AFRICA
iNSiGHT

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

R20,00 (VAT included)

al

Contents

incorporating

AI Bulletin

Reinventing the

by Richard Cornwell

W hen the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) holds its 12th summit in 1998, South Africa will assume the Chair, which will add a new dimension to this country's international role. Virtually since its inception the Movement has been the butt of jibes and insults from conservative Western commentators. For much of its history it was seen as anything but non-aligned – a stalking horse for the Soviet bloc in the protracted manoeuvrings of the Cold War. That Fidel Castro chaired the Movement between 1979 and 1983 gave rise to heightened derision, in that Cuba had long, and inaccurately, been viewed as a mere surrogate of Moscow. This is not to say that the Movement succeeded in living up to its ambitious title, but that commentators often found it convenient to ignore what it had to say about the need for a more equitable world order.

Today, in the aftermath of the Cold War, and the apparent victory of the ideologies of the free market, the NAM and its sister organizations in the UN – the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (Unido) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – find themselves on the defensive, seeking a role in a unipolar, and essentially indifferent, world. But there are suggestions that a revisionist history of the Cold War itself is not far off, and this may have major consequences for the way in which we interpret the results of that struggle.[1] As perceptions change, the triumphalism of the *laissez-faire* globalists may become revealed as premature at best, and in all likelihood horribly mistaken in its failure to anticipate consequences and perverse outcomes.

Already a post-Cold War literature is emerging to warn against the headlong pursuit of markets, profits and technology driven growth. The writings of Noam Chomsky have long questioned many widely held assumptions about the nature of power relations on our planet. To his eloquent liberal anarchism are now added the voices of authors who have serious and considered misgivings about the tendency to an uncritical embrace of the new orthodoxy.[2]

Most of this literature has been studiously ignored by the acolytes of the New World Order, whose belief in the Messianic triumph of technology driven market power is nothing if not reminiscent of the claims for Marxist-Leninism and historical materialism. Thus the importance and potential of the Non-Aligned Movement will continue to be discounted in the mainstream press.

The politicians, however, have a different view of such things, which one can only hope goes beyond rhetoric. As a communiqué of the India-South Africa Joint Commission in December 1996 noted:

> The two sides shared the perspective that the centrality of NAM derived not from the Cold War but from the entrenched imbalance in the distribution of political and economic power, which persists and has in many ways been intensified.

South Africa's Deputy-President Thabo Mbeki used the occasion of the meeting to emphasize the need to redefine the NAM's agenda and the entire New World Order. This is no easy matter, given the relative strengths of the forces in play. Yet

Non-Aligned Movement

NAM constitutes a powerful lobby within the UN and other international forums, representing 113 states and half of humankind.

In an article published in *The Sowetan* on 12 May this year, Garth le Pere of the Foundation for Global Dialogue made a strong case for the continuation of the NAM's process of reappraisal, which had begun at the Nicosia summit in 1988. He reminded readers of the importance of the NAM's philosophical foundations, which should form the base for the development of innovative methods and instruments to deal with the issues on the new global agenda. These would include human, social and economic rights, the environment and sustainable development, migration and the problem of refugees, the democratization of international relations through the UN, peaceful settlement of disputes, terrorism and drug-trafficking, and the debt crisis.

He added that the NAM has a special position as one of the custodians of the interests of the "Global South".

> The NAM, together with other institutional vehicles such as Unctad, really represent the last bulwarks against the creeping disempowerment and disenfranchisement of the South.
>
> The notion of collective solidarity among the non-aligned is thus more than a platitude: it fundamentally serves to arrest the precipitous slide of the South to the world's periphery.

There is a tendency in some circles to welcome the arguments of *Realpolitik*

as reflecting merit in accepting that power and strength rather than virtue determine the order of things. Yet the obsession with a top-down order ignores the successes of peaceful resistance. The NAM's vocal opposition to apartheid and other forms of racism, its commitment to disarmament, human rights and development has been an honourable one. This is not to say that some of the more prominent leaders of the movement were paragons; and the domestic antics of some of them provided ample ammunition to those who were eager to disparage the Movement. This is a point worth remembering in any attempt to seize the high moral ground in international affairs. The call for solidarity and the defence of sovereignty provide no cover for member governments' abuse of their own citizens' rights and aspirations. In this regard, indeed, the NAM could be more vocal in terms of the behaviour expected of member states towards their own subjects, thus raising the levels of responsibility in the conduct of public affairs.

And while on the matter of state behaviour, might it not be an idea to broaden the movement to include other, non-governmental actors. These are far more likely to keep the organization honest, as they have demonstrated by their reaction and participation in a number of UN-sponsored summits over, the past few years. Here, rather in the corridors of power, is where the innovative thinking will come from and the real links of a global civil society be forged.

Endnotes

1   Serious novelists have often been among the most acute observers of the current scene, of course, and the very essence of the Cold War and its driving forces have long been subject to their critical scrutiny; one thinks here of the ambivalence and cynicism of Graham Greene's works touching upon the subject of great power rivalry, and even more of the world so brilliantly depicted in the novels of John le Carré. In Le Carré's case this questioning is most openly expressed in the novel *Our Game* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1995) which illustrates the political inconvenience of cultural minorities now that their usefulness has expired.

2   See, for example, William Greider, *One world, ready or not: The manic logic of global capitalism*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997; Richard J Barnet and John Cavanagh, *Global dreams: Imperial corporations and the New World Order*, New York: Touchstone Books, 1994; Jerry Mander and Edward Goldsmith (eds), *The case against the global economy, and for a turn toward the local*, San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1996; Gregory J Millman, *Around the world on a trillion dollars a day*, London: Bantam, 1995; Neil Postman, *Technopoly: The surrender of culture to technology*, New York: Knopf, 1992. Of Chomsky's latest writings "Democracy and markets in the New World Order", in Noam Chomsky, *Powers and prospects: Reflections on human nature and the social order*, London: Pluto Press, 1996, is particularly thought-provoking, equating as it does "The End of History" with "The Utopia of the Masters"

Democracy and the

Professor Crawford Young of the University of Wisconsin-Madison analyses the problems democracies can encounter in their quest to accommodate ethnic particularism

frica nears the end of a decade marked by a wave of democratization which washed over the continent, as far-reaching as it was unexpected. The irresistibility of the pressures for political opening – never truly welcomed by the incumbents of the late 1980s – finds full measure in the comprehensiveness of the impact: by my count, only Sudan and Libya have thus far completely evaded the imperative of liberalization. Sudan was perhaps out of phase with the continental trends, abandoning an unsuccessful 1986 venture in democratization in 1989 when autocracies elsewhere were beginning to crumble. The contrarian regime in Libya has made defiance of conventional norms a source of legitimacy for nearly three decades.

As the euphoria which accompanied this dramatic surge of change has long dwindled, and the initial transitions recede into the past, the critical interrogations pivot around issues of consolidation and sustainability. The actual outcomes of the dozens of transitions vary widely, from those which appear relatively successful and secure (Benin, Mali, Cape Verde, South Africa), to those where cunning autocrats have outwitted their opponents by rapid mastery and manipulation of the new rules of multi-party politics (Togo, Cameroon, Kenya) or by endless prevarication and dilatory manoeuvre (Nigeria, Zaïre), or where transition processes were aborted by renewed military intervention (Algeria, Burundi). Few observers were of such uninhibited optimism as to expect all ventures in democratization to succeed. At the same time, few were so totally in thrall to 'Afropessimism' as to forecast comprehensive failure.

Consolidation of democratization is contingent upon a variety of factors. A number are contextual and particular to a given political site: the choices and commitments of leaders; the disposition of the military; the vulnerability to external pressures in support of liberalization; the sheer accidents of process. However, two master variables stand out as determinative: economic performance, and the accommodation of cultural diversity.

With respect to the first, I have argued elsewhere that careful scrutiny of indices of economic performance do not correlate in Africa with degree of democracy.[1] The economic performance of the patrimonial autocracies which dominated the African political landscape from shortly after independence was so poor that arguments modelled on East Asia, calling for deferral of democracy while rapid state-led development proceeds, ring hollow. Indeed, the only African states which on a sustained basis exhibit high growth rates are Botswana and Mauritius, both exceptions to the authoritarian pattern. Przeworski and Limongi, in a global study, offer compelling evidence that democracies are equally liable to emerge at any level of development; the poorest, though, are especially vulnerable to relapse into dictatorship, and disproportionately so in Africa.[2]

In this article, I leave to other hands the impact of economic performance on sustainability. Here I address the second question: how can democratization survive in the culturally plural social environment of the great majority of African states?[3] By what means, one may ask, can the cultural diversity of African civil societies find adequate accommodation, so that the conflict potential inherent in identity politics remains within civil bounds.

To explore this issue, we may usefully borrow the Samuel Huntington notion of historic 'waves' of democracy.[4] Relevant to the African experience are the second (1943–1964) and third (1974–) waves, with a reverse global wave of breakdown from 1961 to 1975. In Africa, the second wave embodies the

ethnic question
in Africa

hour of decolonization, which swept away most colonial regimes in the 1950s and 1960s; the third rises in the fateful year of 1989. To set the stage for analysis of the interplay of democratization and cultural pluralism in the third wave, I turn to the encounter of cultural pluralism and decolonization politics, and the impact upon communal identities of the reverse wave regimes, partly justified as necessary to the containment of ethnicity.

As the nationalist challenge to the African colonial state gathered force in the 1950s, few could clearly read the likely impact of identity politics in the larger political equation of the struggle to oust and supplant the colonizer. Of course the universality of ethnic consciousness was recognized by all; tribal cartography, reconfigured by the interpretive schema of the colonizer, was everywhere central to the text of domination. But the imagery through which cultural identity was weighed and appraised, both by the retreating colonial officialdom and their nationalist tormenters, contained major distortions. Paradoxically, in view of the remarkable degree to which ethnic communities, real enough by the 1950s, originated as "imagined communities" of the colonial ethnographer, the idea of "tribe" was essentialized and primordial.[5] The overpowering notion of a modern/traditional dichotomy permeated all paradigms then current. Ethnicity, and in a different way religion, clearly belonged to the world of traditionality, which the irreversible ameliorative tides of modernity were progressively effacing, or at least relegating to inconsequential private spheres. Thus quintessential nationalist Sekou Toure could confidently assert at the time of independence that, "In three or four years, no one will remember the tribal, ethnic or religious rivalries which, in the recent past, caused so much damage to our country and its population."[6] Various

sociologists traced a sharp distinction between rural "tribalism" and a synthetic, urban aggregative identity, incorporating linguistically or regionally related migrants into broader social categories. This "supertribalization", argued Immanuel Wallerstein in a seminal article, could be interpreted as a process of loyalty shift from the parochial ethnic group to the cosmopolitan nation.[7] Above all, no one could be sure what the determinants of electoral behaviour for rapidly enfranchised African subjects would be, or what the operative identity units were; one may recollect the rush of political party organizers in 1960 to the then Lovanium University anthropology department in the Belgian Congo for instruction as to what the boundaries of ethnic vote banks might actually be.[8]

With the exception of those instances where independence was essentially won by guerrilla struggle, and armed nationalism replaced the departing colonizer (Algeria, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola), or the colonizing power was itself autocratic (Spain, Portugal), the pact of decolonization was built upon democratic process, and constitutional formulas modelled upon the colonizer. For the colonial agents, this was the only system they knew, and could thus transfer. For the nationalists, the metropolitan institutions invariably commanded high prestige. Thus, there was little debate over institutional frameworks. At the time, Britain, France and Belgium were all essentially unitary states, whose constitutional frame and operative rules of the political game had been shaped by the great social struggles of the nineteenth century to accommodate class difference, but not cultural diversity.

In the terminal colonial dialogue in Africa over transition arrangements, constitutional debate wrestled with a relatively narrow range of cultural diversity issues. In the early phases, colonial

powers often sought an entrenched electoral privilege for the European minorities, and, in the East African cases, for the Asian immigrant communities. The French in the Fourth Republic hewed to largely racial dual electoral colleges, the Belgians until 1958 presumed a role of parity for the European community (then nearly 8% of the population), and the British, especially in Kenya, Tanganyika and the former Central African Federation, promoted the doctrine of "multiracialism" and "racial partnership", which postulated a collective equivalence of the racial categories in spite of their huge numerical disproportions. African nationalists, infuriated by such schemes to build constitutional walls around racial privilege, responded with the demand of one man, one vote, as the only acceptable interpretation of democratic theory. Except, subsequently, as a transitional dimension of the Zimbabwe settlement (and in South Africa), "race" as a category vanished from constitutional practice.

Partly as an African reaction to the invocation of race as a protected category, the public law of power-transfer democracy was overwhelmingly majoritarian. Only the British, in brokering independence constitutions, took official note of the apprehensions of some ethnic communities that majoritarian democracy would consecrate their marginalization. A commission was dispatched to Nigeria to inquire into the "fears of minorities' and the "means of allaying them'.[9] Arm-stroking and soothing reassurances were the principal means deployed. In Kenya, a short-lived "majimbo" constitution granted some regional autonomy, demanded by the smaller communities fearing domination by the two largest ethnic groups. In Uganda and Zambia, some structural concessions were made to Buganda and Barotseland, in acknowledgement of special status these kingdoms once extracted from the colonizer. But overall, as Kirk-Greene reminds us, the Colonial Legal Service essentially designed constitutions, with nationalist acquiescence, which enshrined the British version of majoritarian practice.[10]

As independence approached, and full majoritarianism came into electoral play with the removal of the restrictive suffrage provisions which often applied early in the decolonization process, ethnicity and regionalism did prove to be an important, if widely decried, factor shaping party alignments. In most in-

stances, political formations disavowed communal purpose, with the regional concentrations of their following reflecting the origin of the most visible leadership rather than ethnic mobilizational intent. Indeed, explicitly ethnoregional formations were largely absent in francophone Africa, and the exception rather than the rule in anglophonic Africa (Northern Peoples Congress in Nigeria, Kabaka Yekka in Uganda). Only in Belgian-ruled Africa (Belgian Congo, Ruanda-Urundi) were self-proclaimed ethnic formations widespread, doubtless reflecting the social model supplied by the permeation of Belgian society with linguistic sensitivities. However, nowhere was the formation of ethnic parties explicitly proscribed in the decolonization wave of democracy, as has been the predominant practice during the third wave.

In the religious domain, we may note a curious paradox: the colonial state, outside Islamic areas, was a resolutely evangelical instrument, providing protection, resources, and support to the Christian missions (with laic France much more lukewarm than the others), yet the constitutional frame for decolonization presumed a secular state. Religious difference as a constitutional issue was nowhere in evidence. In the Islamic states of northern Africa, anticolonial nationalism of the day was radical and secular, apart from the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Sudan. Islamism was yet to arise. In sub-Saharan states, although there was on occasion rivalry within religious streams (Ansar versus Khatmiyya in Sudan, Mourides versus Tijaniyya in Senegal, Catholics versus Protestants in Uganda) which spilled over into political alignments, the secular character of the public realm seemed axiomatic.[11]

Most fundamentally, anti-colonial nationalism powerfully resonated in the popular consciousness – more deeply in some lands than others, but everywhere its basic themes penetrated, and tended to eclipse apprehensions surrounding the cultural divisions in society. The comprehensive indictment of colonial oppression, and the exhilarating vistas of a life more abundant assured by African rule, shaped the vision of a civil society seemingly in transition from subject to citizen. The uniformly 'free and fair' independence elections, even where communal electoral mobilization did occur, did justify the mood of hope and optimism which illuminated the

1960 landscape. The ethnic question seemed manageable within the frame of the independence constitutions.

The dominant mood changed swiftly in the early 1960s. Incumbents soon tired of an opposition deemed destructive, and by combinations of cooptation and coercion began restoring the autocracy of long colonial usage. The most charismatic and widely admired nationalist leaders – Kwame Nkrumah, Sekou Toure, Habib Bourguiba, Julius Nyerere – fashioned the doctrine of the mass single party system as model for African development, claimed as democratic in the sense that the movement embodied the general will of the populace. Their commanding stature at the time carried in their wake the influential support of leading academics.[14] The developmental energies of a state were perceived as a finite sum; whatever was dissipated in political debate and competition was subtracted from the total, an intolerable loss of potential.

Soon thereafter, the wave of military interventions in 1965–66 (Algeria, Nigeria, Zaire, Central African Republic, Benin, Ghana) established the principle that only the army could produce a change of ruler. Further, ran the argument, the robust national commitment, hierarchy, discipline and professionalism unique to the military could qualify them as nation-builders and developmental managers when their predecessors faltered.[13] In turn, most military rulers sought legitimation by copying the single-party formula, created from the summit once they were installed in power.

In the process, with a tiny handful of exceptions (Mauritius, Botswana, Gambia), the democratic structures of the decolonization wave were swept aside. The dominant regime type throughout Africa became patrimonial autocracy. In the process, three dimensions of power management were interwoven. The autocratic legacy of the colonial state was silently resurrected: its routines, mentalities, ample arsenal of repressive legislation. A new political element was added: creation through the single party of a comprehensive apparatus of hegemony, forcing within its structures all important corporate bodies (unions, youth and student groups, women's organizations, among others). Alongside these formal hierarchies of authority, insufficient by themselves, informal networks of patronage tied key intermediaries and their clientele to the regime, with prebendal allocations the reward for loyalty.[16]

A forceful discourse of "nation-building" everywhere accompanied patrimonial autocracy. "Tribalism" was excoriated as a mortal danger to the new state, and the single-party formula was justified as guaranteeing its containment. Opening the political realm to competition and opposition would inevitably bring ethnic mobilization. Any public expression of a communal claim was banned, and ethnic associations, which had flourished in late colonial times, were prohibited in many countries. The powerful instrument of the educational system was systematically employed in the service of nation-building.

To a degree unique to Africa, among world regions, the stigmatization of ethnic expression in the public realm sank roots. Exile opposition groups invariably spoke a language of national redemption and democratic restoration. The very term "tribalism", with its pejorative ring and retrograde connotations, widely used to characterize any public ethnic claim, has no real counterpart elsewhere. Even where secessionist movements arose, in this period, they inevitably invoked territorial identity based on an existing administrative subdivision (Biafra, Casamance, southern Sudan, Eritrea), and not ethnic self-determination. In Nigeria, the first state to consciously address cultural diversity in defining a democratic constitutional order in its 1979 Second Republic constitution, the operative acknowledgement of "federal character" filtered through the then-19 states, and not ethnic communities per se. The constitutional commission recognized that "as a general rule, every Nigerian owes, or is expected to owe, some loyalty to his community and/or sub-community." "Federal character", as a remedy, was nonetheless cast in nation-building terms, defined as "a distinctive desire of the people of Nigeria to promote national unity, foster national loyalty, and give every citizen a sense of belonging to the nation."[17]

The nation-building project, under the tutelage of patrimonial autocracy, had several disabling flaws. Perhaps the most basic lay in the fundamental contradictions of this form of regime. By the end of the 1970s, it was clear that the state hegemonic thrust had failed in the economic sphere, with its comprehensive parastatalization of the productive infrastructure, regulated and managed trade with over-valued currencies,

and state agricultural marketing monopolies as a parasitical burden on the peasant sector. The diverse populist slogans celebrating the revolutionary character of the ruling parties had lost their credibility. For most countries, a period of decline set in, with negative per capita growth and deteriorating living standards for large sectors of the population. The 'nation' under construction inevitably suffered from its institutional embodiment in a state increasingly perceived by civil society as a predator, even a vampire. Sam Nolotshungu eloquently frames this point:

> The gap between the state culture and the popular culture, the forms of expression and even the official languages, the modes of behavior, the rites of passage to positions of influence, and even the geographic location of the apparatus and the state institutions disadvantages the people and serves to mythify the state while at the same time distancing it from the people.[16]

The patrimonial nature of informal power management honeycombed society with circuits of social transaction based upon personal ties. These were necessarily tributary to affinities of kinship or locality of origin; ethnicity writ small. Rulers found ethnic (sometimes religious) barons indispensable allies in forestalling the mobilization of discontent. State favour, exemption from sanction, even routine transactions were facilitated by using the patrimonial channels. Thus consciousness of community found reinforcement through its functional utility as well as its affective properties of shared language, culture and descent.

At the same time, state decline forced civil society to fend for itself in many aspects of life for which the public realm had once provided. Affinities of community provided the reservoir of social trust for survival in the informal economy, and for provision of basic amenities (education, health, transport) previously reliably assured by the state. Thus, though ethnicity was driven underground, there is little evidence that the decades of repressive autocracy diminished its significance. The conclusion of a study group of Camerounian intellectuals is representative of many situations:

> The only evident result of the 30 years of national unity in the name of which our governments have forgotten the security and the liberty of the citizens, and sacrificed economic development of the nation, is an open and permanent invitation

to each ethnic group to struggle, especially to the exclusion of merit, by cheating, by fraud and with impunity, to place its protégés in power, in order to guarantee themselves a portion of the national cake.[17]

Although during this period most rulers sought informal accommodation by including within the governing organs persons drawn from the main ethnic groups, their relative weight was by no means equal. Especially as the military coup became established as the principal threat to regime survival, the inner core of power became governed by an ethnic security map.[18] The key commanders of the military forces were increasingly chosen by the criterion of assured personal loyalty to the ruler; the most reliable criterion was ethnic affinity. The same rule applied to the security agencies. Not infrequently, the ethnic security imperative extended to selective recruitment practices, particularly of those élite units frequently created with special emoluments and equipment, whose members are overwhelmingly drawn from the home area of the president. The operation of the ethnic security map is readily visible in the changes in the command personnel of the Kenya army when Daniel Arap Moi replaced Jomo Kenyatta. The Burundi army is overwhelmingly Tutsi; the core of the Togolese security forces are not only Kabre, but drawn from the cluster of villages from whence President Gnassingbe Eyadema originates. The *Division Speciale Présidentielle* in Zaire is predominantly Ngbandi. The list could readily be extended.

The legacy of the ethnic security map for third wave democratization is evident, most dramatically displayed in Burundi in 1993. Genuine democratization which leads to alternation is very likely to produce a shift in the ethnic balance at the summit. This in turn is a threat to the security force hierarchy, which will fear a purge of its upper ranks and perhaps recruitment patterns. A democratized regime will also be insecure until an ethnic restructuring of the army can occur, which eliminates the imbalances of the previous system.

The Huntingtonian third wave began in Portugal, Spain and Greece in the middle 1970s, with Western Europe for the first time in its history entirely governed by constitutional democracies. The trend became apparent in Latin America shortly thereafter, reversing the

pattern of bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes which had appeared to be standard setters only a few years before.[19] Although there were short-lived democratic transitions in Africa in Ghana and Nigeria in 1979, a brief opening in Burkina Faso in the late 1970s, and a pluralization in Senegal beginning in 1976, Africa remained, overall, outside the orbit of influence of the third wave in its early stages. The widespread recognition of state failure, by 1980, led initially only to a focus on economic liberalization.

However, the structural adjustment decade of the 1980s had two important effects which paved the way for 1989. Firstly, the conviction gradually developed in many quarters, when economic reform failed to arrest the broad pattern of state decline, that the patrimonial autocratic state was incapable of successful adjustment; real accountability and transparency threatened its basic mode of reproduction. Secondly, the superstructure of international monitoring and surveillance that accompanied structural adjustment programmes, as well as the fiscal restraints central to them and the economic decline which gave rise to them, so reduced the resource flows available for patrimonial distribution that the prebendal underpinning of power management was fatally weakened.

A combination of pressures, external and internal, ushered in the African version of the third wave. The psychological impact of the implosion of the Soviet Union – once an important source of single party doctrine, with or without a Leninist component – and Yugoslavia, and the sudden collapse of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe played an important part. Among other lessons drawn, the demonstrated vulnerability of once impregnable regimes to street action certainly emboldened urban protestors everywhere. The Western donor community signalled that further assistance would be conditional upon political opening. Even the international financial institutions, especially the World Bank, under the ambiguous codeword of 'governance', appeared for a time to incorporate political reform in the concept of structural adjustment.[20]

Internally, disaffection among civil servants, students, youth, and urban workers translated into active protest. The first straw in the wind was the wave of urban rioting in Algeria in 1988, which badly rattled the ruling *Front de*

Libération Nationale (FLN), and led to an abandonment of its claim to political monopoly the following year. In Benin, by late 1989, long-time autocrat Matthieu Kerekou, deserted by his internal allies and denied his external life-support system, was constrained to summon a national conference of the *forces vives* of the nation, which peacefully siezed power by declaring itself sovereign. This spectacular success reverberated throughout Africa, especially in the francophone states, and a wave of national conferences followed. The release of Nelson Mandela and the beginning of a political transformation in South Africa in early 1991 also resonated powerfully. The African state system is exceptionally inter-communicating, and these potent trigger events detonated a surge of change which seemed all but irresistible.[21]

Political change occurred through several distinctive pathways, which shaped the context in which the encounter between the liberalized polity and cultural pluralism unfolded. The first pattern, created by the Benin model, found incumbents losing control of the political arena, and thus forced into a transition which drove them from power. Examples include Central African Republic, Congo-Brazzaville, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Zambia and (initially) Niger.

In a second variant, the ruler was adroit enough to ride out the democratization wave, successfully employing the important resources of control of the state apparatus and regional administration to secure the continuity of its control in spite of a degree of liberalization (a freed media, competitive elections, easing of repression). Among those who managed to retain power through electoral means, often by profiting from (or inducing) the division of the opposition, were incumbent rulers in Togo, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Seychelles, Ghana, Djibouti and Tunisia.

A third pattern of change occurred when the existing regime was driven out by armed insurrection from the periphery. One may note that the insurgent forces invariably had an ethnic core, and fundamentally altered the cultural balances which preceded. In addition, in these instances, the successor regimes have significantly limited the degree of political opening (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Uganda, Chad) or set aside democratization altogether (Rwanda). The cohesive ethno-regional core which directed the insurgency remains ascendant.

A fourth type of change, fitting the overall wave of liberalization, occurred when democratic elections were an indispensable component to either overcoming civil war (Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Angola), or a system of minority rule (Namibia, South Africa). The electoral process provided an indispensable mechanism for measuring the relative strength of the contending political forces, and providing a legitimate exit from anarchy or an intolerably unjust regime. In all these cases, a basic shift in the balance of communal forces occurred.

These categories of change are not exhaustive. One may note two crucial cases in which the game of transition was strung out indefinitely by the rulers: Nigeria and Zaire. In Nigeria, there has been a virtually permanent condition of transition, beginning in 1945: first from colonial rule, then to the Second Republic; and since 1985 to a Third Republic which is yet to be born.[11] In Zaire, the cynical manipulation by President Mobutu Sese Seko of a transition process launched in 1990, initially generating high hopes, brought about the accelerated decomposition of the Zairian state leading to the civil war which began in October 1996. In Niger and Gambia, military interventions overturned democratic regimes, however imperfect, and the putschists rewrote the rules of political competition to assure an apparent legitimation of their power siezure. In Morocco, Egypt and Zimbabwe, partially open systems with long-time incumbents withstood pressures for a more thoroughgoing democratization.

In most instances, political opening was accompanied by a more visible expression of the cultural diversity of the great majority of African polities. Few would challenge the axiom that electoral competition readily flows along societal fault lines defined by ethnicity, religion, or race, in Africa as elsewhere. These identities offer tempting vote banks for party organizers. In the present world conjuncture, with all forms of socialism burdened by the blight of the failed Soviet version, parties have difficulty in defining an alternative vision of society to that offered by the market economy. In addition, few African states can withstand the overwhelming external pressures to align economic policy with the "Washington consensus". Thus the language of political competition tends to be framed in terms of vague slogans of

change, animosity towards incumbents rooted in the frustrations and disappointments of economic penury, and coded or overt demands for larger communal servings of the "national cake".

Nonetheless, of the many transitions in process, only a handful have witnessed a spiralling of cultural tensions degenerating into violence: Rwanda, Burundi, Algeria, and Congo-Brazzaville. Endemic civil strife reflecting region, ethnicity, religion or clan in such polities as Liberia, Somalia, Sudan or now Zaire cannot be blamed upon democratization, which in fact seems an indispensable ingredient to any resolution of these conflicts. Of the four instances where violence attended political opening, only in Congo-Brazzaville did it directly ensue from electoral politics per se.

In Brazzaville, ethnic youth militias associated with the three main ethnopolitical formations, with the sinister designations of "Zulus", "Ninjas", and "Cobras", spread terror for several months in 1993, and were responsible for a large-scale ethnic cleansing of capital neighbourhoods. They functioned under the instigation of President Pascal Lissouba, Brazzaville Mayor Bernard Kolelas, and former ruler Denis Sassou-Nguesso respectively.[23] The violence finally subsided in late 1993, when the leaders who patronized it agreed to more civil forms of competition. The youths remain at large, and serve as a cautionary tale of the perils of unrestrained political struggle.

In Algeria, the cycle of violence began when a process of democratization was aborted by military intervention in 1992, to avert a virtually certain electoral triumph by the Islamist Front Islamique de Salut (FIS). The secularist political leadership doubtless had reasons to fear an exclusionary Islamic state. But denying power to an electoralist Islamist formation, which included moderates as well as radical Islamists, led to terrorist violence by far more extreme elements, loosely organized as the Groupe Islamique Armé (GIA). Segments of the military regime committed to "eradication" now war with ruthless GIA terrorism, with at least 10 000 civilian victims. What FIS in power might have done remains unknowable; what is certain is that the present cycle of violence originates in the derailing of democracy, and not in the political opening.

In Burundi, whose civil society began the political opening traumatized

by the historical memory of ethnic massacres in 1965, 1972 and 1988, the Tutsi-dominated regime of Pierre Buyoya initiated genuine steps towards reconciliation as the democratization wave began in 1989. He undoubtedly believed, in moving towards political opening, that his *Union pour le Progrès National* (Uprona) party would harvest the electoral rewards of reconciliation, in spite of its Tutsi antecedents. In fact, in the presidential election, Uprona did win 40%, well beyond its core ethnic constituency of 15%. But a Hutu-dominated formation, the *Front Démocratique Burundais* (Frodebu) emerged victorious, and Buyoya graciously accepted defeat. However, the legacy of the ethnic security map cast its dark shadow; the entirely Tutsi army felt threatened by the new order, and by the initial steps by elected President Melchior Ndadaye to begin a process of ethnic balancing of the security forces. In October 1993 a Tutsi faction brought Burundi to an ethnic crisis from which it has yet to emerge, by assassinating Ndadaye and several other Frodebu leaders. No formula has yet been found to bring the country back from the brink of genocidal confrontation, and a cycle of killings by Hutu militia and the Tutsi security forces continues without end. Perhaps Ndadaye moved incautiously in extending ethnic power-sharing into the security apparatus. Yet one may wonder whether Burundi can ever know peace and stability without balanced representation in its institutions of governance; the carefully staged liberalization of 1989 to 1993, in my reading, was an indispensable road to stabilized reconciliation rather than a cause of ethnic violence.[?]

In the Rwandan tragedy, the evidence speaks even more starkly to the thesis that prudent implementation of democratization, with genuine power-sharing, could have averted the genocidal disaster of 1994. A political system rooted in Hutu hegemony and exclusion of the Tutsi minority, which dated from 1959, was in clear decline by the time the third wave rolled over Africa, increasing venality, growing regional favouritism, decreasing effectiveness. The 1990 invasion by the *Front Patriotique Rwandais* (FPR), whose insurgents were mostly Tutsi long exiled in Uganda, proved the trigger to an inevitable crisis. The parties which sprouted after the abandonment of single-party rule in 1991 failed to fully capture the deepen-

ing discontent within civil society, Hutu and Tutsi, but could have provided an intermediating structure for cushioning and absorbing the rapidly swelling ethnic and regional tensions. The genocidal campaign initiated by Hutu militia, following the downing of the plane bearing President Juvenal Habyarimana back from a peace conference (probably by Hutu extremists), sowed the dragon's teeth which will be reaped for many years to come, with a web of inextricable conflict now engulfing the entire Great Lakes region. The profound polarization which these terrible events produced now excludes democratic politics. But in the longer run, the haunting question remains: whether ethnocide as a mode of politics can ever be supplanted by any political order which does not include power-sharing buttressed by a liberalized politics.[?]

In third-wave political liberalization in Africa, of the three dimensions of cultural pluralism, race persists as an important political factor primarily in South Africa. The abolition of racial seats in Zimbabwe in 1990, and the numerical shrinkage of the white population through emigration, largely marginalize race in the political arena (although not, of course, in the economy). In other countries which at the time of the second wave had significant European minorities (Algeria, Angola, Mozambique, for example), the great majority left at independence; in Kenya as well, the once-strident white settler population has dwindled to politically marginal numbers.

In South Africa, the concept of race remains deeply embedded in the popular consciousness; apartheid may have gone, but leaves its everyday legacy of racial identities shaped by the categories which are a product of 300 years of history, and more than four decades of comprehensive institutionalization under the National Party. Voting alignments since 1994 clearly indicate that the doctrine of nonracialism is insufficient to efface the racial rectangle in place. The enormous challenge of transformation and redress of the racially defined imbalances of the past places a heavy burden upon democratic politics. At the same time, a constitutional polity, an *état de droit*, and the daily brokering of racial tensions inherent to democratic politics, offer the best framework for building a new South Africa.

In the religious sphere, the challenges are substantially greater than in

the decolonization democratization. Religious mobilization becomes a significant factor in a number of countries where it was inconsequential in 1960 (Nigeria, Algeria, Egypt). The axiomatic premise of a world historical trend towards secularization, dominant in 1960, is open to question in the face of the rise of fundamentalisms in all the major religious traditions.[26]

The compatibility of integralist religious orientation and democratic politics is an open question. The divinely-ordained world view of the followers of fundamentalist movements finds acceptance of difference difficult. At the same time, one may query the viability of a purely exclusionary approach: eradication, as theory and practice, is an unlikely formula for political comity and stability in Algeria and elsewhere.

A variety of contentious issues, implicating religious orientation, have emerged in the period leading up to the third wave. One straw in the wind was the bitter battle in Nigerian Second Republic constitutional debates over the proposed creation of a federal high shari'a court. Another was the struggle in Algeria and Senegal, in the 1970s and 1980s, over elaboration of family legal codes. The furtive affiliation of Zanzibar and Nigeria to the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) generated indignant reactions among Christian communities. Muslim communities retort that the claim of secularism camouflages a hidden Christian orientation, for example in the holidays observed, and designation of Sundays as a day of rest.[27]

In the northern tier of states, where Islam is dominant, there has been a trend towards assertion of the Islamic character of the state, and not only in Sudan. In Egypt, in contrast to the radical secular nationalism of the Nasser period, a 1980 law requires that Islamic jurisprudence provide the basis for legislation. In Mauritania, only foreigners may worship at a Christian church. In these states, and the many sub-Saharan states where Christian denominations predominate, the definition of rights of religious minorities, and protective measures for them, pose challenges in the more politically competitive environment which accompanies transitions.

In a number of African states, the proportion of Muslims and Christians is roughly equal (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Tanzania). The difficulties of reconciling the differing perspectives on the nature of the state, the scope of its appropriate role in issues of personal status, and the reach of human rights provisions was well illustrated in the delicate work of the constitutional commission of Eritrea from 1993 to 1996. On the one hand, the radical populist doctrines, which planted deep roots in the three decades of liberation struggle, created strong pressures for a progressive and expansive human rights commitment in the constitution. The voice of women fighters, who participated actively in all aspects of the struggle, spoke with particular clarity and intensity. But the framers of the constitution had to balance these aspirations against the sensitivities of the coastal Muslim population.[28]

The largest array of political challenges, however, revolves around ethnicity. In a number of countries, a process of reinforcement of ethnic ideologies appears to unfold. One measure is the substitution of "nationality" for ethnicity in discourses of identity, in countries such as Nigeria and Ethiopia. More is at issue than a change of vocabulary. In the globalized language of collective consciousness, "nation" carries with it an array of potential claims (self-determination in particular) which go well beyond the entitlements of cultural self-preservation, fair shares, and communal voice embedded in ethnicity.

Yet with rare exceptions we do not see strong pressures towards fragmentation of the African state. The central institutions may collapse, as in Somalia and Liberia, but the warlords who spring up battle over their residual idea of a single state.[29] Perhaps the most telling illustration of this point is Zaire, whose state institutions have been melting away for two decades. Dissident regions, such as Shaba and the Kasais, are virtually autonomous; nothing could stop a determined separation effort, yet it has yet to occur. The armed insurrection, initially by "Banyamulenge" of South Kivu, broke out because populations of Tutsi antecedents, long resident in Zaire, were threatened with extinction of their claim to Zairian citizenship and expulsion. Rebels thus fought for the right to be Zairian as well as Tutsi, rather than for self-determination or linkage with the two Tutsi-dominated neighbouring states.

Democratic statecraft offers an array of policy choices for the management of ethnic diversity.[30] Most fundamentally, the constitutional framework needs to

facilitate power-sharing amongst the major ethnic communities. Another master principle, argued in particular by Donald Horowitz, is the value of institutional incentives for inter-group cooperation, rather than zero-sum competition.[31]

The power-sharing ethos argued in the Arend Lijphart concept of consociationalism likewise offers some framing ideas.[32] The fullest version of the Lijphart consociational model is perhaps of limited application in Africa, since it assumes a primordialized set of ethnic collectivities, upon which the overarching principles of proportionality, mutual veto, and summit diplomacy can be superimposed. One may doubt the wisdom of committing the state through its own structuration to formalizing, constituting, and rigidifying a given temporal pattern of identity, rather than preserving the large degree of flux and fluidity which now exists.

The choice of electoral system carries important implications for the modalities through which societal diversity is expressed. The range of variations on the proportional representation themes have found much wider favour in the African third wave than in the decolonization era, when single-member district majoritarianism predominated.[33] The restrictions on explicitly ethnic or religious parties practised in many countries, a unique feature of African democratization, may favour a politics of accommodation, if such limitations find broad acceptance. In a case such as Ethiopia, the particular history of the insurrection of the ethnic periphery against the Amhara-centred Marxist-Leninist dictatorship of the Derg exclude such a choice. Where Islamist currents flow strongly, as in Algeria, such an exclusion may not be feasible. But in settings as diverse as Nigeria, Tanzania and Eritrea, constitutional provisions requiring parties to have a national orientation to secure legal recognition command general assent.

In various ways, many countries – even small polities such as Benin – now accept a much greater degree of decentralization than state doctrines once accepted. In culturally diverse polities, the relevance of the Jacobin doctrine of the centralized, unitary state is open to question. Acceptance of decentralization is also a practical acknowledgement of the serious weakening of state capabilities in the long era of decline afflicting much of the continent.

Democracy and cultural diversity are uneasy partners. Yet the failure of autocracy in the interwave period was so complete that one may view alternatives with scepticism. The excruciating economic difficulties which will continue to bedevil much of Africa make the current round of transitions vulnerable. But the quest for accommodation of diversity within democratic frameworks can and will succeed in a number of instances, which will then serve as a beacon of hope for the others.[34]

Notes and references

1. Crawford Young, 'Africa: an interim balance sheet,' Journal of Democracy, vol 7, no 3, July 1996, pp 53–68.

2. Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi, "Modernization: theories and facts," World Politics, vol 49, no 2, January 1997, pp 155–183.

