Militias, Rebels and Islamist Militants

Human Insecurity and State Crises in Africa

Edited by Wafula Okumu and Augustine Ikelegbe
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Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) soldiers. AP Photo/Jean-Marc Bouju.
Hundreds of thousands of refugees stream out of Mugunga refugee camp and head toward the Rwanda border as Zairian rebels move in to occupy what was the largest refugee camp in the world. AP Photo/Enric Martí.

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Acknowledgements

*Militias, rebels and Islamist militants* has been in the works since 2006 and is a culmination of the authors’ assiduousness, fervour and fortitude to make contributions that increase understanding of one of Africa’s most unfortunate phenomena: that of armed non-state groups undermining human security and the state capacity to provide it. After Musa Abutudu had introduced us to each other, we took the first step of preparing a concept note that was endorsed by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and supported with funds provided by the government of Finland. In this regard, we would like to express our deepest appreciation to the ISS Executive Director, Jakkie Cilliers, the ISS Pretoria Office Director, Cheryl Frank, and the African Conflict Prevention Programme Head, Paul-Simon Handy. All continued to offer words of encouragement and useful tips on content, concepts and historical facts.

This book is an expression of our desire to unpack a phenomenon that has become a prominent feature of African politics. It is also an outcome of hard work by all of the contributors who made many sacrifices to research and write superb chapters, as well as to review each other’s work. Bettina Engels, Eric George, Ibaba Sibaba, Muhammad Kabir, Phillip Kasaija, Anne Kubai, Macharia Munene, Godfrey Musila, Adams Oloo, Paul Omach, Justin Pearce, Krijn Peters, Samson Wassara, and Aleksi Ylönen should also be thanked for providing us with a wealth of knowledge that we heavily relied on to compile and edit the volume.

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Wafula Okumu and Augustine Ikelegbe
Pretoria
October 2010
About the book

*Militias, rebels and Islamist militants: human insecurity and state crises in Africa* explores how armed non-state groups have emerged as key players in African politics and conflicts since the 1990s. The book is a critical, multidisciplinary and comprehensive study of the threats that militias, rebels and Islamist militants pose to human security and the state in Africa. Through case studies utilising multidisciplinary approaches and concepts, analytical frameworks and perspectives cutting across social sciences and humanities, the book conceptualises armed non-state groups in Africa through their links to the state. After contextualising these groups in history, culture, economics, politics, law and other factors, a systematic effort is made to locate their roots in group identity, social deprivation, elite manipulations, the youth problématique, economic decline, poor political leadership and governance crisis. Differentiating militias from insurgents, rebel groups and extremist religious movements, the book illustrates how some of these groups have sustained themselves, undermining both human security and the state capacity to provide it. The responses to their threats by local communities, states, regional mechanisms and initiatives, and the international community are analysed. The findings provide a conceptual reference for scholars and practical recommendations for policymakers.

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Foreword

Although armed non-state groups have been major players in almost all African armed conflicts since 1960, a analysis of their participation in these conflicts has often been limited to factors such as greed and grievance. Generally, there has been a lack of a deeper analysis of the impact of these groups’ activities on human security and the capacity of the state to provide it.

*Militias, rebels and Islamist militants: human insecurity and state crises in Africa* is being published at a critical moment of assessment of the costs of the actions of armed non-state groups and their implications for human security and the capacity of the state to provide it.

This book is a timely contribution for a number of other reasons. First, it is being released at a time when armed non-state groups are becoming increasingly involved in African politics, particularly during and after elections. Second, these groups have constituted themselves into major armed forces, alternative police or anti-crime forces, standing ethnic, religious and regional armies, a morphous bands, a nd a rmed wings of political parties, insurgent movements and movements fighting for self-determination.

This book will serve as a useful resource for both academics and practitioners in the sense that it seeks to establish a theoretical framework that links the formation and sustenance of armed non-state groups to how the state is governed and its capacity to guarantee human security. It also makes far-reaching proposals on how to effectively combat and prevent threats posed by these groups. Indeed, if Africa is to address the challenges of development, democratisation and governance in Africa as a result of centralised, patrimonial, privatised and hegemonised state power, exclusionary politics, corruption, state malformation, de-co nstitutionalism, truncated transitions and successions, inequitable distribution and redistribution of public goods, inter-group tensions, poor leadership, and misuse and abuse of the state.

Hence it is important for both researchers and practitioners to be conversant with the fact that remedies for addressing the threats of these groups do not lie solely in state responses such as military action or use of brute force by the police, but in building the capacity of states to govern well.

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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADF</td>
<td>Allied Democratic Forces</td>
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<tr>
<td>ADLF</td>
<td>Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AENF</td>
<td>Alliance of Eritrean National Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFD</td>
<td>Alliance de Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRICOM</td>
<td>United States African Command</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFRC</td>
<td>Armed Forces Revolutionary Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AIAI</td>
<td>Al-Ittihad al-Islami</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired immunodeficiency Syndrome</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIS</td>
<td>Armée Islamique du Salut</td>
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<tr>
<td>AK-47</td>
<td>Avtomat Kalashnikova 47</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALIR</td>
<td>Armée pour la Libération du Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALS/ARS</td>
<td>Alliance for the Liberation of Somalia / Alliance for the Reliberation of Somalia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMIS</td>
<td>African Union Mission in Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMP</td>
<td>Alliance pour la Majorité Présidentielle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANR</td>
<td>Armée Nationale de Résistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANC</td>
<td>African National Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANSGs</td>
<td>Armed non-state groups</td>
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<td>APCP</td>
<td>All Peoples' Congress Party</td>
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<td>APRM</td>
<td>African Peer Review Mechanism</td>
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<td>Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (L'organisation A l-Qaïda au Maghreb Islamique)</td>
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<td>APC</td>
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<td>BAMOSD</td>
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<td>CDU</td>
<td>Civil Defence Unit</td>
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<td>Coalition for Militant Action</td>
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<td>CP</td>
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<td>Egbesu Boys of Africa</td>
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<td>ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS</td>
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<td>FIP</td>
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<td>FLA</td>
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<td>FLEC</td>
<td>Fronte de Libertação do Estado de Cabinda</td>
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<td>Front National de Libération (National Liberation Front)</td>
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<td>FLGO</td>
<td>Forces de Libération du Grand Ouest (Forces for the Liberation of the Great West)</td>
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<td>Gewehr 3 rifle</td>
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<td>Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat</td>
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<td>Global War on Terror</td>
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<td>HIV</td>
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<td>Human Rights Watch</td>
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<td>International criminal law</td>
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<td>Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre</td>
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<td>IGAD</td>
<td>Inter-governmental Authority on Development</td>
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<td>IHRL</td>
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<td>IGAD Partners Forum</td>
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<td>JIBWIS</td>
<td>Jama'atul Izalatul Bid'ah Wa Ikamatus Sunnah</td>
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<td>Jihadi Islamic Group</td>
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<td>JIUs</td>
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<td>Liberia Peace Council</td>
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<td>LRA</td>
<td>Lord’s Resistance Army</td>
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<td>LURD</td>
<td>Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy</td>
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<td>MAP</td>
<td>Mass awareness and participation</td>
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<td>MASSOB</td>
<td>Movement for the Realisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra</td>
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<td>Mouvement pour la Démocratie et la Justice au Tchad</td>
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<td>Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta</td>
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<td>MK</td>
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<td>MNC</td>
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<td>MNJ</td>
<td>Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice</td>
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<td>Movement for Democracy in Liberia</td>
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<td>MONUC</td>
<td>Mission des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo</td>
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<td>MONUSCO</td>
<td>Mission de l’Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en République Démocratique du Congo</td>
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<td>MPCI</td>
<td>Mouvement Patriotique de Côte d’Ivoire</td>
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**Acronyms and Abbreviations**

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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
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<td>Mouvement Patriotique pour la Réstauration de la République Centrafricaine</td>
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<td>MPRD</td>
<td>Mouvement pour la Paix, la Reconstruction et le Développement</td>
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<td>MPLA</td>
<td>Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola</td>
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<td>MRC</td>
<td>Mouvement Révolutionnaire Congolais</td>
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<td>MTNMC</td>
<td>Mouvement Touareg Nord Mali pour le Changement</td>
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<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
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<td>NDMFS</td>
<td>Niger Delta Militant Force Squad</td>
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<td>NDPSF</td>
<td>Niger Delta People’s Salvation Front</td>
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<td>NDPVF</td>
<td>Niger Delta People’s Volunteer Force</td>
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<td>NDVF</td>
<td>Niger Delta Volunteer Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NDVS</td>
<td>Niger Delta Volunteer Service</td>
</tr>
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<td>NDV</td>
<td>Niger Delta Vigilante</td>
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<td>NEPAD</td>
<td>New Partnership for Africa’s Development</td>
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<td>Northern Frontier District Liberation Front</td>
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<td>NGOs</td>
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<td>National Islamic Front</td>
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<td>National Movement for Reform and Development</td>
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<td>NPFPL</td>
<td>National Patriotic Front of Liberia</td>
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<td>NRA/M</td>
<td>National Resistance Army/Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organisation of African Unity</td>
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<td>ODM</td>
<td>Orange Democratic Movement</td>
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<td>OLF</td>
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<td>ONGC</td>
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<td>ONLF</td>
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<td>OPC</td>
<td>Oodua People’s Congress</td>
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<td>PAC</td>
<td>Pan-Africanist Congress</td>
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<td>PAIGC</td>
<td>Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde</td>
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<td>PALIPEHUTU</td>
<td>Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu (Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People)</td>
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<td>PRA</td>
<td>Popular Resistance Army</td>
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<td>Project for the Research of Islamist Movements</td>
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<td>Parti pour l'Unité et la Sauvegarde de l'Intégrité du Congo (Congolese Rally for Democracy)</td>
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<td>Rassemblement Congolais pour l’A démocratie (Congolese Rally for Democracy)</td>
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<td>RENAMO</td>
<td>Resistência Nacional de Moçambique</td>
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<td>RFC</td>
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<td>RPF/A</td>
<td>Rwanda Patriotic Front/Army (Front Patriotique Rwandais)</td>
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<td>Rassemblement Populaire Rwandais</td>
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<td>Republic of Congo</td>
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<td>Ralliement pour l’Unité et la Démocratie</td>
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<td>RUF</td>
<td>Revolutionary United Front</td>
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<td>Small Boys Unit</td>
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<td>Special Court for Sierra Leone</td>
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<td>Socle pour le Changement, l’Unité et la Démocratie</td>
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<td>Sabao Land Defence Force</td>
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<td>Sudan Liberation Movement/Army</td>
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<td>Somali National Movement</td>
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<td>SPLM/A</td>
<td>Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army</td>
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<td>Somali Salvation Democratic Front</td>
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<td>Southern Sudan Defence Force</td>
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<td>South West Africa People’s Organisation</td>
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<td>Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission</td>
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<td>Transnational corporations</td>
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<td>TPLF</td>
<td>Tigray People’s Liberation Front</td>
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<td>Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative</td>
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<td>Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée</td>
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INTRODUCTION

A major presence in the African states is the multiplicity of armed non-state groups (ANSGs) that range from armed bands, vigilantes, cultist groups, private security companies, criminal bands, community/ethnic/religious/regional armies, armed wings of political parties and private armies to militias, Islamist militants and rebel groups. These groups have been key players in the political violence that has severely undermined human security and the state in Africa.

Augustine Ikelegbe and Wafula Okumu

Introduction: towards conceptualisation and understanding of the threats of armed non-state groups to human security and the state in Africa
Republic of Congo (DRC), Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. Apart from the 19 civil wars and one interstate war in 16 African countries between 1990 and 2000, there have been numerous internal conflicts in which militias, militant Islamist movements and smaller rebel groups were involved. These are a re s et out by Bettina Engels (chapter 3 and appendix).

The activities of these groups in national and regional conflicts have exerted a huge toll on the stability, development and security of Africa. Human insecurity has been a major casualty in terms of massive internal displacements, disruption of livelihoods, violations of human rights, heightened criminality, loss of lives and humanitarian crises.

Although ANSGs have existed in Africa in the pre-colonial, colonial and immediate post-independence periods, there has been an resurgence since the 1990s, with groups forming for dissent, resistance, civil defence, and struggles for or against determinations. Political elites form and resource groups, often through the state.

A less notable has been the persistence and seeming entrenchment of this phenomenon in some countries such as the DRC, Somalia and Sudan.

The increased incidence and activities of these ANSGs raise serious concerns about the institutionalisation of violence as a means of redressing grievances, its widespread use and abuse by state and non-state actors, the exposure of the human insecurity, humanitarian crises, development and governance crises, and potential entrenchment of this phenomenon in some countries.

The book highlights the growing role of ANSGs in the political and socioeconomic landscape and the conflicts in Africa and their growing use of arms and violence, which traditionally were the monopoly of the state. The work also identifies the interfaces between the state, the nature of governance and politics with the emergence, activities and methods of ANSGs as well as with how they impact on the multiple crises of the state, governance and development in Africa.

Further, the impact of ANSGs’ activities and engagements is examined, as well as the effect of internal conflicts, insurgencies and civil wars on human security and progress in Africa. This book is composed of case studies that utilise multidisciplinary approaches and concepts, a nati cal frameworks and perspectives drawn mainly from the social sciences and humanities. The specific case studies draw on historical, cultural, spatial and related contexts, and contemporary developments.

Particularly, the book seeks to analyse and understand ANSGs as institutions of struggle, opposition, resistance and violence in African politics; as part of a broad and larger politics of the struggles by identity groups and counter-elite for power and resources and how these struggles are mediated by the state, ruling classes, political elite, civil society, neighbouring countries, and in international organisations and national actors. The book further investigates how ANSGs are transformed from civil struggle groups into militant and violent movements and how they are transformed into non-violent political actors. Finally, the book makes a concerted effort to provide knowledge that could inform policy related to ANSGs in Africa.

This book is composed of case studies that utilise multidisciplinary approaches and concepts, a nati cal frameworks and perspectives drawn mainly from the social sciences and humanities. The specific case studies draw on historical, cultural, spatial and related contexts, and contemporary developments.

Particularly, the book seeks to analyse and understand ANSGs as institutions of struggle, opposition, resistance and violence in African politics; as part of a broad and larger politics of the struggles by identity groups and counter-elite for power and resources and how these struggles are mediated by the state, ruling classes, political elite, civil society, neighbouring countries, and in international organisations and national actors. The book further investigates how ANSGs are transformed from civil struggle groups into militant and violent movements and how they are transformed into non-violent political actors. Finally, the book makes a concerted effort to provide knowledge that could inform policy related to ANSGs in Africa.
This chapter captures the major findings of the contributors in nine sections. The first section is an overview of the three types of ANSGs – militias, rebels and Islamist militants – that form the main topic of this study. The second section contextualises ANSGs in Africa. The third to fifth sections explore the social bases of militias and rebel movements, the causality and sustainment of armed conflicts and ANSGs and the nexuses between ANSGs, power, politics and violence. The sixth and seventh sections are exposures of how ANSGs threaten human security and undermine the state in Africa. The last two sections focus on the emerging regional dynamics and ramifications of ANSG activities, and draw some conclusions.

MILITIAS, REBEL MOVEMENTS AND ISLAMIST MILITANT GROUPS IN AFRICA: CONCEPTS AND TYPES

Militias

A militia is an armed force of ordinary persons or, as Zahr puts it, ‘an armed faction’ engaged in combat or fighting or that resorts to violence to attain certain objectives. This presupposes first that it is a civil force or a privately organised group of armed persons and second that it is largely an informally organised force whose structures, hierarchies, commands, procedures and processes are usually not fixed and rigid. Third, it is generally mobilised voluntarily on the basis of some common identity challenges or general concerns and threats.

Drawing on characterisation by Zahr, one can identify the essential characteristics of militias as irregular forces (outside regular forces), informal (not usually formal state militaries or paramilitaries), private forces (established and commanded by private persons), illegal (not sanctioned by law), illegitimate (even though they may be adjuncts or connected to regimes and recognised political groups) and clandestine (suppor, funding, arms and management are often secret and outside the public view). The purpose or goals of militias usually relate to projecting or protecting, and fighting for and defending certain private, group, communal, ethnic, religious, sectional, regional, national, regime or related interests that may concern power and resource struggles, security and safety.

Historically, the militia is an organisation of local defence service or duty, which acts in response to challenges of war, disaster and security. In the advanced Western countries, the militia was either a reserve army or an emergency force of the paramilitary type that was established by a government or communities. Militias of the resistance, rebellion, liberation and self-defence persuasion existed in Europe and America until the mid-20th century in countries such as France, during the World War II German occupation, and Austria, after World War I. The reserve, special duty or emergency paramilitary type is the quintessential militia identified by Godfrey Musila (chapter 4), who adopts a state-centrist and legal conception of militia as an extension, and volunteer corps, of a regular army that conforms to the law.

The more contemporary form, particularly in Africa, is that of small and mobile bands, usually youths, who are voluntarily and selectively recruited, poorly trained and moderately armed, and organised to respond to immediate challenges that may be national, regional, sectional, ethnic, religious and communal and that may relate to issues of power, resources, self-determination, freedom, insurgency or counterinsurgency. They may be formed by retired or current security personnel or by those with relevant training and experience, and usually revolve around certain prominent commanders or warlords. They may be militant wings or even armed wings of some civil agitation or struggles, self-determination movements, political parties, or informal armed wings of factions of the ruling class and political elite.

There are essentially two forms of militias in history: statist and non-statist or private militias. State militias are ‘paramilitary formations that organise in defence of the political order’ and proxies set up or cultivated as ‘adjuncts of state power’ and which fight for, on behalf of or at the behest of the state and state functionaries. Each of these categories is categorised in to one or t hree t ypes: quasimilitary or paramilitary militias, government militias and state-patronised militias.

The quasimilitary or paramilitary militia is constructed as the populist, large-scale, periodic, short-term complement to a standing army in the advanced countries and provinces of countries where the standard army is not widely present and acts as a time, to ensure a military force with occasional duties that is established for particular public purposes and peculiar circumstances such as emergencies, disasters, internal conflicts and consists of those who are by law available for call-up or service. As a public force
constituted by law, its mobilisation, organisation, training, discipline, equipment, funding and deployment are regulated by the state. The reserve militia and the less formally organised state militias and alternative forces that existed in Europe and America between the 17th and 19th centuries fit into this mould. The modern version is the reserve army and standby forces of some states.6

State or regime militias are civil armed groups constituted by governments to combat certain threats or security situations. They may be a militia formal quasimilitary organisation or a privately armed group of a top government leader. The former may be remunerated and equipped with public funds but its existence and sustainment is tied to a particular regime rather than constitutional provisions and enactments. Presidential, palace or private security guards are examples of non-military armed forces.7

There are government organised, patronised, supported and guaranteed by governments. Here governments may directly or surreptitiously make use of militias on the basis of utility and expedience and may discreetly fund, equip and protect a militia group for purposes of crime control and counterinsurgency. In Sudan, Liberia, Côte d’Ivoire and the DRC, governments have legitimised, supported or patronised some militia groups.8 In Sudan, the Bashir government has used the Janjaweed militias to fight rebel groups in the Darfur region. In Côte d’Ivoire the government has used the Jeunes Patriotes (Young Patriots) in the civil war to target northerners, immigrants and the French.9

Non-state militias are more privately organised, supported and funded from local communities, ethnic or regional groups. They may be part of larger groups, but usually tend to freelance and are available on a case-by-case basis to perform certain clandestine political roles such as committing or countering criminal violence. They may be part of larger groups, but usually tend to freelance and are available for diverse commercial violence and may be involved in resource plundering and criminal violence.

Apart from the above categories, militias can also be classified using other variables. For example, the core reason for the militia group formation could be underpinning of structure, roles, dynamics and methods. A militia group could be categorised in terms of objectives or purposes. Thus, there are political militias, insurgent militias, vigilante militias, and self-determination militias. Insurgent militias are formed to resist state policies, practices and authority, particularly issues of marginality, corruption and repression through armed rebellion and resistance against state policies and practices, elite behaviour and national and regional problems and conditions. Warlord militias are small-arm bands and cult groups that have been instructed to a round in individual military leaders. They may be part of larger groups, but usually tend to freelance and are available for diverse commercial violence and may be involved in resource plundering and criminal violence.

One can further differentiate militias by their social base, age and identity lines and constitute identity-based local armies or foot soldiers of the state. Community, ethnic and regional militias are formed to target issues of marginality, corruption and repression through armed rebellion and resistance against state policies and practices, elite behaviour and national and regional problems and conditions. Vigilante militias can erode trust, roles, dynamics and methods and then transform themselves into insurgent or counterinsurgent militias to silence or intimidate opponents of governments in the form of individuals, groups, political parties or insurgent rebels. Vigilante militias can erode trust, roles, dynamics and methods and then transform themselves into insurgent or counterinsurgent militias to silence or intimidate opponents of governments in the form of individuals, groups, political parties or insurgent rebels. Vigilante militias can erode trust, roles, dynamics and methods and then transform themselves into insurgent or counterinsurgent militias to silence or intimidate opponents of governments in the form of individuals, groups, political parties or insurgent rebels. Vigilante militias can erode trust, roles, dynamics and methods and then transform themselves into insurgent or counterinsurgent militias to silence or intimidate opponents of governments in the form of individuals, groups, political parties or insurgent rebels.
Table 1–1: Types of militia in Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State militias</td>
<td>Complement state militaries</td>
<td>National Guard (Nigeria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government-supported/-patronised</td>
<td>Counterinsurgency</td>
<td>Popular Defence Force / Janjaweed (Sudan) Kamajor (Sierra Leone) Fifth Brigade (Zimbabwe) Arrow Group (Uganda) Jeunes Patriotes (Côte d’Ivoire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-state/private militias</td>
<td>Political objectives Struggle for political domination</td>
<td>Mambas, Cobras and Ninjas (RoC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/ethnic militias</td>
<td>Struggle for inclusion, resources and justice</td>
<td>Egbesu/Oduduwa People’s Congress (Nigeria) Mungiki (Kenya) Militias under Southern Defence Force (Sudan) Interahamwe (Rwanda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth militias</td>
<td>Identity Resource access Insurgency</td>
<td>Niger Delta Volunteer Force / Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (Nigeria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vigilante militias</td>
<td>Security Crime control</td>
<td>Bakassi Boys (Nigeria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warlord militias</td>
<td>Struggle for power and resources Commercial violence</td>
<td>Armed bands and cult groups in the Niger Delta (Nigeria)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by authors.

and recruitment, there can also be social movement or broad-based militias and warlord-based militias.

There is considerable fluidity in colouration and roles and in fact militias could, and do, wear different tags at different times. Community, ethnic and youth militias, for example, could be in insurgent or counterinsurgent, political and progovernment or even vigilante militias. Vigilante militias could become political and pro-government militias. Vigilante militias could be crime control and commercial violence. Community-, et hnic- and y outh-based. Th e Kamajor militias in S ierra L eone, though initially formed as a nd su pervised b y go vernment of ficials, be came a grassroots p opular co mmunity m ovement o rganised, su pported a nd e ven sponsored by community leaders and members. The Interahamwe in Rwanda was both a state militia and an ethnic militia.

