned. Dams have also increased the incidence of malaria. The Aswan Dam in Egypt has been held responsible for the spread of bilharzia, the Nile's increased salinity, increased erosion along the river's banks, destruction of Egypt's sardine fishery and the displacement of thousands of people. The salinization of irrigated lands is largely a result of poor management practices, and can be prevented. In other technical areas, chemicals are not widely understood, while high-yielding seeds perform no better than the traditional seeds they replace if not fertilized and correctly cultivated. Neither are other modern agricultural methods, though generally superior in terms of yield and output, always beneficial in Africa — techniques such as monocropping developed for large capitalist farms may not be suitable for small peasant holdings, yielding as they do short-run profits but at the expense of long-run damage to the soil.

Africa's research infrastructure, including extension services, is also limited. Rather than focus on the development of traditional crop varieties important to Africa, agricultural research has tended to concentrate on cash crops. It has neglected the introduction of drought-resistant varieties of maize or sorghum in the semi-arid regions of North Africa. Many of the new technologies have proved inappropriate for low-resource farmers. Simple intermediate technologies have

been given insufficient attention. In general it may be said that research infrastructure, including extension services, is so limited that in many of the poorest countries it lacks, as it were, the critical mass to enable it to make it economically viable.

### Food aid

Food aid constitutes a significant and increasing sub-category of official aid. This is in part a consequence of the tendency of advanced capitalist countries to subsidize agricultural production, thereby necessitating the aggressive pursuit of export promotion, (sometimes by offering food aid) to rid themselves of surpluses. In fact the quantity of food aid on offer is often determined more by the level of surpluses, and their current prices on world markets, than by the severity of the need.

Although there are few examples of massive failures, there are also few examples of food aid making a major and sustained positive impact. Plagued by complexities and paradoxes, the main objection to food aid is that it has provided governments with easy escape routes rather than adequate agricultural policies: they can keep food prices to their urban populations low without improving the local food purchasing network. It has also been associated with increased food imports because it generates a dependence upon imported foodstuffs — often of sorts that cannot be produced domestically. Arguments against food aid have also pointed to its constituting a disincentive to local producers. Food surpluses given or sold at concessionary rates to governments tend to depress local farm prices and local production, while at the same time driving local foods "out of fashion" in the cities, a situation that governments with their perennial foreign exchange problems can ill afford. In addition there is the more insidious danger of food aid producing a state of mind in the recipient population in which they see themselves as dependent or lose any desire to be self-reliant.

### Conclusion

While about 30 per cent of the total land area of Africa is potentially cultivable, on a regional basis there is much variation: a few countries will never be able to grow sufficient food

to support their populations; some can afford imports to make good their food deficits; others cannot, and will therefore always be dependent upon food aid unless they receive special donor assistance to reshape their agriculture and their economies.<sup>35</sup> Nevertheless, the one common solution to Africa's problems is that the continent's agricultural potential must be fully realized if further and continuing disasters are to be avoided. There are ways in which production could be increased by more than 3 per cent a year — a growth sufficient (in the long term) to halt and reverse the declining levels of per capita agricultural production in many, though not all, countries.

The task of putting an end to hunger in Africa, however, is not only that of raising food production; it is inextricably linked with the need to eradicate the scourge of poverty. Severe economic deterioration, coupled with the increased evidence of a widespread degradation of the environment and natural resource base upon which the economies of African countries so largely depend, is forcing a re-examination of development strategies. New approaches are needed that seek to build upon existing resources and the productive and innovative potential of the people. Achieving sustainable development means eliminating hunger on a permanent basis — that is, ensuring that the entire population has access to the food supplies they require to meet at least their minimum requirements for good health and nutrition. A clear and focused commitment to eradicating hunger through sustainable food security would contribute more than any other single thing to the realization of the broader objectives of development.

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# Agricultural development in the developing areas of Southern Africa

*Professor T J Bembridge, Head of the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development at the University of Fort Hare, looks at the current state of agriculture in the developing areas of Southern Africa and suggests ways to achieve improved productivity.*

## Introduction

The characteristics of agricultural development in Southern Africa are, for the African continent, unique. On one hand there is a progressive commercial farming sector of some 62 000 farmers with modern infrastructure and internationally recognized research stations. On the other, South Africa has within its borders a farming sector of some 1.27 million small-scale landholders who experience most of the problems typically met in the Third World and who, in the majority of cases, do not even produce enough to feed themselves. One difference, we may remark, between South Africa and most First World countries is that the latter can propose aid and solutions to Africa's problems from a distance, whereas South Africa has to solve its problems from within.<sup>1</sup>

The development of agriculture in the developing areas of Southern Africa may conveniently be traced back to the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910. But it was not until 1929, sixty years ago, that agricultural development in these areas was put on an organized basis. Considerable areas of land were incorporated into these territories by the Land and Trust Act of 1936. More land has since been incorporated. Real progress, however, started some thirty years ago, in 1959, a year which saw the start of an intensive, planned

programme of soil and water conservation undertakings and other rural infrastructural development. By 1972, approximately 50 per cent of the areas we are discussing had been planned in terms of delineating arable land, setting up rotational grazing schemes and allocating house and garden plots in defined areas. The object was to stabilize and develop agriculture. These early efforts at infrastructural development still provide the basis for today's much needed new strategies for the transformation of this small-scale agriculture.

The period after 1972 has been characterized by the creation of self-governing national states (four of which later became independent). This has resulted in the transfer of responsibility to Departments of Agriculture in each of these ten states.

This article discusses present agricultural development trends and the development potential of Southern Africa's agriculture. It also suggests possible interventions, and solutions to a complex array of problems. One notable problem in any assessment of agricultural production in the less developed areas of Southern Africa is the relative lack of reliable data for many demographic, socio-economic and agricultural parameters.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, on the information available, it is possible to assess general trends.

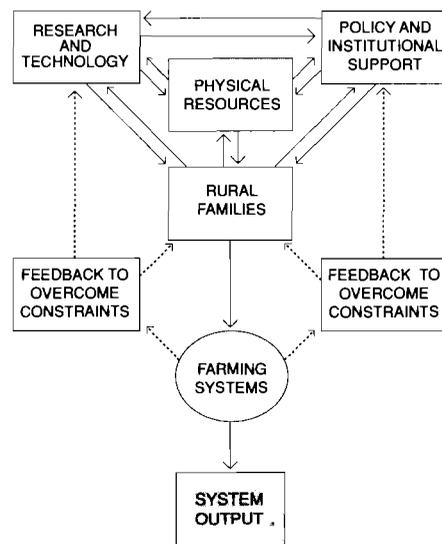


Figure 1 Interrelationships between changes in physical resources, human potential, technology, institutions, farming systems and agricultural output

## A systems approach

The problems of under-development are generally interrelated. It seems logical, therefore, to adopt a systems approach in reviewing agricultural development in the developing areas of Southern Africa.

Briefly, our approach identifies four interacting forces which, in combination, determine the type of farming

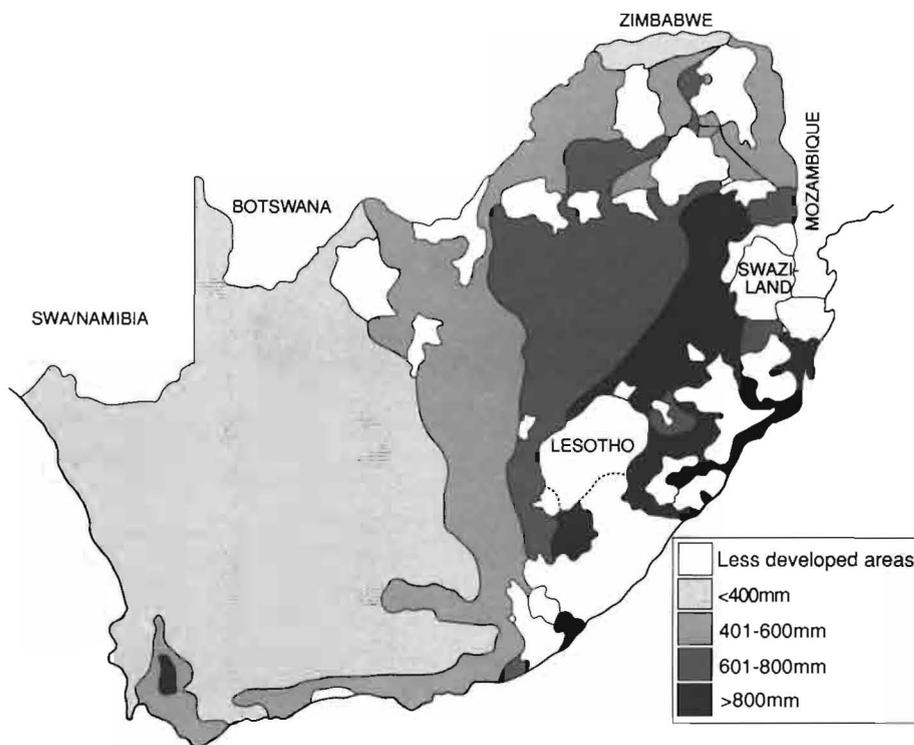


Figure 2. Mean annual precipitation zones showing less developed areas (After Tapson, 1985)

system practised in a given agro-ecological area. Firstly there are the physical resources and environment. These determine the type of agriculture which can be practised, the area's potential, and the degree to which use can be made of area resources. Secondly, there is the institutional framework within which agricultural development takes place. Thirdly, the application of technology determines how well natural resources are utilized for increasing production and improving the quality of rural life. Lastly, there are those factors concerned with the area's human potential which must be known if governments and development agencies are successfully to bring about change. It is the interaction of these four subsystems which determines output and production levels, and which brings about a general improvement in the quality of life in rural areas. Natural resources, and human and agricultural development factors may, of course, vary greatly from one area to another.

### Physical and human resources

The less developed areas of Southern Africa constitute some 16,72 million

hectares (ha) of grazing and arable land, comprising 27 separate blocks (Figure 2), of which approximately 76 per cent enjoys a rainfall greater than 500 mm and therefore has good potential for dryland agriculture.

The de facto population of these less developed areas of Southern Africa is estimated at more than 14 million (Table 1) or about 45 per cent of the

total population of Southern Africa,<sup>3</sup> approximately 90 per cent of this number living in the rural areas. The average family comprises approximately six persons. Working on these figures, it can be calculated that the arable land available per family is approximately one hectare (Table 1) — more than sufficient, on the basis of annual food requirements of 0,8-1,2 tonnes per family to cater for the subsistence needs of the population.<sup>4</sup> Note that the data in Table 1 conceal the fact that approximately 50 per cent of rural households do not have access to land. Families with land rights have therefore, on average, access to roughly 2 ha of arable land. Much of this arable land is either under-utilized or in some cases not used at all. A good deal of it shows varying degrees of soil erosion.

Only 14 per cent of the areas under discussion are suitable for arable production (Table 1). Livestock is a major resource and component of agricultural production; and it always will be approximately 84 per cent of the land can be used only for grazing. In general, there is gross over-stocking, with deterioration taking place in much of the grazing.<sup>5</sup> Although there is a maldistribution of land in South Africa, resource endowment is not a constraint to agricultural development.

### Institutional support

Institutional factors include planning authorities, agricultural policy, infrastructure, prices, marketing, research,

Table 1. POPULATION AND ARABLE LAND DISTRIBUTION IN THE INDEPENDENT AND NATIONAL STATES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA IN 1986

State	Population ('000)	Area (000 HA)	Arable land ('000 HA)	Arable land (%)	Arable land per household
Transkei	3 000	4 200	754	17,9	1,5
Bophuthatswana	1 721	4 050	400	9,9	1,4
Venda	460	638	65	9,5	0,8
Ciskei	750	776	75	9,7	0,6
Gazankulu	620	656	65	9,9	0,6
KaNgwane	448	382	36	9,4	0,5
KwaNdebele	236	197	24	12,2	0,5
KwaZulu	4 382	310	565	18,2	0,8
Lebowa	2 157	218	347	15,9	1,0
Qwa Qwa	209	65	7	10,8	0,2
TOTAL	14 063	16 299	2 338	14,3	1,0

**Table 2. TYPICAL CONTRASTS IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT BETWEEN THE COMMERCIAL AND SMALL-SCALE FARMING SECTOR IN SOUTHERN AFRICA**

Factor	Commercial farming	Small-scale farming sector
Land tenure	Usually freehold, large enough to make a living	Communal land rights uneconomic land allocations
Access to farm inputs and impliments	Good and reliable	Poor and unreliable
Source of seeds	Purchased, high quality	Poor access, usually own seeds
Access to credit	Good access	Poor access, seasonal cash shortages
Debt load	High proportion with debt load	Low debt load
Labour	Hired labour, few constraints	Usually family labour, seasonal constraints
Prices	Often lower than small-scale for inputs and higher for outputs	Higher than commercial for inputs and lower for outputs
Markets	Well organized	General lack of market outlets
Priority for food production	Low	High
Research	Well organized and appropriate	Practically non existant often inappropriate
Extension services	Public and private sector, easily accessible	Poor access, little relevant material
Farmer organisations	Strong farmer associations, cooperatives and committees with political influence	Generally lacking, with little political influence

low level of debt. Except for sugar, and estate crops such as tea and sisal, marketing arrangements for the products of the small-scale farmers are still inadequate and unsatisfactory.

Unlike the commercial farming sector, which is backed by an influential farmer's union, by cooperatives, by soil conservation committees and other farmer interest groups, the small-scale farmer (with few exceptions) generally lacks effective local and higher level organizations to provide leadership and be the vehicle of participation in agricultural development and the bringing to bear of political influence.

Today, no more than 200 of the estimated total of more than 10 000 agricultural graduates in Southern Africa are, directly or indirectly, involved in agricultural development in the less developed areas. This represents not only an imbalance in intellectual investment in agricultural development, but also a major practical constraint. *Table 3* presents an unsatisfactory situation in terms of graduate specialists and diploma-level extension workers. It is generally held that in less developed countries the aim should be one field extension worker per 500 families.<sup>6</sup> Of even greater concern is that evaluation studies show that field-level staff in particular lack the necessary knowledge,

education and extension, availability of farming inputs and other institutional aspects, such as land tenure. All these influence farming systems and agricultural production in terms of results and output.

Much of the success of commercial farming in Southern African can be attributed to the sort of institutional support and services mentioned above. Although the situation may vary from one state to another, the small-scale farmer finds himself without the institutional supporting services necessary for agricultural development (*Table 2*).

Many small-scale farmers indeed do not even have easy access to basic farm implements or inputs such as seed, insecticides and fertilizer. Although limited credit has been made available through government and private sector agencies, the procedural requirements and problems of collateral security deter those needing help. It follows that small-scale farmers have a

**Table 3. PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL STAFF EMPLOYED, VACANCIES AND PERCEIVED FUTURE STAFF REQUIREMENTS IN THE INDEPENDENT AND NATIONAL STATES OF SOUTH AFRICA IN 1986**

State	Agricultural graduates		Veterinarians		Diplomates		Future Requirements		Ratio of landowner to extension workers*
	No.	Vac.	No.	Vac.	No.	Vac.	Grad.	Dip.	
Transkei	18	30	16	6	771	233	48	714	172
Bophuthatswana	4	6	4	-	238	6	15	6	1 215
Venda	4	10	-	1	131	76	20	1 100	547
Ciskei	17	8	1	6	118	231	4	143	1 302
Gazankulu	11	14	3	2	131	116	5	115	875
KwaNgwane	12	15	1	1	31	100	18	110	2 333
KwaNdebele	3	3	1	-	26	59	6	92	2 166
KwaZulu	31	-	3	3	535	8	60	732	1 308
Lebowa	11	14	7	1	454	84	12	216	868
Qwa Qwa	-	-	-	-	24	-	12	40	2 488
TOTAL	111	100	36	20	2 459	922	191	3 277	1 002

\*Assumed 50% of families have land rights - probably an underestimate. Vac. = vacant. (source: Department of Agriculture)

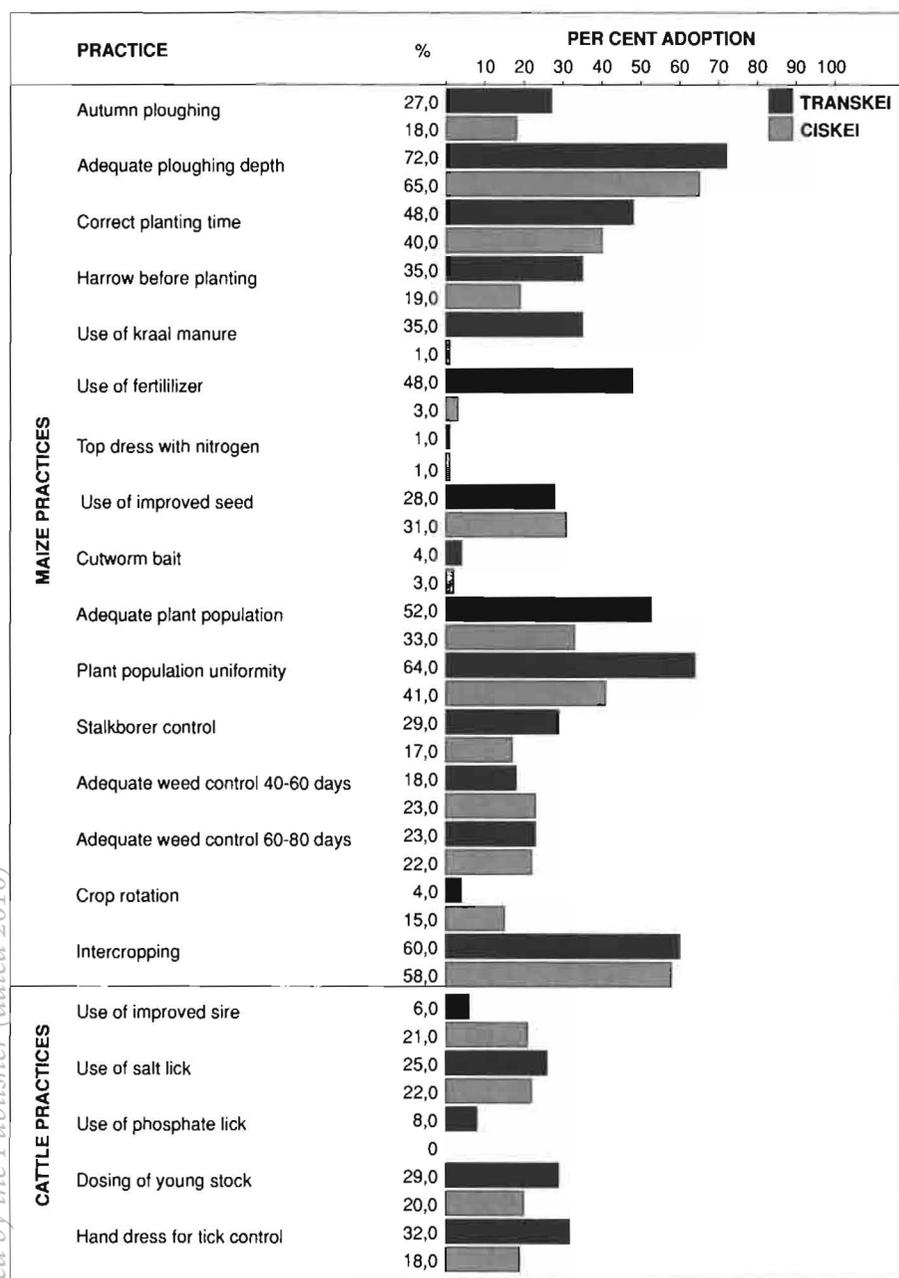


Figure 3. Adoption of crop and livestock practices in Transkei and Ciskei

skills and motivation to carry out their task effectively.<sup>7</sup> There are thus inadequate links between extension services, research and farmers. Apart from two agricultural universities, there are no research stations in the less developed areas; and there is a general lack of trained scientists overall (Table 3).

## Technology

There are many shortcomings in the relations between research and extension services, between these and small-scale farmers, and also in the provision

of other essential back-up services. Southern African states are largely dependent upon research carried out in the commercial farming sector; and the technology recommended by extension officers is not always appropriate to the circumstances of the small-scale farmer. There is overwhelming evidence that because the relative production factors and commodity prices differ so greatly in small-scale agriculture from those in the commercial sector, optimal technology in the commercial farming sense is not optimal in less developed agriculture.

Figure 3 shows the low overall percentage of farmers adopting recommended maize and cattle practices in typical mixed farming areas of Ciskei and Transkei.<sup>8</sup> The practices evaluated had been recommended by extension officers over the previous 15-20 years, ensuring that there was reasonable time for each innovation to pass through the adoption process. Studies in other areas reveal a similar situation. The low rate of adoption of recommended farming practices may be largely ascribed to the fact that generalized recommendations were designed for more progressive farmers and were not appropriate for resource-poor farmers. Data in Figure 3 hide the fact that there were deficiencies in how these recommendations were made use of in practice.<sup>9</sup>

In general, the majority of farmers were aware of new practices, but often did not have a real grasp of the proper application of the new thinking. Neither did they have any clear understanding of the fact that all such practices are not only interrelated, but interrelated in a definite pattern and work in a planned direction. This explains why all-inclusive package programmes have been unsuccessful.<sup>10</sup>

## The human potential

The main features of the demographic profile in rural areas are a high population growth ( $\pm 2,8$  per cent), a very unequal age/sex distribution in the productive age groups (20-50 years), and a high dependency ratio. Farming and other activities are therefore left increasingly to women, old men and children, the adults generally having low levels of education and literacy ( $\pm 33$  per cent).<sup>11</sup> At least one-third of the economically active population here are employed in the agricultural sector.<sup>12</sup> Studies have shown that lack of farming knowledge and poor managerial ability are principal causes of low rates of adoption of sound farming practices and the low levels of production found consequently.<sup>13</sup>

Despite the undoubted modernization which has taken place, especially in improved housing, household appliances and rural infrastructure, there is evidence that in terms of income distribution and levels of nutrition, approximately 60 per cent of rural families are living in varying degrees

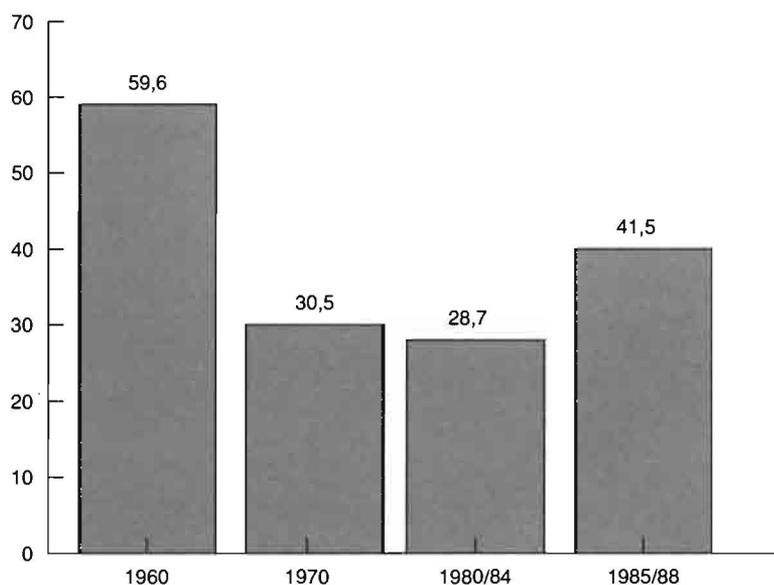


Figure 4. Annual per capita grain production (kg) in the less developed areas of Southern Africa, 1960-88

Sources: 1 Department of Statistics  
2 Development Bank of Southern Africa

of poverty.<sup>14</sup> For example, a recent study in Transkei showed that approximately one-third of rural families had below recommended minimum energy intakes.<sup>15</sup> On average, 80-90 per cent of family income is derived from earnings in the urban sector and pensions, a high percentage of this income being spent on food and household needs. Most rural families are therefore consumers, and not producers, of food.

In terms of economic differences, resources, personal characteristics, values, concerns and interest, there are basically four categories of household in the rural areas under discussion:<sup>16</sup>

- market-oriented commercial farmers who are making a living from farming, comprising  $\pm$  3 078 households (0,2 per cent);
- progressive small-scale landholders,  $\pm$  238 083 households (13 per cent), who adopt some recommended technology and who sell some produce and/or livestock, but usually do not produce adequate food for their families. This category includes farmers on irrigation or similar projects;
- small-scale landholders with below subsistence production levels who do not usually sell any crops or livestock, comprising  $\pm$  1 028 252 households (56 per cent); and

- resource poor non-landholders, comprising  $\pm$  561 983 households (31 per cent) who have no arable land or large stock.

Extension services have in general concentrated on the more progressive farmers in category (b) above. Category (a) farmers usually seek advice from corporations, the private sector and other commercial farmers.

## Agricultural production

Although the developing areas account for 14 per cent of the total land, collectively they produce only 6 per cent of the gross value of agricultural production,<sup>17</sup> probably not more than 10 per cent of which reaches the market.

### Crop production

Maize accounts for approximately 89 per cent of the output of food grains, sorghum almost exclusively making up the balance. Small amounts of wheat, beans, groundnuts, pumpkins and millet are grown, often inter-planted with maize.

Available data show that on average the developing areas produce approximately 30 per cent of their grain requirements. Figure 4 shows a recent increase in per capita grain production. This can largely be attributed to irrigation schemes, and to large dryland

CROP	YIELD TONNES PER HA										YIELD DISPARITY %	ESTIMATED POTENTIAL INCREASE %
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Dryland maize	[Bar chart showing yield range from 0.78 to 2.10]										169,0	47,6
	[Bar chart showing yield range from 0.78 to 2.10]											
Irrigated maize	[Bar chart showing yield range from 3.58 to 5.5]										54,0	101,1
	[Bar chart showing yield range from 3.58 to 5.5]											
Sorghum	[Bar chart showing yield range from 1.50 to 8.0]										233,0	50,0
	[Bar chart showing yield range from 1.50 to 8.0]											
Ground nuts	[Bar chart showing yield range from 0.56 to 0.80]										61,0	75,0
	[Bar chart showing yield range from 0.56 to 0.80]											
Sugar cane	[Bar chart showing yield range from 3.00 to 5.5]										66,7	20,0
	[Bar chart showing yield range from 3.00 to 5.5]											

Figure 5. Estimated yield per ha and yield potential for commercial farming and less developed areas of Southern Africa.

Sources: 1 Department of Agriculture and Water Supply  
2 SA Sugar Association  
3 Statistical data from TVBC Countries and national states agricultural departments

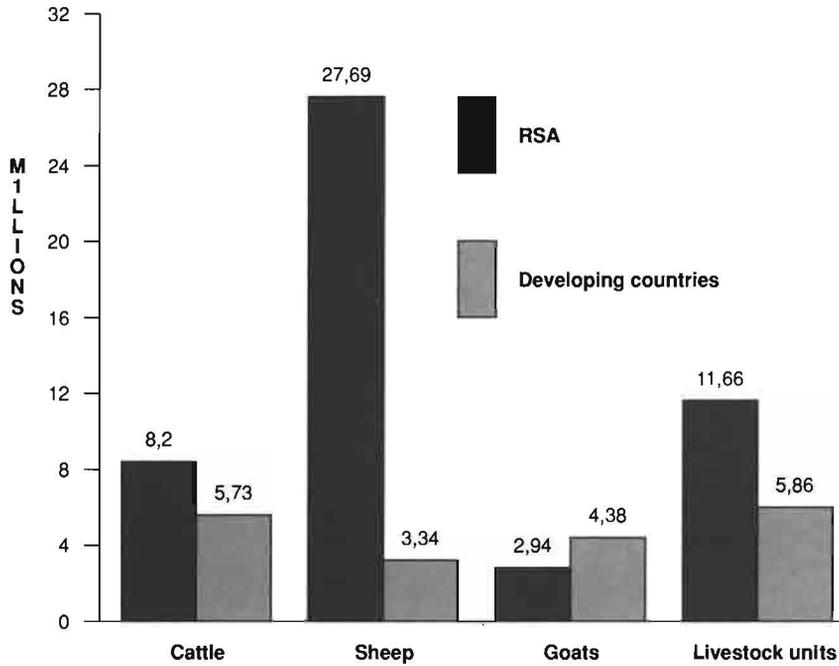


Figure 6. Relative importance of livestock in the commercial and developing areas of Southern Africa, 1987/88

Sources: 1 RSA Meat and Livestock Statistics  
2 Development Bank of Southern Africa

their own viable farming units. So far, however, relatively few have benefited by the change.

**Livestock production**

The relative importance and potential of livestock production in the commercial and developing areas of Southern Africa is illustrated by the fact that 41 per cent of the cattle, 60 per cent of the goats and 11 per cent of the sheep are to be found in the developing areas (Figure 6). Livestock is thus a major resource and component of the developing areas' agricultural production. Yet it contributes comparatively little to their cash economy.

The problem of over-stocking in communal grazing areas is illustrated by the fact that the developing areas, which comprise 14 per cent of the agricultural land support no less than one-third of the total livestock units in Southern Africa (Figure 6). This has led successively to a deterioration in the environment, low levels of animal nutrition and thereafter low levels of animal production. This is illustrated in Figure 7. Because of the lack of control of grazing areas, owners tend to maximize the number of their animals, especially in seasons of good rainfall. During years of poor rainfall years the pressure of the increased numbers of livestock results in a rapid deterioration of grazing and in high mortality rates: a great loss to livestock owners (Figure 7). Because of the importance of the various social, spiritual and economic roles played by livestock in such a society, however, livestock numbers tend to

30 tonnes per hectare is still low when compared with about 50 tonnes from commercial growers.