3. By 'cultural pluralism', I refer to the existence within a given political unit, normally a state, of more than one socially salient and self-conscious ethnic, religious, and/or racial group.

4. Samuel P Huntington, The Third wave: democratization in the late Twentieth Century. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991.

5. The reference is to the seminal Benedict Anderson monograph, Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism. London: Verso Editions, 1983. On the importance of colonial construction of ethnic categories, see inter alia Jean-Loup Amselle and Elikia M'bokolo, Au coeur de l'ethnie: ethnies, tribalisme et état en Afrique. Paris: Editions de la Découverte, 1985, and Leroy Vail (ed), The creation of tribalism in Southern Africa. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

6. Sekou Touré, Toward full reafricanisation. Paris: Présence Africaine, 1959, p 28.

7. Immanuel Wallerstein, "Ethnicity and national integration," Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines, no 1, 1960, pp 129–139.

8. Faculty at the time, needless to say, were all Belgian. On the vagaries of ethnic identity at this period in Zaire, see Crawford Young, Politics in the Congo. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp 232–272.

9. Nigeria. Report of the Commission appointed to enquire into the fears of minorities and the means of allaying them. Cmnd 505. London: HMSO, 1958.

10. A H M Kirk-Greene, "A sense of belonging: the Nigerian constitution of 1979 and the promotion of national loyalty," Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics, vol 26, no 2, July 1988, 158–172.

11. Earlier, one may note that the internationally brokered establishment of an inde-

pendent Libyan state in 1952 involved installing as monarch King Idris, whose primary pedigree was leadership of the Senussiyya order. This arrangement, mostly unencumbered by democratic process, was motivated by the political attractions of the King to the Anglo-American sponsors of the settlement, and not its religious dimension. See Adrian Pelt, *Libyan independence and the United Nations: a case of planned decolonization*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970.

12. For example, Thomas Hodgkin, *African political parties*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961; Ruth S. Morganthau, *Political parties in French-speaking West Africa*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964; Immanuel M Wallerstein, *Africa: the politics of independence: an interpretation of modern African history*, New York: Vintage, 1961.

13. The notion of the military as modernizers also attracted academic admirers. See Morris Janowitz, *The military in the political development of new nations: an essay in comparative analysis*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964, and John J Johnson (ed), *The role of the military in underdeveloped countries*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962.

14. For a fuller development of this argument, see Crawford Young, *The African colonial state in comparative perspective*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994, 282–292.

15. A H M Kirk-Greene, *op cit*, 165-166.

16. Sam C Nolotshungu, "L'Etat face au conflit civil: réflexions sur l'Angola, l'Ethiopie et le Tchad," *Revue Française de Science Politique*, vol 38, no 4, August 1988, p 541.

17. Collectif Changer le Cameroun, *Changer le Cameroun: pourquoi pas?* Yaounde: ESF, 1990, 19. For other evidence, see the various contributions by leading Nigerian scholars to Paul A Beckett and Crawford Young (eds), *Dilemmas of democracy in Nigeria*, Rochester: University of Rochester Press, forthcoming 1997.

18. This concept finds felicitous development in Cynthia Enloe, *Ethnic soldiers: state security in divided societies*, Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980.

19. The concept was first developed by

Guillermo O'Donnell, *Modernization and bureaucratic authoritarianism: studies in South American politics*, Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1973. See also David Collier (ed), *The new authoritarianism in Latin America*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979, and James M Malloy (ed), *Authoritarianism and corporatism in Latin America*, Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University Press, 1977.

20. See, for example, the article by World Bank official Pierre Landell-Mills, "Governance, cultural change, and empowerment," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 30, no 4, December 1992, 543-567.

21. Among the works which inventory this transformation, see Jennifer Widner (ed), *Economic change and political liberalization in sub-Saharan Africa*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994, and Goran Hyden and Michael Bratton, *Governance and politics in Africa*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992.

22. See various contributions to Paul A Beckett and Crawford Young (eds), *op cit*, especially the chapters by Young and Oyelele Oyediran.

23. The Ninjas were a Lari group, the dominant ethnic element in Brazzaville; the Zulus were an offshoot of the *mouvance présidentielle*, whose regional base was the Niari, Bouenza and Lekoumou districts near Brazzaville, from whence comes the recent ethnic acronym of "Nibolek"; the Cobras were mainly remnants of the Sasso-Nguesso presidential guard, originating from his northern village cluster. See *Africa Confidential*, vol 34, no 25, 17 December 1993, and Kajsa Ekholm Friedman and Anne Sundberg, "Ethnic war and ethnic cleansing in Brazzaville," University of Lund, Sweden, typescript, 1994.

24. See the illuminating work of Rene Lemarchand, *Burundi: ethnocide as discourse and practice*, Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1994, and Filip Reyntjens, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating: the June 1993 elections in Burundi," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 31, no 4, December 1993, 563–584.

25. See the careful account by Timothy Longman, "Rwanda: democratization and disorder: political transformation and social deterioration," in John F Clark and David E Gardinier (eds), *Political reform in francophone Africa*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1996, 287–301.

26. See Martin E Marty and R Scott Appleby (eds), *Fundamentalisms and the state: remaking politics, economics, and militance*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993, and the several other volumes with the same editors resulting from the Chicago "fundamentalisms" project.

27. See the chapters by Sabo Bako and Toyin Falola on the increasingly strident political orientations of elements of the Muslim and Christian communities respectively, in Paul A Beckett and Crawford Young (eds), *op cit*.

28. The delicacy of the balance which needed to be struck was keenly evident to all of us who had the opportunity to serve on the International Advisory Board to the Eritrean Constitutional Commission.

29. On the collapsed state phenomenon, see I Wiliam Zartman (ed), *Collapsed states: the disintegration and restoration of legitimate authority*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995.

30. For an inventory, see Crawford Young (ed), *Ethnic diversity and public policy: a comparative inquiry*, London: Macmillan, forthcoming 1997.

31. Donald L Horowitz, *A democratic South Africa? constitutional engineering in a divided society*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991. Although the specific prescriptions for the South African situation are open to criticism, the underlying concept remains valuable.

32. See especially his seminal original formulation of this theory, in Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in plural societies*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977.

33. For a valuable inventory, see Shaheen Mozaffar, "Electoral systems and conflict management in Africa," in Timothy Sisk and Andrew Reynolds (eds), *Elections and conflict resolution in Africa*, Washington: United States Institute of Peace, forthcoming 1997.

34. For a useful evaluation, see Larry Diamond, *Prospects for democratic development in Africa*, Stanford: Hoover Institution, 1997.

The role of civil society in consolidating democracy:

An African comparative perspective

against the background of the excitement generated by the designation of civil society as the key to political and economic development in Africa, this article addresses one of the popular concerns of the moment: the role of civil society in democratic consolidation. Given the external origins of the civil society school, I begin by attempting to contextualize civil society in the African perspective and then zero in on how its role in democratic consolidation should be examined. For the latter purpose, I suggest that the role of civil society in the democratic transition process holds the key to analysis of its role in democratic consolidation. The central argument that flows from this is that where the aim of civil society constituents is simply to capture state power, the prospect for democratic consolidation is not as bright as it is in a situation where the constituents effect a change of political leadership and accept the new regime or confer legitimacy on it, but retain a measure of the autonomy necessary for them to continue to play overseeing and consolidatory roles.

To close this introductory section, it is necessary to operationally define the key concepts used in this article. The first is *civil society*. Given its highly diversified pedigree, the concept does not lend itself to common usage, as we shall find out in the following two sections devoted to clarifying the meaning and application of civil society in African discourse. It has both normative and functional dimensions, neither of which can

really be understood apart from the other. In functional and concrete terms, it refers to the non-state sector of the public (as opposed to private) realm which mediates relations between the individual (family) and the state.

Civil society comprises the whole gamut of formal and informal associational life, in so far as the associations are relatively autonomous of the state, are public (that is, involved in setting the normative order for the state as well as the furtherance of the common

good), and civil (that is, unlike the state, they are voluntary bodies which reconcile differences on the basis of mutual interests rather than coercive means). By implication, not every segment of associational life belongs to civil society, though scholars differ on which associations to include and exclude. In this article, an inclusive approach to the structuration of civil society, which reflects its actual character as a contested terrain and has implications for its efficacy in democratization, is adopted.

Professor Eghosa E Osaghae, Head of Political Studies at the University of Transkei, Umtata, has published extensively on issues related to civil society, and is editor of Between state and civil society in Africa, *Dakar: Codesria, 1994. Here he looks at some of the misconceptions about the nature of civil society in contemporary Africa and the misplaced expectations of its potential role in the democratization process.*

Democratic transition refers to a **continuous** process of movement of political institutions, political culture, and political economy away from authoritarianism to democracy. It is a continuous process because it does not end with the interval of actual transition which typically involves the introduction of multiparty system, new constitution, elections, installation of new leaders, and so on. The new institutions and values of participation, political efficacy, accountability, transparency, constitutionalism, rule of law, and legitimacy of the political system have to be protected and entrenched to a point where a relapse to authoritarianism becomes unlikely. It is in this long-term context that democratic transition melts into democratic consolidation. *Democratic consolidation* accordingly refers to an advanced stage in the transition continuum where democratic structures are sustained and have become stable. The chances of democratic transition and consolidation are higher when civil society constituents develop stakes in the survival of the new structures, legitimize it, and are in a position to continue to prod the state towards democratic ends.

Civil society as a received paradigm in African studies

The recent and ongoing focus on civil society in African studies grew out of the search for how to consolidate political and economic reforms. American Africanists, many of whom had given up on the weak, "rogue" and ineffective state, and the World Bank, which was interested in sustaining private-sector led development, championed the new perspective, which basically aimed at reconstructing state-society relations. The hope was that civil society could be sufficiently strengthened to check the chronic weaknesses of the state evident in poor governance, defined in terms of bureaucratic inefficiency and general institutional ineffectiveness, as well as low levels or virtual absence of accountability, impartiality and impersonality in the management of public affairs,[1] and legitimacy crises. Civil society therefore had an enormous task, and its constituents have received ample support from the international donor community in order to enhance their capacity to tame the state, strengthen key elements of governance, develop an autonomous private sector, and consolidate the forces of democratization.

As the state in several countries became more disabled by economic reforms, poor management and prebendalism, to the point where some countries were no longer capable of discharging the most basic of responsibilities, such as paying the salaries of civil servants, so the amount of so-called capacity-building support to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) increased. In countries such as Somalia and Liberia, where the state atrophied for all practical purposes owing to protracted internal wars, NGOs took over some of the responsibilities of the state, especially in the provision of social goods. But even in countries like Tanzania, Uganda, Zaire, and Cameroon,

where the state only grew pale, and seemed to be *responding well* to standard IMF/World Bank treatment, the role of the NGOs in primary health care, education and community development increased, as donors preferred to give aid to these organizations rather than to corrupt government agencies where large portions of the funds were very likely to end up in private pockets.

This background to the origins of the civil society perspective is meant to provide a clear picture of what the civil society project in Africa is all about, and to serve as a point of departure for the arguments to be made in this paper. Let me begin by distilling the main points of the perspective outlined above, and examine their implications for the discussion of the role of civil society in democratization processes in Africa. The first is that at both the scholarly and developmental levels the civil society perspective originated outside Africa, and

although the vitality of public associational life in Africa has long been recognized,[2] the new perspective aims at the (re)construction of civil society to enable it perform new roles assigned to it. This is why, in spite of the long history of civil society constituents, many adherents of the new perspective refer to the "emergence" of civil society.

It also explains why ethnic and other particularistic associations which permeate the civil society landscape in most African countries, but whose publicness is regarded as negative and dangerous, are excluded from the civil society of discourse. These notions of civil society derive from the traditions of Western political philosophy, but they do violence to the corpus of civil society in Africa. In particular, by running away, as it were, from the reality of a divided civil society which has always been an arena for contesting and contradictory centrifugal and centripetal forces, and focusing only on associations with a national or universal orientation, the new perspective sometimes leads to overly exaggerated and optimistic views of the roles and capacity of civil society.

The second point is closely related to this, and it is that the civil society perspective has tended, largely because of the Western origins and contexts of discourse, to be more prescriptive or normative than explanatory or empirical. Thus, although it recognizes the potential of civil society to enhance the consolidation of democracy, the emergent perspective fails to properly contextualize civil society in Africa by relating it to the social formations, political culture and political economy of the larger society. This is a serious omission because the potential of civil society can only be captured and realized if it is approached contextually. The third point is that many adherents of the civil society perspective take the success of democratic transition for granted, and seem to suggest that civil society is crucial only at the stage of consolidation. This leaves out the critical question of the role of civil society in the struggle to enthrone democracy, which was the focus of the democratic-transition-as-second-independence-movement school,[3] a perspective which has been somewhat abandoned. Some authors even go so far as to suggest that "the decline of weak predatory states and autocratic rule has

opened opportunities for the *formation* of civil society".[4]

So, where was civil society during the process of transition? Arguably, the predominance of authoritarian regimes and dictatorial tendencies in several countries suggested that civil society was not effective, but it seems that a more important reason for underplaying the role of civil society was to emphasize the role of external actors in the entire transition, thereby making the *formation* of civil society simply a matter of consolidating a process begun by the international community.[5] But notwithstanding the crucial roles Western countries and the donor community played through political conditionality, especially in countries such as Kenya and Nigeria where incumbent heads of state were either unwilling to adopt multiparty democracy or scuttled the transition process, the question of democratization and its consolidation is an internal one. One of the main arguments of this article is that the prospects for democratic consolidation can only be properly gauged if the role of civil society in the democratic transition is analysed and related to its role in the post-transition period. If that role was simply to capture state power while leaving basic authoritarian structures intact, or to install an ethnic party in power, then the prospects of democratic consolidation would be quite slight.

The fourth and final point is that civil society is presented as a rival or an alternative to the state. Its efficacy is therefore measured chiefly either by its ability to confront the state, oppose and possibly overthrow authoritarian and corrupt regimes or, at other times, by the amount of autonomy it enjoys from the state. This has raised pertinent questions about what the true objectives of the civil society project are and, in particular, whether it is not aimed at the perpetuation of American and European hegemony. But putting this aside, what exactly should be the relationship between the state and civil society? The history of civil society-state relations in Africa supports the view that confrontation and autonomy are the pillars of civil society dynamism, but it does not support a decoupling of the two spheres of the public realm because, in the final analysis, the state needs the legitimacy conferred on it by civil society sup-

port to subsist. How then should civil society relate to the state for purposes of democratization? Its role should be to reconstruct the state along democratic lines, confer legitimacy on it (which sometimes requires cooperation), and ensure democratic sustenance. This means that the role of civil society in the process of actual transition is as crucial as it is in the post-transition period.

The nature of civil society in Africa

While civil society has a rich and diversified intellectual history in Western Europe which dates back to Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, Gramsci and de Tocqueville, it is a recent entry into African social scientific discourse. Largely for this reason, the definition of civil society in Africa is still in a state of flux, and takes its cues from perspectives developed out of Western experience. These latter perspectives, which were engendered by the development of capitalism, locate civil society in the distinct private realm which exists alongside the encompassing power of the state (Hegel), or in an array of voluntarily aggregated interests which occupy the social and political space between the state and society, and function to limit the encroachment of the state on the liberties of the private realm (de Tocqueville). Civil society is then defined in contradistinction to the state:

> Within the state, political action is motivated by means of command backed by the implicit sanction of violence. Within civil society, political initiatives arise on a voluntary basis either because actors perceive a material advantage or because they are motivated by commitment to ethical or political value. Although the state may possess a legitimate claim to the monopoly of violence, it cannot claim exclusive dominion over economic or ethical life. Yet, economic interests and moral values are key poles around which political activity regularly clusters. These are the province of civil society.[6]

From the literature on the development of civil society in Western Europe, three distinct features which underlie its composition and functions can be discerned:

(i) It is constituted by members of the middle classes (or the bourgeoisie) whose independent

material base and articulation of universal, as opposed to parochial, values provide the pedestal for protecting society from state intrusion. The efficacy of civil society is determined to a large extent by the extent to which these classes are developed;

(ii) It is distinguished from other voluntary and manifestly political associations in (political) society by its publicness and civilness which, according to Azarya, is a "recognition that all people have similar rights and obligations and ... implies a readiness to moderate particular or parochial interests in consideration of some common good";[7] and

(iii) It is the repository of the common good, collective will and solidarity, as well as public opinion, and acts on these bases to set the normative rules (especially those having to do with accountability) which govern the functioning of the state and its operators. As such, civil society is at the centre of state formation and reformation and the harmonization of organizing principles of the state with those of the larger society.

Taking the foregoing as a point of departure, the conceptualization of civil society in Africa has revolved around the similarities and differences between civil society in Africa and Western Europe in terms of its composition and functions.[8] For example, Woods notes that although it is premised on a growing differentiation between public and private interests and its constituents seek to articulate a principle of public accountability that is binding on the state élite, "the public sphere that is developing in Africa is not based as strongly on bourgeois economic relations as was the case in Western Europe".[9] It has also been pointed out that because of what Bayart calls the *totalizing* tendency of the state or the efforts by its managers to dominate not only the political but also the economic, social and cultural spheres, the civil society-state distinction in Africa is tempered by a mix of cooperation, cooptation, and exchanges, in addition to confrontation which is commonly assumed to be its main function.[10] This

is because, for historical reasons which have to do with low levels of national cohesion and the underdevelopment of autonomous bourgeoisie and middle classes, the state has played crucial roles in the shaping of civil society.[11]

Of the few attempts so far made to formulate an African perspective of civil society, that by Peter Ekeh is easily the most outstanding.[12] Ekeh's formulation derives largely from his theory of colonialism and the two publics in Africa which demonstrated that, whereas in the West the public realm developed as one public in relation to society, in Africa it developed as two publics because of the disjunction between state and society under colonialism.[13]

On the one hand was the *civic* public, which was dominated by the state and its apparati – bureaucratic, military, legislative, executive, judiciary, and other agencies. The state has, since colonial times, sought to emasculate and subordinate other constituents of the civic public which, in the strictly Western sense, make up civil society – labour unions, student organizations, the mass media, women's organizations, and so on – as part of its totalizing process and the efforts of the political élite to create a national society. This public, as embodied by the colonial and post-colonial state which claimed ownership of it, was far removed from the lives of most ordinary people, who consequently did not develop a sense of its ownership. Largely for this reason, it was bereft of the normative order of the indigenous society and operated within an amoral milieu which permitted prebendalism and other corrupt practices.

On the other hand was the *primordial* public which, because of the alienation of the state and its failure to provide the basic welfare and developmental needs of the ordinary peoples, evolved as more or less an alternative to the state. It comprised ethnic, religious, regional and similar particularistic organizations which organized indigenous credit schemes, awarded scholarships, built schools, town halls, dispensaries, and so on. The distinctive mark of this public has been the strong sense of ownership amongst most ordinary citizens, who have effectively resisted state intrusions into it. Conduct in the primordial public has moreover

been informed by the normative order of society and has therefore tended to the moralistic. The two publics are not, however, separated, as in fact the élites, managers of the state and other public officials operate simultaneously within them. The contradictory pulls of membership in the two publics underlie problems like corruption and ethnicity, especially as primordial constituents expect members in the civic public to employ state resources to further private and communal interests.

The major consequence of the contradictions which subsist in the post-colonial dispensation has been well articulated by Ekeh in terms of the disenablement of a sense of common ownership of the public realm which is central to the definition of civil society:

> The dynamics of African politics have been generated from the fact that individuals have fought to expand their, say, ethnic spheres of influence by controlling the state so as to be able to dominate the public realm and use its resources for the benefit of their own primordial public. In so doing the commonness of civil society is diminished.[14]

Ekeh's insights help to explain certain key features of civil society in Africa which are crucial for understanding its role in democratization. For example, it explains why exit, or what Azarya and Chazan call disengagement, is the way in which many civil society constituents relate to the state.[15]

The voice or engagement option requires the cultivation of a sense of ownership of the state. This seems to have grown rapidly in many countries in recent years, as can be seen in the increased spate of agitations and contestations over state power and resources, but most people still emphasize their ownership of civil society structures, and the continued or even heightened inability of the state to provide public goods has strengthened the exit option. This is not only true of organizations in the primordial public, but also of civic public organizations, which emphasize their corporate interests above those of the public at large. Thus, although in the recent past labour unions and student organizations have risen to make strong political demands on the state, their preoccupation has remained first and foremost the betterment of their members.

Ekeh's insights also tell us that civil society is an arena of contestation between primordial and civil forces and between primordial organizations. This explains why more universal civil society groups such as labour unions and women's associations are susceptible to, and often divided by, ethnic and other cleavages, and why concerted civil society actions are a rarity. Although Ekeh does not explicitly make the point, the insight into the contested terrain that is civil society underlines its role as a manager and conciliator of conflicting interests. In fact, its efficacy in democratic transition and consolidation depends in large measure on its ability to further the reconciliation of conflicts. Finally, Ekeh's insight also explains why civil society elements are, contrary to the notion born out of Western experience, involved in the struggle to capture state power, as ethnic organizations and political parties as well as labour unions have done. As I shall argue, however, this reduces the political efficacy of civil society, which by definition hinges on its ability to wrest concessions from the state and subject state power holders to its scrutiny, rather than on its ability to capture state power.

Having tried to establish the African parameters of civil society, we can then examine its empirical dimensions. What groups make up civil society in Africa, and what criteria should be used for inclusion and exclusion? The relevant groups are voluntary associations and social movements which occupy the non-state space of the public domain. The criteria for inclusion/exclusion would depend largely on the aspects or functions of civil society that one is interested in, but in general they include, in addition to publicness and civilness, relative autonomy from the totalizing state, which often necessitates confrontation with the state.

Given the roles stipulated for civil society in the reconstruction of state-society relations, political scientists tend to emphasize autonomy and the ability to confront the state and counteract its totalizing tendencies. Bayart, for instance, sees civil society as made up of groups which are in direct touch with the state and remain so for as long as there is self-consciousness of their existence and of their opposition to the state.[16] This means, for several scholars, that only

labour unions, student organizations, the mass media, human rights and other pro-democracy organizations which have taken on the state time and again qualify to be civil society constituents.

"Clearly", Ekeh says, "these do not exhaust the scope of associational life in Africa and underrepresent civil society when its meaning is expanded beyond manifest capacity to confront the state. The truth of the matter is, in African circumstances it is often difficult to foretell which organizations will challenge the state effectively".[17] He then cites the example of the *Agbekoya*, a rural movement which effectively challenged the Nigerian state in the late 1960s. The Bakalori peasant uprising in northern Nigeria, as well as the Susukuu movement in pre-civil war Liberia and the Rwenzururu movement in Uganda, can also be cited.[18] Scott's identification of invisible, day-to-day forms of resistance by common peoples in symbols, attitudes, music, and non-concrete acts, which he describes as *infrapolitics*, further supports an expanded definition of civil society.[19]

In the structuration of civil society in Africa therefore, Ekeh argues that care should be taken to include associations and institutions that possess not only *manifest* but also *latent* capacity to confront the state. On this basis, he identifies four categories of civil society organizations in Africa: **civic public associations** (cf trade unions, student unions, mass media); **deviant civic associations** (cf secret societies, fundamentalist religious movements); **primordial public associations** (ethnic associations); and **indigenous development associations** (cf farmers' and traditional women's unions).[20]

Emphasis on confrontation, whether manifest or latent, should not however be at the expense of cooperation, exchanges, cooptation and other coupling elements which characterize the dynamics of state-civil society relations (it should be remembered that neither the state nor civil society can act or survive independently of the other). Most important, confrontation should not be taken to mean a complete rejection or delegitimization of state authority. Civil society also has a responsibility to legitimize state authority when that authority is exercised in accordance with the norms of democracy. For the purpose of this article,

therefore, while the ability of an association to confront the state for purposes of enthroning democracy is emphasized in the structuration of civil society, it is also essential that the association accepts and supports the state when its authority is exercised democratically. This is a major requirement for both democratic transition and consolidation.

Should we exclude ethnic and other traditional associations and movements which usually pursue exclusionary and parochial interests from civil society as some scholars have done?[21] No. Their inclusion is perhaps the distinctive mark of civil society in Africa, as Ekeh's insights make clear, and the vast majority of the citizens relate to the state through them. They need to be included not only because
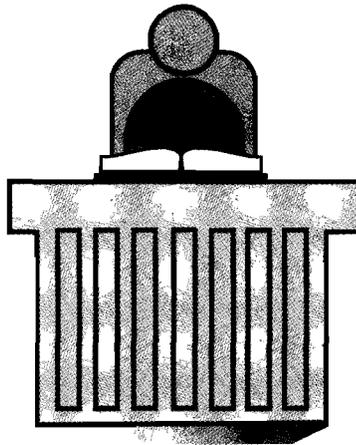
they also occupy the public domain, are voluntary associations, and have confronted the state, sometimes in alliance with civic public organizations, to entrench democracy, but also because their inclusion enables us to analyse civil society as an arena of contesting and contradictory forces whose efficacy and nationalness cannot be taken for granted. Another important reason for including these primary associations is provided by Fatton, who points out that democracy is impossible without the empowerment of subordinate classes whose members organize these associations, relate to other segments of civil society through them, and are mobilized through them during periods of the struggle to terminate authoritarian rule.[22]

Should international actors, especially international NGOs, who have played critical roles in funding, training, expanding and strengthening civic public organizations (notably NGOs

and pro-democracy groups) which were in the vanguard of the democratic struggles in Africa, be included in the definition of civil society? While the importance of the international community cannot be denied and has of necessity to be factored into our analysis, civil society by definition exists within national boundaries, and it is better to keep it so.

The final empirical aspect of civil society in Africa is the rapid expansion, change and strengthening it went through in the 1980s and 1990s. Since these were the critical years of democratization on the continent, it can be argued that the two processes were related, as indeed they were, although the economic recession and adjustments "without a human face" partly accounted for the explosion of civil society activities all over the continent.[23] The introduction of liberalization policies which hinged on the retrenchment of the state's totalizing tendencies and the expansion of private capital engendered the opening of political space in previously closed systems. The adoption of multiparty systems as the institutional correlate of political liberalization further enhanced this process in countries where opposition to the single party had previously been outlawed or emasculated.

The expansion of civil society was evident in all segments. Within the civic public, the most notable expansion (or emergence, since they did not previously exist in many countries) was in the number of civil liberties and pro-democracy associations as well as of independent newspapers and magazines. In a few countries such as Nigeria private radio and television channels also emerged. But there was an overall increase in the number of voluntary public organizations. In Côte d'Ivoire, for example, between 1990 and 1992 alone the Ministry of the Interior registered no fewer than 50 new voluntary associations, most of them with political objectives.[24] In former one-party states such as Kenya, Zambia, Malawi, and Côte d'Ivoire, the expansion of civil society resulted in the proliferation of opposition groups, many of which operated as political parties. There was also an increase in the number of exile opposition groups, especially in countries like Nigeria and pre-1990 Liberia, where authoritarian regimes remained impervious to demands for change. In

the latter case, the various opposition forces to the government of the late Samuel Doe formed the backbone of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) which Charles Taylor led to overthrow Doe and attempt to take over control of the country.

In addition to the phenomenal expansion, established civic public constituents, notably professional associations (especially bar associations), students organizations, labour unions, church and other religious organizations and women's groups became more assertive and confrontational towards the state. The primordial public, on the other hand, also witnessed a phenomenal return of ethnic unions, self-help groups, indigenous development associations and so on. As the state became increasingly unable to satisfy the demand for public goods, especially in the social sector, so the relevance of these groups which provided some of these goods in the daily lives of ordinary people became more pronounced. As in the past, disengagement was the mainstay of primordial public groups, but diminishing economic resources and increased concern with the structure and control of the state led ethnic and fundamentalist religious organizations in particular to unprecedented political agitation and confrontation with the state, sometimes in collaboration with civic public organizations. The movements of the ethnic minority groups of the oil-producing areas of Nigeria, including the Saro-Wiwa-led Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), the resurgent Casamance question in Senegal, and the various ethnic uprisings in Niger and Mali were good examples.

To recapitulate, civil society in Africa comprises both civic public and primordial public organizations which have a manifest or latent capacity to confront and legitimize the state for the purpose of enthroning democracy. It is itself an arena of contest between contradictory centripetal and centrifugal forces, and the ability to resolve these contradictions is one of the determinants of its efficacy in the process of democratic consolidation.

Civil society, democratic transition and consolidation

As I indicated earlier, the key to analysing the role of civil society in democratic consolidation lies in its

role in the struggle for democracy in the first place. So what has been the role of civil society in democratic transition in Africa? It has varied from transition to transition depending on the mode of transition, the scope of popular participation by various constituents and their ability to reconcile their differences and form stable coalitions, and the extent of political and economic liberalization (or openness of the system), all of which had implications for the outcome of transition in the short run, and democratic consolidation in the long run.

The class dynamics of transitions set the overall parameters for civil society's involvement in democratization. In almost all cases, democratization was prefaced by prolonged civil strife and political turmoil – demon-

strations, strikes, riots, and so on. These mass protests, which were primarily aimed at exacting improved economic and social conditions for workers, students and other groups, provided as it were the enabling environment for specifically political demands to emerge for the ousting of incumbent authoritarian leaders and regimes. From a class perspective, Fatton has pointed out that the transition-inducing struggles involved mainly the subordinate classes and groups "which have been the most forceful promoter, defender and supporter of democracy simply because they have consistently been excluded from political participation".[25]
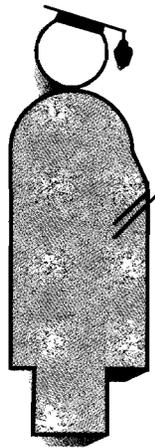
However, the mass-based organizations and movements tended to be sidelined from the actual processes and arrangements of transition, which were taken over by members of the "predatory" classes, typically public and private sector élites forced by economic

reforms to seek new forms of control and accumulation, and the middle-sector classes and groups comprising the intelligentsia, professionals, labour, exile opposition groups and displaced élites from the predator class. In most cases, these latter groups literally hijacked the democratization process, subordinated popular demands to their narrow class interests, and foreclosed the chances of fundamental reforms of the state and its relations with society which were central to the demands of the lower classes. It was the dominance of these groups which coalesced into opposition coalitions that led to the quest for, and in some cases actual takeover of, state power by civil society constituents.

In general, the efficacy of civil society in transition depended greatly on the scope of involvement of its various constituents, and their ability to reconcile conflicting interests. Where participation was restricted to only a few constituents, as in transition by co-optation and military-engineered transition where incumbent regimes and selected opposition groups were the main actors, the ability of civil society to play its role maximally was constrained. The problem was that fundamental problems which precipitated transition – authoritarian and non-accountable rulership, exclusion and marginalization of large segments of the citizenry from state power and resources, competing identities and contested citizenship, corrupt and non-performing governments, economic hardship, declining standards of living, and so on – were in danger of not being properly addressed. The prospect for successful transition and eventual consolidation was brighter where the scope of participation was wide enough to allow all the contesting interests to be articulated and addressed by civil society constituents: this increased the chances of legitimacy of the ensuing democracy, which is a prerequisite for consolidation.

The actual role of civil society in democratization, as indicated earlier, depended on the mode of transition. The modes of transition in Africa included the national conference (Benin, Gabon, Togo, Zaire, Congo; South Africa had a pseudo-national conference transition through the long-drawn-out and encompassing constitutional talks); military disengagement (Nigeria, Ghana, Burkina

Faso); plural elections with or without regime change (Cape Verde, Malawi, Zambia); conditionality-induced transition (Kenya); co-optation of opposition (Senegal); and overthrow of regime through armed liberation struggle (Uganda). These different modes have also been classified into forced transition (regime overthrow, conditionality-induced transition), negotiated transition (national conference, co-optation) and voluntary transition (military disengagement, plural elections).

From a civil society point of view, the sovereign national conference mode which was most inclusive of civil society constituents and aimed more at the transformation of state-society relations, at the setting of new rules of conduct in the public domain, at resolving issues of the national question, at the entrenchment of new values and institutions, and less at the capture of state power by civil society constituents (implying that civil society was kept more or less intact), had the greatest potential for democratic consolidation. This was more so if it involved virtually all the critical civil society constituents – bar associations, professional, women, labour, student, ethnic, religious and human rights organizations – in the negotiated transition, thereby giving them a stake in the sustenance of the democratic settlement.

An insight into the inclusiveness and mechanics of transition by national conference is provided by the case of Benin:

T[he] seemingly heterogeneous assembly, consisting of dozens of political movements and hundreds of delegates was convened by the regime and succeeded in turning itself into a sovereign body and in imposing a new government on the regime in power as well as transition institutions. The subsequent course of events ...was as follows: the national Conference ... brought together the most representative social and political leaders, and was followed by the appointment, within the framework of the conference, of bodies responsible for supervising the transition ...[26]

But with exception of Benin (and to some extent Mali), whose national conference led to a fairly successful transition, all the other national conferences were scuttled by incumbent rulers so that, even when they led to transition, it was on terms set by the

rulers themselves rather than civil society (Zaire is a good example here). The efficacy of civil society in national conference-type transition was, however, partly demonstrated in Benin, where the civil society coalition which brought Soglo to power mobilized to get him out of office in the first post-conference election on the grounds of poor performance. At least the activism of civil society did not terminate with a change of government.

All the other modes of transition entailed attempts to take over, and in a few cases actually saw the takeover of, state power by civil society constituents, with little or no fundamental change to the authoritarian milieu of governance except for multiparty elections and, in some cases, constitutional changes to reflect pluralist politics. Under such circumstances, the capture of state power had the potential effect of weakening the capacity of civil society to play a deterministic role in the reconstruction of the state. For one thing, this left the business of reconstruction more in the hands of the state than civil society, and for another the unchanged authoritarian milieu enabled the new rulers to relapse into old ways in the name of national cohesion, political stability and economic reforms, while actually working to keep themselves in power.

In the circumstances, civil society structures had to be rebuilt or reorganized to meet the new challenges. Ironically, the onus of doing this fell on the former (authoritarian) leaders and their displaced parties, which now championed the democratization assault on the state. This is what happened in Zambia, where the powerful trade union movement lost its bite after its leader, Frederick Chiluba, won the election and became president. By contrast, the labour unions, bar associations, and other pro-democracy groups did not become less confrontational in furtherance of accountable and responsible governments after new leaders emerged in countries like Benin and Mali where the national conference mode was relatively successful. In the case of transition by co-optation where, as in Senegal, the incumbent regime appointed opposition leaders to top ministerial and other public positions, the weakened civil society had to seek alternative ways of engaging the state.

In spite of all that has been said, several questions remain in relating

civil society to democratization. First, it is not clear to what extent the highly partisan goals of the struggles by labour, students, women, and professionals which revolve around better conditions for their constituents can sustain democratization. As they have crystallized, they appear too sporadic and self-serving to be able to uphold genuine democratic transition, still less consolidation. It is therefore not surprising that it has been relatively easy for opportunistic and displaced members of predator classes to hijack the process of democratization. A corollary of this is that many of the demands of these civil society constituents are economic rather than political demands - in fact, the strengthening of civil society groups in many cases was forced by the repressive implementation of structural adjustment programmes, and outside of strong resistance to the hardships inflicted by SAPs these groups have not demonstrated the level of political efficacy required for viable democratization. Second, the goals of transition appear too short-run and immediate to have the necessary enduring effects on democratic transition. All that seems to matter is that a multiparty system be introduced and that incumbent leaders who are held responsible for the economic woes and hard life be booted out of office; once these are achieved, civil society reverts once again to slumber. This is why, as we said, a national conference-type transition which places emphasis on rule setting and reformulation of the state and its relations with society stands a good chance of consolidation in the long run. Thirdly, civil society remains as divided as ever in most countries, though in a few countries where ethnic and other particularistic organizations were incorporated into the politically relevant civil society coalition, some progress has been made. In others, however, where seizure of state power was uppermost, the purpose of transition seems to have been the replacement of one ethnic, religious, or regional hegemonic group by another. All these have obvious implications for the consolidation of democracy, as we have tried to show.

Conclusions

By 1994, when many dictators and authoritarian regimes had been unseated in Africa, there was a celebration of

the dawn of democracy in several parts of the continent. But by mid-1996 all that euphoria, like the euphoria of independence in the 1960s, seemed to have given way to despair. Countries like Zambia and Kenya that had supposedly completed a process of democratic transition were, for all practical purposes, back to Square One. They were back to repressive and arbitrary rule, weak watchdog and overseeing institutions, corruption and prebendalism, and mismanagement. Even the supposedly multiparty systems were fast giving way to one-party dominant systems, which could yet be the prelude to full-fledged single-party systems.

The crumbling of the democratization project is largely to be blamed on the *incompleteness* of the civil society-led democratic transitions, as we showed in our analysis in the last section. In particular, by taking the essence of democratization to be leadership and regime change as well as multiparty rule, most transitions left the question of rule setting for the public domain. Constitutionalism, the resolution of the contradictory centrifugal and centripetal forces, and the transformation of the state, which are critical for democratic consolidation, were virtually ignored, thereby giving the new men of power a blank cheque to relapse into old authoritarian ways (*cf* Ghana, Zambia). The fact that the critical segments in the transitions were, as Fatton points out, the predator and opportunistic middle-sector classes and groups whose primary interest was to capture state power is partly to blame for this. The subordinate classes and groups of civil society, which include elements of the primordial public, do not however have this disposition to capture, and have persisted in resisting state incursions into their domains largely through exit and disengagement. The riots and mass actions which prefaced democratic transitions persist; although these remain expressions of economically-fuelled anger and demands, their potential for precipitating political change remains, as in the past, high – if the hijacking by other classes can be prevented.

To conclude this paper, it is necessary to say a few words about the linkage between the state and civil society, and how this impacts on democratization, in the light of attempts that have been made by external actors to build the capacity of civil society in Africa. One implication of the class and group divisions in civil society and the divergent orientations towards the state is that for civil society to play the critical role expected of it in the democratization process

> What is needed is to search for ways that will enable the state and ...civil society to be mutually engaged in the public arena, lessening the claims of the state for total ownership of the political space of the civic public realm and encouraging the competence of the individuals and associations of civil society with respect to their appreciation of ownership of the public realm where they and the state can function together....This means that the state should not be abandoned....[27]

The attempts by donor agencies to decouple civil society totally from the state have therefore to be re-examined, as decoupling is unlikely to enhance democracy.

Indeed, by the very nature of the totalizing tendencies of the state in post-colonial Africa, which have not changed despite political and economic liberalization, it is doubtful if civil society, especially the predator and middle-sector segments of it, can successfully disengage from the state; the fact that they seek to capture state power rather than check it from without means that, at least for the present, they can not. The absence of an independent material base and the subsequent dependence on the state for social reproduction severely limit the amount of autonomy these segments of civil society can enjoy.