Rebel movements

Rebel movements are organisations that essentially engage in armed opposition and resistance, a nd particularly in surrection or in surgence against governments and ruling regimes. It is the latter that defines the movement as rebel or creates the rebel tag. A s H arbom a nd W allensteen n ote, r ebel m ovements a re a rmed o pposition or in surgent o rganisations that a re in compatible with, di sagree with and c hallenge exi sting na tional g overnments. Th e c en tral g oal of a r ebel m ovement i s c hange in t erms of di splacement a nd re placement of exi sting g overnments, t he de volution o f a narchy t o g rant sepa rate exi stence to some regional or ethnic homeland.

There are different types of rebel movements. The liberation rebel movement resists co lonisation a nd f oreign do mination a nd seeks i nde pendence, w hereas t he insurgent m ovement s eeks p olitical c hange a nd p olitical p ower. A s Thompson n otes, t he r ebel m ovement s eeks t o es tablish a n ew p olitical s ystem based on an ideology such as communism. Warlord insurrections are closely knitted groups built around leaders that seek to overthrow regimes/ regime leaders but form personal territorial fiefdoms.

Rebel m ovements t hat h ave b een e ngaged i n li beration s truggles a gainst c olonial a nd f oreign do mination i n clude t he M au M au (Kenya), F ront d e Li bération N ationale (National L iberation F ront, FLN – A lgeria), Movimento
Table 1–2: Types of rebel movements in Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rebel movements</th>
<th>Liberation movements</th>
<th>Insurgent rebel movements</th>
<th>Separatist rebel movements</th>
<th>Islamist rebel movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Decolonisation</td>
<td>Resistance</td>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td>Islamic law/rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independence from</td>
<td>Reform struggles</td>
<td>Self-existence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>foreign government</td>
<td>Overthrow of regimes/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>governments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grievance</td>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td>Marginalisation</td>
<td>Ethnic/regional</td>
<td>Unbelief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>narrative</td>
<td>Exploitative foreign</td>
<td>Exclusion</td>
<td>marginalisation</td>
<td>Corruption of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Islamic practices</td>
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<td>and rules of</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Popular movements</td>
<td>Armed wing of</td>
<td>Ethnoregional</td>
<td>Political</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>driven by militant</td>
<td>political movement</td>
<td>movements</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nationalist</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>organisations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology</td>
<td>Nationalist and</td>
<td>Political programmes/</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>liberation ideals</td>
<td>arrangements of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>inclusion/reform</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Militant nationalist</td>
<td>Excluded</td>
<td>Militant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>leaders</td>
<td>politicians/youths/</td>
<td>ethnoregional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>opposition</td>
<td>leaders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Militant Islamic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>leaders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dominant</td>
<td>Guerrilla warfare</td>
<td>Guerrilla warfare</td>
<td>Bloody protest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>methods of</td>
<td>Pitched battles</td>
<td>Pitched battles</td>
<td>Riots</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>engagement</td>
<td>from controlled</td>
<td>from controlled</td>
<td>Terror attacks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>territories</td>
<td>territories</td>
<td>Guerrilla warfare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>Mau Mau (Kenya)</td>
<td>National Redemption</td>
<td>Rebel groups</td>
<td>Armed religious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>African Party for the</td>
<td>Front/Army (Sudan)</td>
<td>in Sudan, Mali, Nigeria</td>
<td>groups in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independence of</td>
<td>Revolutionary United</td>
<td>(1967–1970), Senegal,</td>
<td>Algeria, Somalia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guinea and Cape</td>
<td>Front (Sierra Leone)</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Verde)</td>
<td>Lord’s Resistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Army (Uganda)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled by authors.
and Development, UFDD) has been fighting government forces in the east in a struggle to topple the government of Idriss Deby. Uganda’s Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) is perhaps one of the oldest rebel movements in Africa and the most regionalised. It has been fighting the Museveni government for over two decades. Bad governance based on ethnic and regional hegemonic rule, marginalisation and exclusion, fermented separatist rebel movements such as the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in Southern Sudan and the EPFL in Ethiopia. The Tuareg rebellion in the northern parts of Mali, Niger and South Algeria seeks an Azawad independent state. In the Casamance region of Senegal, the Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance (Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance, MFDC) has been waging a self-determination struggle since the 1980s. In Ethiopia, a separatist group, the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), is fighting the Ethiopian government for the control of the oil- and gas-rich Ogaden region.

**Militant Islamist groups**

Militant Islamist groups are a reflection of the resurgence of political Islam, radical Islamism and the global jihad. The groups, according to Kabir (chapter 11) manifest themselves in politically extermist forms of violent resistance and dissidence against regimes, policies and society branded as impious, un-Islamic, or tainted by modernising and Western influences. George and Ylönen (chapter 12) as well as Kabir (chapter 11) identify several of these groups in Egypt, Algeria, Morocco and Nigeria, such as al-Jihad, the Armée Islamique du Sahel (AIS), Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat (Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, GSPC), Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Boko Haram and Taleban. In Somalia, religious militias such as the Al-Ittihad al-Islami (Union of Islamic Courts, UIC), Al-Shabaab and Ahlu Sunna, which control most of the country, have fought for several years in the country ungovernable. The strategy of militant Islamist groups to target Westerners, Western allies and Western interests has earned them membership on the ‘terrorist list’ compiled by the US State Department. Because of their perceived links to the global jihad, al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, these groups have drawn keen interest from Western security and intelligence agencies.

**Table 1–3: Comparisons of militias, Islamist militants and rebel movements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Militias</th>
<th>Armed religious groups</th>
<th>Rebel movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goals</strong></td>
<td>Limited sociopolitical goals and more specific local/community/ethnic issues</td>
<td>Clear religious objectives such as Islamic basis and reform of the state/government</td>
<td>Clear and larger sociopolitical goals such as change of governments and secession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation</strong></td>
<td>Identity-based socio-political grievances and challenges with a mix of opportunism</td>
<td>Religious and socio-political grievances</td>
<td>Larger political grievances and struggles for power and access to resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope and size</strong></td>
<td>Small groups constructed around commanders/leaders</td>
<td>Larger groups founded on Islamic leaderships and cells that operate among the population</td>
<td>Larger groups constructed as fighting units that operate in or seek extensive territorial control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methods</strong></td>
<td>Armed protests, violent attacks and guerrilla warfare, but often may not hold territory</td>
<td>Violent protests and attacks</td>
<td>Larger-scale organised fighting through guerrilla and conventional warfare from controlled territories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagements/targets</strong></td>
<td>Low-intensity conflicts, engage security agents, rival militias and perceived enemies/enemy groups</td>
<td>Violent attacks against civil population and security agencies, perceived infidels and deviant religious groups</td>
<td>Intensive conflicts against the government/pro-government groups and military over extensive territory Full-scale war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social base</strong></td>
<td>Community and ethnic groups and youths</td>
<td>Religious and youth volunteers</td>
<td>Larger social basis, which may comprise identity/non-identity and youths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Funding</strong></td>
<td>Local extortions/levies/tolls, low-level resource plundering Local and ethnic elite funding</td>
<td>Tolls/levies/taxes Elite funding</td>
<td>Extensive toll collections Imposed levies Extensive resource exploitation/plundering/trading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by authors.
The nature and character of ANSGs in Africa

Most ANSGs are structured and disciplined, with strong organisational structures, well-coordinated systems, strict rules and regulations that guide operations and behaviour of followers as well as visionary, clear-headed and effective leaderships who weld the groups together, and inspire and sustain them. Among these are the NRA in Uganda and the EPLF in Eritrea. Clapham has noted that groups exhibiting these organisational and leadership characteristics were able to achieve success in the battlefield, a fair level of governance in the territories they controlled, positive relations with communities and local people and eventually attained their objectives.21

However, the majority of ANSGs are disorganised and undisciplined with loose control over operations and activities, poor leadership, organisational problems, control and command problems and factional fighting, and are prone to fragmentation and factional fighting. Th ese problems often manifest in criminal activities, violent infighting, in discriminate and g r atuous violence, exploitation and abuse of communities, forceful conscription of children, abuse of drugs and plundering of community resources.

In Africa many ANSGs descend from insurgency and activities, political violence, exploitation and abuse of communities, forceful conscription of children, abuse of drugs and plundering of community resources. This has been evident in ANSG activities in Liberia, Sierra Leone, the DRC, the RoC, Uganda, Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi and Nigeria. A critical question then is, how and why has this transformation taken place?

The internal dynamics and behaviour of ANSGs could be explained by factors such as the levels of training, ideological leanings, dedication to goals, the nature of leadership, the nature of relations with host communities, the nature of threats faced and the nature of the environment.22 Zahar asserts that militia membership, objectives, structures and resources are determined by the nature of the militia-civil relations, treatment of communities and civilians and behaviour.23 Militias that are well-structured and organised with regard to chains of command and control, sanctions processes and discipline, are able to enforce standards of conduct, attribute responsibility, develop enforcement and retribution mechanisms and ensure co-operation with communities.24 Peters (chapter 14) notes that ANSG activities are in conflict with communities, and that ANSGs are disorganised and undisciplined, posing a problem to communities because of the conduct of fighters and a low level of predation on or exploitation of communities.

Exemplary leadership is the key to success, and those leaders who seek inclusion, acceptance, recognition and legitimacy from national, regional and international audiences and actors tend towards more moderate behaviour and relations with inhabitants of the controlled territories.25

The environment in which ANSGs operate determines specific organisational structures, strategies, operations and behaviours of members. For example, there exist more brutal methods of social control and more disjunction in aspirations, values and goals in a symmetrical environments. Peters (chapter 14) points out that ANSGs that are challenged by unfavourable environments, such as restriction to jungle camps in inaccessible forests as in the case of the RUF in Sierra Leone, and sparsely populated villages as in the case of the NRA in Uganda, resort to forced conscriptions, abductions, forced labour, harsh punishments for escapees, confiscation of materials and reprisals. ANSGs that operate in independent economic resources are subject to exploitation of local resources. ANSGs operating in unfamiliar areas and among unfriendly communities usually use brutal methods to reassert control and legitimacy from national, regional and international audiences and actors. Insurgent movements that operate in unfamiliar areas and among unfriendly communities usually use brutal methods to reassert control and legitimacy from national, regional and international audiences and actors. Insurgent movements that operate in unfamiliar areas and among unfriendly communities usually use brutal methods to reassert control and legitimacy from national, regional and international audiences and actors. Insurgent movements that operate in unfamiliar areas and among unfriendly communities usually use brutal methods to reassert control and legitimacy from national, regional and international audiences and actors.
apprentices, artisans, street urchins and the urban and rural poor. They are largely marginalised, a,ienated and frustrated youths, who are often enmeshed in multiple roles, such as social identities leading them into the ranks of ANSGs. George and Ylönen (chapter 12) argue that alienated, frustrated and disenchanted youths, who are mostly urban and unemployed, together with poverty, are at the root of militant Islamist groups. Adams Oloo (chapter 6) locates the social base of the militias in Kenya in the lower class, among the unemployed youths, artisans, small traders, landless squatters, street children, hawkers, urban poor and slum dwellers.

Marginalised and alienated youths such as the Moryham youths in Somalia, the Raray boys in Sierra Leone, Bayaye in Kenya and Uganda, Machicha in Tanzania, Hittiste in Algeria, Tsotsis in South Africa, Area Boys in Lagos and Yan Daba in Kano, Nigeria, have made up the core membership of several ANSGs. In Nigeria, the Obedia People's Congress (OPC) attracted artisans, traders, unemployed, peasants and the underclass in the densely populated areas of Lagos. However, at the top echelons of many militias and rebel movements are a sprinkling of educated and partly educated elements and activists who provide intellectual and general leadership, relate to or liaise with the outside world and, in particular, speak for the groups. This has been especially the case with the ethnic militias in Nigeria.30

The presence of women in ANSGs has been neglected in the literature. As Peters notes (chapter 11) argue that in many ANSGs, women have no role in decision-making and are often marginalised and oppressed within the groups. Women also act as local moderators of behaviour and peace-builders. Furthermore, women have often been present merely as victims. But they perform important roles, such as carrying fetish items, ferrying arms, acting as spies or informants and providing such services as cooking, social welfare and health care. Women also act as local moderators of behaviour and peace-builders. They also act as a moderating influence, and in the Niger Delta resource conflicts, for example, community women groups have sought to restrain youth violence and hate speech and protect women and children from the conflict. Although Alice Lakwena remains the most famous rebel leader in recent times, rebel groups such as ONLF, EPLF and RPF are known to have women in their rank and file.

As far as identity is concerned, ANSGs tend to share identity commonalities such as community, ethnicity, region and religion. Even when ANSGs have broad membership or a pan-identity spread, they begin with a core identity and may have identity-based structures at a subgroup and cell level. As Peters notes (chapter 14), the point of entry and initial base of mobilisation and recruitment in ANSGs and insurgencies are often marginalised and oppressed ethnic groups, such as the Mano and Gio groups in Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), and the Mende ethnic group in Foday Sankoh's RUF in Sierra Leone.

At the early stages of development, membership is mainly voluntary and based on identity patriotism, mobilisation and solidarity and particularly the depth of feelings about perceived identity-based grievances. In some cases recruitment is restrained by space, arms and maintenance resources. However, as engagements broaden and confrontations become more extensive and stressful, and as they begin to lose contact with communities, ANSGs may turn to conscription and forced recruitment from within and outside their identity base. Juveniles, young girls and children are sometimes captured, conscripted and used as fighters, spies, ordnance carriers, sex slaves and cannon fodder. In Sierra Leone, drugs were used to psychologically prepare members for action. Examples of child rebels include Charles Taylor's Small Boys Unit (SBU), the Gronna Boys in Liberia, Museveni's Kidogos in Uganda, and the Green Bombers in Zimbabwe.

The use of child rebels is quite prevalent in Africa. In Angola, for example, about 8000 children registered for demobilisation in 2002, while in Mozambique there were about 300 000 children used during the war. The recruitment and circulation of youths and child rebels across borders were main features of the conflict in the 13 to 15 years of age. The LRA, like other rebel groups, prefers child rebels because of their net benefits in terms of doctrination and effectiveness. Children and adolescents also form almost half of the militias and rebels in the DRC. At February 2007, about 54 000 children had been disarmed and demobilised compared to 115 000 adult combatants, while an estimated 15 000 – 20 000 children compared to 85 000 adults were awaiting demobilisation.

ANSGs also draw members from migrants and fighters across borders. Bettina Engels (chapter 3) introduces the co-operators of regional recruits (migrants) and regional warriors (recruited fighters) to explore this phenomenon and asserts that most ANSGs are regionally embedded. In West Africa, there has been a high level of mobility of fighters across borders between countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire.
CAUSALITY AND SUSTAINMENT OF ARMED CONFLICTS AND ANSGs

Several explanatory perspectives and findings can be used to decipher the issues of causality and sustainment of armed conflicts and ANSGs in Africa. The point of departure for an analysis is the analytical perspectives that provide explanations for conflicts and rebellion over resource appropriation and control of opportunities. An analysis of the struggle for lootable resources. This discourse is highlighted in the chapters by Kasaija, Wassara, Ibaba and Ikelegbe, and Kabir.

According to Collier and Hoefler, most rebellions are either pure loot-seeking or combine justice-seeking and loot-seeking. In the latter, grievances could be a start-up motive for rebellion, but groups turn to looting for survival and protection. Thus grievances exist and are articulated as a platform for agitation, violence and terrorism. However, in spite of evidence from the cases of Liberia, Sierra Leone and the DRC, the greed thesis is simplistic, one-sided and weak in several respects. First, the larger issues such as the character of the state, regimes and governance, hegemonic struggles, the roles of politics and state failures and economic decline on which the causation and dynamics of civil wars are situated, are neglected in this thesis. Second, as emerging evidence suggests, the engagement in ANSG activities, violence and terrorism is not simply the result of the motives of people with a low level of education and low market opportunities, but a complex matrix of issues such as ideology, identity, localised and mundane reasons and personal motivations. So, the thesis is merely a short-term smokescreen for larger and long-term interests and objectives of resource appropriation.

The later works of Collier and Sambanis push the issue of the availability of lootable resources or ‘extortable economic rents’ beyond mere motivation to that of opportunities that make rebellion profitable. As Elbadawi and Sambanis have found, there is a positive and significant association between natural resources and violent conflicts in Africa. Resources are not only strongly linked to both grievance and greed-based conflicts, but are more difficult to terminate and tend to have ‘shorter term post conflict peace durations’. Thus grievance and greed tend to have a symbiotic relationship with rebellion. To get started, rebellion needs grievance, whereas to be sustained, it needs greed.

The thesis is based on evidence of the association between mineral wealth and the occurrence and duration of conflicts; the existence of violent scramble for resources in conflict regions; the concentration of conflicts in resource-rich zones of conflict regions; the profiteering from warlords and conflict by warlords, traders and ADLF fighters; the involvement of merchants, syndicates and black marketeering companies in resource-rich zones of conflict regions, and the interference of neighbouring countries that tend to be motivated by struggles for privileged resource access.

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In fact, Guichaoua has noted that the greed-based analysis is a historical and not comprehensive.\textsuperscript{55} Mkandawire has further pointed out that in spite of the catalogue of cases usually packaged as evidence of greed in Africa’s resource wars, nowhere in Africa has a b and o f cr iminals grown into a rebel movement.\textsuperscript{52} Therefore a more comprehensive analytical perspective has to be sought and particularly those on Kenya, Nigeria and Sudan.

The struggle for resources

The resource competition model situates conflicts in the mobilisation, organisation and collective actions in pursuance of valued resources, particularly where identity is associated with clear advantages in resource distribution and benefits.\textsuperscript{53} However, though the politics and competition for resources are present in identity-based mobilisation and thus could escalate disputes into conflicts,\textsuperscript{54} conflicts are not pervasively and proportionally related to inequalities of resource endowment and distribution.\textsuperscript{55}

Rather, conflicts are a nd ANSG activities are rooted in the struggles for access to resources by diverse claimants – the state, ethnic groups, regions, communities, political elites, factions of the ruling class, n eighbouring con untries a nd in ternational b usiness g roups a nd syndicates. It is therefore not surprising that most of the resource-rich regions in Africa, such as Angola, L iberia, S ierra L eone, N igeria, t he D RC, t he R oC, Equatorial Guinea, Ch ad, Mali, the CAR, Sudan and Ethiopia have been embroiled in conflicts and ANSG activities.

In most of these regions, rebels, militias, renegades and syndicates are guards and were instrumental in turning the militias into opportunistic, criminal and resource-theft elements. In chapter 8, Ibaba and Ikelegbe state that oil theft syndicates in the Niger Delta armed, funded and used militias as guards and were instrumental in turning the militias into opportunistic, criminal and resource-theft elements.\textsuperscript{56}

Identity crisis

Identity is a nd iden tity-based di visions a nd oblisitations a long a nd t he hnic lin es, a s Elbadawi and Sambanis have noted, is positively, robustly and non-monotonically associated with t he p robability o f wa r.\textsuperscript{56} Many A fricans co untries a re de eply divided, polarised and fractionalised policies, religious, r egional and s ectional lin es. A s n oted in m any o f t he c hapters, s truggles a gainst exclusion and marginalisation, ex clusio n a nd r epression h ave p rovided p latforms f or ANSG emergence and activities in s uch c ountries as Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Nigeria, Kenya, Senegal, Mali, Ethiopia and Côte d’Ivoire.

Often a siege mentality is constructed around the identity cause and interests and guarantors of the identity group survival in the face of perceived threats. This is why ANSGs are often the informal, protection, defending or offensive agent of sub-national groups. In Burundi, rebels based in the majority ethnic H utu fought exclusion and marginalisation by the Tutsis, who constitute about 15 per cent of the population. In northern Mali, a Tuareg rebellion driven by ethnic and Islamic insurgents and based in the north has been embroiled in conflicts and ANSG activities.

The state and governance crises

The state-centred thesis places causality in the nature, character and behaviour of the state, the use to which it is put and the nature of its politics. Being large, bloated, authoritarian, repressive, violent and run by neo-patrimonial networks, the post-colonial state is an instrument of domination, exploitation, subordination and exclusion. Yet, its poor capacity, legitimacy and governance render it ineffective, irrelevant and susceptible to challenge. The post-colonial state spawns...
politics that make violence a prime means of engagement and resistance, just as its pronoeness to excessive coercion and abusive violence constructs a vicious terrain for violent challenges. 58 Further, the post-colonial states provoke what Clapham calls ‘reactive desperation’ by locking all avenues of political aspirations of marginalised groups, alienated elite and opposition groups. 59

As Norlen has found, ‘political variables especially political marginalisation are important in influencing the probability of observing a war event’ and inevitably engender secessionist ethno-territorial conflicts. 60 This is particularly true where differences in modernisation are developing, en suing disparities and inequalities are an increasing tense among groups and the phenomenon of the ANSG. Paradoxically, while creating a fertile ground for political elite power struggles, the African states have become a major casualty of ANSG activities. George and Ylönen (chapter 12) have also found that corrupt and impious regimes, despised government and political elites have been major factors in the formation, funding, recruitment for diverse projects. In these circumstances violence and involvement into a massive youth and urban under-class that is available for mobilisation and political conflicts and deploy criminal terror. 64 In chapter 6, Oloo asserts that the militia phenomenon in Kenya can be partly attributed to the manipulation and mobilisation of youths, their role in mobbing t he political elites, and the phenomenon of the ANSGs. As Ibaba and Ikelegbe note in chapter 8, the political elite hire, arm and use militant youths and militias to intimidate opponents and perpetuate electoral abuses and violence.

**Economic decline and social ferment**

In their chapters, Ikelegbe, Ibaba and Ikelegbe, Oloo, Omach, Kabir and Wassara highlight the relationship between economic decline, de opening poverty, unemployment, job losses, social decay, collapse of social services, urban congestion and decay, decline of social welfare, rising school dropout levels, widespread social hardships and misery, declining real incomes and rising costs. These conditions have fermented a social discontent in many African countries since the 1980s that has radicalised the youth and turned them into a massive youth and urban under-class that is available for mobilisation and recruitment for diverse projects. In these circumstances violence and involvement in ANSG activities are a strong protest against society, a viable survival alternative and a form of employment. 66 As many of the case studies show, unemployment, poverty, collapsed infrastructure, services, declines of social welfare, lack of opportunities, political crises and scarcity created by economic decline have created a large population of frustrated and vulnerable youths who are amenable to diverse mobilisations and recruitment by the ANSGs and even government counterinsurgency forces.