In recent years there has been considerable progress in project development of various cash crops, including cotton, sisal, maize, subtropical fruit, tea, citrus, coffee and other crops. A start has been made with privatization in the form of encouraging farmers with entrepreneurial ability to manage

maize projects run by development corporations. Farm production per unit is the most important expression of farming efficiency. Figure 5 shows the low average crop yields of small-scale farmers in Southern Africa, when compared with those of the commercial farming sector. In the author's view, the figures for developing areas should be regarded with some caution. For maize, the average yields are probably an over-estimate.

A general conclusion from grain production data, using South African commercial farming yields as a yardstick, is that the developing areas are probably producing something like one-third of their potential only (Figure 5): the inherent potential for increased dryland maize production is of the order of 300 per cent.

As has been shown earlier in this article, low maize yields are caused firstly by biological constraints and secondly by socio-economic and other constraints which prevent farmers from making use of improved technology.

Sugar is the most important cash crop grown by some 20 000 small-scale farmers in Natal. Gross income from sugar-cane has increased significantly in recent years.<sup>18</sup> The average yield of

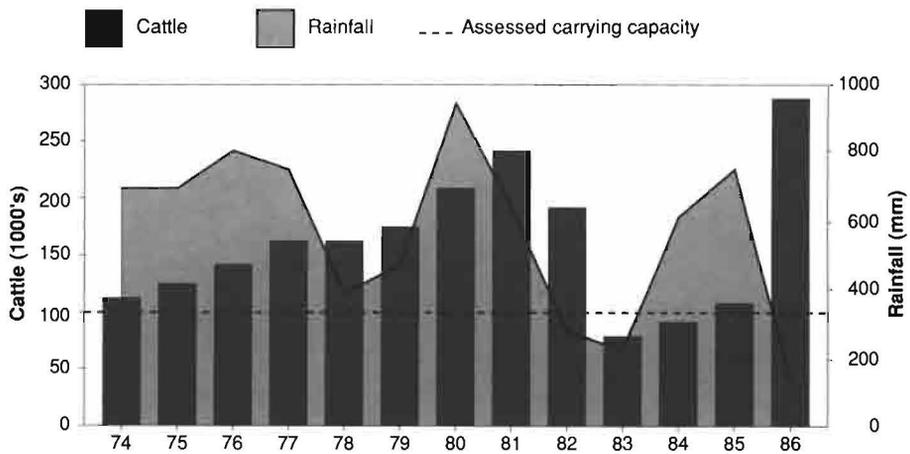


Figure 7. Cattle numbers (Gazankulu) vs. Rainfall, 1974-1986

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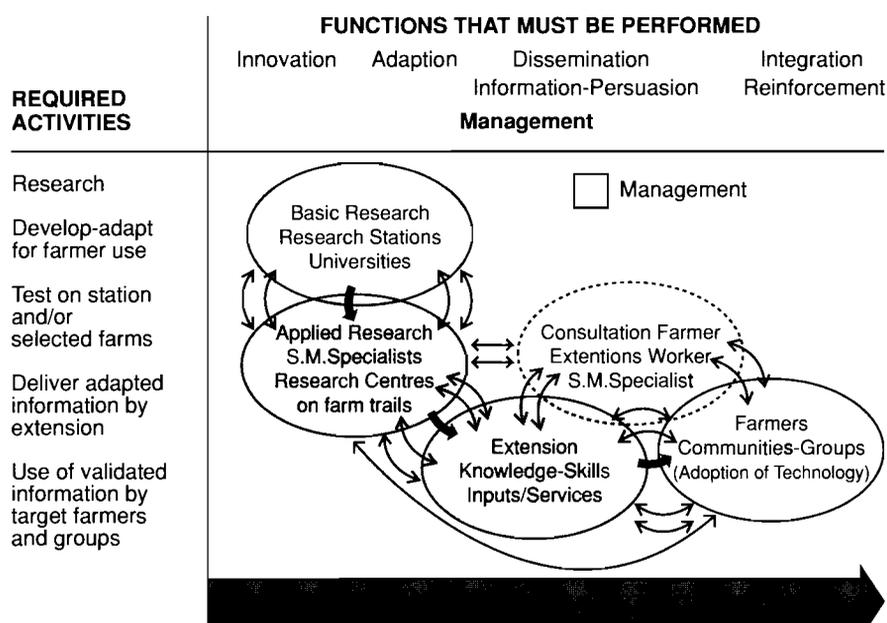


Figure 8. Farming information supply system

Source: Lionberger, 1986

rather than a bureaucratically rational strategy.

The starting point of agricultural development is where people are now and what they feel about their needs. It thus makes sense that initially the emphasis should be on participatory projects aimed at fulfilling felt (and unmet) basic needs. These may include non-agricultural needs such as clean domestic water supplies, fuel, basic nutrition, adult education, and pilot agricultural development programmes such as vegetable gardens and the keeping of small stock. Different programmes will be necessary for different target groups depending upon their interests.

For those families interested in agriculture and with some resources, the flow and reliability of physical production requirements, the credit facilities to buy them and the provision of suitable marketing outlets at realistic prices must all be improved.

There is a dire need for a common agricultural policy in Southern Africa. In the long term, policies need to consider land reform and the privatization of development projects for farmers with the entrepreneurial ability to earn a good living from the land.

One of the greatest challenges facing agricultural development planners and managers is the development and management of communal grazing areas. The solution lies in mobilizing local communities, initially on a pilot basis, to develop, manage and control clearly defined areas for the economic benefit of participants. This must be done with the aid of government finance for infrastructural development and with the guidance of local experts. Grazing rights will have to be negotiable.

The need to upgrade extension services and reinforce adaptive research in order to develop suitable technologies for different target groups has already been highlighted. What is needed is a well managed technology generating system (Figure 8). Knowledge generation needs to be a team effort involving professionals from various disciplines who will study and determine the farming systems and socio-economic conditions in a given agro-ecological area. Based on their analysis of such data, valid recommendations concerning agricultural technology, needs and practices can be developed, then validated on a trial basis

build up again when the drought ends — and the grazing deterioration cycle continues.<sup>19</sup>

The levels of productivity of cattle in both meat and milk are far below their potential if measured by standards in the commercial farming sector. For example, recent studies have shown the percentage of calves weaned to cows mated at between 30 and 40 per cent<sup>20</sup> compared to 55 per cent for commercial farmers. A herd mortality of between 8 and 17 per cent compares poorly with 3 per cent for commercial farmers.<sup>21</sup> The average off-take in terms of sales varies between 3.5 and 7 per cent compared to the normal commercial farming off-take of about 20 per cent.<sup>22</sup> These low levels of efficiency can be attributed to the small size of herds and to the owners' lack of knowledge and management skills, as well as to the deterioration in the environment and poor nutrition already noted.

A similar situation pertains with sheep, goats, pigs and poultry.<sup>23</sup>

## Conclusion

There is a wide gap between present and potential levels of agricultural production. Resource endowment is not in itself a constraint upon agricultural development. The problems lie in a

lack of trained manpower for development, in a lack of resources and farming inputs, knowledge and skills, available technology, institutional support, leadership and suitable local farmer organizations. Good progress has been made in infrastructural development as a sound basis for future planning.

There is evidence from countries such as Malawi, Kenya and Zimbabwe, as well as from examples in Southern Africa, that there are small-scale farmers who will respond, often quite dramatically, if given the necessary resources, security and institutional support. The future of agriculture in the developing areas of Southern Africa is thus dependent upon a commitment to, and implementation of, suitable strategies by politicians and their professional advisors. Creating the right environment for agricultural development is a first priority.

Successful agricultural development depends upon creating strong leadership and village-level organizations which will cooperate with central institutions. Provision also needs to be made for the involvement of women in planning and implementing agricultural development programmes. Any institutional strategy must recognize prevailing political structures and influences, and thus seek the politically feasible

on experimental stations and/or selected farms. Their acceptability can be tested with selected farmers in villages. Finally, extension workers, working with interest groups, can facilitate through effective communication the transfer of such tested, acceptable technology to different groups of farmers.

Manpower resources in the developing areas are insufficient in numbers, poorly trained and motivated. The long-term solution lies obviously in accelerated training and incentives. In the meantime, it will be necessary to upgrade the present staff, particularly in developing leadership and management skills, as well as in practical farming knowledge and skills.

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# Black artists, white patrons: The cross-cultural art market in urban South Africa

*In the following two articles Professor Elizabeth Rankin, of the Department of the History of Art, University of the Witwatersrand, considers the complexities of the interaction between South African black artists and their white patrons.*

This article is based on the premise that the concept of fine art was a white import to black Africa.<sup>1</sup> Objects of great skill and beauty have of course been produced for many centuries, works fulfilling practical or symbolic functions integral to African social structures, but a concept of art divorced from specific social needs, especially easel painting produced as a commodity to be bought and sold on the open market, had no place in black tradition.

The foreign nature of commodified art is a factor which, together with socio-economic circumstances, helps to explain why black art of this type has rarely found black patrons, but is sold almost entirely in a white market in South Africa.<sup>2</sup> While I am not sure that one can or should distinguish black art as a category on the grounds of unique innate characteristics, it is certainly differentiated from other art in South Africa by the fact that its processes of production and reception occur in two different arenas of class and culture, arenas that have by and large been kept apart and distinct from each other by the policy of separate development imposed by a minority white government.

Because fine art was thought of as part of the high culture of the dominant white rulers of South Africa, until relatively recently no formal educational provision was made to offer art to



Gerhard Bhengu: *Bearded Beau*. Sepia, 38 x 30 cm. De Beers Centenary Art Gallery, University of Fort Hare, (reproduced with permission of the University of Fort Hare).

blacks, and few black children had access to art materials in their home environment. The earliest black painters

were therefore largely self-taught, but their development was often initiated and nurtured by white mentors. Inevitably these well-intentioned sponsors tended to impose their concept of what black art should be like. A good example is provided by the highly detailed studies of Zulu types by **Gerard Bhengu**, who was born in Natal in 1910. Bhengu was given his first watercolour paints in 1920 by a school inspector, who recognized talent in his unauthorized schoolbook sketches, and was further assisted by a medical doctor who showed him prints of the old masters and also encouraged him to draw from life. White sponsors continued to help him at various times by providing funds, materials and commissions. The popular appeal of Bhengu's work, in its combination of a veristic style with what was to white admirers "exotic" subject matter, is confirmed by the publication of a "coffee-table" book of his Zulu images in South Africa in 1965.<sup>3</sup>

In contrast, **Gerard Sekoto**, who was born in the Transvaal in 1913, developed a more independent style. He began making art seriously only in 1933 while training as a teacher in Pietersburg,<sup>4</sup> and then during his first teaching job at the Khaiso Anglican boarding school, when he was greatly encouraged by his friends and fellow teachers, Louis Makenna, Nimrod

Ndebele and the sculptor Ernest Mancoba. In 1938 he moved to Johannesburg to devote himself to art: the community life of black urban centres, like Sophiatown and, later, District Six in Cape Town, provided him with his chief subject matter, which he portrayed in a simplified, vivid style. Sekoto was befriended by a number of whites who were interested in his work, but none of them seems to have attempted to impose any aesthetic preconceptions on his art, but to have restricted assistance to more practical matters. The artist Judith Gluckman, for example, showed Sekoto how to use oil paints, while Brother Roger of St Peter's School in Rosettenville, Johannesburg, who provided formal art classes for blacks, gave him general encouragement and introduced him to the Gainsborough Galleries, where in 1939 Sekoto participated in the first of a series of successful exhibitions. His work sold well, most commonly to whites of a liberal disposition, often from the Jewish community, and he also rapidly received professional recognition when his work was included in South African Academy exhibitions from 1939, and he was invited to exhibit with the Cape-based New Group in the 1940s. His success seems to have been dependent on two rather different factors — the undoubted quality of his paintings and his unique position as the first recognized professional black artist in South Africa. Yet Sekoto seems to have had little interest in promoting this uniqueness, but to have cherished a Western concept of aesthetic value, in that he set his sights on going to Paris, which he thought of as the centre of great art. As soon as he had raised enough money from exhibitions, he set out in 1947 for France, where he has remained ever since, sometimes painting Parisian scenes, but also drawing on his memories of South African life.<sup>5</sup>

It seems unfortunate that Sekoto's voluntary exile has meant that he has had little direct influence on black artists in South Africa, for role models are vital in encouraging new developments in art from within a community. Such a role seems to have been played by **John Koenakeefe Mohl** (1903-85), who had a formal training at the Windhoek School of Art, and apparently also spent some years in Düsseldorf in Germany. He was a highly competent



Sydney Kumalo: *Woman Combing Hair*. c 1975 Bronze, Height 34,5cm. Johannesburg Art Gallery, (reproduced with permission of the Johannesburg Art Gallery).

painter who participated in South African Academy exhibitions in the 1940s, and demonstrated, in the words of Tim Couzens,

... the idea that black artists can prove to the world in general or white South Africans in particular that black artists are capable of anything other artists can do, at the same time as having a didactic role as regards blacks themselves.<sup>6</sup>

Mohl set up the first art studio for blacks in Sophiatown in the 1940s; he was also a founder member of the Artists' Market Association, established in the 1960s to organize regular outdoor exhibitions, dubbed "Artists in the Sun". Although the works of white artists predominate, these exhibitions have continuously provided a useful outlet for black art, without recourse to expensive commercial galleries, but again to a white clientele.

As recently as the 1970s, Mohl

assisted one of the few black women artists in South Africa, **Helen Sebidi** (born 1943), to develop a career in painting. Helen Sebidi first became aware of art as the domestic servant of an amateur artist who gave her her first box of paints. She later approached Mohl, who offered criticism of her work and helped her to market her small paintings of rural scenes at "Artists in the Sun"; there a white buyer encouraged her to attempt the large oil paintings which have led to Helen Sebidi's wider recognition in the 1980s, when she embarked on more experimental work, recently leading to the Standard Bank Young Artists Award for 1989.

While an informal process of assistance and interaction with fellow artists in the black community, together with the intervention of interested white artists and patrons, has remained characteristic of black art production, other support structures emerged from the 1950s. In 1951 a small number of black artists in Johannesburg formed an art group within the Chiawelo Social Centre. This initiative was greatly extended the following year when the white artist Cecil Skotnes established an art centre, after being appointed cultural officer at the black recreation hall in Polly Street, Johannesburg, by the City Council's Committee for Non-European Adult Education. The Polly Street Centre, as it was called, became well-known and attracted potential black artists in large numbers throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s, when the group was moved to the Jubilee Social Centre. As well as offering art classes, Skotnes organized commissions and exhibitions which gradually developed a viable market for black art.

One of the best known of the early Polly Street students, **Sydney Kumalo** (1935-1988), was launched on his career by a commission that Skotnes arranged with Bishop van Welsen for the ceiling decorations of the Catholic church of St Peter Claver in Kroonstad, followed by a relief series of the Stations of the Cross for the same church. Although there were no sculptors on the Polly Street staff, Skotnes had introduced modelling in brick clay, readily available in the city, and when he saw Kumalo's promise as a three-dimensional artist, he suggested that he work with the Italian-born sculptor, Edoardo Villa, which Kumalo did from

1957 to 1960. In the latter year he had his first commission for a free-standing sculpture for the Rand Easter Show. His sculptures of this period, which had a sense of compressed vitality that seemed to draw simultaneously on ancient West African and modern European traditions, attracted the attention of the German art connoisseur, Egon Guenther, who had opened an art gallery in Johannesburg in 1957. Guenther played an active role in advising Kumalo about his works, and undertook their casting in bronze, which was a financial burden beyond Kumalo's means. Guenther also arranged the sculptor's first solo exhibition in Johannesburg in 1962 and promoted his work abroad from 1963 as part of the Amadlozi group; this Zulu name, chosen by the group to mean "spirit of our ancestors", was intended to refer to the "Africanness" of the group's art, although Kumalo was its sole black member. Kumalo also had successful shows at Estorick's Grosvenor Gallery in London, in 1964, 1965 and 1966. His achievements in the 1960s not only established his own professional status, but did much to encourage other black artists, especially at Polly Street where he had joined the staff at the end of the 1950s.

But the main thrust of Polly Street art was two-dimensional. Because Skotnes was aware that black easel painting had no tradition of its own on which to draw, he concentrated on the teaching of techniques, largely drawing and watercolour.<sup>7</sup> The style and subject matter of the painting was generated spontaneously from the community situation, depicting life as the artists observed it in the surrounding black townships, which were to develop into Johannesburg's twin city, Soweto.

**Ephraim Ngatane** (1938-71) was probably the first painter of the Polly Street Centre to have a solo exhibition, held at the Lidchi Gallery in 1962, followed by shows at the Adler Fielding Galleries. All were successful, and the last attracted much publicity as a complete sell-out, which undoubtedly encouraged the efflorescence of so-called "township" painting in the 1960s. Ngatane set another precedent for "township" art when his work was promoted in America by an early sponsor, the Reverend Hall Duncan, who had taught at St Peter's School. Ngatane's bright and vigorous water-



Alphen Ntimbane showing his watercolour paintings of township scenes to clients at the "Artists in the Sun" Exhibition, Zoo Lake, Johannesburg, February 1988, (photograph: the author).

colours depict township scenes in a free impressionistic style. His work has social implications because of its subject matter, but he did not stress the drabber aspects of black urban existence, reflected in the subject choice and more restrained palette of other artists. While painters like **Durant Sihlale** (born 1935) pursue an art of careful observation with a thoroughly professional approach, others exaggerate picturesque poverty and generate a rather superficial sense of self-pity in a decorative and sentimental style, as **Winston Saoli** (born 1950) did on occasion in his early work. This may have been encouraged by the market, because initially "township" art appealed to the liberal English-speaking sector, which apparently experienced a sense of philanthropic gratification in supporting a form of art that emphasized the gap between its own privileged life style and the deprivation of black urban areas. It was probably as much an awareness of the white market as a sense of social consciousness that led some artists to seek out derelict shanty towns to paint in preference to the more suburban parts of Soweto.<sup>8</sup>

But "township" art usually presented itself in a palatable picturesque style that stressed the colourful vitality of community life in Soweto, which probably explains why it has continued to sell well in the popular white market, at

venues like the "Artists in the Sun" exhibition at the Zoo Lake in Johannesburg every month, and to provide a living for many full-time black artists. **Alphen Ntimbane** (born 1948), for example, who attended the Jubilee Art Centre in the early 1970s, gave up his job at the South African Broadcasting Corporation in 1986, because he could not keep up with orders for his watercolours of Soweto street scenes, especially from American dealers, who buy bulk lots of his paintings, twenty to fifty at a time, for resale to their customers. **Peter Sibeko** (born 1940), who sells at "Artists in the Sun" too, and has painted full-time for about seven years, is also a prolific painter, building up the colourful acrylic impastos he favours in a number of paintings at the same time. Sibeko has recently launched an exclusively black gallery; although there is a growing interest in art amongst the new black middle class, he expects his clientele to be predominantly white, at least initially, as is reflected in his choice of premises in Johannesburg's city centre, which is today common territory for black and white, rather than in Soweto, although there are still no galleries there.<sup>9</sup>

White expectations of black art have probably been particularly influential in the area of painting not only because this art form was new to black culture, but because the concept of art as a



Mslaba Dumile: *Untitled*, 1967. Charcoal, 107 x 194 cm. De Beers Centenary Art Gallery, University of Fort Hare, (reproduced with permission of the University of Fort Hare).

depicted by **Emmanuel Sibanda** (born 1965) or **Lungile Phambo** (born 1960), for example, does not fit the accepted idea of the genre. But “township” art should not be dismissed out of hand. Apart from its historical importance, one can discover many examples of honest observation and technical competence in the “township” genre, which can also still generate innovative work, like the lively vision of **Thomas Motswai** (born 1963), one of the few black artists in South Africa to apply his acute perception to white as well as black urban life.

While the paintings of township life inevitably made a social comment, it was often implicit in the subject matter, rather than a deliberate statement from the artist. Alongside the relatively neutral works of the 1960s, however, more directed social statements were to be found, especially in graphic works where a highly personal stylization became the vehicle of the artist’s self-expression and interpretation of black experience in South Africa. The powerful line and violently contorted imagery of **Mslaba Dumile** (born c 1939) carries a message of anguish and anger, an overt comment on the apartheid system. His distinctive style attracted many followers, notably **Julian Motau** (1948-68), whose promising career was cut short by his violent death in Alexandra township when he was only twenty years old. These works found ready recognition amongst whites, but it is difficult to believe that this was the result of their aesthetic qualities alone, as the content is so insistent: perhaps it was a patronage of guilt; perhaps such works seemed to vindicate the owners’ privileged position as white South Africans; outside a political context, perhaps such works may also serve to demonstrate the avant-garde stance of chic elitist buyers who reject bourgeois taste. Although the country’s authorities have rarely perceived the visual arts as a threat potent enough to warrant censorship, Dumile’s harassment because of his general political involvement forced him into exile in 1968. He has since associated himself with cultural efforts opposing apartheid, but his work is no longer accessible to those whose oppression it represents.

Dumile may, however, have bequeathed a wider legacy in his influence on popular graphic art. The



Leonard Matsoso: *Cat*, 1972. Charcoal on paper, 140 x 110 cm. University of the Witwatersrand Art Galleries, (reproduced with permission of the University of the Witwatersrand).

nal *Staffrider*,<sup>10</sup> for example, provided a context for images and writing by both blacks and whites that addressed the South African situation directly, and often expressed an overtly political position. These images are accessible both in their style and in the fact that they are disseminated through publication. *Staffrider* recognized the inherent problem of black access to the visual arts, which are usually enshrined in white galleries, and used graphic works not merely as illustrations, but instituted a policy of devoting special sections to a “Staffrider Gallery” with pages of reproductions.

The illustrations in *Staffrider* also draw our attention to another common characteristic in the development of black art — the frequent deployment of graphic techniques, such as wood- and linocuts. Early promoters of black art such as the mission schools encouraged graphic art, possibly in the belief that these skills approximate the traditional black crafts and are appropriate for stylized “primitive” art forms. The Art and Craft Centre of the Evangelical Lutheran Church formed at Rorke’s Drift in 1962 has been a particularly rich source of such art, often depicting religious subject matter in innovative narrative and decorative forms, as in the linocuts of **Azaria Mbatha** (born 1941) and **John Muafangejo** (1943-87). But the choice

commodity, another idea introduced from the West, has been adopted whole-heartedly by many black artists who have a thoroughly practical view of art as a way of earning a living and therefore pay close attention to the requirements of their market, sometimes to the detriment of their work. In addition, white dealers at home and abroad, either for financial gain or because of feelings of racial guilt, have on occasion promoted less competent black artists, who were attracted to painting by the monetary success of others and the considerable publicity they received in the press. Unfortunately, these trends tend to equate all the works produced in this mode, overlooking some painters’ more personal imagery in favour of a saleable picturesque stereotype. The harsh reality of Sowetan life in the 1980s as

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of simple and inexpensive techniques like linocuts and watercolour drawings also reflects the social and economic circumstances of the artists, and the limited resources of black art centres which favour these techniques, like the Community Arts Project in Cape Town. But restricted resources need not restrict artistic expression. A number of black artists have developed the simple medium of pencil or ink drawing to a high level of intricacy and sophistication: finely patterned and textured areas create tightly interwoven surfaces in the drawings of township life made by **Andrew Motjuoadi** (1935-68), and an intense almost obsessive exploration of pen marks builds up the dramatic volumes of the mythical beasts of **Leonard Matsoso** (born 1949). **Cyprian Shilakoe** (1946-72) evolved a highly personal style in delicate etchings which evoke a sense of poignancy and pathos. And at Polly Street a new art form developed out of the woodcut, when the wooden panel itself became the work of art, as in the coloured wood engravings of **Lucky Sibiyi** (born 1942). This technique evokes an ethnic flavour that seems appropriate to Africa, although it is a modern innovation used by Skotnes as well as Sibiyi, which raises the question of whether black art does or should have a distinctive style.

**Louis Maquabela** (born 1939), whose drawing skills earned him the Artists of Fame and Promise award in 1966, including a trip to Europe, was greatly influenced by a visit then to the expatriate South African Douglas Portway. Maquabela subsequently developed works combining graphic contours with floating areas of colour: the international appearance of his semi-abstract works caused critics of the later 1960s to comment that black painting had at last freed itself from the preconditions of "township" art. Certainly there have been many recent examples of black artists in South Africa eager to work in an international style, especially since wider educational possibilities have been made available to them, with the establishment of institutions such as Bill Ainslie's Art Foundation from 1972, open to blacks and whites, the Federated Union of Black Artists, established in the Market Theatre complex in 1978, the African Institute of Art at Funda in Soweto which opened in 1983, and the Thupelo Art Project spon-

sored by the United States/South African Leadership Exchange Programme from 1985 to 1987, as well as the open universities whose efforts to increase their black intake in the face of legislated restrictions have been more successful over the past few years. These opportunities have encouraged innovation and demonstrate the willingness of the artists to experiment with a wide range of art forms, as is evident, for example, in the contrast between Helen Sebidi's naturalistic terracotta figures produced at the craft-oriented Katlehong Centre in Germiston, and her abstract metal sculpture made during the 1986 Thupelo workshop. Generous working spaces, available resources and a sense of vital interaction at these workshops encouraged artists to produce large free abstractions, such as those by **Dumisani Mabaso** (born 1950) and **Philip Malumise** (born 1956). But ironically many of these works have not found a ready market, which suggests that white buyers are attracted to black art that has a recognizable black content, and that an element of racial patronage is therefore reflected in their buying. And while most black artists will defend their right to use any form of expression they may choose, many do feel a need to draw on their personal experiences in their art, or to use art to reflect their sense of social responsibility.

This belief is exemplified in the paintings of **David Koloane** (born 1938) which seem at first glance to relate to Abstract Expressionism; but he has a critical attitude to this style, recognizing its susceptibility to technical exploration empty of feeling, and prefers the evocative atmospheric landscapes of Turner. Observing the abstract development of his friend Maquabela, working with Bill Ainslie at the Art Foundation, and taking up opportunities to study in New York and London, gave Koloane the freedom to work, as he puts it, in the gap between figurative and non-figurative art. So although direct depictions of black urban culture are less frequent in his work now, he still reflects his community experience, often drawing on collage to make explicit reference to the South African environment. But Koloane admits that this work is closed to most black people who find these images inaccessible.

**Bongiwe Dhlomo** (born 1956), on the

other hand, who trained at Rorke's Drift, depicts the experiences of blacks under apartheid in bold simplified linocuts. But even these works have few black buyers, although she has attempted to reach a more extensive audience by publishing her work in *Staffrider* and on book covers, as well as illustrating an anthology of writing by South African women, entitled *Sometimes when it rains* (1987). Bongiwe Dhlomo has received considerable publicity of late which she wryly attributes to her novelty as a black woman artist,<sup>11</sup> but her favourable reception undoubtedly also depends on the accessibility of her direct visual language and the subject matter of her graphics, commenting on events of political significance, in works like *Removals*, and on broader social issues, as in her series on women in South Africa.

The work of **Ezrom Legae** (born 1938) depends on a more personal imagery. Like Kumalo, Legae was started on his career by Cecil Skotnes' teaching and Egon Guenther's promotion, from which he too evolved a powerful sculptural style. After his initial successes in the white market, however, Legae lapsed into a period of inactivity, from which he was roused only by the tragic events of the later 1970s — the Soweto riots and the death of the black consciousness leader Steve Biko. His response to these was a series of drawings in which the subtlety of technique and composition suggests a rich heritage of art history, but the subject matter is forged from black experience, both the mythology of the past and the reality of the present. From these, Legae develops a universal language that goes beyond the sum of its parts and creates a synthesis of Western art forms and black imagery.<sup>12</sup>

A similar process may be perceived at work in the painting of **Tony Nkotsi** (born 1955), who is young enough, however, to have been part of the events of the 1970s, a disaffected school drop-out in 1975, a detainee in 1976. He was also young enough to be able to find experience, mentors among established black artists, who were vital to his career, such as Dumisani Mabaso, who introduced him to print-making, and Durant Sihlale, who taught him a great deal about watercolours. But Nkotsi also acknowledges the roles played by whites in his career — Janet Levine, a city councillor, who helped



Gerard Sekota: *Yellow Houses: A Street in Sophiatown*, 1940. Oil on cardboard, 50,8 x 74,55 cm. Johannesburg Art Gallery (reproduced with permission of the Johannesburg Art Gallery).

with materials and sponsorship at the Mofolo Art Centre in Soweto in 1978; the American Jay Johnson, who taught at Rorke's Drift in 1982; Brita Ellis, who arranged a successful exhibition of his work in France in 1986; Bill Ainslie, who invited him to run workshops in printmaking at the Art Foundation in 1987, to name a few. Drawing also on an awareness of twentieth-century European art — the fragmentation of Cubism, as much as the vivid painterliness of Expressionism — Nkotsi creates paintings which force the spectator to react, to share in his emotions, often his anger, through their jarring tensions of form and colour. While his works certainly express his specific political awareness, Nkotsi feels that images should be able to communicate anywhere, and should not reflect the South African situation alone.

This is an issue on which there is no

general agreement amongst black artists: there is a sense of dichotomy in their aspirations, from standards based on so-called universal aesthetic values, to a programmatic definition of a specifically black art that plays a social role in the political struggle. The work of many of the artists discussed in this article demonstrates, however, that black art can both draw on individual South African experience and also speak a language that addresses a far wider audience.