But even for the subordinate classes and groups, disengagement does not mean extrication from the state, as members of these groups expect the state to improve and extend the provision of public goods and the quality of life. These, for them, are the stakes of democratic transition and the measure of its success. It is this expectation that underlies the gradual redefinition of ownership of the state by these segments, and it is this that has led them to rise up against undemocratic and non-performing regimes after transition, as can be seen in the continued political turmoil and tension in several countries. The expectations and demands of the subordinate classes and groups from the post-transition state have to be factored into analyses of democratic consolidation, not least because their non-fulfilment weakens the legitimacy of the state. A state crippled by a legitimacy crisis from below is not a likely candidate for democratic consolidation, even where middle- and upper-class segments of civil society effect democratic transition in the name of regime change.

Notes and references

1. See, amongst others, G Hyden and M Bratton (eds), *Governance and politics in Africa*, Boulder & London: Lynne Rienner, 1992. For a more nuanced and critical analysis of the origins of the civil society perspective, see G Hyden, "The challenges of analysing and building civil society", *Africa Insight*, vol 26, no 2, 1996.

2. There is a rich literature on associational life and its political uses in Africa. See, for example, J F Bayart, "Civil society in Africa: reflections on the limits of power", in P Chabal (ed), *Political domination in Africa*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986. N Chazan, "Patterns of state-society incorporation and disengagement in Africa", in D Rothchild and N Chazan (eds), *The precarious balance: state and society in Africa*, Boulder: Westview, 1988, and M Bratton, "Beyond the state: civil society and associational life in Africa", *World Politics*, vol 41, no 3, 1989.

3. See P A Nyong'o, (ed), *Popular struggles for democracy in Africa*, London: Zed, 1987

4. P M Lewis, "Political transition and the dilemma of civil society in Africa", *Journal of International Affairs*, vol 46, no 1, 1992 (emphasis original). Also see V Azarya "Civil society and disengagement in Africa", in J W Harbeson *et al* (eds), *Civil society and the state in Africa*, Boulder & London: Lynne Rienner, 1994.

5. For an elaboration of this argument, see E E Osaghae, "The study of political transitions in Africa", *Review of African Political Economy*, vol 22, no 64, 1995.

6. M Bratton, "Civil society and political transitions", in J W Harbeson *et al* (eds), *Civil society and the state in Africa*, Boulder & London: Lynne Rienner, 1994, p 59.

7. V Azarya, "Civil society and disengagement in Africa", *op cit*, p 90. Also see E Shils, "The virtue of civil society", *Government and Opposition*, vol 26, no 1, 1991.

8. See, for example, J Hartmann, "The state in Tanzania: yesterday, today and tomorrow", in U Himmelstrand *et al* (eds), *African perspectives on development*, London: James Currey, 1994.

9. D Woods, "Civil society in Europe and Africa: limiting state power through a

public sphere", *African Studies Review,* vol 35, no 2, 1992, p 95.

10. J F Bayart, "Civil society in Africa" *op cit;* and "The historicity of African societies", *Journal of International Affairs,* vol 46, no 2, 1992.

11. See, amongst others, R Fatton, jr, "Africa in the age of democratization: the civic limitations of civil society", *African Studies Review,* vol 38, no 2, 1995. Actually the notion that "civil society and state form a fabric of tightly interwoven threads" is also well established in the perspectives of Hegel, Gramsci and Montesquieu. See M Bratton, "Civil society and political transitions", *op cit.*

12. See the following works by P P Ekeh: "Colonialism and the two publics in Africa: a theoretical statement", *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* vol 17, no 1, 1975; "The constitution of civil society in African history and politics", in B Caron, E Gboyega, and E Osaghae (eds), *Democratic Transition in Africa,* Ibadan: CREDU, University of Ibadan, 1992; and "Historical and cross-cultural contexts of civil society in Africa", Paper presented at USAID workshop on Civil Society, Democracy and Development in Africa, Washington DC, June 1994.

13. P P Ekeh, "Colonialism and the two publics in Africa", *op cit.*

14. P P Ekeh, "Historical and cross-cultural

contexts of civil society in Africa", *op cit.* p 12.

15. V Azarya and N Chazan, "Disengagement from the state in Africa: reflections on the experiences of Ghana and Guinea", *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* vol 29, no 1, 1987 Also see V Azarya, "Reordering state-society relations: incorporation and disengagement", in D Rothchild and N Chazan (eds), *The precarious balance: state and society in Africa,* Boulder: Westview, 1988, and his "Civil society and disengagement in Africa", *op cit.*

16. J F Bayart, "Civil society in Africa", *op cit.*

17. P P Ekeh, "Historical and cross-cultural contexts of civil society in Africa", *op cit,* p 11.

18. For a comprehensive examination of the role of social movements in the democratic struggle in Africa, see M Mamdani and E Wamba-dia-Wamba (eds), *African studies in social movements and democracy,* Dakar: CODESRIA Books, 1995.

19. J Scott, *Weapons of the weak: everyday forms of peasant resistance,* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985, and *Domination and the arts of resistance,* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.

20. P P Ekeh, "The constitution of civil society in African history and politics", *op cit.* Also see E E Osaghae, "Structural adjustment, civil society and national cohesion

in Africa", Research Report submitted to the CODESRIA project on African Perspectives on Structural Adjustment, Dakar, 1966.

21. See for example, L Diamond, "Civil society and democratic consolidation: building a culture of democracy in a new South Africa", in H Giliomee and L Schlemmer (eds), *The bold experiment: South Africa's new democracy,* Halfway House: Southern, 1994.

22. R Fatton jr, *op cit,*

23. See, amongst others, P Gibbon, Y Bangura, and A Ofstad (eds), *Authoritarianism, democracy and adjustment: the politics of economic reform in Africa,* Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1992, and T Makandawire and A Olukoshi (eds), *Between liberalisation and oppression: the politics of structural adjustment in Africa,* Dakar: CODESRIA Books, 1995.

24. D Woods, *op cit.*

25. R Fatton, *op cit,* p 88. Also see C Ake, *Democratization of disempowerment in Africa,* Lagos: Malthouse Press, 1994.

26. J Nzouankeau, "The African attitude to democracy", *International Social Science Journal,* no 128, 1991.

27. P P Ekeh, "Historical and cross-cultural contexts of civil society in Africa", *op cit,* p 23.

Post-apartheid South Africa:

The implications for

Professor Ahmad A H M Aly, Department of Economics, Al-Azhar University, Egypt

he long history of economic cooperation in Africa has been described as one of failure. In the euphoria of independence in the early 1960s, the leaders of the newly independent African states rushed to create a host of co-operation arrangements, at all levels and in almost all economic sectors, in the justifiable belief that regional economic development was preferable to the go-it-alone approach. The number of intergovernmental organizations created in the continent over the past three decades ranges between 100 and 200.[1] Yet the outcome has been disappointing: so many schemes have collapsed or come to a standstill. Even those arrangements that have managed to survive are reported to be performing very poorly.

Invariably, cooperation efforts in the continent were made on the understanding that South Africa was not to be considered as an African state. Some efforts, such as the creation of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) and the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA), were even directed against South Africa. In 1994, historic changes took place in South Africa whereby the country adopted black majority rule and ended apartheid; it has consequently been recognized as an African state and accepted, moreover, as a member of African organizations. These historic changes have made it necessary to revise the literature on intra-African integration, the conclusions of which are now called into question. The changes also call for the rethinking of future plans for collective action in the continent. The following major questions in particular have arisen:

- Will post-apartheid South Africa turn its attention towards regional development or choose instead to foster its relations with First World countries?

- If it chooses regional cooperation, is it qualified to lead the drive for co-operation in Africa?

- If so, to what extent can the new South Africa boost economic co-operation in Africa?

- Finally, under what conditions can the role of South Africa in regional integration be maximized?

The present paper seeks to address the above questions with a view to arguing that under certain conditions post-apartheid South Africa can reverse the downward trend of intra-African cooperation. To test this hypothesis two areas of research need to be covered. The first is to identify why regional cooperation in Africa has failed over the past three decades. This would help to designate the areas in which to concentrate collective action in the future. The second area concerns the peculiarities and special circumstances which qualify South Africa to lead the cooperation drive in Africa, or disqualify it from doing so. The two insights would pave the way for exploring the role South Africa can really play in boosting regional integration in the continent, in the light of lessons drawn from past experience. The paper will therefore deal with:

- The causes of failure of past cooperation efforts;
- South Africa: a leader in waiting;
- Integration potential in the post-apartheid era;
- Conclusions to be drawn from the above.

Causes of failure in past experience[2]

The analysis of past experience pinpoints the over-ambition of African leaders as a reason why efforts at cooperation have failed in the continent over the past three decades. This reflects the lack of a clear vision of how to approach regional integration. Having worked out no alternatives to suit their peculiar situation, the impatient African leaders hastened to emulate the classic *laissez-faire* model of economic integration, which was basically tailored for developed countries. This model, as is well known, is outward looking, using foreign trade as an engine of growth. For this model to succeed in

regional cooperation in Africa

integrating member economies, certain preconditions should be fulfilled, including:

- diversity of tradeable goods;
- low proportion of foreign trade as a percentage of GDP of the member countries;
- more intra-group trade than extra-group trade;
- sufficiency of means of payment, and
- political maturity

As yet, few or none of these prerequisites can be claimed to exist in the continent.

Structural disequilibria

African countries are well known to be producers of primary commodities. Between 50 and 60% of their GDP, on average, is accounted for by the primary sector, the ratio varies of course from one country to another, for instance from 65% in Ethiopia to 11% in the Seychelles. Most products are cash crops, basically destined for the markets of developed countries. Minerals and metals are also produced as raw materials for industrial countries.[3]

The manufacturing sector, by contrast, is responsible for a very small percentage of GDP, about 10% on average – once again, the ratio declines to 13% in Equatorial Guinea and goes as high as 30% in Zimbabwe.[4] The sector depends heavily on imported inputs, notably in the form of technology, equipment and technical expertise, and moreover mostly involves assembling activities which are dominated, in most cases, by multinationals.

This lopsided pattern of production has resulted in the African import/export trade representing a high percentage of the GDP in order to satisfy the growing demand for consumer goods, capital goods and foodstuffs. In 16 African countries, imports represent more than 40% of GDP. The most notable examples are Swaziland, Lesotho, Gambia and Mauritania, whose imports constitute 95%, 77%, 73% and 70% of GDP respectively. Exports account for
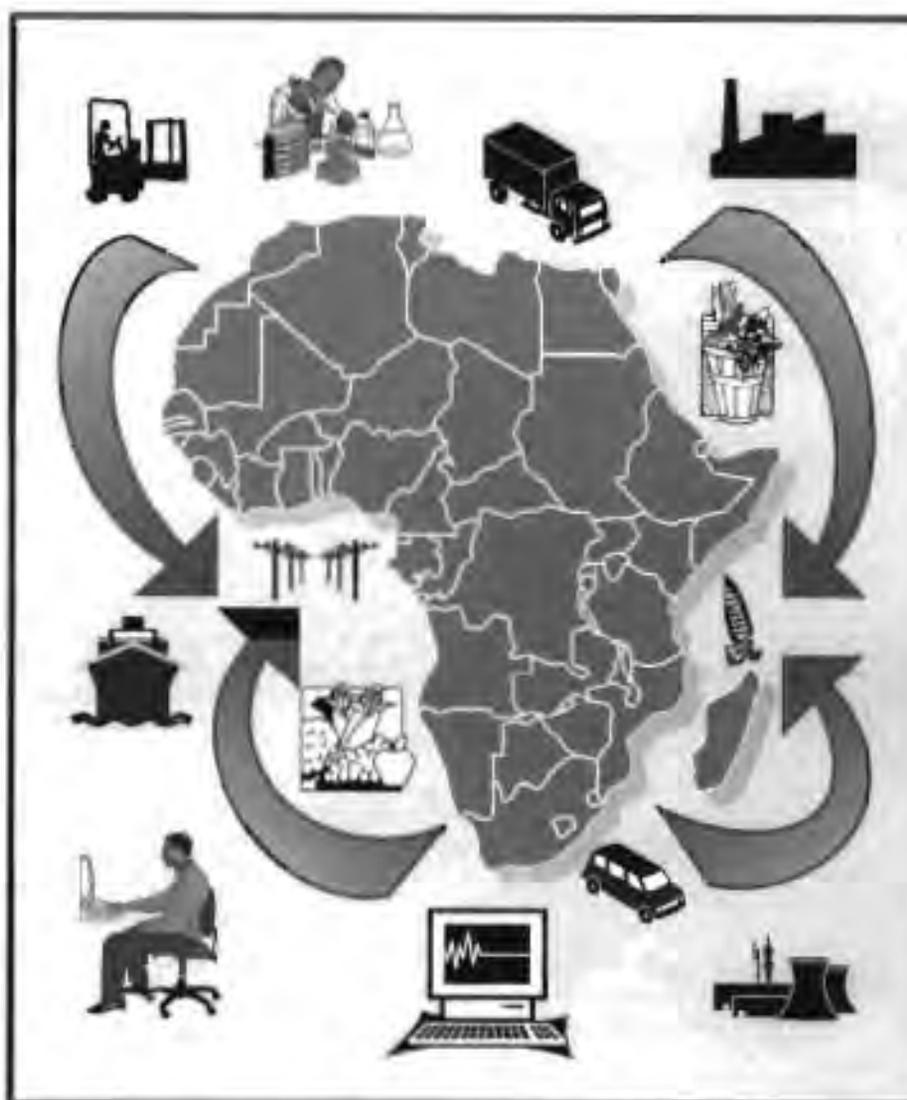
more than 35% of GDP in 10 African countries, with Swaziland, again, at the top of the list (69%), followed by Côte d'Ivoire (57%), Mauritania (49%) and Congo (48%).[5]

African exports invariably include crude oil, coffee, copper, cocoa, sugar cane, tea, cotton and phosphate which, combined, account for 94% on average of the continent's total exports. Manufactured goods, by contrast, represent 75% of Africa's total imports.[6]

This asymmetrical commodity pattern of Africa's foreign trade unfortunately renders African countries less useful, or even useless, to one another.

Post-apartheid South Africa: The implications for regional cooperation in Africa

Lacking a developed manufacturing sector, African countries have not been able to use regionally the abundant supply of primary raw materials, nor have they been able to satisfy the growing regional demand for manufactured goods. As a result, 80% of the continent's total exports are destined for countries with a developed market economy, from which the overwhelming bulk, around 75%, of the continent's imports of manufactured goods is procured. In contrast, intra-African trade has been negligible. It constituted only 6,6% on average of Africa's total trade over the 1960s, and declined to 4,5% by the end of the 1980s.[7]

Scarcity of foreign exchange

It goes without saying that unless debit balances associated with foreign trade are settled in one way or another, commodity flows can hardly take place. In the African context, the IMF reports that foreign exchange reserves were mainly on the decline over the last two decades.[8] The holdings barely cover a few weeks of imports. In 1991 and 1993, six countries had virtually no foreign reserves, as opposed to two countries in 1980 and one country in 1975. Ten countries held reserves covering less than one month of imports in 1991. The ADB (African Development Bank) confirms that in 1993 six African states did not have reserves, while two countries held foreign exchange covering less than one month of imports, eleven held reserves for less than two months of imports and eighteen countries were capable of financing up to three months of imports.[9] As a result the African countries rely heavily on a few key exportables, which has exposed them to destabilizing external factors. Over the last two decades, the prices of primary commodities have fluctuated on the international markets while showing a steady downward trend. By 1980, raw material prices were reported to have been at their lowest levels in recorded history relative to the prices of manufactures.[10] Since 1986 the decline in the prices of most African exportables has continued, except perhaps for some recovery in the last two years.

While export proceeds were declining, the requirements for foreign exchange to finance growing imports and other external obligations were on the rise. The widening gap which resulted was largely covered by foreign sources, which were easily accessible under the old bipolar system. Recent reports estimate that capital inflows represented a high percentage of export earnings: 39,1% in 1977, 43% in 1981, 39,6% in 1988 and 33,5% in 1993.[11]
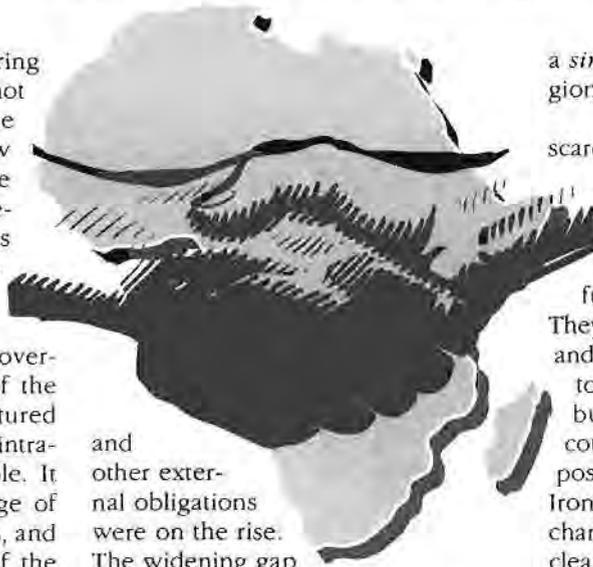
This worsening financial situation has triggered off a chain reaction which eventually damaged efforts at integration in the continent. First and foremost, Africa's foreign debt has increased at a rate exceeding that of the region's GDP or its exports of goods and services. The rate of debt expansion, about 22%, has been even more rapid than that reported for other developing countries, estimated at 19%.[12] In 1993, the continent's identified debt was estimated to have reached $300 billion, or 90% of the regional GDP, as opposed to 25% two decades earlier. The debt service ratio is reported to have increased from 10% in 1980 to about 40% in 1989. Thereafter it declined to 21% in 1993 as a result of successive rescheduling agreements.[13]

The scarcity of foreign exchange has, in addition, had the negative effect of discouraging African countries from trading with one another. All countries needed to be paid in foreign exchange while almost none of them had sufficient reserves to honour their obligations. Both exporting and importing countries therefore directed their trade towards the North, whose rich countries can afford to pay for African exports in foreign exchange and offer African importers credit facilities. Another unfavourable consequence of this financial crisis was the inability of African countries to develop credit facilities at the regional level,

a *sine qua non* for expanding intra-regional trade.

Finally, the same problem, the scarcity of foreign exchange, has largely contributed to the failure of many organizations to achieve their objectives. Solidarity funds have reportedly been unable to function as initially anticipated. They have no resources of their own and rely instead on member countries to actually pay their assessed contributions. For their part, member countries are not in most cases in a position to honour their obligations.[14] Ironically, the scarcity of foreign exchange has frustrated the subregional clearing arrangements, the very mechanism established to economize on the use of foreign exchange reserves of partner states.[15] The absence of adequate credit facilities, and the fact that member countries insist on hard currencies for settling outstanding balances, have paralysed the subregional clearing houses. Both creditor and debtor countries have ceased using the clearing facility. The impatient creditor country, badly in need of foreign exchange, cannot wait any longer, while the almost bankrupt debtor country, equally short of foreign exchange, cannot pay in hard currency. Worse still, the two groups of countries have tended to exclude key commodities, particularly oil, from the list of goods and services passing through the clearing houses, which has further reduced their operations.

Political considerations

The political situation in Africa is no better. It is still far from being able to handle regional integration. The ruling systems in the overwhelming majority of African countries are nondemocratic and the monopoly of a privileged class. The autocratic nature of these systems has turned rulers more oppressive, a fact that is responsible for the African masses becoming all the more indifferent to matters such as regional integration.

The type of leadership has made things much worse. Many of the leaders tend to consider themselves national heroes guarding the interests of their countries. The situation has been compounded by contradictory ideologies imported from the North: almost the whole spectrum of political ideologies have coexisted in the continent since various countries acceded

to independence. Equally influential have been the special relations between some African leaders and non-regional powers, particularly former colonial ones, which have severely limited the usefulness of African countries to one another. Artificial boundaries established by colonial authorities have further given rise to political conflicts between leaders of many adjacent countries.

Changing and unstable African politics have been responsible for the frequent rise and fall of regional organizations. Numerous schemes collapsed and many others were set up, not on the basis of economic viability or technical soundness, but merely for the sake of political alliances and friendship. Worse still, many overlapping schemes have been established, tackling almost the same problems with more or less the same objectives and often at the same time, but independently and in a different manner and without coordination, or even consultation, with the other schemes.[16]

More importantly, the governments of member states have not shown adequate commitment to collective action. This lack of commitment has manifested itself in the fact that member countries develop their own strategies, plans and priorities which hardly include regional cooperation.[17] It has also been reflected in tardy payment of budgetary contributions and poor participation in meetings, as well as in the fact that not all member countries have ratified and/or implemented the protocols, acts and decisions of the groupings.[18]

Finally, management of various subregional organizations has not been objective, but has rather been influenced by the interference of member governments. Conflict of national interests has consequently contributed to the failure, paralysis and poor performance of many of these arrangements.

A leader in waiting

South Africa is certainly capable of leading cooperation efforts in Africa, having many qualifications for this leadership. To begin with, the location of the country is unique. It occupies the head of the continent's southern triangle separating, or joining, the two large oceans, the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans. It looks therefore like

a peninsula, with all its neighbours, except Lesotho, lying to the north. If this symbolizes anything, it is that South Africa, by geography and destiny, belongs entirely to Africa and is therefore free from the curse of divided loyalty. This point can be clarified by comparing the situation of South Africa with that of Egypt, another African state that lies at the opposite end of the continent. Egypt is geographically a part of Africa and yet belongs at the same time to the Mediterranean region and the Arab world. Geopolitically, it is further classified as a Middle Eastern state. Egypt, therefore, unlike South Africa, suffers from multiple affiliation with its attendant evils.

In absolute terms, South Africa is a medium-sized country, as regards both area and population. Its area is of the order of 1,22 million km^2 and its population exceeded 40 million in 1994.[19] In relative terms, however, the area of the country ranks ninth in Africa and second in the Southern African subregion after Angola. Representing 20,5% of the total area of this subregion, South Africa's territory is equal to the area of Lesotho, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe combined. In addition, it is generously endowed with diverse natural resources, which make it possibly one of the richest countries in the world.

The relative position of South Africa in terms of population is even stronger. It is the largest in Southern Africa and the fifth largest in the continent. It accommodates 40% of the total population of the Southern African subregion, its population being equivalent to that of Angola, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe together.

Thanks to the combination of abundant resources and active population, the economy of South Africa is the best in Africa and the 28th largest in the world. Exceeding $120 billion in 1994, South Africa's GDP accounts for one third of Africa's total GDP (the other two thirds being almost evenly divided between North Africa and sub-Saharan Africa). Interestingly, the GDP of South Africa is twice as large as that of West Africa and six times as large as the GDP of East Africa and that of Central Africa. The total GDP of all the countries of Southern Africa represents barely one fifth of South Africa's GDP. In consequence, the standard of living of South Africans, as measured by per

capita income ($1030) is the best in Africa, together with that of Mauritius which is very slightly higher ($1050).[20]

More importantly, the manufacturing sector is particularly well developed. It is responsible for almost one quarter of the GDP (23%) and produces more or less the same value added from the manufacturing sector as all other African countries combined, approximately $26 billion. Important industries include machinery and equipment (19%), food (17%), chemicals (10%) and textiles (8%).[21] These figures indicate that, as against other areas of Africa, Southern Africa might find some relevance in the classical model of integration, which uses foreign trade as an engine of growth. Four countries in Southern Africa – Mauritius, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe – have a relatively well-developed manufacturing sector.

The capital market is one of the largest in the world. Its capital value amounts to $217 110 billion, which makes it the 10th largest in the world. Over the period 1985–1993 the market grew at 292% while transactions growth rate was as high as 360%. Companies listed on the market increased by a high rate of 40% over the same period.[22]

Notwithstanding these credentials qualifying South Africa to lead the drive for cooperation in Africa, the country is as yet unprepared for assuming this critical mission. It is currently suffering from serious weaknesses, undergoing a transition process that creates uncertainty and confusion, particularly with respect to investment plans and decisions. Three obstinate problems need to be urgently addressed: high unemployment rate, increasing emigration of skilled labour and maldistribution of national income.

South Africa has one of the highest, if not the highest, unemployment rates in the world. Official estimates put the rate at 33%, while other sources claim that 50% of the labour force is jobless.[23] The African Development Bank conservatively estimates that unemployment in South Africa may exceed 40%, excluding informal sector employment.[24] This problem is of course a high priority with the new government. Then, the state of uncertainty – particularly as regards the future of the white minority – has caused many of the young generation of

skilled labour to emigrate, mainly to North America, Australia and New Zealand, seeking a more secure future. The number of emigrants is not certainly known, but unofficial estimates suggest that it is increasing at an annual rate of 20–25%.[25] Coupled to emigration is capital flight, exerting pressure on the exchange rate and keeping interest rates unreasonably high. Undoubtedly, the long-term implications of these unfavourable trends would be disastrous for the South African economy if left unchecked.

The third problem, the unfair distribution of national income, is equally disturbing. According to recent estimates quoted by Sachs,[26] blacks constitute 75% of the total population and receive only 33% of national income, with an average per capita income of $1 950. Disparities of income within the black population are reported to be vast. In contrast, the whites represent 12,8% of the total population but capture 54% of the national income with an average per capita income of $18 700. Asians and coloureds fall in between the two extremes. The Asians constitute as little as 2,6% of the South African population, but secure 4% of the national income. Their average per capita income, estimated at $6 900, ranks second to that of the white. Coloureds represent 8,7% of the total population and earn 9% of the national income, with an average per capita income of $4 660.

Sachs[27] proposes a policy for narrowing income inequalities and addressing the other two problems as well, based on the following five pillars:

■ rapid market-based growth, especially for the poor sections of the population;

■ fiscal redistribution through progressive taxation, combined with the equalization of government services provided to all sections of the population;

■ avoidance of increasing marginal tax rates, or larger budget deficits, that might cripple economic growth or provoke a financial crisis in the future;

■ the use of new compensation methods in the formal economy to encourage wage restraint in the base wage level;

■ policies to stimulate national savings, including improved fiscal balances, greater resort to provident funds, extension of postal savings systems and introduction and support of microfinance.

Sachs does not, however, indicate how such a plan could be implemented in the current state of uncertainty associated with the exceptional transition process being experienced in the country. A major propeller of growth and other policy measures proposed by Sachs is investment. If investments were to increase, unemployment would come down and income increase, with inequality of income gradually narrowing. Emigration might also be halted or even reversed. The question is, nevertheless, how to increase investment. Of course the government alone cannot assume this responsibility. Certainly the private sector, including foreigners, could promote investment, yet the private sector is not in a position to take investment decisions in the current climate of uncertainty.

A way out of this situation, we propose, is for the South African government, before considering Sach's plan, to create an enabling environment for investment through applying a three-stage reform programme. The first stage involves macroeconomic stability which enables the private sector to take investment decisions. The second stage has to do with deregulation of the economy. The labour market in particular should be dealt with very carefully, for if handled rightly labour market deregulation would reduce unemployment and trigger off a positive chain reaction. The third component of the proposed reform programme deals with opening up the economy. Under world sanctions, as is well known, the government applied the notorious import-substitution development strategy, which resulted, as expected, in the establishment of a multitude of inefficient industries that have increasingly needed protection. Protection in turn encouraged monopoly and reinforced inefficiency. According to recent reports,[28] two companies currently produce 75% of the sugar production, three companies account for 75% of the country's production of fertilizers and three companies are responsible for 90% of the country's production of textiles. Moreover, 76,5% of the stock market is accounted for by only four companies. The end result has been that

South African industries have grown uncompetitive on the international markets. The economic freedom index indicates that South Africa scores 3,00, thus ranking 45th in the world (the best score is 1,00).[29] This underlines the need to open up the economy to encourage national private sector and foreign direct investment.

An important factor in this brief sketch is that the attention of the new government of South Africa will be focused for a time on the internal issue of getting its house in order, rather than taking bold action at regional level. How long the transition will take cannot be predicted, yet with wise and competent leadership it should be accomplished in a short period of time.

Integration potential in a post-apartheid era

Provided that South Africa successfully undertakes the necessary adjustments to get its economy in order, economic cooperation in Africa has a good chance of succeeding. South Africa's capabilities and level of growth, referred to above, well qualify it for the role of coordinating efforts at cooperation in the continent. The chances of success can be maximized in the light of the following guidelines, drawn mainly from past experience in Africa and elsewhere.

First. A useful lesson from past experience is that integration is more likely to succeed if initiated by a small group of countries. This conclusion by no means contradicts the theoretical argument that the larger the grouping the more beneficial the integration. The fact is that multilateral schemes are usually more manageable when instituted by a small number of countries. In the course of time, however, the fruits of integration increase as the grouping expands to include new members.

Though in line with the subregional approach to economic integration endorsed by the ECA, as against continentalism, this calls for realignment of the present African subregions in order to have a smaller group of countries in each subregion. In another paper,[30] we suggest redividing the continent into seven subregions instead of the present four: North Africa, Central Africa, East Africa, Southern

Africa, West Africa 1, West Africa 2, and the islands of the Indian Ocean. According to this new definition, the Southern African subregion should be confined to the following 10 countries: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. It is therefore recommended that a South African-led drive for integration should begin in Southern Africa, leaving other parts of Africa for latter stages. In due course, pan-African integration, under the leadership of South Africa would, hopefully, gain momentum.

Second. One prominent feature of intra-African cooperation has to do with the multiplicity of overlapping and largely similar arrangements, a notorious phenomenon in all African subregions except North Africa. In addition to wasting the limited resources of the already poor member states, the overlapping has paralysed most regional arrangements because of the contradicting provisions and divided loyalties which result. This underscores the need to rationalize the existing organizations in order to have one strong community which orchestrates cooperation in each subregion. Rationalization would involve merging similar organizations, phasing out worthless ones and harmonizing dissimilar arrangements.

In Southern Africa, as defined above, there are four overlapping schemes: Comesa (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa) the SADC (Southern African Development Community), Sacu (Southern African Customs Union) and the RMA (Rand Monetary Area). It is interesting to note that the four members of the RMA are all members of Sacu, and the five members of the latter take part in the SADC, eight members of which join Comesa. The urgent question in this context is how can these four overlapping arrangements be rationalized?

One commentator considered five options[31]: a merger between SADC and Comesa; the establishment of two regional cooperation bodies, one in East Africa and one in Southern Africa; the harmonization of relations between Comesa and the SADC; the maintenance of the status quo, and establishing smaller groups within the
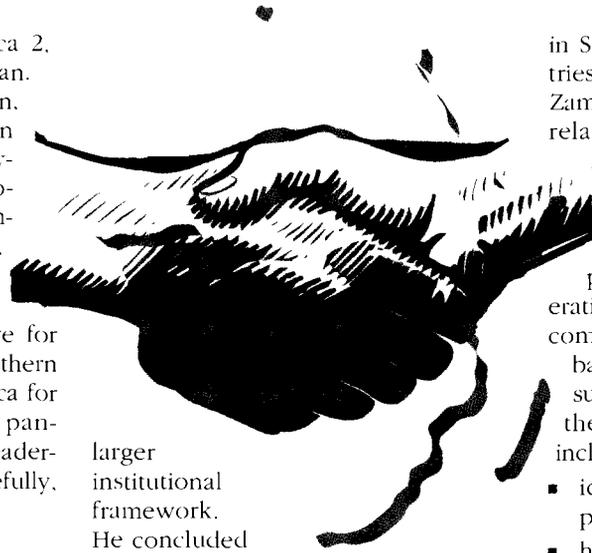
larger institutional framework. He concluded in favour of the last option. Another point of view[32] proposes, by contrast, a variable geometry approach involving an economic union between South Africa and Lesotho, a common market between the economic union and Swaziland and Namibia, a free trade area between Sacu and Zimbabwe and a preferential trade area between the free trade area and the rest.

Though following different methodologies, the two proposals are more or less similar. In essence they endorse the idea of smaller groupings, which we ourselves favour. Our approach, though, seems slightly different. We strongly recommend that Comesa be left to East Africa. Assuming that Botswana joins the RMA, the latter and Sacu would automatically be one grouping, embracing 50% of the countries of the subregion (all members of the SADC). It would therefore be easy for the members of the SADC, given the weight and leadership of South Africa, to work out an appropriate formula for in due course merging the SADC with Sacu, a step we support, in order to have only one economic community for the whole subregion.

Third: As regards integration strategy, past experience has shown that the PTA (Comesa) has followed the classical model of integration, using foreign trade as an engine of growth, and has failed to achieve integration of the member economies as a result of the absence of relevant prerequisites.[33] The SADCC adopted regional projects but, in turn, did not achieve striking success for several reasons.[34] In our view, in the current state of affairs, the two mechanisms can work together jointly

in Southern Africa since several countries in the subregion (South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe) each have a relatively well-developed manufacturing sector, a necessary condition for the functioning of the classical model of integration. In the meantime, the integration process can be speeded up by operating regional projects as a potent complementary spearhead, ensuring balanced development of the whole subregion. The terms of reference for the subregional community would include:

- identifying and monitoring the implementation of regional projects;
- harmonizing relevant economic policies of the member countries, and
- working out appropriate modalities ensuring equitable distribution of the costs and benefits of integration.

It would also be useful in this context to have structural adjustment policies such as those currently being implemented in most countries of the region, notably privatization and debt/equity swaps, coordinated as far as possible on a subregional basis rather than at country level.

Fourth: The adoption of regional projects as a co-propeller of integration in the Southern African subregion would require sizeable financing funds. This would be an opportunity for the triad of the African Development Bank (ADB), the Southern African Development Bank (SADB), and other donors. The ADB, hitherto focusing on national projects, would be urged to change its policy. The statutes of the Bank place legal constraints on its lending directly to subregional organizations.[35] When borrowing for multilateral projects, the statutes further require member countries to use their individual country allocations, which they have generally been reluctant to do. The legal constraint aside, the Bank has not shown enough enthusiasm for financing multilateral projects. As of December 1994, total commutative lending of the Bank group to regional member countries amounted to $29.3 billion, of which only $548 million, or 1.9%, represented commitments to multilateral projects – a negligible percentage indeed.[36]

It is therefore suggested that the Bank should revise the relevant

provisions of its statutes and formulate its lending programmes to accord higher priority to regional projects. It is equally essential to create within the Bank a focal point to be exclusively charged with the promotion of multi-lateral projects. Also of paramount importance is to get the ADB to consult with subregional communities on the allocation of the resources of the Bank group. As far as Southern Africa is concerned, the ADB could provide the subregional community with a credit line through the SADB.

With respect to donors, they did in the past channel considerable resources to the subregion both on a bilateral and on a multilateral basis. But for several reasons,[37] the positive results which were expected have not materialized at the time when old debts have successively fallen due. The problem now is that while African countries are in desperate need of fresh financial resources, donors are turning their backs on them, having shifted their interests to other areas, notably Eastern Europe. Donors would be encouraged to resume injecting funds into Africa, on the understanding that the largest part of these resources be given on a multilateral rather than on a bilateral basis. Donors could direct funds to the Southern African sub-region through the SADB.

In this way the SADB would play a crucial intermediary role between the ADB and other donors on the one hand and the Southern African community and countries on the other. The Bank would direct the resources received through the two lines of credit to financing, inter alia, regional projects, in consultation and coordination with the subregional community and the countries concerned. The involvement of the SADB in this process would provide a guarantee to donors and ensure, moreover, efficient utilization of these resources.

Fifth. The reliance on foreign trade as an engine of regional development requires efficient payment mechanisms. As mentioned earlier, the lack of such mechanisms has been largely responsible for the failure of efforts at integration in Africa over the past three decades. Almost all countries suffer from persistent shortage of foreign exchange. Credit facilities at the regional level are also inadequate. Even the clearing facilities, established mainly to

overcome this problem, have been ironically trapped by it. Fortunately, the Southern African subregion does not suffer much from this problem. Four countries of the subregion are members of the Rand Monetary Area and therefore use the same currency, the rand, in the settlement of intra-group trade. In addition, the rand is almost universally accepted in the whole subregion as a reserve currency, rendering the subregion a *de facto* monetary union. All that is needed is simply to formalize this situation by inviting the non-member countries to join the RMA. In so doing, the subregion would overcome one of the formidable obstacles to intra-group trade. Unlike other African subregions, Southern Africa would need no other monetary arrangements.

Sixth: Contrasting the experience of integration in Africa with that in Europe and North America highlights one more useful point. The integration process in Africa has invariably been the concern of governments and the public sector – the executive arm of governments – while in Europe and North America it has been largely left to the private sector, within the general framework established by governments. This partly explains the comparative failure of integration in Africa. The argument that the private sector in Africa is not yet qualified for this mission has become irrelevant, because the private sector, in the broadest sense of the word, includes not only the internal private sector but also the foreign (and regional) private sector. The governments of Southern African countries should entrust the private sector with the primary responsibility for regional integration. Fortunately the countries of the sub-region, particularly South Africa, have powerful private sectors, which would make the exercise relatively manageable.

Seventh: It must be conceded that the whole scenario conceived above hinges on the political will of the member countries. It is true that South Africa can do without regional integration, given its size and level of growth, but it should regard this process both as a mission and as a source of mutual benefit. Any costs or obligations incurred in this context should be viewed in this perspective. For their

part, the small countries in the subregion should realize that subregional integration is a matter of survival in today's world of regional blocs, and that the leadership of South Africa is necessary for such development to succeed. They should therefore accept this country's leadership as the price of the benefits they expect to draw from subregional integration. Understanding that economic integration invariably involves costs as well as benefits, political leaders are urged to live up to their responsibilities. In the meantime, the subregional community, as mentioned above, has as its terms of reference to work out appropriate modalities to ensure equitable distribution of the costs and benefits of integration among the partner states. This should allay smaller members' fears of the possible hegemony of South Africa, and at the same time respond to South Africa's demands for fair distribution of the costs and benefits of integration.

Notes and references

1. African Centre for Monetary Studies (ACMS), *Cooperation strategies among African countries for promoting intra-African trade*, Senegal: ACMS, April 1990, and *The Economist*, 22 June 1991.
2. This section draws heavily on our paper, "Towards a more practical approach to regional integration in Africa", *South African Journal of Economic and Management Studies*, University of Pretoria, South Africa (forthcoming).
3. African Development Bank, *Selected statistics 1995*.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. African Centre for Monetary Studies, *op cit*.
8. International Monetary Fund, *Direction of trade and international financial statistics*, several issues.
9. African Development Bank, *Selected statistics*, 1995.
10. Drucker, "The changed world economy", *Foreign Affairs*, Spring 1986.
11. African Centre for Monetary Studies, *op cit*, and African Development Bank, *Selected statistics, op cit*.
12. R H Green and S G Jones, "External debt: sub-Saharan Africa's emerging iceberg", in T Rose (ed), *Crisis and recovery in sub-Saharan Africa*, OECD, 1985.
13. Ahmad A H M Aly, *Economic cooperation in Africa: in search of direction*, Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994, and African Development Bank, *Selected statistics, op cit*.
14. S K B Asante, "Regional economic cooperation and integration: the experience

of ECOWAS", in Anyang' Nyong's (ed), *Regional integration in Africa: unfinished agenda*, Nairobi: Academy Science Publishers. 1990.

15. A A Halim, "Financing mechanisms for promoting intra-African trade", *ACMS Financial Journal*, vol 9, no 1, 1989.

16. P Robson, *Integration, development and equity: integration in West Africa*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1983.