**The youth problem**

Another key finding by En gel, Kubai, Oloo, Kabir, Ibaba and Ikelegbe is that youths have been the dominant base of recruitment and participation in ANSGs. This finding mirrors that of Abdullah and Muana, who point out that in Sierra...
Leone, youths who were unemployed, poorly educated, school dropouts, or drug addicts who exhibited antisocial behaviour, social disaffection and rebelliousness, were critical participants in ANSGs. It is not difficult to understand the youth dominance in conflicts and ANSG activities, because of the ‘youth bulge’ and the ease with which they can be recruited, indoctrinated and utilised for violence, as well as manipulated and mobilised for diverse purposes. This is actually a question of social vulnerability. Economically diminished employment opportunities and rising impoverishment create disaffection, alienation and unruliness, which fuel crime, violence and rebellion. As Ikelegbe notes, these conditions have turned the youth on society in outrage, defiance, subversion and resistance and created a youth culture with elements of nihilism, fatalism, deviance, populism, resentment, impunity and violence.67

To the youth, participation in conflict means actually represents an ‘expression of power and search for recognition and identity’, a means of registering dissent and frustration, and of challenging the practices and conduct of state officials and local elites.68 Reno has also noted that some youths in ANSGs ‘seek personal opportunity and safety with insurgen[s].’69 The youth has therefore been victims and agents, or rather objects and subjects, of the diverse conflicts in Africa.

Globalisation and arms proliferation

Another key factor fuelling ANSG activities is the ready availability of weapons. It is quite common to see in African armed conflicts images of young men proudly brandishing AK-47 rifles and other sophisticated weapons. According to Ibababa and Ikelegbe, the easy access to and supply of arms to ANSGs are critical to the onset and sustainment of violent conflicts. Furthermore, Michael Klare argues that small arms proliferation has been a status symbol and means of expressing power that attract the youth to resistance movements and crime. As Ikelegbe notes, the easy access to and supply of arms to ANSGs are critical to the onset and sustainment of violent conflicts. Klare argues that small arms proliferation has been a status symbol and means of expressing power that attract the youth to resistance movements and crime. As Ikelegbe notes, the easy access to and supply of arms to ANSGs are critical to the onset and sustainment of violent conflicts.

Conflicts and ANSGs’ activities have largely contributed to the smuggling and proliferation of and the propensity to use guns in political violence and criminal activities. Africa has become a dumping ground for light weapons manufactured in Western and Eastern Europe and purchased from former conflict regions across the world. It was estimated that in 2004, of the 500 million illicit weapons in the world, 100 million were in sub-Saharan Africa and 8 – 10 million in West Africa.70 Indeed, the proliferation of firearms has been a major ‘destabilising factor’ and a ‘major threat to the peace and security’ in Africa.71

Religion, culture and traditions

While historical and cultural orientations as well as heritage and religious deities and practices do not per se generate conflicts and violence, they could constitute the framework of dispose position and judgment and unenforceable, and of challenging the practices and conduct of state officials and local elites.68 Reno has also noted that some youths in ANSGs ‘seek personal opportunity and safety with insurgen[s].’69 The youth has therefore been victims and agents, or rather objects and subjects, of the diverse conflicts in Africa.

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actually n ot o nly f orms o f e xpr ession o f d issent b ut p rovide ide ological a nd structural platforms for mobilisation and legitimisation. Oloo, in chapter 6, adds that in the case of the SLDF, charms and oaths bound members to a common cause and were said to give them mystic protection that imbued them with supernatural powers and made them invincible.

In a more contemporary sense, there has emerged in Africa new, globalised perceptions and conceptions of living, livelihoods, lifestyles and social relations, particularly among the youth, in which domination, control, impunity, perversion, abuse, crime and violence are associated with peer acceptance, power, influence and social mobility. It is these new cultures that prize the physical exercise of power, machismo, nihilism and narratives of suppression and abuse, and promote and accommodate the social and criminal violence, street crime, banditry and anarchy to which many youths have been drawn and which constitute some broad framework for recruitment to ANSGs.

**Motivations and sustaining factors**

With regard to what motivates the ANSGs and what keeps them fighting, Herbst has identified economic incentives, political indoctrination, ethnic mobilisation and coercion. On their own and in combination, these variables constitute the nucleus of the recruitment platforms of most ANSGs. A s Collier, Hoeffler and Söderbom note, while greed fuels onset and initiation, the prolonged conflicts and wars tend to be underpinned by ethnic, religious and regional heterogeneity or diversity and particularly identity polarisation and fractionalisation. Beyond the ethnic basis, in the cases of political rebellion and conflicts and particularly among the youth, in which domination, control, impunity, perversion, abuse, crime and violence are associated with peer acceptance, power, influence and social mobility, it is these new cultures that prize the physical exercise of power, machismo, nihilism and narratives of suppression and abuse, and promote and accommodate the social and criminal violence, street crime, banditry and anarchy to which many youths have been drawn and which constitute some broad framework for recruitment to ANSGs.

**POWER POLITICS, VIOLENCE AND THE PHENOMENON OF ANSGs**

**The struggles for power**

A key finding of this book is that the ANSG phenomenon can be linked to the struggles for power through the groups’ affiliations to some larger political groups, in both the government and opposition, on behalf of which they act. The phenomenon is further rooted in the politics of the zero-sum game, and the cutthroat pursuit for control of the state that utilises all means available, including fanning community, clan, ethnic, religious and regional acrimony. This is why some of the ANSGs in several countries developed from the youth wings of political parties, support groups of electoral candidates, and outfits formed to intimidate opponents during election campaigns. With time, as Oloo (chapter 6) and Ikelegbe (chapter 8) point out, the groups became more autonomous agents of violence and mayhem. This is what happened in the case of some cult and militia groups in the Niger Delta in Nigeria since the 2003 elections and of the community bands and political militias in Kenya since the multiparty elections of 1992.

The ANSG phenomenon is also a response from below, albeit a militant and violent one. It represents an extreme response to and challenge of persisting group inequality and marginality, as well as dissatisfaction, evoking a need for new structures and systems of power and governance. It is a platform constructed by marginalised persons who are deeply aggrieved and desperate enough to engage in armed engagements as either a resistance or a counterforce. They have therefore viewed it as the only instrument available to the frustrated, endangered, excluded and repressed victims of state power and identity hegemony. According to Justin Pearce (chapter 13), quoting Vines, this is indeed what happened in Mozambique,
where RENAMO drew its support from the aggrieved and discontented who saw it as an alternative method of taking power.

In fact, Osaghae et al, drawing on Tarrow and Medearis, posit that conflict and the ANSG phenomenon emerge from and are founded on contentious collective action. These movements, which are the main channels of expression of sadavantaged, marginalised and oppressed groups, are a form of struggle defined as the struggle of a broad movement demanding self-determination.

The terrain of politics (even legitimate struggles) has inescapably become a theatre in which those who wield state power use state institutions to coerce their rivals and those who have been excluded and marginalised create their own institutions of counter-violence. ANSGs are products of this culture of political violence, and are the instruments and platforms of counter-violence.

More importantly, violence has become a commodity that is sold and bought. The utility of violence as a political tool has created conflict entrepreneurs who are patronised by state officials and opposition political parties and candidates. These entrepreneurs refer to situations of conflict and repression, and are the instruments and platforms of counter-violence. They are the instruments and platforms of counter-violence. ANSGs are products of this culture of political violence, and are the instruments and platforms of counter-violence.

The dialectics of violence

 Ikelegbe (c.hapter 5), O loo (c.hapter 6) and K abir (c.hapter 11) argue that the activities of some regime political élites and ANSGs have increased violence in Africa to a new level, by making it the main vehicle for furthering the objectives of acquiring power, accumulating resources and making resource claims. Violence has been reconstructed as a highly prized commodity that is associated with power and resources. Regime, political élite and ANSGs’ activities have raised the profile of violence, the importance and need to acquire, own, control and use it as well as its centrality to the diverse power, political, economic and sociocultural struggles of African societies.

Neo-patrimony, which is dominant in African politics, particularly constructs and reinforces the politics of violence. As also noted by Chabal and Daloz, patrons can ‘access or restrain official violence’ as they can ‘count on the local police or military commander’, to protect their clients, a nd to threaten ‘coer cion against competitors’. The further maintain ‘their own com munication with the local police’ to ‘protect their clients’, ‘counter the violence of competitive networks’ or to ‘enforce compliance’.

In the end, the African political arena has become a theatre of state violence; a theatre of violence versus private violence; violence of state officials and political élite versus violence of the aggrieved, marginalised and excluded; state-sanctioned violence versus violence of informants, claimants, groups with power or powerlessness; violence of state institutions and regime officials versus non-state institutions of violence; and violence of state institutions and regime officials versus non-state institutions of violence.

What has happened then is the emergence of counter-violence and violence in pursuit of state governance versus private, self-entrepreneurial uses of violence. The utility of violence as a political tool has created conflict entrepreneurs who are interested and commercialised violence.

It is the nature of the African state and leadership that has made violence a factor in the political terrain. Most post-colonial states have strict access to power, accumulation of resources and making resource claims. Violence has been reconstructed as a highly prized commodity that is associated with power and resources. Regime, political élite and ANSGs’ activities have raised the profile of violence, the importance and need to acquire, own, control and use it as well as its centrality to the diverse power, political, economic and sociocultural struggles of African societies.

The terrain of politics (even legitimate struggles) has inescapably become a theatre in which those who wield state power use state institutions to coerce their rivals and those who have been excluded and marginalised create their own institutions of counter-violence. ANSGs are products of this culture of political violence, and are the instruments and platforms of counter-violence.

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Further, while ANSGs have been considerably castigated for their horrendous and atrocious violence, the do ming of state institutions and regime officials versus non-state institutions of violence; and violence of state institutions and regime officials versus non-state institutions of violence.

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In some instances, it was the states’ extreme brutality and excessive force that gave rise to the extreme counter-violence of militants and rebels. Indiscriminate and retaliatory violence, whether by the state or ANSGs, have compelled youths in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Mozambique, the DRC and other countries to join militant and rebel groups to survive, protect themselves and their kin, and to avenge atrocities committed by the state. As Kwesi Aning and Angela McIntyre have noted, g overnments – like rebel forces – have used forceful recruitment strategies (including terror and abduction) in civil wars in for example Sierra Leone.86 Peters (chapter 14), Oloo (chapter 6) and Wassara (chapter 9) also note that state counterinsurgency tactics are sometimes brutal, including summary executions of fighters and even relatives, sacking of communities, a ‘sort of co-alition of marginals, which have been excluded politically and socially from the state, from the market and from development during and even before FRELIMO came to power’. In certain situations ANSGs’ activities could be seen as the last resort for necessary political change, just as violence sometimes becomes accepted as the only means to reform a political order with which they are dissatisfied. As Chabal and Daloz have noted, the war by the NRA against the Obote regime in Uganda and by the attack of Laurent Kabila’s forces against the Mobutu regime in Zaire was, to a large extent, welcomed as a legitimate means of political change by citizens.87 ANSGs may also be part of the search for alternatives; discourse or spaces for governance, and expressions of identity. It is, in a way, a search for meaning, self-worth and empowerment by ordinary people. The phenomenon may therefore be at one extreme a source of succour for the alienated and frustrated; a hope for the poor, underclass, deprived, unemployed and idle; an opportunity for the marginalised and excluded; a venue for the abused, suppressed and repressed. It is, further, a form of empowerment to those who have been alienated, disempowered and disenfranchised by a lack of political and citizenship rights, political choices and actual participation.

Between functionality and dysfunctionality

ANSGs are often demonised by governments as bunches of criminals, mi scarets, va gabonds and opportunists. They are an instrument of state branding to delegitimise the groups and deprive them of sympathy. However, we would miss certain aspects in the picture if we take for granted that they are purely a symptom of the dysfunctionality of the system. ANSGs usually seek to attain certain goals, which often pertain to a change in the status quo with regard to equity, justice, sociopolitical rights, citizenship rights and inclusion, and the issues of the national question, restructuring arrangements and state centralisation. They often seek to be recognised as derivations of the groups and as an ascription of the state elite. Some of the issues at stake are critical to eventual progress, stability, integration and development of the African state in question.

ANSGs are therefore in a sense a form of social action – defiance, opposition, challenge, resistance and protest – against the form and nature of the state and how it is governed. In fact, in some ways, though regime-based labels often play down this dimension, they have a role in creating a terrain of political violence, sometimes drafted by ordinary people. The phenomenon may therefore be at one extreme a source of succour for the alienated and frustrated; a hope for the poor, underclass, deprived, unemployed and idle; an opportunity for the marginalised and excluded; a venue for the abused, suppressed and repressed. It is, further, a form of empowerment to those who have been alienated, disempowered and disenfranchised by a lack of political and citizenship rights, political choices and actual participation.

ANSGs AND HUMAN INSECURITY IN AFRICA

The incidence of rebellions, insurrections, secessionist attempts, insurgencies and wars has been associated with widespread human insecurity and catastrophic humanitarian crises. The crises in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa regions are currently the most serious on the continent. The culture of political violence and the prevalence of human insecurity, especially in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa regions, are currently the most serious on the continent. The culture of political violence and the prevalence of human insecurity are sometimes associated with widespread human insecurity and catastrophic humanitarian crises. The crises in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa regions are currently the most serious on the continent. The culture of political violence and the prevalence of human insecurity are sometimes associated with widespread human insecurity and catastrophic humanitarian crises. The crises in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa regions are currently the most serious on the continent. The culture of political violence and the prevalence of human insecurity are sometimes associated with widespread human insecurity and catastrophic humanitarian crises. The crises in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa regions are currently the most serious on the continent. The culture of political violence and the prevalence of human insecurity are sometimes associated with widespread human insecurity and catastrophic humanitarian crises.
Regime of indiscriminate violence, crime and terror

In several countries the activities of ANSGs and government counterinsurgency organisations as well as the conduct of conflicts have caused a severe breakdown in public law and order. There is often a reign of harassment, intimidation, fear and terror, leading to general uncertainty. Civilians and local communities live in fear of attacks, punishments and retaliations. In the CAR, there have been reprisal attacks and mass punishments against civilians and communities. Most ANSG and counterinsurgency activities have been characterised by extensive, arbitrary and horrendous violence, physical abuses and atrocities, torture, in indiscriminate killings and executions. Rebel movements have used tactics such as mutilations (amputations of arms and legs, slicing off of ears, chopping off of fingers), and indiscriminate killings of civilians by hanging them from trees in broad daylight and burying victims alive in the presence of horrified crowds, as strategies to intimidate the population and compel governments to negotiate with them.

With regard to Sierra Leone, Peters (chapter 14) notes that RUF rebels and renegade soldiers raped, mutilated and burned alive hundreds, if not thousands, in their failed attempt to capture Freetown in 1998. Territories where groups such as the LRA operate are highly insecure and also prone to criminal activities such as armed robberies, assassinations, murders and rape. It is this terrible toll that makes wars in Africa seem like wars on civilians, as they suffer direct and indirect violence and loss of livelihood.

Socio-economic disruptions and deepening poverty

ANSG activities mainly disrupt socioeconomic systems, and destroy property and food stores through looting and burning. This strategy to undermine the state also aims at disrupting commerce and agriculture, creating unemployment and causing food in security. In general, human security is experienced through spiralling living costs, severe scarcity, widespread hunger and misery in most conflict regions.

The disruption of productive activities and commerce, the forcible appropriation of private properties and the resultant effects on living conditions, availability of goods and services and incomes produce deep and widespread poverty. Human misery deepens with soaring living costs and unemployment. Using the case of the Konya region, a conflict zone in the DRC, in chapter 6 asserts that the activities of ANSGs have stunted economic growth, destroyed livelihoods and caused food insecurity through the closure of businesses and markets and the abandonment of farms.

A regime of extortion and plundering

ANSGs in conflict situations in most cases engage in activities such as extortion and plundering to generate resources that are used to profit their leaders and to sustain the group’s activities. Usually, conflict and war economies are constructed through illegal taxes, levies and forceful contributions by workers, traders, shop owners, transporters, miners and farmers, who are forced to pay a surcharge fee based on an arbitrary calculation of their earnings. Locals are also subjected to forced payments and levies for services such as protection and security of economic production, trade routes and markets. In some cases, local people are forced to pay a ‘tax’, compelled to hand over their produce or be forced to hand over their produce or be used as labourers and carriers of equipment. According to Oloo (chapter 6), militia in Kenya have an elaborate machinery and system of taxation along with extortion and coercion of the local population to extract the minerals.

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Internal displacement, refugee and humanitarian crises

Overall, ANSGs and counterinsurgency activities have caused catastrophic humanitarian crises through widespread infrastructural devastation, and massive dislocations and losses of human life. ANSGs’ activities and government responses have forced large numbers of people to flee their homes with few personal belongings to forests, government- or rebel-held areas, and border regions of neighbouring countries. In Sierra Leone, about half of the population was displaced during six years of the RUF rebellion. All over the conflict zones in Africa, huge internal displacements and refugee camps do the border regions of countries close to conflict epicentres. LRA activities in Uganda, Sudan, the CAR and the DRC have resulted in a humanitarian crisis in the region by displacing over two million people. People were forced to flee villages by the government or forced to flee villages because of LRA or government attacks and confrontations. These camps have also been attacked by both ANSGs and government troops or government-supported militias.

In Rwanda, the ANSGs are held partly responsible for triggering violence that claimed about 800,000 persons in 1994. In Sierra Leone, about one million people died in the first six years of the conflict that started in 1991. In Angola’s renewed fighting between the government and UNITA rebels in 1992, about 400,000 people were killed, 1.5 million were displaced and 330,000 became refugees. In the 16-year civil war in Mozambique, about 700,000 people were killed in internally displaced people camps by the government or forced to flee villages by the government. ANSG activities in Africa, they have also been one of the major victims of the conflicts that accompany these activities. Many governments in countries such as the CAR, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, the DRC and Sudan have been seriously weakened and rendered incapable of managing conflicts, providing social services and asserting their sovereignty over their territories. Kasaija (chapter 7), Mbeki (chapter 8) and Kabir (chapter 11) argue that ANSGs take advantage of weak and fragile states such as the DRC and Nigeria. Others that collapsed at some point, through the activities of ANSGs, such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and Somalia, became havens in which ANSGs and anarchical conditions flourished.

In countries such as the DRC, ANSG activities have accelerated state decline and exposed its weaknesses with regard to the provision of human security. State fragility is usually demarcated in terms of security apparatuses’ lack of discipline, tendency to looting, ex cessive use of force, and discrimination. Inhibitions were overtaken by ANSG activities in Uganda (Milton Obote / Tito Okello), Sierra Leone (Joseph Momoh), Liberia (Samuel Doe), the DRC (Mobutu Sese Seko), Rwanda (Juvénal Habyarimana) and Ethiopia (Mengistu Haile Mariam).

Some rebel movements that gained more legitimacy due to effective leadership and organisation accentuated the collapse of these regimes. Instability and political crises have also dogged countries such as Burundi, the CAR, Chad, the RoC, Côte d’Ivoire, the DRC, Nigeria, Uganda, Somalia and Sudan.

ANSGs, STATE WEAKNESS AND COLLAPSE

Ikelegbe (chapter 5) and Wassara (chapter 9) point out that the e arly conflicts in conflict situations plagued by ANSG activities is the weakening of the state capacity to provide public safety and security to the population. As conflict intensifies, the state becomes incapable of providing security as a public good due to the depolymen of t he security resources. In the interstes of the government, the government retaliates, and the public becomes further displaced. The government retaliates, and the public becomes further displaced. The government retaliates, and the public becomes further displaced. The government retaliates, and the public becomes further displaced.

In some cases, the government’s heavy-handed responses by targeting infrastructure that serves the public, which further displaced the people. The government retaliates, and the public becomes further displaced. The government retaliates, and the public becomes further displaced. The government retaliates, and the public becomes further displaced. The government retaliates, and the public becomes further displaced. The government retaliates, and the public becomes further displaced.

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militia and rebel groups, some operating for decades without being vanquished by government forces.

**Impact and ramifications of ANSGs on regional and international dynamics**

The impact of ANSG activities is felt far beyond the borders of the states within which they originated. ANSGs have regionalised human security and pose serious challenges to regional mechanisms for preventing, managing and resolving conflicts. Regional trends that dovetail with ANSG activities include humanitarian crises, human rights violations and use of violence as a tool for conflict resolution. ANSGs are increasingly transforming into a network of regional and international military interventions and operations involving counterinsurgency operations across borders, military interventions and support and brokerage of agreements, and security interdependence. The impact of ANSG activities is felt far beyond the borders of the states within which they originated. ANSGs have regionalised human security and pose serious challenges to regional mechanisms for preventing, managing and resolving conflicts. Regional trends that dovetail with ANSG activities include humanitarian crises, human rights violations and use of violence as a tool for conflict resolution. ANSGs are increasingly transforming into a network of regional and international military interventions and operations involving counterinsurgency operations across borders, military interventions and support and brokerage of agreements, and security interdependence.

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In their chapters, Engels, Omach and Peters all note that it is not only ANSGs’ activities and state responses in terms of cross-border activities that have become characterised by emerging regionalisation, but also the fighters, particularly the youth and children. Thus Taylor's NPFL recruited young fighters from Sierra Leone and Côte d’Ivoire, while in Angola a few years later five ANGOM fighters from Malawi were kidnapped by their own countrymen. The CNDP (Forces d'Libération de la République Démocratique du Congo) were also involved in child combat. In their chapters, Engels, Omach and Peters all note that it is not only ANSGs’ activities and state responses in terms of cross-border activities that have become characterised by emerging regionalisation, but also the fighters, particularly the youth and children. Thus Taylor's NPFL recruited young fighters from Sierra Leone and Côte d’Ivoire, while in Angola a few years later five ANGOM fighters from Malawi were kidnapped by their own countrymen. The CNDP (Forces d'Libération de la République Démocratique du Congo) were also involved in child combat.

As the conflict areas expand across borders, so do the complexities and interactions between states, between states and ANSGs, and between the international community and the states. In turn supported rebels in Sierra Leone and government forces in Côte d’Ivoire. In Rwanda, Uganda supported the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF, Front Patriotique Rwandais), and later fought with it to oust Zaire's Mobutu from power. In backing Rwandan rebels. Interestingly, Rwanda and Uganda turned against Laurent Kabila, whom they had installed in power, and supported a rebellion against his government that was then propped up by the Angolan, Namibian and Zimbabwan governments. Uganda and Rwanda later turned against each other and used rebels as proxies to enhance their interests in the DRC. Apart from using the LRA as a proxy against the Ugandan government, Sudan also supported rebels in Chad and the CAR, which in turn supported rebels in Darfur.

Some rebel groups have formed the governments of post-independence, post-war and post-conflict states or shared power by participating in governments or transforming into political parties. In Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Uganda, Sudan, Sierra Leone, the DRC, Côte d’Ivoire and Liberia, rebel movements have been incorporated into governments of national unity or been transformed into political parties for or such purposes. In turn, the DRC, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Côte d’Ivoire and Sudan, rebel movements are participating in governments through various pacts, power-sharing arrangements, largely brokered by the southern African states, major rebel groups, CNDD-FDD, won parliamentary elections and the presidency in 2005 and successfully negotiated with other rebel groups to end the country's armed conflict. In chapter 13, the question of how former rebel groups fare in post-conflict politics is dealt with by Pearce using UNITA and RENAMO as case studies.

CONCLUSION

An understanding of the phenomenon of ANSGs is facilitated by detailed, in-depth studies of their activities and state responses in terms of cross-border activities that have become characterised by emerging regionalisation, but also the fighters, particularly the youth and children. Thus Taylor's NPFL recruited young fighters from Sierra Leone and Côte d’Ivoire, while in Angola a few years later five ANGOM fighters from Malawi were kidnapped by their own countrymen. The CNDP (Forces d'Libération de la République Démocratique du Congo) were also involved in child combat.