It remains a problem, however, that the more sophisticated forms of black art do not speak directly to the majority of people in South Africa who, belonging to the black working class, have poor educational opportunities and limited exposure to art through a lack of cultural facilities. These disadvantages will have to be redressed before a market for black art in its present forms<sup>13</sup> can be meaningfully established in the

black community, for even the potential art buyers of the black middle class are affected by these problems — hence the continuing importance of the white market for black artists.

Obviously the area of interchange of black artists and white patrons is a sensitive one in the current political climate, and open to a variety of interpretations. Different writers range in opinion from those who perceive the white role as entirely supportive and the primary source of inspiration, through to those who see it as a negative and degrading intervention, exploiting a position of political dominance. While it is undeniable that the white market has exploited black artists and used their art to its own ends, it must also be acknowledged that it has provided the context within which a vigorous new artistic tradition has evolved. Nor must it be overlooked that many white individuals — teachers,



David Koloane: *Shantytown*, 1978. Collage on board, 39,6 x 44 cm, (reproduced with permission of the University of Fort Hare).

sponsors or patrons — have played a positive role in this development.

But to acknowledge these things is in no way to undervalue the autonomous vitality of black creativity, often overcoming apparently impossible odds, nor to suggest that in the development of art in South Africa, influence has been a one-way process. Black art has profoundly influenced white artists also. It is troublesome though that this has perhaps not always been fully recognized, and that white art that is closely related to black developments has in the past been accorded more serious critical attention and commanded higher prices than equivalent black works. One could cite the coloured wood panels that Cecil Skotnes developed out of his Polly Street experiences, for example. Of course this inequality is reversed in the international market, but there are also indications that it is being redressed in South Africa itself. Black art is attracting far more serious attention, not only amongst buyers and critics, but also amongst researchers. This is illustrated by the case of Gerard Sekoto, long overlooked in his Paris exile. His early painting *The proud father* recently fetched R9 000 at a Sotheby's auction in Johannesburg, a high price on the South African art market, and he has also exhibited successfully at an elite gallery in Johannesburg's northern suburbs, even

though the works on sale were relatively minor examples. A Sekoto retrospective exhibition took place in 1989, and a lavishly illustrated book, with a text edited from Sekoto's own letters, was published in 1988. Recognition may be

belated, but it is real — although still this initiative has come from white sponsors who value Sekoto's contribution.

The influence of patrons on artists is of course in no way uncommon in the history of art: it is the South African situation that taints the relationship between black artists and white patrons and lays their interaction open to misrepresentation, whether it takes the form of promotion or exploitation, mentoring or manipulation. Perhaps the balanced view is simply to acknowledge that whites have patronized black art in both the positive and the negative senses of that ambivalent word, and to look forward to the day when black artists are able to make choices free of dependence on a white market alone.

## Notes and references

- 1 This topic was researched in response to a request to give a paper on black art in South Africa from Columbia University, New York and the Southern African Research Programme at Yale University during a visit to the United States in 1988. This art is, with a few exceptions, poorly documented, and within the few available texts the researcher finds inaccuracies and contradictions. I have therefore worked



Tony Nkotsi: *Deadlock*. 1987. Oil, (reproduced with permission of the artist).

primarily through interviews, limited at this stage to the Johannesburg area, and wish to put on record my gratitude to those who have given so generously of their time and knowledge — teachers, community workers, art dealers, librarians, academics and, of course, the artists themselves — all in all too many to mention individually. The range and richness of black art has made it obligatory to be drastically selective; wherever possibly my choice of examples has been based on a preference for information available from direct sources.

The following texts discuss South African black art, chiefly urban, at least to some extent; specific research projects are separately referred to in subsequent notes.

E Berman, *Art and artists of South Africa*, Cape Town: Balkema, 1983.

J Bufacchi, *An optimist in South Africa*, Johannesburg: Zambetti, 1988.

E de Jager, *Contemporary African art in South Africa*, Cape Town: Struik, 1973.

E de Jager, "Contemporary African sculpture in South Africa", *Fort Hare Papers*, vol 6, no 6, September 1978.

H Fransen, *Three centuries of South African art*, Johannesburg: AD Donker, 1982.

A Krell, "Urban art in South Africa", unpublished MA(FA) dissertation, University of Cape Town, 1972.

S Lisoos, *Johannesburg art and artists: Selections from a century*, Johannesburg: Johannesburg Art Gallery, 1986.

M Manaka, *Echoes of African art: A century of art in South Africa*, Johannesburg: Skotaville, 1987.

A Nettleton and D Hammond-Tooke (eds), *African art in Southern Africa: From tradition to township*, Johannesburg: AD Donker, 1989.

G Ogilvie, *Dictionary of South African artists*, Johannesburg: Everard Read, 1988.

E Rankin, *Images of wood: Aspects of the history of sculpture in 20th-century South Africa*, Johannesburg: Johannesburg Art Gallery, 1989.

S Sack, *The neglected tradition: Towards a new history of South African art 1930-1988*, Johannesburg: Johannesburg Art Gallery, 1988.

U Scholz, *PhafaNyika: Contemporary black art in South Africa with special reference to the Transvaal*, Pretoria: Pretoria University Archives, 1980.

P Snyman, "Styl en betekenis in die skilderkuns met verwysing na kontemporêre Bantoeekuns in Suid-Afrika", unpublished MA dissertation, University of Potchefstroom, 1978.

S van Rensburg, "Sydney Kumalo en ander Bantoeekunsteners van Transvaal", unpublished MA dissertation, University of Pretoria, 1970.

2 That the visual arts have been very much a middle-class preserve is an important factor in the white emphasis in the South African art market. Blacks, who belong predominantly to the working class, seem far more drawn to community activities, such as song and dance, as is discussed by D. Coplan, "The emergence of an African working class culture", in S. Marks and R. Rathbone (eds), *Industrialization and social change in South Africa*, New York: Longman, 1982. These activities probably also provide the context for the vital developments in black theatre in South Africa.

3 P Savory, *Gerard Bhengu: Zulu artist*, Cape Town: Timmins, 1965.

4 Sekoto studied at the Diocesan Training College at the Grace Dieu Mission near Pietersburg. While the College had no formal art classes, drawing exercises were included in the syllabus, and there was also a carving school attached to the carpentry workshop, which submitted works to the South African Academy Exhibitions ("Native" section) from 1934 to 1939.

5 A number of the sources state that Sekoto was sent to Paris by a white sponsor from Pretoria. In an interview with the author in Paris in June 1988, the artist denied this, stating that he paid his own passage. He did apply for funds from the Bantu Welfare Trust, which eventually forwarded him the sum of £200, about two years later.

6 T Couzens, *The new African: A study of the life and work of H I E Dhlomo*, Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1985, p 253. Although Couzens' section on the visual arts is brief (pp 249-54), it provides extremely useful information on early black artists.

7 Personal communication in a letter dated 14 March 1988. It is an indication of the importance of Polly Street that it has engendered its own mythology: Skotnes agrees that it is often "hard to differentiate the facts from the fiction".

8 David Koloane recalls how Louis Maquabela would travel from his own home in Orlando, built in the Smuts era, to paint in "Shantytown".

9 The lack of exhibition facilities in Soweto remains a problem. Community centres are in heavy demand for other activities and can therefore only be spared occasionally for brief periods for art exhibitions. The successful "Black art today" exhibition of 1981 was held in the Standard Bank in Soweto. Funda uses its audio-visual space as an occasional exhibition area, and Fuba has a permanent gallery, but it is in the Market Theatre complex in Johannesburg.

10 *Staffrider* was published from the late 1970s. A number of its issues were banned, including vol 1, no 1. Its appearance was somewhat sporadic in the mid-1980s, but Ravan Press are continuing publication, and an article on Sekoto by Barbara Lindop appeared in 1988.

11 The paucity of black women artists may be attributed to a variety of reasons, not least of which is the fact that many black women in the urban situation have such heavy responsibilities as the sole supporters of their family unit. The dominant position of the male in black society may also tend to exclude women artists, although an expectation that males should control art production is at odds with traditions still found in rural communities. Different areas of art production are often reserved for the different genders, but women are certainly not excluded, and are usually responsible for the making of beadwork and pottery, and for mural decoration.

12 Barbara Buntman researched Legae's recent work for an honours dissertation at the University of the Witwatersrand, 1987, entitled "Ezrom Legae: 1976-1986".

13 It is of course possible that new visual art forms will emerge to meet the needs of black working class culture, which has in fact already happened to some extent in the production of banners and T-shirts for occasions like the funerals of community leaders. There are those who feel that elitist art forms are inappropriate to the present struggle, and should change, but many artists prefer to meet their social obligations in other ways, such as participating in community projects; one could mention, for example, that Bongwiwe Dhlomo ran the Alexandra Art Centre, and is presently coordinating the Thupelo Workshop, and Ezrom Legae takes art classes in Deep Meadow. Some interesting discussion of the need for black art to free itself from "cultural imperialism" and express black consciousness is found in Boniface Malebane's Honours dissertation, "The imagery of black revolt — Black artistic expression, circa 1970-1980", University of South Africa, 1986.

# Black artists, white patrons: The cross-cultural art market in rural South Africa

*Professor Elizabeth Rankin*

Although the traditional arts of black South Africa have tended to be overlooked in the past, they have been attracting considerable market interest in recent years. Foreign buyers are particularly active, especially Americans and Germans, but local interest in establishing representative collections of the traditional arts of Southern Africa has been developing rapidly of late.<sup>1</sup> It might be imagined that in this area production would not be affected by the market, as the works have been made to serve a social structure whose customs were established long before contact with whites, or with the Western concept of art as a commodity. It might seem therefore that the buying and selling of traditional works would be entirely incidental and irrelevant to their making. But this is not the case. The influence of the interaction of two cultures is clearly evident, especially in more recent production.

A particularly interesting example is the art of the Southern Ndebele peoples, especially the Ndzundza group, in the Transvaal, who are well known for the remarkable murals with which the women decorate the walls of their homesteads.<sup>2</sup> The Ndebele had been a powerful force in the Transvaal until their defeat by the Boers in 1882-1883, after which they were particularly harshly treated, dispersed and dispossessed of their land. The wall decorations which emerged around the time of World War II, and developed from fairly simple to rich and colourful

designs, seem to have been a reassertion of a sense of ethnic identity which had survived all the people's hardships. The murals proclaimed that they were Ndebele, even though they were scattered and had no land of their own. It is significant that amongst all the black peoples of South Africa, the Ndebele alone have actually sought a "homeland" in terms of South African government policy, to give status and official sanction to their regrouping. None the less the establishment in 1975 of a self-governing Territorial Authority in KwaNdebele has been attended by as many problems as other attempts to relocate people in terms of an ideology of separate cultural identities.

The efflorescence of mural painting, then, might be seen as an entirely autonomous development within Ndebele culture in response to a need to express its identity in the presence of other groups, both black and white, through a visual language that would be readily recognized by outsiders and the Ndebele themselves. It does seem, however, that it was at least to some extent stimulated by white intervention. Shortly after the wall decorations were first noted by the architect Meiring, a group of Ndzundza at Hartebeestfontein were resettled by the authorities in the Pretoria area at Kwa Msiza in the 1940s, with the plan of forming a tourist attraction. The women were plentifully supplied with polyvinyl paints, which encouraged

more colourful decorations. The focus on this art form and the wide interest it attracted could also have stimulated experimentation with more complex designs, although the fact that the development was not limited to the tourist village suggests that the painting may well have evolved in this way independently, without the intervention of white entrepreneurs. It seems likely that richer resources and widespread publicity stimulated the development.

The contact with tourism also affected Ndebele art production in another way, as it became possible for the women to make a small income through the sale of beadwork, a skill which had predated mural painting. Early records suggest that the traditional forms of beadwork, such as women's aprons, were rather austere, a fabric of closely woven tiny white beads with occasional coloured motifs, in which the shape of the garment rather than patterning indicated the social status of the wearer. But alongside the increasing embellishment of Ndebele homestead walls, the beadwork too became more colourful and decorative. It is hard to gauge exactly how much this was the result of a developing aesthetic within Ndebele culture, and how much a response to the demands of white taste. Certainly black initiative was not slow in realizing the economic potential of established skills which could be employed to make new artefacts appropriate to white consumption, such as beaded jug covers and coasters, as well

as a wide variety of bead jewelry. Women also began producing "traditional" pieces that were never intended for traditional use, but were made for sale from the outset, and were therefore inevitably influenced by fashions in taste.<sup>3</sup> A sponsor such as Operation Hunger, which markets beadwork for as many as 900 women who work at home in the rural areas, runs occasional workshops at which the women are given new ideas and advice in relation to market demands — which colours sell well in America, for example. Through such programmed directives and through individual initiative, established forms have been adapted for the market to fulfil the expectations that whites have of the traditional arts of rural blacks. The expectation, for example, that African works should be decorative and colourful would seem to have led to a process of natural selection in Ndebele beadwork in which the more austere has given way to the brightly patterned.<sup>4</sup>

Of course the irony is that the rarity of the more restrained designs is in turn making them sought after amongst specialist collectors, just as many collectors are only interested in "authentic" pieces which were made for traditional use. The ingenuity of the artists no doubt finds a way of meeting this demand also, especially as such works command higher prices, either by breaking up old pieces to make a number of saleable items, or by arranging for new works to be "used" without delay so that they rapidly acquire an appropriate patina. An interesting side effect of the popularity of beadwork and its ability to generate income, has been the use of cheaper manufactured materials, which are more easily worked to make the equivalents of traditional beaded aprons in appliqué, for the women's own use. As yet these works have attracted little interest but as they become established as a new genre they will no doubt generate their own market.

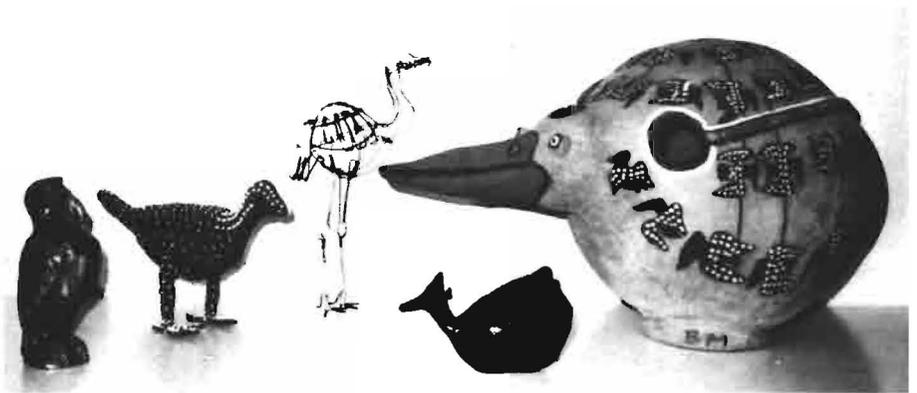
For the popularity of African artefacts at home and abroad has led to an increasing variety of buyers and sellers — from women who travel long distances from rural areas to hawk their wares in the city streets,<sup>5</sup> to roadside stalls that offer farm produce alongside craft objects, to up-market curio shops in high-class hotels and shopping malls, the market would



Ndebele women selling a variety of beaded objects at a favourite site in Yale Road, Johannesburg, October 1988. (Note that one of them is reading Natalie Knight's publication on Ndebele art), (photograph: the author).

seem to be booming. And in most of these commercial ventures the customer is king. A carver like **Themba Gumede** (born 1942), who sells his work at the "Artists in the Sun" exhibition at Johannesburg's Zoo Lake each month, produces his soapstone and wood carvings on demand in response to the requests of his buyers, themselves often tourists seeking souvenirs to match their own concepts of rural Africa. He carves buck and rhino, birds and African heads, for example, often taken from images he has seen in illustrations or on television, for

Gumede himself is very much a city dweller. He is out to produce well-crafted objects and make a living, and frankly rejects any aesthetic pretensions. Indeed the translation of simple rural objects, sometimes made as playthings by or for children, into expensive aesthetic objects, displayed among traditional artefacts and modern paintings and sculptures in the glittering showcases of elegant art galleries, may be as puzzling to those who made them as it is bewildering to those who still cling to a Eurocentric concept of high art.



A variety of birds produced for sale, showing the adaptation of traditional techniques for the art market. From left to right: Themba Gumede, soapstone carving; Ndebele, beaded fabric; Bil Makhuela, wire; KwaZulu area, pottery; Bhekisani Manyoni, painted pottery. (photograph: the author).



Noria Mabasa: Parade of painted clay policemen as an exhibition at the Goodman Gallery, Hyde Park, Johannesburg, 1986, (reproduced with permission of the Goodman Gallery).



**Left:** Johannes Maswanganyi: Carved *muti* containers with removable heads, as made for a *sangoma*. **Right:** Johannes Maswanganyi: *Dr Verwoerd*, 1987. Painted wood, H873 cm University of the Witwatersrand Art Galleries (reproduced with permission of the University of the Witwatersrand).

But if it is the collectors and dealers who are the first to discover and appropriate objects to extend the range of art, the makers are quick to respond to these demands, not only multiplying desirable objects, but inventing new forms. A feature that characterizes this area of black art production is its remarkable ingenuity and adaptability.<sup>6</sup> Traditional skills such as carving, pottery, and beadwork, as well as the making of wire objects as toys, have all been employed in the fashioning of new items for the art market, both as a result of individual enterprise and through joint ventures sponsored by government and big business, sometimes in urban environments, like the Katlehong Centre in Germiston (established in 1977).

Developments also occur in the conscious acknowledgement that objects change in function and meaning in a new market. **Johannes Maswanganyi** (born 1949), for example, was trained by his carver father to produce traditional artefacts for the local market.

When asked to make a headrest for a white researcher, he carved one on a larger scale because it would clearly not be used for sleeping. Similarly, *kiaat* was substituted for the special magical wood that was usually fashioned into carved stoppers for calabashes to hold *muti* in traditional medical practices, when one of these was made for a white commission.<sup>7</sup> But it was a black patron, albeit an urban one, who started Maswanganyi in the direction of representational carving; a Sowetan *sangoma* asked him to make *muti* containers where the detachable head was given a carved body in place of the customary calabash. On an enlarged scale these carvings became marketable sculptures. Maswanganyi's representational figures were possibly also related to some extent to existing figurative traditions, such as the making of small carved figures to enact the moral lessons that formed part of initiation ceremonies amongst the Venda of the north-eastern Transvaal. But Maswanganyi's carvings have gradually developed a thoroughly

modern idiom, depicting subject matter that might be construed as having particular interest for the white market, such as representations of political leaders.

This area of contemporary rural carving is a particularly interesting recent development.<sup>8</sup> One might say that production takes place in the gap between traditional and Western art, which is no doubt what is meant by the label "transitional" that is sometimes applied to this art, although it is not a very helpful description, in that all art is constantly in a state of transition and change, and the term has also been perceived as having pejorative overtones. Whether this is the case or not, it is clear that the art itself is being taken very seriously, and since the innovative "Tributaries" show of 1985, sponsored by BMW, which presented South African urban and rural art in a single exhibition, it has been widely exhibited in up-market commercial art galleries. It is the product of rural black artists drawing on traditional skills, but applying them to new representational forms, often on a fairly large scale; it seems to be addressed entirely to a white market, and in some cases took its beginnings from the tourist trade.

Certainly **Nelson Mukhuba** (1925-87), who, like Maswanganyi, began his career as a local carver, sold works at a stall on the road to the Kruger National Park many years ago. Here traditional pieces were more popular as souvenirs for tourists, but official recognition when his work was displayed at the Venda pavilion at the Rand Easter Show in Johannesburg at the end of the 1970s, followed by the success of the "Tributaries" exhibition, gave Mukhuba's career a new direction, and an opportunity to draw on his urban experiences when he had worked for a time as a carpenter for African Theatres. His recent works range from powerful mythological images to figures reflecting a popular concept of Western culture. His tragic suicide, coupled with the firing of his house which killed his family and destroyed many of his carvings, has been a great loss, and also suggests something of the psychological pressures that may be experienced by a man living between two cultures.

The appeal of these works lies in what to Western eyes seems a naive freshness, which is increased when they are enlarged to a scale appropriate



Noria Mabasa: *Carnage II*, 1988. Wood, 79 x 197 x 218,5 cm. Johannesburg Art Gallery, (reproduced with permission of the Johannesburg Art Gallery).

for a gallery market, because of the exaggeration of their simplicity and lack of detail. The direct carving techniques that are employed are also attractive as a contrast to a high-tech urban environment. Some sculptures even seem to reflect the familiar concept of truth to material, as in the works of **Doctor Phuthuma Seoka** (born 1922), who uses the natural shapes of the trees from which he carves to suggest animated spidery figures, although he further enlivens them with bright enamel paints.

The reception of naive stylization, relatively unsophisticated technique, and the application of crude in contemporary rural art has been enthusiastic. What does perhaps cause some hesitation amongst white buyers is the

repetitive character of some of the works. This would seem to be the result of a natural conflation of the lack of any need for innovation in the artefacts of traditional black culture with the concept of the saleable commodity in the Western art world: if a work is effective, why make only one? Some of the more successful artists, like Seoka, have drawn on the services of family and friends to establish highly productive workshops, where the emphasis is more on the manufacture of images than on their creation.

A paradoxical characteristic that is shared by many areas of black art production — whether “township”, “traditional” or “transitional” art — is that in embracing enthusiastically the concept of a Western art market, many

artists have contravened one of its most fundamental criteria — the belief that art is the product of the individual genius and that great works of art are unique. The pragmatic attitude and, in some cases, almost conveyor-belt approach to the production of saleable commodities by many black artists has led to some resistance in the more elitist sectors of the market, and the outright rejection of certain areas of production by a number of white dealers.<sup>9</sup> Generally some repetition is expected in traditional works, and this provides a possible justification for the same practice in other rural art; it is interesting though that many more are prepared to condone creative ambivalence in rural art, which is clearly categorized as the domain of the black

artist, than they are in urban art, which operates firmly within a Western definition of art forms. But many today feel uneasy in making such distinctions, particularly in the light of a new sociological emphasis in art historical studies, which also challenges the long-established notions of creative genius and unique masterpieces.

And some artists anyway move freely from one category of production to another, demonstrating that they are not bound by Western aesthetic definitions or preconceptions about black art. A most interesting rural artist in this regard is **Noria Mabasa** (born 1938), who began adapting her traditional skill as a potter in the making of pots with human attributes, and of small independent figures. The success of these painted images of South African types, such as policemen, may in part have lain in what was seen to be witty social comment, an aspect that was underlined when an art dealer asked her to produce a whole regiment of such figures for an exhibition appropriately called "Parade". What had probably been the product of Mabasa's acute eye and ready observation was transformed in a white urban context into a political statement.

Noria Mabasa's developing concept of the art of sculpture, that came with her success in the market, led her to seek training in wood carving, a domain normally reserved for men amongst the Venda. Although the large and rather repetitive output of clay figures has continued, from 1984 she has been making wooden figures of great beauty and recently monumental complexity. A work called *Carnage* exhibited in Pretoria early in 1988 was sold for a substantial sum to a major art gallery, and a sculpture from the same series was accepted for the Cape Town Triennial later that year. This demonstrates how Mabasa's reputation in the white market has made the transition from a maker of delightfully naive and inexpensive figures to a sculptor whose work can hold its own in any forum.<sup>10</sup> It would be absurd to attempt to place sculptures like these in some sort of separate category from the work of black artists who have long been acknowledged to occupy a place in mainstream South African art, like Sydney Kumalo, for example. While there have undoubtedly been different areas

of production in the past, particularly in the division between urban and rural black culture, these should not be allowed to enforce preconceptions or to suggest classifications of high and low, major and minor art. It would be more pertinent to recognize how the different strands touch and intertwine, each making their contribution in the development of black art in South Africa.

White influence has also played a part in this process, not least in the sense that the art market has stimulated the adaptation of old and the invention of new forms in rural areas. For those who admire the artefacts of traditional African culture, the changes that are taking place may seem nothing less than the prostitution of art. But it would be absurd to lay the blame for the decline of traditional art on the intervention of the art market, when so many other historical factors have played a part. And it would be well to remember that many traditional skills would probably have disappeared altogether by now, in the face of socio-economic changes, were it not for the stimulus of new markets. Rather than look at the art market as a negative force that has brought about a demise of tradition, it might be more germane to regard it positively, as a catalyst for change, a change characterized by imagination and resourcefulness. For the acceptance of the Western idea of art as a commodity amongst rural artists has evidently been accompanied by the acceptance of the corollary concept that art is not a static value but informed by innovation and originality: repetitiveness may occur, but the creation of new forms is abundant. While rural art production should not simply be adulated indiscriminately, neither should it be categorized as an inferior version of traditional forms, but as something distinct and different, establishing independent parameters and criteria. It is an original genre, an experimental form of visual communication, and the product of an unprecedented interaction between new artists and new audiences in a changing social context.

## Notes and references

1 In the past, the most extensive collections of South African material culture tended to be in cultural history museums in ethnographic collections. More recently,

however, important collections are being assembled in the art context, such as the Standard Bank Foundation Collection of African Art at the University of the Witwatersrand Art Galleries, and the significant collection of Tsonga headrests recently purchased by the Johannesburg Art Gallery, as well as the Brenthurst Collection of Southern African traditional art, which is on loan to the same gallery.

- 2 Ndebele murals have been thoroughly researched by E Schneider, "Paint, pride and politics: Aesthetics and meaning in Transvaal Ndebele wall art", unpublished PhD thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1986, which provided much of the information for this section.
- 3 These developments were not of course limited to the Ndebele, although this group has been chosen as an example here (see note 4). It is interesting, however, that Ndebele art particularly has attracted the attention of the tourist trade, and that its proliferation is therefore especially high. I have come across women of, for example, Swazi background, who none the less produce "Ndebele" beadwork for sale.
- 4 The development of Ndebele beadwork and its contacts with the white market are the subject of ongoing research by Diane Levy for an MA dissertation at the University of the Witwatersrand. Similar adaptations of traditional skills have been observed amongst the N'Twane by Hazel Friedman in her current research for an MA dissertation at the same institution. Sandra Klopper has also been recording transformations in traditional art forms during her fieldwork for her PhD thesis on Zulu art at the University of the Witwatersrand. An interesting piece on Zulu beadwork in the tourist market is Eleanor Preston-Whyte and Jo Thorpe "Ways of seeing, ways of buying: Images of tourist art and culture expression in contemporary beadwork" in Anitra Nettleton and David Hammond-Tooke (eds), *African art in Southern Africa: From tradition to township*, Johannesburg: AD Donker, 1989.
- 5 A paper exploring the initiative taken by black women in setting up markets for their art on a cooperative basis was presented by Eleanor Preston-Whyte of the University of Natal at a training session of the Self Help Association for Development Economics in July 1984.
- 6 The acknowledgement of the positive and innovatory results of contact between traditional art and the tourist market are discussed in a number of publications, notably N Grabum (ed), *Ethnic and tourist arts*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976; B Jules-Rosette, *The messages of tourist art*, New York: Plenum Press, 1984; and P Ben-Amos, "Pidgin languages and tourist arts", *Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication*, vol 4, no 2, Winter 1977.

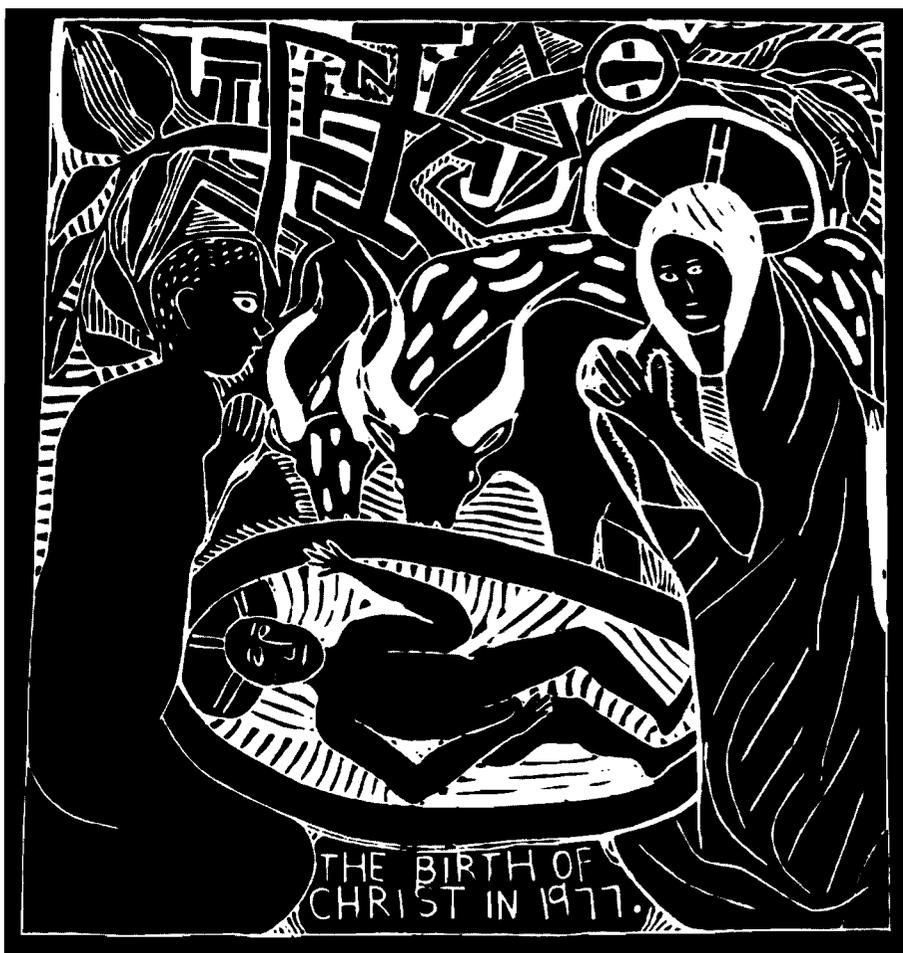
- 7 These examples are drawn from case studies in ongoing research by Rayda Becker in the area of “transitional” art for a PhD thesis at the University of the Witwatersrand, entitled “The woodcarving of the Transvaal Tsonga”.
- 8 The complex issues that inform the study of this area of production are addressed by Anitra Nettleton in her paper, “The myth of the transitional: Black art and white markets in South Africa” *The South African Journal of Cultural and Art History*, vol 2, no 4. Also of interest are a series of interviews conducted by Fiona Rankin-Smith for a paper at the University of South Africa, “A survey into the effects of the white market on a selection of recently popularized rural artists”, 1987.
- 9 Some dealers reject “transitional” rural art as a bastard product resulting from white influence. Others who might accept “transitional” art, reject recently-made works in traditional style and will deal only in old pieces.
- 10 An important role in the promotion and development of rural art in Venda has been played by the outlet Ditike, near Sibasa, created to market art by the Venda Development Corporation.