17. T N Tiboteh, *A scientific perspective for development through integration in Africa*, Paper presented at the 5th Symposium for special commission on Africa on Regional Integration in Africa, jointly organized by the African Academy of Sciences and the African Development Bank, Abidjan, September 1989.

18. S K B Asante, *op cit*, and G Martin, "The PTA of Eastern and Southern Africa: achievements, problems and prospects", in Anyang' Nyong's (ed), *Regional integration in Africa: unfinished agenda*, Nairobi: Academy Science Publishers, 1990.

19. World Bank, *World Development Report*, 1995, and African Development Bank, *Selected statistics, op cit*.

20. African Development Bank, *Selected statistics, op cit*.

21. World Bank, *op cit*, and African Development Bank, *Selected statistics, op cit*.

22. The Economist, *World in figures*, London: Penguin, 1996.

23. *The Economist*, 20 May 1995.

24. African Development Bank, *World Development Report*, 1995.

25. Interviewed by the author, professors at a number of South African universities mentioned these estimates independently.

26. Sachs, *Towards a macroeconomic framework for growth with equity in South Africa*, Paper presented at the Conference on Growth with Equity, sponsored by the Harvard Institute for International Development and Wits Business School, Cape Town, January 1996.

27. *Ibid*.

28. *The Economist*, 20 May 1995.

29. The Economist, *World in figures, op cit*.

30. Ahmad A H M Aly, *Towards a more practical approach to regional integration in Africa*, Pretoria: SAJEMS, University of Pretoria, (forthcoming).

31. P Meyns, "Time to decide: rethinking the institutional framework of regional cooperation in Southern Africa", in H Spanger and P Vale (eds), *Bridging the future prospects for peace and security in Southern Africa*, Westview Press, 1995.

32. Gavin Maasdorp, *A vision for economic integration and cooperation for Southern Africa*, prepared for the Department of Trade and Industry, Pretoria, March 1994, para 10.2.

33. Ahmad A H M Aly, Economic cooperation in Africa, *op cit*, and Schweickert, "Regional integration in Eastern and Southern Africa", *Africa Insight*, vol 26, no 1, 1996.

34. W Lindeke, "Southern African Development Community: challenges ahead", *Transafrica Forum*, vol 10, no 1, Spring 1996.

35. J W Otieno, "The experience of the African Development Bank in financing regional integration projects in Africa", in Anyang' Nyong's (ed), *Regional integration in Africa: unfinished agenda*, Nairobi: Academy Science Publishers, 1990.

36. African Development Bank, *Statistics Compendium 1995*.

37. W Lindeke, *op cit*.

Why Lesotho needs a distinctive diplomatic strategy

Situational constraints

being surrounded by South Africa, a regional power whose economic and military hegemony places it in a dominant position in virtually all transactions, is Lesotho's unenviable situation. Graham Evans observes that South Africa can "virtually dictate the terms of subordination to its neighbours," but notes that South Africa is itself a rather small and peripheral power, "marginalized from and dependent upon the neo-liberal international political economy."[1] He argues, however, that the pragmatic, neo-realist orientation of the new South Africa and the constraints imposed by its domestic political configuration, economic vulnerabilities, and pressing social problems will render any "Pax Pretoriana, either tacit or actual, … almost certainly benign." Assuming that Evans is correct, Lesotho is more likely to be neglected than to be attacked or substantially aided by its neighbour. While these circumstances are hardly auspicious, they offer different, if not less perplexing, challenges from those posed by the hostility of the past. Unfortunately, Lesotho's leaders have failed to formulate any strategies identifying new opportunities or potential benefits which might accrue from being encapsulated within a friendly, if preoccupied, hegemonic state.

Few South Africans regard Lesotho as a particularly attractive partner. With a GDP per capita barely half that of South Africa's poorest province, the kingdom has the weakest economy of any administrative unit within South Africa's borders.[2] Moreover, Lesotho's recurrent violence, rampant crime, endemic corruption, and political instability have made it a regional security problem and model of unsuccessful governance and development. Nevertheless, Lesotho's liabilities are typically over-

stated. According to global human development ratings prepared by the United Nations Development Program, it falls at the top of the bottom third of all states.[3] This calculation places it ahead of Zimbabwe, Zambia, and many of the black areas of South Africa. Individuals who have witnessed the devastation in Angola or Mozambique are often favourably surprised to discover how well Lesotho's economic infrastructure functions and are puzzled by the negative and fatalistic self-images encountered in Maseru. Although Lesotho lacks the economic potential of most SADC (Southern African Development Community) states, the economic, political, and social chaos which would follow further deterioration of its existing assets would present substantial risks for South Africa.

Both South Africa and Lesotho have much to gain from negotiation on a wide variety of issues which complicate their relationship and threaten to sow the seeds of future discord and instability. As the weaker player, Lesotho suffers most from the unsatisfactory status quo. Why have Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle and his Basutoland Congress Party (BCP), which won all 65 parliamentary constituencies in the 1993 general election, failed to seize the initiative?[4] Two factors seem to have precluded innovative and imaginative strategies, namely, the residual foreign policy legacy of the apartheid era and a series of debilitating domestic crises within Lesotho that have repeatedly threatened the survival of the new constitutional order. Once these obstacles have been explained, we turn to the neglected agenda of international issues confronting Lesotho's policymakers and evaluate their options. Our conclusion addresses the special relationship with South Africa that must emerge if mutually beneficial outcomes are to be created.

but hasn't found an appropriate format

The foreign policy legacy of the apartheid era

Despite the transformation of the South African political landscape, perceptions that its neighbour remains a hostile adversary linger at the highest levels of the Lesotho government. During the political struggles of the late 1950s and 1960s, the BCP was closely aligned with South Africa's Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) against Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC). This alliance was strengthened during the BCP's long exile from Lesotho in the 1970s and 1980s when BCP cadres received military training in Libya under PAC auspices.[5] During that same period, ANC exiles in Lesotho developed close relationships with the Basotho National Party (BNP) government under Chief Leabua Jonathan. On the other hand, Mokhehle's Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA) had found sanctuary in South Africa as they mounted a low-level insurgency against the illegitimate Jonathan government, probably with the assistance of the notorious South African Vlakplaas counterinsurgency unit.

More recently, the discovery of an arms cache in Lesotho belonging to APLA, the military arm of the PAC, presented an embarrassing suggestion of continuing collaboration between the BCP and PAC. Although the APLA commander was handed over to South Africa, subsequent enquiries by Basotho authorities about his wellbeing were interpreted in Pretoria as evidence of

alarm regarding what he might say should he testify before Desmond Tutu's Truth Commission. Some BCP leaders also perceive a continuing South African preference for friendly relationships with Retselisitsoe Sekhonyana, the present BNP leader, who served in the Jonathan and military governments, and whose inflammatory speeches played a major role in inciting undiscipline within the Lesotho Defence Force (LDF). The result of these continuing animosities and suspicions has been that interaction between BCP and ANC leaders, though correct, lacked the warmth and spontaneity that might have fostered resolution of common problems.

Another type of adversarial perception within the Lesotho Government is the view that South Africa owes Lesotho compensation for lost land, particularly the "conquered territory" in the Free State. From this perspective,

Why Lesotho needs a distinctive diplomatic strategy

reparation is similarly due to Lesotho for the systematic exploitation of its workforce in South Africa, which had been denied the benefits of its significant long-term contribution to South African development. Reluctant to consider reparations for past wrongs at home, Nelson Mandela's government can hardly adopt such an approach toward Lesotho. Transfer of lands from the Free State to Lesotho seems unthinkable. However, at least one individual close to Mokhehle took Mandela's off-the-cuff remark regarding Lesotho's need for access to the sea as evidence that a corridor of land through the former Transkei to a seaport could realistically be negotiated. Foreign Minister Kelebone Maope has tried to sensitize western donors to the legacy of apartheid in the hope that they will remember to continue assisting Lesotho instead of rushing away to aid Pretoria. At the 1996 Donor Conference, however, he precipitated a hostile response from aid donors when he asked them to assume the burden of guilt for colonial exploitation of Lesotho as well as for prior collaboration with the apartheid regime.

The maintenance of a decentralized array of interactions with South Africa, developed during the apartheid era, is a less widely recognized factor that has frustrated Lesotho's capacity to produce a coherent foreign policy. In pursuing his rapprochement with the ANC and international image as the leader of a beleaguered state, former Prime Minister Jonathan could not afford full diplomatic interchanges with President PW Botha's government. Similarly, Lesotho's military leaders, Generals Metsing Lekhanya and Phisoana Ramaema, needed to maintain their distance lest they be seen as pawns of Pretoria. Nevertheless, the reality of Lesotho's full economic integration within South Africa necessitated a host of routine interactions in labour recruitment, transportation, education, agriculture, health services, disaster relief, law enforcement, internal security, and virtually every other sector. As a result, a myriad of informal contacts, commissions, and other liaisons emerged which linked neighbouring towns on both sides of the porous borders and also permitted regular interchanges between virtually all government departments in Maseru and their counterparts in Pretoria. A

Foreign Minister K.A. Maope

fragmented *mélange* of relationships between Lesotho and South Africa was established, but there was virtually no coordination between them nor any overview of their character and direction.

Under the new dispensation, a coordinating body at ministerial level receives reports about the nature and substance of many lower echelon discussions and efforts to implement decisions. Although this body meets annually, it lacks a plan of action or the capacity to bring cohesion to these diverse relationships. Cabinet-rank leaders on both sides of the border are only intermittently involved and often fail to share information with their colleagues. Lesotho's Foreign Ministry is rarely informed of important transactions and commitments made by other cabinet departments and agencies. The Ministry's relatively small staff and budget would preclude dynamic leadership even if the needed information were available. As a result the Foreign Ministry has never been able to formulate a coordinated plan of action or to design innovative negotiating strategies which cut across the jurisdictional areas of the other units. A similar pattern seems to prevail regarding foreign assistance, where bilateral and multilateral donors work on project design and implementation with individual ministries and programmes, precluding a coordinated national strategy which might shape the content and direction of aid. Dealing with South Africa in a piecemeal fashion plays into the hands

of the stronger party. In each subject area, South Africa is invariably in the dominant position. If disparate issue areas could be aggregated, mutually beneficial trade-offs among them would become possible. Lesotho and South Africa would be unlikely to have identical agendas and would formulate differing evaluations of which elements at issue were most vital to their respective interests.[6] To date, Lesotho's Foreign Ministry has lacked the vision, leadership, will, and means to formulate priorities and shape a coherent action plan.

The foreign policy implications of domestic conflicts

Much has been written about linkages between domestic politics and foreign policy behaviour. Since the demise of the apartheid regime, Lesotho's leaders have not been able to rally domestic support against a foreign adversary. Quite the contrary: Nelson Mandela, Cyril Ramaphosa, and other South African leaders are undoubtedly far more popular in Lesotho than any indigenous leader. One needs only to observe the large number of taxis around Maseru sporting South African flags, stickers, and slogans to verify the strong attraction of the new South Africa and, especially, of the greater economic opportunity there. For Lesotho, the contested authority and legitimacy of the state and its political leaders have posed hitherto unsurmountable barriers to the design or implementation of any foreign policy initiatives. Indeed Mokhehle's government has been hard pressed to mount even a minimal response to South African and regional actions which could undermine Lesotho's sovereignty and threaten its economic survival.

Civil-military confrontations

Although the military regime transferred power to the elected BCP government, it left a time bomb in the new constitution which effectively denied control of the Lesotho Defence Force (LDF), Lesotho Mounted Police (LMP), and National Security Service (NSS) to the civilian rulers. Excluded from the new parliament by the winner-take-all electoral format, opposition leaders, particularly Retselisitsoe Sekhonyana of the BNP, sought to rally support within the military by

playing upon their fears of BCP intentions and highlighting grievances over salaries and working conditions. To be sure, the mutinies and coup which followed were also fostered by inflammatory remarks from BCP cabinet ministers and parliamentarians, many of whom had been victimized by the security services under both Jonathan's civilian regime and the successive military governments. Moreover, Prime Minister Mokhehle and his cabinet neglected to visit military installations during their initial year in power, or to show any interest in the concerns and wellbeing of the disciplined forces. The emerging imbroglio was further complicated by the government's reluctance to accede to demands that King Moshoeshoe II, who had been deposed during the military era, be reinstated.

Instead of being a prototype of democratic transformation during the South African transition to majority rule, Lesotho emerged as a case study of murderous anarchy, requiring external intervention and mediation on several occasions. Mutinous troops compelled officers to retire from the service at gunpoint and demanded 100% increases in their salaries. Soldiers from rival military barracks fortified mountain ridges within Maseru and fought pitched battles with mortars and machine guns amidst the terrified civilian population. Cabinet ministers were temporarily taken prisoner and questioned by military units. The deputy prime minister, Selometsi Baholo, was murdered by soldiers. A wave of lawlessness was precipitated by a three-week-long strike by police who also demanded massive wage increases. Lacking a loyal coercive apparatus, government responses remained feeble and equivocal, as several intimidated cabinet ministers took refuge in South Africa and had to be replaced. The government established commissions of enquiry to investigate military undiscipline and the dethronement of Moshoeshoe II. The military and King Letsie III both perceived the terms of reference and composition of the commission in their respective domains to be biased and threatening. With the tacit support of the military, and the active encouragement of the opposition BNP and royalist forces, King Letsie III launched a coup against the vulnerable BCP government on 17 August 1994. Eager to return to his

civilian pursuits, the reluctant young king seized power with the primary objective of restoring his father to the throne![7]

Coercive mediation by Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe following the coup restored the elected BCP government to power, but only after it had agreed to reinstate King Moshoeshoe II and to facilitate a national dialogue on reconciliation which would include all political parties and interested non-governmental organizations. That all was still not well was confirmed by a mutiny of NSS detectives, who took their superiors hostage in early March 1995, and released them three weeks later only after intercession by the secretary-general of the Commonwealth. Since that time, however, remarkable progress has been made towards bringing the military under civilian control. Officers from Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe played an active role in the Defence Commission of Enquiry investigating and explaining the causes of the coup and mutinies.[8] Together with American and British advisers, they participated in a series of seminars and workshops with Lesotho Defence Force personnel from all ranks regarding appropriate roles for the military in a democratic society. As a result the LDF supported a constitutional amendment and enabling legislation creating a separate military authority within a Ministry of Defence, directed by a civilian cabinet minister and operated under a well-defined set of rules and regulations.

What might be seen as the most significant achievement under BCP rule has been portrayed as a power grab by opposition politicians, who argued that it recreated the potential for the sort of politicized army manipulated by Leabua Jonathan. Thus far, however, the army has remained in the barracks and accepted its constitutional role despite the opportunities for political involvement caused by internal struggles in the ruling party. The fragile political system also successfully weathered the tragic death of King Moshoeshoe II in an automobile accident in January 1996 and the ironic succession of Letsie III only a year after he had stepped aside. Nevertheless, two crucial years have been wasted when South Africa was itself in transition. Instead of approaching South Africa and the SADC as a negotiating partner with constructive ideas, Lesotho played the unproductive role of a suppliant seeking assistance.

Internecine strife within the BCP

For quite some time, Basotho journalists have observed and speculated about a widening rift in the ruling Congress Party between two factions called the "pressure group" (*Maporesha*) and a group sometimes termed "ruffian conservatives" (*Majelathoko*, meaning literally "those who eat apart"). As confrontations with the monarch and military lessened, the overwhelming BCP majority in Parliament was afforded the luxury of factionalism, not possible when a narrow "winning coalition" must retain its solidarity to remain in power.[9] However, there are no apparent ideological or programmatic divisions between the competing factions. The issues at stake are clearly the undemocratic character of party governance, political succession to the mantle of the aged and infirm leader of the party, Ntsu Mokhehle, and the distribution of power thereafter.

At the December 1994 annual party conference, leaders of the *Maporesha* were successful in winning most of the contested positions on the National Executive Committee.[10] The group included party stalwarts Molapo Qhobela Molapo, the long-standing BCP representative in London, who was elected deputy leader, GM Kolisang, who was returned to the post of secretary-general which he had held

Prime Minister Mokhehle

Why Lesotho needs a distinctive diplomatic strategy

in the 1960s, and a number of well-respected members of the Cabinet. The losing faction included Shakhane Mokhehle, the Prime Minister's ambitious younger brother, and other members of the Cabinet most closely associated with the ageing leader, although Ntsu Mokhehle claimed to be above the fray. A source close to the Prime Minister[11] claimed that the victorious faction drew its support from "intellectuals" at the university and consisted largely of "newcomers" who had previously belonged to the defeated parties, but had opportunistically jumped on the BCP bandwagon during the electoral landslide of 1993. These pressure group "intellectuals" had supposedly lobbied covertly "in an underhanded and illicit manner" taking the legitimate party faithful by surprise. Conflict within the party executive during the period of exile in Botswana, largely about alleged misuse of funds, was also an important line of demarcation between the factions.

During the BCP conference in March 1996, the *Majelathoko* turned the tables and, playing a similar zero-sum game, ousted all of the *Maporesha* from the party executive. Shakhane Mokhehle was to resume the pivotal position of BCP secretary-general. Alleging that the party constitution and by-laws had been violated by procedural anomalies and numerous irregularities in participation and voting, several BCP constituency committees supporting the *Maporesha* brought a lawsuit in the High Court, contesting the outcome. An interim injunction left the *Maporesha* faction in control of the party executive, machinery, and treasury pending the outcome of the case.

In early May, Ntsu Mokhehle ousted four of the most prominent *Maporesha* leaders from his Cabinet, confirming rumours of a pending purge and of his thinly veiled preference for his brother's faction. Several days later the two remaining *Maporesha* cabinet members, Deborah Raditapole and Michael Senaoana, the Minister of Finance, resigned in protest. They are thought to be the first cabinet ministers in Lesotho's history to sacrifice their powers, salaries, and benefits on a matter of principle. In practice, the *Maporesha* had begun to function like an alternative party by holding well-attended rallies around the countryside

and testing *Majelathoko* strength in Parliament. The divisions, however, occurred on procedural rather than substantive votes, reinforcing perceptions that policy questions were not a cause of the split. The *Majelathoko* retained a slight edge, though a third of the parliamentarians absented themselves, quite possibly hedging their bets. A further complicating element is that some supporters of the *Majelathoko* deplore the divisive impact of the *Maporesha* upon the BCP, but favour a merit-based succession to the party leadership and are reluctant to support Shakhane Mokhehle.

To counter the *Maporesha* challenge, the ailing Prime Minister felt compelled to respond at public meetings, succumbing to his opponents' strategy to draw him from State House, so that his frailty and inability to govern would be starkly revealed. At his poorly attended speech in Maseru, he seemed bent on settling scores rather than reconciling differences, as he called on the party faithful to ostracize his colleagues of 30 years, whose loyalty, reliability and trustworthiness he had belatedly found wanting. The crisis became especially complicated shortly thereafter, when Mokhehle was rushed to Hydromed Hospital in Bloemfontein, where he remained in a critical condition for several weeks. The succession issue became even more controversial when Shakhane Mokhehle was gazetted as acting Prime Minister because Pakalitha Mosisili, the deputy

King Moshoeshoe II

Prime Minister, was out of Lesotho on government business. Ntsu Mokhehle survived what many thought would be a terminal episode, but was unable to resume his duties until early September and thus did not participate in the annual SADC summit meeting held in Maseru. Typically, the Lesotho government had no strategy for using this special event to highlight Lesotho's pressing needs and special situation. Hence, local news reports featured King Letsie III's jocular speech about his need for a bride, in contrast to King Mswati III of Swaziland who attended with his sixth wife! SADC leaders got off easily by promising that remedying the young King's plight had become a new regional priority!

Instead of prescribing a judicial solution for the bitter legal wrangle between the two BCP factions, the High Court ruled that the matter was "entirely political" and "referred it to the leader of the party, Dr Ntsu Mokhehle, for an amicable settlement".[12] After six months of testimony airing all of the dirty linen not only of the BCP conference, but of the bitter years of exile politics and armed insurgency, the court called upon the man at the centre of decades of controversy to resolve the dispute! Because the party leader failed to break the deadlock, the matter was returned to the High Court, which ruled that the *Maporesha*-led party executive should remain in office and conduct the next party conference. Hence the dispute remains a volatile and highly divisive issue, which will keep the ruling party focused on its internecine struggle rather than permitting it to address pressing issues of domestic governance and foreign affairs.

As in the past, political infighting in Lesotho has assumed a tragicomic aura, only now the battles rage within the party that had been illegally denied power for over two decades. As one BCP stalwart explained, some decline in party cohesion may have been inevitable, given generations of frustration, the totality of victory at the polls, and the absence of viable opposition, especially within Parliament. In many respects, Lesotho would be better off if the impending split were finalized and one of the factions became a genuine parliamentary opposition. The old National and Maremateou Freedom (MFP) parties are discredited

or split and the many new parties have failed to mobilize grass-roots support. But the need to control the party name and symbols at the next election and to succeed Ntsu Mokhehle, thereby controlling government patronage, remains too tempting. Locked in its narcissistic internal struggles, the ruling BCP lacks the time, energy, or competence to use the present window of opportunity to address the challenges of shaping Lesotho's destiny in the new Southern African environment. An enervating fatalism and business-as-usual attitude prevails.

Labour disputes

As in most less developed countries where the state is the primary employer, the overburdened government of Lesotho is the immediate target of workers' wage demands and grievances. Addressing these is especially onerous when the government is constrained by an enhanced structural adjustment agreement negotiated with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which mandates austerity and severe constraints upon public expenditure. The use of coercion by the LDF and LMP to push demands for huge wage increases set unfortunate precedents for civilians, especially as the government had been forced to abandon its policy of equal treatment for all public employees and allow 60% raises. The impact of strikes by teachers, telecommunications and construction workers and many other less visible groups is not on the same scale as the military insurrections, the royalist coup, or the struggles within the ruling party. However, labour unrest further undermines the credibility of government and reduces the already low morale of teachers, public servants, and other employees.

In 1994, strike action by perennially underpaid teachers yielded an unprecedented 80% increase from a government eager to avoid further confrontation. Since the salaries of teachers in public and mission schools constitute a substantial government expenditure, the IMF found the increase to be contrary to Lesotho's structural adjustment agreement and the increase, already implemented, was scaled back to 15%. Civil servants were also to get a 15% boost, but the police and military were excluded from this increment owing to their prior large increases. When the police protested by

limiting their working hours and obstructing traffic flow, they were swiftly given the 15%. Needless to say, the disaffected teachers went back on strike. The tension was compounded when teachers picketing at the Ministry of Education were tear-gassed by police. This not only created animosity among the teachers, but led to a lethal shoot-out among police, initiated by officers who sought revenge on colleagues deemed responsible for treating the teachers so shabbily. Although the strike ended as a result of parental pressure and imminent year-end examinations, major questions remain about the training and remuneration of teachers, declining examination results, and increased government supervision of mission schools. Nothing lasting has been resolved.

Two recent strikes threaten serious damage to the economy, to government credibility, and to external relationships. Just prior to the 1996 SADC summit in Maseru, when the government would be most inconvenienced, workers of the Lesotho Telecommunications Corporation (LTC) went on strike, swiftly bringing phone services and all communications with South Africa to a halt. In addition to the predictable salary demands, their grievances included theft, corruption, and mismanagement by senior administrators. Another underlying issue is the workers' perception of a threat to their jobs from the prospective privatization of the corporation, as part of the process of economic liberaliza-

King Letsie III   *The Argus*

tion. The government's hesitancy in responding bodes poorly for the future.

The more serious confrontation involved Basotho construction workers at the 'Muela power station component of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project. The workers went on strike to protest the higher pay which they believed South African employees of the project were receiving. After being sacked *en masse* by the contractors, they refused to vacate their barracks. Pursuant to a court order, the police forced them out with teargas and shot a number of them in the process, in what some observers considered a brutal and excessive use of force. These events will raise the cost and postpone the completion of the 'Muela portion of the project, which has already been long delayed by rampant corruption and incompetence in the letting of contracts. This turmoil could well cause the World Bank, which is under strong pressure because of the controversial environmental impact of the project, to decline to fund the next phase. Even before these events, Kader Asmal, the South Africa Minister of Water Affairs, had indicated that his government wanted to review a whole range of issues concerning the "governance" of the Highlands Water scheme. In short, the government's incompetence in dealing with workers and corruption in project management threaten the future of Lesotho's most critical development project and promising source of revenue.[13]

Clearly, the BCP government has a very weak record of building effective linkages with employees and trade unions and with civil society in general. As in the past, the police and military tend to react to challenges reflexively with excessive violence. Lesotho's leaders are generally unable to respond effectively to the concerns of such NGOs as churches, women's groups, and relief organizations and to negotiate or mediate disputes. These deficiencies echo and reinforce their lack of a negotiating agenda and bargaining skills in the international arena.

The critical international issues

Nelson Mandela and the older generation of ANC internationalists are well

Why Lesotho needs a distinctive diplomatic strategy

aware of the important contributions and sacrifices which neighbouring states made to sustain the liberation struggle. Because of these historical linkages and the continuing pattern of complex interdependence, South Africa has promised an era of non-intrusive cooperation with its regional partners, devoid of any residues of former hegemonic ambitions. Political leaders and scholars in Lesotho are becoming aware that such good intentions can swiftly be compromised.

Many younger leaders within the ANC experienced only the internal struggle and understandably emphasize the primacy of the needs of their local constituents. Second, the actions of key South African ministries such as Internal Affairs may be shaped by coalition partners such as Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who think in terms of regional rather than national objectives. Third, personnel from the old regime continue to staff and influence much of the South African bureaucracy, especially the Department of Foreign Affairs. While many of them have adapted remarkably well to the new dispensation, their orientation remains distinctly a "South Africa first" outlook, promoting and sustaining what various authors have identified as a "neo-conservative"or "neo-realist" foreign policy. Evans argues that the ANC's new foreign policy orientation breaks completely with past revolutionary or socialist variants.

Unlike previous articulations it is neither 'idealist' nor overtly 'internationalist' in tone. It acknowledges acceptance of, and signifies a willingness to work within, the prevailing order. It is rooted in the notion of the primacy of domestic politics and the belief that national interest, properly conceived, can sit comfortably with the international interest. It contains some remnants of the old thinking – a preference for 'non-alignment', for example, – but apart from a 'non-exploitive' frame-

work, it is virtually undistinguishable from the overall philosophy underpinning van Heerden's New Diplomacy.[14]

Instead of basing expectations upon the ebullient rhetoric of regional cooperation, Lesotho's leaders need to find ways to cope with the state-centric foreign policy orientation emerging in South Africa. The window of opportunity to develop creative new relationships between Lesotho and South Africa is already narrowing and could close even more rapidly once Mandela retires and a post-apartheid generation of leaders assumes power. The following survey of Lesotho's most crucial international linkages highlights the new challenges to which the government in Maseru must respond.

Disappearing jobs and citizens

Hardly a publication on Lesotho fails to comment on its labour reserve economy where about half of the GNP derives from the remittances of migrant workers.[15] As anticipated, recruitment of Lesotho's workers is declining sharply as preference is being given to South African citizens. South Africa's readinesss to make unilateral decisions on an issue so critical to Lesotho, the state most dependent on access to employment in South Africa, was less clearly foreseen. The first instance was the decision to grant permanent residence status to foreign workers who had lived in the Republic since 1986, notwithstanding the potentially devastating impact upon Lesotho's revenues, human resource base, and social structure should large numbers of miners leave permanently. This action resulted from vigorous pressure on the ANC government from James Motlatsi, a Mosotho, and his National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), to fulfil earlier promises. Although the NUM membership contains large numbers of Lesotho citizens, its primary commitment has been to serve their individual interests, not those of their country. Ironically, Basotho mineworkers have little difficulty in thinking of themselves as ANC supporters while they reside in South Africa, but remain committed BCP stalwarts at home. The BCP government might have had a significant impact on the content of this decision, if it had responded to South African efforts to solicit its perspective, or if it had nurtured its potential linkages, through its own members, to NUM. Moreover, the government has taken no apparent pains to

Remittances of migrant workers amount to about half Lesotho's GNP

build stronger relationships with Tito Mboweni, the South African Minister of Labour, who graduated from the National University of Lesotho. Neither is there any evidence that it has strengthened its case by reminding the South Africans that the Labour Commission's report to Mboweni treated access to employment in the Republic as an non-negotiable entitlement for citizens of regional states that traditionally provided migrant labour. The BCP leadership seems not to have anticipated that the recently implemented Social Assistance Act would deny South African pensions to new permanent residents. Implementation of this law would staunch the exodus of retired miners and their dependants, but not of the able-bodied workers upon whom Lesotho's economy depends.[16] Nevertheless, South Africa can hardly be faulted for playing a hegemonic role by default, if the BCP authorities fail to utilize their opportunities to make their case!

South Africa recently imposed visa requirements on holders of passports from Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, and Swaziland for visits exceeding 30 days. Pretoria has also been successful in blocking adoption of a SADC protocol which would have phased in a free market for labour, tourism, goods, and services over a 10-year period. Growing paranoia about crime, drugs, violence and unemployment has focused public attention, particularly in South African urban areas, on foreign workers and illegal immigrants as the purported primary culprits, despite persuasive evidence to the contrary.[17] Whether a restrictive immigration policy will be any more effectual than influx control under the apartheid regime remains to be seen. The fact that more ethnic Basotho are citizens of South Africa than of Lesotho will make implementation of new constraints problematic. Students and individuals seeking employment legally or illegally often live with relatives in the Republic for extended periods, and are not easily distinguished from citizens. The costs in time, energy, and ill will of issuing countless visas, of policing Lesotho's porous borders, and of constantly deporting illegals may prove astronomical. While all of the affected states will suffer, the new requirements will most adversely affect Lesotho, whose citizens are most completely integrated into the South African economy and who have no other point of access to the world beyond.

Not all Lesotho nationals are unwelcome in South Africa. Like the United States, South Africa has a voracious appetite for "desirable" immigrants, who bring expertise and scarce skills. Both the private and public sectors in South Africa compete to meet their affirmative action ("transformation") objectives by hiring talented foreigners, especially those who speak English as well as an indigenous southern African language and can easily

Lesotho Highlands Water Project: Katse Dam

blend into the local milieu. Lesotho, like other SADC states, finds its social capital investment in physicians, nurses, university faculty, and experienced administrators being severely depleted by this burgeoning brain drain. Once again, the impact is much greater upon Lesotho than on more affluent states like Botswana and Swaziland who can offer more competitive remuneration. There can be no better symbol of the problem than the recent appointment of Dr Timothy Thahane, a citizen of Lesotho with World Bank experience, as Deputy Governor of the South African Reserve Bank and the likely choice to become its first black Governor. Within a free market context, it is difficult to see how this process can be forestalled, although Lesotho can certainly argue that the brain drain justifies continued access to higher education in South Africa for its citizens. As an issue in a skilfully planned negotiating agenda, the negative consequences of the brain

drain should provide leverage to gain compensation or more favourable treatment on other issues.

A further, less known but potentially disruptive, consequence of the loss of skilled personnel is their replacement by professionals from Nigeria and numerous other economically devastated Third World countries less well off than Lesotho. This new wave of primarily black expatriates may become a barrier to upward mobility of young Basotho professionals, causing new tensions and resentments. A case in point has been the vigorous opposition of unionized faculty at the National University of Lesotho to the selection of any expatriate to replace the outgoing Nigerian vice-chancellor.

The Southern African Customs Union (Sacu) and the Common Monetary Area (CMA)

Although the Southern African Customs Union (Sacu) has been cited as the oldest and most successful example of regional integration in Africa, none of the parties seem satisfied with the present arrangements. Far from offering a better deal than the apartheid regime, spokespersons for the ANC government argue that the existing complex, compensatory factors are already too favourable towards its vulnerable neighbours. The South Africans contend that scarce resources are being diverted from their Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) because their economy generates 83% of the revenue, but gets only 68% of the customs pool. Leistner suggests that denial of these vital resources puts in jeopardy the success of the new political dispensation and the vibrance of the South African economy which is the engine of regional development.[18] Old hegemonic arguments seem to have found a new rationale!

Other BLNS[19] states receive more customs revenue than Lesotho, but Lesotho's share constitutes a considerably larger portion (47%) of its total government revenue. Like its BLNS colleagues, Lesotho complains that Sacu polarizes regional economic development, impedes creation of new industries, and raises prices of imported goods. Moreover, the BLNS states lose control over their national fiscal policies, are insufficiently consulted, lack means of resolving disputes, and are paid only after a two

year delay. Although the arrangements still seem preferable to establishing their own separate customs arrangements, the BLNS states seek more favourable compensatory arrangements and a greater voice in setting Sacu policies. Any compromises which the BLNS group might negotiate with South Africa involve risks for Lesotho, since the greatest impact of reductions in revenue would fall on the most vulnerable state.

The case for more equitable arrangements is even stronger for Lesotho, Namibia, and Swaziland, which belong to the CMA with South Africa and all have currencies pegged to the rand. In addition to the constraints imposed by Sacu membership, they have surrendered control of their national monetary policies to the South African Reserve Bank and cannot manage their own foreign exchange holdings. This arrangement might prove beneficial if the rand were a source of stability. On the contrary, however, South Africa has experienced a continuing "randslide", with its currency depreciating against the dollar from approximately 2,6 in 1990 to 3,6 in 1995 and to 4,7 in 1996. Even the Botswana pula, though formally distinct, has had to be devalued sharply in tune with the rand to keep Botswana's exports competitive in the South African market. For all of the BLNS states, externally imposed devaluations cause serious inflationary pressures, reduce real incomes by increasing the cost of goods imported from outside Sacu, and enhance the stranglehold of South African products within the entire market area. Unlike its other partners, whose exports become more competitive globally, Lesotho gains virtually nothing since its sole significant exports, labour and water, go to South Africa. For the BLNS states to renegotiate Sacu with South Africa without simultaneously addressing the problems of CMA makes little sense.

Multilateral negotiation of both customs and monetary arrangements creates special problems for Lesotho. If South Africa were dealing with its impacted neighbour alone, the compensatory customs formula would provide no great barrier, nor would some additional adjustment to counter the effects of devaluation. Unfortunately the consequences of extrapolating any special arrangements to the much larger and stronger economies

of Botswana and Namibia become unacceptable, since these two already receive approximately two billion rand of Sacu revenues. Consideration of Lesotho's special circumstances is ruled out, not on its merits, but because of the precedents that would be set and the demands of the others for equal treatment even though their situations are not equivalent.

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP)

Although the huge Katse dam is nearly complete and the impoundment of water is ahead of schedule owing to good rains and heavy snowfall, the Highlands project continues to raise controversial issues with South Africa, Lesotho's project partner, and with the World Bank, the focal point for assembling the necessary financing. The Highlands Treaty was signed by representatives of the apartheid regime and Lesotho's military government shortly after the 1986 coup precipitated in part by South Africa. Questions are raised on both sides as to whether the agreement negotiated by these unrepresentative governments gave proper weight to the interests of ordinary citizens. Impoverished township consumers and local authorities in the Gauteng Province are already coping with the exorbitant water rates needed to finance construction. Rising costs and delays caused by corruption, mismanagement, and the absence of effective leadership in components of the project for which Lesotho is responsible have inevitably spawned South African demands for a review of project governance and reevaluation of the planned future phases. The World Bank has been dismayed by Lesotho's neglecting to expend funds appropriated for resettlement and other compensatory programmes for communities and individuals adversely affected by the project, and by gross maladministration of project revenues designated for community-based development projects throughout the country. Ironically, some sort of regional economic guarantorship to help Lesotho reconstruct the financial and administrative capabilities of the Lesotho Highlands Development Authority might be useful to keep the project on course.

For Lesotho the Highlands project is an essential source of revenue, not just from the water to be sold to

Why Lesotho needs a distinctive diplomatic strategy

South Africa, but also from the Sacu payments generated by the goods and services imported for construction of dams, conduits, and infrastructure. A decision not to proceed with construction of the next phase, including the Mohale Dam and the associated infrastructure, would also greatly reduce scarce employment opportunities, at a time when Maseru and the other towns are already packed with retrenched mineworkers and other job seekers. Unfortunately, Lesotho's impacted physical environment and dearth of managerial skills, organizational capacity, and bargaining acumen make alleviating South African and World Bank concerns exceedingly difficult. There is simply no equivalent farming or grazing land in Lesotho on which the hundreds of families to be uprooted by the Mohale Dam could be relocated without displacing others. Since the water, power, construction, and administrative components of the Highlands project clearly have a transnational character, why can't the human dimension be treated in a similar manner? Unfortunately, economic integration does not apparently extend to people, so that Project funds cannot be used to buy under-utilized land across the border in the Free State for resettlement of those displaced, while raising land values in the process. Clearly the most significant problems confronting the Highlands project are inextricably interlocked with issues of immigration, brain drain, customs, trade, and access to employment and education that transcend national borders. The World Bank would be badly misconstruing the sources of the deficiencies, if it were to refuse funding for the next phase of the project because Lesotho had not been able to resolve unilaterally the substantial environmental, resettlement, and rural development issues.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC)

Can multilateral diplomacy within the regional framework of the SADC permit Lesotho to fulfil its foreign policy objectives more expeditiously? In answering this query, it is important to recognize that Lesotho is quite a marginal player in the SADC and has little hope of remedying that reality. Its weak economy, small size, impacted

location, reputation for instability, and lack of decisive and assertive leadership mean that its voice and influence are no greater than are suggested by its being one vote among eleven. While supposedly serving as the SADC sector coordinator for tourism and soil conservation, Lesotho's soils have become further depleted, its tourism industry has disintegrated despite the large bureaucracy paid to promote it, and no regional initiatives have emerged. Given the failings of the Highlands project, it seems a bad joke that the SADC states designated Lesotho as sector coordinator for water affairs at the Maseru summit! During the apartheid era, the regional grouping played the important role of focusing external attention and assistance on the needs and plight of particularly vulnerable states like Lesotho. In the current environment, there is little it can offer Lesotho besides symbolic encouragement. Lesotho's economic and diplomatic options are so circumscribed by South Africa that only Pretoria has a vital stake in its future and the capacity to take ameliorative action.

What Lesotho needs is for other SADC states to support its claims to special treatment. Fortunately, the SADC format recognizes the "disparities, imbalances, and variable geometry of the region", and seeks to turn this potential liability into an asset by encouraging members to experiment bilaterally.[20] Unfortunately, large exporters of labour to South Africa like Malawi and Mozambique would hardly lobby to secure Lesotho's workers a privileged position at their own expense. States with stronger economies, like Botswana and Namibia, have little incentive to accept special consideration for Lesotho within Sacu to their own disadvantage. Lesotho will have a very difficult time persuading its SADC partners that any separate arrangements or benefits negotiated with South Africa will eventually open the door to enlarging that initial experiment throughout the region. Piecemeal arrangements would lessen the urgency for South Africa to address SADC's broad agenda. On the other hand, SADC is too big and its problems too substantial for South Africa to accommodate the whole group without diluting its own reconstruction and development.