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studies of specific cases while bearing in mind the general characteristics, internal dynamics, driving forces, linkages with local and external forces, its politics and economics and the complex relations with populations, youths, communities, the political elites and communities, and the political and economic interests of local and external forces. Out of these, some general, systematic and analytically based conclusions can be drawn that would aid in understanding and in the management of ANSGs.

NOTES


6 Ibid, 41–42.

7 The *National Guards* during the Nigerian military regimes of the 1990s is an example.


16 Ibid, 1–18.

17 Ibid.


46 Guichaoua, The making of an ethnic militia.

47 Guichaoua, The making of an ethnic militia.


50 Ikelegbe, State, ethnic militias and conflict in Nigeria, 490–516.


58 Chabal and Daloz, Africa works, 83.


60 Elbadawi a nd Sambanis, Understanding civil war, 151–181.


63 Reno, The politics of insurgency in collapsing states, 845.

64 Patrick C habal a nd J ean-Pascal D aloz, Africa w orks: d isorder as p olitical i nstrument, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 61–95.

65 Abdulla h and M una, The Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, 172.


67 Ikelegbe, Beyond the threshold of civil struggle, 89–90.

68 Ikelegbe and Garuba, Youth conflicts in West Africa, 124–147.

69 Reno, The politics of insurgency in collapsing states, 843.

70 Michael T Klare, The international trade in light weapons: what have we learned? In Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T Klare (eds), Light weapons and civil conflict, Lanham, Md: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999.


75 Bah, Micro-disarmament in West Africa, 33.


78 Chabal and Daloz, Africa works, 83.


80 Kabir’s chapter deals specifically with this aspect.


84 Chabal and Daloz, Africa works, 83.


87 Chabal and Daloz, Africa works, 83.
INTRODUCTION

The African continent is vast and the militia and rebel groups are numerous and varied, and therefore I have set pragmatic limits on the scope of this chapter. This is a general overview of the historical and cultural dimensions to help readers better understand the case studies treated in subsequent chapters.

With over 250 wars around the world, the last century may have been the most brutal in human history, measured not only in terms of the number of casualties but also in terms of the changing nature of warfare, where 85–90 per cent of the casualties were civilians. Admittedly, ‘the magnitude of this violence is staggering’ and Africa is by far the continent most affected by collective violence. It is indisputable that most of this violence has been perpetrated by various factions and groups, often under the guise of revolutionary liberation or national liberation movements. The effects of conflict have been severe, leading to famine, epidemics, displacement, human rights violations, and the loss of life and livelihoods. The continent has been scarred by war and conflict, leaving deep wounds that continue to inflict pain and suffering.

INTRODUCTION TO PART I

ISSUES AND DIMENSIONS

CHAPTER 2

Historical and cultural dimensions of militia and rebel groups in Africa

Anne N Kubai

INTRODUCTION

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Wars and conflicts raging in Africa are complex and need to be understood in the light of historical and globalisation processes, which have unleashed competition over an unequal sharing of resources. These conflicts, supported by small arms and light weapons, have utilised cultural resources especially for the recruitment into and mobilisation of militia and rebel groups. Cultural explanations include the African conceptions of a authority and the role of religious narratives and symbols.

In an attempt to sketch the history of resistance in Africa, one can identify several phases:

- The first phase was before colonialism when reformers mobilised resistance against oppressive traditional rulers in societies with centralised sources of authority.
- The second phase was when colonial powers moved into Africa to annex their spheres of influence. Resistance to the imposition of European colonialism in Africa was in any case ruthless and many lives were lost, since African warriors were no match for European armies with modern weaponry. This violence, one can argue, set the stage for the bloody resistance that was to become the hallmark of Africa’s history.
- The third phase is the liberation struggle, which pitted Africans against their colonial masters who they determined to drive out of newly created states so that they could reclaim the land and, more importantly, the dignity and freedom that the colonised peoples believed would be the products of self-rule and political independence.
- The fourth phase followed the realisation that the much-sought-after freedom that the colonised peoples believed would be the products of self-rule and political independence.

In the African ‘traditional’ world view(s), most basic authority was vested in the head of the family, who enjoyed undisputed power as the family head and was the mediator with the world in matters of the family. The elders also were accorded high social status and its attendant respect and power. Next in this hierarchical order of power were the clans and finally the chiefs, who held their positions for life. Despite the dynamic influences of other cultures, particularly the process that established good governance and eradicated poverty. However, even after they established themselves in power, the political ills of their predecessors did not evaporate. If anything, they became just as oppressive and co-opted and the citizens sank deeper into poverty and despair. This is a situation that has largely contributed to the emergence of militia and rebel movements in the current phase.

There are contrasting opinions on how to deal with the challenge of militia and rebel groups on the continent. Some attribute this phenomenon to the aggregate effect of colonialism that is manifest in the dysfunctional states. The process of the establishment of nation-states in Africa by the colonial authorities was in many cases ruthless and many lives were lost, since African warriors were no match for European armies with modern weaponry. This violence, one can argue, set the stage for the bloody resistance that was to become the hallmark of Africa’s history.

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bears such contested labels as ‘Westernisation’ and ‘modernisation’, there is no doubt that elements of African cultures are still vibrant and continue to shape the way people perceive a national/provincial/national identity as a national/ethnical identity experiences, in both the urban and rural areas. Particularly matters such as the meaning of life, in individual and communal identity, a nation the goal of the human relations, duties and obligations, a rejecting the framework of traditional social norms.

However, far less attention has been paid to the cultural dimension of militarism in Africa. According to F, A, it is possible that a nation’s understanding of politics without understanding past and present cultures in such areas as beliefs and conventions of Africans, their religions, philosophy, established practices for power relations, societal stratifications and concepts of power and the “big man.”

The role of the ‘big man’ in the case of presidents in independent Africa is informed by precolonial centralised political systems where the old African kings and chiefs wielded immense power and authority, and controlled the means of government. Here contradictions arise when modern states, with elected governments based upon written constitutions, function more or less like the old chiefdoms. This, I argue, is one of the factors that has contributed to the emergence of militia groups in Africa. Therefore cultural factors, whether latent or manifest, lie beneath the emergence of rebel and militia groups in Africa.

In this introduction to his book on the civil militia, Francis discusses the way various patterns have co contributed to the emergence of militia groups. He emphasises that the weakness of the ‘Africa state’ as a creation of European colonialism in Africa and the authority, and controlled the means of government. Here contradictions arise when modern states, with elected governments based upon written constitutions, function more or less like the old chiefdoms. This, I argue, is one of the factors that has contributed to the emergence of militia groups in Africa. Therefore cultural factors, whether latent or manifest, lie beneath the emergence of rebel and militia groups in Africa.

In this section, I will cite examples of resistance against oppression and foreign intrusion to illustrate that violent resistance has been expressed in Africa in varying degrees in the last two centuries. Thus I agree with Kastfelt that to explain the brutal wars that Africa has experienced in recent years, one has to look at the ‘long history of colonial violence’ and also at the conflicts in a wider global context, though they have African local context.

In the 19th century and the earlier part of the 20th century, many African societies put up strong resistance to European intrusion in Africa. A number of the rebellions were inspired by African traditional religion and culture, such as the practice of fusing protective magic potions and spells to make the fighters invincible to bullets. In West and Central Africa, the 19th century was expected to mark Islam’s victory over the non-Muslim world. This was the time of the emergence of the Muslim world as a world of Islam and African traditional religion, have become so prominent in many militia and rebel groups. This chapter will address these questions.

**HISTORIES OF REBELLION AND RESISTANCE TO OPPRESSION AND FOREIGN INTRUSION**

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Since ‘Islamic discourse is also above all a means of resisting the state’, the Islamic jihad provided a rallying call for resistance and rebellion against oppressive and corrupt local rulers as well as foreign intrusion, particularly by Europeans. During the 19th century, Muslims in a number of states in West Africa had various grievances against the aristocracy, such as conscription into the armies to fight fellow Muslims, slavery, upholding traditional religious practices, heavy taxation and other injustices, all of which were considered Islamic. Militant jihad movements used these grievances to mobilise resistance by both Muslims and non-Muslims. The best known of these was the jihad of Uthman dan Fodio who, inspired by his deep knowledge of Islamic law and mystical visions, declared war against the corrupt and unjust government of Gobir in 1804. The long-term impact of the jihad was to shape the future of the West African societies.

In 1881, Muhammad Ahmad, believing that God had called him, declared himself the Mahdi or ‘the guided one who would come during the troubled times at the end of the world’ and accepted an oath of allegiance from local communities, gathering a large following that was mobilised against the Turk-Egyptian-European intrusion in Sudan. He led his rebel army against the Military, Rebels and Islamist Militants: Human Insecurity and State Crises in Africa.
intruders apostates and therefore worse than unbelievers. From his position as the Mahdi he attacked the oppressors and won the support of the Sudanese people, who resented the Turko-Egyptian administration.\footnote{Not only did the Mahdi put up a formidable resistance to the British, but the history of the Mahadiyya had an enormous influence upon the geopolitics of present-day Sudan.}

East African countries such as Kenya have a history of resistance dating back to the struggle against the establishment of colonial rule. Thence started the Nandi rebellion, which started in 1890 and lasted for 11 years, was so severe that it was one of the earliest rebellions in Kenya to oppose foreign intrusion. By 1900, the Nandi warriors had destroyed an important telegraph communications centre at Kitoto, in the Nandi valley, thus cutting off communications between the British government in London and its soldiers and the railway workers in Kenya and Uganda. Even after the British soldiers had mounted a massive attack on the Nandi fighters, the Nandi leaders declined to negotiate. Five decades later, the Mahdi’s followers still refused to sign a peace agreement. The Mahdi’s followers were considered to be the most formidable resistance to the British, but the history of the Mahdi’s followers is one of the earliest rebellions in Kenya to oppose foreign intrusion. By 1900, the Nandi warriors had destroyed an important telegraph communications centre at Kitoto, in the Nandi valley, thus cutting off communications between the British government in London and its soldiers and the railway workers in Kenya and Uganda. Even after the British soldiers had mounted a massive attack on the Nandi fighters, the Nandi leaders declined to negotiate. Five decades later, the Mahdi’s followers still refused to sign a peace agreement.

The repressive German regime in what is now Tanzania bred discontent among the people and by 1905, anti-colonialism was evident throughout the region, reached breaking point. A prophet named Kinjikitile Ngwale said he had portrayed, were subjected to cruel torture and even death.

**THE POST-COLONIAL SITUATION: THE STATE, GOVERNANCE AND CONFLICT**

At independence the status quo was maintained, particularly because the change entailed substitution of a European authority holder with an African, but both the core structure and the underpinning ideology of the system were retained. Gordon and Gordon summed it up thus:

> The realities of heritances of African states, provide the historical context for the political trends and events, particularly those of the 20th century – the most bloody in human history.
fitting in to the shoes of those that they had replaced. Following this historical trajectory, the next scene of African politics was to be dominated by the emergence of all manner of civil groups in many of the countries, which claimed to be acting on behalf of the people. Some of these groups were self-help women and youth groups, welfare groups and church organisations working outside a nd beyond government influence and control. Gradually these crystallised into what has become generally known as civil society, but for the purpose of my discussion this is one of the processes that served as a midwife for the birth of, among others, the civil militia.

Many of those that developed into militia did not have a clear agenda to begin with, and as mentioned earlier on, they emerged as well-intentioned village and neighbourhood vigilante groups and youth clubs. In due course, the character of the groups evolved and gradually some of them metamorphosed into violent armed groups, made up largely of young people who were willing to offer their services for hire to powerful individuals for personal protection or any other services.

The question is why this situation arose. The answer lies in the fact that the independent leaders who took over power failed to forge strong states out of the diverse communities that were brought together, sometimes hurriedly, within national boundaries of the newly created states. McCalpin's statement about the diverse communities that were brought together, sometimes hurriedly, within national borders of the newly created states, serves as a useful illustration: the configuration of the contemporary Congolese polity is not to be viewed as simply the general disorder that has come to characterise African states but rather as a direct result of crosscutting influences in its particular history. The current situation represents the superimposition of factions on a very underdeveloped, ext ractive and predatory state upon the vestiges of traditional societies and the ethnic mosaic.

Another important factor should be borne in mind, namely the nexus between an economic crisis and security. As a slum in a slum, a nation building remained a mirage as slums were spent on national resources on viable institutions that continued to deplete vital human resources and economic development over time, these sates, making poverty a persistent threat for African societies. Poverty was further entrenched by the international monetary fund (IMF) and the World Bank for, as Abutudu observes:

Adjustment policies and neo-liberal reforms in general are so severe in their impact that they have tended to undermine the basis of the nation-state project in post-colonial Africa, compounding the weakness of the state, engendering mass hostility to it and underpinning its legitimacy.

As the commission on human security put it, poverty and the exclusion and deprivation of whole communities from the benefits of development, naturally contribute to the tensions, violence and conflict within countries – and there can be no doubt that deprivation contributes to conflicts and violence in Africa. The situation that has proved to be fertile ground for the emergence of militia and rebel movements in Africa is summed up as follows by Abutudu:

Over the last two decades, various forms of communal and religious violence have been the hallmark of many an African country. Civil wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Burundi, Rwanda etc., have been the more extreme expressions of a process that has seen economic crisis and IMF/World Bank reforms pitching the state against its citizens and community against community, in shooting wars.

When people are deprived and are struggling to fulfil basic needs, they tend to be more prone to violence and crime rates increase and the youth tend to be drawn to delinquency. In such cases there is no peace and security for the individual or the society. Inextricably linked with the issue of peace and security, is the question of justice. It is common knowledge that a sense of frustration and despair, in equality and discrimination in society can and often do lead to the emergence of militia and rebel movements all over the continent.

Furthermore, failure to meet the aspirations of the society usually leads to social upheavals, which in turn threaten the state. Where the national elites are not accountable to the people, the pattern is that when people begin to interrogate their relationship with the state, a social time bomb begins to tick and eventually explodes. Hence I state that the emergence of militias in Africa could well be characterised as one form of social explosion.

52 Institute for Security Studies Militias, Rebels and Islamist Militants: Human insecurity and state crises in Africa 53
TRADITIONAL CONCEPT OF AUTHORITY AND CONTEMPORARY POLITICS

For the purpose of this chapter, I eschew the view of culture as dynamic, aptly summed up as ‘the meanings, changing over time, that are generally attributed in a given community to repertoires of action’ by Ellis. A more expanded view is provided by Ali A Mazrui, who posits seven functions of culture in society, namely that it provides lenses of perception and cognition, motives for human behaviour, criteria of evaluation, a basis of identity, a mode of communication, a basis of stratification and a mode of production and consumption.22 From this perspective both the emergence and actions (behaviour) of the rebel groups and militia can be situated within a cultural context.

Needless to say, traditional and modern political ideologies are informed by the traditional concept of authority based on ethnicity and kinship. In line with this point of departure, I suggest that the personalised rule, with a high concentration of power and the practice of patronage relationships – which were soon to become the defining characteristics of the new African leaders – were attained through various rites of passage, particularly in communities where councils of elders functioned as sources of authority. A trait of some communities, political organisation was based on kinship and clan and therefore segmented, in others a authority was a set Balinese of rank thus clearly defined for the various office holders, from the highest to the lowest level.

Social control was exercised through the notions of shame and guilt. A code of rules and taboos regulated both the in individual and group political activities, as Magesa reports:

Social control through shame and fear of transgressing taboos or holding of dignity is also the reason behind the formation and maintenance of the various sodalities ... blood friendships, secret societies, age grades and joking relationships play a conspicuous political role, each one at its own level in African societies.23

The appropriation of the African concept of authority serves well to illustrate the cultural dimensions of the traditional African communal life, a authority figures beyond the family level, where political and ritual offices of the leaders reinforce each other to safeguard their power and the wellbeing of the community. But leadership and political patterns were not the same in all the communities: some positions of authority were hereditary, while others were acquired through individual merit or attributes such as wisdom and integrity or were provided by Ali A Mazrui, who posits seven functions of culture in society, namely that it provides lenses of perception and cognition, motives for human behaviour, criteria of evaluation, a basis of identity, a mode of communication, a basis of stratification and a mode of production and consumption.22 From this perspective both the emergence and actions (behaviour) of the rebel groups and militia can be situated within a cultural context.

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military, university chancellors and watukufu (Swahili term meaning glorious, exalted) figures aften hom in institutions of high her aning, roads, schools, hospitals and key intuitions in their states were named. Hence, not only does the traditional model for the exercise of authority become in compatible with the Western norms of democratic governance, but it also reinforces militarism and promotes primordial loyalties, which are the fodder for militarism in Africa. In Somalia, for instance, a warlord is viewed in terms of traditional leadership based on the clan system. He (it is usually a man) not only receives, but also ’deserves’ allegiance and support from members of his clan.

The contrivance of the public sphere for social expression and political action could not be more explicit than in the practice of sacking government ministers at will and expelling non-conformist and disloyal members from the ruling parties. These actions reflect the traditional exercise of authority and control of political organisation by a king or chief. This style of leadership became entrenched in post-colonial Africa, too, and has largely shaped the current political and social trends in many African countries. It has become practice to quell the dissenting voices, often by using violence through the ’arms of government’ such as the police and paramilitary forces. The unintended outcome of this practice is to strengthen the resolve of those who hold dissenting opinions and those who feel they are being strangled by the hold on power of the all-powerful president. Hence this is one of the factors that has engendered dissension, which has in turn nurtured the growth of rebel groups and militia – theirs are a reaction, one can say, to the resolve of those who hold dissenting opinions and those who feel they are being strangled by the hold on power of the all-powerful president.

...Perceived or real social differences in the ethical, communal and religious dimensions are responsible for shaping a people’s world view. Hence, in the past, African cultural norms and values have been turned into a useful resource, aiding the formation of and recruitment for militia groups and rebel movements. Culture promotes primordial loyalties, which are the fodder for militiam. African cultural norms and values have informed and, to some extent, still shape the formation and maintenance of social and political structures that have created the climate for the emergence and proliferation of militia. Normally young people are concerned about their identity, who they are and what they will become in the future. For answers to these questions they turn to the society: p eers and leaders who are not only vested with a certain amount of authority, but also considered to be knowledgeable. In the traditional social set-up, this process was facilitated by agents of socialisation functioning within a socially controlled framework founded on age-old institutions. Thus the society was able to provide a safety net for individuals and members of communities. However, with the social changes that the African societies have undergone in the last five...
decades, there is a plethora of agents that compete for influence and the choices the youth face are Real b ehind the ad beyond the limit of t he conventional social checks and balances. The cultural turbulence of our times is reflected in the behaviour and activities of the youth.

In the midst of these social changes, young people cannot easily resolve their attendant identity crises. Their self-confidence is complicated by the fact that their identities are influenced by leaders who serve selfish ends, with the result that they have become one of the causes of conflict. There is no doubt that questions of identity are related to both the history and culture of a group. A belief in a shared historical origin provides a heritage of values, norms and symbols and confirms the ethnic homoties between the hose of which belong. This link is the essence of the myths of origin, which aim at explaining the origins and history of a people, and at answering questions on who are they and where they come from. The trend is that in political situations where there are contested histories and identities, the aggrieved groups are inclined to defend their cause, be it the right to citizenship or land, and they will be willing to fight for it. The ideological underpinnings of the conflict are established by ‘identity’ groups, many of which consider the historical and cultural aspect to be the most important of all. The point is that this background is the precursor to the militarisation of groups that can be classified as part of the civil society in its broadest sense, which gradually distinguish themselves as militias.

Thakur identifies three factors leading to the emergence of various militias in the case of the Kivu region of the DRC, namely personal enrichment; the power and security vacuum that generates the need to provide security for their people, reinforced by the ethnic configuration; and the current post-transition political climate that makes it possible for militant groups to emerge and thrive in this part of the country, which triggered the current crisis in the DRC. The cultural turbulence of our times is reflected in the behaviour and activities of the youth.

Innovative use of religious rituals and interpretations of scriptures and doctrines create a sense of novelty, of change in the status quo and hence provide some credibility to the rebel groups in the eyes of society. By attacking the existing corrupt governments or Islamic practices, the militants provide an alternative, but also a sense of legitimacy to their cause.

Laurent Nkunda, leader of the National Congress for the Defence of the People, a rebel group, was interviewed by the BBC in 2008 and asked why he was ‘fighting a democratically elected government’, his response was that ‘we are protecting our people’. This statement implies that the people that he was purporting to protect are identifiable as a particular group that feels either threatened or insecure.

From statements such as these, it is clear that the rise of some rebel groups is associated with a perceived or real threat to security, and takes place to secure the self-preservation of the group. At present the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda – a group fighting against the Kigali government – is one of the prominent millet rebels groups that poses a serious threat to the peace and security in Africa’s Great Lakes region. Though there are several factors, including ineffective government, impunity and the struggle for the vast natural resources in this part of the country, which triggered the current crisis in the DRC, the cultural and historical questions of identity are apparent in the contentious underlying issues of the crisis.

USE OF RELIGION

One of the salient characteristics of militia and rebel groups is the use of religion in the recruitment and initiation of members, and as a means of sustaining their activities. Religious doctrines, rituals and symbols from Islam, Christianity and African traditional religion are used by these groups. As Kastfelt notes:

In some cases, such as northern Uganda, established religious traditions are applied to new social conditions resulting in innovations of new belief systems and the basis of existing traditional beliefs. In northern Sudan, wars produce fundamental changes, which in turn erode the whole social context of religion and new beliefs and rituals.

Innovative use of religious rituals and interpretations of scriptures and doctrines create a sense of novelty, of change in the status quo and hence provide some credibility to the rebel groups in the eyes of society. By attacking the existing corrupt governments or Islamic practices, the militants provide an alternative, but also a sense of legitimacy to their cause.
In his brief overview of warfare, Francis posits that there is a link between the activities and modus operandi of the militias and the belief in supernatural powers and occult practice. The hallmark of this relationship is the belief in the invincibility of the militias, which is based on their claim to supernatural powers through the use of oracular deities and secret societies. This claim to supernatural powers is seen as driving the putative efficacy of civil militias in security provision.

Francis's perspective has one notable drawback in that he sees merely a link between the way the militias operate and the belief in supernatural powers. His framework of analysis of the appropriation of religious resources by the militias does not take into consideration the centrality of religion in African life in all its social, economic, and political aspects. According to modern public space, this idea is aptly summed up by Kalu: "There is a direct correlation between the use of traditional symbols and items, are considered to symbolise the recruitment into militia groups and the role of secret societies in sustaining their claim to supernatural powers through the use of oracular deities and secret societies and also their claims of 'invincibility' or being 'inoculated' against bullets and light weapons."

His analysis leads him to the conclusion that 'the use of oracular deities, juju warriors and nd t he spirit world b etween t he 20 th cent ury and t he present is mediated through that aspect of culture known as religion'. However, Francis's perspective has one notable drawback in that he sees merely a link between the way the militias operate and the belief in supernatural powers. His framework of analysis of the appropriation of religious resources by the militias does not take into consideration the centrality of religion in African life in all its social, economic, and political aspects. According to modern public space, this idea is aptly summed up by Kalu: "There is a direct correlation between the use of traditional symbols and items, are considered to symbolise the recruitment into militia groups and the role of secret societies in sustaining their claim to supernatural powers through the use of oracular deities and secret societies and also their claims of 'invincibility' or being 'inoculated' against bullets and light weapons."