# Namibian artist John Muafangejo (1948-1987)

*Professor E J de Jager of the Department of African Studies, University of Fort Hare, discusses the life and work of one of Southern Africa's most important modern artists*

Namibia has produced a number of noted artists, especially painters, several of whom have achieved national recognition. Names such as Hans Aschenborn (1888-1931), Adolph Jentsch (1888-1977), Fritz Krampe (1913-1967), and more recently Joos Nell (born 1935) and Ulrich Scwanecke (born 1923), immediately come to mind. These artists have all been inspired by the atmosphere and expansive landscape of the region. The only Namibian artist to have dealt with the human and social situation, and who was not preoccupied with landscape painting, was the Ovambo artist John Ndevasia Muafangejo. A graphic artist, who produced mainly linocuts, woodcuts and etchings, he was also the first black Namibian artist to achieve fame.

John Ndevasia Muafangejo was born in 1943 near Oshikango, a village close to the border between Namibia and Angola. From about 1963 he attended the school and teacher's training college of the St Mary's Anglican Mission at Odibo, in Owambo. In 1968 he enrolled as a student at the Arts and Crafts Centre of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Mission at Rorke's Drift, in the province of Natal, South Africa. As Arnott points out, Muafangejo was an intense and sensitive person. The extended absence from his home in Namibia, the strain of severe application to his work, together with intense self-absorption, led to a state of nervous exhaustion during his first



John Muafangejo: *The birth of Christ in 1977*. Linocut 1977

year at Rorke's Drift, and he had to be admitted to the Madadeni Hospital in Newcastle, Natal. After his recovery

he returned to Rorke's Drift in 1969 and completed his course. In 1970 he returned to Owambo, to the country

which he loved so deeply, to teach and to apply himself to his own art. From 1970 to 1974 he taught art at Odibo in Owambo where he himself was educated. In 1974 he was invited back to Rorke's Drift, as "artist in residence". After this he returned to his spiritual home, St Mary's Mission, where he worked full-time on his art. In 1977 he moved to Windhoek where he settled in the adjoining Katutura township. He died suddenly from a heart attack in December 1987, at the age of 44.

Muafangejo was an intensely religious person who found himself most at home in a mission environment. In such surroundings he felt secure and protected and best able to concentrate on his art. It was as if such a religious and spiritual environment facilitated the expression of what he wanted to say through his art. His perspective was, therefore, always a deeply religious and human one, aimed at reconciliation, not only as far as it affected himself, but also between other people. His art portrayed a message of faith and hope which he wanted to convey to the world.

Stylistically, Muafangejo can best be classified as belonging to the genre of so-called "naive" art. His work has all the most important qualities of "naive" art; his style is completely unaffected and there is no endeavour towards special effects — it is simple, direct, bold and spontaneous. His art is introspective, personal and about himself and his involvement with the world. That is what he communicated. He made little distinction between reality and fantasy.

Apart from these general qualities, his work has in common with "naive" art the following particular characteristics of his style are also worthy of comment. Muafangejo's work remained completely two-dimensional. Formal composition is absent and the style is characterized by disproportion between the objects depicted. The artist used strong delineation in outlining form. There is also bold use of form, stressed by the way in which he contrasted the colours black and white. There is repetition of rhythms and forms in many of his works, as for example the forms of beads, bricks and vegetation. There are strong decorative qualities achieved through, for example, a variety of patterns. His work is narrative in nature, and in many of his pictures he employed direct writing as explanatory



John Muafangejo: *Vision of Eden*. Linocut 1968

text and to reinforce his pictorial images, as well as to create certain decorative effects.

When considering his total *oeuvre* it becomes clear that from the point of view of content his pictorial output can be classified into six main categories. These are briefly as follows.

- Works dealing with everyday life in Zululand (from the time of his stay at Rorke's Drift), Namibia and more particularly in Owambo. These include day-to-day relationships between people, birth and death, hunting, ploughing, weddings, activities such as stamping corn and making sour milk.
- A second category of work deals

with historical events such as the Battle of Rorke's Drift, the history of the Kuanyama tribe and their last chief Mondume ya Ndemufajo.

- A large number of his works deal with his missionary surroundings both at Rorke's Drift but more particularly at St Mary's Mission in Owambo. In this category we find scenes of holy communion, life at the hospital, church meetings and missionary activities such as the inauguration of a new printing press.
- An important category of his work deals with biblical and religious themes and subjects such as the Last Supper, Jesus and his disciples, the



Muafangejo, John: *The Last Supper*. Linocut 1978

birth of Jesus, the story of Adam and Eve, and the Prodigal Son. To many of these events he gave personal meaning and interpretation and they became visual images of his personal life and religion.

Muafangejo also turned his attention to contemporary political events in his country, for example, the now famous meetings at the Turnhalle, Windhoek, in the 1970s. Of particular significance here is the way in which he saw black and white people cooperating and sharing problems, a theme encountered also in many of his religious works and works inspired by St Mary's Mission as well as Rorke's Drift Mission where separation between the races never existed.

By far the majority of his works are autobiographical. They reveal the man Muafangejo and his religious relationships with the world and with his God. These works are truly introspective, revealing the depth

and sensitivity of Muafangejo's person, life and beliefs. In them we see the personal, religious, ethical, moral, political and social problems and tensions posed by the world as seen by Muafangejo, and he often supplied his answer of reconciliation to these problems. Other pictures are more closely related to his daily life and various incidents from his life, such as an interview he had at the University of Cape Town; in this piece he depicts himself with a silver cup he had won with one of his linocuts. There are also a number of self-portraits, other portraits showing him busy with his art activities, his being welcomed back to St Mary's Mission in 1975 and the adventure of buying an old car in 1973. All these events from his personal life were significant to him. He communicated them for us to enjoy, as well as to bring relief from personal tensions; they were his way of finding and stating solutions. They

can be called his personal "visual confessions".

Present in the art of Muafangejo is a strong indigenous feeling and a sense of Africa. This is obtained through the cultural activities carried out by the people depicted on his linocuts, their dress and department, the inclusion of typical African symbols and imagery such as in the vegetation portrayed, the cattle and other animals, material cultural objects such as eating and drinking vessels, drums, masks and head-dresses. Yet it is at the same time also a world of acculturation of the meeting between the indigenous African and European cultures. Of this we are reminded especially by missionary and Christian-religious motifs as seen in garments worn by priests, Christian symbols, such as the cross, the communion vessel, angels, and serpent. Other manifestations of Western culture include clothing, furniture, motor cars, guns and soccer games. Muafangejo thus portrayed the world in which he lived, consisting of many traditional as well as many European things and also of their fusion into the new Africa.

It would not be wrong to describe Muafangejo's rise from total obscurity to fame as meteoric. Recognition came early, when Muafangejo was still a student his work was included in the Contemporary African Art Exhibition held in London in 1969. His work was also selected for inclusion in the South African travelling exhibition to Canada 1969-1970. He participated in numerous exhibitions, of which only the most important are listed here. He had his first one-man exhibition in Johannesburg in 1975. During 1970 he exhibited at the National Gallery in Stockholm, and again in 1971 with the Society of Graphic Artists in Stockholm. During 1972 he exhibited in Holland, in 1973 in Botswana and in 1976 in Florida and Brooklyn, USA. In South Africa he exhibited in Johannesburg, Durban, Pretoria, Port Elizabeth, Worcester, King William's Town, East London and in other lesser centres. The highlight of his career was undoubtedly when he was chosen to represent South Africa at the Sao Paulo Biennial in 1971. A retrospective exhibition of his work has held in July at the 1988 Standard Bank Arts Festival in Grahamstown. He was a member of the Arts Association of South West Africa-Namibia. Muafangejo's work is

included in many private and public collections in South Africa and abroad.

Muafangejo won several awards. In 1981 he won the Republic Festival Graphic Award; in 1983 he won a medal at the 7th International Graphic Exhibition at Frechen, West Germany; in 1985 the most outstanding artist award at the STANSWA Biennial in Windhoek, Namibia, and in 1987 he was a joint winner of the quarterly award at the Vita Art Now Exhibition in Johannesburg.

Despite his meteoric rise and fame, Muafangejo remained modest and humble, and an example to many. He will be sadly missed and mourned by all who knew him. His death was also a great loss to South African art, an art that he enriched in so many ways.

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John Muafangejo: *Windhoek people pray for peace and love in 1977*. Linocut 1977

# South African development aid to African countries

*Erich Leistner, Director of the Africa Institute, looks at some of the assistance South Africa provides to other African countries.<sup>1</sup>*

## Introduction

The Republic of South Africa, as the regional power of Southern Africa, is vitally interested in having prosperous and politically stable neighbours and, as we will show, is well placed to promote the economic progress of distant as well as nearby African countries. Neighbouring countries are able to benefit from the strength and diversity of the South African economy thanks chiefly to the existence of an increasingly close and sophisticated network of intraregional commercial ties. Such intra-regional exchanges in trade, investment, transport, water and power supplies, labour, tourism and technology are far more developed in Southern Africa than elsewhere on the continent. These mutually beneficial exchanges stimulate the economic progress of the less advanced countries more effectively than does conventional development assistance in the shape of funds and other resources supplied free or on concessional terms.<sup>2</sup>

The present article is only concerned with South African development aid in the conventional sense, principally aid provided by government to government.

## South Africa as a donor of aid

South Africa's situation as a donor of aid to Africa differs substantially from that of the industrial nations of the northern hemisphere in a number of respects:

- South Africa is part of Africa and its future;
- it has developed technologies appropriate to African conditions;
- its own developmental problems are in many ways the same as those of sub-Saharan Africa as a whole;
- it is the object of punitive international action; and therefore
- it has greater difficulty in gaining access to other African countries than has the rest of the world.

As part of Africa, the Republic cannot isolate itself from the consequences of strife and economic decline in neighbouring countries. In recent years, hundreds of thousands of refugees and illegal work-seekers have entered the country, while the breakdown of civil administration in neighbouring countries has led to the resurgence of scourges such as malaria and cholera, as well as animal diseases such as foot-and-mouth and anthrax. South Africa is apt to suffer just as much from locust swarms as the neighbouring countries in which they may have bred. The damage wrought by desertification and other environmental destruction in one country is likely to affect its neighbours too. Economic retrogression in the region, the Republic's economic hinterland, inevitably hurts many South African industries. In brief, it is in the Republic's own interest to assist its neighbours to prosper.

South Africa has a great deal in common with its neighbours — climate,

geology, soil conditions, the pests and diseases that afflict man, beast and plant, and a population the majority of which are black Africans. Thanks to its sophisticated scientific facilities and skilled manpower generally, South Africa has developed an impressive body of know-how and techniques appropriate to its own ecological, economic and social problems, know-how and techniques which to a large extent can be readily applied elsewhere in Southern Africa — and beyond.

South Africa itself is still very much a Third World country. It has a population of which 40 per cent are estimated to be living at or below the breadline; vast numbers of unemployed; large economically backward areas; declining industrial productivity; a serious shortage of critical skills; major financial headaches, and so on and so forth. In 1986/87, its own underdeveloped areas absorbed R4 955 million of central government funds.<sup>3</sup> It is clear that the country's financial and manpower resources for assisting other African countries are severely limited.

Over and above these constraints, South Africa is shackled by economic sanctions and wide-ranging international efforts aimed at isolating it politically, militarily and culturally. It is ironic that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) plays a leading role in these efforts while virtually all its members trade with South Africa. This goes too for neighbouring countries which would suffer damagingly were

the sanctions campaign to succeed in its purpose.

Such punitive measures make it more difficult for South Africa than for overseas countries to communicate with the rest of Africa through normal diplomatic, commercial, academic and personal channels. South Africa's commercial and aid relationships in Africa are thus to a large extent shrouded in secrecy in order to spare its partners embarrassment and avoid countermeasures by third parties.

## The motives underlying South African aid

Unlike Western donor countries, South Africa gives virtually no publicity to its African aid. Guiding principles are rarely discussed in public, and motives even less. Apart from sparing the recipient countries embarrassment, the South African government is anxious not to provide ammunition for its domestic critics: black South African spokesmen maintain that they have greater claim than foreign countries to available aid funds and other resources; white right-wingers object to African aid on principle.

Drawing largely on personal discussion and observation as well as on unpublished written material, however, it is possible to outline as follows the motives underlying South African aid to other African countries.

- As part of Africa, South Africa has a vital interest in stability and prosperity in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Southern Africa.
- Apart from this direct interest, South Africa also feels morally obliged to help Africa as far as possible.
- By demonstrating that isolating South Africa is counter-productive, aid helps the country to break out of the isolation which the OAU is trying to impose.
- Aid helps to correct the negative image of South Africa cherished in many quarters.
- Aid demonstrates South Africa's economic and technological capabilities.
- Successful aid projects are a means of "showing the flag" and stimulating trade and other relations.
- Aid to Southern African countries

promotes regional interaction.

In brief, South African aid, like that of other donors, is guided by a variety of motives, most of which may be summed up as enlightened self-interest. Whereas aid is certainly viewed as a means to gain influence and make friends, South Africa is well aware that gifts cannot turn African leaders into reliable allies and friends, and that the political climate in Africa is at least as changeable as elsewhere in the world.

## Principles guiding South Africa's aid effort

Again drawing on a number of available sources, the principles guiding South Africa's aid may be put as follows.

- Given South Africa's limited resources, projects must not be undertaken unless the expertise and other resources sufficient for success are available.
- Projects must take into account the needs of the recipients as well as those of South Africa.
- Projects must be such as South Africa can afford.
- The emphasis must be on quality rather than quantity; but luxuries which benefit only a handful of people must not be supported.
- Aid must be seen to promote the people's well-being, notably through education and training.
- Partnership and training are to be given preference over charity and dependence.
- The expertise and other resources of South Africa's private sector are to be used to the greatest possible extent.
- Provision for the proper maintenance on a continuing basis of whatever project may be undertaken is to be an essential feature of South African aid.

South Africa knows full well that its approximately 120 aid projects can contribute only in a small way to the easing of Africa's immense problems. It therefore avoids competition with other donors and any duplication of projects.

## Aid projects

Since very little detailed information concerning South African aid has been

published, it is difficult to provide a comprehensive picture, analyse the experience gained or assess the results. Our overview, nevertheless, should give a sound impression of the type of aid given, its geographical distribution, and its efficacy.

## Agriculture

Although about four-fifths of black Africa's population live in rural areas, the continent's agriculture (especially food production) has been neglected. There are growing food shortages. And the income from exports of cash crops is increasingly unable to answer the needs of a rapidly growing population. Help in increasing productivity and introducing greater diversity into Africa's agriculture is clearly what is needed first and foremost.

In late 1989 South Africa was operating some 15 agricultural projects in African countries, four in Swaziland, one each in Malawi and the Comoros, the remainder in Central and West Africa. These projects include five cattle farms varying from a stock-breeding unit to the establishment of a commercial red meat production unit. Other schemes concern the cultivation of improved seed, the introduction of improved plant material and new types of crops, the cultivation of crops for fodder, and the production of vegetables. The nutritional basis of the countries in question is thus strengthened and diversified.

Apart from assistance to countries which, like South Africa itself, are situated in subtropical Africa, South Africa is well placed to promote agriculture in the tropics. Climatic and soil conditions, pests and diseases in Natal and the Lowveld are similar to those in countries well to the north. New cultivars bred and selected in South Africa can therefore subsequently be introduced there. Similarly, cattle and small stock from South Africa have been found to adapt readily to West African conditions.

The cattle breeding ranch at Granja de los Granaderos on Equatorial Guinea's island of Bioko in particular is considered an outstanding success. It is also exceptional in that a fair amount of information about it has appeared in the South African press.<sup>4</sup>

Acting upon a request by a third party to assist this impoverished country to develop a source of protein,

South Africa embarked upon a project there in 1985 with a herd of 150 cattle, mostly Nguni, and a number of Dorper sheep imported from South Africa. Everything was brought in by air, including 20 000 bags of cement, medicines, fertilizer, lorries, tractors, road-building machinery and so forth. After initial problems of adaptation, the cattle did very well and showed a calving rate higher than the average in Natal. The sheep thrived even more, growing bigger and fatter and bearing more wool than in their accustomed dry South African environment. These results are the more gratifying in that European experts had failed in the same location.

The ramifications of the Bioko project go beyond the provision of protein. The manager's success in growing tomatoes, beans and other vegetables for his own use led him to promote their cultivation by the local people on a cooperative basis. This, too, proved a success. The vegetables are being marketed and bring in cash. Measures to improve the health of the population include malaria control and the erection of a clinic.

For seed, African peasants normally use grain from their previous crop. In time this results in inbreeding, stunted growth and declining yields. By establishing seed cultivation schemes as well as introducing new cultivars, South Africa is assisting several countries. One very successful and productive project in West Africa is being run by a private company which is currently setting up training facilities in Natal for its West African workers.

In the Comoros, again the usual diet of the inhabitants is monotonous. By establishing a 600 ha experimental farm for growing vegetables, South Africa is helping to improve the islanders' food — in quantity no less than in variety and nutritional value. South African-bred cultivars and lines of tomatoes, sweet-potatoes, beans and so forth grow exceptionally well in the Comoros, in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, and even under tropical conditions.

West African countries have been severely hit by falling cocoa prices. South African specialists therefore have begun to introduce South African citrus — navels and clementines — and are confident that even under these tropical conditions favourable results

will be forthcoming.

Due to the high costs of animal feed, a chicken and pig farm in one particular Central African country was experiencing difficulties. South African experts established that soya beans, the meal of which is an important ingredient in animal feed, can be readily grown in the country concerned. The production of soya beans is therefore to begin shortly.

Swaziland is being assisted with the introduction of new cotton cultivars. A South African cultivar (Lido 636) has already proved superior, with outstanding fibre quality. Experiments with other lines are continuing.

Tobacco programmes in Swaziland and Malawi have proved highly advantageous to the growers. Recent data from the Swaziland project revealed a tenfold increase in the receipts of one particular cooperative. Overall production approximately doubled within a year of the project's starting. In Malawi, tobacco diseases such as blackleg, bacterial wilt and oidium pose more problems by the year. South Africa is cooperating with the Malawi Tobacco Research Authority in screening on their behalf South African cultivars with greater disease resistance.

Africa's cattle herds are more afflicted by disease than those in moderate climatic zones. Disease control is important because a healthy animal has greater resistance to adverse conditions, derives greater benefit from its feed, produces offspring regularly, and eventually delivers more food for human consumption.

South Africa with its well organized animal health services and its world-famous Onderstepoort Veterinary Research Institute plays a significant role in diagnosing and combating diseases in neighbouring, and more distant, African countries. There is virtually no country in Africa which does not in some way have contact with, and benefit from, Onderstepoort. In 1983/84, the Institute supplied Africa with more than 2.75 million doses of veterinary vaccines. South African experts and their counterparts routinely meet and learn from each other. Whereas most of these interchanges take place informally, South Africa also has official programmes for assisting neighbouring countries to control diseases such as foot-and-mouth and rabies.

## Wildlife and nature conservation

World-wide publicity has been focused in recent years on the dramatic decline of Africa's wildlife, notably its rhino and elephant populations. Since Africa's wildlife has always been a major tourist attraction and thus a source of income, this decline — apart from other considerations — entails economic losses for the countries concerned. And because South Africa has consistently attached great importance to wildlife conservation, is well known for its game and nature reserves, and disposes of outstanding expertise in this field, it is in an ideal position to assist other African countries to replenish and scientifically manage their wildlife, to plan game parks, train staff and so forth.

At present, South Africa is involved in eleven schemes concerning wildlife and national parks, most of them in Central and West Africa. The emphasis is on technical, relatively low-cost aid, rather than heavy capital outlay. Aside from some donation of animals, the aid consists mainly of counsel and training. In November 1989, as an instance, it was reported in the press that 15 Mozambican game scouts (out of 20 who started the course) had just completed their training in the Songimvelo Game Reserve in Kangwane, South Africa. Among the sponsors of the course were the South African based Endangered Wildlife Trust and the Elephant Foundation.<sup>5</sup>

## Education and training

Most South African aid schemes have a training element. But there are several projects directly concerned with formal education. Examples are the granting of bursaries for the study of applied sciences — medicine, dentistry, veterinary science and architecture — at South African universities; donation of books to university libraries (Lesotho and Malawi); donation of school equipment (Swaziland); assistance to needy students (Malawi); and a school building programme (Swaziland).

South Africa has offered to establish a manpower training centre in Mozambique where about 1 000 persons could at any one time be taught the basic skills of welding, plumbing, motor repair and other trades. The capital cost would be about R3 million. Similar schemes are also envisaged for other

nearby countries. At the Bloemfontein Group Training Centre approximately 200 citizens of Lesotho are already being trained annually in seven-week courses (at a cost of about R200 000) in basic mechanical and maintenance work. Technical assistance is also given to Swaziland. Here it is for the training of factory inspectors and manpower training generally, and in unemployment insurance matters and the rehabilitation and training of physically handicapped persons.

### Human health

Poor health goes a long way to explain Africa's generally depressed economic situation: people weakened by malaria, bilharzia, intestinal parasites and the like, not to mention an inadequate nutrition, are naturally incapable of sustained vigorous effort. What is more, where health services are absent or insufficient, infant mortality is usually high, and this in turn strengthens the wish of parents to have as many children as possible. Since the discrepancy between population growth and limited increases in food and production generally is a crucial feature of Africa's worsening economic and social plight, the provision of proper health services must be an essential precondition for any fundamental improvement in the continent's overall situation.

South Africa's current official aid programme in the health service field embraces twenty projects. They fall into the following broad categories: the treatment of patients, the training of medical and paramedical personnel, donation of equipment and medicines, preventive and control measures, and consulting and diagnostic services. Beyond this, there are the "flying doctor" services financed by major South African companies: specialists and paramedics are flown over weekends to Lesotho and Swaziland where they treat patients free of charge. There is also a vast range of direct professional contact between South African practitioners and their colleagues in neighbouring countries.

In the "patient programmes" thousands of patients requiring specialized treatment are accommodated every year. They come from six countries, including Mozambique, Swaziland, Malawi, the Comoros and Mauritius. In 1987/88, a total of 2 876 patients from African countries were treated at a total

cost of R3,53 million (of which R1,99 million was recovered from the countries concerned). In 1983/84, the number treated was 1 161, increasing in 1985/86, to 1 716. These 1 716 patients receiving hospital treatment came from no less than 13 African countries. Telephonic consultations frequently take place between the South African Medical Research Institute and private medical practitioners, mission hospitals, mine medical officers, and occasionally official health authorities, elsewhere in the region.

Emergency assistance in epidemics has been provided to a number of countries, some far beyond South Africa's borders. Assistance has included medical expertise, laboratory materials, medical supplies, and rare materials needed for the treatment of patients. Mention may also be made of supplies of serums and vaccines generally sold on a commercial basis; in 1983/84, just under 17 000 doses were despatched.

Gifts have included lung-testing equipment, laboratory equipment (Swaziland), X-ray and other medical equipment (Comoros), blood-testing equipment (Malawi), and clinics (West Africa).

In collaboration with the University of the Witwatersrand Medical School, the South African Medical Research Institute is providing post-graduate medical training in the field of tropical medicine. African doctors regularly come from as far afield as West and East Africa to gain the Institute's internationally recognized Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene which qualifies them better to serve their people. Medunsa, the Medical University of Southern Africa near Pretoria, currently has about ten post-graduate students from African (including East African) countries. Three Swaziland students are studying dental medicine there on bursaries from the South African government. A training programme for nurses has been conducted in Malawi for quite a few years, providing virtually all the qualified nurses of which the country disposes. In the Comoros, midwives are being trained.

### Housing

At least two housing projects are being undertaken by South Africa in West Africa. Attention may be drawn to a novel building method developed for the Comoros by the South African

Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in Pretoria. Traditional Comoran building methods, using beach sand and lime (made by burning coral from the reefs surrounding parts of the volcanic islands), are damaging to the ecology and ultimately must threaten both the fishing industry and tourism.

The CSIR's first objective was to develop a building system for constructing good middle-class houses on a great scale. The second was to simplify the system for wider application — so that it could be used by individual Comorans to build houses for themselves. This CSIR building system uses foundation and superstructure walls cast on site, with timber shuttering. Large lumps of lava, readily available, are placed by hand at the base of each shutter, bedded-in, and surrounded by mortar. The mortar is a mixture of cement and volcanic ash from the islands' naturally occurring deposits.

By May 1989, about 30 of the envisaged 80 two-, three- and four-roomed houses had been completed. They cost approximately half as much as the traditional sand-cum-coral houses, and have proved popular with the Comorans.<sup>6</sup>

### Construction and infrastructural projects

Whereas the following projects generally involve much more extensive and costly investment than those mentioned so far, they can be dealt with summarily because inherently they do not differ much from similar projects undertaken by northern hemisphere countries.

The rehabilitation and modernization of Maputo harbour is of considerable direct and practical interest to Mozambique and South Africa. A South African company was entrusted with this work, loans of over R100 million for which were guaranteed by the South African Credit Guarantee Insurance Corporation over the four years ending in 1989.<sup>7</sup> Work is still in progress.

Hundreds of pylons for the power lines running across country from the huge Cahora Bassa hydroelectric scheme in Mozambique to the South African grid have been blown up by Renamo insurgents with the result that for years South Africa has not received power from this source. South Africa has set aside R40 million

for the protection of these power lines, the actual replacement of which is to be financed by Portugal. A third regionally important project in Mozambique is the rebuilding of the road between Komatipoort (at the South African border) and Maputo. South African engineers have already surveyed the road — which is to be an entirely new construction — and are also to build it. Finance has already been promised by a third party. Construction has yet to start, however.

South Africa has also financed the tarring of the Nsoko-Lavumiso road in Swaziland which is important for the flow of commercial traffic to Natal. Malawi has been assisted with the upgrading of its railway telecommunications system, and has also received coaches from South Africa. Minor road construction projects have been undertaken in the Comoros and in West Africa. In Lesotho, the central bank, a stadium and government buildings have been erected. Other projects concern a water purification plant in Mozambique and desalination and power plants in West Africa. The latter two projects also entail rehabilitation work and the training of personnel.

### Training and technology

There are numerous training schemes we have not yet mentioned. South African Airways has made available to the air carriers of neighbouring countries tuition and training facilities for air hostesses, traffic control, engineering, reservation procedures, tariff calculations, and many other airline activities. Quite a few students from Central Africa are studying geology in South Africa. Mozambique and another country further north are being assisted with their geological surveys.

The CSIR, whose name has cropped up already in this article, has established a secretariat for technological cooperation with Africa. The CSIR itself is a vast organization with a total of 4 200 employees and an annual budget of just under R500 million. In 1985/86 it was responsible for the funding and execution of about 13 per cent of all research and development work done on the African continent. Speaking in 1986, the organization's president, Dr Chris Garbers, stated that the CSIR had collaborated with 13 African countries over the past three years, developing not only appropriate

technologies for Third World use, but also strategies for industrialization and high technology.<sup>8</sup> The CSIR will clearly play an increasingly important role in Africa south of the Sahara, and ever closer cooperation in science and technology is certain to benefit the entire region.<sup>9</sup>

There are many other ways in which South Africa seeks to promote the development of neighbouring states. Recent examples include the supply of urgently needed spares for motor boats (Malawi), the provision of printing equipment (Lesotho), funding for moving vital goods (Mozambique and Malawi), assistance to the Malawi Bureau of Standards and funding to enable African scientists to attend specialized conferences.

### Conclusion

As we have indicated, too little data is available for any real evaluation of the effectiveness of South Africa's aid projects. In a technical sense and in the short term, quite a few have no doubt been successes. What cannot be readily determined, though, is the extent to which such projects — the less clearly successful as well as the obvious successes — are contributing to long-term economic progress.

Similarly, it is difficult to know what South Africa has gained politically. So far, not a single African country has followed Malawi's example and established full diplomatic relations. At the same time it must be noted that South Africa is officially represented in at least ten African countries, including Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mauritius and the Comoros. It is no doubt significant that more and more African countries are prepared to associate openly with South Africa. The visits by former State President P W Botha to Mozambique, Côte d'Ivoire and Zaire in September 1988 and President F W de Klerk's visit to Côte d'Ivoire in December 1989 stand in striking contrast to the secrecy marking Prime Minister Vorster's visits to West Africa in the 1960s and other ministerial forays.