Lesotho and the guarantors

Despite infringing upon Lesotho's sovereignty, the coercive mediation of Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe to end military mutinies and restore to power Ntsu Mokhehle's elected government has produced more constructive changes than Lesotho's own meagre domestic and foreign policy initiatives. Acting on behalf of the SADC and the Organization of Africa Unity, the so-called "troika" sent a clear signal that a military coup or abrogation of democratic rule would not be tolerated when South African paratroopers rained from the skies just across the border during Letsie III's coup. The message has been reinforced by the regular presence of the troika's officers from Botswana, South Africa, and Zimbabwe on the Defence Commission of Inquiry and in a broadly based Steering Committee established to deliberate and reach consensus about the future of the LDF. More importantly, the troika moved positively to end the isolation of the LDF by encouraging its participation in regional meetings of the SADC Inter-State Defence and Security Committee and in local interactions with South African commanders to combat drug smuggling, illegal immigration and cattle rustling along the border. The results included constitutional reform, a new organizational format within a Ministry of Defence, and the very noticeable decline in the numbers of armed soldiers roaming around downtown Maseru in camouflage gear.

With zero-sum, winner-take-all approaches still entrenched in its domestic and international strategies, the BCP government appears not to have responded to the more nuanced bargaining styles adopted by Botswana and South Africa during negotiations to end the coup. Mafa Sejanamane observes that the BCP could have secured better terms if they had better understood their own strengths and weaknesses and avoided a "maximalist" approach which made unconditional demands.[21] As mediators, Presidents Mandela and Masire emphasized conciliatory approaches providing both parties with face-saving ways to find mutually beneficial outcomes. In contrast, Robert Mugabe's intemperate public comments on what the Zimbabwe army would do to a recalcitrant LDF caused resentment within

Why Lesotho needs a distinctive diplomatic strategy

the LDF which lessened Zimbabwe's effectiveness in subsequent negotiations. Had the BCP leadership responded in kind to the firm, but supportive, inputs from Mandela and Masire, regional intervention into Lesotho's domestic tribulations might have become the impetus for initiating substantive negotiations with South Africa on the many outstanding issues. Instead, the government brooded about the affront to its authority and manoeuvered to avoid fulfilling its commitments to reinstall King Moshoeshoe II and convene a national dialogue.

There is no ground, however, for suggesting that the guarantors have imposed a form of trusteeship upon Lesotho. Their intervention pertains only to the disciplined forces, and in that domain has come to depend more upon persuasion and discussion than the latent threat of economic and military sanctions should the democratically elected government be ousted or coerced. The apparent lack of a military component in the internecine battle within the BCP suggests that the guarantors' initiatives have had a continuing positive effect.

Dealing with donors

What can Lesotho expect to gain through bargaining with aid donors in an environment where resources are scarce, donor priorities have changed, and even more conditions are attached? Simply sustaining existing programmes would be a real achievement. Lesotho has lost its resident Russian, German and Canadian embassies, as well as the USAID mission and USIS, including the American library and the Fulbright Program. What became clear in the latter instance was that the Lesotho government either didn't care, or was hopelessly inept in attempting to get the decision rescinded. American officials involved reported an aura of fatalism in Lesotho's Foreign Ministry built on the assumption that nothing could be done, in contrast to the Swazi king whose direct approach to President Clinton altered the outcome for his country. A high-ranking Foreign Ministry source explained that Lesotho had accepted assurances that the cause of the exodus of the various missions was "cost saving" and that business as usual could be carried on just as well from Gaborone or

Pretoria. The visit of a ranking USIA officer was viewed as a courtesy call to explain an irrevocable decision, and not as an opportunity to press vigorously for reversal. Such political torpor reaps its own rewards.

Both bilateral and multilateral donors are clearly well informed about Lesotho's urgent economic needs and pressing social problems. Virtually all of them claim that the real issue isn't insufficient aid, but a lack of absorptive capacity which means that aid already appropriated is not used or is misused. Offers of additional assistance frequently get no response. Foreign ministry sources acknowledge that South Africa's suggestion that Lesotho participate in RDP programmes had not been answered, apparently because the South Africans hadn't brought it up again. South African officials observe that the Lesotho government complains a lot, but offers no alternatives and originates few, if any, discussions of mutual concerns and objectives. Should South Africa fill that gap, its initiatives would probably be rebuffed as intrusive and domineering. Certainly, Lesotho's leaders also need to call to the attention of international financial institutions the stresses which structural adjustment conditions, pressure for privatization, and stringent environmental standards for the Highlands project impose on the stability of their fragile democratic state. Unfortunately, the BCP authorities haven't adjusted to the new reality that donors are no longer knocking at their door or learned that Lesotho must now compete aggressively for aid.[22]

Perhaps the greatest deficiency is that the government has ignored the strategy suggested in early 1995 by the cluster of sympathetic United Nations donor agencies. Their report urged immediate action during the present "window of opportunity"..."to create a timely and consistent policy framework" for renegotiation of Lesotho's economic and political relationships with South Africa. This framework was to include "clear strategies," a sustainable "negotiating position," and movement towards a *de facto* economic union with South Africa, which, at the minimum, would allow Basotho workers access to jobs in South Africa.[23] Moreover, if Lesotho prepared and sought to implement a suitable strategic negotiating plan, the resident UN

agencies expressed their eagerness to play a supportive role. In their words, "A co-ordinated position involving Donor Agencies and the Lesotho government on these questions would strengthen Lesotho's bargaining position enormously."[24] The donors would also benefit from the success of such a strategy, since they would enhance the chances of success of their independent initiatives in Lesotho if South Africa could be encouraged to assume greater responsibilities. Typically, no action on their recommendation has been forthcoming from the Lesotho government.

Towards a special bilateral relationship with South Africa

Since current South African foreign policies were identified at the outset as neorealist, it should not be too great a shock to discover that Lesotho's options also have a strong neorealist flavour. In every policy area discussed above, Lesotho's relationships with South Africa became the central focus. All of those elements are closely interrelated, so that policy decisions taken in one sector have immediate and important consequences for the others. Lesotho can address its external concerns only by developing a comprehensive and coordinated action plan for the reevaluation and restructuring of its bilateral relationships with South Africa. Even the UN cluster of intergovernmental aid donors resident in Lesotho have recommended predominantly bilateral rather than regional strategies.

In its conversations with South Africa, Lesotho needs to emphasize over and over again that it is a special case! Pretoria has not been receptive to this perspective, because it fears that a special relationship with Lesotho will provide unfortunate precedents, with the other SADC states seeking similar treatment. Some South African officials and academics, nevertheless, agree that Lesotho's special position might justify an Eire-type relationship, not for idealistic reasons, but because of the likely spillover effects of economic, social, and political catastrophes in Lesotho. Indeed, South African officials familiar with the circumstances recognize that the Republic must, in its own self interest, keep Lesotho functioning at a tolerable

level, with the caveat that the demands of groups in South Africa must be addressed first.

Lesotho is, after all, already more integrated with South Africa economically and politically through Sacu, CMA, the Highlands project, the guarantor security arrangements, and a myriad of routine economic, social and political transactions than any of the European Union states are with each other. Under these circumstances, why shouldn't Lesotho become formally what it otherwise will be illegally, namely, a "test case" of a free regional labour market? The planning and managerial mechanism for such an arrangement, a bilateral joint commission, is already encouraged within the SADC framework. A Lesotho-South African joint commission functioning regularly at the inter-cabinet level could provide the coherence lacking in existing bilateral transactions. Both sides will find more bargaining room if the outstanding issues can be aggregated, evaluated as parts of an interrelated whole, and managed through mutually beneficial trade-offs among them. If this approach were adopted, citizens of Lesotho would, for the foreseeable future, retain their autonomous political identity, avoiding the controversy arising from surrendering national independence or creating an ethnically configured, tenth South African province. There is no necessity for close economic cooperation and political union to be linked at this juncture.

Notes and references

1. Graham Evans, "South Africa in remission: the foreign policy of an altered state, *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 34, no 2, 1996, pp 266–267

2. UNDP, WHO, UNICEF, and FAO, *The impact of changes in South Africa on the developmental prospects of Lesotho*, Maseru: July 1995, p 4.

3. Pieter Esterhuysen and Madeline Lass, *Africa at a Glance: 1995/6*, Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa, 1995, p 24.

4. See also Francis Makoa, "Lesotho beyond the elections," *African Studies*, vol 54, no 1, 1995, pp 1–14.

5. Bernard Leeman, *Lesotho and the struggle for Azania: Africanist political movements in Lesotho and Azania: the origins and history of the Basutoland Congress Party and the Pan Africanist Congress*, 3 vols, London: The University of Azania, 1985.

6. Aggregation of issues to augment the probabilities of agreement is discussed in Avinash K Dixit and Barry J Nalebuff,"Thinking strategically: the competitive edge", in *Business, politics, and everyday life*, New York and London: W W Norton, 1991, pp 295–296, and Roger Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton, *Getting to Yes: negotiating agreement without giving in*, 2nd edition, New York and London: Penguin Books, 1991, pp 70, 73–74.

7. The complex sequence of events referred to here is thoroughly discussed and evaluated in Khabele Matlosa,"The recent political crisis in Lesotho and the role of external forces", *Africa Insight*, vol 24, no 4, 1994, pp 225–229, and Mafa Sejanamane, "The Lesotho crisis and regional intervention", *Southern Review*, (SAPEM), vol 9, no 5, February 1996, pp 37–43.

8. *The Report of the Commission of Enquiry (Lesotho Defence Force)*, Maseru: Government of Lesotho, 31 January 1995, 124 pp.

9. One independent had been elected in a by-election. The greater stability of a minimal winning coalition is examined in William Riker, *The theory of political coalitions*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962.

10. The party leader, Ntsu Mokhehle, had a five year term which expired at the end of 1996.

11. Confidential interview.

12. "Court refers matter to leader," *Lesotho Today*, vol 11, no 20, October 24–30, 1996, p 1.

13. "SA reviews Lesotho Water Scheme", *Star Business*, 19 July 1996, p 1.

14. Graham Evans, *op cit*, pp 258–259.

15. A good recent example is Khabele Matlosa, *Labour migration and the economy in Southern Africa: a review of Lesotho-South Africa relations in the post apartheid era*, unpublished paper presented at the Second ACDESS Conference, Johannesburg, January 24–27, 1996. See also Richard F Weisfelder, "Lesotho and the inner periphery in the New South Africa", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 30, no 4, 1992, p 664.

16. Marion Edmunds, "No pensions for permanent residents," *Weekly Mail and Guardian*, vol 12, no 33, 16–22 August 1996, p 7.

17. Hussein Solomon, *From uncertainty to confusion: the illegal immigrant question in South Africa*, unpublished paper presented at the Second ACDESS Conference, Johannesburg, 24–27 January 1996.

18. This section draws on the concise summary of the opposing perspectives in Erich Leistner, "Renegotiating the Southern African Customs Union (Sacu)" *Africa Institute Bulletin*, vol 35, no 2, 1995, pp 4–5.

19. Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, and Swaziland.

20. Ibbo Mandaza and Arne Tostensen, *Southern Africa: in search of a common future*, Gaborone: Southern African Development Community, 1994, p 104.

21. Mafa Sejanamane, *op cit*, p 41.

22. Khabele Matlosa, *Disappearing donors: bargaining for aid*, unpublished paper in absentia at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association, San Francisco, 23–26 November 1996, p 30.

23. UNDP, WHO, UNICEF, and FAO, *The impact of changes. " op cit*, pp ii, 35.

24. *Ibid, p 35.*

Development, the state and

The neoliberal paradigm revisited

Cecile Ambert casts a critical glance over the neoliberal development paradigm in the light of the experiences of two of Africa's poorest states

There have been several approaches to development in sub-Saharan Africa. All have failed to prescribe an essential component of development: the generation of original African capacities – competencies, knowledge and institutions.[1]

Introduction

after the euphoria of development strategies in the 1960s, African countries underwent the tragedy of economic restructuring in the 1980s. Promoted by international funding organizations and

applied by the governments of Madagascar and Malawi, development strategies have been largely ineffective in furthering economic growth and socio-economic development. This discussion will demonstrate how – in spite of contextual differences – both countries have evinced considerable similarities since independence, as regards state characteristics. Secondly, it will show how the developmental capacity of each of the two states has failed to materialize, regardless of its involvement in social and economic evolution, and despite the predictions and presumptions of the aforementioned international funding organizations when one state, Malawi, was a firm neoliberal favourite, and both complied with political liberalism as

embodied in the concept of "political good governance".

The neoliberal theory of the developmental state – historical perspective

Economic modernization

When interest in the poor nations of the world began to materialize following World War II, economists in the industrialised world were caught off guard as to how to modernize both the economies and the societies of the Third World.[2] However, drawing their theoretical inspiration from Keynes, and their practical insights from the successes of the Marshall Plan, analysts and policy makers alike were convinced that economic modernization and financial funding were the key to accelerated development.[3] This approach dominated the liberal creed which held that the state had a crucial role to play in stimulating demand for goods and services, thereby promoting economic growth.[4] In practice the approach was reflected in a policy of "all-out borrowing", perpetuated by the former colonial powers and the multilateral agencies of the West, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The conditionality of aid

Until the 1980s, the predominant tendency was for the state to extend its hold on the economy. If political leaderships opted for different ideologies, the state was widely perceived as a catalyst for development. Yet, as political and economic performance became an outlet for ideological competition, donor agencies sought to attach liberal economic conditions to the delivery of financial assistance.[5] It was within this context that the concept of good governance, relating to the ability of the state and its actors to promote development in accordance with neoliberal principles, first made its appearance, and "poor governance" became characterized as "the main factor

its leadership in

Malawi & Madagascar

behind stagnation and decline, emanating from poor policy making".[6] The developmental state had become the free-market state; a state urged to "get macroeconomics policies right – encourage competition – use institutions wisely".[7]

However, with the demands made on the state by both the civil constituencies of African leaders and macro- and micro-economic development, African bureaucracies grew larger, and the size of public enterprise hampered the emergence of a strong private sector. The above, applying pressure on the African state – or as some called it *l'état providence* – created difficulties in the delivery of economic goods, so that African governments faced civil opposition and political criticism. In response, many African leaders argued that long-term development could be achieved only if societies were disciplined.[8] Then followed a situation within which *de facto*, if not *de jure*, one-party and personal rule was established, allowing for potential mismanagement, private appropriation of public funds, and political repression. Paradoxically, "by concentrating their assistance on public agencies and adopting top-down approaches, donors contributed to the dominance of the state, thereby weakening civil society and expanding the opportunity for exploitation".[9]

With the disintegration of the socialist system in most parts of the world, and the revival of democratization and political accountability across the globe, a new orthodoxy has appeared in the neoliberal paradigm. At its core is the confident assertion that "good governance" and democracy are not simply desirable but essential conditions for development in all societies.[10] Fighting poverty and underdevelopment in Africa has become synonymous with fighting the "neo-patrimonial" state under the banner of democracy, accountability, and transparency. From this assumption it has been deduced that political liber-

alization is the *sine qua non* of successful economic liberalization and ultimate development, so that in principle a developmental state is equated with a state armed with "democratic good governance".[11]

A review of the neoliberal approach.

Against this there stands a review of neoliberal thinking based on a new statist concept of development, which questions the assumption that political

liberalization will result in economic growth.[12] Most of the literature relating to the capacity of the state to promote development centres around the quest to extract characteristics of state "hardness" through which developmental programmes may be devised and enforced.[13] The emphasis is placed on two principles of the developmental state: what it *wants* to achieve, and what it *can* achieve. In the context of governance, this translates into the following formula: Is the state dedicated to development?
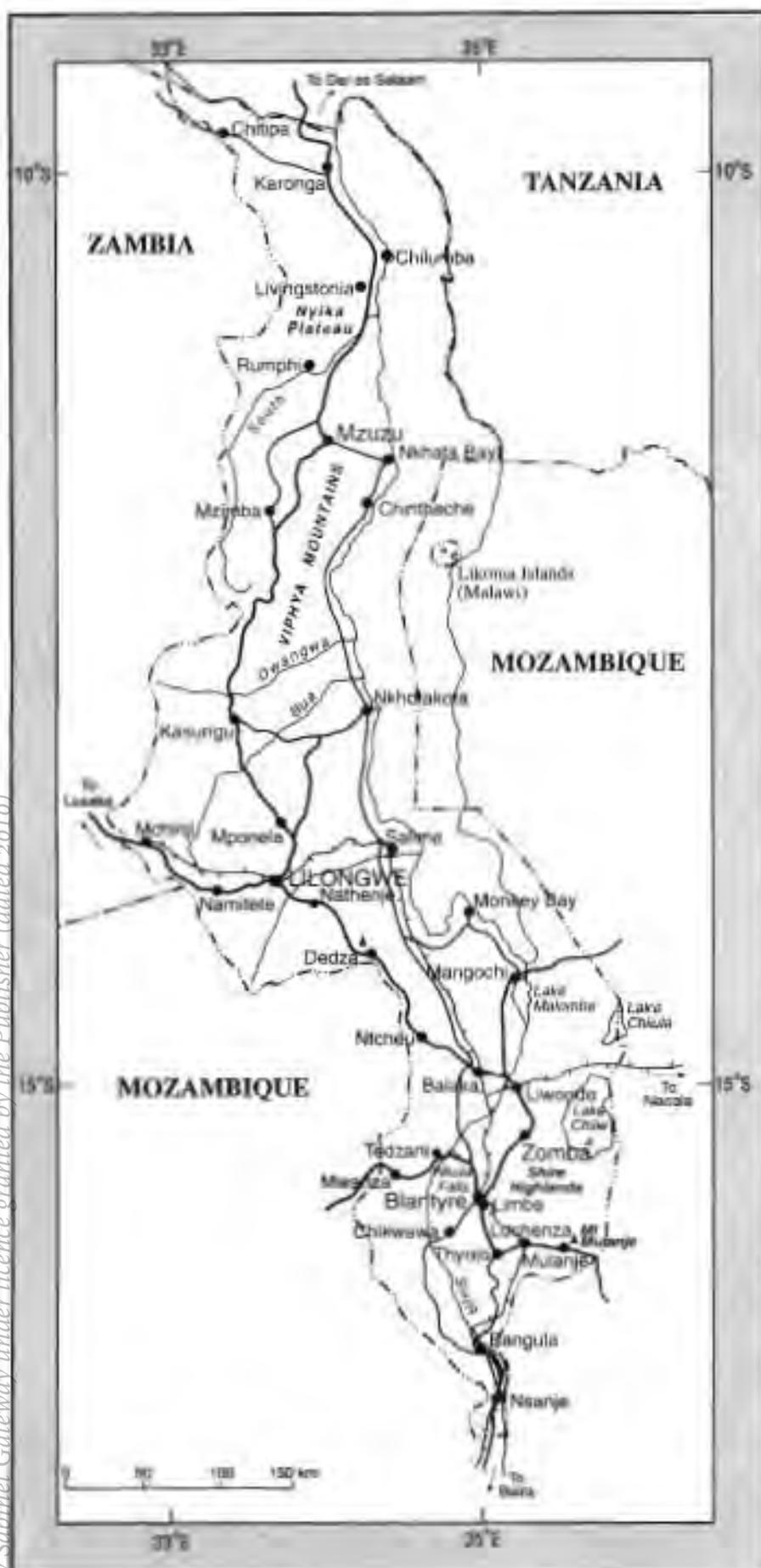
Are policies designed to achieve it? and, Does the government have the capacity to enforce them?

Traditionally, development has been envisaged in terms of economic growth, as distinct from sociopolitical factors. [14] A new paradigm should seek to view development as the quality of life that can be enjoyed by a people, in terms of an increasing and widening distribution of life-sustaining goods, a substantial improvement in the standard of living of the majority, and the reduction of socioeconomic inequalities. Concern may, and should be, given to humanistic, cultural and political issues. [15] Merging these criteria with the capacity of the state to create an enabling environment has become a necessity. Leftwich isolates certain components of the developmental state model, which include, firstly, the existence of a developmental elite, of a powerful, competent and insulated economic bureaucracy, along with the effective management of non-state interests. [16] Secondly, the capacity of the state to enforce developmental policies – or its "hardness" – can be measured according to its relative structural and economic autonomy, its ability to perform and legitimize itself, as well as the extent to which civil society is subordinate to and penetrated by the state. [17]

In Africa, the overriding tendency has been to equate state and leadership in a way unparalleled in any contemporary developed country. If France, Great Britain or the United States are mentioned, the image that comes to mind is not necessarily that of the leading political personalities of the respective countries. However, sub-Saharan Africa has been stigmatised by an association between the nation, the state and the leadership, as carriers of national symbols. Gitelson explains the concept of symbolic leadership by maintaining that a power vacuum was created by the colonial decision to evacuate the newly independent state's political arena, with the consequence that the major source of legitimacy was personal appeal. [18] The above element of the developmental state, its leadership, will thus be examined as against the successive presumptions of the neoliberal paradigm, from independence to the most recent political, economic and social developments in both Madagascar and Malawi.

The developmental capacity of the state in Malawi and Madagascar

Madagascar and Malawi are countries which shared the experience of the post-independence statist euphoria. If one is to derive any insight from a comparison, it is necessary to limit oneself to what is comparable; this analysis will therefore be restricted to the periods which are relevant to the framework above. Thus, the establishment of personal, one-party rule in Madagascar and in Malawi and the most recent events linked to the shift to liberal democratic rule in both countries are the chronological limits of this discussion. In so doing the comparison will seek to establish a pattern of similarities between the leadership of both states, and highlight the lack of practical insight and the ideological flaws within the neo-liberal paradigm, with its vision of "good governance" in the "structural adjustment" of the 1980s, and of "political good governance" in the 1990s.

The impact of the leadership on the economic realm.

Since independence in 1964, Malawi had been governed by Dr Banda, the African Englishman, under a system of absolute rule which he refused to reform or relinquish until the beginning of the 1990s. Not for him were the grandiose industrial plans of other African states; agriculture was to be the driving force behind the country's development, and he would turn impoverished Nyasaland into "the Denmark of Africa".[19] This was reflected in the evidence that Malawi was an economy in which the modern sector – commercial agriculture – was exhibiting remarkable growth, while the peasant sector was ensuring minimum living standards for those not involved in either wage labour or self-employed cash cropping.[20] Malawi's leadership seemed to propagate the belief that but for Banda as Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture Malawi's policies would have had a more socialist overtone, so the donor agencies made little effort to seriously obstruct his policies until the financial crisis of the early 1980s.[21]

A closer look uncovers a different version of the politics of Banda. Unopposed in cabinet, the "conservative autocrat"[22] was inclined to devise policies and institutions which would

provide him with sufficient resources to allow for the pursuit of his personal vision of development.[23] This included systematically giving priority to symbolic investments, rather than concrete economic plans (a new capital, Kamunsu Academy or Eton-in-the-Bush, and a flock of residential palaces), along with the appropriation of public funds which made of him one of the wealthiest persons in his country. "Developmental states have played a major part in encouraging the emergence and growth of private economic institutions".[24] Banda introduced measures facilitating access to

Dr Banda

land for private ownership, promoting agricultural estates and export production. Yet most of the estates' production was owned by Banda and his circle of close supporters; it was in effect, a mere "presidential fiefdom".[25]

Furthermore, the campaign of Africanization in the retailing sector, through which Banda sought to replace Asian traders with Malawians lacking both capital and managerial skills, caused severe retailing shortages.[26] Likewise, the lack of production incentives and heavy taxation imposed on the peasantry engaged in the cultivation of staple products meant that its lack of productivity was to have devastating effects upon the social welfare of the entire population. The data compiled by the World Bank on the mobilisation of domestic re-

sources for investment, matched by performance and growth, do not explore the issue of the distribution of the benefits of this growth. In fact, some have argued that the redistributionary goals of the multilateral agencies were completely at odds with the priorities of Banda.[27] Indeed, the fact that Malawi's elite lacked integrity and followed personal economic interests had an adverse effect on the economy and the capacity of the state to promote development.

After the three turbulent years following the fall of the First Republic in Madagascar, characterized by a neo-colonial state[28] and a rise in social tensions, the military established a socialist state headed by Ratsiraka. When he was put into power, Rastiraka had already devised "a general policy whose principles and methods (were to be) based on the socialist revolution by means of an updated fokolona".[29] The new ruler, asserting his commitment to socialism à la Malagasy, established mass nationalization (including that of French owned banks), the severing of economic trade with France,[30] the closure of American economic institutions, the implementation of Kholkoze-based plantations, and the establishment of the vanguard system of the Malagasy revolution; all measures which were duly described in Ratsiraka's "little red book".[31]

Nationalization affected the most vibrant sector of Madagascar's economy: agriculture. Previously based upon communitarian principles, agriculture once restructured failed to maintain its levels of productivity. Whereas at independence Madagascar could rely on rice, a staple food, as its most thriving export, in 1990 it had to import four fifths of the population's yearly consumption – in a society where rice means politics. In time, parallel markets flourished, and the government lost its hold on the agriculture. An ill-conceived and poorly coordinated national industrialization programme, promoted by the government from 1978 and linked to a policy of all-out borrowing, proved to be a veritable "money pit". The international pressure to embark on widespread borrowing was accompanied by local financial pressures; the costs of running a nationalized economy were more than Madagascar could afford. "The results of such a policy

were to have such devastating effects, that by 1980, Madagascar had to apply for financial help from the IMF".[32] The dependency on aid grew throughout the 1980s and has ultimately left the state and especially the leadership at the mercy of multilateral agencies.

Although it is evident that both leaderships took opposite paths towards development, Banda being seen as a dedicated capitalist, and Ratsiraka a fervent socialist,[33] their respective economic policies have had similarly disastrous consequences. Both favoured strong centralization of power, both followed a policy of *emprunts à outrance*, both used public funds to promote private interests, both lacked sufficient economic insight into the agricultural sector.[34] They were responsible for their countries becoming importers of staple food, whereas they had previously been exporters, both ignored the imperatives of productivity by overtaxing or nationalizing even the smallest private economic ventures. On the economic front both have hindered the developmental capacity of the state.

The state and society

Malawi's bureaucracy remained relatively competent until the 1980s, at odds with developments in the rest of Africa; a real concern for strong management and the efficiency of a meritocratic bureaucracy must have contributed to the climate of belief among the aid agencies that a sound overall development strategy was under way.[35] Yet unravelling the composition of the civil service – which still accounts for 20% of formal employment, in a country where 10% of the labour force migrates to neighbouring states for employment – exposes the formidable abuses of the system. Ghost workers, falsified pay-rolls, the redundancy of civil servants, and the misappropriation of funds point to the rapid disintegration of the bureaucratic apparatus.[36] In effect, it is very likely that the civil service was marked with the same stigma of nepotism and outright corruption as were Banda and his entourage.

The policy of developing the urban elite, coupled with a discriminatory attitude towards non-Chewa regional ethnic groups[37] has also affected the socioeconomic status of the population. The bias in favour of the urban masses, in terms of access to

public resources such as health care and education, resulted in severe imbalances in standards of living, which were aggravated by the rise in poverty.[38] All this translates into a serious disablement of human resources, where most of the population lives below the level of absolute poverty.

The bureaucracy, during Ratsiraka's term in power, grew formidably, owing to the demands of managing a whole gamut of nationalized institutions. The growth of the state apparatus outstripped the human resources and capital which could have provided for the establishment of a competent,

Lt Commander Didier Ratsiraka
Madagascar

honest, and developmental bureaucracy. One can easily judge the losses in government revenue linked to the costs of an inept and corrupt state machinery by the multitude of presidential palaces (one of which is modelled on the palace of Versailles), and by the number of ghost civil servants, amounting to over 50 000 in 1990.[39] Following a programme of structural adjustment during the 1980s, the government had to apply severe cuts in government spending, resulting in the deterioration of social services, described in the phrase "*les années terrible de l'austérité*."[40] Progressively, the capacity of the state to provide social services declined, so that in 1990 it was estimated that the health, education, and infrastructure enjoyed by the emerging generation would be inferior

to those received by the preceding generation.[41] Social indicators point to the decline of social conditions.[42]

Although aimed primarily at the Malgachization of the population along with the propagation of Ratsiraka's gospel of development, the promotion of education was successful. Even in decline, Madagascar's literacy rate is among the highest in the continent. But education alone cannot promote development. There is a need for economic empowerment through the creation of an enabling social environment, which clearly has failed to materialize during Ratsiraka's presidency.

Socioeconomic conditions have degenerated in both Madagascar and Malawi. The discrimination of the leadership in favour of either (in the case of Banda) a specific section of the population, the Chewa, or (in the case of Ratsiraka) a particular aspect of social development, education, has failed to promote the social conditions which could have facilitated the developmental capacity of the state.

The state and the polity

Soon after independence, during a cabinet crisis, Banda made it clear that he was no democrat; he asserted that: "I am the boss ... I decide everything ... anyone who does not like it can get out".[43] During his periods of extreme sensitivity to criticism, political repression could be felt in detention without trial, "car accidents", torture, purges, and forced exile. These punishments were executed by Banda's personal army of youth, the Young Pioneers, whose original task had been to promote development and work in the agricultural sector, but whose actions were merely restricted to political bullying and intimidation.[44] In appearance, the country seemed stable and exempt from the unrest that has periodically characterized African states, so that development agencies were relatively unaware of the cost of this stability.[45] Moreover, it would be incorrect to assert that Banda remained in power only through manipulation and intimidation; it has been argued that in fact he enjoyed a relatively high degree of legitimacy which rested mainly on the lack of political awareness of the population which was barred from access to the mass media, and on the redefinition of the Malawian culture within which Banda was depicted as the benevolent father of the nation.[46]

If the subjugation of the Malawian population, and the lack of internal pressure on the government, favoured Banda's stay in power for over 30 years, this was not true of the influence of the multilateral donor agencies. In the early 1980s Banda was forced to curb his economic policies to comply with the demands of both the World Bank and the IMF. Cuts in government spending were ordered, following the emergence of a serious balance of payment crisis. These demands for economic restructuring soon gave way, in the late 1980s, to those for political liberalization. Indeed, the dependency on external sources of revenue led Banda's regime to progressively lose considerable political leverage in the domestic arena, so that today "real power belongs to the international community".[47] Disillusioned with what it had hoped would be a developmental state in the light of "good governance", the international economy soon uncovered the skeletons in the closets of Banda's leadership, and called for 'political good governance'.

Ratsiraka ascended to power with the support of the workers, students, a leftist urban elite, and the "Vanguard of the Malagasy Revolution", to consolidate his populist base, incorporating both left- and right-wing political elements in the government. Progressively, Ratsiraka came to embody the government, and the policies emerging from cabinet were mainly a reflection of his principles and beliefs.[48]

However, the sociopolitical tensions which had marked the years of the formation of the Second Republic had not receded and broke out in periodic urban riots and rural revolts, with violent government countermeasures.[49] Indeed, the erosion of Ratsiraka's influence should not be mistaken for impotence.[50] Having emerged from the military, he knew how to use his ties to the army to coerce the population, and official propaganda was resourceful. Opposition to the regime culminated, in 1985, in the *Kung Fu* revolts, fuelled by precarious economic and social conditions resulting from the policy of austerity and led by various religious leaders and members of the underground opposition parties. The final blow to the regime was a general strike and riots called for by a prodemocratic coalition called "Force Vive", and supported by the churches, in 1991.

The above points to the lack of
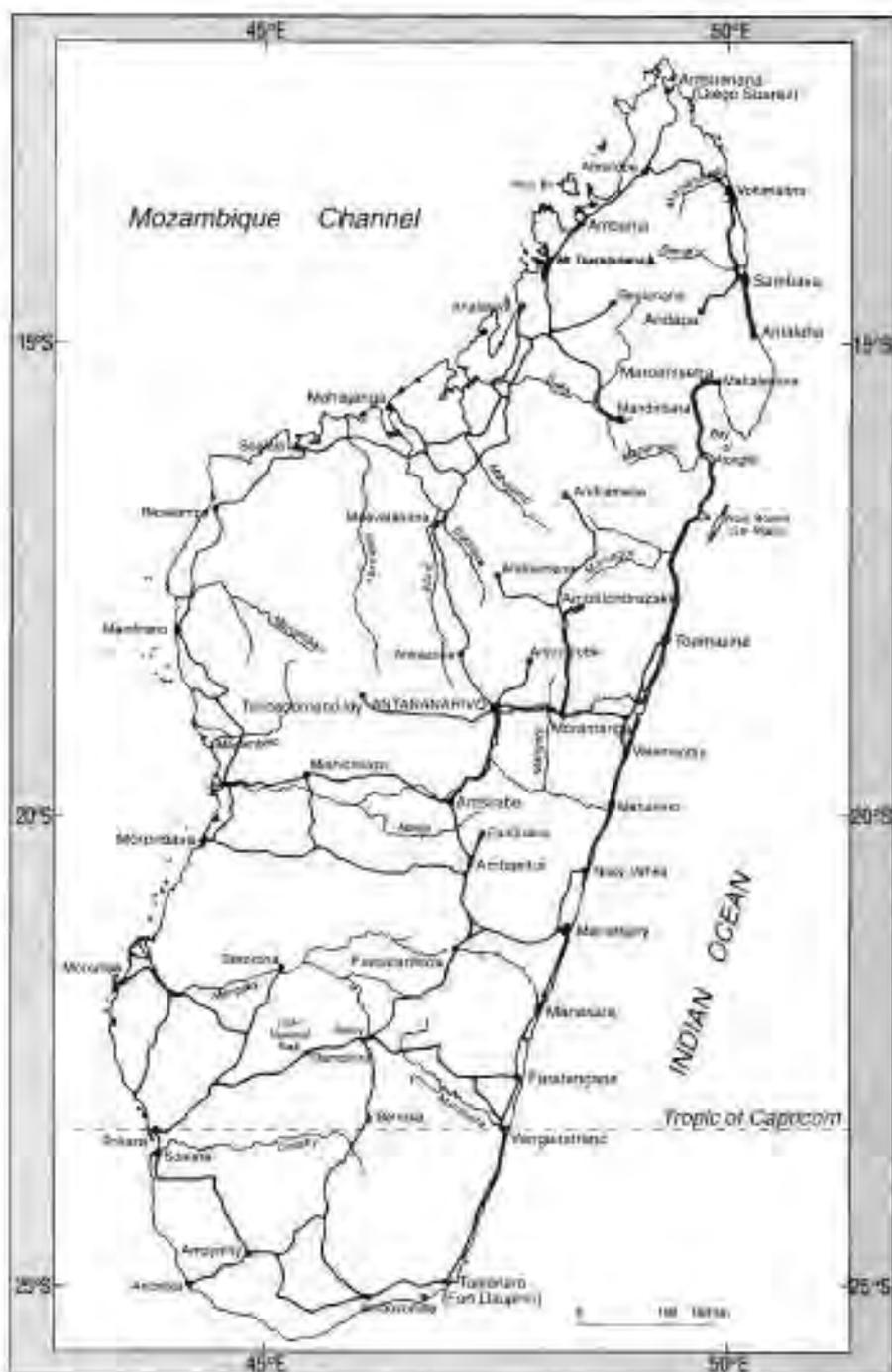
political strength of the Ratsiraka regime. It is clear that the elite lacked a hold on the population, which periodically challenged its authority. Along with the pressure from below, the regime has had to contend with pressure from above since 1980; the IMF has played an influential role in shaping the island's politics. Pushing for structural adjustment at first, from 1989 it insisted on political liberalization if it were to continue its financial aid, when the country's foreign currency reserve amounted to not more than four days of ordinary import expenses. This re-

flects a remarkable lack of autonomy of the leadership from the 1980s.

Whereas Malawi's government could rely on a relatively unchallenged authority throughout the Banda era, Madagascar never enjoyed such overall stability; opposition was an aspect of its political life that the state had to contend with. However, both states faced similar pressures from external sources to redefine their policies. Indeed, the IMF and the World Bank were integral political players in the political transformations of the early 1990s.

Stocktaking: the neoliberal paradigm revisited

On the whole, the impact of the leadership on the developmental capacity of the state and on the success – or lack of it – of developmental policies devised by the state was on a par in both countries. In the economic and social realms, the Malawian and the Malagasy leadership undermined developmental prospects. Through ill-fated planning and patrimonialism the leadership hampered the emergence of a strong and competent state apparatus. One may therefore in this context critically assess the neoliberal paradigm, which sought to make of Malawi a model state during the 20 years following independence. If Banda was eager to maintain liberal economic policies it was only in appearance and in order to benefit from free-market principles.

Likewise, the tendency of the donor agencies to recommend borrowing until the 1980s and the channelling of funds through state institutions meant that both states, from 1980 onwards, were to rely to excess on this form of financial revenue. On the home front, the political impact of both leaderships was negative. Banda left the population of Malawi with a political naiveness unequalled in most of contemporary Africa; the elections held in Malawi in 1994 were carried out in near ignorance of the stakes of democratic rule[51], while the politically aware urban and rural masses of Madagascar had been voicing their disapproval of state policies even before independence. However, the conditionality of aid has meant that whatever political processes have arisen since the late 1980s have probably emerged less out of the interests of genuine political leadership than out of those of the IMF/World Bank. Thus both countries reflect a loss by the state of its ability to steer the path of policy making.

The new game of multilateral funding agencies – does democracy enhance development?

Has the developmental capacity of the state increased since the rise of democracy? Have the new leaders shown themselves to be dedicated to promoting development? Has "political good governance" been achieved,

and does it deliver? It has been assumed that the two democratic governments have had to take over Madagascar and Malawi when both were in an advanced state of decay. Although I do not seek to underplay the gravity of the situation at the time of the passing of powers, I will show that the capacity of the state to promote development, and the capacity of the leadership to enforce developmental policies, has in fact declined in both countries.

Economic realities since the establishment of multiparty democracy

Many of Malawi's problems can be traced to the economic legacy left by the former regime, but it appears that the new government is slow to introduce the necessary reforms. Although the new president, Muluzi, has set the eradication of poverty as one of his priorities, and introduced measures in an attempt to facilitate access to land, ex-president Banda is still the largest landholder in a country where 60% of the population is landless[52]. The agricultural sector has not regained its pre-Banda vitality,[53] and famines are looming. Malawi is kept alive by a drip-feed of international aid, food relief from the World Food Aid Program[54] – a cocktail which some might view as possibly invigorating but one which can have adverse consequences for the peasant farming population which receives, instead of economic incentives from the government, unbeatable competition. In other economic sectors, the disbanding of the system of preferential ownership of media and services has led to an upsurge in the number of news agencies, and in the establishment of informal enterprise.[55] The government has also showed that it favours the return of Asians into the rural area to take over the trade sector from which they had been formally banned for the past 26 years. Yet the impoverishment of the rural areas and a rise in insecurity tends to bar the traders from returning.[56]

Corruption is still rife in the government; regionalism and nepotism have not been cleared from the system of access to governmental functions.[57] Poverty-relief programmes are slow to pull Malawians out of their misery, and one may argue that with the prospects of more IMF counselling,

austerity will have to be on the agenda. Moreover, the leadership's lack of dynamism could aggravate socioeconomic conditions.