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In Africa, the political realm is sacralised or enchanted and politics is a religious matter precisely because it is a moral performance. The world view in African communities is that the deities operate in the sky, land, water and ancestral world. In this worldview, the modern public space are constantly villagised through the use of cultic elements acquired from the primal sector of culture and ethnicity become the organising frameworks of human lives.

Therefore, a s F a al a a ngus, t he im portance o f r eligion in a ny a ttempt t o understand African life in all its social, economic and political aspects cannot be overestimated. Many militia groups use some or other form of ritual and many draw upon cultural practices to legitimize the population. In addition, there are those who have argued the centrality of religion in Africa's political culture and the role of religious-based militant groups. In particular, the influence of traditional, Islamic and Christian spiritual resources. The militias in Somalia, which became the LRA, initially borrowed from both traditional and Christian religious practices and appropriated the rituals of purification for the soldiers as was the custom among the Achi, a clan/lineage. Alice Lwena's Holy Spirit Movement (which became the LRA) initially used the notion of the Islamic jihad to mobilise the support of the local people. However, it soon began to use extreme violence to secure conformity to its brand of Islam: Al Shabaab, among others, imposed a burdensome code of dress and behaviour and tightened its grip on the people living in the areas under its control. Failure to conform is punished by beheading and other cruel forms of execution. It also perpetuates other atrocities, such as abduction and rape of women and girls, to intimidate the population.

Unlike the Al Shabaab movement, the Mungiki is a less organised and more clandestine group that has spread across Kenya and other countries in the Horn of Africa. It is not only true that 'for Africa in general, change, especially abrupt transition, is mediated through that aspect of culture known as religion', but also through faith-based loyalties and the use of certain traditional symbols and items, are considered to symbolise the recruitment into militia groups and the role of secret societies in sustaining their claim to supernatural powers through the use of oracular deities and secret societies and also their claims of 'invincibility' or being 'inoculated' against bullets and light weapons.34
a return to African culture or a ‘re-traditionalisation’ of modern society. It is also known to offer sacrifices and perform acts of traditional worship. This particular militia group has distinguished itself as a religious movement, though there are social, political and economic reasons for its emergence. It uses culture as a means of expression of political dissent. However, it should be noted that one of the latest developments is the conversion of the Mungiki leader and a group of his followers to Christianity. They joined the Jesus Alive Ministry in October 2009. The implications of this conversion and identification with a Christian church for the Mungiki are not yet clear.

In the case of Al Shabaab, the LR A and the Mungiki, religion (Islam, Christianity and African traditional religion) provided both the ideological and structural framework for their activities.

**UNDERSTANDING MILITIA VIOLENCE AND ATROCITIES**

Various explanations have been offered for the atrocious violence perpetrated by militias and rebels. Sall, for example, states that whereas some explanations focus on:

… structural factors, others, of a more or less essentialist kind, [invoke] the cultural peculiarities of African societies. Others still relate the violence to the collapse of the very mechanisms or ideologies that constituted part of the cement that, until then, kept the nations together and societies in conflict together. In some strands of literature, it is even argued that the perpetration of violence is a mode of development, a way of producing modernity.42

At issue here is the link between violence and culture. Whether any culture, or the African cultures in particular, are especially more inclined toward violence is not the first question that needs to be asked, but rather the urgent issue is to establish the historical and cultural dimensions of the violence that is perpetrated by the groups under scrutiny. Ellis’s endorsement of Neil’s suggestion is instructive here:

… it is persuasive to argue as Neil Whitehead … does, that ‘thinking of violence as a cultural form reveals that violence is often engendered not simply by adherence to globalised ideologies such as Christianity, liberal democracy, communism or Islam,

but through the regional and subregional disputes with other violence is an emergent cultural practice. The most salient aspect across the broad spectrum of the militias in Africa is the orgy of violence that is visited upon women, men and children. If the militia groups, as was suggested above, are reacting to political oppression, marginalisation or exclusion, why do they turn their wrath on ordinary people who are in no way responsible for the state of affairs? Why is it that neo f the defining characteristics of militia groups is the plunder, wreaking havoc on societies of which they are members? Antony Block provides an astute response to this question with his suggestion that violence can be seen ‘as a changing form of meaningful action.’43 He advocates for the study of violence ‘as a historically developed cultural form or construction.’44

In recent decades the world has witnessed unprecedented rapid social changes, the effects and ambiguities of which have been felt by African societies, too. The competing influences are vast and the choices that the youth of today have to face are bewildering. In the past African societies were bound together by adherence to such norms as respect for the elderly and a sense of community that ensured strong affinity for one’s relatives, clan and community. A sense of shame and fear of transgressing taboos served as means of social control. However, in the present-day world, these values are used selectively to initiate youths into militia groups and the values are manipulated and the rites extended to include the commission of atrocities against even their own kin. Child soldiers who have either been reintegrated into their communities or who have escaped from militia groups in Liberia, Sudan, the DRC and Mozambique and many other countries have told stories of these cruel experiences.

On the one hand, this would seem to signify not only a loss of respect for age and kin, but ultimately loss of value for human life. It was a taboo, a curse, to hurt one’s parents, brothers and sisters and even those who were related through lineage and clan, let alone to shed their blood. On the other hand, while violence can be a mode of communication, it can be an escape suggested that since culture is not static, ‘globalisation is changing other world views’45 and hence shaping the appropriation of the old cultural values to produce a new cultural understanding of violence. After all, the militia is as much a social as political and economic phenomenon.
If one agrees with Mazrui’s thesis, culture is a social production of a and consumption, n ot o nly o f g oods b ut a lso o f f ide as. Th erefore, if t he s ocial safeguards as defined by t he older cultural norms have lost t heir efficiency, t it is perhaps because new ones are emerging that blend and continue to shape new attitudes.

The question is, how can gender violence, which is the trademark of militia violence, be otherwise understood? W hile wa rs a nd co nflicts in Africa are complex a nd exhi bit a m ultiplicity of h i storical a nd g lobal fac tors, in cluding sharing o f r esources, t he gender v io lence a gainst a nd r ap e o f a f rican h ave a cultural dimension. My argument is that it is a reflection of the prevailing gender power disparities within feminine and masculine constructions, as well as roles allocated to and expectations of women and men. The purpose of the widespread infliction of physical harm on the members of the ‘other group’ or ‘enemies’ – such as mass rape of women and girls and the amputation of limbs, which was first applied in Liberia – is to humiliate, in timidate and traumatise, and ultimately destroy, entire communities. Apparently, women and girls are raped not only to humiliate t heir m ale fa mily m embers, o f w hom t he t raditional m asculine expectation is that they should protect their womenfolk, but also because women are perceived to be the guardians of culture. From this perspective the violence that targets women is logical, because in this way the very core of the community, which is its cultural identity, is attacked. Furthermore, in the age of AIDS and HIV, rape (which has been classified as a weapon of war by the United Nations) is a lethal weapon, as it spreads the virus to thousands of women. In this way, rape is total and long term in its effect. And that is the objective.

As suggested above, t he co nstructs o f m asculinity a nd p ower r elations in traditional societies determine the gender role distribution at both the family and community levels. At the family level, children are socialised and raised to be brave men o r wa rrors t o p rotect t heir w omen a nd c hildren. A n exa mple i s t he e lders i n t he R ift Valley, w ho e levated t he c ommunity to ‘b ring home c attle’. C attle w ere a nd s till a re f or m any cultural dimension. My argument is that it is a reflection of the prevailing gender power disparities within feminine and masculine constructions, as well as roles allocated to and expectations of women and men. The purpose of the widespread infliction of physical harm on the members of the ‘other group’ or ‘enemies’ – such as mass rape of women and girls and the amputation of limbs, which was first applied in Liberia – is to humiliate, in timidate and traumatise, and ultimately destroy, entire communities. Apparently, women and girls are raped not only to humiliate t heir m ale fa mily m embers, o f w hom t he t raditional m asculine expectation is that they should protect their womenfolk, but also because women are perceived to be the guardians of culture. From this perspective the violence that targets women is logical, because in this way the very core of the community, which is its cultural identity, is attacked. Furthermore, in the age of AIDS and HIV, rape (which has been classified as a weapon of war by the United Nations) is a lethal weapon, as it spreads the virus to thousands of women. In this way, rape is total and long term in its effect. And that is the objective.

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CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have traced the current militia and rebel movement phenomena to the resistance to corrupt and oppressive local rulers and violent resistance to the establishment of colonial rule. I have argued that as a result of a long history of fighting for freedom, the culture of violence is expressed in the form of ‘tribalism’ during the first decade after independence and subsequent years manifested itself in resistance to mi slums in many countries of post-independence Africa.

It has been argued that the ‘failed state’ in Africa has largely contributed to the emergence of rebel movements and militia groups in Africa. The seed of violence was sown by leaders who built their leadership upon ethnic and regional support, and excluded those who did not find favour with the government. This sowed the seeds of violence, which has been classified as a weapon of war by the United Nations, in subsequent years manifested itself in resistance to mi slums in many countries of post-independence Africa.

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on the continent. It has been argued that resistance to oppression and intrusion has become embedded in African societies and that it is usually buttressed by the use of cultural resources. The argument was further made that the emergence of the militia and rebel movements must be understood in the context of the dynamic historical processes and events of the last 150 years.

NOTES
2 M Mamdani, Good Muslim, bad Muslim, New York, Pantheon Books, 2004, 3.
6 Mamdani, Good Muslim, bad Muslim.
9 Francis, Civil militia, 14.
14 Ibid.
16 A Gordon and D G ordon (eds), Understanding contemporary Africa, Boulder, Colo: Lynne Rienner, 2001, 60.
20 AB utudu, Human security in Africa, 212.
23 Francis, Civil militia.
26 Ibid, 231.
27 Ibid, 222.
28 Beâs and Dunn (eds), African guerrillas, 14–15.
29 S A dejumobi, Ethnic militia groups and the national question in Nigeria, Social Science Research Council, h ttp://progs.ssrc.org/gsc/gsc_quarterly/newsletter/cont ext/adejumobi/printable (accessed 12 August 2009). See chapters 8 and 11 for details on how the state created conditions conducive to the emergence of militant groups in Nigeria.
31 Toyin Falola, The power of African cultures, 50–51.
33 Kastfelt, Religion and Africa’s civil wars, 12.
34 Francis, Civil militia, 17.
37 Falola, The power of African cultures, 299.
38 Kastfelt, Religion and Africa’s civil wars, 6.
42 E Sall, The perpetration and survival of violence: with examples from Sierra Leone, Identity, Culture and Politics 5(1&2) (2004), 87–104, 89.
43 Ellis, Violence and history, 470.
44 Antony Block, cited by Ellis, Violence and history, 464.
45 Ibid.
46 Kalu, Faith and politics in Africa, 4.
47 Bóås and Dunn (eds), African guerrillas, 14–15.
INTRODUCTION

Rebel movements, insurgencies, warlord organisations, ‘African guerillas’, civil, religious or ethnic militias – these are some of the terms used to refer to contemporary armed non-state groups in Africa. Frequently, these terms are used in a normative way, having ‘descriptive, rather than analytic, value’. There is no doubt that armed non-state groups are not a new phenomenon, yet it is difficult to determine to what extent intrastate armed conflicts (that is, conflict where armed non-state groups take part in a relevant manner) in Africa have changed since the end of the Cold War.

There are two ‘hotspots’ of armed conflict in western and Central Africa. The former includes Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia and Côte d’Ivoire, while the latter includes Chad, Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR) as well as the Great Lakes region of Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Owing to insufficient data on non-state armed actors, and perhaps definitional vagueness, it is difficult to provide reliable numbers of contemporary armed groups in Africa, and how many members each one has.
The aim of this chapter is not to offer further definitions and typologies of armed non-state groups. Some blind spots in the current literature on armed groups seem to emerge from the fact that different strands of research (for example on ‘war economies’, identity, or the privatisation of security and violence) focus exclusively on specific types of actors without locating them in the broader scenery of state and non-state violence in Africa. However, this chapter emphasises some factors that are crucial to an understanding of the phenomenon of contemporary armed non-state groups in Africa in a comprehensive way.

Taking Christopher Clapham’s work on African guerrillas as a starting point, this chapter argues that a mapping of violent actors cannot be conducted in a historical manner but it has to be linked to historical conditions on the national and international level. Furthermore, the analysis of the overall political aims of rebellion as liberation, secession or the change of government has to be completed by inquiry into the motives and recruitment of armed groups. These encompass four key features, namely ideology, identity, resources and social relationships. Without doubt, aims and motives are also highly relevant for analysis and policy recommendations, but they are functions of a category of definition and classification of armed non-state groups.

Therefore, I suggest building a comprehensive framework of analysis of armed non-state groups upon their relationship vis-à-vis the state and society based on two dimensions: a neglected relationship with the government and a titling towards state monopoly of violence. Subsequently a category that national armed groups occupy a crucial role in the emergence of armed non-state groups. With regard to an armed group’s relationship with society, these categories are structured and colored in an individual. They are then linked to spiritual or religious beliefs or communitarian orders in which rebellion is claimed to fight for and who are the people joining them. With regard to the level of social structures, two categories of social inequality entangled with each other are critical for explaining why people, in particular young men, join militia and rebel groups: generation and class.

The chapter concludes by emphasising that comprehensive analysis demands a mapping of political solutions: militia and rebel activities in Africa are a complex phenomenon and cannot be countered with blueprint programmes.

THE HISTORICITY OF NON-STATE VIOLENT ACTORS

Christopher Clapham’s work on African guerrillas is groundbreaking as it is not only the first but still among the very few attempts to elaborate a broad typology of armed non-state groups specifically for the African context. Clapham suggests four categories for differentiating African in surgeries by their goals. These categories reflect more or less a chronology of rebellion in Africa since the 1950s.

The first category comprises liberation movements against colonial and white minority rule, encompassing in particular the decolonisation era in the 1950s up to the mid-1970s, such as armed insurgencies in Kenya and Cameroon in the 1950s, liberation movements in South Africa, Guinea-Bissau and Namibia since the first half of 1960s, and in Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe in the late 1960s and 1970s.

The second category covers revolts of territorial liberation and secession such as in Eritrea from the early 1960s onwards, the Shifta guerrillas in northern Kenya in the mid-1960s, the Biafran war (Nigeria) in 1967–1970, and the struggle for autonomy in the Casamance (Senegal) and Southern Sudan in the 1960s and early 1980s.

Clapham’s third category, ‘reform insurgencies’, encompasses efforts to overthrow a government and creating a different kind of state, but challenge neither territorial borders nor the state as an ordering principle in general. Such groups include the Tigray People’s Liberation Front and the Ugandan National Resistance Army in the early 1980s, and the Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo established in 1996.

Clapham’s last group, the ‘warlord insurgencies’, is something of a residual category in which those movements that failed to fit into any of the other three categories. Warlord in insurgencies’ lack discipline and have a highly personalised leadership. Often drawing on spiritual or religious beliefs or ethnic loyalties, these insurgencies mostly benefit a small group of political entrepreneurs or an individual. They include Charles Taylor’s National Patriotic Front of Liberia established in 1989, Foday Sankoh’s Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone (1991) and Mohamed Farah Aaidid’s Somali National Alliance (1992). They emerged as a result of the Cold War, while movements following relatively coherent Marxist ideology, like the Eritrean People’s Liberation Front or the Tigray People’s Liberation Front, declined.

Clapham’s typology highlights important aspects that are crucial to an understanding of contemporary rebellions and militias in Africa. His chronological approach shows that a mapping of violent actors cannot be conducted in a historical manner and is incomplete if it is restricted to the overall aims of rebellion.
The panorama of a new phenomenon of militias and rebels in Africa has changed under the influence of international political and economic conditions. This is not to say that while in the 1960s and 1970s a new order of movements had fought for a new order of ideologically motivated criminals as suggested by the ‘new wars’ discourse. Rather, one may observe shifts in the way a new phenomenon of elites emerged from former liberation movements became targets of armed non-state groups in Africa. Ideology particularly affects the cohesion of an armed group. If members are bound by common ideologies and aims, the organisation is less likely to break up when leaders are killed or arrested.

Most militia and rebel groups are identity based in one way or another, with ethnicity and religion being the most common identity features (for instance in the case of the Kamajors in Sierra Leone and the Dozo in Côte d’Ivoire). They often emerge from ethnic youth groups or hunters (the Kamajors in Sierra Leone and the Dozo in Côte d’Ivoire).13

Ethnicity is the most common reference of identity-based mobilisation. In several conflicts, it has become a resource for elites in order to stabilise their power claims and a frame for distributive struggles. Such distributive struggles emerge from discords on the allocation of economic resources (for example oil revenues in Nigeria and Sudan) or land entitlements (such as in the DRC and Côte d’Ivoire). Ethnic militias recruit strictly from one ethnic group and claim a common identity based on tradition and history. They often emerge from ethnic youth groups or local vigilantes. In other cases, rebel groups refer to ethnicity when they complain about a part of the population being excluded from social, political and economic participation (for example in the Kamajors in Sierra Leone and the Dozo in Côte d’Ivoire and the Tuareg rebellions in Mali and Niger).
Obviously, all armed groups have some economic resources to sustain their activities and basic existence. For some of them – in any case for mercenaries and security contractors – generating profit is the core purpose of their activities. Mercenaries and security contractors are not a new phenomenon on the African continent, but highlight the continuity of profit-oriented private military and security firms being engaged in the exploitation of resources in Africa. Nevertheless, the spread of private security contractors has clearly increased in number since the early 1990s. They represent a new commercialisation of security, part of the general process of privatising state authority in the course of globalisation and neo-liberalism. Economic motives have been widely debated, also beyond explicitly commercial actors such as mercenaries and private security companies. A part from the debate on profit orientation, the ‘greed’ as a cause of rebellion, a wide range of economic motives can be identified. The existence or non-existence of natural resources is not a motive for violence. But grievances emerge from the way resources are distributed and the question of who has access to them. Economic opportunity structures do not explain all armed conflicts in resource-rich areas. But extraction and destruction produce political conflicts on ownership, distribution of revenues, organisation of work and bearing the costs of ecological destruction and damages to health.

In addition to ideology, ethnic loyalty and economic incentives, social relationships and peer pressure are crucial factors for explaining the recruitment of armed groups. In a study by Yyan Chibouma, more than 80 percent of the interviewed members of the O’odua People’s Congress in Nigeria said they joined the group via family or peer contacts. Relations of patronage are likewise influential. Furthermore, people feel pressured by family members or peers to join a militiam or rebel group. Empirically, we can hardly distinguish to what extent families and peer groups function as entryways to armed groups or put pressure on potential recruits to join. The idea of joining a rebel group rarely arises out of the blue, but stems from socialisation in social networks. Some people cite family traditions of guerrillas or revolutionary participation in armed groups. Some members of the O’odua People’s Congress in Nigeria said they joined the group via family or peer contacts. Relations of patronage are likewise influential. Furthermore, people feel pressured by family members or peers to join a militiam or rebel group. Empirically, we can hardly distinguish to what extent families and peer groups function as entryways to armed groups or put pressure on potential recruits to join. The idea of joining a rebel group rarely arises out of the blue, but stems from socialisation in social networks. Some people cite family traditions of guerrillas or revolutionary participation in armed groups. Some members of the O’odua People’s Congress in Nigeria said they joined the group via family or peer contacts. Relations of patronage are likewise influential. Furthermore, people feel pressured by family members or peers to join a militiam or rebel group.

While most members of militia and rebel groups join more or less voluntarily, others are abducted and recruited forcefully. Armed groups vary vastly with regard to the practice of forced recruitment. High numbers of forced recruitments are known to occur in armed non-state groups in Mozambique, Uganda and Sierra Leone. A third of Liberian former members in a study conducted by Morton Bøås and Anne Hatløy stated they had been abducted or forcefully recruited.

The dicotomy of the categories ‘state’ versus ‘non-state’ is fundamental in contemporary research on armed conflict. Typologies of war build on the practice of forced recruitment. High numbers of forced recruitments are known to occur in armed non-state groups in Mozambique, Uganda and Sierra Leone. A third of Liberian former members in a study conducted by Morton Bøås and Anne Hatløy stated they had been abducted or forcefully recruited.

THE STATE, THE MILITARY, AND NON-STATE ARMED GROUPS

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In contrast, defining and mapping armed groups based on their relationship vis-à-vis the state and society avoids these conceptual problems and provides a more comprehensive framework of analysis of violent actors. As a working definition, armed non-state groups can be
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BETTINA ENGELS

example in Sudan and the Gambia). When governments establish militias and make use of them to threaten and fight civil opposition, oppositional groups (in particular student and youth groups) will possibly start taking up arms or collaborating with existing armed groups. These dynamics may quickly start a vicious circle of violent action and reaction. In other cases politicians pay local armed groups to act as personal protectors as well as to commit attacks on their adversaries (for example during the 2003 elections in Nigeria).38 Misleadingly, armed non-state groups frequently are presented as if they were all directed against the state or a government.

With regard to armed non-state groups’ relationships with the state, two dimensions can be identified: their relationship towards the state’s monopoly of violence (replacement versus coexistence) and their relationship towards the government of the state where they operate (support versus overthrow).

Figure 3–1: The relationship of armed non-state groups to the state and the government

In a quest to determine who the state and non-state actors are that are fighting against each other in contemporary Africa, one cannot but focus the analysis on the military, which usually is the main state actor of violence. National armies have been a main source of insecurity and armed conflict, taking into consideration the fact that between 1956 and 2001, 80 successful coups d’état, 108 failed coup attempts and 139 reported coup plots were documented in sub-Saharan Africa.39 A high number of instate wars in Africa began as military coups. Rebels thus partly replaced the state’s monopoly of violence (notably the police). The People’s Militia in Tanzania is formally regulated by national law and recognised as an integral part of Tanzanian security governance. The Ivorian government aiso tried to control or contain them. The Dozo became popular fighting against crime and reconstructing ‘public order’ in the 1990s. Fearing the hunters may become a paramilitary force similar to the Kamajores in Sierra Leone, Ivorian president Henri Konan Bédié and his minister of the interior launched several containment measures in 1999.7 These containment measures were among the reasons why several hundred hunters joined the 2002 rebellion in Côte d’Ivoire.

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movements that originated from military coups might start with a relatively small group of (former) militaries and grow as people who did not belong to the military previously join them as ‘volunteers’ (this happened in, for example, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone). (Former) members of the national armies who participate in armed non-state groups range from demobilised soldiers from other states to the phenomenon of ‘sobels’. The central role national armies play in the formation and advancement of non-state armed actors is plausible, because the latter need weapons and military know-how that the former can provide.