The growing rapprochement between South Africa and both neighbouring and more distant African states must be seen against the background of a number of important developments:

- South Africa's growing credibility in Africa, thanks to its role in the Namibian independence process, the African contacts made in the negotiations leading up to that process, and recent changes in its domestic policies;
- the disillusionment of foreign investors and donor nations at the course of Africa's economic and political development;
- Western Europe's preoccupation with preparations for its closer economic union in 1992;
- the vast opportunities for Western trade and investment that have been opened up by the dramatic changes in the USSR and Eastern Europe set in train by President Gorbachev's *perestroika*;
- the end, for the time being at least, of superpower competition for influence in Africa; and
- the growing awareness among African leaders that their former Western and Soviet Bloc allies are losing interest in Africa.

As a result of these changing situations, ever more African countries are placing great hopes on closer economic ties with South Africa. South Africa, in turn, is actively propagating closer regional cooperation in terms of a Southern African Development Programme in which South African technological and managerial expertise will combine with private capital and enterprise from the West to help develop the rich potential of Southern Africa. Existing regional ventures such as the Cahora Bassa hydroelectric scheme, the Lesotho Highlands Water Project and the Sua Pan soda ash project in Botswana have set a pattern for intraregional interaction from which the entire region will benefit and which can be readily built upon in future.

Such intraregional interaction entails true partnership between independent states; does not demean any one of them; and promotes economic development more effectively than the aid described in this article.

### Notes and references

- 1 This article is based on a paper presented at the symposium, "Development aid: What works and what doesn't", held at Tamkang

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- 2 For a detailed description of these exchanges see Erich Leistner and Peter Esterhuysen (eds), *South Africa in Southern Africa - Economic interaction*, Pretoria: Africa Insitiute of South Africa, 1988.
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# West Africa — The mineral ports of Liberia, Guinea and Mauritania

*Denis Fair, Senior Research Fellow at the Africa Institute, concludes his series on the ports and harbours of sub-Saharan Africa.*

The economies of Liberia, Mauritania and Guinea depend heavily upon the export of minerals — iron ore and pellets in the case of the first two and bauxite (the ore of aluminium) in the case of the third. In 1987, 57 per cent and 41 per cent, respectively, of the value of Liberia's and Mauritania's exports came from iron ore while no less than 83 per cent of Guinea's exports was accounted for by bauxite and alumina. Over the past 40 years investment in mining and associated infrastructure in these countries has been enormous, the main railways and the ports they feed having been built and improved primarily for the transport of these minerals and their loading into bulk ore carriers for export mainly to Western Europe, the United States and Japan. The extent of the investment in port infrastructure can be gauged from the fact that of the total tonnage of import and export cargo (including petroleum products) handled by the major ports of these three countries — Buchanan and Monrovia in Liberia, Conakry and Kamsar in Guinea and Nouadhibou in Mauritania — no less than 90 per cent is accounted for by the export of processed minerals and ores.

## Liberia

Liberia became an independent state in 1847 when freed slaves from the United States were settled in Monrovia

and at other centres along the coast. But there was no real economic development until the present century when large international companies began to exploit the country's raw materials. The first of these was rubber, Liberia's dominant export between 1926 and 1960, when it was superseded by iron ore, with timber also a significant export since 1961. Since the 1970s the government has steadily reduced the influence of the multinationals in the production and export of these and other raw materials, itself taking a substantial investment stake in their operations. In 1987, 95 per cent of the value of the country's exports came from five commodities — iron ore (57 per cent), rubber (23,3 per cent), timber (9,4 per cent), diamonds (2,9 per cent) and coffee (2,6 per cent). However, nearly 80 per cent of the labour force have little to do with the export economy and are concerned with traditional and some commercial agriculture. The population of Liberia today numbers 2,5 million.

Mining of iron ore commenced in 1951 and expanded to a peak output of 25,3 million tons in 1974, making Liberia Africa's chief producer. However, since 1980 the country has suffered political and economic setbacks. Foreign confidence and investment have declined, as have world demand and prices for its export commodities. In 1974 the value of iron ore exported was \$262,2 million,

representing 66,5 per cent of total exports. Thirteen years later, by 1987, output had fallen almost by half to 13,9 million tons and the export value to \$218 million (less in real terms), representing 57 per cent of total exports, posing severe financial problems which have exacerbated the country's critical international debt commitments.

An aspect of Liberia's economy which is responsible for substantial government revenue is its Liberian-registered merchant fleet, comprising ships of many countries of origin. However, the tonnage of ships operating under this "flag of convenience" fell by 35 per cent between 1982 and 1986 due to a decline in the world oil tanker fleet, competition from other states using the same "open registry" system, and increasing international criticism of the system.

## Monrovia

The Liberian coast, described as "350 miles of mainly lagoon-studded shoreline" provides no sites for natural harbours and in this respect resembles the featureless sandy coastline of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo and Benin. To replace the earlier inadequate surf ports of Robertsport, River Cess, Greenville and Cape Palmas, modern artificial ports had to be built if Liberia's economy was to grow once its iron ore resources began to be tapped.

Iron ore was first discovered in Liberia in 1934, at Bomi Hills, 40 km north of Monrovia. But it was not until 1951, three years after the Americans completed the building of a new port at Monrovia, that it was possible for the newly established Liberian Mining Company (LMC), then largely American owned, to export its first ore. In 1961 the National Iron Ore Company (NIOC) on the Mano river was opened and the 70 km railway line from Monrovia to Bomi Hills was then extended to its present length of 150 km. Both mines are open-cast as is a third iron ore mine, opened in 1965, north-east of Monrovia by the Bong Mining Company, a mainly German-Italian concern. Again a specially built railway 78 km from the port to the mine was built as well as a pelletizing plant.

The port of Monrovia was built behind two breakwaters projecting 2 km into open sea, giving a sheltered harbour of 300 ha. Development of the port infrastructure in the 1960s was particularly active after the NIOC and Bong mines came into production. Ore carriers were then able to load at three finger-piers serving the needs of the three mining companies. By deepening the harbour and providing mechanical loading facilities, vessels of up to 90 000 tons were loaded with ore and concentrates, at the rate of 2 000 tons per hour. In addition, the port possessed a quay for general cargo, a fishing quay, a small dry dock and facilities and storage areas for off-loading petroleum for the Liberian refinery and for loading liquid latex. Moreover, Monrovia had been established as a free port, allowing the import and re-export of goods, stored or processed within the port area without the payment of duty. By 1968, 10.4 million tons of cargo was being handled by the port of which 9.97 million tons was iron ore, along with some 50 000 tons of rubber. The remainder was incoming general cargo and petroleum.

Improvements were steadily made to the port's operations and, to meet the needs of the larger ore carriers then coming into service, depths in the harbour and at the wharveside were increased so that vessels of up to 120 000 dwt can now be accommodated. By the mid-1970s, when the export of Liberian ore was peaking at 25 million tons, the volume of ore handled by Monrovia

was still about 10 million tons. The remainder came from the country's largest mine, opened in 1963 by the Liberian American Swedish Minerals Company (Lamco), which used the newly built port of Buchanan for the shipment of its ore and pellets (see below). Total traffic through Monrovia was about 12 million tons per year in the mid-1970s, the extra 2 million tons arising out of the city's position as the country's main centre of commerce and industry. More than half of Liberia's population of 2.5 million live within the city (450 000) and its hinterland.

Since 1977, and especially since 1985, when the recession set in, both the Bomi Hills and the NIOC mines have closed or had their production curtailed. Consequently, in 1987 the output of ore and pellets in the Monrovia region was down to only 8.9 million tons, 1.6 million from LMC and 7.3 million from Bong, with commensurate on traffic through the port. In 1988 a German firm took over the management of the port with the possibility also of modernizing its facilities and later expanding the port. Under a contract financed by the European Community, this company has had considerable experience in managing a number of other West African ports including Nouakchott, Conakry, Tema, Takoradi and Freetown.

### **Buchanan**

Lamco's investment in 1963 was massive. It entailed opening the high-grade iron ore mine in the Nimba Mountains on the border with Guinea, the building of both a new port, Buchanan 97 km south-east of Monrovia and a 265 km connecting railway between the port and the mine, together with the construction in 1968 of a pelletizing plant at the port. This plant made for the more efficient export of some of the iron in the form of concentrates rather than as unprocessed ore.

Like Monrovia, Buchanan is an artificial port built behind two breakwaters. At first ore carriers of up to 45 000 dwt were accommodated, but the need to take the larger new-generation vessels of up to 200 000 dwt has necessitated the deepening of the harbour and improving loading facilities. There are also quays for commercial traffic and for the export of timber and rubber. The port also handles a limited amount of transit trade to and from neighbouring

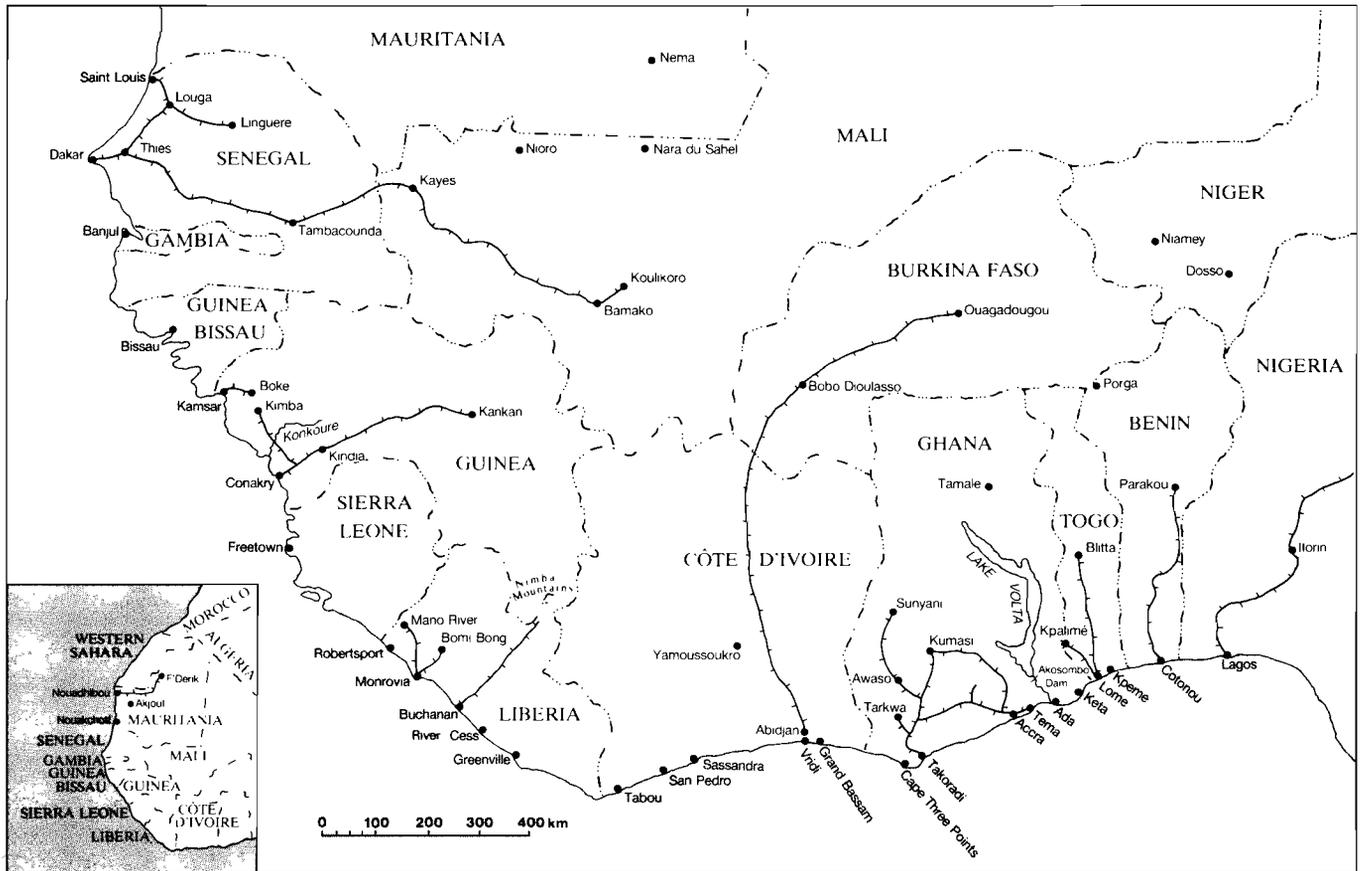
Guinea, there being a contract for the railway to carry these goods in addition to its prime purpose as an ore carrier. In 1968, five years after commencing operations, Buchanan handled 8.7 million tons of ore and pellets compared with only 100 000 tons of general cargo, 61 000 tons of which was imported petroleum products. By 1980 Lamco was producing half of Liberia's iron ore and by 1981 the export of ore and pellets through Buchanan amounted to 11.5 million tons. Another 255 000 tons was other incoming and outgoing cargo.

Events since the early 1980s, however, have been dramatic. Diminishing ore reserves and rising working costs, together with the recession in world demand for iron ore and steel, have forced Lamco to cut back its output drastically, even to the extent of threatening closure. The American firm Bethlehem Steel Corporation had sold its interest in Lamco in 1984 to a government-owned company after production at Mt Nimba had slumped by one-third in 1982 to 7.8 million tons. By 1987 output was down to 4.9 million tons, with a consequent effect upon traffic through Buchanan. Some respite could come from the mining and export of high-grade ore in the Nimba Mountains across the border in Guinea. This would mean the extension of the existing railway line from Buchanan by 17 km. Although production is planned to begin in 1990-91 no firm arrangements have yet emerged for making the project operational; nor will the unsettling political events of early 1990 help in this regard. As it is, the scale of the project has been cut from a proposed output of 15 million tons of ore per year to 4.5 million tons in view of the economic outlook for iron and steel.

There are three other potential iron ore projects in Liberia but all have been shelved until such time as world markets revive. The first is the Putu Hills deposit in the south-east with possible export through Greenville. The second and third are at Wologosi and Bie Mountains, in the far north-west and west respectively, which would necessitate the building of a new railway line of over 250 km to a new export harbour at or near Robertsport.

### **Greenville and Harper**

These two small ports are also specialist ports. The first, built in 1963, is



primarily concerned with the export of timber and logs; the second, built in 1959, handles timber, rubber and some agricultural products. Improvements to these harbours have recently been made but the total traffic handled by both in recent years is no more than some 400 000 ton per year or 1,5 per cent of Liberia's total maritime traffic. However, some encouraging increase in the export of logs and timber has occurred, recently valued, some believe, at over \$100 million in 1988. This compares very favourably with the value of iron ore exports of \$218 million in 1987.

### Guinea

Guinea, formerly French Guinea, gained its independence in 1958. It is rich in mineral and agricultural resources, possessing the world's largest reserves of bauxite, a valuable diamond mine and commercial crops such as coffee and cocoa. After independence its economic development should have been prosperous, but for reasons that were mainly political this was not to be.

Relations with France were severed, necessitating the development of entirely new economic connections, and a highly centralized socialist form of government was adopted which, for lack of skilled personnel, was incapable of managing the economy. Only the mining sector was left in private hands. Following a military coup in 1984 more liberal social and economic policies were embarked upon, backed up by the implementation of economic reforms proposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and other Western creditors. Although the country's external debt remains a cause for concern an improvement in the growth of real gross domestic product (GDP) has been registered since 1986.

Although 80 per cent of the population of 6,5 million is involved in agriculture, the export of bauxite and alumina dominates the economy, accounting for 83,2 per cent of the value of exports in 1987. Diamonds and gold account for 13,6 per cent and coffee for 2,7 per cent. In all, mining provides more than 50 per cent of government revenue. In recent years government revenues have

been heavily determined by contract, rather than by market, prices for bauxite. In future contract prices will be more closely related to market prices. The latter rose encouragingly in 1988.

Bauxite production has averaged 14 million tons per year over the past five years. Production comes from three main areas, two of which are served by the port of Conakry and one by the newer port of Kamsar.

### Conakry

Conakry, the capital, has a population of almost one million. Although Guinea has an indented coastline, a swampy low-lying plain inhibits the building of towns and ports near the sea. However, at Conakry a rocky spur — the Kaloum peninsula and Tombo island — projects into the sea and provides a solid foundation for the town and the port. The latter is situated on the island and is joined to the peninsula and the mainland by a road and rail bridge. The railway to the interior was commenced from Conakry in 1900 and reached its present terminus at Kankan, 650 km to the north-east on an upper

branch of the Niger river, in 1914. The port is described as an improved natural harbour unencumbered by the strong Atlantic surf, sand-bars and lagoons, unlike some other ports along the West African coast. The port's functions expanded in 1952 when iron ore was mined on the Kaloum peninsula nearby, but this activity was abandoned in 1969.

In the meantime, major investments were made in the 1950s by Fria, an international consortium, to work the bauxite deposits by open-cast methods 145 km north of Conakry at Kimba, to which a branch line was built from the Conakry-Kankan railway. In 1960 the company opened a refinery to produce alumina from the ore, which has a metallic content of 46 per cent. The capacity of the plant is 700 000 tons of alumina per year. In 1988 output was 570 000 tons produced from about 1.2 million tons of ore. In 1973 the government acquired a 49 per cent share in the operation and the company is now known as Friguia. A four-year plan was embarked upon in 1987 to increase the company's production capacity. This includes replacing obsolescent mining and refinery plant and equipment, rehabilitating the electricity generating and supply system and improving transport installations. These improvements should raise alumina output to 670 000 tons per year. A second mine, run by a government-owned corporation, has an output capacity of 3 million tons of bauxite per year but it has no alumina refinery. It is located at Dèbélé near Kindia, about 100 km from Conakry on the Kankan line. Shipments of ore from the mine began in 1973 and part of the output goes to the USSR.

The port of Conakry has some 1 400 km of quays and was considerably improved after 1960 for the handling of alumina in bulk, of fruit and of general cargo. Vessels of up to 43 000 dwt can be accommodated. In recent years improvements have been made to the fishing port, including expansion of quays, handling equipment and storage facilities. In 1987 a further phase, financed by international agencies, was commenced. This includes the construction of a container quay, a refuelling quay for vessels of up to 25 000 dwt and the dredging of the harbour and approach channels. In addition, the increased output from Friguia,

expected to materialize in 1991, will necessitate the improvement and enlargement of the alumina handling facilities at the port. The current programme also covers transport in the hinterland of the city and the port in order to improve the access of rural agricultural producers to Conakry. Moreover, a new fishing centre was opened near the port in 1988. Both these developments are aimed at reducing Guinea's dependence on bauxite — by doubling coffee exports by 1991 and resuming the export of fish, tropical fruits and cocoa. Conakry handled some 4.7 million tons of cargo and commodities in 1986, 80 per cent of which was exports. Of these, in turn, over 3 million tons was bauxite and alumina. The most important imports are petrol and petroleum products.

Two proposed mining developments would have a profound effect upon the port if implemented. First, alumina refining and aluminium smelting plants with a combined capacity of 450 000 tons per year are envisaged at the bauxite deposits at Tougé-Dabola about 400 km north-east of Conakry. Second, a new 870 km railway and a new deep water port are planned at Conakry for the export of the rich iron ore deposits from Mt Nimba in the extreme east of the country. The first project is not likely to see the light of day until at least the mid-1990s, while the second has been shelved in favour of exporting the ore via the Liberian port of Buchanan. But, as mentioned earlier, this outcome is also far from certain.

### Kamsar

Kamsar, Guinea's second port, is comparatively new. The port and a connecting railway of 140 km were completed in 1973 with the opening of the rich Boké-Sangaredi bauxite deposits in the western part of the country 250 km from Conakry. The mining complex is run by the Halco consortium of international aluminium companies in which the Guinean government has 49 per cent of the equity but takes 65 per cent of the profits. The metal content of the ore is very high (60 per cent alumina) and is exported in its raw state without refining. Output from Boké varied from 8.4 million to 10 million tons per year between 1983 and 1987 but fell to 8 million tons in 1988, all of which was exported via Kamsar. This port thus

handles more than twice the total tonnage that passes through Conakry.

The port of Kamsar is one of West Africa's typical estuarine ports and is situated on the east bank of the Rio Nunex 17 km from the sea. The port facilities are dominated by the bauxite loading wharf. With a depth alongside of 13.5 m, large ore carrying vessels can be accommodated. General cargo handled is small and the main unloading facilities are for petroleum products. Activity at the port would considerably increase should the Ayé-Koyé bauxite deposits in the Boké region, with a potential yield of some 9 million tons per year, be developed. However, a refinery and a smelter to process the ore would have to wait upon the development of sufficient power resources — such as a supply from the proposed Konkouré river hydroelectric project, which has been mooted for many years. While interest in the mining and power projects has been shown by international concerns the cost involved is considerable. Implementation would require not only the assembly of financial backing from numerous sources but also greatly improved world demand and prices for alumina and the finished product.

### Mauritania

The Islamic republic of Mauritania was formerly part of the vast colonial territory of French West Africa. It gained its independence in 1960. Its economy stands on three main pillars — traditional pastoralism, a mining sector and a growing fishing sector. Between the commencement of iron ore exports in 1963 until the mid-1970s this sector was the chief earner of foreign exchange. However, when world iron ore demand and prices began to fall — an economic setback exacerbated by the West African drought and by guerilla action in the mining region over the disputed possession of neighbouring Western Sahara, formerly Spanish Sahara — a decade of recession set in from 1975 to 1984.

Since 1985 the government has adopted an economic recovery programme supported by the International Monetary Fund, with a strong emphasis on what the Economist Intelligence Unit calls "projects with immediate productive impact (essentially fishing and agriculture), the rehabilitation of

productive capacity and existing infrastructure (essentially mining and transportation infrastructure) and absolutely essential physical and social infrastructure". However, fishing and mining remain the country's principal providers of export commodities. By 1983 fishing had become the chief earner of foreign exchange and by 1986 contributed 59 per cent of the total value of Mauritania's exports, iron ore accounting for 41 per cent.

### Iron ore mining

Iron ore in Mauritania could hardly have been found further from the country's main area of settlement and economic activity. This high grade deposit found near F'Derik (Fort Gouraud) and opened between 1960 and 1963 lies in the desert Saharan zone 700 km north of the capital Nouakchott and well beyond the Sahel zone where 90 per cent of the population live. As was the case with the opening of Liberia's iron ore mines, the infrastructural investment was enormous. A mining town had to be built at Zouérate, power and water supplies laid on, and a 650 km railway line had to be constructed through the desert from the quiet fishing harbour of Nouadhibou, formerly Port Etienne, on the desolate western coast of the Sahara. Here too a new town had to be built, as well as sophisticated facilities for the loading of large ore carrying ships. The mining company concerned with these developments was Miferma (*Société des Mines de Fer de Mauritanie*) owned almost entirely by interests in France, the United Kingdom, Italy and West Germany. In 1974 the Mauritanian government nationalized the operation and control was taken by Cominor (*Comptoir Minier du Nord*), the main subsidiary of the state mining and industrial holding company Snim (*Société Nationale Industrielle et Minière*).

Output rose rapidly within five years of the opening of the mine, to 7.7 million tons in 1968, the bulk going to West European countries for which the Mauritanian ore was well located. In fact, at this time the government was considering the establishment of an integrated iron and steel mill at Nouadhibou. By 1974 output reached a peak of 11.9 million tons, only to be set back by a period of political instability and hostility. In 1975 Spain ceded sovereignty over its former colony,

Western Sahara, to Morocco and Mauritania. The Polisario Front, however, claimed the right of self-determination for the territory and over the period 1976 to 1979 attacks were carried out on the railway line, Zouérate and the port of Nouadhibou. In 1979 Mauritania renounced its claims to any part of Western Sahara and the attacks ceased. By then, however, the fall in world demand for iron ore was setting in and exports fell to 7.4 million tons in 1983.

More recently, because of some improvement in demand and the opening of further ore deposits in 1984, necessitating the extension of the railway 40 km to El Rhein, exports rose to some 9 million tons in 1987 and to 10 million in 1988. However, the fact that prices for iron ore have not risen much has meant that revenues received by the mines have stagnated recently to between \$130 million and \$140 million per year. Most recently, new high grade ore deposits found at M'Haoudat near Zouérate can be mined more profitably than in the costly operation at El Rhein, so that a new mine could be opened by 1993. These high grade ores do not require beneficiation and would need only a rail extension of 30 km from the existing line.

### Nouadhibou

It was fortunate that the nearest point in Mauritania which could serve as a harbour for the export of the iron ore from F'Derik had all the advantages necessary for shipping the ore. The village of Nouadhibou lay on Lévrier Bay behind the Cape Blanc peninsula, 50 km in length from north to south. Not only is the site protected from the strong Atlantic swell, but the depth of water and the relatively small tidal range allow large vessels to enter the bay. No other site along the West African coast from Dakar to Casablanca enjoys the natural advantages of Nouadhibou. Moreover, the shores of that part of West Africa are washed by the cold waters of the Canary current, the type of marine environment which makes it one of the world's richest fishing grounds.

Within five years of the commencement of iron ore exports in 1963 Nouadhibou had a population of 12 000 and comprised a number of elements — the town itself, a residential area for mine personnel, a commercial port, a

fishing port and a mineral loading facility at Point Central 15 km south of the town. The rapid mechanical unloading of ore trains from F'Derik and the loading of vessels of up to 150 000 dwt makes the operation a very efficient one. A further increase in efficiency is envisaged with a feasibility study to assess the possibility of establishing a pelletizing plant with a capacity of 2 million tons per year along the lines of the Buchanan plant in Liberia. This will raise the iron content of the export product from 40-45 per cent (ore) to 65-68 per cent (pellets). The proposal is backed principally by Arab interests and the pellets would be exported mainly to the countries of north-west Africa and to Egypt.

Between 1969 and 1978 copper was mined at Akjout 300 km to the south-east of Nouadhibou. It was originally thought that this mineral would also be exported via that port but an existing road to Nouakchott 250 km to the south-west favoured its export via that harbour.

As the centre of Mauritania's fishing industry Nouadhibou has seen an exceptionally rapid growth in this sector in recent years. From 77 000 tons of fish and fish products exported in 1980 the amount has grown to 381 000 tons in 1987, with a concomitant increase in the facilities, vessels and personnel involved in the industry. Nouadhibou is also served by an international airport.

### Nouakchott

Nouakchott is the capital of Mauritania. Until a new deep water harbour was completed in 1986 the only port facility was a lighterage quay connected to the shore by a gangway. Only small vessels could be accommodated and Lloyds advised ships that when weather and sea conditions turned for the worse they should weigh anchor and move out to sea "as the coast offers no natural shelter". The quay could handle 400 000 tons of cargo per year including the export of copper concentrates from Akjout until the mine closed for economic reasons in 1978.

The new deep water port, described by the Economist Intelligence Unit as "a tremendous engineering feat", was built and financed by the Chinese. It is an artificial port and during construction workers had to contend with the heavy Atlantic swell, currents and waves. Construction commenced in

1980 and the port was officially opened in September 1986. The handling capacity is 500 000 tons per year and three vessels of 10 000 to 15 000 dwt can be accommodated at its 585 m quay. A great advantage of the new port is that it eliminates the previous need for Mauritania to route 35-40 per cent of its maritime traffic through Dakar in Senegal, nearly 500 km to the south. Additional commodities that may be routed through the new port in future are gypsum as well as copper from the Akjout mine, the reopening of which is being considered.

A further opportunity of which the port could take advantage is the completion in 1985 of the 1 100 km Trans-Mauritanian Highway from Nouakchott to Nema near the border with Mali. Should roads from the Malian

towns of Kayes, Nioro and Nara du Sahel be linked to the new highway an alternative route to the sea would be available to land-locked Mali which now uses Abidjan, in Côte d'Ivoire, and Dakar as its main export outlets. Nouakchott is served by an international airport.

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# The energy crisis in rural Ciskei

*Dr G J Steyn, Head of the Department of Agricultural Science at Vista University, provides an insight into the energy crisis facing households in rural Ciskei.*

## Introduction

In the last decade, developing countries have faced three related energy problems. Firstly, there has been a steep rise in the price of imported energy. Secondly, traditional sources of energy (firewood, charcoal, dung and agricultural waste) required to meet basic domestic needs, such as cooking, heating and lighting have become scarcer and more costly. Rapid population growth has resulted in such an increase in the consumption of traditional fuels that the natural regeneration of natural resources has become inadequate. Fuelwood collection and the felling of forests for commercial purposes have led to rapid deforestation, soil erosion, the silting-up of rivers and general soil depletion. Thirdly, the rural and urban sectors need additional energy if they are to increase productivity and provide essential services.<sup>1</sup>

Conditions in the less developed areas of Southern Africa are similar to those found in many Third World countries. Scant attention has been paid to the energy problems of developing countries and lack of a national policy for investment in energy means that even the most urgent needs of this sector cannot be met.<sup>2</sup>

In the case of Ciskei, the lack of data on energy consumption and demand has aggravated the problem. Apart from three detailed local studies of energy consumption in developing areas,<sup>3</sup> three studies have been done in Ciskei itself. Tarlton studied the role of community woodlots in the collection

of fuelwood and Sipuka carried out a time study on fuelwood collection.<sup>4</sup> In his study of patterns of energy consumption patterns in rural and peri-urban areas without electricity, Eberhard considered the full range of energy sources.<sup>5</sup>

In a farming systems study of two areas in Ciskei, wood was found to be still the most common source of energy. However, it has become increasingly difficult to obtain, even at considerable expense, with the result that alternative sources of energy such as paraffin, have to be used. The over-exploitation of local wood resources has led to a serious retrogression of range lands and an alarming loss of soil as a result of erosion. These conditions, in turn, directly affect the quality of farmland and crops.