Since the political transformation of Madagascar, after a year of "anarchy" and economic standstill in 1991, the democratically elected government has proved disappointing to the population. In December 1994, a French deputy deplored that, "a year and a half after democratic elections, the disappointment measures up to formerly held hopes, and the situation is just as critical; the pauperization of the population, the inefficiency of the administration, the collapsed economy, all of these constitute today, like yesterday, the components of the Malagasy reality".[58] One of the criticisms made of the leadership is its lack of initiative and dynamism. In a country where 80% of the population is involved in subsistence farming, priority is still placed on export production – inefficiently so, for it is estimated that the island's agricultural potential is far from being maximized. Furthermore, the environmental degradation, which has caused the island to be rated the number one priority of the World Wildlife Fund, is now being disregarded. The practice of *tavy* (slash-and-burn) cultivation is devastating; it not only depletes the soil of its nutrients, but has also caused the country's major harbours to be almost unusable.[59] The infrastructure is decayed and poorly adapted to the promotion of economic development.

President Zafy, who was recently deposed and whose candidacy in the second round of presidential elections is threatened by that of Ratsiraka, had been engaged in fraudulent activities with "would-be donors", and led financial institutions to embark in con-men's scams with parallel funding agents, some of whom had links with the Russian and Israeli Mafia.[60] The rate at which the government failed to enhance development led observers to doubt its dedication. Even though President Zafy put some of the blame on his predecessors and on foreigners – French, Italian, Russian, Pakistani and Indian – neither he nor his government emerged as developmental models.

In both countries, democracy has not brought about the economic development foreseen by the population and the multinational donor agencies.

The governments lack a dynamic approach to economic growth and insight into the real needs of their respective constituencies. Nor have the leaderships proved themselves to be free from corruption. Madagascar and Malawi have not reaped the rewards of economic takeoff. One may indeed wonder about the capacity of the present leadership to bring about development.

Social transformation and the democratically elected leadership

Malawi's bureaucracy, undergoing severe cutbacks, sees its performance declining. Over-staffing in the junior ranks, lack of professionalism and corruption led the government to cull 30 000 civil servants out of a work force of 105 000.[61] The decrease in the quality of health services is alarming.[62] The health status indicators provide a glimpse of the hardship and the suffering. At the root of the crisis stands the issue of poverty at household level. The rising crime and gangsterism in the country point to the state's inability to effectively deploy police forces, and to the resurgence of tensions suppressed during the Banda era, along with the lack of economic stability. These factors are linked to the disbanding of Banda's security network, that of the much-feared Young Pioneers.[63] The perception that the country is sliding into anarchy at the hand of gunmen and criminals does little to promote local and international investment. Overall, the government's capacity to uphold social security has declined since the emergence of democratic rule. The civil service, although under extensive restructuring, lacks funds and dedicated, skilled human resources to face the crisis. In such conditions, it remains highly unlikely that Malawian society will become a driving force for development.

Madagascar has not fared better; its social conditions are appalling, and there is little hope of recovery, with nongovernmental organizations, like the World Health Organization (WHO), having to provide services normally rendered by the state. Corruption in the bureaucracy and the non-payment of salaries have led to a rapid decline in the state's capacity to promote social development. Furthermore, the urban populations suffer from rising street- and organized crime,[64] along with an increase in social diseases. A WHO re-

port published in 1995 points to a rapid rise in slum gangs, prostitution, and begging. The cities cannot cope with the rural exodus which has developed since the 1980s, and urban poverty has aggravated the problem of insecurity. The rural areas, too, are not exempt from crime; a high level of banditry discourages interregional movement and investment.[65] The new leadership has not focused sufficiently on the state's capacity to promote development by creating enabling social conditions and developing human resources.

Once again parallels are evident: both states suffer from an inability to contain widespread social crisis. The quality of health, education, and other social services is on the decline. Crime is taking its toll in the social and economic arenas. One may wonder why both governments do not attach more importance to the welfare of their respective constituencies? After all, though the IMF and the World Bank advise and order the implementation of drastic economic measures, neither has to contend with potential voters and hungry mobs. Underplaying the role of society in the developmental process may prove very costly to both states, and at the moment it could also cost the government its leadership. This has been verified by the failure of Zafy to effectively secure the presidential seat from which he was deposed in mid-1996, and for which he is now competing against his opponent, former dictator Ratsiraka.

The political reality of "political good governance"

With democratic rule a new political game has opened for the political leadership, which now has to account – in principle – for its actions. Malawi's young democracy, being marked by social insecurity, suffers some degree of political uncertainty. If donors have complained about government's uncontrolled spending, so has the population.[66]

Furthermore, the emergence of a definite regional, if not ethnic, pattern of voting in the 1994 elections points to a possible lack of legitimacy of the government.[67] In any case, real power in Malawi belongs to the international community, owing to the country's overwhelming dependence on foreign aid.[68] The economic options that the government can choose to follow are fairly limited. Popular pressures de-

mand a rapid increase in living standards; the provision of housing, employment, and better living conditions could tempt the leadership to adopt a more authoritarian approach.[69] Such a choice would doubtless offend the multinational donor agencies, but it could create conditions which would permit the enforcement of structural adjustment; on the other hand, it could also lead to another era of corrupt autocracy.

Madagascar's political life has now taken the route of renewed autocracy. The elections in 1993 brought in an odd coalition of powers, following the drafting of a shaky loophole-ridden constitution. It was not long before the president, manipulating a cabinet crisis, forced his main opponent in the coalition government to resign, through a fraudulent referendum giving the president the right to hire and dismiss the prime minister.[70] Zafy did not like criticism, especially when it involved his participation in fraudulent donor operations. Inflation growth and the new policies of austerity placed upon the population[71] have led to unrest and protest, resulting in confrontations of popular groups with the armed forces, and in turn to Zafy's deposition. With the first round of the elections in November 1996 showing considerable popular support for Ratsiraka, one may assume that the country is heading towards renewed authoritarianism.

So recent events suggest that the leaderships in Malawi and Madagascar are leading political development towards authoritarian rule. Decreasing legitimacy and a history of political abuses could force them to do so; yet the complete lack of autonomy that both have in relation to the donor agencies leaves little room for their ability to lead political developments in a direction that does not correspond with the designs of "political good governance".

The failure of "political good governance" to recreate developmental state capacity

The above demonstrates how the developmental capacity of the state in Madagascar and Malawi has failed to materialize since the emergence of multiparty democracy. In both countries, the leadership, given the legacy

of impoverishment and debt inherited from the previous regimes, has failed to promote development. Their lack of competence, integrity and dynamism has weakened economies which were already extremely feeble. The absence of socioeconomic empowerment now results in the emasculation of potentially able work forces, owing to the dramatic decrease in the delivery of social services and the rise of insecurity. Politically, the loss of its legitimacy has led the leadership in both countries to adopt a certain measure of political repression, leading some observers to subscribe to the already popular "Afro-pessimist" belief that the new African democracies cannot stand the test of time. The lack of autonomy of the leadership in matters of policy drafting could decide otherwise; yet one can not escape the fact that, so far, "political good governance" has not been effective in promoting development. Worse, it has established a rigid paradigm which remains immutable despite this failure.

Conclusion

Multilateral agencies, assessing the lack of success of development policies devised by them through the years, have been quick to shift the blame to the leadership of the African states. Blaming the *état providence*, neo-patrimonialism, the "politics of the belly", factionalism, tribalism, and political irresponsibility, neoliberal theorists have attempted to show that states in Africa should strictly be seen in their own terms, as the products of their own society, and not merely as failed attempts to reproduce some mode of government designed elsewhere.[72]

Yet, at independence, the African states were encouraged to engage in the development of their bureaucracies to follow Western patterns of institutional and economic development, and to borrow extensively. If the state in Africa has failed to materialize as a successful replica of states in the developed world, it has been shown that the blame can not be placed upon one or other factor or actor that has shaped the sub-Saharan state as it stands today. However, over the years macro-economic conditions, coupled with lack of pragmatism in the drafting of economic and social policies by the African leadership – relying increasingly on external funding – have left the African states at the mercy and goodwill of donor agencies' ideologies and creed.[73] The examples of Madagascar and Malawi have shown that in spite of the predictions of the neoliberal perspective, both countries now stand on a par, ranking among the ten poorest countries in the world, whereas Malawi was once regarded as a progressive capitalist state, and both states were guided onto the path of structural adjustment and austerity, and both had to comply with the demands of "political good governance". The successive leaderships have from the onset of their coming into power shown signs of defective developmental capacities which, although carefully documented in the neoliberal literature, should not be seen as being solely responsible for conditions in their countries which the successive policies of structural adjustment and the concern for political good governance could not have alleviated.[74] Indeed, if democracy can be more functional for a society which has already achieved a high degree of economic and social development, "a (developmental) dictatorship can, *in principle*, be far more effective than a democracy in creating the social conditions that would permit both capitalist economic growth and, over time, the emergence of a stable democracy".[75]

Notes and references

1. *Initiative for the reinforcement of capacities in Africa (IRCA)*, Washington, World Bank, 1991, p 3 (my translation).
2. M Todaro, *Economic development*, 5th ed, London: Longman, 1994.
3. P Jacquemot and M Raffinot, *La nouvelle politique economique en afrique*, Vanves: Edicef, 1993, p 15.
4. G Hyden, "Rethinking theories of the state", *Africa Insight*, vol 26, no 1, 1996, p 26.
5. P Jacquemot and M Raffinot, *op cit*, p 15.
6. The World Bank, *Adjustment in Africa: Reforms, results, and the road ahead*, Washington: World Bank Publications, 1994, p 20.
7. World Bank, *op cit*, p 9.
8. Dr E J Keller, "Liberalization, democratization, and democracy in Africa: comparative perspectives", *Africa Insight*, vol 25, no 4, 1995, p 226.
9. P Landell-Mills, "Governance, cultural change, and empowerment", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 30, no 4, December 1992, p 564.
10. A Leftwich, "Governance, democracy and development in the Third World", *Third World Quarterly*, vol 14, no 3, 1993, p 605.
11. *Ibid*.
12. See E J Keller, *op cit*, A Leftwich, *op cit*, and F Fukuyama, *The end of history and the last man*, New York: The Free Press, 1992.
13. J B Forrest, "The quest for state 'hardness' in Africa", *Comparative Politics*, vol 20, July 1988, p 423.
14. J P Nettle, *Strategies in the study of political development*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969, p 14.
15. M Todaro, *op cit*, p 14–15.
16. A Leftwich, "Bringing politics back in: towards a model of the developmental state", *The Journal of Development Studies*, vol 31, no 3, February 1995, p 405.
17. *Ibid*, see also J B Forrest, *op cit*, p 423.
18. S A Gitelson, in P G Forster, "Culture, nationalism, and the invention of tradition in Malawi", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 32, no 3, 1994, p 482.
19. *The Star*, 29 December 1994.
20. J Kydd, "Malawi in the 1970s: development policies and economic change", in *Malawi: an alternative pattern of development*, p.297.
21. *Ibid*. In fact, G.Carter wrote in 1978, referring to Dr Banda, that growth and development in Malawi can be traced back to "his making"
22. See R Jackson and C G Rosberg, *Personal rule in Africa: prince, autocrat, prophet, tyrant*, London: Berkeley, 1982, p 157–64.
23. J Kydd, *op cit*, p 306.
24. A Leftwich, "Bringing politics back in...", *op cit*, p 418.
25. J Kydd, *op cit*, p 320.
26. *Business Day*, 14 May 1996.
27. *Ibid*.
28. M Covell, *Madagascar, politics, economics and society*, London: Frances Pinter, 1985.
29. D Ratsiraka, 1975. The term "fokolona" refers to the basic social and economic unit prior to both colonisation and the hegemony established over all of the island's groups by the Merina living in the Highlands. To this day ethnic and regional tensions still prevail, with clashes occurring periodically between the *côtiers* (people from the coast) and the Merina. Political power shifted, with the coming into power of D.Ratsiraka, into the hands of the *côtiers* and it has remained there to this day.
30. This obviously showed a lack of basic economic insight, since in 1975 Madagascar still relied upon trade with France for up to 45% of its GNP.
31. M Covell, *op cit*.
32. *Ibid*, p 63.
33. F L Prior, *The political economy of poverty, equity, and growth: Malawi and Madagascar*, Washington:The World Bank, Oxford University Press, 1990, p 44.
34. *Ibid*.

35 J Kydd, *op cit* . p 307

36 See G Marion, "What Banda left Malawi", *Weekly Mail and Guardian*, 20 July 1995, "Skeleton in Banda's closet is dug up", *Weekly Mail and Guardian*, 17 March 1995, P Mwanza, 'Malawi makes first of 30 000 public services retrenchments", *The Star*, 24 November 1995, and "Muluzi clamps down on corruption in state boards", *The Citizen*, 23 May 1994

37 Dr.Banda considerably enhanced the advancement of the Chewa group, to which he belonged, for instance by making their vernacular language the second official language (the other being English) See D Kaspin, "The politics of ethnicity in Malawi's democratic transition", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 33, no 4, 1995, p 595–620.

38 Social indicators found in *Africa at a Glance*, and in the *World Bank Report on sub-Saharan Africa*, show that since the 1970s socioeconomic conditions have declined tremendously, so that in 1992 the GNP per capita stood at US $55, about 60 % of the population was illiterate, nearly one in four children did not live beyond the age of five, and girls could expect to have nearly seven children.

39 Interview with the Consul Honoraire de Madagascar, Johannesburg, July, 1995

40 This translates into "the terrible years of austerity"

41 Q M Khan, *Findings on Madagascar*, World Bank Publication, No 45, Washington: World Bank, 1995.

42 *African Development Indicators 1995*, Washington: The World Bank, 1995.

43 *New York Times*, 16 December 1962.

44 K K Virmani, in *The making of Malawi*, Kalinga, Delhi: Sn, 1992, p 112; see also

Zimbabwe Herald, 18 February 1994 and 22 February 1994.

45 And if they were, it was felt that political stability being a sound base for economic development, was ultimately desirable, whatever the cost

46 P G Forster, *op cit*, p 477–497

47 D Beresford, *Zimbabwe Herald*, 2 November 1993, George Marion, *Weekly Mail and Guardian*, 20 July 1995, and *National Weekly Times*, 27 February 1993

48 C B Barrett, "Understanding uneven agricultural liberalisation in Madagascar", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 32, no 3, 1994, p 457

49 A 1989 *I S Human Rights Report* points to mysterious disappearances, as well as underground military and police organizations

50 C B Barrett, *op cit*, p 451.

51 *The Citizen*, 23 May 1994

52 *Business Day*, 18 May 1995.

53 Droughts have also lowered agricultural productivity

54 George Marion, *Weekly Mail and Guardian*, 20 July 1995

55. *Ibid*

56 *Business Day*, 14 May 1996.

57 D Beresford, press cutting, Jan Smuts Library, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, File: 4E6.An example of high level corruption/bribery is illustrated in the recent awarding of $3 400 each to the 120 members of the ruling majority in parliament, by the new president (G Marion, *op cit*).

58. C G Marcus, *La France et Madagascar*, Document d'Information de l'Assemblée Nationale, Commission des Affaires Etrangères, Rapport d'Information no 1853, Dec 1994.

59 *The Star*, 20 February 1994

60. *The Star*, 1 September 1995, *The Economist*, 9 October 1995, *La lettre de l'Ocean Indien* 19 September 1995 and 14 November 1995

61. This figure does not differentiate between real workers and ghost employees.

62 Blantyre's Queen Elizabeth Hospital came to a standstill at the beginning of 1996 because of the lack of medical supplies

63 *Weekly Mail and Guardian*, 2 September 1995

64 *Indian Ocean Newsletter*, June 1995.

65 *The Star*, 24 November 1995

66 *Ibid*

67 D Kaspin, *op cit*, p 595–620

68 D Beresford, *op cit*

69 *Herald Tribune*, February 1996.

70. *Zimbabwe Herald*, 14 October 1995.

71 Such measures have been the result of the IMF granting of conditional aid, at ultra-preferential rates It has been suggested that the real issue in Malagasy politics now centres around the question "Who owns Madagascar, its government or the IMF?" *Weekly Mail and Guardian*, 22 September 1995.

72. See J F Bayard, in C Clapham, review article "The *longue durée* of the African state", *African Affairs*, vol 39, 1993, p 433, P.Landell-Mills, *op cit*, see also G Hyden, *op cit*.

73. C V Scott, "Socialism and the "soft state" in Africa", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 26, no 1, 1988, p 23–36.

74. B Fine and C Stoneman, "State and development", *Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 22, no 1, March 1996.

75. F Fukuyama, *op cit* (my emphasis).

Cuito Cuanavale revisited:

Professor W Breytenbach of the University of Stellenbosch analyses the conflicting interpretations of one of the most significant engagements in the military history of Southern Africa.

t is about a decade since the "Battle of Cuito Cuanavale" took place. Although almost all observers agree that this event was a turning point[1] in the history of the subcontinent, virtually everything else about this event is still shrouded in controversy. Today it is even debatable whether it should be referred to as a battle; in many ways it could be defined rather as a siege, although, as will be pointed out later, it was linked to the biggest battle in Africa since the Second World War.

The problem and related issues

What made it such an important battle was the context: the last of the proxy wars during the dying days of the Cold War; a high degree of external involvement focusing mainly on Cuba and a pre-De Klerk South Africa; important political stakes for Angola and Namibia, and by implication also for the ANC (African National Congress) in South Africa.

Two of the major contenders for political power in Angola – the *Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) through the official Angolan army, the *Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação de Angola* (Fapla), and the *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (Unita), were locked in a 13-year-long civil war for political supremacy in that territory. During this war Fapla was supported by the Cuban army which, in turn, was supported by the USSR. Swapo (South West African Peoples Organization) and the ANC were part of this alliance, although as far as can be ascertained the ANC was not involved in the battle or siege of Cuito Cuanavale. The other alliance, though much looser, consisted of Unita supported by the South African Defence Force (SADF), with the Reagan Administration in the USA supporting Unita militarily, though not South Africa's regional policies. In a sense there were surrogates on all sides.

In elucidating its significance, one should perhaps be cautious not to judge such a complex issue in terms of a single factor only: in this case the military outcome of what happened at Cuito Cuanavale. The political consequences of the larger war in Angola were perhaps of greater significance, as will be pointed out later. With this in mind, we can reduce the disagreements about the outcome of Cuito Cuanavale to three issues: first, the question of the objectivity of source material; second, differing interpretations of the short-term military outcome and the longer-term political consequences; and third, related to the second, who – with the benefit of hindsight – were the "real" winners and losers.

The first issue involves a major problem, namely, the varied quality of source material, most of which is secondary and often based on official information. The latter must perforce be treated with suspicion as, in the nature of modern warfare, it tends to be a mixture of fact and fiction and possibly lack the quality of critical analysis. For example, South Africa initially (in 1975 and in 1987) denied officially that the SADF was involved. In the Cuito context, it was only after the South African involvement had been revealed in a Washington newspaper by a first-hand reporter (Fred Bridgeland in the *Washington Post* on 22 November 1987) that the South Africans admitted to it. By then, the Angolans and Cubans had a monopoly on "official" information released, and some of this included information to the effect that 41 South African jet fighters had already been downed. Without other verification, this figure was requoted by academic writers on the subject.[2] (From 1990 onwards, when the quality and frequency of reporting improved, other serious writers had no doubt that this figure had been heavily inflated.[3]) As far as propaganda went, the South Africans had therefore lost the first round. The first (and only) SADF document on the related events was released only months later, in early 1988.[4] This contained the SADF version of losses; figures given here were vastly different. It was stated, for example, that South Africa had only lost thirty one soldiers, three tanks,

Same outcomes, different consequences

seven infantry vehicles, one combat aircraft and one light aeroplane.

First-hand reporters, such as Fred Bridgeland and Karl Maier, played an important role in putting the record straight. Their accounts were augmented after 1989 by seriously researched books by other war correspondents. These included Willem Steenkamp's *South Africa's border war 1966–1989* (1989), Helmoed-Romer

Heitman's *War in Africa the final South African phase* (1990), as well as Fred Bridgeland's own *The war for Africa twelve months that transformed a continent* (1990) and Karl Maier's *Angola promises and lies* (1996). Although Steenkamp's and Heitman's books were sympathetic to the SADF cause, it is not known whether their scripts were screened beforehand. This is unlikely, however, since the question

tion of censorship was never raised by them or their critics. Bridgeland and Maier were completely independent of the SADF. Bridgeland was a Southern African correspondent for Britain's *Sunday Telegraph* who also wrote for the *Washington Post*. He subsequently joined *The Scotsman*. As a journalist, he won myriad international awards, which attest to his credibility as a respected journalist.

How did he gain access to Angola? He answers

> I was offered a contract to write a different book on Angola seen through the eyes of the ordinary South African soldiers who did the fighting at the height of the Cuban-South African war there in 1987–88. I would be free to interview as many men as time, energy and money would allow. There would be no interference from top levels of the military or the government. My own stipulation and that of my publisher was that there should be no question of the book being subjected to censorship in Pretoria.[5]

He leaves it there, but seems satisfied that this condition was met. Maier has covered the Angolan conflict since 1986 as a correspondent for the *Independent* and *Washington Post*. Flown in by the Angolans, he became the first reporter to witness the clash at Cuito.[6]

Apart from these books, two others stand out as noteworthy contributions, being written by former role-players in the Angolan drama, namely Chester Crocker and Jannie Geldenhuys. The first to be published was Chester Crocker's account of his experiences as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs in the Reagan administration. In 1992 Crocker published *High noon in Southern Africa: making peace in a rough neighborhood*. In 1993, General Jannie Geldenhuys, Chief of the SA Defence Force at the time of the Siege for Cuito Cuanavale, published his own recollections as *Die wat wen: 'n Generaal se storie uit 'n era van oorlog en vrede (Those who won: a General's story from an era of war and peace)*, which was translated into English in 1995. These are significant contributions to the historiography of the topic. Any researcher must be wary of bias and the almost inevitable tendency of the authors of autobiographies to be subjective on controversial issues, attempting to make their own role appear better with hindsight. Yet these books do not contradict each other in any noticeable way.

This leads to the second issue, namely that of different interpretations. In fact most contradictory views are not those belonging to writers of first-hand experiences, but to researchers who,in the absence of reliable information, have become secondary sources and made their own deductions based on the scant information available, including untested data. Some writers, such as Horace Campbell, Hasu Patel and Adam Gordon, believe that South Africa actually lost the battle – as opposed to the Heitman school of thought that believes that in fact South Africa scored a clear and unqualified victory. Virtually all other commentators qualify their verdict: essentially, this is the "stalemate" school of thought, underlining the "siege" notion of a protracted battle.

With hindsight one can say that the third problem, the issue of who the real winners were, relates not only to the military outcome but to the political implications of the war in Angola. Since this included longer-term consequences, many of the works of 1989 and 1990 were published too soon to make the kind of political judgements required, though those of Bridgeland and Maier still rate among the best. This article is an attempt to contribute to precisely this debate.

Overview

The roots of the conflict in Angola go back a long time, to the pre-independence and especially the post-independence periods from 1975 onwards.

Before 1974, at least three liberation movements fought Portuguese colonialism in that territory: the MPLA; the FNLA (*Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola*), and Unita. The liberation wars ended on 25 April 1974 when the Portuguese government was overthrown in a military coup in Lisbon. This coup was one of the primary repercussions of Portuguese colonial wars in Africa, which became increasingly unpopular at home, where Portugal was under heavy strain. Within two days of the coup, the new regime in Portugal recognized the independence of the Portuguese colonies in Africa. Angola, however, attained independence only in November 1975, owing to problems of disunity. After the coup, a transitional government consisting of all three nationalist movements was quickly formed, but internal differences led to its disintegration (this fact is crucial to understanding the aftermath of Cuito Cuanavale). The MPLA then executed a coup against both the Portuguese colonial forces still resident in Luanda and the disintegrating transitional government. The other two members of the transitional government, Unita and the FNLA, then formed a military alliance against the MPLA, and the post-colonial civil war commenced in 1975.[7] However, with the consent of the Portuguese, the MPLA, avowedly Marxist, took control on 11 November 1975 when Angola became independent.

This war soon escalated into a conflict of international proportions. The Soviet Union, through its historical support for the MPLA dating from the late 1950s, decided to continue its support for the sake of protecting its interests in this region.[8] The United States of America considered this unacceptable in view of US global interests, and decided to support what it regarded as an "anti-Marxist alliance" with Unita.[9] Thus the civil war in Angola became an arena for superpower proxy wars. In fact, during the 1980s the Cold War was probably more intense in Southern Africa than in any other region in the world.[10]

When the MPLA came to power in 1975, South Africa decided to intervene. This decision was apparently based as much on South Africa's convictions as on the encouragement from the USA, Zambia and Zaire to halt any further Cuban-Soviet (Marxist) penetration of the region.[11] This went unannounced at the time. By 22 November 1975, however, the story of South Africa's involvement in the war was front-page news in the *Washington Post*. The US then reassessed its support for Unita in view of its relationship with South Africa. This was a major crisis for South African policy makers. On 19 December 1975 the US Congress cut off all covert CIA aid to Unita and the FNLA. After spectacular initial successes, South Africa decided it could not fight on alone in Angola, and pulled out its military units on 27 March 1976.[12] By then, Russian-made "Stalin organs" were deployed by the Cubans against South Africans and the balance of power had suddenly shifted against South Africa. Following this crisis, US/South African efforts were once again renewed,[13] the Americans still not supporting South Africa directly, yet unwilling to criticize South Africa's cross-border raids.

The South African forces retreated into Northern Namibia, concentrating on cross-border support of Unita against MPLA offensives, and fighting

Swapo insurgents on either sides of the border. These short-term invasions were usually code-named "operations". This phase lasted until 1985.

The ANC had established bases on Angolan soil with the blessing of the MPLA. The setting up of ANC bases lent credibility to the "total onslaught" theory of the time: namely that the ANC was part of a wider and more radical alliance. Moreover, in 1976, the MPLA was, as mentioned above, no longer fighting alone: with Cuban assistance (and increased Soviet support from 1987), the former guerrilla army was transformed into Fapla, and it was fighting for the same liberatory causes as Swapo and the ANC. To be sure, the ANC in Angola was probably not seen as too great a menace by the South African government. But Swapo was different, as it had a conventional capacity. Swapo and the United Nations were undoubtedly seen as the biggest threats to the preservation of South African control in Namibia. Hence the strategic commitment to prevent "a red flag in Windhoek".[14] And because of the Cuban factor, the South Africans were prepared to use military as well as other methods in Angola.[15]

Why Cuba got involved in the way it did, from the end of 1975, is not quite certain. Albright[16] speculates that the reasons had to do with the revolutionary visions of the Cuban army; its liberatory role in Africa; the prospects for increasing international prestige; the opportunity to gain political influence at home; the upgrading of its weapons systems; and to provide enhanced leverage for Soviet economic, diplomatic and military assistance to Cuba. What emerges from this is that the Cubans were not simply surrogates of Moscow. The Soviets were apparently not involved in Angola's decision to appeal to Cuba for help, nor in Cuba's decision to send troops to Angola.[17] The Cubans, therefore, had their own reasons for involvement in Angola.

During the period 1976 to 1985 the Soviets and the Cubans knew that covert US support for Unita (and by implication for South Africa), was illegal in terms of the Clark Amendment of 1976. They knew this would limit the US role. But when the Clark Amendment was replaced by the Reagan doctrine in July 1985, the US restarted support for Unita and began

once more openly to supply Unita with military assistance from 1986,[18] hoping to make the war more costly for the Cubans and Soviets – who responded by sending in more Russians from 1987.

This is the superpower backdrop to the war. In Angola itself, the internationalization of the conflict deepened with South African and Cuban involvement. For example, in 1985 Fapla launched the first assault on Unita, in the area of Mavinga. When Fapla got the upper hand, the SADF intervened successfully, withdrawing shortly afterwards. Short-term interventions were nothing new to the SADF as it had by then used them in various operations, for example Savannah, Bruilof, Reindeer, Rekstok, Sceptic, Klipkop, Protea, Super, Mebos, Phoenix and Askari. In 1987, Fapla launched another offensive in the direction of Jamba, the capital of Unita. Unita obviously wanted to halt this as far as possible from its headquarters. Heavy fighting then ensued between Unita and Fapla at the Lomba River.[19] At that stage South African forces were further south, but decided to invade again and assist Unita, whereafter the MPLA was driven back into Cuito.[20] At this the Cubans rushed in to support the MPLA at Cuito, fortifying the town and establishing a superior air defence system at the airport, vital for the planned attack on Jamba.[21] This was a turning point of sorts: up to that point Cuba had acted relatively independently from the USSR, but evidence suggests that the Russians had now stepped up their involvement. The South African response to this culminated in three operations: Moduler, Hooper and Packer.

By then, Gorbachev had already come to power in the Soviet Union, introducing "new thinking" into domestic reforms, and into the USSR's foreign relations. Eventually, the USSR committed itself to seeking political solutions to regional conflicts. This attitude of cooperation (including cooperation with the United States), was unprecedented as far as the joint resolution of these conflicts were concerned.[22] In the end, this translated into Soviet pressure on the Cubans to consider political solutions as well, but only after the Soviets had stepped up their involvement in 1987.[23]

It is against this background that the battle or siege of Cuito Cuanavale

in 1987/88 must be assessed; the MPLA/Fapla were in alliance with the Cuban forces, now actively supported by the USSR, and Cuito was the first line of defence. Swapo (and the ANC) were also role-players in the Angolan theatre, but only in a secondary role; the ANC was not involved in Cuito.

The Siege of Cuito Cuanavale, 1987–1988

Strengthening the argument that this was a siege rather than a battle is the fact that it was the last of a number of campaigns launched by Fapla forces to capture Mavinga, a Unita base not too far from Jamba, starting in September 1985, when the SADF had intervened successfully. Two years later, another offensive against Mavinga commenced on 14 August 1987. The successful occupation of Mavinga would have allowed the Fapla forces (with their Cuban allies) to launch air attacks on Jamba, and possibly on Rundu and Katima Mulilo in Northern Namibia, which were important logistical bases for SADF support of Unita. Battles took place in the area of the Lomba River. With South Africa assisting Unita, Fapla forces were forced to retreat (from Mavinga en route to Jamba) back to Cuito Cuanavale.[24] On this point there seems to be consensus: the South African/Unita forces won the Battle for Jamba (at Mavinga).[25]

After the setback at Mavinga, Fapla and Cuban reinforcements arrived at Cuito Cuanavale. This time it is possible that the Cubans were there at the instigation of the Soviets, whose military men might have sensed that this was their last chance, because Gorbachev had already come to power and was planning the new policies in the USSR. Cuban forces included the Cuban 50th Division – reputedly 50 000 strong – aiming to "out-escalate" the South Africans,[26] in the knowledge that South Africa was under constraints owing to sanctions and other political factors. The South Africans attacked in Operation Moduler, and the ensuing battle became one of the biggest ever in Southern Africa, culminating in a siege that lasted from August 1987 through March 1988 – Operation Packer. Although the war was undeclared, and in this way not typical of modern-day conventional wars, the type of fighting was undoubtedly conventional.[27]

The Fapla/Cuban forces (with active Soviet involvement) speedily fortified the town: bunkers were constructed; land mines were deployed; tanks took up defensive positions; air defence systems were erected. The purpose was to defend the air base and the landing strip as these were essential for future offensives against Unita's capital, Jamba. This apparently took the SADF by surprise.

It is not completely clear what the South African intentions were. This is the crux of the matter; on the answer depend the arguments about who actually won or lost the "battle" for Cuito Cuanavale.

One school of thought maintains that South Africa wanted to seize the town of Cuito Cuanavale through the capture of the air force base,[28] though the political price in casualties and costs would have been very high. If this was so, South Africa failed in this intention.

According to James,[29] there is evidence that the SADF contemplated the occupation of Cuito Cuanavale. But they then decided against this more ambitious plan, not so much for military as for political reasons, such as the potential loss of many lives. These considerations forced the South Africans to adopt a narrower objective. A second school therefore maintains that the South Africans had only limited objectives: for the SADF to neutralize the airfield, not through high-risk offensive tactics at the sacrifice of men and machines, but only through the use of long-range G5 and G6 artillery. This school holds that it was not their intention to seize the town or capture the airfield for purposes of physical occupation.[30] The intention was at most to prevent assaults on Jamba, and this was successfully accomplished.

Thus it is on the differing interpretations of South African intentions that the whole controversy about "who won" at Cuito Cuanavale hinges. The fact that they did not seize the town or capture the airfield could lead the first school of thought to argue that the SADF lost. Writers who reason in this way are Horace Campbell[31] and Hasu Patel.[32] These and other proponents of this school of thought claim the following: Cuito Cuanavale was "South Africa's Waterloo"; South Africa conceded air superiority; South Africa's attempt to score a quick vic-

Gorbachev

tory at Cuito failed; Cuba and Angola succeeded in retaining Cuito; and South Africa failed to capture the northern towns of Cuemba and Luena. Interestingly, the word "defeat" is never used. "Failure" therefore seems more appropriate here. Strangely, Adam Gordon[33] writes that "a famous victory won the battle due mainly to Cuban air superiority". So far, only Fidel Castro himself has suggested that this was anything like a "famous" victory. Judged against other accounts, Gordon's words are therefore perhaps somewhat extreme.

A view diametrically opposed to that of Campbell and Patel – and by implication Gordon as well – is that held by war correspondent Heitman[34] who writes:

The defeat inflicted on the Fapla Forces in the process was so crushing, that it changed the strategic situation beyond recognition. The result was that this campaign in large measure brought about the political developments hoped for. The key factor was the military disaster that overtook Fapla in late 1987 and early 1988. This convinced Moscow and Havana of the need to reconsider their role in this theatre. The fighting had proved conclusively that Fapla alone could not stand up to a South African conventional force. The successes achieved by the very small South African force further suggested that even Cuban intervention might not be sufficient to oppose it ..

Unfortunately the question of South Africa's intentions, which is crucial to the assessment of the short-term outcome, is left unanswered. Heitman

refers to "political developments hoped for", but does not touch on the longer-term implications. In this sense, Heitman's views are unhelpful to our examination.

Interestingly, not everyone who opts for the first line of thought concludes that the SA Defence Force lost. In line with James, Crocker[35] and O'Neill and Munslow[36] also maintain that it was indeed the intention of the SADF to take Cuito Cuanavale (by March 1988, according to O'Neill and Munslow) in order to enable Unita to strike at Fapla bases further away from Jamba. Yet the failure to do so does not make these observers conclude that the SADF actually lost.

Crocker's account is particularly revealing: instead of "defeat" for the South Africans, he writes about "a stunning humiliation for the Soviet Union".[37] In contrast to previous military engagements when the Cubans acted autonomously, the evidence was that the Soviets now played a much bigger role. This is Crocker's version:

In early October the Soviet-Fapla offensive was smashed at the Lomba River near Mavinga. It turned into a headlong retreat over the 120 miles back to the primary launching point at Cuito Cuanavale. In some of the bloodiest battles of the entire civil war, a combined force of some 8,000 Unita fighters and 4,000 SADF troops destroyed one Fapla force of 18,000 engaged in the three pronged offensive. This offensive had been a Soviet conception from start to finish. Senior Soviet officials played a central role in its execution. Over a thousand Soviet advisers were assigned to Angola in 1987 to help with Moscow's largest logistical effort to date in Angola: roughly $1.5 billion in military hardware was delivered that year. Huge quantities of Soviet equipment was destroyed or fell in Unita and SADF hands when Fapla broke into a disorganized retreat. In a splendid paradox, the Soviet Union had become the largest external source of arms to Unita and South Africa. The 1987 military campaign represented a stunning humiliation for the Soviet Union, its arms, and its strategy. It would take Fapla a year, or maybe two, to recover and regroup. Moreover, the Angola military disaster threatened to go from bad to worse. As of mid-November, the Unita/SADF force had destroyed the Cuito Cuanavale airfield and pinned down thousands of Fapla's best remaining units clinging onto the town's defensive perimeters. There was a risk of a complete Fapla collapse in the south of Angola.

What Crocker is saying is that the Fapla/Cuban forces and their Soviet advisers were humiliated. Unlike Heitman, he does not claim that the SA Defence Force actually won. Revealingly, General Jannie Geldenhuys – Chief of the SADF at the time, echoes the sentiments of Crocker. He writes[38] that the war in the south-east of Angola was decisive and that the SA Defence Force and Unita had won the battle for Jamba, as most writers agree. On the question of Cuito, he says that the campaign did not end in a spectacular way. There was no knockout as in the Gulf War. Thereafter, according to Geldenhuys, the Russians lost their appetite for war in Angola and opted for peace a few months later. But whether this was because of "new thinking" in Moscow or because of a perception of "humiliation" in Angola is left unanswered.

What is more certain, however, is that Cuito Cuanavale represented neither political victory nor defeat for any of the parties, despite the fact that South Africa arguably had the best of the military exchanges. But in terms of the bigger picture, political-military "stalemate" prevailed. In similar vein, Thomas Ohlsson[39] refers to this condition as "military deadlock". Karl Maier, Jeffrey Herbst, Kathryn O'Neill and Barry Munslow and Susan Brown echo the same sentiments.

For example, Herbst[40] writes as follows:

> In the heaviest conventional fighting in Africa since the Second World War, the Cubans and the Angolans succeeded in retaining Cuito. Cuito Cuanavale can however not be regarded as a defeat for South Africa. The fierce fighting resulted in preventing the annihilation of the Angolan army and in the restoration of the *status quo ante bellum*.

Similarly, but less emphatically, Kathryn O'Neill and Barry Munslow[41] write:

> All the parties concerned recognised that a purely military solution was no longer feasible.... Whilst South Africans were not decisively defeated at Cuito, they faced political costs by continuing the fighting that were much too high.

Susan Brown[42] sums it all up:

> A failed South African-Unita attack in March 1988, which aimed to drive Fapla-PLAN-Cuban forces back over the river into Cuito Cuanavale before blowing the bridge across it, led to stalemate, with

both sides holding their positions. But it also enabled Fidel Castro and the MPLA to claim glorious victory – which in turn made it possible for Cuba to convince the MPLA to participate and make concessions in negotiations.

Although the fighting in Cuito was over by March 1988, the war in Angola was not over yet. A new drama was unfolding in the west of Angola. For this reason, Pycroft[43] reminds us to avoid making the siege of Cuito Cuanavale the sole determinant when evaluating the outcome of the larger battle. What he is really saying is that there is a bigger picture and the longer-term political consequences are perhaps more important than short-term military outcomes. This is also the thrust of this article.

When considering the consequences, the military outcome is only one facet. Here, the evidence strongly suggests that the SADF may have suffered setbacks, but were hardly defeated on the battleground: to claim "famous" or "glorious" victories for the Cubans is simply wrong. But history and politics (not politicians) have had the last say. The bigger picture only becomes clearer now.