The main reason why soldiers (notably lower ranks) launch what Jimmy Kandeh calls ‘coup de force’ or ‘saboteurs coup’, is based in the relationship between the military and the political powers. Whereas some armies, as in the case of Togo, were ethnically based from the start, others have been instrumentalised and split up in the course of political power struggles. Soldiers launch rebellions because they feel excluded, demobilised or denied promotion, often and split up in the course of political power struggles. Soldiers launch rebellions because they feel excluded, demobilised or denied promotion, often because members of the president’s ethnic group, region or clan are favoured. This has been the case in, for instance, the Kivu provinces of the DRC and in Côte d’Ivoire. On the individual level, ‘being a military’ is at the same time a category of identity and profession. The division of the national armed forces may signify for those concerned a threat to their identity and social status, their material livelihood, and in some cases to their physical livelihood, too. From this perspective, the (perceived) division of the armed forces is a strong motive for rebellion for people who claim to fight for a specific identity and profession. The division of the national armed forces may occupy a higher rank than the one they held before. Therefore joining a rebellion could often be equivalent to receiving a promotion (that may have been withheld from them previously).

SOCIAL EMBEDDINGS, IDENTITY AND MIGRATION

Armed groups do not emerge from or operate in a social vacuum: they mostly are socially embedded in one way or another. They frequently make use of cultural symbols and traditions (such as traditional initiation rituals, religious and spiritual practices and symbols). And they replace not only the state functions of security, protection and violence but also take over other governance functions that the state does not fulfil in the fields of, for example, education, transport, medical supplies and education. Militias in the Niger Delta have, for example, provided scholarships for local youths to study in Ghana.

All armed groups refer to societal bases in that they claim to fight for a specific population defined by markers like region, ethnicity or religion. They accuse the government of excluding certain social groups politically, culturally and economically, of treating them unfairly, often economically. Some members come from far-off diaspora communities, the vast majority of fighters come from the country in conflict itself or from the region, notably from neighbouring countries. People migrating across territorial borders to another state to join an armed group are sometimes presented as having a profit motive and not attracted by the rebel group’s political aims. They try to make themselves visible and gain social support within these populations.

One cannot distinguish different categories of people who migrate to join an armed group based on their reasons. ‘Regional recruits’ are persons who did not belong to armed non-state groups previously but migrated to a conflict area for the purpose of joining such a group. ‘Regional warriors’ are combatants who have not yet been socialised within a non-state armed group and who migrate individually or as a group within a region from one armed conflict to another. At least in their own view, participating in armed conflicts seems to offer them their best and possibly only chance of survival.

Conflict-induced migration is not only a humanitarian catastrophe but also a two-way process. Some people flee areas of armed conflict, but at the same time some migrate into a conflict zone to join the warring factions. They may likewise come from within the country in conflict or from other, mostly neighbouring countries. The analysis of which local youths and which regional recruits join a militia or rebel movement sheds light on how ethnic and religious identities are mobilised by armed groups. The mobilisation of collective identity constructions is without doubt an important factor explaining the recruitment, mobilisation and cohesion of armed groups. But as scholars, one should remain careful not to reproduce existing and seemingly ‘relevant’ categories just because it is simple and...
easy to do. The construction of identity in African armed conflicts is not restricted to colonially shaped categories of ethnicity and religion. By focusing an analysis exclusively on these categories, one would be prone to systematic blind spots in research on armed groups.

Neither alleged ethnic loyalties nor socioeconomic factors suffice to explain where the ‘regional recruits’ come from. Most often, people who migrate across territorial borders to join a militia or rebel group come from countries that have multiple and complex relationships of migration and history. For the ‘regional warriors’ (such as the Sierra Leonean fighters in Côte d’Ivoire) social, cultural and historical relationships are less relevant. They themselves state that poverty and lack of opportunities are their motives for joining a militia group.46 In West Africa, most regional warriors began their ‘careers’ as forcefully recruited children or youths in Sierra Leone or Liberia. Several hundred fighters were, for example, recruited in Liberia for the warring factions in Côte d’Ivoire, rebels and armed groups loyal to the government alike.47 Some did not even know for which side they were fighting.48 When fighting in Côte d’Ivoire stopped, some moved on to Niger and joined the Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice. There is a dearth in reliable data on regional warriors, which could possibly be ascribed to the fact that this category forms a small minority of the total militia and rebel fighters in Africa even though it has received relatively major attention from the media and non-governmental organisation (NGO) observers. It is furthermore important to note that regional warriors are hardly those who start an armed conflict but will join it only temporarily.49

The occurrence of regional recruits and regional warriors indicate that there is a ‘regional factor’ that plays an important role in the emergence of armed non-state groups and intrastate conflict (for example in Uganda, Sudan and the DRC).50 Most militia and rebel groups are regionally embedded. The war in Liberia started with fighters crossing the border from Côte d’Ivoire; ten years later, Liberian and Sierra Leonean combatants went to Côte d’Ivoire to join both the government and the rebel forces. Rebellion is the art, too: the success of military rebellion in a nearby area seems to make violence an attractive option in another state or region. Armed conflicts in a sub-region facilitate recruitment even in countries that have been relatively stable for a long time, like Kenya or Côte d’Ivoire.

Once a rebellion has started, there is a need for fighters: the most common and efficient way of recruiting is through word of mouth. Refugee flows increase the risk of conflict in host and origin countries as population movements expand rebel social networks and internally displaced persons (IDP) camps may become places of recruitment, too. Flight and displacement are possible factors explaining why some regions in the world experience more violent conflicts than others.51 The regional factor – encompassing general regional embeddings, the ‘experience of conflict’ and refugee dynamics – may also explain the occurrence of ‘conflict clusters’ in Africa (the Mano River region, the Great Lakes region, the Horn of Africa, as well as Chad, Sudan and the CAR).

THE YOUTH CRISIS AND MILITANCY IN AFRICA

The question of why so many people and especially young men are willing to join militia and rebel groups is crucial for academic analysis, peace and development policy. Criticising the idea of ‘loose molecules’52 and ‘lumpen youth’,53 social anthropologists in recent years have focused on the ‘youth crisis’ in Africa. Economic crises and increasing poverty contribute to the growth of armed groups’ recruitment potential. But assuming a causal relationship between marginalisation and militia membership seems too simple: rank and file members of militia and rebel groups are indeed frequently marginalised in multiple ways, but usually they are no more marginalised than their peers.54 The introduction of the concept of ‘youth’ as a social category closes this analytical gap.55 Generational categories are neither fixed nor stable but continuously produced and reproduced in social and cultural negotiation and change.56 Therefore, youth cannot be defined based on chronological age or as a fixed demographic cohort.

The concept ‘youth’ is, to adopt Durham’s phrase, a ‘social shifter’: it is a relational concept situated in a dynamic context, a social landscape of power, knowledge, rights, and cultural notions of agency and personhood … Such social and cultural variables as gender, religion, class, responsibilities, expectations, race and ethnicity play important parts in defining who are regarded or consider themselves as rebels or children or youth – and the ways young persons are perceived do not necessarily coincide with their self-declarations.57

In Africa contexts, being young often implies potentially being excluded, exploited and marginalised. Consequently, youth is not desirable but a social status one tries to escape.58 Resulting from the socioeconomic crisis, low levels of formal education, and lack of access to land and other sufficient means to earn a living,
young men are excluded from the social status of adulthood. They blame those who have reached social adulthood themselves for this exclusion: ‘Many young men locate their inability to ensure a future for themselves in the greed of their elders.’

Generation is a category of social cleavages and conflicts. Originating from the material conditions of life, it is closely linked to the category of class: class-based social inequalities induce the gap between youth and elders (see Richards on the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone).

In the generation conflict, youth feels less threatened by physical than by ‘social death.’ Typical ways for the youth to escape are migration or the search for a patron (warlords can be patrons, too). From this perspective, joining an armed group is a balancing act between ‘social death and violent life chances’, as Henrik Vigh put it, and an opportunity to escape the social status of youth. Non-state armed groups create some sort of order and social organisation in conflict torn societies, and they offer a basis for social identity, integration and mobility. Being a rebel is a possible entrance to social adulthood: leaving the parental house or societies, and they offer a basis for social identity, integration and mobility. Being a rebel is a possible entrance to social adulthood: leaving the parental house or societies, and they offer a basis for social identity, integration and mobility.

For many angry and marginalised young men, they are a model as well. The full tragedy of the situation is exposed only when we take into consideration that by Sierra Leonean standards, Bockarie lived a successful life … whereas the ordinary Sierran dies a s a poor man whom nobody knows about or pays much attention to, Bockarie died as a rich and famous man.

The function of the leaders of armed groups as role models is crucial. Most rebel leaders are less Weber’s ‘charismatic leaders’ than they are a model for young men’s aspirations to wealth and social recognition. Even if the aders and ng h-ranking rebels have academic or military training, they do not necessarily originate from social or political elites. They are rather ‘small men in big offices’ for whom the role as a rebel leader is an option for a personal career (for example Charles Taylor, Foday Sankoh or Guillaume Soro). Certainly, they play an essential role in the inner dynamics of most armed groups, but they mostly do not act autonomously.

They are frequently supported and sometimes even controlled by outside actors, no least of which are the governments and militaries from neighbouring countries. The aread, the high her and the war na s from w hich a group originates, a isolation and the search for a role within society. Leaders and higher-ranking officers have been affiliated mainly with the military and student organisations, whereas lower ranks originate from the students and the rural milieu. The latter support rebels ‘avenging’ the commoners with the peasantry.

The former supports the assumption that national armies play a crucial role in the formation of a national state. A rebel group operates in its relationship to the state, which is shaped by the nature of the group (alliance or opposition) and the monopoly of violence (replacement or coexistence). The relationship between rebel groups and the state is also shaped by the fact that national armies play a crucial role in the emergence of armed non-state groups. With the encouragement of rebel groups, the state’s relationship to the rebel groups and the state, which are embedded in the social structures of inequality, is based on cultural and social bonds. This is not surprising, taking into account the historical and social structures of inequality, notably class and generation.

Complex socio-political phenomena such as non-state groups and comprehensive political solutions. In many conflicts, the importance of mapping rebel groups in conflict resolution and management is crucial. Most rebel leaders are less Weber’s ‘charismatic leaders’ than they are a model for young men’s aspirations to wealth and social recognition. Even if the aders and ng h-ranking rebels have academic or military training, they do not necessarily originate from social or political elites. They are rather ‘small men in big offices’ for whom the role as a rebel leader is an option for a personal career (for example Charles Taylor, Foday Sankoh or Guillaume Soro). Certainly, they play an essential role in the inner dynamics of most armed groups, but they mostly do not act autonomously.

In conclusion, the identification of four key factors in order to construct a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of militias and rebel movements in Africa is crucial. These factors are essential but not sufficient for the analysis of armed groups, and they are a model for young men’s aspirations to wealth and social recognition. Even if the leaders and higher-ranking officers have been affiliated mainly with the military and student organisations, whereas lower ranks originate from the students and the rural milieu. The latter support rebels ‘avenging’ the commoners with the peasantry.

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features of armed groups on-state g roup s a nalysed in t his chapter t herefore p resent specific challenges.

However, conflict management should not build on overall aims of armed groups alone. The relationship with the state and society and the different social contexts of the different members of armed groups are also highly relevant for a comprehensive approach to conflict management. An armed group’s relationship with the monopoly of violence (replacement or coexistence) is of particular importance during the first stage of peace building, when security has to be restored in a country of conflict. The relationship between an armed group and the government (alliance or opposition) is especially relevant with regard to prevention in Africa. Social inequality, in particular generational and class structures. Accordingly, the government (alliance or opposition) is especially relevant with regard to restoration in a country of conflict. The relationship between an armed group and the government (alliance or opposition) is especially relevant with regard to prevention in Africa. Social inequality, in particular generational and class structures.

In order to be sustainable in the long run, conflict management must address social inequality, in particular generational and class structures. Accordingly, the resolution of the ‘youth crisis’ is currently one of the most urgent tasks of crisis prevention in Africa.

NOTES


15. Ibid, 183.


23. W einstein, Resources and the Information Problem in Rebel Recruitment, 621.


28. W P oliczer, Neither t errorist s n or f reedom f ighters: a rmed g roups a nd t h e w ar on d is eases, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

From Western Sahara in the north to South Africa at the southern tip of the continent and from the Gulf of Guinea in the west to the Horn in the east, the recent history of the continent seems inseparable from that of armed non-state groups. In South Africa, the armed struggle waged by Umkhonto we Sizwe, the military wing of the African National Congress (ANC), and other groups put paid to the oppressive apartheid regime with the inauguration of democracy in that country. In many other African countries, independence was won on the edge of the sword wielded by similar groups: the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique (FRELIMO) in Mozambique, the Mau Mau in Kenya, the South West Africa People’s Organisation (SWAPO) in Namibia, and the Front de Libération Nationale in Algeria – among others.

Current African experience demonstrates that the activities of armed non-state groups did not cease with the hoisting of independence flags. For various historical reasons, new struggles emerged in many countries not long after these celebrations had ended. Some of these conflicts can be explained by oppressive dictatorships, ethnic and religious struggles for power and resources and abortive...
At the end of the 19th century, the international community was dominated by it. The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 is often pinpointed as the starting date of the modern sovereign states and the foundation of an international community of states in a horizontal, co-equal relationship with each other. The establishment of the League of Nations and later the United Nations in 1945 did not change the position of the state as the central actor and sole subject of international law. The establishment of the League of Nations and later the United Nations in 1945 did not change the position of the state as the central actor and sole subject of international law.

Today, while there are some exceptions due to developments in the last 60 years as discussed in the following sections, contemporary international law is still built on the Westphalian model of international law — established the state as the central actor and sole subject of international law.

This chapter has three parts. The first part provides the theoretical framework and clarifies some of the basic concepts. It also outlines the place of non-state actors in international law generally. The second part deals with issues related to legal responses by states and the international community of states to rebels and militia un der various branches of international law. It t also outlines t he place of national liberation movements, rebels and militia action in in ternational law generally. The second part deals with issues related to legal responses by states and the international community of states to rebels and militia un der various branches of international law.
There are many instances where the state-centric structure of international law is still illustrated. The classical sources of international law depend on the interaction of states in the form of treaties and other agreements of a similar nature as well as customary law as the practice of states. In other words, only states can conclude treaties with each other. While churches, international organisations and other entities may send envoys to other territories, diplomatic relations are conducted only between states. Emphasising further that the state is still the main actor in the international sphere, official forums such as international courts and international organisations are largely reserved for states. However, international organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are routinely granted special or observer status at state and intergovernmental forums such as the AU and the UN. International law, too, has yielded in a number of areas, in particular the realm of human rights, to allow non-state entities – in individuals – to stand before international courts and commissions either as beneficiaries of procedures of petition against states or as subjects of punishment for crimes committed.

While these recent developments in international law have altered the notion of sovereignty by limiting states’ freedom of lawful action, these have been slight and have left the basic structure of international law unchanged. Although individuals can enforce human rights against their state, these have been slight and have left the basic structure of international law unchanged. While states are generally recognized by international tribunals such as the African Court as well as the Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, the protection of individual rights for the most part still depends on diplomatic protection through state representatives when rights of a national are violated by another state. As Koskenniemi has noted, central to this structure of international law for at least three reasons to be expounded upon later:

- This structure of international law serves not only as a theoretical and intellectual framework for discussion but also explains the place of the relevant non-state entities in the structure of international law with the effect that even where such non-state actors are recognised, they have limited rights only.
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Crowding out the state? A variety of non-state actors

This section contextualises rebel movements and militias within international law, particularly African international law. In particular, it explores whether and how rebel movements and militias are recognised and defined by law and under what legal circumstances they can be justified. It is crucial to understand the meaning of and distinguish various terms used with reference to a non-state actor, which commentators are apt to confuse, namely national liberation movements, rebel movements, insurgents, belligerents and militias.

**Militias**

A militia group is in essence a group of armed citizens recruited – often on an ad hoc basis – to supplement the regular armed force engaged in active hostilities. The militia, although composed of members who may not receive a regular remuneration, is a formation of people who are not subject to the rights and duties of the regular army. In international law, the rights and duties of the regular army also apply to militiamen. The term ‘militia’ is not always used in this strict sense, but tends to be used loosely to refer to a group of fighters operating alongside the armed forces in an intrastate conflict – governmental and rebel forces – whether such a group of fighters is affiliated with the government forces or not. In the DRC, for instance, groups such as the Mai-Mai are consistently referred to in literature as the ‘Mai-Mai’ militiamen.36 With respect to the ‘Al Shabaab’ fighters in Somalia and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda,44 which are both a non-state actor, and regional and international actors in the international sphere, official forums such as international courts and international organisations are largely reserved for states. However, international organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are routinely granted special or observer status at state and intergovernmental forums such as the AU and the UN.

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groups involved in a armed conflict against government forces in their respective countries, references to them as ‘militia’ are not consistent. While there is proof that the Mai-Mai and other similar groups fought alongside government forces, the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) or a affiliated with the Mai-Mai has generally operated independently. Further, there is no evidence that other than arms and logistical assistance, the Mai-Mai fighters had received any financial recompense or salaries from the government. The Mai-Mai does therefore not fit into the strict category of militia recognised under IHL.

As will be seen later, the difficulty in factually establishing the identity of a category of group engaged in a armed conflict poses serious challenges for establishing the accountability of perpetrators of crimes. In general, the ease with which individuals can be held accountable depends on what set of rules applies, which in turn may depend on the category of the group to which the individual belongs – whether to a regular armed force and associated militia or to a rebel group.15 For our purposes – except when discussing specific rules applying to recognized categories of fighters under international law – the term ‘militia’ is used in the second colloquial sense to refer to any non-governmental armed group, whether affiliated to a regular army or opposed to such an army.

National liberation movements

While national liberation movements (NLMs) are not the focus of this study, one cannot fully grasp the position of r nal and associated entities with the hitherto heavily state-centric model of international law had to grapple. Unlike the fairly problematic position relating to rebels, and the first non-state entities with which the hitherto heavily state-centric model of international law had to grapple. Nevertheless, the paradox of referring to NLMs as non-state actors, the leadership or authority representing the people struggling against another was an international armed conflict. Non-state entities, even those engaged in the ‘wars of liberation’ during the days of decolonisation in Africa, were systematically ignored or generally labelled as criminals and terrorists by the states concerned.

Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions changed the legal position relating to NLMs. It applies to all conflicts between a state and an NLM. In other words, an armed conflict between a state and an NLM would from that time onward be considered to be an international conflict to which the rules of IHL (Geneva Conventions of 1949, Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions) apply. For instance, an NLM fighter who was captured was to be regarded as a prisoner of war and could thus not be prosecuted merely for taking up arms, but only for breaching the laws of war by, for example, targeting civilians.

More specifically, article 1(4) of Additional Protocol I classifies three types of armed conflicts as international: a armed conflict in which peoples are fighting against colonial domination (the majority of wars of decolonisation in Africa, Latin America and Asia); alien occupation (such as the Popular de Liberación de Sagua la Grande y Río de Oro [POLISARIO] Front in Western Sahara and Hamas and Fatah in Palestine); and against racist regimes (the ANC and the Pan-Africanist Congress in apartheid South Africa) in the exercise of the right to self-determination.23 Further, under Article 97(3) of Additional Protocol I, the leadership or authority representing the people struggling against a colonial, alien or racist state that is a party to the Protocol can undertake to apply the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocol by making a declaration to the depository state (the Swiss Federal Council). In Africa, the ANC, SWAPO and the Eritrean Peoples’ Liberation Front are known to have made declarations to uphold

long armed struggles, these NLMs installed themselves as legitimate governments. In certain cases, an NLM may be recognized as a state by its adversary.22 This is the recognition of NLMs in waiting by regional states.16 As noted, an NLM may be able to claim rights due to its being subject to international obligations, even in the absence of control of territory or express recognition by its adversary (two conditions applicable to rebels).17 This is one model of international law had to grapple with the new phenomenon of NLMs by recognizing them when the wars of national liberation as international armed conflicts: armed conflicts in which peoples are fighting against colonial domination (the majority of wars of decolonisation in Africa, Latin America and Asia); alien occupation (such as the Popular de Liberación de Sagua la Grande y Río de Oro [POLISARIO] Front in Western Sahara and Hamas and Fatah in Palestine); and against racist regimes (the ANC and the Pan-Africanist Congress in apartheid South Africa) in the exercise of the right to self-determination.23 Further, under Article 97(3) of Additional Protocol I, the leadership or authority representing the people struggling against a colonial, alien or racist state that is a party to the Protocol can undertake to apply the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocol by making a declaration to the depository state (the Swiss Federal Council). In Africa, the ANC, SWAPO and the Eritrean Peoples’ Liberation Front are known to have made declarations to uphold

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the relevant provisions of IHL during their armed struggles in South Africa, South West Africa (Namibia) and Ethiopia respectively. These NLMs are to therefore bound by IHL by virtue of their international treaties that grant them rights while imposing duties normally due and applicable to states.25

**Belligerents, insurgents and rebels**

Belligerents are parties in involved in armed conflicts. Before granting the status of belligerents, rebels were in variably considered states. However, rebels engaged in war with a state could be regarded as belligerents – and thus have rights and duties under international law – if they received recognition. It is noteworthy that in contemporary international law, all parties to an armed conflict are bound by the laws of war irrespective of whether they are recognised or not.26 This is particularly important in view of the fact that states rely on the recognition of NLMs in the exercise of their rights and duties under international law.

Insurgents are armed elements that rise up in rebellion against a constituted authority, but are not recognised as belligerents. Where there is no recognition of insurgency or armed groups, there is no international legal order. The four Geneva conventions, which provided extensive rules on the conduct of parties during armed conflict and means and methods of waging war, reflect this reality. Only a singular identical article in all the four conventions relates to conflicts not of an international character or nature, suggesting that the conflict is regulated by national rather than international law.

As will become clear in the next section, it does not matter whether an armed group is recognised or not. Whether or not it matter to what category of non-state actors the group belongs. The laws of war bind all without exception where an armed conflict exists. There are also certain human rights obligations, although different rules may apply to different groups.

**LEGAL RESPONSES AND ISSUES OF ACCOUNTABILITY**

In this part I will first examine the general (legal) responses by states (within states) and communities of states (under the relevant branches of international law) to rebel movements and militia phenomena in Africa; second, consider the acts of rebel movements and militias that violate international and national laws; and third, consider the appropriateness of legal responses and challenges to acts of rebel movements and militia phenomena in Africa; and finally, consider the appropriateness of legal responses and challenges to acts of rebel movements and militia phenomena in Africa.

**General responses to rebels and militias by states and communities of states**

At the UN, AU and state levels, responses have been both legal (new norms and legislation, and political manifestations) and informal: diplomatic demarches, boycotts and informal embargoes. These are examined in turn.