## Methodology

In this article, general patterns of energy consumption will be discussed and special reference will be made to the full range of energy sources.

The investigation was confined to two typical subsistence or below-subsistence communities in the Peddie district, selected on the grounds of apparent infrastructural, organizational and socio-economic differences (*Figure 1*).

Nyaniso lies on the outskirts of a town and has all the usual amenities, whereas Lujiko lies approximately 25 km from a town and consequently has few amenities and hardly any infrastructure.

The field research was planned over a one year period and undertaken in 1986. In order to obtain reliable data, in-depth interviews, based on a questionnaire, were conducted. Because of the small populations involved in the research (280 households at Nyaniso and 274 at Lujiko) a random sample of 14 per cent was taken as representative. One local enumerator per study area was furthermore accepted as adequate. All statistical calculations were done with the SPSS statistical package on a Prime 750 computer.<sup>6</sup>

## Patterns of energy consumption

In less developed rural areas energy is mainly required to meet basic domestic needs, such as cooking, heating and lighting, and women and children spend considerable time and energy collecting fuelwood, dung and crop waste. Fuelwood yields approximately 86 per cent of commercial energy in these areas.<sup>7</sup>

The types of fuel generally used for cooking, heating and lighting at Nyaniso and Lujiko at the time of the study are listed in *Table 1*.

It was evident from the survey that respondents from Nyaniso used more modern technology for cooking, lighting and heating. Two of them (5 per cent) had gas stoves and 10 per cent had gas lamps. Coal stoves were used by 18 per cent. At Lujiko neither coal nor gas was used. No fridges were recorded at Lujiko, but at Nyaniso 5 per

**Table 1**  
**PERCENTAGE OF VARIOUS FUELS USED FOR COOKING, HEATING AND LIGHTING AT NYANISO AND LUJIKO (N = 89)**

	Firewood	Dung	Waste	Paraffin	Candles	Coal	Gas	Batteries
Nyaniso (n = 39)	100	0	0	100	29	18	15	66
Lujiko (n = 50)	100	63	89	100	45	0	0	71

cent of respondents had refrigerators and another 5 per cent paraffin refrigerators. Three respondents had petrol/diesel generators, which they used for lighting.

## Fuelwood

The mean annual consumption of fuelwood for cooking and heating is shown in *Table 2*. The figures were derived from estimates of the number of head-loads used per week and the average mass of head-loads.

These estimates are subject to error as the consumption of fuelwood varies according to season, and household estimates are not accurate. Sipuka found that 318 kg of fuelwood were consumed per capita per annum.<sup>8</sup> Eberhard found a relatively accurate correspondence between measured and estimated consumption.<sup>9</sup> Seasonal variations in fuelwood consumption may arise not only from the weather (more wood being required in winter than in summer), but also from social custom. Liengme found that the largest quantity of fuelwood was consumed in August, the month in which young girls are initiated and considerable quantities of sorghum beer brewed for the celebrations.<sup>10</sup> Sipuka found that the largest quantity (63 per cent), of fuelwood was consumed in June/July which confirms that during winter wood is used for cooking as well as for heating.<sup>11</sup>

**Table 2**  
**MEAN ANNUAL CONSUMPTION OF FUELWOOD FOR DOMESTIC PURPOSES AT NYANISO AND LUJIKO (N=81)**

	Consumption per household (Kg)	Consumption Per capita (Kg)
Nyaniso	2 964	491
Lujiko	3 402	766

Several authors have argued that the consumption of fuelwood is closely related to its availability.<sup>12</sup> According to Eberhard, the consumption of wood should not be interpreted entirely in terms of the prevalence of natural indigenous woodland cover as the availability and price of wood from plantations will also affect consumption.<sup>13</sup>

Ninety-six per cent of households from Lujiko and 90 per cent from Nyaniso claimed that it had become more difficult to obtain fuelwood and that they had to go further afield to do so than a few years ago. According to Eberhard, acute scarcities are not experienced in all areas; villages along the densely forested Transkei coast have access to abundant wood supplies.<sup>14</sup>

## Time spent on collecting fuel

In most less developed countries women and children, especially girls, spend considerable time and energy collecting fuelwood, dung and crop waste for cooking, heating and lighting. According to Tarlton the time taken to collect one head-load at two hours.<sup>15</sup>

Respondents understandably found it very difficult to estimate distance and time accurately, and therefore all figures have to be regarded with circumspection. From local observation, however, it was evident that fuelwood was seldom collected closer than 3 km from

the homestead. If specific species were sought the distance would often be considerably longer. Dry wood was seldom found close to the villages.

At Lujiko wood could be more easily obtained from neighbouring forests in the Fish River valley, but 51 per cent of respondents nevertheless purchased fuelwood. Only 28 per cent of respondents from Nyaniso collected fuelwood some 4,5 km away, whereas the rest relied on purchased wood. The majority (85 per cent) of those who collected from surrounding forests at Nyaniso did so every third day, and the rest once a week. At Lujiko, the majority (58 per cent) collected wood every second day and 33 per cent every third day. On average, respondents from Lujiko spent four hours per trip whereas residents of Nyaniso spent up to five hours per trip.

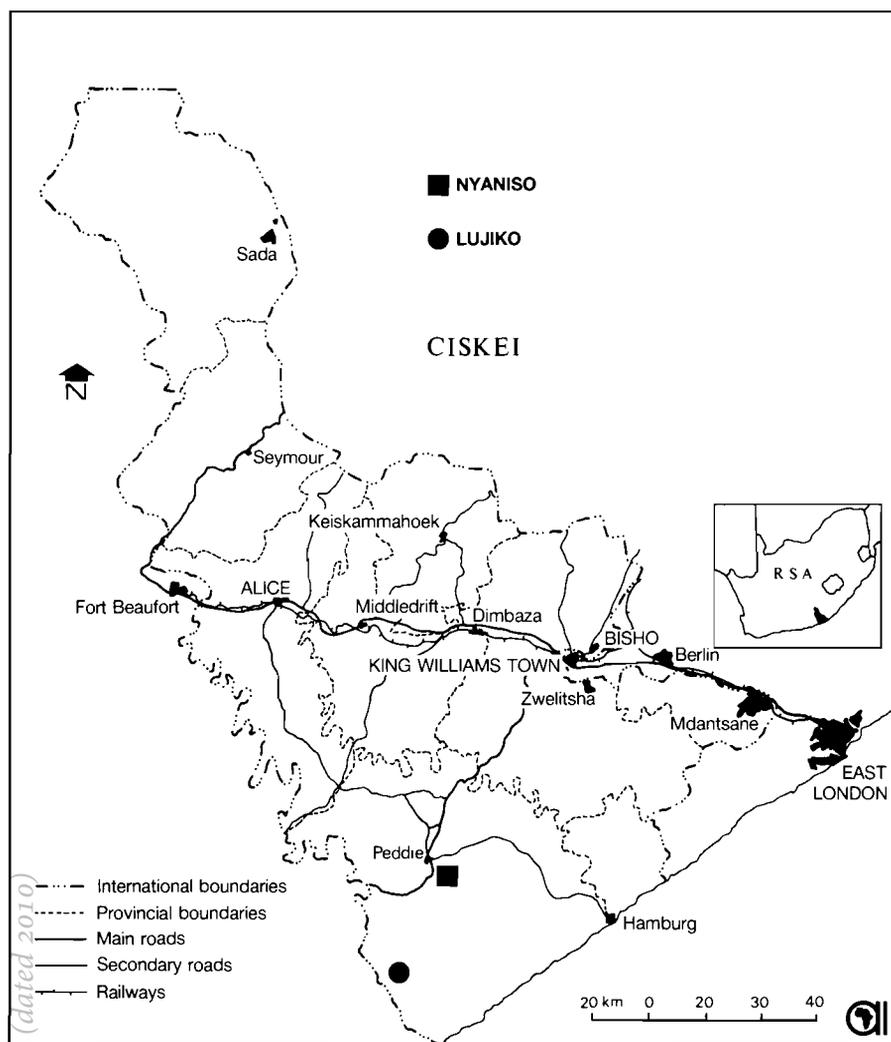
## Type of wood collected

Women generally did not favour large pieces of fuelwood although these were often readily available. Large pieces of wood require splitting before use — unnecessary hard work, especially if small pieces are available. Women did not mind collecting smaller bundles of wood more frequently when it could be done close to their homes.

The average diameter of pieces of wood collected in the Amatola Basin varied between 2 and 6 cm; 50 per cent of bundles had no pieces measuring more than 6 cm.<sup>16</sup> Where there was a wide selection of fuelwood, it was the smaller pieces that were collected. This is in keeping with the traditional method of building a fire, and smaller pieces are also easier to ignite than large ones.

It was observed that woodpiles adjacent to homes usually comprised pieces markedly larger in diameter, the average pieces found in head-loads. This could well be because larger, sturdier pieces are better stored than the smaller ones, which are therefore used first.

The depletion of indigenous forests in developing countries has increased the burden upon women. As a result of the poor heating properties of some of the trees and shrubs now commonly used, larger quantities of fuelwood are needed for cooking on open fires. This means that women who do the cooking are more exposed to smoke and, in some cases, very unpleasant odours from the fires.



### Cost of fuelwood

The shortage of fuelwood has considerably increased the cost of living. A rather startling factor emerging from Eberhard's study is the extent to which this once "free" natural resource has been commercialized.<sup>17</sup> Strict control measures introduced in Ciskei to protect indigenous forests stipulate that only dry (dead) wood may be collected from these forests. Consequently, 51 per cent of families from Lujiko and 54 per cent from Nyaniso resorted to buying fuelwood. At Lujiko, truckloads of wood were bought from adjacent farms for up to R54 per load. The local chief was one of the main suppliers of fuelwood in the area. At Nyaniso, wood was obtained quite far afield and prices ranged from R40 to R90 per load, depending on the size of the load.<sup>18</sup>

Respondents from Nyaniso spent on average R16,91 per month on fuel whereas respondents from Lujiko spent only R11,40 per month.<sup>19</sup> However,

Bembridge found that respondents in Transkei spent only R10,40 per month on fuel.<sup>20</sup>

In days gone by women looked forward to fuelwood gathering trips, which played an important social role by providing an opportunity for frank discussion and gossip away from the men and other members of the community.

The general poverty in rural areas has caused many to resort to cutting any tree near the home to obtain material for building houses, cattle kraals and other structures. However, using poor quality building material may prove very expensive as structures erected in this way will require frequent repair.

The fines instituted by the Ciskeian government for the illegal cutting of green (live) trees, prevent people in rural areas from admitting that they do this. These fines have provided some measure of protection for trees and indigenous forests especially along the Fish River valley. Nevertheless, 2 per

cent of households at Lujiko acknowledged that green wood was still being cut.<sup>21</sup>

### Waste products as fuel

For all practical purposes fuelwood has run out. Instead, animal dung and crop waste — maize cobs and stalks, and cotton and millet stalks — are used as fuel. In many instances, however, these materials also serve as valuable fertilizer or fodder.<sup>22</sup>

In recent studies Eberhard found the majority of households to use dung as alternative fuel.<sup>23</sup> On the other hand, Tarlton found that only 9 per cent of households in the Amatola Basin used dung as fuel.<sup>24</sup> Apart from the extremely unpleasant smell, particularly when the fire is first lit, cow dung is uneconomic as fuel. It can be used much more effectively as a fertilizer to increase soil quality and therefore harvests.<sup>25</sup>

Some 60 per cent of households at Lujiko used cow dung as fuel. Eighty-six per cent of this dung was collected from the veld and 14 per cent from cattle kraals. At Nyaniso, only 5 per cent of respondents were found to use dung as fuel.

Cow dung is primarily used for brewing beer because it provides a low-temperature fire. Such fires are also used for heating water used for washing. Dung is usually collected by women and girls.

Maize being the major crop in most rural areas in Ciskei, it came as no surprise that maize cobs and stalks were an important substitute for fuelwood. The majority of respondents (90 per cent) from Lujiko used maize cobs, while 18 per cent used the stalks. In the past two seasons Nyaniso had a complete crop failure and therefore respondents could not use waste as fuel.<sup>26</sup>

Many traditional subsistence farmers cannot afford chemical fertilizers. Recycled dung and crop waste are therefore often the sole source of nitrogen, sulphur and phosphorus for their fields. If waste products are not recycled, yields will inevitably decrease drastically.<sup>27</sup> It was found that dung and crop waste were not used in the areas of study to sustain soil fertility. Lack of transport was mentioned as the main reason for this. The severe drought experienced over the past few seasons meant that crop waste did not feature as a major source of energy in

these two areas.<sup>28</sup>

## Commercial fossil fuels

Today is paraffin the fuel most commonly used for cooking, except in these areas where fuelwood is still readily available.<sup>29</sup> When finances permit, rural women are quite willing to use other sources of energy, including paraffin, gas and electricity.

Although substitutes for fuelwood are receiving increasing attention, they are unlikely to be adopted for at least a considerable period of time. These renewable sources of energy require additional, relatively costly, appliances. Also, new energy sources often imply a change in cooking methods, something that cannot be achieved overnight.<sup>30</sup>

At Lujiko, 85 per cent of respondents said wood provided the cheapest fuel for cooking. This was confirmed by Eberhard, who noted that 94 per cent of households said they had problems with using paraffin, particularly because of its cost.<sup>31</sup> From general observation during the survey it was clear that paraffin was more readily used for cooking at Nyaniso than at Lujiko.<sup>32</sup>

## Creating more fuelwood resources

The felling of indigenous trees will continue because of pressure from the population and the increasing demand for agricultural land and fuelwood, but some of the adverse ecological and social consequences may be avoided by putting more emphasis on the extension of forestry practices. In turn, this will create employment opportunities.<sup>33</sup>

Traditionally, the Xhosa are cattle owners and subsistence farmers who regard trees merely as a source of fuel, building and fencing material. Conservation, in the form of planting trees to renew a dwindling resource, is foreign to the rural Xhosa and will remain so until traditional attitudes and behaviour are altered by means of well-designed extension programmes. For this reason most attempts at establishing and managing wood-lots have been unsuccessful.

In most of these projects the emphasis was on planting more trees. According to Arnold the same increase in trees may sometimes be achieved more rapidly and cost-effectively by

improved management of remaining indigenous wood resources.<sup>34</sup>

## Conclusion

In subsistence households most energy is used for cooking and heating. The ecological effects of the loss of tree cover in Ciskei are well documented. Fuelwood deprivation is, however, but one aspect of a more complex process of rural deprivation. The extra time spent collecting might have been used more productively, and this is one of the most obvious elements of rural deprivation.

A general shortage of fuelwood in many areas suggests a need for improved fuel technology and for the establishment of efficiently managed commercial wood-lots in various administrative areas.

The role of women in planting and tending trees must be recognized and exploited by the authorities. Technical advice and information on how best to cultivate trees must be provided. Research and extension services, oriented towards community forestry, must be established.

In most rural areas, correct management existing woodlands, together with the planting of trees in denuded areas around villages, could ensure a continuous supply of fuelwood.

Wood-lots need only be managed on a short-term, coppice rotation basis, since smaller pieces of wood are preferred. The establishment of wood-lots of suitable exotic or, preferably, indigenous species for fuel and building timber is essential to prevent complete destruction of woodlands.

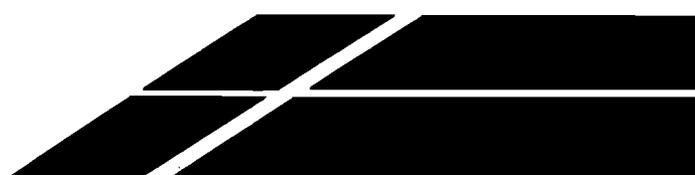
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# AFRICA MONITOR




## Africa monitor October to December 1989

Marita Snyman and Jenny Macgregor

### NORTH AFRICA

#### Algeria

At the national **party congress** held in November there was an unexpected political return of old-guard leaders: anti-reformists, they included the previous prime minister, Kasdi Merbah, and Abdelaziz Bouteflik, foreign minister for former hardline socialist president Boumedienne. Initially there was uncertainty as to whether the congress was a victory of the opponents of reform, who could hinder Pres Chadli Bendjedid's goal of a thorough rejuvenation of the ruling National Liberation Front (FLN), or a qualified success for the reformers. A month later the central committee voted for a new 15-man politburo, the body which takes the important decisions in Algeria. As not one of the **old guard** was elected, their influence is likely to be diluted by the defenders of the political and economic reforms (KT 2/12; E 9/12, 13/1; JA 18/12).

At least 24 people were killed and 456 injured in late October when an **earthquake**, measuring six points on the Richter scale, hit Chadli Nador in western Algiers (C 31/10; DN 2/11).

The World Bank is financing a \$300 mn loan to assist in the financing of **economic reforms** (AP 11/89).

Algeria's state oil and gas monopoly, Sonatrach, has negotiated contracts, initially worth about \$600 mn, with a number of European and US companies in an effort to increase the country's gas export capacity. Algeria wants foreign partners to share the massive development costs required for research and development (AE&M 2/11, 30/11; C 13/11; ARB 30/11).

#### Chad

Official returns showed that Pres Habré received a 99 per cent "yes" vote in the **presidential elections** held on 10 December, the first in two decades. Pres Habré was the sole candidate and claimed that the result gave him a seven-year mandate as president and

approval for a **new single-party constitution**. Since the suspension in 1975 of the 1962 constitution, Chad has been ruled by transitional regimes (SWB 24/11, 2/12, 29/12; KT 28/11; AC 15/12).

A joint commission set up to resolve differences between Chad and **Libya** which met on three occasions during November and December, failed to make further progress other than to renew commitments to the "**Algiers accord**" of 31 August. Despite the accord conflicts continued, notably in the Darfur region of Sudan where Chadian government forces claimed to have destroyed a military base of the "Libyan Islamic Legion", (the government's name for the opposition forces led by Col Deby). Libya denied any connection with what it called "the imaginary and unfounded so-called Islamic Legion." (SWB 3/11, 4/11, 16/11, 29/12; WA 6/11; ION 25/11; KT 28/11; ARB 15/12).

*(Chadian opposition to delivery of French military aircraft to Libya — see Libya.)*

#### Egypt

Egypt and **Sudan** have signed a trade protocol for the year 1989/90 worth \$322 mn, 50 per cent up on the the previous year's (ARB 31/10).

Talks between Egypt and the **IMF** on a possible standby arrangement ended in stalemate, despite hopes of an agreement following the World Bank approval of recent government pledges to liberalize the state-dominated economy. Approval from both institutions was needed before Egypt can hope to reschedule its \$50 bn foreign debt (DT 17/11; AA 24/11).

Two decades after Libya severed relations with Egypt, Pres Mubarak met with Libyan Pres Gaddafi in October at a Libyan coastal resort for reconciliation talks. Hoping to end several years of hostility, the two leaders met on three subsequent occasions over a period of two months. Agreement was reached on a new framework for economic and technical cooperation and the setting up of offices in each

other's capitals, although the two countries stopped short of announcing a full resumption of diplomatic ties. Relations first began to thaw in May 1989 after Egypt was readmitted to the **Arab League** from which it had been boycotted because of its 1979 peace treaty with Israel. As chairman of the OAU, Pres Mubarak appears to be playing a pivotal role as conciliator in the latest search for a Middle East peace settlement (KT 19/10; ARB 15/11, 15/1; TS 16/11; SWB 14/12).

#### Libya

After years of rigid state control, private business is being encouraged, rules on foreign travel have been relaxed and more goods have been allowed into the country. But the **economic relaxation** in Libya, aimed at defusing political discontent after years of austerity, has resulted in the trade balance moving into deficit for the first time since 1973. Economists have pointed out that the problem of the country living beyond its means could itself fuel a political crisis (DT 12/12; TS 27/12; ARB 31/12).

Libya signed a \$100 mn trade pact with Iran covering the exchange of goods and the continued employment of Iranian experts in the oil industry (ARB 31/12).

Libya suspended transport and communications links with **France** in mid-December in response to a French government decision to withhold the return of three Mirage fighters and the delivery of other weapons bought by Libya. In mid-November France had authorized the return to Libya of the jets, which it had impounded when they were returned for repairs in 1983, in retaliation for the major offensive undertaken by Libya against Chad. France said that the improvement in Chadian-Libyan relations since the signing of the Algiers accord in September justified the return of the aircraft. Chad, however, protested that the move was premature and amounted to a partial lifting of the arms embargo on Libya. Subsequently Pres Mitterand took exception to

Col Gaddafi's remarks about France's immigration policy and rescinded the decision to return the aircraft (SWB 21/11; ARB 15/12, 15/1).

(Peace talks with Chad — see Chad; Reconciliation talks with Pres Mubarak — see Egypt; Diplomatic relations with Côte d'Ivoire — see Côte d'Ivoire; Arms shipment to Somalia — see Somalia.)

## Morocco

Hopes of a settlement to the 16-year-old war in Morocco (raised by the recent defection of several Polisario members) were shattered by the dramatic intensification of military activity during October and November. Following nine months of relative calm, pending the resumption of UN/OAU peace talks, on 7 and 11 October Polisario carried out two major offensives along the "defensive wall" which surrounds the territories occupied by Morocco. After the first attack Polisario claimed to have pushed enemy lines back 25 km, and to have killed 200 Moroccan soldiers. On November 8 a third assault, coinciding with Moroccan celebrations of the 1975 "Green March" invasion of the Western Sahara, took place at the central Imgall sector of the "wall"; Polisario claimed to have killed more than 250 Moroccan soldiers and to have inflicted substantial material losses.

The reason given by Polisario leaders for the resumption of hostilities was that King Hassan had persistently refused to hold direct talks. However, political commentators believe that the resumption of large scale military attacks is a response to King Hassan's statement on 21 September that he would never negotiate with "his own citizens". With the recent defection from Polisario of Omar Hadrami, hard-liners within the movement are also thought to be taking a dominant role.

Following the attacks, King Hassan cancelled any further peace talks and announced the holding of a referendum on 1 December to approve the postponement of the elections planned for 1990 in Morocco, in order to allow the UN to organize a referendum on the future of the Western Sahara. Polisario rejected the referendum on the basis that the "problem of the Western Sahara is a decolonization issue and has nothing to do with Moroccan internal affairs." It reiterated its call for immediate and direct talks to draw up the conditions for the holding of a UN referendum. The Moroccan referendum produced a massive vote in favour of postponing general elections.

Although Morocco's interior minister has ruled out retaliatory military attacks against the rebels, who have bases in Algeria and Mauritania, it is feared that prospects for a newly formed union of North African states may be seriously jeopardized (KT 9/10; WA 16/10, 30/10, 20/11; CI 1/11; SWB 10/11, 18/11, 4/12; ARB 15/11, 15/12, 15/1; JA 4/12; DT 5/12; NA 1/90).

Following on the appointment of Moulay Zahdi in October to the newly created post of minister of privatization, the government voted in mid-December to dispose of 113 companies, including 37 hotels and four

banks, over a six-year period. Moves to privatize are influenced by the fact that the public sector absorbs more than 10 per cent of state expenditure (ARB 30/11, 15/12; AR 11/90; JA 10/12).

(Re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Benin — see Benin.)

## Sudan

Gen el-Beshir's military junta, initially camouflaging its ideological leanings, is now openly perceived as being aligned with the National Islamic Front. Judges known to favour secularism have been replaced by others sympathetic to Islamic fundamentalism, and there has been a purge in the civil service directed against secularist-minded individuals. Accusations of corruption have been made against many of the former political leaders, among them Sadiq el-Mahdi, who has been placed under house arrest. Others have received punishment ranging from the death sentence to long-term imprisonment.

Failed attempts to negotiate with the SPLA, which has been fighting since 1983 against the domination of southern Sudan by the Moslem north, have in turn resulted in the collapse of the five-month old *de facto* truce. SPLA leader John Garang declined the offer to take part in the government's September peace initiative to discuss ways to end the civil war, because of the refusal to abrogate Islamic law (*shari'a*). The government offered instead to institute a federal constitution, which would offer the south a measure of autonomy. The SPLA responded by launching a major offensive in late October, capturing the strategic towns of Kurmuk, near the Ethiopian border, and Koriabuth.

The sharp increase in the level of fighting led to intense diplomatic activity and early in December unconditional peace talks were held in Nairobi under the auspices of US ex-Pres Jimmy Carter. These broke down on the SPLA's continued insistence that *shari'a* be suspended and the state of emergency be lifted to allow a ceasefire and a constitutional conference. The rebels group also dismissed the junta's plan for a federal system which would allow the south to opt out of *shari'a*.

On 7 December the government announced its decision to begin implementing the *shari'a* law of punishment — *hudud*, which allows for punitive amputation — and to step up the war against the SPLA. Reports of a sharp increase in fighting in the south followed. There were numerous reports of starvation following the breakdown in UN relief supplies as a result of the government ban on 2 November of the use of rail, road and river routes to the south. With the collapse of the peace talks, it was feared that the famine of two year ago, when at least 250 000 people died as an indirect result of the civil war, could be repeated.

In reaction to the military government's intransigence and the growing belief that the new regime was strongly influenced by Muslim fundamentalists, Sudan faced increasing international isolation. There was a noticeable growth in support for John Garang's SPLA among members of the OAU and from

influential leaders such as Pres Mugabe and Pres Kaunda; the USA also appeared to have toughened its stance towards Khartoum; and even Egypt, one of its Arab allies, became highly critical of el-Beshir's government. In contrast, Iraq's attitude warmed (TWR 4/10, 18/10, 1/11, 15/11, 22/11, 13/12, 3/1; ARB 15/10, 15/11, 15/12, 31/12; WM 20/10; KT 1/11, 17/11, 27/11, 13/12, 4/1; AC 3/11; DT 17/11, 21/11; ION 18/11, 9/12, 16/12; SWB 20/11, 4/12, 7/12; C 21/11; AE 12/89; E 23/12).

Ethnic clashes between Arabs and Africans in central Sudan in late December left 186 dead, 4 Arabs and 182 from the African Shilluk tribe. In a similar incident the previous month, 68 African Nuba tribesmen were killed (TS 13/11; KT 4/1).

Adding to the pressures that el-Beshir's government is facing are the IMF demands for a new programme and the repayments of \$60 mn of the more than \$1 000 mn arrears the government owes. With a current account deficit estimated at \$450 mn for 1988, and inflation reaching 90 per cent at the end of 1988, Sudan faced an economic crisis. Although an economic recovery and development programme was prepared by the IMF in 1984 to redress the budget and current account deficits by imposing austerity measures, none of the governments since that time have been prepared to risk introducing it (AB 10/89; LT 16/11).

(Trade protocol — see Egypt; Bombing of Ugandan town — see Uganda).

## Tunisia

Pres Ben Ali ruled out the acceptance of any religiously-based political parties in an opposite reference to the religious movement, **Ennahda**, which for several years has sought recognition. Addressing parliament on 7 November, he emphasized the need to separate politics from religion, saying that the state was the single defender of Islam (CI 1/12; ARB 15/12).

## WEST AFRICA

### Benin

The social tension in Benin continued to build with more strikes in protest against the protracted non-payment of civil service salaries. On 2 October the government met one of the conditions laid down by the teachers for the resumption of classes by releasing the last two people who had been detained for several months after taking part in a strike. The teachers returned on 26 October, only to threaten to strike again from 8 December if salary arrears were not met. Demonstrations by school pupils and students to express solidarity with the teachers took place at the beginning of December, often being dispersed by troops and ending on 11 December with some arrests. In the meantime, the Beninese government frantically negotiated with delegates from the IMF and the World Bank, in an attempt to obtain fresh financial aid to pay salaries. On

18 December journalists and radio and television workers went on a 48-hour strike, also protesting about the non-payment of their salaries. They were joined by members of the People's Convention (a coalition of opposition movements tightly controlled by the Communist Party) who demonstrated and called for the resignation of Pres Kérékou. This social disorder continued despite the official announcement on 7 December that communism would be abandoned and a prime minister would be elected in 1990, in accordance with demands made by the **IMF** and **World Bank** as preconditions to their providing the equivalent of three months' salaries for the civil servants. The public appeared sceptical about the news, not knowing if Benin is moving from a one-party to a multi-party system (SWB 9/10, 1/12, 5/12, 7/12, 21/12; ARB 31/12; AC 1/90).

On 5 October it was announced Benin and **Morocco** would resume diplomatic relations broken off 12 years ago after Benin accused Morocco of being involved in the coup attempt of 16 January 1977, by providing training facilities for mercenaries led by Bob Denard. (SWB 13/10; WA 30/10).

A Boeing 707, bought by Pres Kérékou in May 1989, started to create a stir in Belgium where it is kept at an airport. The "flying apartment" with gold-plated seat-belt buckles and a king-sized bed previously belonged to Rev Sun Myung Moon of the Unification Church and was bought by the president for \$10 mn. The Benin treasury did not have the money to pay for an overhaul and in addition the company controlling the airport demanded \$14 700 in overdue parking fees for the six-month period to November (AA 24/11).

The former president of Benin, Sourou Migan Apathy died in Paris on 3 December at the age of 76. He was head of state from 1970 to 1972 (SWB 7/12; WA 25/12).