Outcomes and consequences: What the bigger picture says

The siege for Cuito lasted seven months. The Fapla/Cuban defences (and Soviet logistics) held out, but not without the involvement of the renowned 50th Cuban Division. The SADF also destroyed the airfield, but not other supply lines.[44] By then, the major parties (South Africa and Cuba) had realized the high costs of an all-out victory, creating the scenario for a "mutual hurting stalemate".[45] This increased the chances for a negotiated settlement, especially as attitudes in Moscow were also changing. South Africa tried one more time to overpower Cuito, but failed. On 27 June 1988 the Cubans bombed a South African base at the Calueque Dam, killing 12 soldiers. The Cubans then marched on the Namibian boundary in the west. Was this the real turning point politically? Or had the actual turning point occurred earlier when the Soviets' last stand in Africa failed to materialize and stalemate ensued?

Either way, negotiations became unavoidable, especially in the light of

South Africa's problems in the field and American insistence that Cuban withdrawal be linked to the peace process, thus denying the MPLA/Fapla its only means of viable defence.[46] The negotiations on peace, and the implementation of the United Nations Resolution 435, were in full swing soon after. By 22 December 1988 the parties – including the USA and the USSR – reached an Accord in New York. The consequences of this peace accord must, of necessity, be factored into a final assessment of the war in Angola. Here one is reminded of Karl Maier's[47] observation that, like the Tet offensive in Vietnam, this was a matter in which "everybody claimed victory, but which technically, no one really won".

Is this true?

Although Crocker[48] claimed "victory" for the US policy of constructive engagement, Peter Vale,[49] in reviewing Crocker's book, questions this point while bringing the Cuban factor into the argument. He asks, "Had Castro not bolstered his troops in Angola – an act which culminated in the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale – would South Africans have agreed to withdraw?" Perhaps not. But without the linkage policy and South African artillery, the Cubans might not have withdrawn either.

The political consequences could be assessed in various ways, by considering the domestic, regional and international implications. They can also be assessed in terms of not only short-term outcomes but also longer-term consequences, which are still unfolding today, a decade later.

In the short term, South Africa withdrew its troops from Angola, thereby withdrawing from its alliance with Unita; the peace agreement also compelled the Angolans to pressure the ANC to close its camps on Angola soil. Namibia's independence was followed by the final withdrawal of all Cuban forces, ahead of schedule, and had it not been for Resolution 435, the basis for the peace accord, Swapo might have self-destructed.[50] However, with all foreign forces out, the conventional war between the two opposing (Angolan) alliances quickly degenerated into a civil war between the MPLA and Unita: in a sense we were back at 1975.

The agreements of 1988 could also be seen as the end of the short-

term military outcomes, and for Angola, the beginning of the longer-term consequences. In what might be regarded as perhaps one of the most authentic versions of the war published so far, Fred Bridgeland opts, not for the narrow interpretation of what happened at Cuito, but for an assessment of the bigger picture. Bridgeland writes[51] (and this is quoted in full):

> So who won the War for Africa? Cuba, according to Fidel Castro. South Africa, according to the Chief of the SADF, General Jannie Geldenhuys. The most simplistic Cuban propaganda in print and on video is that the South African Defence over-extended itself and became surrounded by Fapla and Cuban forces at Cuito Cuanavale. South Africa therefore entered negotiations brokered by the USA from May 1988 onwards to extract its beleaguered troops, tanks and armoured cars from Pretoria's own Dien Bien Phu. The Cuban story was taken at face value by Castro's sympathisers in the Western press and repeated so many times that it became received truth. The Cubans were helped by the South Africans' own clumsy efforts at propaganda, which amounted to saying as little as possible about the full-scale war they fought in Angola.
>
> The Cuban assertion was nonsense. No one can surround anyone in south-eastern Angola. The vastness, wilderness, tangled vegetation and sparse population of the terrain make that impossible. The limited number of troops committed to battle by the SADF, Cubans, Fapla and Unita – in relation to the huge extent of the forested area over which the fighting took place – made it even more inconceivable.
>
> In speeches in Havana on 26 July 1988 and 9 July 1988 Castro gave a more rational version of events at Cuito Cuanavale than those fed to foreign sympathisers with Cuba. In these important domestic homilies, he referred only to the 'thwarting' of the South Africans at Cuito Cuanavale. His 'alternative history' corresponds closely with the accounts given by the fighting men of the SADF.
>
> Castro said a 'complex and critical situation arose [at Cuito Cuanavale] as a consequence of an enormous military escalation by South Africa'. Intervening with tanks, infantry, aircraft and 'Namibian mercenary forces', the South Africans had dealt Fapla a number of military blows on the Lomba River, he said. The Fapla forces then began retreating because they were suffering grave shortages of food, fuel and ammunition.
>
> Further disaster followed, Castro admitted. On 14 February 1988 the South African crashed through a five kilometre gap between 21 and 59 Brigades of Fapla and routed them. 'A very difficult situation emerged', said Castro. 'They [the SADF] could have gone as far as the [Cuito River] bridge back into Cuito Cuanavale and cut off three entire Angolan brigades – more than 3 500 soldiers'.
>
> In an implicit criticism of the Russian military advisers, mirroring that of the Cuban defector General Rafael del Pino Dias, Castro said: 'One day history will reveal it all, where the mistakes lay, why those mistakes were made. I shall only limit myself to saying that Cuba was not responsible for those mistakes'. When the South Africans surprised the Cubans at Techipa with an artillery barrage on 26 June 1988, the Cubans responded with an air attack not on Ruacana, in Namibia, but against the Calueque dam further to the east inside Angola. After a chance bomb killed 11 national servicemen, the Cubans braced themselves for a large-scale counter-attack by the SADF. It never came. The war ended and the New York Accords were signed, which sent the Cubans out of Angola and the South Africans back home.
>
> It is not clear what happened to stop the war at this point; but it is fair to surmise that the Americans and Russians, whose joint commitment to ending the Angola-Namibia crisis had grown stronger and stronger, brought enormous pressure and blandishments to bear on both sides to step back from what would have been a serious intensification of the War for Africa.
>
> The trouble with asking who won the War for Africa is that it may be the wrong question. It is the inevitable question raised by anyone interested in the problems of southern Africa. But a better, or at least more forward-looking, question to ask is: What new opportunities did the war, and the consequent New York Accords, open up for all the different belligerents?
>
> The answer is: Many.
>
> For Swapo it paved the way to victory in multi-party elections in Namibia supervised by the UN in 1989, that the movement had no hope of ever achieving on the battlefield.
>
> For Angolans it offered the opportunity of settling their 15-year civil war at the negotiating table free from internal interference from Cuban and South African forces.
>
> The War for Africa and the New York Accords provided Cuba with pretexts for slipping out of a commitment that had become too hot and too expensive to handle. The agreement of the Cubans to leave Angola, in return for the granting

of independence for Namibia was, from the South African point of view, the most important consequence of the War for Africa. It opened up entirely new opportunities for South Africa to tackle its serious internal problems. It was always inconceivable that South Africa would embark on serious domestic reform of Verwoerdian apartheid while the Cuban Revolutionary Army was encamped just beyond its borders. It was also understandable why South Africa was reluctant to launch significant democratic reforms in such circumstances. The Cubans had gone to Angola to establish one-party Marxist rule, which more than 15 years after independence in 1975 had never been tested in one-man, one-vote elections promised to Angolans by the Alvor Accord of January 1975. Wrong though the South Africans were in many ways, they were not soft in the head. The Cuban demand for the realization of one man, one vote in South Africa would never be heeded while Cuba remained in Angola, propping up a non-democratic Marxist autocracy, and while multiparty democracy was forbidden in Cuba itself.

The bottom line was that necessary reforms and new thinking throughout southern Africa could not begin while Cuba stayed; but for Castro to be persuaded to get out of Africa, the Caribbean Stalinist with social imperialist dreams and his Marxist Angola allies needed first to have their noses bloodied, and bloodied again and again when they failed to draw the necessary conclusions.

Ironically, while peace and democratic transitions came to Namibia and South Africa, the Soviet Union collapsed, bringing an official end to 70 years of communism in Eastern Europe. Namibia gained Walvis Bay, as a "gift" from South Africa. Southern Africa and Eastern Europe were counted among democracy's newest gains. But for Angola it was not to be. The civil war continued well into the nineties. Not even an election (in 1992) could bring an end to that.

In a sense, it is too early to tell who actually won in the longer term. There are many candidates for this accolade, with Namibia one of the major contenders; the United States is another. The US also won the Cold War.

The only certainty is that Angola, through its ongoing wars, is a heavy loser; and unlike the SADF, which was never defeated, the "old" South Africa may be judged the other loser in a political sense: perhaps this marked the

beginning of the end of destabilization and militarization in South African politics. But the old South Africa lost in a manner that could give birth to the negotiations for a new South Africa.

So although all debates about the outcome of the campaign have not yet been settled, the more sober assessments indicate a creative stalemate. Yet for Angolans, talking about "turning points" is almost meaningless. Karl Maier[52] may have got it right when he wrote that Angola is the new world order in its purest form: "a nasty stain left over by the Cold War which has proved almost impossible to remove". Hopefully Angola will also find peace, even if it comes ten years late.

Notes and references

1. This expression, "turning point", was probably first used in Brendan Seery, "Security Council Resolution 435 and the Namibian independence process", in Glen Moss & Ingrid Obery, *South African contemporary analysis*, London: Hans Zell, 1990, pp 227–240.
2. Horace Campbell, "The defeat of the South Africans in Angola", *Monthly Review* (New York), vol 40, no 11, 1989, p 10.
3. Fred Bridgeland, *The war for Africa: twelve months that transformed a continent*, Gibraltar: Ashanti Publishing, 1990, pp 368–380.
4. Republic of South Africa. Department of Defence, *Background to the war in Angola*, press releases, Pretoria: Department of Defence, 1988.
5. Fred Bridgeland, *op cit*, cover page, back and p 1 of preface.
6. Karl Maier, *Angola: promises and lies*. Rivonia: William Waterman Publications, 1996, p 20.
7. J Laffin, *The world in conflict 1990: war annual 4: contemporary warfare described and analysed*. London: Brassey's, 1990, p 18.
8. D Birmingham, *Frontline nationalism in Angola and Mozambique*. London: James Currey, 1992, p 105.
9. I Tvedten, "US policy toward Angola since 1975", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 30, no 1, 1992, p 37
10. Kathryn O'Neill and Barry Munslow, "Ending the Cold War in Southern Africa", *Third World Quarterly*, vol 12, no 3, 1990, p 81.
11. Fred Bridgeland, *op cit*, p 7.
12. *Ibid*, p 11.
13. James Barber and John Barratt, *South Africa's foreign policy: the search for states and security 1945–1988*, Johannesburg: Southern Books, 1990, pp 191–192.
14. This was an expression used by then president, PW Botha; see Chester A Crocker. *High noon in Southern Africa: making peace in a rough neighborhood*. Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball, 1992, p 41.
15. This is how "destabilization" was born; see J Hanlon, *Beggar your neighbours: apartheid power in Southern Africa*. Jeppestown: Jonathan Ball, 1986, p 154.
16. D E Albright, "The Communist states and Southern Africa", in G M Carter and P O'Meara. (eds), *International politics in Southern Africa*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992, pp 12–13.
17. Michael Wolfers and Jane Bergerol, *Angola in the front line*, London: Zed Press, 1983, p 31.
18. Kathryn O'Neill and Barry Munslow, *op cit*, p 90.
19. This is well documented. From a political perspective, see A Pazzanita, "The conflict resolution process in Angola", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, vol 29, no 1, 1991, p 99.
20. D Turner, "Angola: UNITA's strategic advantage", *Southern African Freedom Review*, vol 3, no 3, 1990, p 27
21. W M James, *A political history of the civil war in Angola, 1974–1990*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1992, p 219.
22. Kathryn O'Neill, and Barry Munslow, *op cit*, p 86; see also A Pazzanita, *op cit*, p 99.
23. This is suggested by Crocker, *op cit*, p 361. This trend is corroborated by Harold Wolpe, "Seizing South African opportunities", *Foreign Policy*, vol 73, 1989, p 66.
24. D Turner, *op cit*, p 27, and P L Moorcroft, *African Nemesis: war and revolution in Southern Africa*. London: Brassey's, 1990, p 204.
25. Chester A Crocker, *op cit*, p 360, Jannie Geldenhuys, *Die wat wen*, Pretoria: Van Schaik, 1993, pp 165–188, Helmoed-Romer Heitman, *War in Angola: The final South African phase*, Gibraltar: Ashanti Publishers, 1990, p 337, and Karl Maier, *op cit*, p 28.
26. A Pazzanita, *op cit*, p 104, and R S Jaster, *The defence of white power: South African foreign policy under pressure*, London: MacMillan, 1988, p 100.
27. R S Jaster, *ibid*, p 99, and P L Moorcroft, *op cit*, p 204.
28. P L Moorcraft, *op cit*, p 206, and A Pazzanita, *op cit*, pp 105–106.
29. W M James, *op cit*, p 219.
30. Helmoed-Romer Heitman, *op cit*, p 169, Jannie Geldenhuys, *op cit*, pp 180–181 and 249, and Willem Steenkamp, *South Africa's border war 1966–1989*, Gibraltar: Ashanti Publishers, 1989, pp 151–152.
31. Horace Campbell, *op cit*, pp 1–5.
32. Hasu Patel, "Peace and security in a changing Southern Africa: a frontline view", University of the Western Cape, *Southern African Perspectives*, 1992, pp 6 and 11. Interestingly, Patel quotes Campbell as one of his sources for this assessment; the others are Michael Clough and Jeffrey Herbst, but as far as can be ascertained, neither of them ever used the word "defeat" in the sense that Campbell does.
33. Adam Gordon, "Cuba and South Africa". *The South African Journal of International Affairs*, vol 3, no 2, 1996, pp 151–152.
34. Helmoed-Romer Heitman, *op cit*, p 337.
35. Chester A Crocker, *op cit*, p 366.
36. Kathryn O'Neill and Barry Munslow, *op cit*, p 82.
37. Chester A Crocker, *op cit*, pp 360–361.
38. Jannie Geldenhuys, *op cit*, pp 180–181.
39. Thomas Ohlsson, "The Cuito Cuanavale syndrome: revealing SADF vulnerabilities", *South African Review*, no 5, 1989, p 182.
40. Jeffrey Herbst, "Die oorlog in Angola: Castro en Magnus se chicken-speletjie", *Die Suid-Afrikaan*, February 1989, p 26.
41. Kathryn O'Neill and Barry Munslow, *op cit*, pp 82–83.
42. Susan Brown, "Diplomacy by other means – SWAPO's liberation war", in Colin Leys and John S Saul (eds), *Namibia's liberation struggle: the two-edged sword*, London: James Curry, 1995, p 36.
43. C Pycroft, "Angola – the forgotten tragedy", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol 20, 1994, p 241.
44. Kurt Campbell, "From Sierra Maestro to Cuito Cuanavale: the rise of revolutionary Cuba", *Unisa Latin American Report*, vol 5, no 1, 1989, p 35.
45. William I Zartman and Maureen R Zerman, *The practical negotiator*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982, pp 62, 74–77, 82.
46. Phyllis Johnson and David Martin, *Frontline Southern Africa: destructive engagement*, New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1988, pp 408–409.
47. Karl Maier, *op cit*, p 32.
48. Chester A Crocker, *op cit*, pp 425–428.
49. Peter Vale, "Crocker's choice: constructive engagement and South Africa's people", *The South African Journal of International Affairs*, vol 1, no 1, 1993, p 103.
50. Colin Leys and John S Saul (eds), *Namibia's liberation struggle: the two-edged sword*, London: James Curry, 1995, p 57.
51. Fred Bridgeland, *op cit*, pp 375–376.
52. Karl Maier, *op cit*, p 15.

Local government
and the SMME in South Africa
economy

t the apex of the new South African government's vision for social and economic transformation is the Reconstruction and Development Programme or RDP[1]. Of the priorities identified for post-apartheid reconstruction, one of the most significant is the building of a new economic order that reverses past economic distortions. The RDP White Paper emphasizes the need for "greater participation in the economy and less concentrated, more racially and gender inclusive ownership patterns".[2] One step towards a new economic order is the commitment to uplifting the role of small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs) in the South African economy.[3] Such kinds of enterprises, it is argued, must assume a "substantially larger part in economic activity"[4] and are an "important vehicle to address the challenges of job creation, economic growth and equity".[5]

Recently, a number of steps have been taken to establish a new national policy framework and environment for SMME development in South Africa. In February 1995 an official White Paper was published on strategies for supporting SMMEs.[6] This was followed in December 1995 by the first draft of enabling legislation designed to give effect to these strategies.[7] Among several stated key objectives for South Africa's new national small business strategy are, *inter alia,* creating an enabling environment, facilitating greater income opportunities and addressing the legacy of apartheid-based disempowerment of black business.[8] Further endorsement of the importance attached to SMME development is provided in South Africa's newly formulated macro-economic strategy which sets forth an approach to economic reconstruction "in keeping with the goals set out in the Reconstruction and Development Programme".[9] The Growth, Employment and Redistri-

bution (GEAR) strategy views the promotion of SMMEs as "a key element in the Government's strategy for employment creation and income generation" and states that a "major effort will be made to operationalise and implement the policies outlined in the White Paper on small business promotion".[10] In the operationalizing of these policies the White Paper envisages a vital role for local governments in small enterprise promotion, arguing that "in our past local authorities have seldom played a significant supportive role with respect to SMMEs".[11]

Against this background of a shifting policy climate for small enterprise development in South Africa, and of potential new developmental roles for local government in post-apartheid reconstruction, this article examines a set of policy issues around local government and SMME development. It reports the findings of an investigation which was designed both to gauge the expectations of groups of growing SMMEs, and to explore the past and future role of local government in support of SMMEs. The geographical setting for this study is the Witwatersrand area of Gauteng province, the economic heartland of South Africa. The paper is structured in two major sections. First, it provides an overview of the existing policy climate relating to SMMEs and their development in Gauteng. Second, it presents the results of a set of detailed interviews conducted during the period June-August 1996 with a range of SMMEs in three different areas of the Witwatersrand. Areas of concern in these interviews related to local government support for SMME develop-

Professor C M Rogerson of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, examines issues surrounding the changing role of local government in the development of the small, medium and micro-enterprise (SMME) economy of Gauteng Province, South Africa. *

ment – past, present and future. Overall, this study represents a contribution to the emerging debates around policy formulation on the South African SMME economy, with a particular regional focus on conditions in Gauteng.[12]

Gauteng and SMME development

In Gauteng, the newly constituted provincial and local government administrations confront the need "to facilitate the creation of an enabling socio-economic environment in which the economy grows significantly in a manner which creates sustainable employment opportunities".[13] One vital policy area of provincial and local frameworks for "growing the economy" is that of SMME development – especially significant when formal employment opportunities are stagnating and an informal survivalist economy is rising.[14] Although the database is far from comprehensive, it has been variously claimed that the "percentage of the workforce in the informal sector in Gauteng is the highest in the country"[15] and that "there is a marked shift in more people becoming involved in the informal sector".[16]

The SMME economy of Gauteng is highly diverse, with structures and problems that differ markedly between different kinds of enterprise. Following the national pattern, a broad distinction can be drawn between three sets of enterprises.[17] First are survival enterprises of the informal economy, which are a set of activities undertaken primarily by unemployed black people unable to find regular employment. In this group of enterprises, incomes usually fall short of minimum standards, little capital is invested, skills training is minimal and there are scant opportunities for upward growth into a viable small business enterprise. The second category of businesses are micro-enterprises, which are very small enterprises, often involving the owner, some family members and at most one to four employees. Although such businesses frequently lack the trappings of "formality" in terms of licences or formal premises, and entrepreneurs sometimes have only rudimentary business skills or training, many (though not all) micro-enterprises will make the transition into viable formal small businesses. Finally, small and medium enterprises constitute the basis of the formal SME economy, with employment levels ranging between 5

and 100 workers for small enterprise and up to 200 employees for medium-sized enterprise. Such enterprises are usually owner-managed, operate from fixed premises and fulfil all the trappings associated with formality.[18]

It is officially admitted that there are at present "insufficient disaggregated data" to furnish a detailed profile of Gauteng SMMEs.[19]

It is evident, however, that in Gauteng the majority of survivalist and micro-enterprises represent emerging black enterprise, whereas the existing or established formal SMME economy represents primarily white-owned enterprise, with a strong segment of Asian-owned business and only a minor component of coloured- or black-owned enterprise. In addition, it is maintained that "Gauteng has a larger percentage of its economically active population located in informal micro-enterprises and unregistered small business than anywhere else in the country".[20] Although little substantial information is available on the formal SME economy, one recent study showed that the Gauteng region "is the major location for formal small-scale industrial enterprise".[21] Moreover, a similar conclusion was reached with respect to the role of Gauteng in terms of industrial SMEs.[22]

Overall, the above observations point to an important national role of the Gauteng region for SMMEs of all categories, namely survivalist informal, micro-enterprise and formal SMEs. In its policy formulation, the Gauteng provincial government follows the perspective of the national White Paper, endorsing an important role for SMMEs in the region's future development. It is stated that SMMEs "are viewed as a viable instrument for sustainable job creation, growth and economic development" in the province. Moreover, "SMMEs are seen as an instrument to meaningfully empower Gauteng citizens who were previously denied access to mainstream economic activity – this implies *inter alia*, facilitating the upward movement of people involved in survivalist activities".[23] The provincial economic strategy document notes that "the regional government is determined that SMMEs and SMME support strategies be viewed as part of an integrated, holistic regional economic strategy rather than as a separate sector or 'junior partners' in the drive for economic growth". Accordingly, it is maintained that "SMME development must therefore be fostered in

line with national economic development strategies which promote: increased investment, enhanced productivity, expanded job opportunities and generally increased competitiveness".[24]

In order to achieve these objectives associated with SMMEs, "it is accepted that in the short to medium run government intervention will be required to facilitate this contribution"[25]. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that "the crucial element in SMME development is the creation and effective running of SMME support agencies and support services".[26] As is the case nationally, it is clear that local government throughout Gauteng must become more developmental in outlook and address unemployment and poverty problems through a range of local economic development initiatives, including the upgrading and promotion of SMME activities.[27] It is evident, however, from a large range of previous historical investigations into aspects of the SMME economy, that until the 1990s the role of local government in Gauteng was largely *anti-developmental*.[28] The result was that many types of survivalist enterprise and even micro-enterprise were repressed in the era of apartheid planning. In particular, in accordance with the dictates of apartheid social engineering, black small business entrepreneurship in the Witwatersrand was subjected to an arsenal of repressive measures which were operated by the local state.

Local government and SMME development in Gauteng

This section provides details of the survey areas and the research methodology, and is followed by the results of the interviews concerning SMME expectations of local government.

Survey areas and methodology

The research survey aimed to interview SMME entrepreneurs in Gauteng in order to investigate their past and present experience of local government activities and their expectations for the future. Interviews were undertaken in three different areas of the Witwatersrand in order to sample the perceptions and experience of a spectrum of SMMEs. The three areas selected were chosen to include contrasts both in the racial composition of SMME entrepreneurs and in different kinds of SMMEs. In each of the sampled areas the interview sample was

structured (wherever possible) to try to capture a range of SMMEs, from micro-enterprise through formal small business to medium-sized enterprise. The focus was upon interviewing SMMEs that would be defined broadly as having a growth potential, that is manufacturing, wholesale or service industries; the category of survivalist informal enterprise was excluded from the scope of this investigation.

No attempt was made to structure the interview sample in order to produce a scientifically random sample; however, the scope of the survey was organized to include as broadly representative a sample as possible of "growth" enterprises in the Witwatersrand. Overall, a total of 80 interviews was undertaken in the three case study areas. Of these interviews, 74 were used for the analysis that is presented below. The three areas that were selected for interviewing were (1) Strijdom Park in Randburg, (2) Boksburg in the East Rand, and (3) Soweto. These areas were chosen to represent different types of SMMEs and contrasting locational environments for their development. Geographically, 21 interviews were successfully completed in Strijdom Park, 26 in Soweto and 27 in Boksburg. In terms of racial mix of entrepreneurs, the total picture was of 36 white and 38 black entrepreneurs. Although the analysis is conducted in terms of different racial ownership of SMMEs, essentially these must be seen as representing categories of established SMMEs (white-owned enterprises) on the one hand and of emerging SMMEs (black-owned enterprises) on the other.

The Strijdom Park area of Randburg was selected as an example of an industrial township which is situated in one of the consistently growing zones of industrial development in the Witwatersrand.[29] This area contains a cluster of new, relatively high-growth industrial, wholesale and service enterprise. Moreover, it represents a case study of a group of established white-owned SMMEs in an area with a long-established and functioning local government apparatus.

A wide range of SMME activities are represented in the Strijdom Park area and the interviews captured a range of manufacturing, wholesale and service industrial enterprise. Among others these included manufacturers of electrical equipment, instrumentation, kitchenware and lawnmowers, and printers and

Witwatersrand as a whole, Soweto is a relative laggard that is currently losing many growing enterprises to new locations in the now deracialized inner-city zones of Johannesburg.[30] Within Soweto, interviews were undertaken at a range of locations including Dobsonville, Orlando West industrial park, Diepkloof, White City, Senaone and Phiri.

In the light of the apartheid repression of black entrepreneurs and the constraints placed on business development in Soweto, it is not surprising that the interview sample of SMMEs here was confined to a narrower range of activities than in the Strijdom Park area. The group of manufacturing enterprises engaged in the following types of operations: brickmaking, the construction of zozo huts and the manufacture of clothing, furniture, coal boxes and water buckets; service enterprises included carpenters, plumbers, upholsterers, welders and distributors of ice and mineral waters. In terms of numbers of workers employed, the majority of the Soweto sample – 16 of 26 enterprises – would be classed as micro-enterprises with less than 5 workers. All the remaining enterprises (10 interviewees) employed a maximum of 10 workers. As regards locational choice, 5 interviewees had been working in the same area for 10 years or more, 8 for between 5 and 10 years and 14 for less than 5 years. Among the responses of entrepreneurs as to why they were in their present location were: "insufficient space at home"; "I wanted to move from the backyard"; "close to home"; "I wanted bigger space"; "I had no choice" and "lots of potential buyers".

The last case study was undertaken in the urban Boksburg area which has recently experienced cyclical phases of economic growth and decline which closely parallel the prevailing conditions in the major industrial sectors of the East Rand. [31]Two sub-groups of white and black SMME entrepreneurs operating in the East Rand were selected. Among the group of white entrepreneurs, many were linked to the servicing of the mines or the traditional industrial sectors of the East Rand. The majority of the white-owned SMMEs were situated in Anderbolt, Dunswart, or Jet Park townships of Boksburg. Their activities included steel rolling, the manufacture of pumps, hoses, scaffolding, paints and moulds; service industries included rubber lining and the distribution of welding equipment and steel fasteners. Other entrepreneurs interviewed in Boksburg included

packagers; service activities ranged from repair of air conditioners and exhaust fitting to design fabrication. In terms of size of enterprise, all 21 SMMEs in Strijdom Park fell into the category of small enterprise, as the largest employer engaged 98 workers. Of the 21 enterprises, 5 had less than 10 employees, 11 had between 10 and 20 workers and the remaining 5 had more than 20 workers. The majority of the SMMEs interviewed – 19 of the 21 interviewees – were relatively long-term residents of Strijdom Park, having been situated in their present premises for at least five years or more. Reasons cited for locating in Strijdom Park included: "close to home"; "safe area"; "an up-market industrial area"; "opportunity to design and own premises" and "out of the (Johannesburg) CBD".

The case study of SMMEs in Soweto represents, in many respects, the polar position to that of Strijdom Park. The townships of Soweto contain only a small purpose-built environment for the formal development of SMMEs in the group of industrial parks and small business hives that began to be established from the early 1980s. The sample in Soweto was of exclusively black entrepreneurs who were functioning in an area with an historically weak or non-functioning local government and were now adjusting to new circumstances in the post-apartheid democratic period. In the context of SMME development in the

makers of fruit juice concentrate and chemical importers. With two exceptions, which fell into the category of medium-sized enterprise, all the Boksburg sample were classed as formal small enterprise. The majority had been at their existing premises for 10 years or more and cited a number of reasons for their locational choice in one of the industrial townships of Boksburg: "close to home"; "good industrial area servicing Boksburg, Benoni, Germiston and Springs"; "a convenient and established industrial area" and "central to the market of East Rand".

The second group of black interviewees were operating in markedly different circumstances, either at the small business hive at Vosloorus or from home or backyard premises in the township of Vosloorus. The range of activities of these black-owned enterprises is comparable to that in the Soweto sample. Manufacturers of kitchen units, furniture, mail boxes, bricks, and wood tables were interviewed; other enterprises included electricians, plumbers and builders. The sample was divided into seven that fell into the category of micro-enterprise and five that were slightly larger in terms of numbers of workers, qualifying them marginally as small enterprise. Most of the enterprises (7 of 12) had been in their present location for less than five years. Reasons put forward for their existing location were "close to home"; "convenient to home", and "did not have space working at home in the backyard".

The findings from the 74 interviews are presented below in terms of the key themes of the interviews, namely (1) the past and present relationships of SMME entrepreneurs with local government, (2) their future expectations in a shifting policy and political environment and (3) their opinions on possible support initiatives in the form of local business or service centres. In view of the fact that much of the questionnaire survey was designed to collect qualitative responses or perceptions rather than hard quantitative data, the results are presented in a manner which, wherever possible, allows the words of the SMME entrepreneurs themselves to 'speak' to the issues of concern.

Local government relations:
Past and present

In Strijdom Park the 21 interviewees were all in agreement that during the pre-election (1994) period local government was not a significant influence

upon the operations of their businesses. One chemical distributor summarized and typified the situation, averring that it was a small business with established clients, independently run and thus "local authority intervention would make no difference at all". In a similar vein, most SMMEs in Strijdom Park did not expect or receive any assistance from local government in their day-to-day work. For example, a small design manufacturer of electronic equipment and components stated that they had "nothing to do with them" (the local authority). Another small enterprise, which was an agency for repair of air conditioners, similarly noted that local government had no impact on their business as the enterprise itself was not geared to a local market but was rather an exporter of repair services throughout much of Southern Africa.

Although local government in the Strijdom Park area was a factor of only minor significance in SMME development, many interviewees did refer to certain past problems in their relationships with the local authority. Seven interviewees expressed the view that there were no problems at all in their past relations with local government, saying only that they were "happy with the area" and that "it's OK – no general problems". Five interviewees indicated minor problems or signalled that problems were emerging, especially in the context of the impending rates increases. The following statements were indicative of such sentiments: "We used to have a problem with telephones but that has improved"; "No problems with old or new council but rates are going up a lot"; "Not the authorities' fault but burglaries and the crime rate is bad"; and "Happy with the environment but not huge rates increase".

Finally, 9 of the 21 interviewees in Strijdom Park indicated a considerable degree of unhappiness and a number of problems in their past or present relations with the local authority. The core issues of concern related to the unsatisfactory state of the area's infrastructure, to the increase in squatting and informal trading and to problems with local government's (lack of) decision-making. In the words of a selection of interviewees:

- "Problems when moving in – mainly telephones which are OK now; access is still problematic".

- "The road design is bad, ingress and egress is difficult as only one access".

- "They are letting in more squatters and sidewalk vendors".
- "Roads and their upkeep is shocking. Rates went up an extortionate extent. Things have improved slightly in the last month (July 1996). Last year was particularly bad as no one knew what 'Randburg' was anymore and no decisions were made".
- "There are squatters and hawkers on the street. It is too overcrowded – I am moving out".

In Soweto the majority of the interviewees were in agreement that the influence of past local governments had been of minor significance. Given the harsh apartheid restrictions on black entrepreneurship, it was perhaps surprising that only a small proportion (5 of 26) of interviewees suggested that local government had exerted a negative influence on their business. Reasons which they gave related to the lack of premises and in particular to apartheid prohibitions on business. One Soweto brickmaker stated that "We were jailed or charged before – not allowed to do any form of business". Eleven of the 26 interviewees in Soweto did not indicate any past problems in their relationships with local government. The remainder indicated a degree of concern or frustration with local government over a range of issues. It was apparent, however, from these complaints that the responsibilities of local government were not fully understood. Typically, the following complaints were aired: "Electricity is very high"; "The entrance to this place is difficult"; "They want us to pay tax but there is nothing done to help us", and "We are not told of anything – we are asked big amounts".

Among the Boksburg sample of SMMEs the micro-enterprise community in Vosloorus were largely agreed that local government in the past had been a passive factor with no positive or markedly negative influence on their developing businesses. One plumber, however, remarked perceptively that "the aim of apartheid was contrary to the growth of our businesses". In similar vein, a Vosloorus cabinet maker spoke of past local governments as "Small business destroyers [rather] than developers". Overall, the most common problems that were raised by interview-

ees related to the costs and availability of basic water and electricity supplies and drainage. The following statements are representative: "Our electricity is weak" and "Right now my electricity is out – how can I work because I am using power machines". In addition, the same group of interviewees expressed opinions on certain missed opportunities where local government could have offered assistance to these developing entrepreneurs:

- "... things like schools, clinics, where you would need furniture, the (local) government should give orders to us"
- "Local government should have provided more workshops".

The group of white-owned SMMEs in Boksburg once more echoed the common theme that past local government had been a factor of only minor influence on their business. Only two of this sub-group of 15 Boksburg SMMEs had experienced problems with their business as a consequence of local government . The first (a producer of rubber products) was concerned about drainage problems in the summer months. The second (a paint manufacturer), more pointedly, averred that local government never used them and bought products (paints) elsewhere. Although SMME entrepreneurs in Boksburg saw local government as a minor factor, many entrepreneurs acknowledged an important role for local government in creating or maintaining a favourable working environment for their business. Typically, one rubber-liner declared: "Unlike Telkom, whenever there is a problem the council have promptly fixed things – whether this related to power or blocked drains". Another Boksburg entrepreneur, a moulding company, was "very happy with the service from them". A truck and trailer dealer stated that they "never had any problems – Boksburg is a good council". Lastly, although one fruit juice concentrate producer acknowledged that they had no ongoing problem, another interviewee expressed concern about the theft of telephone cables in the Jet Park area of Boksburg.

Future expectations of local government

One striking finding which cut across the case study areas and across both

white and black entrepreneurs was the high level of uncertainty or ignorance as to which was their responsible local government authority. In Strijdom Park, 12 of the 21 SMME entrepreneurs admitted that they had "no idea" which was their new local government authority. Interviewees expressed the following sentiments: "I am confused"; "Northern substructure or something", and "don't know – could be Randburg". A further 7 interviewees were confident that their local government was Randburg; only 2 of the 21 interviewees were correct in identifying the shift of responsibility to the newly constituted Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council. Confusion as to which was their responsible local government authority was equally widespread in the Soweto sample of interviewees . The following represent typical responses that were recorded: "Not sure"; "It's not clear"; "Don't know"; "I do not know – I do not even want to know"; and, most remarkable of all, "The SBDC (Small Business Development Corporation) is in charge"! Of the three study areas, the Boksburg sample showed the greatest knowledge about their local government structures; some of the sample even correctly identified the Transitional Local Council of Greater Boksburg. In particular, most of the group of white-owned SMMEs were knowledgeable; however, among the Vosloorus SMME entrepreneurs much uncertainty was evident. Respondents indicated the following: "I knew by the time I was voting but since I now forgot"; "It is SBDC by itself"; "Here it is – SBDC"; "I do not know and I do not care about those", and "Elsie is the head". Above all, what these findings underscore is an urgent need for clarification as to the identity of the responsible local government. This need is particularly evident in the black townships and among communities of black SMMEs, some of whom clearly are under the illusion that the semi-official Small Business Development Corporation is a local authority in itself.

A key set of perception issues that were explored in the study related to the expectations of SMMEs regarding the changing roles and responsibilities of local government. Interviewees were probed on their opinions as to whether and how new local governments should assist the

development of the SMME sector. In Strijdom Park, two thirds of the sample (14 interviewees) felt that local government should be an active player in support of local business; 7 interviewees indicated that they felt that no support role should be undertaken by local government.

The voices of some of these Strijdom Park community of SMMEs reflect the views and suggestions in support of an important role for local government:

- "Randburg is growing so quickly, development is booming. The council should advertise the area and promote the industrialists. During the election campaign councillors are very visible but then disappear. This contact (with local business) should be kept up constantly".

- "The rand is weak. Local government should assist local businesses that are export-oriented by advertising the area, bringing foreign businessmen and delegates to the area and marketing it. This would create a boom for the export industry".

- "If local government is not going to help their local residents and businesses what is the point of having them ... I would like to see less spending on bureaucracy and more spending on the area and people".

Overall, the most common positive theme that emerged from the Strijdom Park interviewees was the need for local government to market and promote the area and the local businesses in its area of authority. Another significant perception of many businesses was that local government could assist simply by purchasing local goods and services. By contrast, the negative views of entrepreneurs in Strijdom Park towards an assistance role for local government were based either on the fact they were "independent businesses" or on common perceptions that "government interferes too much in business and should stay out" and that "local government can't sort anything out – if I relied on them for anything business would only go backwards".

Much stronger expectations for local government support of local enterprise in the future were evident in the sample of Soweto SMMEs; 25 of

the 26 interviewees were strongly inclined towards a supportive role for local government in their businesses, while the other interviewee was "uncertain". Many of the problems of developing micro-enterprise in Soweto were seen as possible support issues for local government. Interviewees thought that local government might assist with access to finance, premises (other than those provided by SBDC) and training and, most importantly, in terms of assistance in access to markets. An issue that arose repeatedly in the interviews was the need for assistance or information concerning tender procedures. In some cases, however, the expectations expressed by interviewees were unrealistically hopeful.

The following sample comments extracted from the Soweto material reflect the issues raised by micro-entrepreneurs.

- "The (local) government could help us with tendering and teach many of us how to go about applying for tenders" (ice works and distributors).

- "The government should involve us in public works. We need to be recognised, small as we are" (plumber).

- "The government should provide us with space that I can regard as my business – distinct from my house" (brickmaker).

- "We need access to markets that can make us grow and be able to employ people from outside. There is no information as to where to apply for tenders" (welder).

- "You know there is still apartheid even today. Our applications for tenders do not succeed. In that way, as of today, we don't have access to markets" (plumber).

- "They must help me with market tendering. It is critical – our market is very poor" (carpenter).

- "I have applied for tenders but to get the Bulletin booklet is expensive" (brickmaker).

In summary, the black SMME entrepreneurs in Soweto expressed high hope for support from new local government. The major concern which was highlighted related to improving their access to markets as a whole, and more particularly through the local tender proceses.

Not surprisingly, in the light of the Soweto findings, the community of black SMME entrepreneurs in Vosloorus also expressed much hope for a more interventionist and supportive role for local government. In Vosloorus all the SMMEs sampled indicated that they thought local government should assist their developing businesses. The sentiments which are expressed below from the East Rand community of businesses are not dissimilar to those from Soweto. Once again, the group of interviewees highlighted concerns about support for improving their premises, market access and financing. Considerable expectation is clearly attached to new business opportunities that might arise in the context of public works initiatives. Strikingly, one interviewee (a building contractor) acknowledged that local government assistance had been received in the form of a contract to repair violence-damaged homes in Thokoza and Spruitview. Another comment was that "the new government must undo the evils of the past by helping us to be on a par with white businesses".