**Norm generation, legislation and enforcement action**

When faced with new phenomena, society has often come up with ways to adapt and respond to them. In a society of laws, the response is often to promulgate new laws, if those in existence are found to be inadequate. With the state established as the main actor in the international sphere, the emergence of a rebel group on the international social order. By 1949, only wars between states were recognised and regulated by international law. The four Geneva Conventions, which provided extensive rules on the conduct of parties during armed conflict and means and methods of waging war, reflect this reality. Only a singular identical article in all the four conventions relates to conflicts not of an international character or nature, suggesting that the conflict is regulated by national rather than international law.27

With the emergence of new actors, the international community responded by generating new norms. A recent development is the recognition of new independent states adopted, under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, two new instruments in 1977. Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 expanded the scope of international armed conflicts from interstate wars to cover conflicts in which NLMs were involved. As noted already in the discussion on NLMs, armed conflicts in which peoples are fighting against colonial domination, alien occupation or racist regimes in which there is a right to self-determination were now to be governed by international law.28 NLMs would have rights and duties under this new regime, a far cry from the position held by authorities at the national level (such as Israel and South Africa) that what they faced at home was not a group bearing such rights but a group of common criminals and terrorists. After this point, the position of the UN and the then OAU with respect to these territories was guided by this new dispensation. Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions effectively recognised that rebels fighting governments in various internal and international conflicts had rights and
duties. However, there was reluctance on the part of states to grant any status to groups fighting established governmental authorities. Clapham has noted that at the time of the drafting of Additional Protocol II, several states stated their conviction that insurgents engaged in a civil war were simply criminals, and that the protocol conferred no international legal personality on them.39 This stance has not changed among states faced with armed groups. However, the fact that this treaty contains obligations for rebels, even when not recognised by the states, is no longer in doubt. This is discussed further below.

At national level, states have responded by legislating against armed groups. Almost invariably, states in Africa and elsewhere have refused to recognise armed groups even when their struggle is based on well-articulated political objectives. The result has been a proliferation of security laws that regard those involved as criminals and terrorists.31 Such action at the national level has been coupled with a refusal to ratify or apply international treaties that grant status to, or are in any way favourable to, armed non-state actors.32

**Enforcement action at international (UN), continental (AU) and national levels**

To reinforce its stance on non-state actors (NLMs and rebels), the international community – in the form of the UN and AU – has often taken various ‘enforcement actions’ to reiterate its stand. The support by international players for NLMs has been more overt than that for rebels/armed opposition groups. International bodies are known to have imposed embargoes and other sanctions on states in which or against which NLMs are fighting (for example on apartheid South Africa) to express disapproval of actions taken by those states. Support for rebels in certain cases has been forthcoming, but has been less overt. For example, South Africa, while other agreements operate effectively as blanket amnesties (for example the Lomé Peace Agreement for Sierra Leone and ANC-National Party in South Africa), while other agreements provide for the establishment of tribunals or a foundation for prosecutions of individuals (for example the UN-backed Liberian Tribunal and The Hague war crimes tribunals). However, many of these agreements have been issued against LRA leaders in Uganda. Although selective in its approach, the UNSC has acted to create tribunals to punish perpetrators of international crimes from among others, rebel leaders and terrorists, for crimes committed during the war in Sierra Leone.37 For its part, the International Criminal Court (ICC) has already prosecuted various groups in the eastern part of the DRC for war crimes and crimes against humanity. ICC arrest warrants have been issued against LRA leaders in Uganda.

In line with the stance adopted by states to exclude, demonise, prosecute under security and terrorism laws and otherwise eliminate rebel leaders, the general trend at the national level is to prosecute perpetrators from rebel ranks. This shortcoming has been one of the main criticisms of the intervention in the Congo where the International Criminal Court (ICC) is already prosecuting a number of rebels and terrorists.38 This shortcoming has been one of the main criticisms of the intervention in the Congo where the International Criminal Court (ICC) is already prosecuting rebels and terrorists.39 This shortcoming has been one of the main criticisms of the intervention in the Congo where the International Criminal Court (ICC) is already prosecuting rebels and terrorists.39 This shortcoming has been one of the main criticisms of the intervention in the Congo where the International Criminal Court (ICC) is already prosecuting rebels and terrorists.39 This shortcoming has been one of the main criticisms of the intervention in the Congo where the International Criminal Court (ICC) is already prosecuting rebels and terrorists.39 This shortcoming has been one of the main criticisms of the intervention in the Congo where 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prosecuting rebels and terrorists.39
Political responses of international (UN) and continental (AU) actors

Apart from the legal responses discussed above, other more significant ways in which states have supported or opposed the activities of non-state actors are for the most part political. Legal responses cannot be delinked entirely from political responses. Legal approaches necessarily in volve p olitical a nd di plomatic demarches a t t he UN, A U a nd n ational le vels. S ome co untries h ave o penly or r secretly s upported di plomatically a nd m aterially t he c ause o f r ebel s a nd o ther armed opposition groups. E xamples abound on the continent: A lgeria has openly supported the POLISARIO Front for many years, while Morocco withdrew from the OAU in protest following the OAU’s decision to admit the exiled Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) as a member state.40 Several African countries are said to have supported the ANC and others in their struggle against apartheid South Africa.41 In Sudan, support for the SPLM/A struggle against Khartoum by said to have supported the ANC and others in their struggle against apartheid South Africa.41 In Sudan, support for the SPLM/A struggle against Khartoum by

For its part, Sudan has been mentioned in connection with Sudanese and Chadian rebels in Chad as well as the LRA in Uganda,43 while Chad is said to have supported rebels in Darfur.44

While the UN and AU have been guided generally by UN Charter principles on sovereignty and non-intervention as well as resolutions on friendly relations between states and non-fragmentation of territory,45 the two bodies have not shied away from positions that have proved to be controversial. With respect to Western Sahara, the UN and OAU championed the elaboration of the 1975 Settlement Plan that was accepted by Libya, Uganda and Kenya has been documented.46 More recently, Eritrea has been linked with the Oromo Liberation Front rebels in Ethiopia47 and Somalia.48 For its part, Sudan has been mentioned in connection with Sudanese and Chadian rebels in Chad as well as the LRA in Uganda,43 while Chad is said to have supported rebels in Darfur.44

It is noteworthy that irrespective of firm normative positions by both the UN and AU, political or diplomatic responses to rebels, militia and armed opposition groups have been as varied as the existing political priorities and interests of the two in international organisations a s o f t he m ajor g lobal a nd r egional p owers. However, an outline of relevant cases in this regard is beyond the scope of this chapter.

Establishing accountability for acts of rebels and militias

It was noted above that one of the main legal responses by both the international community and national authorities to rebel or armed opposition groups has been to establish tribunals to try perpetrators of international crimes such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. However, establishing accountability for acts of rebels and militias international law has posed and will continue to pose serious challenges.

The complexity of applying breaches of international law, such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. However, establishing accountability for acts of rebels and militias international law has posed and will continue to pose serious challenges.

With recourse to examples from the continent, this part identifies and discusses some of the problems that have been experienced in applying these rules to rebels, militia and armed opposition groups. The complexity of relationships these entities may have with states and multinational companies, and the differences in rules of responsibility under various branches of international law (human rights, humanitarian law and international criminal law) have posed and will continue to pose serious challenges.

It was noted above that one of the main legal responses by both the international community and national authorities to rebel or armed opposition groups has been to establish tribunals to try perpetrators of international crimes such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. However, establishing accountability for acts of rebels and militias international law has posed and will continue to pose serious challenges.

Sampling the wrongs: breaches of international law by rebels and militia

Within the context of international law, with the recognition that non-state actors can commit breaches of international law, militiamen, rebels and armed opposition groups can be categorised as human rights violators (under human rights law, irrespective of the debate on whether or not rebel or armed opposition groups commit breaches of international law). This indicates a firm position against rebel or armed opposition group activity.

It is noteworthy that irrespective of firm normative positions by both the UN and AU, political or diplomatic responses to rebels, militia and armed opposition groups have been as varied as the existing political priorities and interests of the two in international organisations as of the major global and regional powers. However, outlines of relevant cases in this regard is beyond the scope of this chapter.
including war crimes, where the wrongs are committed within an armed conflict (war) as a peremptory by the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols; and international crimes such as crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide under various international instruments in cluding the Torture Convention, the Genocide Convention, and the Rome Statute.49 In northern Uganda, the RPF was active during that period, too.50 In northern Uganda, the conflict has in turn occasioned numerous atrocities.51 In northern Uganda, abductions of children, enslavement of girls, murder, torture, mutilation and destruction of property by the LRA are well documented.52 In the DRC, atrocities have been committed by various armed groups, including the Mai-Mai, Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda, Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple and other groups active in the eastern part of the country.53 Murder, rape and other forms of sexual violence stand out as some of the most common crimes.54 Apart from violations against individuals and private property, reports have linked a number of armed groups to the plunder of Congo’s natural wealth, which has in turn occasioned numerous atrocities.55 Many companies and some regional governments have been linked to what has been aptly termed Congo’s war economy.56 Comprehensive accoutability must address all these dimensions of the conflict.

Accountability under international human rights law

International human rights law (IHRL) – contained in numerous treaties adopted since 1945, at both the global and regional level – confers upon individuals certain rights and poses obligations on states in a way that respects the human rights obligations of states. Conceptually, IHRL engages state responsibility at the international plane such that final responsibility for the respect and fulfillment of human rights obligations lies with the state. Accordingly, apart from refraining from infringing on these rights and taking positive measures to promote the enjoyment of rights, states are required to protect their citizens and all others on their territories from violations by private entities. Within this state responsibility framework, responsibility for human rights violations by non-state entities such as rebels and militia ultimately lies with the state. It is, therefore, up to the state to ensure that these rights are not violated or when violated, individuals have access to effective remedies. When a non-international tribunal such as the African Commission or Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights, complaining of human rights violations, it will be against the state and not a rebel formation or militia.

It is clear, therefore, that a rebel or militia – in a way attempts to enforce human rights against a med non-state actors. While it seems paradoxical that states weakened by war or those unable to exercise practical sovereignty over territory under rebel control should bear responsibility for violations by rebels or militia, conceptually, the international human rights framework admits only state responsibility.57 The Forces Nouvelles in Côte d’Ivoire, while having controlled virtually the entire northern half of that country for several years now, have no international responsibility for human rights violations, but can be brought to account in national courts.

Some commentators58 have suggested that certain non-state actors have human rights obligations, whether they have consented to them or not. Tomuschat suggests that NLMs – an essentially government-like formation – are bound by IHRL, noting that a movement struggling to become the legitimate government of the nation concerned is treated by the international community as an actor who, already a thither in its bryonic stage, is subject to the same obligations as any other state in the international community.59 However, the idea that a non-state entity has human rights obligations through international law has no universal appeal.60 Apart from the state-centric conceptual framework in terms of which only states have human rights obligations, even when rebels or militias have control of some territory, they often lack the capacity to fulfill the human rights obligations in question.

At the same time, the involvement of multinational/transnational companies in the theatres of war. Within the human rights framework states have the ultimate responsibility for protecting citizens and others from violations attributable to such companies. The fact that action against them could jeopardize investment, coupled with the fact that some of these companies are ‘stronger’ and richer than the states from which they operate, poses serious challenges for accountability. Such states are required to protect their citizens and others on their territories from violations by private entities.
capacity to enforce their own laws, in particular in a conflict situation. The ‘merging’ of multinational/transnational company interests with those of armed non-state actors turns on whether the conflict is international or internal in character. Additional Protocol I and other specialised rules govern NLMs or insurgents, while common article 3 does not seem to require these conditions to be met. There may be serious violations going on. Under Additional Protocol II, it must be shown that the armed group is under responsible command and exercises control over a part of its territory, which enables it to carry out sustained and concerted military operations, and to enforce the rules of IHL. This is a very high threshold, although common article 3 does not seem to require these conditions to be met.

Fourth, the command structures of rebel movements, militia and other armed groups are sometimes fluid and pose problems in pinpointing responsible ‘commanders’, hence issues for enforcement of laws of war.

Sixth, criminal sanction against commanders of rebel movements and militia in international courts cannot extend to corporations that finance the activities of such non-state actors, leaving one with many ‘impunity gaps’.

### Accountability under international humanitarian law

It has already been noted that IHL or the laws of war regulate the conduct of armed conflict: the means of waging war, protection of certain groups of people and what forms legitimate objects for attack. Non-state actors who may not be held accountable under IHRL do not escape responsibility entirely because IHL, unlike IHRL, recognises certain non-state actors. Further, since rebels and militia are most active in times of armed conflict, IHL is perhaps the most relevant body of law. The activities of militia in terms of IHL (that is civilian fighters and volunteers forming part of government forces) as described in the introductory section above, are governed by rules of IHL applicable to the regular armed forces, which in turn depend on whether the conflict is international or internal in character. Additional Protocol I and other specialised rules govern NLMs or rebels operating within the context of an international armed conflict, while common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions provides for in the ICTR and SCSL.

Third, conflicts may not attain thresholds for application of IHL, although there may be serious violations going on. Under Additional Protocol II, it must be shown that the armed group is under responsible command and exercises control over a part of its territory, which enables it to carry out sustained and concerted military operations, and to enforce the rules of IHL. This is a very high threshold, although common article 3 does not seem to require these conditions to be met.

Fourth, the command structures of rebel movements, militia and other armed groups are sometimes fluid and pose problems in pinpointing responsible ‘commanders’, hence issues for enforcement of laws of war.

Fifth, prosecutions before international criminal tribunals such as the ICTR in Rwanda and SCSL and national courts have proven to give inadequate responses in view of large numbers of perpetrators, limited resources to conduct trials at international and national level, the inability to address issues of victims and reparations and broader reconciliation.

Sixth, criminal sanction against commanders of rebel movements and militia in international courts cannot extend to corporations that finance the activities of such non-state actors, leaving one with many ‘impunity gaps’.

### Accountability under international criminal law

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**Challenges to establishing accountability under international humanitarian law**

There are a number of challenges to establishing accountability for breaches of IHL. First, since IHL applies only in times of conflict, initial problems arise from the characterisation of a situation where a rebel force is based. A rticle 1(2) of the Geneva Conventions is not sufficiently adapted to deal with some of the more difficult issues alluded to here. Attempts to deal with accountability for multinational/transnational companies in such circumstances have yielded no binding norms and informal commitments.

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Challenges related to applying international criminal law to rebels, militias and armed groups

While the rule on individual criminal responsibility as the basis of action is settled, various dynamics, such as the composition of armed groups, their relationships with states and multinationals and the fluidity of command structures, render this body of law inadequate in dealing with militias and rebel movements. It is further inadequate for dealing with responsibility of groups, organisations and corporations that have been active in Africa’s war theatres.

The question of selectivity continues to dog the operation of ICL. To begin with, the UNSC de cisions to establish tribunals such as the ICTR have been selective, and not entirely driven by a principled and consistent pursuit of justice. As a result, militia and other armed actors in a number of African conflicts have escaped justice for some of the most egregious crimes. At the operational level of the tribunals, various factors have conspired to ensure that some actors are not brought to account. The role of the RPF during the genocide and the failure by the ICTR to prosecute any member of the RPF remain highly contested and have cast doubt on the impartiality of the tribunal.

In the absence of ready and effective domestic justice mechanisms, action by international tribunals more often than not arrives late and is often caught in the trap of international politics. The current work of the ICC in Africa is a case in point. Politicisation of the work of international tribunals affects efforts by such courts to establish accountability for crimes committed by armed groups.

If establishment of accountability must include restorative justice for victims, ICL is handicapped. Until the establishment of the ICC, ICL has for the most part excluded victims of international crimes such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, reserving for them only the role of witnesses. Although the ICC now provides for the possibility that victims may participate in the process and have a right to reparations, victims still face serious challenges in their pursuit of justice. Even when a n o opportunity to claim reparations is presented, the indigence of those accused ensures that victims cannot claim reparations directly from them. In the DRC all the rebel leaders facing prosecution – Thomas Lubanga, Matheu Ngudjolo and Germain Katanga – have claimed indigence and are in need of legal aid themselves. Further, reluctance by states to contribute to compensation funds produces the same result – incomplete justice for victims.

Measures of accountability under national law

The typical response by states in Africa – w hen faced by armed threats or opposition from within has been to deny the armed groups’ existence or to refuse totally to recognise such groups by labelling their members as common criminals, subversive elements or terrorists. The last label has gained particular
currency in recent years, in tensifying with the much-reviled and controversial ‘war on terror’. In fact, it seems the labelling of even legitimate political opponents and other dissidents as terrorists is one of the most potent weapons wielded by challenged African regimes. The reason is not difficult to find. This strategy tends to secure international partners for the regime’s cause more readily than accepting some of these groups for what they really are – legitimate opposition trying its hand at what seems a more persuasive method. Governments have reacted in an almost knee-jerk fashion to deny and refuse to recognise these armed opposition groups.

Experience shows that even when recognition, rights and duties are accorded unequivocally by y in international law t o s uch a g roup a s di scussed a bove, no government would admit that it is a colonial or racist outfit or that it is in a lien occupation of territory.† In recent times, it was no surprise that apartheid South Africa consistently labelled the ANC and other armed groups in South Africa as criminals, saboteurs, communists (connoting subversives) and terrorists. While this label had no significance whatsoever in terms of international law (IHL, in particular Additional Protocol I, as set out above), which by application of the law recognised t he AN C a nd SW APO fighters in S outh A frica and N amibia respectively as combatants and thus prisoners of war when captured, a apartheid South Africa treated them as terrorists and prosecuted them under state security laws.† The recent prosecution and sentencing to death of numerous members of the Justice and Equality Movement in Khartoum and the Mahamat Nour-led United Force for Democracy and Development rebels in Chad (some in absentia) is consistent with this approach.

This refusal to acknowledge and recognise armed opposition by states has had a far-reaching effect with respect to rebels and other opposition groups, towards whom IHL is generous and nd m ore s stringent in its p rescriptions, b earing in mind the requirements that rebels must control territory and that the violence must be of particular intensity (not merely riots or sporadic and short-lived acts of violence).† This means that IHL, and the protections that come with it, will apply only if a certain threshold of violence is reached and that in the absence of these conditions national law applies, which often affords more leeway to states in their dealings with rebels.

Denying legal status to rebels and other armed opposition, even when they represent a legitimate cause, has been coupled with the belief – mostly misguided – that the rebels are blotted with military power. The fake lure of y t he Ugandan government to defeat the LRA, despite affirmations to the contrary, is the starkest illustration in current African experience. Yet states such as Sudan and others continue to rely on the military approach.

Even when states, as the case of Uganda illustrates, come to the realisation that the military approach cannot work and that a legal approach is a necessity, they have for the most part taken half-hearted and incoherent measures. Incoherence and l ack of unif ormity – i tself inf ormed b y t he mi sq uided y et ineffective over-reliance on military options – is clear in the sense that the threat and n on-state a rmed g roup do n o t m atch t he p rescriptions f o r r esponse. In Uganda, for instance, while the government has maintained that the LRA is a terrorist entity (that should be treated and dealt with as a criminal outfit), it has acceded through the Juba Peace Agreement to a position that seems at odds with the terrorist label. The prosecution response for war crimes would inherently have to accept that IHL applies and that the LRA is entitled to fight and thus its fighters have combatant or combatant-like status and cannot be prosecuted merely for taking up arms but only for committing international crimes.

CONCLUSION

This chapter showed that while international law – human rights, humanitarian and cr iminal l aw – h as c lear def initions o n n ational li beration m ovements, insurgents, rebels and militias and their status, this is not always so in common parlance, w here r ef erences t o v a rious a rmed n on-state ac tors a re s ome what confused. It was noted that while in common usage rebel or armed opposition group is sometimes used in interchangeably with militia, the latter has a specific meaning in IHL. The distinctions are important in view of the fact that different rules apply to the conduct of different armed groups and this has implications for accountability issues.

Legal and political responses by states in international organisations to the activities of armed non-state actors have varied. Political responses range from covert support to outright condemnation and sanction, and are often coloured by contextual considerations, in particular t he in terests o f r egional and global hegemons.

The apparent confusion in references to various armed non-state actors is not problematic from the point of view of a applicable r ules of i nternational l aw and their implementation. However, the bundling of various groups in the media and other non-academic literature complicates a general understanding of the nature of these groups and various rules applicable to them under human rights law.
humanitarian law and ICL. There is merit in clarity, not only in nomenclature but also in terms of applicable rules, particularly if the public and victims want to pursue remedies for violations attributable to a specific group.

In view of these shortcomings, states should establish accountability for wrongs committed by armed non-state actors such as rebels and militia requires the use of a combination of approaches at the national as well as international level. However, there is lack of coherence among the multiplicity of actors who have attempted to privilege with the ac tivities of armed non-state entities at the international and national levels.

Where the UN and the AU do adopt a legal response, attention should be paid to how these approaches fit in with approaches at the national level in order to ensure that they are not insonant and incoherent. In particular, national tribunals and other mechanisms at that level, which have an important role but are rarely well considered, should be integrated in the response.

Governments, which bear the primary and perhaps exclusive responsibility under human rights treaties, should ensure that mechanisms exist at the national level to address the activities of armed non-state actors that violate human rights. While the record of African countries in ratifying and acceding to international human rights treaties is high, compliance in this regard as well as with rulings of international oversight bodies remains rather low. For instance, although many countries have ratified the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as the Torture Convention, few have effective implementing mechanisms. These same applies to IHL treaties and the Rome Statute of the ICC. Moreover, African states have shown themselves even less willing to comply with decisions of oversight bodies. In general, compliance is an area that needs work from states, otherwise they make a mockery of international commitments.

IHL regulates the conduct of armed non-state actors. However, this fact is often lost to these actors. The fact that states often deny that a particular situation is an armed conflict, and the debate over particular crimes being committed, does not help. International actors and others engaged in resolving conflicts need to communicate to belligerents that the conflict in which they are involved is not unregulated by international law, and that they will be individually accountable for crimes committed.

The fact that IHL – the laws of war – is unknown to many needs to be remedied. The Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols contain the rules and consequences of breaches of them that the citizenry should be informed of.

In particular, relevant aspects of IHL in schools, in particular in vulnerable societies, should be encouraged. The possibility exists that knowledge of the rules and consequences of breaches of international law, particularly if the public and victims want to pursue remedies for violations attributable to a specific group.

States also undertake to respect and ensure respect for the rules of IHL. This would be in line with the requirements of ICL, in particular the Rome Statute of the ICC, that states should take measures to domesticate the statute and to investigate and prosecute perpetrators. States have the primary responsibility in this regard. Questions can be raised with respect to the willingness of various African governments to prosecute perpetrators of crimes by armed non-state actors.

However, the willingness of governments to take a decisive in prosecuting perpetrators may depend on an assessment of their ability to do so, which in turn depends on the availability of necessary criminal justice infrastructure. In debates around the contested role of the ICC in Africa, the AU has conceded as much. For instance, in countries such as the DRC and Kenya, it is dependent on the judiciary and capacity of existing systems have raised concerns.

To address these problems, a mini-sternal meeting of African states party to the Rome Statute has recommended that the capacity of African states to prosecute international crimes by themselves should be improved.

NOTES


3 Schreuer, Waning of the sovereign state, 448.


5 Individuals can bring petitions concerning human rights violations against states for redress. Examples at national level in clude the African Commission (and Court) on Human and Peoples’ Right, the European Court of Justice, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.
Commission) on Human Rights. At the United Nations level it includes the Human Rights Committee.

Individuals are subject to punishment before international tribunals for the commission of international crimes. Current tribunals include the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the International Military Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the International Criminal Court.