## Burkina Faso

Despite any substantive evidence from the Burkinabe government, the second **coup attempt** in the space of three months seems to have taken place on 24 December. It was claimed to have been masterminded from neighbouring Ghana, where Captain Boukary Kabore, the former Burkinabe commander of the regiment at Koudougou, has been living since fleeing after the October 1987 assassination of ex-president Thomas Sankara. He denied all claims that he was involved in this coup attempt. As many as 50 people, including several junior army officers, were arrested. Many people in Burkina Faso believe that in his determination to stay in power, President Campaoré is using investigators to track down potential plotters (SWB 28/12, 1/1; AA 5/1).

On 15 October the governments of Burkina Faso and **Côte d'Ivoire** signed an economic cooperation agreement in Abidjan according to which the Côte d'Ivoire will give preferential treatment in terms of customs tariffs to Burkinabe traffic going through Ivorian ports. Burkina Faso, a landlocked country, committed itself to transporting a substantial part of its goods through Ivorian ports on Ivorian

ships (ARB 30/11).

President Campaoré officially opened construction work on the Bagre hydroelectric dam on 17 October. The dam will be built at Tebagre (175 km south-west of Ouagadougou) at an estimated cost of CFAFr46.8 bn. The electric power station will provide approximately 33 per cent of the annual production of the National Electricity Company, Sonanbel, and will irrigate 7 400 ha of land. Various banks and international bodies have contributed to the financing of the dam, including the Arab Bank for Development in Africa, the African Development Bank, the West African Development Bank and France's Central Fund for Economic Cooperation. The civil engineering work is being carried out by the Italian firm Torno (ARB 31/10, 30/11; AE&M 2/11, 4/1).

## Côte d'Ivoire

On 28 December, and following his talks with some 2 000 members of the Ivorian elite to discuss grievances, Pres Houphouët-Boigny said in a speech to the nation that **no multi-party system** would be implemented until "national unity is achieved". He explained that the country consisted of 60 tribes and that national unity could not be achieved in 10 to 30 years. Pres Houphouët-Boigny was severely criticized by Professor **Laurent Gbagbo**, the chairman of the opposition movement, Ivorian Popular Front (FPI), who said the Ivorians are ready for a multi-party system. He also challenged the regime to propose a government and social programme to free the country from its crisis of growing insecurity. In a speech in London's Africa Centre in October, Gbagbo said the Ivorian and Zaïrean single parties were as oppressive as those in East Germany and Romania (SW 2/10; AA 27/10).

The Ivorian and Libyan governments established diplomatic relations on 6 October (ARB 15/11).

On 26 October the World Bank agreed on a loan of \$50 mn to Côte d'Ivoire. This represented the first instalment of a total contribution of \$216 mn from the Bank to the Ivorian **structural adjustment programme**. Under the terms of this deal the authorities have promised to take measures to restore the budgetary balance and reduce the Agricultural Products Stabilization Fund's deficit, thought to be about \$466 mn. They are also to try to increase the effectiveness of recovering duties and to balance income and expenditure by new budgetary austerity. This announcement by the World Bank followed the decision by a group of donor countries meeting in Paris to provide \$380 mn to Côte d'Ivoire to cover its financial needs until the end of 1990. The meeting of "Friends of the Côte d'Ivoire" brought together representatives from Canada, Spain, the US, France, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, West Germany, the ADB, the European Investment Bank, the EC and the United Nations Development Programme (ARB 30/11).

On 1 December South Africa's Pres **F W de Klerk** met Pres Houphouët-Boigny in Yamoussoukro for talks on Angola and on

South Africa's domestic policy, as well as the expansion of contacts in trade and technology already existing between the two countries. South African products are openly on sale in Côte d'Ivoire, despite an OAU trade ban, and South African Airways has a weekly direct flight between Johannesburg and Abidjan. South Africa is to provide Côte d'Ivoire with a comprehensive and substantial technical aid package, centred on developing its gold mining industry. It was reported after the meeting that full diplomatic relations between **South Africa** and Côte d'Ivoire may become a reality as soon as Mr Nelson Mandela was released (SWB 1/11, 2/11, 2/12, 4/12; BD 1/12, 4/12; SS 2/12, 3/12; S 4/12, 5/12, 6/12).

Two members of the **Togolese** opposition, Godwin Tete and Kuevi Akue, were detained by the Ivorian government on 17 December after documents found in their possession were held to be hostile to the Togolese regime. The documents were said to be the manifesto of the Democratic Convention of African Peoples, which denounces the dictatorship of General Eyadema since he took power in 1967, and demands a multi-party system as well as a change of regime. They were both expelled from Côte d'Ivoire on 3 January 1990 (SWB 29/12, 3/1).

(*Negotiations with Pres Houphouët-Boigny — see Angola; Economic cooperation agreement — see Burkina Faso.*)

## The Gambia

Since the break-up of the **Senegambia Confederation** on 30 September, Senegal has been accused of applying an economic squeeze on The Gambia, which is virtually dependent on it for essential commodities, ranging from cooking gas to empty cement bags. Matters developed to the point where Senegal virtually closed borders to Gambian commercial vehicles. Blackouts occurred in The Gambia because the flow of lubricating oil from Senegal was stopped. Senegalese customs and other officials have also been accused of harassing Gambian citizens travelling to and from their country.

After protests by the Gambian government on 14 November, Senegal replied that the **restrictions** were entirely in line with the trade policies of CFA Franc Zone states, and were conceived to defend the economic interests of Senegal.

Pres Jawara and Pres Diouf of Senegal had talks on 15 December in Dakar and afterwards Pres Jawara reported that the **tension** between the two countries was easing (SWB 17/11, 22/12; WA 20/11, 27/11, 18/12; ARB 15/12).

The IMF has approved a \$5.3 mn loan to support the second annual economic and financial plan, under the enhanced **structural adjustment programme**. During 1988/89, the government made further progress in its medium-term programme by continuing structural reforms and a liberalized trade and exchange system. The fact that The Gambia also pursued responsible fiscal and monetary policies and attained greater public-sector efficiency, contributed to the IMF's approval (IMF S 27/11; ARB 31/12).

(Relations with Mauritania — see Mauritania.)

## Ghana

The government of Flt-Lt Jerry Rawlings celebrated eight years in office on 31 December facing many difficulties and **dissension** within its own ranks. The trouble started with the arrest and detention of leaders of the Ghana Bar Association in June, followed by the government cancelling the Sixth Biennial Conference of the African Bar Association scheduled for Accra from 17 to 22 September, explaining later that the Ghana Bar Association had planned to use the conference to destabilize the regime. On 23 September the government announced the removal of Lt-Gen Arnold Quainoo from his position as General Officer Commanding Ghana's armed forces, without citing reasons. Rawlings himself took over the post (NA 12/89).

On 6 October the government announced the arrest of five officers allegedly involved in a coup plot three weeks earlier. The incident was referred to as the **Quarshigha affair** after the alleged leader, Maj Quarshigha. Questions are being asked about the death in detention on 29 September of one of the arrested officers, Flt-Lt Domie. The government announced his death only on 11 November, claiming that he had committed suicide.

Some commentators saw the discovery of the "plot" as an excuse to purge the security services of unreliable elements, but felt that Rawlings could be in an embarrassing position if Quarshigha eventually had to face charges in an open court (AC 20/10; SWB 13/11; TS 13/11; ARB 15/11, 15/12; WA 20/11, 27/11; AE 12/89; AA 8/12; NA 1/90; AP 1/90).

## Guinea

On 1 October the Guinean President, Gen Conté, said in an address to the nation that a **two-party system** would be initiated in Guinea in about five years' time. The President of the Republic and head of government would also be elected by universal suffrage for a five-year term of office, renewable only once. It was also decided that a unicameral parliament would be elected and the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government would be clearly separated. A National Recovery Council (CNR) would be set up in April 1990 to oversee the country during the transitional period and would consist of both civilian and military members. Gen Conté blamed the one-party political system for the gross abrogation of the citizen's constitutional rights that had occurred in Guinea and also for the country's slow economic and social progress (JA 23/10; SWB 27/10, 7/11; WA 6/11; ARB 15/11).

Guinea has launched a **conservation** project for the country's forestries and fisheries and secured an IDA credit of \$8 mn and a World Bank loan of \$8 mn. Guinea itself will provide the remaining \$6 mn to finance the four-year project. The scheme aims to protect 300 000 ha of forest and train 80 forest engineers. This has become necessary because of the heavy and uncontrolled demand for wood, which has

resulted in deforestation in coastal and farming areas. The project also aims to improve the operations of the fisheries department through technical assistance and support for licensing programmes, research and planning. It also plans to monitor and control fishing in select areas (WBN 26/10; ARB 30/11; AP 1/90).

## Guinea-Bissau

The **maritime dispute** between Guinea-Bissau and Senegal, which dates back to the 1970s, was again on the agenda when Pres Vieira met Portuguese Pres Soares and Prime Minister Cavaco Silva in Portugal on 30 October. Pres Vieira reported that both his hosts had assured Guinea-Bissau of their support in the peaceful settlement of the maritime conflict. During a visit to Guinea-Bissau on 20 November, Pres Soares reaffirmed his support for Guinea-Bissau and said he had been in personal contact with Pres Mitterand of France to find a solution for this problem. The dispute was also discussed when Pres Vieira visited Zaire on 14 December to brief Pres Mobutu Sese Seko and appeal for his mediation in resolving it. In the meantime, Senegal's minister of foreign affairs, Ibrahima Fall, said on 2 November in Paris that Senegal does not intend to resume oil exploration in the disputed offshore zone. According to Fall, Dakar had agreed that litigation should continue before the International Court of Justice (SWB 6/11, 22/11, 16/12; AE&M 16/11).

## Liberia

On 24 December about 100 exiled government opponents and alleged Ivorian nationals entered **Nimba County** in north-east Liberia from Côte d'Ivoire, led by Charles Taylor, who fled Liberia in 1986 after being accused of embezzlement. The Liberian government said the rebels attacked villages near the border and killed some 16 officials and more than 200 civilians. Amnesty International, however, called on the government to stop extra-judicial executions and said that government forces retaliated brutally, burning villages and killing large numbers of civilians unconnected with the **rebels**. It also said as many as 20 000 refugees were reported to have fled to Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea in the days that followed (SWB 1/1, 15/1, 16/1; KT 8/1; S 16/1; DT 16/1).

On 9 October the governments of Liberia and Taiwan signed a joint communique formally restoring diplomatic relations between the two countries. Two days later the People's Republic of China suspended diplomatic relations with Liberia in protest. The events are seen as the coming of age of Taiwan's "economic diplomacy". Liberia reacted by closing its embassy in Beijing and recalled its staff. Liberian students in the People's Republic (PRC) would also return home due to the PRC's unwillingness to continue sponsoring them. It was reported that Taiwan would take over the funding of the scholarships (SWB 5/10, 18/10, 8/11; KT 11/10; ARB 15/11; WA 20/11).

Pres Doe announced certain **austerity measures** on 22 November, describing the "new

Liberian economic order" as being necessary because the plight of the country's economy had reached crisis proportions. These measures include the privatization of the entire customs service as part of wide-ranging measures to broaden the revenue base and improve economic performance. Certain taxes will be eliminated, a flat 5 per cent import tax will be levied and the price of petroleum products and rice will be increased in line with wage increases which come into effect on 1 January 1990. The suspension of duty-free privileges was also announced, although accredited diplomats would not be affected (WA 18/12; ARB 31/12).

## Mali

On 23 November Mali's principle creditors — France, Italy, Netherlands, United Kingdom and Switzerland — announced a **rescheduling** of Mali's debt, estimated at \$2,11 bn (ARB 31/12).

## Mauritania

The **border dispute** between Mauritania and Senegal about the north bank of the Senegal river continued with conflicting demands being made by the two sides. Mauritania sought compensation for goods seized from Mauritians in Senegal and Senegal wanted the border redrawn. Since the two states broke off diplomatic relations in August, various mediation efforts achieved nothing. On 8 November Senegal's Pres Diouf claimed that Senegal had chosen the diplomatic path to settle the conflict and asked his people to adhere to this. However, some Senegalese groups evidently continued raiding.

Mauritania formally accused the Senegalese of forming an anti-Mauritanian lobby to provoke racial hatred in Mauritania. At the beginning of November, several clashes were reported in the border area following disputes between local farmers over the cultivation of land, on the Mauritanian side of the river, which had been farmed by Senegalese for decades (SWB 31/10, 7/11, 8/11, 15/11, 5/12; WA 20/11; ARB 15/12, 15/1).

## Niger

On 10 December the Nigerien electorate took part in **presidential and legislative elections** for the first time in 19 years and some 3.5 mn electors voted for a president and 93 deputies. The present head of state, Gen Ali Saibou, was the single candidate in the election for a president with a seven-year mandate. During his electoral campaign, Gen Saibou promised the continuation of the policy of food self-sufficiency and economic recovery. Of the registered electorate, 99.6 per cent voted for Gen Saibou, while 99.52 per cent supported the list of deputies chosen by the National Movement for the Development of Society. A turnout of about 95 per cent was claimed (SWB 7/11, 13/12, 23/12; ARB 15/12, 15/1).

On 7 November Niger and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen established diplomatic relations at ambassadorial level (SWB 11/11).

In mid-November Gen Saibou began the process of Niger's **administrative decentralization**, announcing the doubling of the regional investment budget for the 1990 financial year. The funds would be devoted mainly to developing out-of-season crops, which should enable Niger to fill its cereals deficit. This new strategy is aimed at involving people more in the management of public affairs and in alleviating the inadequacies of an administration characterized by "blockages" (ARB 31/10, 31/12).

## Nigeria

On Independence day, 1 October, the Nigerian government ordered the release of 26 **students** who had been detained since the violent protests against the government's economic austerity policies in May. Six of the universities which were closed down were allowed to reopen earlier than expected, on 30 October. As a prerequisite for opening, the government introduced a number of stringent formalities, including the signing of a good behaviour undertaking by the students. From now on students would have to pay in full for any damage done to property during student demonstrations (K 10/89; ARB 15/12).

Pres Babangida announced on 7 October that the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) decided to dissolve all 13 parties which had applied for registration following the lifting of the ban on party politics in May. In their place the AFRC itself created **two new parties**, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC). These were to be, respectively, "a little to the left" and "a little to the right" of centre in the political spectrum, a description which led to much speculation and confusion, not least amongst the politicians, who had spent time and money in trying to devise parties with acceptable nationwide support.

In the meantime, Nigerians began asking whether **state funding** of the new political parties was a good idea. At first it seemed that it would deny Nigeria's power-seeking millionaires the chance to become paymasters of a future civilian government. But estimates for transforming the SDP and NRC from mere notions into credible parties able to fight general elections were about \$350 mn. Some people feared that the generals might find the democratic exercise too costly and decide to retain power instead.

On 4 December the government released the constitutions and manifestos it had drawn up for the two parties. Since they came from the same committee, it was understandable that the draft documents and constitutions for the two parties resembled each other, while the manifestos were based on a formalistic textbook conception of the necessary difference between progressive and conservative parties (K 10/89; S 9/10; DN 9/10; SWB 10/10, 27/10; AA 13/10, 24/11; E 14/10; WA 23/10, 18/12; TWR 8/11; ARB 15/11, 15/1)

A Nigerian diplomat, 56-year-old **Emeka Anyaoku**, was elected **secretary general of the Commonwealth** to succeed Sir Sridath

Ramphal, at the Commonwealth summit held in Kuala Lumpur from 18 to 24 October (JA 6/11).

Nigeria's deepening debt crisis was emphasized with the signing of another agreement for rescheduling its debt to Sweden on 23 November. The accord, the second between the two countries, provides for repayment of the debt from 1995 after a five-year grace period. This agreement is the seventh to be signed and ten similar agreements are expected to be signed between Nigeria and its creditors in the Paris Club. Nigeria's economic decline has been so severe that it now ranks as one of Africa's poorer nations with income per head estimated at less than \$300 compared with over \$1 000 a decade ago (ARB 31/12).

## Senegal

The World Bank-backed **structural adjustment programme** has caused widespread discontent in Senegal. Prominent trade unionists criticized new employment regulations passed in parliament on 4 October, while market traders staged a one-day strike in protest against the increases in sales tax and import duties. Taxation on most household items such as soap, milk and butter — but excluding rice, cooking oil and sugar — was raised by at least 10 per cent. The new employment law gave employers power to issue fixed-term employment contracts and make workers redundant without prior government authorization. The World Bank made a reduction in the number of civil servants a precondition for granting a fourth structural adjustment loan of \$150 mn (ARB 30/11).

*(Border dispute — see Mauritania; Relations after Senegambia Confederation — see Gambia).*

## Sierra Leone

On 7 October six men were **executed** for their part in an abortive coup against the government of Pres Momoh in March 1987. Appeals from several governments, including those of the United Kingdom and France, and a campaign on behalf of the six men by Amnesty International had failed to persuade Pres Momoh to exercise his prerogative of clemency (K 10/89; WA 9/10; AE 11/89; ARB 15/11).

## Togo

The Togolese government adopted a **draft budget** for 1990 which, according to a government communique, "reflects the morose economic situation which has prevailed for years on the international plane and which forces our country to pursue an austerity policy" (ARB 31/1).

*(Togolese detainees expelled — see Côte d'Ivoire.)*

## CENTRAL AFRICA

### Cameroon

On 21 November the government announced a big drop in the purchasing price paid to **coffee** and **cotton** producers. For the 1989/90 season

the price of robusta coffee would fall by 60 per cent and that of seed cotton by 32 per cent. These reductions had been expected for some time because of the constant fall in world prices and followed cuts in the prices of cocoa in August. They raised doubts about the future of production as cocoa, cotton and coffee represent approximately 80 per cent of Cameroon's agricultural exports. On a national scale, in seven of Cameroon's ten provinces, sales of these cash crops accounted for half of the peasant incomes (ARB 31/12).

The former Cameroonian president **Ahmadou Ahidjo**, died of a heart attack at his home in Dakar on 30 November. In the preceding month, rumours were rife of his return to Cameroon to spend his last days in his native country. Ahidjo, who was president from 1958 to 1982, was unusual amongst African veteran heads of state in that he voluntarily relinquished power and left the country in 1983. However, he was never allowed to return to Cameroon because of his alleged involvement in the 1984 coup, when it was said that he regretted his abdication (SWB 6/11, 4/12; WA 13/11, 20/11, 18/12; AC 1/12; DT 5/12; JA 10/12; ARB 15/1).

## Central African Republic

On 15 October Pres Kolingba announced a cut in the purchasing price of unhulled **coffee**. He explained that the government supported producer prices by subsidizing coffee with money borrowed from donors in the past three years (ARB 30/11).

## Congo

In a speech on 4 November at a ceremony marking the start of his third term in office, Pres Sassou-Nguesso said he would be devoting himself to the implementation of **economic reforms**. He also said that he was prepared to release some 40 farmers who have been in detention without trial for the past two years on suspicion of involvement in the July 1987 coup plot. However, three officers and three civilians, including Gen Opango, a former head of state, would be brought to trial (WA 20/11; SWB 23/11; ARB 15/12).

On 31 October Pres Sassou-Nguesso announced plans to **liberalize** Congo's economy, control public spending and privatize state-owned enterprises (AA 10/11; ARB 30/11).

## Equatorial Guinea

On 25 November the former minister for water and forests, Angel Alongo, was jailed for two years on corruption charges. He was previously considered one of the key figures in the government (SWB 28/11).

The Central African States Bank (BEAC) has agreed to refinance medium-term credits granted to the International Bank of West Africa-Equatorial Guinea (BIAO-GE), the country's sole functioning commercial bank. This **revitalization of the banking system** is one of the main aims of the IMF-backed medium-term economic development programme (1989/91) approved by donors in December 1988 (ARB 31/12).

## Gabon

On 4 October the government claimed to have uncovered a **coup plot** which would have included the murder of Pres Omar Bongo. It accused Pierre Mamboundou, a Gabonese executive at the Cultural and Technical Co-operation Agency (ACCCT) in Paris, of masterminding the scheme. Mamboundou denied the allegations, claiming that the plot was a government fabrication. In the meantime, another alleged coup plotter, Doukakas Nziengui, died in prison on 12 December, according to the authorities of high blood pressure but according to Pierre Mamboundou as a result of torture (K 10/89; SWB 6/10, 9/10, 13/10, 17/10, 15/11, 28/11; JA 13/11; ARB 15/11, 15/12, 15/1; DN 27/11).

Gabon's **budget** for the 1990 fiscal year was fixed at CFAFr400 bn, CFAFr50 bn more than during the preceding year. The budget was still dominated by the unfavourable economic and financial climate and by the application of a structural adjustment programme with the support of the IMF (ARB 31/12).

## Sao Tomé and Príncipe

On 1 September the leader of the March 1988 coup attempt, Mr Alfonso Dos Santos, was sentenced to 22 years in prison. He was also sentenced to pay 1,35 mn dobras in damages and interest to the families of the three victims of the coup attempt (ARB 15/10).

On 22 November Pres Da Costa announced the **privatization** of a number of state of companies as a measure to settle the country's foreign debt. Companies affected are the telecommunications company, Enatel, a ceramic factory built by West Germany, Encerra II, several tourist companies and five cocoa producing units (ARB 31/12).

The ruling party, the Movement for the Liberation of Sao Tomé and Príncipe (MLSTP) held a national conference from 5 to 8 December where 600 delegates proposed the ending of the political monopoly held by the MLSTP. A new constitution with a **multi-party system** was proposed and the idea was endorsed by Pres Da Costa at the final session. The delegates also suggested that the head of state should be elected by universal adult suffrage for a maximum of two terms and should share power with a prime minister. The proposals would be submitted for formal approval at the party's third congress, due to take place in July 1990 (SWB 27/10, 12/12; ARB 15/1).

## Zaire

In early October, Pres Mobutu visited the USA, where he encountered vociferous criticism during a visit to Harvard University (AA 13/10).

Zaire's **draft budget** for 1990 was submitted to the national assembly in December. It provided for an increased overall deficit of 30 bn zaires (\$66,4 mn) against 1989's target of 21 bn zaires (\$46,5 mn). (ARB 31/12).

(*Mediation in dispute with Senegal — see Guinea-Bissau; Pres Mobutu's role in Angolan peace negotiations — see Angola; Training of soldiers — see Mozambique.*)

## EAST AFRICA

### Burundi

Prime Minister Adrien Sibomana and other Hutu ministers, appointed in October 1988 as part of Pres Buyoya's policy of **relieving ethnic tensions** in Burundi, offered their resignations in early November. They reacted to an incident in which a Hutu officer cadet was so seriously bullied by Tutsi cadets at the military academy that he was hospitalized. Although Pres Buyoya refused the resignations, no action was taken against the soldiers. Ethnic conflict is still Burundi's main problem, with more reports of harassment of Hutus by the Tutsi dominated army. Pres Buyoya claimed on 11 October that a multi-party system was not suitable for Burundi, as it had led to ethnic violence in the past (SWB 14/10; NA 12/89; AC 1/12).

On 23 November the Burundi franc was **devalued** by 9 per cent to help deal with an economic crisis created by falling revenues from coffee, the country's main export. It was hoped that the devaluation would lead to a narrowing of the trade deficit, by reducing demand for imports and promoting non-traditional exports (ARB 31/12).

### Comoros

On 5 November a **referendum** was held to determine whether **Pres Ahmed Abdallah** would be allowed to stand for another six-year term in office. According to government sources, 92.5 per cent voted in favour of the proposal, but opposition spokesmen rejected the result, claiming voting irregularities aimed at creating a life-presidency. The referendum was nevertheless declared valid. On 26 November, however, Pres Abdallah was killed at the presidential palace in mysterious circumstances. Some accounts claimed that he had been shot by accident, others that he had been **murdered** by the former head of the Comoran armed forces, Maj Ahmed Mohamed, who had recently been relieved of his post. Some sources attributed responsibility to Col **Robert Denard**, who had commanded the presidential guard since leading the coup that brought Abdallah to power eleven years ago. Denard denied any part in the president's murder, but on 29 November he and his men took control of the islands despite popular protests and installed as interim president Mr **Said Djohar**, the former head of the Supreme Court. The following day Djohar announced that presidential elections would be held in January 1990.

The French government, alarmed at the turn of events in its ex-colony, and at the leading role being played by some of its nationals in the presidential guard, sent a task force to the neighbouring island of Mayotte. **South Africa** too urged Denard to leave Comoros, and announced that it was suspending its substantial aid to the islands and was halting its financing of the presidential guard. On 6 December **France** also announced the suspension of aid until the mercenaries left the islands. After a series of negotiations Denard and 25 of his men left Comoros for South

Africa, while 50 French troops arrived from Mayotte to take over the presidential guard (ION 29/10, 11/11, 2/12, 23/12; C 9/11, 28/11, 30/11, 1/12, 4/12, 5/12; T 9/11, 28/11; AA 10/11, 8/12; SWB 15/11, 28/11, 4/12, 5/12, 7/12, 8/12, 16/12; ARB 15/11, 15/12, 31/12, 15/1; BD 28/11, 5/12; S 28/11, 30/11, 2/12, 5/12, 6/12, 12/12, 29/12; B 28/11, 5/12; AC 1/12; E 2/12).

### Djibouti

Pres Aptidon visited **Saudi Arabia** on 20-21 October to discuss bilateral relations with the Saudi monarch (SWB 21/10).

### Ethiopia

Talks between the Ethiopian government and the Tigrean People's Liberation Front (**TPLF**) took place in Rome from 4-11 November and from 12-18 December. The TPLF had scored several major battlefield victories in the weeks leading up to the talks, threatening to cut off **Dese**, a key garrison town protecting part of the road linking Addis Ababa with the port of Assab. Observers suggested that Pres Mengistu's regime would not survive if the rebels captured the town. Thousands of government troops were rushed to Dese, and succeeded in halting the rebel advance from the north.

The second round of **talks** ended inauspiciously and a third round was postponed to March 1990. The Ethiopian government blamed "the TPLF's intransigence over points of routine and relative minor importance such as the drawing up of an agenda".

In the meantime, talks began in Nairobi on 18 November between the Ethiopian government and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (**EPLF**). The matters outstanding from the Atlanta talks had been agreed upon: former-presidents Carter and Nyerere would co-chair the meetings and also select the secretariat, and seven observers would be chosen. The EPLF had chosen the UN and the OAU; the Ethiopian government had chosen Zimbabwe and Senegal; and Sudan, Kenya and Tanzania had been chosen by mutual agreement. However, the Ethiopian government finally put forward a precondition, saying that the UN should not participate as an observer, and hence the Nairobi talks reached a deadlock (S 4/10, 29/11; E 7/10, 2/12; TWR 11/10; ION 14/10, 21/10, 28/10, 18/11, 25/11, 2/12, 16/12, 23/12; ARB 15/10, 15/11, 15/12, 15/1; TS 24/10; AP 11/89; DT 1/11, 21/11; SWB 2/11, 6/11, 13/11, 16/11, 20/11, 21/11, 22/11, 25/11, 27/11, 28/11, 1/12, 2/12, 5/12, 8/12, 9/12, 12/12, 13/12, 16/12, 18/12, 20/12; C 13/11, 21/11, 30/11; DN 13/11, 20/11; WR 24/11; AE 12/89; KT 1/12, 28/12; JA 4/12).

On 3 November a government spokesman announced that Ethiopia had decided to restore full diplomatic relations with **Israel**. Relations had been severed in 1973 in response to a call from the OAU following Israel's invasion of Egypt in that year. Commentators said that the new development reflected an unstated acknowledgement that Addis Ababa was allowing Ethiopian Jews to emigrate to Israel. The Ethiopian foreign ministry denied a

London press report that the government had agreed to the mass emigration of black Jews (Falashas) in exchange for Israeli military aid. The newspaper said that Israel would replace the Soviet Union as Ethiopia's main military supplier and that the deal prepared the way for extensive intelligence cooperation between the two countries. The allegation elicited a sharp response from **Libya's Col Gaddafi**. In the meantime, a large number of East German civilians, including doctors, and security advisors, left Ethiopia for East Germany, while the East German government decided to withdraw its entire military staff from Ethiopia (SWB 6/11, 15/11; DT 8/11; TS 9/11; ION 11/11, 16/12; TWR 15/11; JA 20/11; C 11/12; SWB 14/12; ARB 15/12).

Pres Mengistu appointed a new deputy prime minister and two other ministers in a **cabinet reshuffle**, the fourth cabinet shake-up since the coup attempt in May 1989 (ARB 15/12).

## Kenya

Relations with **Somalia** seemed to improve after deciding on 1 October that close contacts would be maintained in order to monitor bandit activity. This decision followed the attack by members of the Somali armed forces on the small Kenyan border town of Liboi a few weeks earlier. The state of goodwill lasted until 13 November, when Kenya began a three-week screening process of all ethnic Somalis in the country to weed out illegal immigrants from Somalia. The Kenyan government distinguishes between the more than 500 000 ethnic Somalis who were born in Kenya and have full right to Kenyan nationality, and the recent refugees from poverty and conflict stricken Somalia. Hundreds of Somalis fled into **Tanzania** to avoid prosecution in Kenya. Some of them were arrested, fined and sent back to Kenya. Eventually some 3 000 refugees were forcibly repatriated to Somalia by the Kenyan government (WR 6/10, 24/11; ION 7/10, 18/11, 2/12; DT 17/11; SWB 20/11, 23/11, 24/11; KT 23/11; AE 12/89; C 1/12).

Tensions emerged between the **Law Society of Kenya (LSK)** and Pres Moi following the latter's rejection of a proposal by a member of the Kenya African National Union (Kanu) to affiliate the LSK to Kenya's only party. The LSK earlier criticized the screening of Somalis, saying the measure was unconstitutional and discriminatory. Already in August 1989, the LSK had denounced the voting of a law which extended the period of custody without being charged to 14 days. Pres Moi described the LSK as "an obnoxious, absurd and ridiculous society" (WR 22/12; NA 1/90; ION 6/1).