The views aired in the Vosloorus interviews are shown in the following sample statements:

- "The government does not necessarily need to give us thousands of rands but it could offer us contracts" (plumbers).

- " Local government should make shows where we would go and show our products" (cabinet makers).

- "The government should help us with both marketing skills and give us work – I mean the government should involve us in its public works" (electricians).

- "We need places for us to work at but not with the SBDC" (electricians)

- "The government should buy furniture from us – I can make school desks and chairs if the government could take orders from me" (furniture producer).

- "The best way that government could help me could be about involving me in the construction of low cost houses by taking orders from me and other small brickmakers" (brickmaker).

The white SMME business community of Boksburg showed the lowest level

of support for a strong role for local government in assisting their businesses. Of the 15 interviewees, 8 indicated a positive view and 7 felt no need for an interventionist role for local government. It must be appreciated that the lukewarm support for a future local government role in SMME development was due to a large extent to their views that they were "happy to be independent" or "could not see how" such a role would take place. The overall opinions expressed by the white community in Boksburg very largely mirrored those of the Strijdom Park businesses. Issues of concern and suggestions again related to local promotion of the area through advertising, local purchases by the authorities and augmentation of export opportunities by local producers. Typical of views expressed by white-owned small enterprises in Boksburg are the following observations:

- "I am impressed that Springs is advertising for business to go there. Boksburg should follow suit" (distributor of steel fasteners).

- " Local government should promote their own business in the local area" (engineers).

- "Local council should utilise local companies in their area more" (distributor of welding equipment).

From the above comments and observations from the three case study areas, it is evident that a supportive role for local government in SMME development would be endorsed by communities of both white-owned and black-owned SMMEs. Not unexpectedly, however, the expectations are evidently much higher among black than white entrepreneurs. Key areas of possible intervention are those of local promotion and marketing, local purchasing and, among black entrepreneurs in particular, opportunities in relation to public works programmes and tender procedures.

Possible support policy interventions

The final section of the interview schedule sought to obtain the views and perceptions of SMME entrepreneurs concerning possible policy interventions. More particularly, entrepreneurs were probed as to their opinions regarding the possible establishment of local business or local service centres. Two particular issues were raised in the interviews: firstly, the availability of information on new local business opportunities and secondly the provision of training programmes.

Among the white-owned SMMEs situated in Strijdom Park, the response to ideas of instituting local service centres was divided. Of 21 interviewees, only 9 thought positively that a local business or service centre would be a good idea. None the less, several businesses supported the idea but indicated that their particular type of business meant that they were "too specialized to use it". Among the reasons given for supporting such a development initiative was that a "local business centre is a good idea if local businesses and the council use it to buy what is locally available and support local business". Strongest support was evident for the function of local business centres as providers and sources of information. For example, in the interviews it was argued that "there are businesses all around but we do not know who does what". In a similar vein another interviewee stressed the importance of enriching local information bases: "Council has names of all businesses – it should send these to everyone so that companies know who is in the area and who can be prospective clients".

Training initiatives were not seen as an element that would be of use to many Strijdom Park SMMEs. Most companies situated in this area are highly specialized in their activities and undertake in-house training. The advantages of training were, however, acknowledged by certain interviewees. For instance, it was asserted that "if training is aimed to reduce unemployment, it is a good idea and I would think about employing someone who has trained and taken the initiative"; "training would be beneficial for new people starting up". The negative views which were linked to suggestions of training programmes often concerned the funding of such interventions. Typically, it was stated: "Costs would be optimum. How will it affect tax payers? Where exactly would they be situated?" Indeed, overall, the suspicion of Randburg SMMEs towards the possibility of local business centres was largely couched in terms of such questions about the funding and usage of such establishments.

In sharp contrast to the responses from the group of white interviewees in Strijdom Park, the idea of local service centres was warmly endorsed by Soweto entrepreneurs. All the Soweto

sample were supportive of the idea of introducing an institution along the lines of a local service centre which might assist in areas such as developing markets through provision of information and developing skills through programmes of training. Training received a very considerable body of support. Indications of the highly positive responses that were received from the sample of 26 Soweto businesses are evident from the comments listed below:

- "Knowledge is power. Surely my business could be better if I could know more about running a business" (zozo manufacturer).
- "We need information. We need to know how other business people succeed... Sure, we need to know how to run our businesses. Maybe my business is not growing for a small thing that I do not see" (ice works and distributor).
- "That's a good idea that can encourage even our children" (knitwear producer).
- "We need these (training centres). We run our businesses at the moment by thumb-sucking on pricing or charging our customers" (zozo builder).
- "We need these (local service centres) by no doubts. My wish is to show that we can do rather than just getting money" (welder).
- "This is the best idea. These centres better be in our locality so that we can talk to them anytime" (cabinet maker).

The Vosloorus community of SMME businesspersons were equally highly receptive to notions of a local service centre. Again, all the interviewees were positive to this type of initiative. The voices of support and hope from this East Rand township for local service centres are reflected below:

- "That would be a blessing since that would help even those who have thoughts of business to realise their dreams" (building contractor).
- "That is a super idea. There we will be able to advertise ourselves. We need such skills as book-keeping etc. The SBDC promised us these but did nothing. SBDC is only prepared to help those who have money." (cabinet maker)
- "We would definitely like to have those (local service centres) because there is quite a lot of information that

we would like to have only to find that you have to travel to town for that" (plumber).
- "The SBDC promised us the same thing calling on people to move from backyards now we hope that the government will do something sensible" (metal worker).
- "We need such places. It would be a blessing for us" (clothes maker).

Finally, attention returns to the responses of a community of a white-run SMMEs situated in the industrial areas of Boksburg. Here, the broad picture is of a favourable response to the concept of a local business or service centre. This is qualified, however, by statements that such centres would be of little direct value to their existing businesses for a variety of reasons, primarily due to their highly specialized character. The general response from this sample of Boksburg enterprises was that local service centres could possibly be an important catalyst for businesses of a size smaller than themselves or for newly emerging businesses. Examples of the range of views expressed in this sample of white-owned Boksburg SMMEs are:

- "Local service centres and training would be useful for new people starting up but not for us" (scaffolding manufacturers).
- "Maybe new starting up businesses would use it" (steel section roller).
- "Inexperienced businessmen need this. They know their job but not business skills" (hose manufacturer).
- "It would be of great help to people who are new to the area" (distributor of welding equipment).
- "Damn good man!. Excellent, seems like a brilliant idea. It would have use for our company and many others" (distributors of trucks and trailers).

Concluding remarks

The objective in this study was to build upon existing research on SMMEs in South Africa, examining the relationships of such enterprises with local government. In Gauteng, as in other parts of South Africa, major importance will be attached in future to the role of local government in implementing the goals of the national and provincial government for creating a more dynamic SMME sector.

The survey findings reveal a number of important conclusions about a

future developmental role for local government in South Africa. First, it is crucial that the responsibilities and activities of new local governments become more widely known, for the survey shows a high level of ignorance as to which local authority is responsible for particular areas. Second, it is evident that the past influence of local government on both white- and black-owned businesses is seen as limited, in the case of white-owned businesses, and as destructive by some of the black entrepreneurs interviewed. Third, different levels of expectations of the new local government structures are apparent amongst communities of SMME entrepreneurs. In particular, there is a divide between groups of black and white entrepreneurs, with the former looking hopefully towards local government as a support mechanism for growth and upliftment. The divide is especially apparent in terms of the type of support that might be expected from local government. In the case of white-owned SMMEs the emphasis was on place marketing and local procurement issues. In the case of black-owned SMMEs the stress was on core issues of improving their access to markets (particularly through tendering) and opening of opportunities in a context of widely publicized public works programmes. These findings must be interpreted as the respective needs for support of established SMMEs (white-owned enterprise) on the one hand and of emergent SMMEs (black-owned enterprise) on the other. Finally, all the communities of SMME entrepreneurs in the three Gauteng case study areas expressed firm support for the new initiatives for establishing local business or service centres. The need for such support initiatives was especially apparent in the economically underdeveloped townships of Soweto and Vosloorus.

Notes and references

1. See ANC (African National Congress), *The Reconstruction and Development Programme: a policy framework*. Johannesburg: Umanyano Publications, 1994, and Republic of South Africa, *White paper on reconstruction and development*. published in Government Gazette no 16876, Pretoria: Government Printer, 1994.
2. Republic of South Africa, *op cit*, p 20.
3. ANC, *op cit*, pp 76–77.
4. Republic of South Africa, *op cit*, p 20.
5. Republic of South Africa, *National strategy for the development and promotion of small business in South Africa: White Paper of the Department of Trade and Industry*. Cape Town: Department of Trade and Industry, 1995, p 5.
6. Republic of South Africa, *National strategy for the development and promotion of small business ...*, *op cit*.
7. Republic of South Africa, Department of Trade and Industry, *Notice 1304 of 1995*, published in Government Gazette no 16876, Pretoria: Government Printer, 1995.
8. Republic of South Africa, *National strategy for the development and promotion of small business....*, *op cit*, p 16.
9. Republic of South Africa, *Growth, employment and redistribution: a macroeconomic strategy*. Pretoria: Department of Finance, 1996, p 1.
10. *Ibid*, p 13.
11. Republic of South Africa, *National strategy for the development and promotion of small business....*, *op cit*, p 45.
12. For a review of existing research, see C M Rogerson, "South Africa's micro-enterprise economy: a policy-focused review", in R Hirschowitz, M Orkin, C Rogerson and D Smith (eds), *Micro-enterprise development in South Africa*, Pretoria: European Union, 1994, pp 14– 37; C M Rogerson, "Urban poverty and the informal economy in South Africa's economic heartland", *Environment and Urbanisation* vol 8,no 1, 1996, pp 167– 181, and C M Rogerson, *Rethinking the informal economy of South Africa*, Development Paper no 84, Halfway House: Development Bank of Southern Africa, 1996.
13. Provincial Government of Gauteng, *Economic policy document*, Johannesburg: Department of Finance and Economic Affairs, 1995, p 3.
14. Provincial Government of Gauteng, "Gauteng economic growth and development perspective" (second draft), unpublished mimeo, Johannesburg, 1995, and Plan Africa, *Gauteng spatial development framework* (draft), Johannesburg: Plan Africa, 1996.
15. Provincial Government of Gauteng, *Economic policy document, op cit*, p 7.
16. Plan Africa, *op cit*, p 14.
17. Based on: Republic of South Africa, *National strategy for the development and promotion of small business....*, *op cit*.
18. *Ibid*.
19. Provincial Government of Gauteng, *Economic policy document,op cit*, p 18.
20. *Ibid*.
21. C M Rogerson and J M Rogerson, "The metropolis as incubator: small-scale enterprise development in Johannesburg", *GeoJournal*, vol 39, 1996, p 34.
22. *Ibid*.
23. Provincial Government of Gauteng, *Economic policy document, op cit*, p 19.
24. *Ibid*.
25. *Ibid*.
26. *Ibid*.
27. Republic of South Africa, *National strategy for the development and promotion of small business...op cit*.
28. For details see C M Rogerson, "Feeding the common people of Johannesburg, 1930–1962", *Journal of Historical Geography*, vol 12, 1986, pp 56–73; C M Rogerson, "The underdevelopment of the informal sector: street hawking in Johannesburg, South Africa", *Urban Geography*, vol 9, 1988, pp 549–567; and C M Rogerson, "Deregulation, subcontracting and the '(in)formalization' of small-scale manufacturing", in E Preston-Whyte and C Rogerson (eds), *South Africa's informal economy*, Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1991, pp 365– 385.
29. C M Rogerson and J M Rogerson, "Manufacturing location in the developing metropolis", unpublished report submitted to the World Bank (Confidential), 1996.
30. C M Rogerson and J M Rogerson, "The changing post-apartheid city: emergent black-owned small enterprises in Johannesburg, *Urban Studies*, vol 34, 1997, pp 85–103.
31. C M Rogerson and J M Rogerson, "Manufacturing location...", *op cit*.

AFRICA FOCUS

Angola: The political outlook

Under present circumstances, it is difficult to assess Angola's medium- to long-term prospects for political stability. Developments in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo have certainly strengthened the hand of the authorities in Luanda, though this may not remain the case should Laurent Kabila fail to establish his effective authority over the national territory.

Meaningful predictions must also await signs of recovery through the whole Angolan economy – as distinct from the enclave activity of the oil sector. Only a resumption of economic activities will highlight the full extent of the obstacles that need to be overcome before there can be reasonable hope for acceptable living conditions and stability in Angola. That said, whatever happens in the Angolan political scene, little is likely to harm the oil sector, which has remained largely isolated from the ravages of the war, and whose growth is essential to whoever seizes control of the political machine.

As Mozambique shows, the failure to absorb demobilized soldiers into gainful employment is likely to result in large scale brigandage and high crime rates. The instruments of killing, with which Angola is awash, will for a long time pose a serious threat to the country's own stability as well as that of neighbouring Namibia, Zambia, DR Congo and quite possibly South Africa.

The task of reconstruction will also have to contend with the profound distrust between the followers of MPLA and Unita. This distrust will not vanish overnight because it is rooted not only in the experience of civil war but also in different ethnic and racial origins. While Unita's power base is among the Ovimbundu people, that of MPLA is among the Mbundu while its leadership has a strong element of urban-based *mestiços*. It is worth noting that Savimbi's rhetoric when addressing rural audiences in the vernacular is quite different from the persuasive and moderate tone he uses on the Western media: his appeal to his followers is unashamedly racist, in particular reviling the "non-Angolan" origins of many government leaders, including the President, whom he refers to as a São Toméan.

Apart from the hindrances outlined above, the process of rebuilding will also be encumbered by the shortage of skilled people, especially engineers, technicians, artisans and competent administrators and planners. The huge amount of foreign debt is another impediment to economic progress.

A number of scenarios suggest themselves.

The Government of National Unity and Reconstruction (GNUR) has now been formed, with some Unita participation, but with Savimbi standing outside as putative leader of the opposition and prospective president-in-waiting. The cooperation of Unita and MPLA members could be facilitated by the latter's theoretical adoption of a free-market orientation, and Unita's difficulty in formulating a coherent alternative policy line. Enjoyment of the perquisites of power also persuades Unita MPs to persist in their cohabitation with the MPLA. From outside the formal structures of government, however, Savimbi continues to harp upon the government's inability to address the deepening socio-economic crisis short of imposing austerity measures which bring the urban poor to the verge of revolt. This seems the most likely immediate outcome. From here the scenario fragments:

a. Dos Santos' grip on the party is weakened by internal dissent and his own failing health. A new group of technocrats emerges drawing on both Unita and MPLA parliamentarians and followers, who decide to approach the country's problems with determination and consistency. In this task they are able to point to the discoveries of vast new oil reserves in the deep-sea fields, and secure the necessary support of international donors and agencies. Savimbi is increasingly marginalized, and the new centrist alliance is able to win new elections, ousting the old war parties. This outcome seems reasonably likely, given luck;

*Richard Cornwell,
Head of Current Affairs
at the Africa Institute of
South Africa*

b. The GNUR is totally overwhelmed by socio-economic problems and urban unrest. The military steps in to restore order and becomes the dominant force in government, clearing out the corrupt and despised politicians of the old order. Having taken over Luanda it turns to take over the diamond fields still under Savimbi's control, and to secure the victory it was denied by the Lusaka Accords. A protracted low-intensity war in the Lunda Norte province ensues. The task of national rehabilitation is further delayed by the need to increase military expenditures. A new technocratic government eventually emerges, under military sponsorship. This scenario is less likely than a., but still within the bounds of possibility, and is more likely following recent developments in the DR Congo.

c. The GNUR struggles ineffectually and unconvincingly with Angola's socio-economic problems in the face of growing discontent. Savimbi returns from splendid isolation to seize victory in the presidential elections. This triggers another round of fighting as the armed forces and the vested interests in Luanda are unable to contemplate the consequences of his political programme. From here it is difficult to project a further outcome, except to say that the odds would still be stacked in Luanda's favour, especially given the withdrawal of much vital foreign support for Savimbi. This scenario does not seem all that probable or likely.

A final word also needs to be said about the Cabindan separatists. These groups have now fractured into myriad small movements, and their aspirations tend to be overlooked, as they were in the Bicesse and Lusaka agreements. It is unlikely, however, that Cabinda will stay off the agenda forever. Contacts have been made between Luanda and the Cabindans, and some form of agreement is likely, though well short of autonomy or independence. For the immediate future, small-scale insurgency will continue, with occasional kidnappings of expatriate workers. The effects on the oil industry of instability in Cabinda will gradually diminish as the focus of attention moves to the larger offshore finds to the south.

BOOKSHELF

The Algerian Crisis: Policy options for the West by Andrew J. Pierre and William B. Quandt. A Carnegie Endowment Book. Washington DC 1996. 70 pp. ISBN 0 87003 106 6

The crisis in Algeria is of deep concern not only to the nations of North Africa and the Middle East but also to some European countries and the United States. Moreover, it not only involves immediate political and economic issues but is also part of an ongoing religious and cultural debate. For the Middle East, the outcomes of the struggle in Algeria could affect the future direction of the Arab world. For France, the Algerian crisis not only is the puzzling question of foreign policy but also has broad and critical domestic political and social implications. The ripple effect is felt throughout the European Union. For the United States, dealing with the Algerian situation intersects their policy in the Middle East and the traditional ties they enjoy with France. All said, the Algerian dossier has received remarkably little attention in the United States to date, and its basic ingredients are not well known.

As the title of this book implies, this report is not meant to be a detailed exposition and analysis of Algeria's internal issues and dynamics. It focuses instead on the external effects, actual and potential, of the Algerian crisis and the policy responses that might be considered by Western governments.

Whither African Economies? edited by Jean-Claude Berthelemy, Paris: OECD, 1995. 168 pp. ISBN 92 64 14647 4

This collection of reflections on the future of the African economy diagnoses the malaise which has afflicted the economy of sub-Saharan Africa and left the continent in a state of crisis, despite ongoing development strategies. These articles consider growth factors, international competitiveness and the labour market, regional co-operation rent seeking, and conflict and political stability. This publication strives to stimulate new research leading to new and more effective measures for ensuring a return to growth for Africa south of the Sahara.

Africa in the contemporary international disorder: Crises and possibilities, edited by Mulugeta Agonafer. Lanham: University Press of America, 1996. 411pp. ISBN 0 7618 0252 5

The purpose of this volume is to publish within a single set of covers recent analyses of major political and economic development in the continent's domestic and international operation. As Africa moves into the 21st century, it is imperative that information about the continent's political economic condition be presented to students of Africa in the developed world in a fair and objective fashion. An understanding and discussion of the successes and failures is the only way that an appropriate African-oriented American foreign policy can emerge. Despite the demise of communism in the former Eastern bloc, such discussions are not taking place today.

Still, the day to day quality of life experienced by Africans is directly affected by domestic problems such as poverty, crime, homelessness, inadequate health care, discrimination against women and ethnic minorities, and the many facets of deterioration in African cities.

Most of the articles in this collection have been compiled from papers presented during the first and second Conference on Africa held at Springfield College, as they were originally presented.

Book Review

African political economy: Contemporary issues in development by K.R. Hope. New York: ME Sharpe, 1997 230 pp. Index. ISBN 1 56324 942 1 (pbk), 1 53324 941 3 (hc)

One of the criteria for good research is the ability to synthesise and to build on the research findings from a number of different reference sources. Kempe Ronald Hope manages to achieve this in his book by citing almost five hundred references to substantiate his arguments. A great deal of the literature and empirical material on African development issues is thus brought together in a single readable book of almost 200 pages, excluding the references.

Hope, a United Nations Technical Advisor to the Government of Botswana, Professor of Development Studies at the University of Botswana and an advisor to several developing-country governments, analyses a wide range of critical development issues which impact upon the economic crisis affecting the continent of Africa at the present time.

Part I of the book is titled Development problems and issues, in which Hope gives an analytical perspective on the origins and nature of Africa's economic crisis: followed by analysis of problems of growth, unemployment and poverty in Botswana; urbanisation and urban management; the subterranean economy in developing societies with particular reference to Africa; the socio-economic context of AIDS; and bureaucratic corruption, its causes and consequences. Hope reveals some startling facts in the first part of the book: the subterranean or informal sector now absorbs the majority of new labour-force entrants in Africa; the average population growth rate in Africa has accelerated from 2.7 percent per annum during the period 1965–1980 to 3.1 percent per annum at present; and by the end of the century life expectancy could drop in sub-Saharan Africa to forty-seven years instead of the average of sixty-two years expected in the absence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic spreading across the continent. Moreover, he says, the impact of the economic crisis has been so devastating that the 1980s have been referred to as "Africa's Lost Decade".

Part II of the book deals with policy reform and change in Africa. The author suggests a development policy for the poor; assesses the objectives and im-pact of structural adjustment programmes; the implementation of development policy reforms in Botswana; the control of bureau-cratic corruption; decentralisation and the New Public Administration; and finally the challenge of policy reform in Africa.

Although the main title of the book is *African Political Economy*, and the sub-title *Contemporary issues in development*, the content of the book really focuses on development issues. In my view, a political economy perspective suggests a reciprocity between politics and macro-economic issues. The book barely touches on the political dimension, except in the last chapter where political issues such as problems of leadership, the patrimonial state, good governance, the creation of democratic institutions, the need for strengthening civil society, and the restructuring of the nation-state (which should really be referred to as the state-nation in the African context) are discussed. Many of the solutions which Hope proposes are in line with IMF/World Bank prescriptions: reduction of budget deficits; promotion of the free market; accountability; decentralization; liberalization; democratization and accountability.

A further telling point which Hope makes, and which should be made more frequently, is that many of Africa's problems should be blamed on the quality of Africa's leadership rather than on colonialism, American imperialism, the international eco-nomy system and international development agencies. Further, no real African alternatives to the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) currently being implemented in most of Africa have been devised by Africans, although in many instances these programmes are severely criticised. Hope suggests that rather than the abandonment of SAPs, a structured approach to indigenous policy making to complement these programmes should be followed.

The proposing of solutions to facilitate Africa's economic recovery is all very well, but for a decentralized democratic state to function properly, institutions need to be devised to accommodate these and other policy goals. Fundamental constitutional reform is surely necessary to establish legitimate institutions in the state. This is perhaps the next step in the African political economy debate which should be explored.

Hope has written an extremely important and provocative book on African development issues. All who are involved in some way or another in policy and development issues should study it.

Clive Napier
Dept of Political Science, Unisa

Africa Institute N·E·W·S
African Studies

Africa Institute

Seminars and visiting scholars

Several meetings were held in the Institute's ongoing series of African studies seminars **The Hon Mr Justice Paul Nwokedi**, Chairman of the Nigerian Human Rights Commission, conducted a seminar on "Human rights in Nigeria" on 16 January 1997; **Dr Sandy Shaw**, Counsellor in the South African Embassy, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, gave a seminar talk on 27 January 1997 on 'Recent developments in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa'; **Professor Mordechai Tamarkin**, Department of Middle Eastern and African History, Tel-Aviv University, Israel, addressed a seminar meeting on 3 February 1997 on 'Conflict resolution in South Africa and Israel: Comparative perspectives'; **Professor Larry Diamond**, Senior Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, California, presented a seminar on 'Prospects for democratic development in Africa' on 10 March 1997; and **Professor Christoff Heyns**, Director of the Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, conducted a seminar on 18 March 1997 on 'Human rights law in Africa: Changes and challenges' – this seminar was arranged to mark National Constitution Week (17 to 21 March).

From 7 to 13 January 1997, the Institute hosted **Dr Graham Evans**, Department of International Relations, University of Wales, Swansea. He conducted research into aspects of South Africa's regional foreign and defence policies. On 5 March 1997, discussions were held with **Dr William Nhara**, Co-ordinator in the OAU Conflict Management Centre, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, about Institute assistance with the compilation of a database on conflict indicators in Africa.

Fellows and research fellows

Recently, **Professor Jean-François Médard**, Centre d'Etude d'Afrique Noire, et l'Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Bordeaux, France; and **Professor Andrei Zhukov**, Department of African Studies, St Petersburg State University, Russia were invited to become *fellows* of the Institute. **Professor Ahmad Aly**, Department of Economics, Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt; **Professor Simon Bekker**, Department of Sociology, University of Stellenbosch; **Dr Dominique Darbon**, Centre d'Etude d'Afrique Noire, et l'Université de Montesquieu-Bordeaux IV, France; and **Mr Steven Friedman**, Executive Director, Centre for Policy Studies, Johannesburg accepted appointments as *research fellows* of the Institute.

Letters of agreement

The Institute has, recently, entered into several *letters of agreement* with African studies centres abroad: the **Center of African Studies, University of Bombay**, India, the **Institute of African Research and Studies, Cairo University**, Egypt; and the **Institute for African Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences**, Moscow. On 20 March 1997, Professor Ludmila Verbitskaya, Rector, and Professor Andrei Zhukov, **Department of African Studies, St Petersburg State University**, Russia, visited the Institute to formally sign a similar agreement.

In addition, two other institutions have held exploratory discussions with the Institute on possible co-operative linkages: the **African Studies Programme, City University of Cairo**, Egypt (Dr Geoffrey Neestler, Associate Vice-President for Academic Affairs, and Dr Mohamed Hussein, Director for the Middle East and Africa, visited the Institute on 28 February 1997); and the **Foundation for Research on the International Environment, National Development and Security**, Rawalpindi, Pakistan (Dr Fasahat Syed, Executive Vice-Chairman, paid a visit to the Institute on 14 March 1997).

Conferences, study/liaison visits abroad, lectures

Head of Current Affairs, **Richard Cornwell**, presented a seminar paper on

Dr Denis Venter, Executive Director and Head of Academic Programmes, Africa Institute of South Africa

"The Crisis in the Great Lakes area" at the Institute for Security Studies on 24 January 1997. He gave a talk to a group of Canadian Africa-based diplomats on "South Africa in Africa" on 29 January 1997. He visited the Boston area, Massachusetts from 2 to 9 March 1997 to attend a conference at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge on "African renewal", and a roundtable meeting in Boston of the Global Coalition for Africa on "Governance in Africa". He also visited Zimbabwe from 19 to 27 March 1997 to attend a workshop organized by SAPES Trust, and to conduct interviews for a contracted research study (in association with the Centre for Policy Studies, Johannesburg) for the Swedish government.

Dr Denis Venter (Executive Director and Head, Academic Programmes) attended an advanced workshop on the Southern African Development Community (SADC), organized by the Foreign Service Institute, Department of Foreign Affairs, Pretoria, on 20 and 21 January 1997; and he participated in the third meeting of the Indian Ocean Research Network (IORN), held in Durban on 10 and 11 March 1997. He also presented a lecture on "Regional Security in Sub-Saharan Africa" to the Joint Staff Course, South African Defence College, Pretoria on 5 March 1997.

Publications

The Institute co-published, with the Foundation for Global Dialogue, Johannesburg, a monograph by **Dr Sadig Rasheed** on *Development, participation and democracy in Africa: Four essays.* The author is a Fellow of the Institute and is currently Director of Programmes at the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) in New York. Other publications that came off the press were: the ninth edition of the authoritative compendium, *Africa at a glance: Facts and figures, 1996/97* (compiled by Pieter Esterhuysen and edited by Madeline Lass), and the Institute's *Annual Report 1995/96* (compiled and edited by Dr Denis Venter).

Richard Cornwell has done several pieces of contract research work, such as risk analyses on Zaire (for JCI), on Angola (for *Oxford*

Analytica), and on Mozambique (for MBendi); and he has prepared briefing documents on the crisis in Eastern Zaire and in the Great Lakes region, and on the developing situation in the Sudan (for the Department of Foreign Affairs). **Dr Erich Leistner** (Resident Fellow) has done a risk analysis on Gabon.

Dr Erich Leistner and **Richard Cornwell** published *Southern Africa: Prospects for economic development.*

Dr Denis Venter published articles on "The Indian Ocean Rim Initiative: A Vehicle for South-South Co-operation", in *Indian Journal of African Studies,* vol VII, nos 1 & 2, 1996; and "Regional Security in Sub-Saharan Africa: What Role for South Africa?", in *African Journal on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution,* vol 1, no 1, January-April 1997.

Honours

Richard Cornwell has been appointed a Research Associate of the Institute for Security Studies, Midrand.

Joint conference with the Center for African Studies, University of Florida, Gainesville

The **Africa Institute**, in collaboration with the **Center for African Studies, University of Florida**, is organizing a small expert conference on the experience of constitution-making in Africa. Ethiopia, Uganda and South Africa are three countries among those in Africa with the most extensive experience of a constitutional review process in recent years. By bringing together researchers and legal/constitutional practitioners to assess the review processes in these countries, the Institute hopes to produce a document that may also be of value to other African countries where similar constitutional reviews are being contemplated and could take place in future. For practical reasons, this meeting will be confined primarily to participants from English-speaking countries in Eastern and southern Africa. The conference, to be held at the ABSA Conference Centre in Montana, Pretoria from 26 to 28 May 1997, is organized around

three major themes: who were the principal actors involved in the constitutional review processes and why were they chosen?; which were the mechanisms developed to ensure success in the constitutional deliberations and negotiations?; and how was the process legitimized in the eyes of the public or civil society at large?

Africa Institute educational service project

On 6 March 1997, **Ambassador Yoshizo Konishi**, on behalf of the Japanese Government, and **Dr Denis Venter**, for the Africa Institute, signed a project agreement in terms of which an amount of R350 000 was donated to the Institute to make a package of teaching materials on Africa available to schools in disadvantaged communities in South Africa, at a substantially reduced price. Earlier, the South African business corporation, Murray & Roberts, donated R100 000 for the same purpose. The last component in this package, *Africa A–Z: Country Profiles,* is nearing completion.

African studies
Awards

Joint winners of the **1996 Conover-Porter Award** for outstanding achievement in Africana bibliography and reference works were *Black African literature in English, 1987–1991* by Bernt Lindfors, and *Sub-Saharan African films and film-makers. 1987–1992: An annotated bibliography* by Nancy J Schmidt.

Kita Touré's novel, *Destins paralleles,* published in 1995 by Novelles Editions Ivoiriennes, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, has been named the winner of the **1996 NOMA Award** for publishing in Africa. This is the third time that a novel in the French language has won in the award's 16-year history.

New journal/essay series

The International Research Foundation for Development is soliciting articles for a new journal, **Contemporary Development Analysis**. A special issue on non-governmental

organizations is planned for the Northern Hemisphere summer of 1997. Please submit articles to *Contemporary Development Analysis*, International Research Foundation for Development, 2830 South Holly Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 55008, United States of America; tel: +1 612 689-2963; fax: +1 612 689-0560; e-mail: nirfd@aol.com.

The Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies are pleased to announce the continuation of **New Directions**, an essay series that seeks to open new avenues of inquiry in the study of Africa. Essays, written in English and French, are accepted from scholars in the humanities and the social sciences. An essay proposal should be presented in the form of a two-page abstract and should be sent to: *New Directions*, Africa Programme, Social Science Research Council, 810 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York 10019, United States of America; tel: +1 212 377-2700; fax: +1 212 377-2727.

Forthcoming conferences/ calls for papers

The **First Conference of African Experts on Landmines** on the theme, "Towards a landmine-free Africa: The OAU and the legacy of anti-personnel mines" (sponsored by the Organization of African Unity, in co-operation with the South African Government), will be held at the World Trade Centre, Kempton Park from 19 to 21 May 1997. For more details, contact Nicola Steyn, Institute for Security Studies, P O Box 4167,

Halfway House 1685, South Africa; tel: +27 11 315-7096; fax: +27 11 315-7099; e-mail: nicola@iss.co.za.

The **11th Biennial Congress of the African Association of Political Science (AAPS)** on "Peace and security in Africa" has been relocated to Durban, South Africa and will now be held from 23 to 26 June 1997. For more information, contact Professor Kwame Ninsin, Administrative Secretary, AAPS, P O Box MP 1100, Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe; tel & fax: +263 4 730-403; e-mail: aapp@harare.iafrica.com.

The **Third Biennial Meeting of the African Studies Association of South Africa (ASASA)**, to take place in the Gencor Conference Centre at Broederstroom near Johannesburg, has been rescheduled for 8, 9 and 10 September 1997. For further details, contact the ASASA Conference Co-ordinator, c/o Department of Political Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa; tel: +27 11 716-2765; fax: +27 11 403-7482; e-mail: 064NJP@cosmos.wits.ac.za.

The **Institut Français, London** is organizing a conference on the theme, "Propaganda and empire in France", to be held on 19 and 20 September 1997. For more information, contact Amanda Sackur, School of Languages and Area Studies, University of Portsmouth, Wiltshire Building, Hampshire Terrace, Portsmouth PO1 2BU, United Kingdom; tel: +44 1705 843-479; fax: +44 1705 843-450; e-mail: amanda@hum.port.ac.uk.

The **Biennial Conference of the South African Political Studies Association (SAPSA)** on the theme

"Africa: Democracy and economic growth in the 21st century", will be hosted by the Department of Political Studies, University of the North-West, Mmabatho from 8 to 10 October 1997. Sub-themes that will be addressed are human rights, gender issues, economic growth, the environment, and peace-keeping and conflict resolution. Papers should reach the organizers by 31 July 1997. For further details, contact Violet Mabalane, Department of Political Studies, School of Administration and Management, University of the North-West, Private Bag x2046, Mmabatho 2735, North-West Province, South Africa; +27 140 892-002; fax: +27 140 892-090/892-200; e-mail: agmpol@unibo.uniwest.ac.za.

The **40th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association (ASA)** will be held from 12 to 15 November 1997 in Columbus, Ohio on the theme, "The ASA and Africa: The first forty years and beyond". Sub-themes to be addressed are, *inter alia*, religion in Africa; the visual and performing arts; African challenges to philosophical paradigms; the African diaspora in global perspective; African literatures and languages; the sociology of Africa and urbanization; African economic development; human rights and current conflicts in Africa; the decomposition and reconstitution of African states; Africa in the media; and science, medicine, technology and the environment in Africa. For more information, contact 1997 Annual Meeting, African Studies Association, Emory University, Credit Union Building, Atlanta, Georgia 30322, United States of America; tel +1 404 329-6410; fax: +1 404 329-6433; e-mail: africa@emory.edu.

AFRICAN SOCIAL RESEARCH

(published biannually, June and December)

The Editorial Board of *African Social Research*, published by the Institute of Economic and Social Research (formerly the Institute for African Studies) at the University of Zambia, invites contributions from all those working in the general field of social research in Africa, especially in the disciplines of sociology and social anthropology, psychology, economics, human geography and demography, history and the political sciences. Articles are also welcome from scholars engaged on similar work elsewhere, when the findings appear to be applicable to Africa or provide important points of contrast.

Papers should be as concise as clarity permits and illustrations should be kept to a minimum. They should not usually exceed 10 000 words in length: consideration will, however, be given to longer articles of special interest.

A summary of about 200 words, suitable for abstract purposes, must be provided by the author.

Contributors should pay attention to the conventions of the journal and, in particular, to the form in which references are given. Detailed notes for contributors are published in *African Social Research*, Number 1. Manuscripts which do not conform to these requirements will be returned to the author, as the Editorial Board is unable to accept the additional work involved in amending and re-typing material for publication.

For detailed information, all material submitted for publication, and books for review, please contact:

The Editor (Prof Mubanga E Kashoki)
Institute of Economic and Social Research
University of Zambia
P O Box 900
Lusaka
Zambia

ZAMBIAN PAPERS

(a monograph published annually)

The Institute of Economic and Social Research (formerly the Institute for African Studies) at the University of Zambia is calling for contributions to *Zambian Papers*. These papers serve as a medium of publication in the broad field of disciplines related to the social sciences, with a bearing on Zambia and neighbouring countries. Social research findings in this era of rapid social change can be expected to have general theoretical and practical significance.

For further details, please contact:

The Editor (Prof Mubanga E Kashoki)
Institute of Economic and Social Research
University of Zambia
P O Box 900
Lusaka
Zambia

AFRICA INSTITUTE OF SOUTH AFRICA

(Company registration number 61 00002/08)

- An independent non-profit association, the Africa Institute has established itself as an internationally recognized research and information centre concerned with African affairs.

- The Institute's mission is to collect, process, interpret and disseminate information on African and especially Southern African affairs. It focuses primarily on the political, economic, international and developmental issues facing contemporary Africa.

- Information is made available through publications, a specialized reference library, conferences and non-Institute media. A small research staff answer enquiries and provide comment on topical developments. Apart from their regular studies, the researchers undertake commissioned research.

- In addition to its own researchers, the Institute appoints associates in the field of African studies, runs a programme for visiting researchers, and conducts seminars and workshops. While serving the public as a whole (both professional and lay), the Institute devotes particular attention to educational institutions as well as decision-makers in the business and public sectors.

- The Institute was established in 1960 and is controlled by a council composed of representatives of the South African universities and other experts. Because it therefore has a broad-based academic character, the Institute is funded mainly through a grant from the Department of National Education.

Membership

Membership of the Institute is open to everyone who supports its aims and functions, and entails the following advantages:
- Receipt of *Africa Insight* (incorporating *AI Bulletin*)
- Discount on *other Institute publications*
- Access to the reference library
- Consultation with professional staff
- Invitations to conferences
- Participation in Annual General Meetings

Membership fees

Individuals and schools: South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia & Swaziland: R80 per annum (VAT *included*). (Elsewhere: US$40 or equivalent, per annum)

Institutional membership: (*Academic bodies, libraries, governmental and non-governmental organizations and embassies*) South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia & Swaziland: R200 per annum (VAT *included*). (Elsewhere: US$100 or equivalent, per annum)

Corporate and donor membership: (*Companies and organizations not included under individual or institutional membership*) South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia & Swaziland: R500 per annum (VAT *included*). (Elsewhere: US$250 or equivalent, per annum)

Reference library

The library holdings, consisting of some 60 000 books and many thousands of periodical articles, are indexed on computer. In addition, newspaper and periodical articles on current African affairs, supplemented by an international news service, are kept on readily accessible country and subject files. The library is open to members and students on weekdays from 08:00–16:00, and on Saturdays by appointment from 9:00–12:00.

Institute publications

Africa Insight (incorporating *AI Bulletin*); (quarterly)
Africa at a Glance (two-yearly)
Irregular series of research and occasional papers

Subscription to Africa Insight

Africa Insight is also available on subscription to non-members. Annual rate for South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia & Swaziland: R70 per annum (VAT *included*). (Elsewhere: US$35 or equivalent). Overseas airmail rate: US$80 or equivalent.
Single copies (also back copies) available at R20 or US$10 outside South Africa, Lesotho, Namibia & Swaziland.

Application for membership/subscription to Africa Insight

The Secretary
Africa Institute of South Africa
Box 630
0001 PRETORIA

I/We support the objectives of the *Africa Institute* and undertake to pay the annual membership for individual/institutional/corporate/donor members. I/We wish to subscribe to *Africa Insight*.

Enclosed herewith the amount of .... being the membership/subscription fee for the first year.

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

Organization* ....

Postal address** ....

.... Postal code ....

Signature.. Date ....

* Institutional/corporate/donor members only
** The postal address must be exactly as you wish it to appear on the Institute's mailing list.

AFRICA