10 October marked the first **Moi Day**, a public holiday decided on by the National Assembly in 1987 to celebrate Pres Moi's accession to power. In his address, Pres Moi declared the release of 10 274 prisoners jailed for petty offences as they were not "harmful". **Kenyatta Day** was celebrated on 20 October, to mark the declaration of the state of emergency in Kenya in 1952 when Jomo Kenyatta was arrested by the colonial regime (KT

10/10, 11/10; B 11/10; WR 20/10; ARB 15/11).

On 18 October the **World Bank** approved two loans totalling \$89 mn through its soft-loan affiliate, the International Development Association (IDA). \$45 mn of this total represents the second tranche of an \$112 mn industrial sector adjustment credit (ISAC). The second IDA agreement is for a \$44 mn supplementary financial sector credit, financed from IDA reflows. Prof Saitoti, vice-president and minister of finance of Kenya, said that 1988's growth rate of 5.2 per cent was achieved because of the government's strong commitment to firm economic and fiscal reforms and wide-ranging adjustment in the industrial, agricultural and financial sectors. He added that only donor support would keep the programme on track (ARB 30/11).

## Madagascar

Madagascar's main opposition party, the Movement for People's Power (MFM), led by Mr Manadafy Rakotonirina, publicly proposed on 5 October to eliminate all reference to socialism in the 1975 constitution. The MFM also handed in a new draft constitution for a "third republic", based on "liberal democracy and respect for human rights". The text insisted on the separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers. This followed an invitation by Pres Ratsiraka to all interested groups to present proposals for a new constitution. In December, barely two months later, the **constitution** was **amended**, permitting the formation of political parties after fourteen years during which only parties supporting Pres Ratsiraka were allowed (ION 21/10, 11/11; ARB 15/11, 15/1).

## Mauritius

Pope John Paul II paid a visit to Mauritius from 14 to 16 October, on the last leg of a trip which took him to South Korea and Indonesia. He held a mass in the capital, Port-Louis, before discussions with Prime Minister, Sir Aneerood Jugnauth (ION 14/10, 21/10; ARB 15/11).

## Rwanda

Pres Habyarimana visited Pres Mobutu of **Zaire** in Gbadolite on 23 October to strengthen the ties between the two countries and to continue mutual consultation (SWB 26/10).

## Seychelles

The 1990 **budget** was presented on 30 December. It amounted to 1 282 bn rupees (\$210 mn), and represented a 38 per cent increase over that of the previous year (ION 6/1).

## Somalia

Pres Siad Barre appointed a six-member panel to revise Somalia's **constitution** to allow for a **multi-party system** to be introduced in 1990. However, Pres Siad Barre had already told the constitutional committee that three parties would be enough (SWB 8/11, 10/11; DT 8/11, ION 11/11; KT 14/11; TS 14/11; AC 1/12;

ARB 15/12).

Somalia's two main **rebel organizations**, the Somali National Movement (SNM) and the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) decided at talks in mid-November to **join their forces**. (the SNM fights in the north of the country and the SPM in the south.) They decided to adopt a unified stance on internal and external political policies and to cooperate in military matters including joint operations. Accusations by the SNM and the SPM, that Libya was sending a massive arms shipment to the government of Pres Siad Barre, have been denied by Pres Gaddafi. In October the SNM also accused Libya of sending an estimated 700 soldiers, pilots and technicians and arms to Somalia to help the government combat rebels in the north of the country. Libyan troops were also implicated in the government attack on Somali nationals in the Doble area near the Kenyan border, in which an estimated 150 people were killed (KT 24/10, 25/10; SWB 20/11, 21/11; ARB 15/12).

On 7 December SNM immobilized a Panamanian-registered ship off Heis on the southern coast of Somalia and seized the cargo of arms and military vehicles which were on their way to Somali government forces. Two other operations were also carried out after this incident, one on 11 December when the *Portland II*, a West German ship acquired by the Somali government, was taken by the rebels. The second occurred when the Italian ship, the *Kwanda*, fell under SNM control (ION 16/12, 23/12).

The 1990 **budget** was approved on 7 December. It amounted to 86 012 bn shillings, 36 844 bn shillings more than the previous year (ARB 31/1).

*(Bandit activity to be monitored and repatriation of Somali nationals — see Kenya.)*

## Tanzania

**Zanzibar** chief minister Omar Ali Juma was appointed to the central committee of Tanzania's Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM) (the country's ruling and only legal political party) on 16 October. The move was seen as an attempt to reduce political tensions on the island prior to party and legislative elections in 1990. On 12 November Pres Mwinyi rejected calls for a referendum to determine whether the islands Zanzibar and **Pemba** should remain part of Tanzania (TS 14/11; SWB 15/11, 16/11, 18/11, 20/11; ARB 15/11; AA 24/11; AE 12/89).

The 28th anniversary of mainland Tanzania's independence was celebrated on 9 December. The festivities were attended by Pres Masire of **Botswana**, who was in Tanzania for a state visit. The two leaders also held talks on trade in agricultural produce, fish and manufactured goods (DN 4/12, 7/12, 12/12, 13/12; SWB 8/12, 12/12; ION 16/12).

*(Arrest of Somalis — see Kenya.)*

## Uganda

On 10 October the National Resistance

Council (NRC — the legislature) voted to extend the government's term of office by five years from 26 January 1990, the date when the government's four-year **interim mandate** would expire. The National Resistance Movement (NRM) of Pres Museveni sought more time for the drafting, discussion and promulgation of a new constitution. The announcement met with mixed reaction, most local and expatriate businessmen saying they preferred five more years of stability to premature election fever, but opposition on both sides felt elections should have been held as promised and that a five-year delay was too long (K 10/89; SWB 5/10, 12/10, 30/10; AA 13/10; ARB 15/11; NA 12/89).

In a drive to fight **corruption** in the civil service, 100 government officials, including four permanent secretaries, were dismissed at the end of October. The drive included the army, and a number of senior officers received new postings, in a move seen as a means by which Pres Museveni could curb independent generals and instal others over whom he had better control (AN 9/10; SWB 2/11, 29/11, 5/12; DN 2/11; KT 28/11; ION 2/12; AC 15/12; ARB 15/12).

Over 7 000 students of the **Makerere University** went on **strike** on 31 October demanding the immediate removal of the minister of education because of a withdrawal of their allowances for books, travel and other expenses. The university was closed on 11 November on personal orders from Pres Museveni. The grants were stopped because of a lack of money after lecturers received a pay increase earlier in the year (KT 1/11; ION 18/11; ARB 15/12).

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### Angola

Talks in mid-October rekindled hopes of renewed dialogue on the conflict in Angola. The talks were held at **Pres Mobutu's** seaside villa in the south of France, and it seemed that his good offices were once again accepted by Unita, despite Jonas Savimbi's failure to appear at the previous round of talks held at N'Sele in Zaire earlier in 1989. **Savimbi's** change of heart followed talks with Pres Bush in the United States on 5 October. Besides Savimbi, Pres Mobutu met Mr Pedro de Castro van Dunem, Angola's foreign minister, Mr Herman Cohen, US assistant secretary of state for African affairs and Mr Pik Botha, South African foreign minister. Mr Cohen said on 17 October that the US had specifically urged Savimbi to work towards a ceasefire. He warned however, that the US was ready to continue supporting Unita until "national reconciliation" had been achieved in Angola.

At the end of October, presidents Bongo of Gabon, Pinto da Costa of Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Kaunda of Zambia and Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire met in Yamoussoukro

to discuss the Angolan situation and reaffirmed Pres Mobutu's role as mediator (ST 1/10, 15/10; B 3/10, 13/10; BD 3/10, 6/10; S 4/10, 12/10, 16/10; KT 4/10; SWB 5/10, 1/11; C 16/10; DT 31/10; WA 23/10; AE 11/89; KN 11/89; ARB 15/11, 15/12; SS 26/11).

Angola announced that it intended buy as many as 11 warships from Spain. This step was seen as a further stage in its movement away from the Eastern bloc countries, while turning to the West for assistance (C 25/10; BD 26/10).

At the end of November a number of reports appeared accusing Unita of killing thousands of elephants to finance its war effort in Angola, using South Africa as a conduit (ST 1/10; S 5/10; WM 12/10, 1/12; SWB 20/10).

### Botswana

The ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) was returned to office with an increased majority in **legislative elections** on 7 October, winning 31 out of the 34 elected seats in the National Assembly. A high voter turnout was reported on polling day, and Gaborone radio attributed the BDP's success to a current economic boom, which had enabled the government to increase subsidies to farmers. President Masire was subsequently sworn in for a third five-year term on 10 October. He announced a cabinet reshuffle on 13 October, in which two senior ministers and one assistant minister were replaced (K 10/89; S 6/10; DN 6/10, 9/10, 16/10, 3/11; B 9/10; C 10/10, 14/10; KT 10/10; AA 13/10; SWB 16/10; ARB 15/11).

On 1 November Botswana and **Cuba** signed an agreement on technical, cultural and economic cooperation (DN 2/11).

(Talks with Pres Mwinzi — see Tanzania.)

### Lesotho

King Moshoeshe II visited Zimbabwe on 28-29 October, his first visit to that country since Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. He then departed for a three-day state visit to Swaziland (S 30/10; C 1/11; TS 1/11, 2/11; SWB 3/11).

The World Bank announced a loan of \$110 mn for the **Lesotho Highland Water Project (LHWP)**. This followed the disclosure in mid-October by the South African government and the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA) that cost estimates for the project had been "extremely unrealistic" in 1985 and that a cost overrun of almost R3 bn (about \$1 bn) was to be expected. In the meantime, the first tenders have been issued in Maseru for the four biggest contracts of phase one of the project. They include tenders for the 180 m Khatsi dam as well as for the construction of the transfer and supply tunnels. The deadline for technical and financial bids was set at 20 April 1990 (FT 6/10; BD 16/10; ARB 30/11; AA 5/1).

### Malawi

The chief propagandist for an exiled political movement pledged to topple Pres Banda, **Mkwapatira Mhango**, died in Lusaka on 13 October after a fire-bomb attack which killed

eight other people. The Malawi Freedom Movement (**Mafremo**) accused the Malawi government of staging the attack. The accusation was denied by the Malawi government, which said that the killings were a result of internal feuding within the Malawian opposition. Three weeks before the killings, however, Pres Banda had publicly attacked Mhango of being responsible for publishing a series of articles critical of Malawi's first lady, Mama Kadzamira. In the meantime, on 6 November, **Amnesty International** reported an increase in political imprisonments in 1989 in Malawi. It said some prisoners died in detention after torture or other ill-treatment and added that the Malawi government had not responded to appeals by the organization to investigate the cases of detainees who died in custody. On 11 November, a government spokesman rejected the report as "false and unfounded" (C 17/10; AA 27/10; AP 11/89; S 7/11; AC 13/11; SWB 13/11; KT 14/11; ARB 15/11; AB 12/89; AC 15/12).

The 815-km **railway** linking Malawi with the **Nacala** port in Mozambique was reopened for commercial traffic on 20 October after being closed for five years following sabotage by members of the MNR. This means the bulk of Malawi's exports can gradually be routed through Mozambique instead of South Africa's Durban port (K 10/89; BD 23/10; C 24/10; TS 25/10; S 26/10; ARB 30/11, 31/12; AB 12/89; AA 8/12).

### Mozambique

In mid-October the **MNR** rejected Pres Chissano's offer to allow it to participate in the 1991 general elections, thus bringing to a standstill the talks which had finally got under way in Nairobi in August. For their part the authorities in Maputo had demanded that the MNR recognize the Frelimo government as legitimate and lay down their arms, while the MNR leader, Afonso Dhlakama, called for recognition of the MNR as a political movement and for direct talks between equals. In the meantime, Pres Chissano was pressed by Pres Mugabe to seek a negotiated solution to a conflict which was causing considerable loss and expense to Zimbabwe. Mozambique's other main backers, the USSR, Cuba and East Germany, all of whom were understandably preoccupied with events nearer home, also urged Pres Chissano to negotiate.

On 8 December Pres Moi of Kenya and Pres Mugabe met again in Nairobi in an attempt to restart the stalled peace process. After a short meeting with Pres Mugabe on 16 December, Pres Chissano told his counterparts at a meeting of the Portuguese-speaking African nations on 20 December that he had agreed to a proposal that his government meet with members of the MNR and end the impasse. Dhlakama himself announced his willingness to negotiate, after Pres Mugabe's announcement that there was no precondition that the two sides recognize each other before negotiations took place (C 10/10, 16/10; SWB 18/10, 19/10, 24/11, 29/11, 2/12, 9/12, 12/12, 18/12; BD 19/10; AC 17/11; I 2/12; KT 2/12; ARB 15/1).

It was announced that from February 1990, 200 Mozambicans would be trained in **Zaire** at the Kotakoli military training centre, 80 km from Gbadolite, under the terms of an agreement between Pres Mobutu of Zaire and Pres Chissano. According to this agreement, 640 soldiers would be trained to constitute a **new special force**, the "urban protection and anti-rural bandit squad". Pres Chissano also visited Pres Mobutu on 17 December to ask for his assistance in ending the Mozambique conflict. This visit followed talks with South Africa's Pres De Klerk on 15 December in Maputo and Pres Mugabe in Harare on 16 December.

The meeting with Pres De Klerk was initiated by Pres Chissano who, suggested that discussions would enable him to brief the Lusophone summit in Cape Verde about reforms in **South Africa**. Subsequently, ministers at the summit said the meeting would back De Klerk's reforms, which they saw as bringing new hope to Southern Africa. Pres Chissano's conciliatory attitude towards South Africa followed his announcement in mid-November on a tour of central Mozambique that he believed South Africa had significantly reduced support for the MNR in the preceding months (ION 21/10; BD 24/11; S 24/11; C 24/11; SS 17/12; SWB 19/12, 20/12; FM 22/12).

Mozambique and **Zambia** discussed the setting up of a permanent joint defence and security commission in order to counter MNR attacks, illegal immigration, black market activity and smuggling which caused problems on the border between the two countries. A draft proposal for an accord was signed on 2 December (SWB 28/11, 2/12, 7/12, 8/12).

For the first time since banks were nationalized in 1977, a **private bank** began operations in Maputo on 29 November. The Standard Totta Bank's transactions would be restricted to the area of current accounts, including the opening of accounts for foreign organizations and the purchase and sale of foreign currency. Meanwhile the metical was devalued for the 11th time on 1 December from \$1 = 814 to \$1 = 840 meticals (B 1/12; ION 2/12; S 5/12; ARB 31/12).

(Opening of Nacala railway link — see *Malawi*; Talks with Pres Museveni — see *Uganda*.)

## Namibia

South African security forces claimed to have intercepted **Untag** radio messages reporting a Swapo, Fapla and Cuban military build-up on the Angolan border between 23-31 November, posing a major threat on the eve of the Namibian election. The UN denied that the messages were genuine and suggested that they constituted a desperate effort by disgruntled parties to derail the independence plan. All parties subsequently agreed to put the incident behind them and ensure that the elections ran smoothly (BD 2/11; WM 3/11; B 3/11, 4/11, 6/11; S 3/11; C 3/11, 4/11; SS 4/11, 5/11).

In the **elections** which took place from 7 to 11 November no party managed to win a two-thirds majority required to write a constitution on its own. Swapo gained 41 seats in the

Constituent Assembly; the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) 21 seats; United Democratic Front 4 seats; Action Christian National 3 seats; Namibia National Front 1 seat; National Patriotic Front 1 seat. Swapo's leader announced his shadow-cabinet on 21 December in the Constituent Assembly. According to Mr **Nujoma**, there would be sixteen portfolios with himself as executive president. He also said a prime minister and a deputy president would be appointed (AC 15/12; Rep 22/12; SAN 4/1).

The first **gold** was poured at the **Navachab gold mine** at the end of November, marking the entrance of Namibia into the ranks of the world's gold producers. The expected yield of this low cost open cast mine was 2.22 grams of gold per ton of ore, with annual production estimated at 1 900 kg of gold (MSE 20/12; ARB 31/12).

## South Africa

The new president, Mr F W de Klerk, began to implement the policy heralded in his inaugural speech, in which he promised **constitutional reform** and the creation of a system of **power-sharing**, releasing 8 security prisoners on 15 October. They were the former ANC general secretary Walter Sisulu and ANC members Raymond Mhlaba, Ahmed Kathrada, Elias Motsoaledi, Andrew Mlangeni, Wilton Mkwayi and Oscar Mpetha, as well as PAC leader Jafta Masemola. The released ANC leaders were welcomed by a crowd of about 70 000 supporters on 29 October at Soccer City outside Soweto, where Sisulu said the ANC was prepared to discuss the suspension of hostilities on both sides once the government had created the necessary climate for negotiations. On 16 November Pres De Klerk announced the opening of all beaches to all races, and that the **Separate Amenities Act** would be scrapped "soon". On 24 November he proclaimed four "**free settlement areas**", in which people of all races may reside. The move was seen as the first step towards the scrapping of the Group Areas Act, which determines separate living areas for the different races in South Africa.

On 28 November Pres De Klerk announced the scrapping of the **National Security Management System** and the downgrading of the State Security Council, which were introduced by his predecessor, P W Botha. This was interpreted as diminishing the role of the security establishment in the political arena. The period served by national service conscripts was also substantially reduced.

On 13 December Pres De Klerk held a meeting with jailed ANC-leader Mr Nelson Mandela at Tuynhuys, prompting speculation that Mandela would soon be released (TWR 11/10; SS 15/10, 3/12; BD 16/10, 30/10, 29/11; C 19/10, 17/11, 25/11, 29/11; E 21/10; B 17/11, 29/11; S 17/11, 29/11, 14/12; SWB 18/11, 1/12; ST 19/11, 3/12; WM 1/12; JA 4/12).

On 19 October an ex-policeman, Butana Almond **Nofomela**, was granted a last-minute stay of execution after he claimed to have taken part in the murder of Mr Griffiths

**Mxenge**, a civil rights lawyer who was brutally killed in 1981. Nofomela alleged that he had been a member of a security police assassination squad which had committed the murder. He explained in his affidavit that his disclosures were prompted by the failure of the police to keep a promise to rescue him from Death Row in return for his silence. He also named other policemen in the squad, which he implicated in the killing of several suspected members of the ANC.

Nofomela's story was supported on 17 November by a former security policeman, Capt Dirk **Coetzee**, who claimed in a newspaper article that he had headed a murder squad which carried out killings and attacks against ANC targets in South Africa, Swaziland, Lesotho, Britain, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. He also implicated several high-ranking police officers in these operations.

Following police denials and a public outcry, a judicial enquiry, headed by Judge **Harms**, was appointed at the end of December to investigate all the claims, including those that the hit squad might have been responsible for the killing of David **Webster**, a University of Witwatersrand lecturer and anti-apartheid activist, earlier in 1989 (S 17/11, 20/11, 28/11; B 21/10; C 21/10, 21/11; WM 26/10, 2/11, 17/11; I 17/11; C 18/11; SS 18/11, 19/11; BD 20/11; E 25/11).

(Talks with Pres Houphouët-Boigny — see *Côte d'Ivoire*; Relations with Mozambique — see *Mozambique*; Relations with Zambia — see *Zambia*.)

## TBVC States

**Transkei** — Early in October Gen Bantu Holomisa announced his willingness to hold a **referendum** in Transkei in order to determine whether Transkeians want the territory to be **reincorporated** in South Africa.

The **state of emergency** was lifted on 7 November, although political activity remained suspended in Transkei. Gen Holomisa also made public his intention of unbanning the ANC and the PAC, after formally apologizing for the teargassing of an ANC meeting in an Umtata church hall by what he called "renegade" police on 25 November. Four of the released ANC prisoners were to have addressed the meeting, which ended with two people dead and several injured. At an ANC rally on 27 November, Gen Holomisa was hailed for his struggle against "tribalism and seeking the reunification of South Africa and the homelands" (S 9/11; ION 11/11; SWB 25/11, 27/11; B 28/11; C 28/11; BD 28/11; ST 10/12).

**Bophuthatswana** — The military leader of the 10 February 1988 abortive **coup attempt**, Warrant Officer Phiri, was sentenced on 19 December to 18 years' imprisonment by the Bophuthatswana Supreme Court. According to Justice M W Friedman, the planning and execution of the coup had been left to Phiri, but the idea of the coup had been conceived by Rocky Malebane-Metsing, who was currently taking refuge in London. The 142 coup rebels received prison sentences of between two and

nine years (C 21/10, 25/10, 14/11, 16/11; B 24/10; SWB 24/10; S 25/10, 17/11, 20/12; M 26/10, 24/11, 1/12, 22/12; WM 17/11, 21/12; ARB 15/1).

**Venda** — South African Pres F W de Klerk, accompanied by foreign affairs minister Mr Pik Botha, held talks with Venda's Pres F N Ravele on 24 November in Thohoyandou. The visit was seen as the first in a series of visits to discuss the changing South Africa with leaders of the national states (C 24/11; B 24/11, 25/11; S 27/11; SWB 27/11).

**Ciskei** — On 19 October Ciskei security forces sealed off the troubled Peelson area, close to the Eastern Cape town of King William's Town, and imposed extended emergency regulations banning non-residents from being in the area and giving police the power to evict people, demolish their homes and forcibly remove them to other areas inside Ciskei. The residents of the Peelson area, who did not want to be incorporated into Ciskei, fled to King William's Town where they were given shelter in various church halls. They remained adamant that the area in which they lived still formed part of South Africa. The South African government intervened following representations from the British government and the South African Council of Churches. It decided to set aside an area outside King William's Town for the refugees (C 18/10, 27/10; S 19/10, 20/10, 25/10, 26/10, 2/11, 28/11; WM 26/10, 3/11; B 29/11, 30/11).

## Swaziland

King Mswati III left Swaziland on 6 October on a world tour, starting in Mozambique for talks with Pres Chissano. The same day he had talks with Pres Kaunda of Zambia before flying to New York where he addressed the 44th General Assembly of the United Nations on 11 October. The next stop was in Malaysia, where he addressed the Commonwealth Summit for Heads of States in Kuala Lumpur between 18 and 20 October. On 23 October King Mswati III arrived in Taiwan for a five-day visit. On his return to Swaziland on 28 October, the King was faced by a strike threat by the 5 000 teachers and most of Swaziland's 17 000 civil servants, who were demanding two years' back pay of increases awarded to them in 1988. Prime Minister Obed Dlamini offered them one years' back pay, which labour officials calculated would cost R28 mn. Eventually the offer was accepted and the strike averted (TS 7/10, 30/10; DN 14/10; C 24/10; B 24/10; S 30/10).

## Zambia

Pres Kenneth Kaunda said in an interview in October he was prepared to visit South Africa if the state of emergency was lifted and Nelson Mandela released. On 16 November, while opening a meeting of the heads of the Frontline States in Lusaka, Pres Kaunda said at Southern African regional meeting between the Frontline States and South Africa was a possibility. He also used the opportunity to

warn Mr Nujoma of Swapo not to antagonize South Africa, and commended Pres De Klerk again for allowing mass demonstrations and freeing some political prisoners. The meeting was convened to discuss the implications of Swapo's victory in Namibia. Both of Pres Kaunda's statements were welcomed by South Africa.

During November Pres Kaunda also received two South African delegations, one from the Dutch Reformed Church and one from the Mass Democratic Movement (BD 17/10, 17/11; C 14/11, 24/11; B 17/11; S 17/11, 20/11).

24 October marked the 25th anniversary of Zambia's independence. There were no grand celebrations, as the government announced Zambia needed to save all the money it could to face its economic problems. The re-established relations with the IMF meant that Zambia had accepted a number of clauses and adjustment measures to tackle its severe debt problem. This was also reflected in the 1990 budget of 25 bn Kwacha (\$1.56 bn), which was interpreted as showing that Zambia was on course towards the traditional structural adjustment programme (S 24/10; C 25/10; BD 10/11; DN 20/11; KT 24/11; MSE 4/12; ARB 15/12).

On 22 November Pres Kaunda announced a partial cabinet reshuffle, in which minister of commerce and industry, Otema Musuka, was fired for "inefficiency". In the meantime, Zambia's central bank governor, Mr Francis X Nkhoma, was charged with illegal possession of foreign currencies worth more than \$500 000, amongst other charges of corruption. He was replaced by a Canadian professional banker, Mr Jacques Bussieres (S 23/11; SWB 24/11; AA 24/11, 5/1; ARB 15/12; AP 1/90).

(Security talks — see Mozambique.)

## Zimbabwe

The government ordered the indefinite closure of the country's only university on 5 October after clashes between police and students protesting against the arrest of two of their leaders. In the anti-government demonstrations, 13 other students were arrested, as well as 11 opposition Zimbabwe Unity Movement (Zum) members who were campaigning for by-elections. By 12 October, six students were still in custody. The secretary-general of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, Morgan Tsvangirai, issued a statement on 5 October criticizing the closure of the university as "a clear manifestation of rising state repression"; he was himself arrested under emergency powers the next day. On 18 October the High Court ruled that his statement had not been subversive, and ordered his release, but he was immediately redetained. On 23 October the university reopened temporarily, allowing the students to sit examinations if they signed a pledge not to engage in political activity. The following day the High Court again ordered Tsvangirai's release, rejecting new charges that he was acting on South Africa's orders to encourage strikes, but he was again immediately redetained. He was

released six weeks later on 14 November, without having been charged with any crimes.

In the meantime, four by-elections were to take place on 24-25 October, three of the seats having been vacated because of corruption charges against the incumbents. Eventually all the seats were won easily by the ruling party candidates, amidst accusations by the opposition that the elections had been rigged (K 10/89; C 5/10, 11/10, 13/10, 20/10, 25/10, 31/10, 7/11, 16/11; B 5/10, 16/11; KT 7/10, 11/10; SWB 9/10, 12/10, 26/10, 8/11, 16/11; BD 11/10, 25/10; WM 19/10; S 25/10, 7/11; AA 27/10; AR 11/89; ARB 15/11).

On 14 November Ernest Kadungure, minister of state for political affairs, announced that in future all Zimbabwean males aged 18-30 would have to register for conscription. He cited a "hostile neighbour", South Africa, as one reason for the move and said political and patriotic training would be a major aspect of enlistment. He did not say when recruitment would actually start, nor did he comment on the effect of this step on the country's employment problem, with more than 1 million people unemployed out of a population of 9.5 million. Observers predicted a second white exodus as a result of the announcement (S 14/11, 15/11; C 14/11; SWB 15/11; ARB 15/12).

On 23 November the Zimbabwean House of Assembly voted to abolish its sister chamber, the Senate, paving the way for the introduction of a unicameral parliament in 1990. A Constitutional Amendment Act would empower Pres Mugabe to introduce a one-party state and expropriate private land with the approval of two-thirds of the House of Assembly — instead of the 100 per cent demanded under the Lancaster House constitution. On 26 November, seven Zimbabwean Roman Catholic bishops expressed opposition to Pres Mugabe's plan of transforming the country's Western-style democracy into a one-party state. Zanu (PF)'s first congress as a single united party, following the merger of Zanu (PF) and Zapu, opened in Harare on 19 December. The congress approved a draft party constitution stating that it would seek to establish a one-party state on the principles of Marxism-Leninism "based on Zimbabwe's own historical, cultural and social experiences" (TS 24/11; SWB 25/11, 20/12; ARB 15/12, 15/1; S 20/12, 21/12; AE 1/90).

(Diplomatic relations with Somalia — see Somalia; King Moshoeshe II's visit — see Lesotho; Pres Mugabe's role in negotiations — see Mozambique.)

A — Afrika; AA — Africa Analysis; AB — African Business; AC — Africa Confidential; A Con — Africa Concord; AE — African Events; AED — Africa Economic Digest; AE&M — Africa Energy & Mining; AIB — Africa Institute Bulletin; AN — Africa Newsfile; AP — African Preview; ARB — Africa Research Bulletin; B — Beeld; BD — Business Day; BDN — Botswana Daily News; C — Citizen; CI — Crescent International; Cr — Crescent; D — Drum; DN — Daily News; DT — Daily Times; E — The Economist; FF

— *Frontfile*; FM — *Financial Mail*; F&T — *Finansies & Tegniek*; G — *The Guardian*; H — *The Herald*; IMF S — *IMF Survey*; I — *The Independent*; ION — *Indian Ocean Newsletter*; JA — *Jeune Afrique*; K — *Keesing's Record of World Events*; KN — *Kwacha News*; KT — *Kenya Times*; LT — *Lesotho Today*; M — *The Mail*; MF — *Mozambiquefile*; MIO — *Mozambique*

*Information Office*; MNR — *Mozambique News Review*; MSE — *Market South East*; N — *Namibian*; NA — *New African*; NN — *New Nation*; R — *Rapport*; Rep — *Republikein*; S — *Star*; SAB — *SA Barometer*; SAD — *South African Digest*; SAE — *Southern African Economist*; SAN — *South African Newsletter*; SAT — *Southern Africa Today*; So — *South*; SN — *Swazi News*;

SS — *Sunday Star*; ST — *Sunday Times*; SWB — *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*; T — *Transvaler*; TS — *Times of Swaziland*; TWR — *Third World Reports*; U — *Uniform*; WA — *West Africa*; WBN — *World Bank News*; WM — *Weekly Mail*; WR — *Weekly Review*; ZN — *Zimbabwe News*.

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# AFRICA