Scheurer, Waning of the sovereign state, 448.

See Martti Koskenniemi, The future of statehood, 406.

The Hague Convention, (IV) Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, article 1 of the regulations annexed to the Convention, 18 October 1907.


Ibid.

Noel K ing, Congo’s army vows to disarm, 12 Abdulkarim Jimale, Ibid.


Geneva Convention (I) for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field; Geneva Convention (II) for the Amelioration of the Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea; Geneva Convention (III) relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War and; Geneva Convention (IV) relative to the Protection to Civilian Persons in Time of War [including in occupied territory].

The Genevan Conventions and their Additional Protocols (I and II) are international treaties that contain the most important rules that regulate the conduct of a referred conflict. They protect people who do not take part in the fighting (civilians, medics, aid workers) and those who cannot no longer fight (wounded, sick and shipwrecked troops, prisoners of war). All available at http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/genevaconventions (accessed 18 December 2009).

See also United Nations, General Assembly, Resolution 3103 (XVIII): Basic principles of the legal status of the combatants struggling against colonial and alien domination and racist regimes, 12 December 1973. This resolution preceded the adoption of the Apartheid Convention.

23 See also United Nations, General Assembly, Resolution 3103 (XVIII): Basic principles of the legal status of the combatants struggling against colonial and alien domination and racist regimes, 12 December 1973. This resolution preceded the adoption of the Apartheid Convention.

24 See Clapham, Human rights obligations of non-state actors in conflict situations, 49; see also the other examples given by Michel Veuthey, Guerrilla et droit humain, Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1983, xxvi.

25 Note that even in this case, the traditional state-centric structure of international law is left intact. NLMS are regarded as states for purposes of imposing duties and bestowing rights. One could thus say that international law does not create a new category of actors but rather accords state-like attributes to NLMS for those purposes.

26 See G eneva C onventions, a rticles 1 a nd 3; A dditional P rotocol I, a rticles 3 a nd 4; a nd Additional Protocol II, article 1.

27 Clapham, Human rights obligations of non-state actors in conflict situations, 495.

28 See Geneva Conventions, common article 3.

29 See A iso U N R esolution 3103. Thi s r esolution preceded t he ad op tion o f t he A partheid Convention that declared the crime of apartheid to be a crime against humanity.

30 Clapham, Human rights obligations of non-state actors in conflict situations, 498.

31 See in the case of South Africa various security and pass laws (totalling 150 different statutes that constituted the legal infrastructure of apartheid). For a discussion of these laws see Roger Beck, The history of South Africa, Westport, Conn: Greenwood, 2000, 127–129.

32 For instance, apartheid South Africa rejected Additional Protocol I in terms of which those fighting the regime would qualify as prisoners of war who could not be prosecuted merely because they took up arms against the government. By rejecting IHL r ules, the apartheid
government was able to apply security laws and to prosecute Nelson Mandela and others for treason.


34 Ibid.

35 On 1 November 2005 a UNSC committee imposed a travel ban and asset freeze on a number of rebel leaders in the DRC for violating an arms embargo. See UNSC committee established pursuant to Resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 7 November 2007; UNSC, List of individuals and entities subject to the measures imposed by paragraphs 13 and 15 of Security Council Resolution 1596, 2005.

36 See UN, General Assembly, Resolution requesting an advisory opinion from the ICJ on the legal consequences arising from Israel’s construction of a barrier separating part of the West Bank from Israel, Resolution ES-10/14, 8 December 2003.

37 The Special Tribunal for Sierra Leone has tried or is trying the following: Moinina Fofana and A Ilie Oulonewa (a led by leaders of Civil Defence Force); Issa Hassan Sesay, M oirris Kallon and A auguste Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutionary United Front); A lex Tamba B rima, I brahimm B azy and A llieu K ondewa (a lleged le aders o f Ci vil D efence F orce); I ssa H assan S esay, M orris Kallon and A ugustine Gb ao (R evolutiona...


56 Dinah S helton, Remedies i n i nternational h uman r ights l aw, L ondon: O xford U niversity Pr ess, 1999, 55.


58 Ibid.

59 See C lapham, H uman r ights o bligations o f n on-state ac tors in co nflict si tuations, 502; Liesbeth Zegveld, Accountability of armed opposition groups in international law, Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press, 2002, 49–51, 152.


61 Common article 1 of the four Geneva Conventions provides that ‘undertake to respect and to ensure respect for the present Convention in all circumstances’.

62 Belgium, Canada, Switzerland and Spain are good examples of countries that have held trials related t o t he R wandan g enocide. S ee e n t h is r egard I Di Ga parayi, R wanda: G enocide to ensure respect for the present Convention in all circumstances’.


64 The Lomé Peace Accord, article IX(1)-(3) granted ‘absolute and free pardon’ to combatants.

65 See also Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Report, volume 2, c hapter 2, p aragraphs 106 and 107, where the commission found that the RUF was ‘the primary violator of human rights in the conflict’ and responsible for 60.5 per cent of the violations.


68 See the ICC case in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Prosecutor v Thomas Lubanga; and in the DRC, Prosecutor v Germain Katanga and Mathieu Ngudjolo Chui.

69 See section on definitions above.

70 Clapham, Human rights obligations of non-state actors in conflict situations, 495.


72 The two other groups are the Rally of Forces for Change led by T imane Erdimi, P resident Deby’s uncle and former chief of staff, and Union of Forces for Democracy and Development (UFDD) – Fondamentale, a splinter group of UFDD, headed by Abdelwahid Aboud.

73 Beyond t he A frican s hores, I srael co ntinues t o u se simi lar a rguments w ith r espect t o P alevan ish fighters. See Clapham, Human rights obligations of non-state actors in conflict situations, 495, w ho n otes t hat ‘ arguments b efore S outh A frican a nd I sraeli j udges t hat liberation m ovements a re e ntitled t o p rivileges un d er in ternational l aw h aven ot met w ith success.’

74 Additional Protocol II, a rticle 1.

75 See J uba P r oces s A greement, A greement o n c ommunity a nd R wand a, 1998, 8.P. 51; 27 April 1998.

76 See F rans V iljoen a nd L irette L ouw, S tate c o mpliance w ith t he r ecommendations o f t he ICC, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2009, 35–36.

77 According to article 17 of the Rome Statute on the complementarity framework of the ICC, the ICC prosecutes only if the state is ‘unable or unwilling’ to do so.


79 See Godfrey M Usila, Between rhetoric a nd a c tion: t he p olitics, p ractice o f the ICC’s w ork in t he DRC, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2009, 35–36.

80 See AU, Concept recommendation 7.
INTRODUCTION

The image of Africa that is beamed to the world is that of vicious radical youths marauding the streets of Mogadishu, miserable victims of the devastating civil war in the western Sudan region of Darfur, genocide and ethnic cleansing in Rwanda and Burundi, brutal resource wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone, militants interrupting oil supplies to Western markets in Nigeria, prolonged civil wars in Uganda, Angola, Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Côte d’Ivoire, sporadic clan, religious and ethnic wars in Nigeria and Kenya, deep and extensive political conflicts and violence in the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville), Zimbabwe, Chad, the Central African Republic (CAR) and Guinea-Bissau, and notorious personal and authoritarian rules in Zaire (now the DRC), Equatorial Guinea and the CAR. In all these conflict situations there are a number of common denominators: weak or failing states, bad governance and armed non-state groups (ANSGs), mainly rebel and militia groups.

Conflicts and ANSGs have combined to deepen the continent’s social and identity divisions and inequalities, heightened sociocultural disintegration, rampant criminality, insecurity and social upheavals, ra mpant cr iminality, in security a nd s ocial
disorder. Internal rebellion, resistance or outright civil wars conducted by militias, Islamist militant groups and rebel groups have occurred or still exist in Ethiopia, Senegal, Angola, Mozambique, Sudan, Uganda, the DRC, the CAR, Chad, Algeria, Burundi, Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d’Ivoire, Nigeria, Mali, Niger, Kenya, Somalia and the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville).

It is obvious that as the dominant social force and power formation in Africa, the structure, conduct and operation of post-colonial states, and their governance systems are strongly linked to the Africa condition and human insecurity. These are the core of the state and governance crises and the phenomenon of ANSGs and violence. It also looks at the reverse side of the coin, namely how the state and governance in Africa have been victims of the non-state institutions of violence. Finally, the chapter concludes by recommending that the best approaches to containing the threats of ANSGs to human security will entail extensive reconstruction, rehabilitation and reform of state and governance institutions.

**THE NATURE OF THE STATE**

The state is a set of interconnected and coordinated institutions that are concerned with the organisation of power and the structured domination and ordering of society. Essentially, a state monopolises certain powers and roles, namely the making and execution of binding rules and regulate society, and the effectiveness of control over resources and people. Bräutigam identifies extractive, regulatory, administrative and technical capacities as critical to state execution of its essential roles. These relate to the ability to raise revenue, establish and enforce guiding rules in economy and society, manage manpower, resources and services efficiently and accountably, and acquire and deploy knowledge and expertise required to conduct its affairs. Grindle identifies four types of capacity essential to state functioning, namely political capacity (responsiveness to demands and social pressures, accountability, effectiveness of conflict resolution), institutional capacity (the ability to construct effective national regulatory agencies), administrative capacity (the ability to manage public policies) and technical capacity (ability to set and enforce guiding rules in economy and government).

States can be strong or weak, fragile, in decline or decadent, failing or failed and collapsing or collapsed. These de lineations are fluid and overlapping. For example, weak and failing states may be fragile, just as fragile states are often weak and failing. In fact, scholars have noted that state crises are of different types and progressions into one another. However, as Milliken and Krause have noted, state failure (functional failure) precedes state collapse (institutional collapse). This occurs because the institutional framework of statehood and governance is weak, on-viable and ineffective, as a state’s executive and legislative functions are undermined by hegemony, personality, informalisation and corruption. In this case, the state is unable to perform its critical state roles.
State fragility is characterized by susceptibility and vulnerability to internal and external shocks and strains, a tendency towards violent conflicts, civil strife and violent crimes, the proliferation of non-state institutions of violence and small arms, and instability that threatens the neighboring countries. The vulnerabilities emanate from a variety of factors: discriminatory and contested citizenship; conflict-ridden and violent contestations of state power; perennial challenges to the validity and viability of the state; and a lack of fiscal capacity to discharge basic functions of statehood.

Fragile states are unable to transform society into a modern industrial one, improve economic performance, prevent or alleviate poverty and create prosperity. State institutions, authority and powers fall apart and leave a vacuum where the institutions of governance, the collective will of a people, are held to be ideal, appropriate and acceptable. Good governance, for example, has been a popular concept in development, aid and donor vocabulary and scholarly treatment since the 1980s, and as noted, whether in weak or even decadent forms, maintenance of the state is more pervasive while incidences of state collapse are rare.

State failure has to do with functional dimensions of statehood. It denotes that the state has lost certain privileges and become unable to perform certain roles. Good governance, for example, has been a popular concept in development, aid and donor vocabulary and scholarly treatment since the 1980s, and as noted, whether in weak or even decadent forms, maintenance of the state is more pervasive while incidences of state collapse are rare. As Milliken and Krause have noted, whether in weak or even decadent forms, maintenance of the state is more pervasive while incidences of state collapse are rare.

Governance and development

Governance represents the processes entailed in the exercise and management of the collective will of a people. It refers to the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a nation’s affairs or more specifically, the ‘manner in which a government exercises its power’.

Good governance, for example, has been a popular concept in development, aid and donor vocabulary and scholarly treatment since the 1980s, and as noted, whether in weak or even decadent forms, maintenance of the state is more pervasive while incidences of state collapse are rare. As Milliken and Krause have noted, whether in weak or even decadent forms, maintenance of the state is more pervasive while incidences of state collapse are rare.
The nature of governance and governance systems is critically important to growth, development and the quality of life. It has been observed that weak and failing states are often characterized by the acquisition and consolidation of state power and the accompanying legitimacy, which it maintains by pushing out or marginalizing social groups, communities and individuals. This has led to the state crisis as the state is irrelevant for failing to meet needs and aspirations and not being sensitive to the interests of society and immersed in particularistic or ascriptive grounds. These characterizations were actually inherited from the colonial state. However, in some cases, the state has been described as an authoritarian, repressive, exploitative and predatory; weak, frail, verging on collapse, in a state of flux, in disarray, unstable and in profound decay; neo-patrimonial, co-opted for clientelist, prebendal and primordial purposes, and unproductive and poorly managed. Many African states have been branded as shadowy, pseudo or quasi, juridical, weak or failed and collapsed.

Some of these characterizations were actually inherited from the colonial state. Others are based on nebulous, ambiguous and over-generalised notions. Besides, the descriptions pertain to a very small proportion of the total and a very small minority of African life. For example, the characterization of the shadow state is more generalised but based on only one state, Sierra Leone, Liberia and a few others, where circumstances are described as ecuatorial and institutionalised, resulting in the aders maintaining themselves and their statehood through control over territorial resources, commercial networks and co-opting civil society.
In fact, the immediate post-independence period was characterised by a statist expansion, penetration of public corporations and enterprises, and the expansion of a growing reliance on security agencies for the maintenance of public order. The struggles for power and its consolidation led to a concentration of power in the hands of the president, centralisation of political power and the politicisation of the bureaucracy and security agencies; the circumscriptive manipulation, defiance or interference with judicial institutions, and the exclusion of most social groups from participation in public affairs.

Within a few years after independence, single-party systems were instituted in Ghana, Guinea, Tanzania, Kenya, Tunisia, Zaire, Cameroon and Côte d’Ivoire. Elections became farcical and ritualistic as citizens lost any real right to choice. By the mid-1960s, there had been military interventions in a number of states and some, such as the CAR, Uganda and Equatorial Guinea, were subjected to extreme forms of military-based or supported dictatorships. Democracy was a casualty between the mid-1960s and early 1980s, with Botswana and Mauritius being the only stable democracies. Personal and arbitrary rule weakened the institutional and constitutional order, eroded legal and constitutional integrity and made the law and the state irrelevant to political practice as they were largely ignored by state leaders. Further, there was a steady degeneration of the structures and practice of power and the capture of state power as a zero-sum game and the facilitation of corruption and violence which has been pervasive, extensive, punitive, brutal, horrendous and destructive—has become a major instrument of politics.

Because politics has been a ‘zero-sum game’ and the capture of state power a matter of life and death, violence—which has been pervasive, extensive, punitive, brutal, horrendous and destructive—has become a major instrument of politics. In some states, violence has become instrumental and a resource for the creation of an environment in which arbitrariness, excessive force, abuse, corruption, and accumulation and resource capture flourishes. The nature of politics has been inimical and subversive and has undermined development. Patronage politics in the context of economic decline has tended to exacerbate corruption and violence. Rent-seeking politics have undermined productive activities and created a bogy, consumptive and ostentatious lifestyle and import dependence. The centralisation, concentration and personalisation of power and the politicisation of governance apparatuses and state institutions have delegitimised the state, obstructed collective decision-making, constricted citizen participation in public affairs.
participation, encouraged corruption and arbitrariness, destroyed the integrity of state in situations and weakened the efficient operation of the economy and the social sector.

The nature of statehood that has been constructed was therefore weak, inappropriate and ineffective. The African states failed to create political institutions that had gendered support. The ruling a nd governing elites were unable to achieve a coherent ideology for development, social reform, political and social mobilisation, competitive political action, ethnic, religious and regional integration, and commitment to the future. The consequences of the nature and exercise of power and its consolidation were evident in the mid-1960s, in the form of legitimacy crises, social unrest and tensions, occurrences of military mutinies, failures and collapses, such as the state of security, legitimacy, and its consolidation were evident by the mid-1960s, in the form of legitimacy crises, social unrest and tensions, occurrences of military mutinies, insurrections, military coups and civil wars.

State weakness, fragility and collapse in Africa

Apart from Botswana and Mauritius, which have had sustained democracies and a semblance of stability and prosperity, African states have generally been weak or in decline, fragile or collapsing. In fact, Osaghae’s observation that many states in Africa are fragile and distressed was reiterated in the World Bank report of 2006 that listed 26 fragile states, of which 14 were in sub-Saharan Africa. Sub-Saharan African countries also dominated the lowest rungs of the United Nations Human Development Index in 2006. Foreign Policy’s Failed States Index of 2008 listed 11 African states (Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, the CAR, the DRC, Guinea, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, Zimbabwe) among the 20 states it designated as weak and failing.

These classifications were based on critical indicators of weakness, fragility, failure and collapse, such as the state of stability, security and legitimisation, the levels of group grievances, factionalisation, the lack of state stability, security and legitimisation, the levels of group grievances, factionalisation, the lack of state capacity to enforce law and order, the rule of law and security, the collapse of public services, basic state functions, responsibilities and observances, and the levels of external intervention and displacement of persons.

The major indication of state misgovernance and weakness is the prevalence of a politics of violence and the consolidation of private armies, task forces and armed bands. Politicians and government officials hire armed bands to fight enemies, arm one group to rout another or use armed proxies to create conflict within and between communities and groups. Access to institutions of violence creates a position of strength for which politicians compete either to protect their own positions or to intimidate political opponents.

There is thus a militarisation of politics or the domination of armed politics, with violence being the method for dealing with political and factional conflicts and elections. Violence is a resource in African politics, which leaders offer in the struggles for recognition, resources, inclusion, claims and concessions, and which political contenders purchase in exchange for funds, protection and positions. Violence has been an effective tool for self-enrichment, the guarantee for political positions, access to strong political leaders and patrons, recognition in the political landscape and expansion of political power and political victories in factional and electoral struggles.
The crisis of governance and development in Africa

Post-independence regimes were primarily concerned with two projects, namely nation-building and economic development. The economic downturn led to increased unemployment, deteriorating living standards, socioeconomic hardships, the collapse of the social service and welfare systems and a further economic decline. Thence, the post-colonial state-citizenry pact evolved around the collapse of the social service and welfare systems. These, in addition to the broken social contract, began to translate into crises of legitimacy. The citizens began to react to the government's failure to provide for the acquisition of essential goods. Industrial capacity utilisation declined and enterprise sectors suffered. Corruption and mismanagement that consumed the few resources remained. States became debt-ridden and had to depend on credit from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The enforced commercialisation, the institution of market forces and import liberalisation. The structural adjustment programmes forced on the countries were harsh and had to depend on credit.

As a result of the economic crisis, African countries had to solicit credit and assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The structural adjustment programmes forced on the countries were harsh and had to depend on credit. Governments had been insensitive to the interests and aspirations of the citizens, eroding their participation and political participation. Political representation. These, in addition to the broken social contract, began to translate into crises of legitimacy. The citizens began to react to the government's failure to provide for the acquisition of essential goods. Industrial capacity utilisation declined and enterprise sectors suffered. Corruption and mismanagement that consumed the few resources remained. States became debt-ridden and had to depend on credit from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The enforced commercialisation, the institution of market forces and import liberalisation. The structural adjustment programmes forced on the countries were harsh and had to depend on credit.

The states are not held accountable and in fact, as Baker notes, 'unaccountability is extensively institutionalised in Africa,' largely because of feeble legislative oversight, opaque business dealings and corrupt elections and electoral systems.

The security crisis of governance and development in Africa

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The nature of African politics and the public arena it created simply did not facilitate good governance and development. Rather, a social contract notion of political power and authority was undermined by the rise of security agencies to call public authorities to account. Corruption has been so pervasive that it has undermined public confidence in government institutions and services. The expansion and politicisation of the security agencies and their clientes and members of the public have made entrepreneurial endeavours unnecessary for leaders, patrons and intermediaries. The accumulation of wealth from illegal and legitimate means has facilitated patronage systems, which have become more important than the public interest in the formulation and direction of policy. In the absence of meaningful access to government, meaningful deliberations and consultation and consideration of public interests in the public agenda, there was no public consent, constitutional and popular checks and balances on the executive. There was no accountability or transparency in decision-making. The role of the state and the public sector was undermined by the nature of African politics and the public arena it created. Rather, as Chazan et al note, it facilitated the emergence of a patronage system in which the highest paid officials were doing their best to provide basic services such as water and electricity. The nature of African politics and the public arena it created simply did not facilitate good governance and development. Rather, the state has turned the military into an intervention force in politics, government and society. The leaders have been extremely self-interested and self-seeking, uncommitted, exploitative, corrupt and oppressive. State officials are some of the best paid in the world, and yet los the treasury. Political leaders politicise identities, in creased exp enditure, in troduced div isions a nd conf licts and r uthen the mili tary in to a n in tervention f orce in p olitics, government and society. As a consequence of the above, most state agencies in Africa failed to achieve economic progress and wealth or guarantee citizens’ wellbeing and security.

Case analysis: state, governance, development and human security crises in Nigeria

The misfortunes and sorry situation of a African state are a manifestation of the country’s development crisis and governance. The country is one of the largest producers of crude oil in the Organisation of Petroleum Producing Countries (OPEC) and the largest in Africa. It has earned over US$400 billion from oil exports. As oil and gas revenues in increased, agriculture and the production and export of other minerals declined, leaving the country with an economy, in which oil and gas account for more than 95 per cent of export earnings and 80 per cent of federal government revenues. In the mid-1960s, Nigeria was a par with or better than most of the Asian countries, but typical of most African countries, it is very far behind them today. It now occupies the unenviable position as one of the poorest and most fragile states of the world.

The economy has been in decline since the early 1980s, and has grown only marginally since the late 1990s. The non-oil sector, particularly agricultural and solid mineral production, has suffered a huge decline. Industrial capacity utilisation is less than 30 per cent and the country remains very import-dependent. Public utilities and social services are inadequate, inefficient and weak, but led to larger influence and pressure on governments. Public officials and public sector management have resigned themselves to providing basic services such as water and electricity. The leadership has been extremely self-interested and self-seeking, uncommitted, exploitative, corrupt and oppressive. State officials are some of the best paid in the world, and yet lose the treasury. Political leaders politicise identities, in creased exp enditure, in troduced div isions a nd conf licts and r uthen the mili tary in to a n in tervention f orce in p olitics, government and society. As a consequence of the above, most state agencies in Africa failed to achieve economic progress and wealth or guarantee citizens’ wellbeing and security.
electricity for themselves, at least most of the time. There is huge insecurity of lives and property because of violent crimes and lawlessness. Neighbourhoods and communities provide their own security and safety, sometimes by hiring ethnic militias andComplicity in crimes.

The nation has been devastated by deep ethnic, regional and religious divisions and conflicts. The violent and deadly contests for power have produced a regime of assassinations, unresolved murders, electoral violence and violent clashes. Inter- and intra-communal and ethnic conflicts, and religious group clashes, have led to a condition of pervasive social strife, social unrest and ethnic violence.

The politics of exclusion and the use of the state mainly to dominate and deprive excluded groups of political participation and benefits have heightened ethnic divisions. The nation-state project is still challenged by forces of regionalism, nationalism and ethnocentrism. The state has been dysfunctional, ineffective and predatory. The persistence of the economic crises, accompanied by increasing violence and armed conflict, has increased frustration and disappointment among the poor and the masses. The expectations of the masses for more engagement, for state intervention to alleviate their social problems and for state-directed development have been dashed. The Nigerian military struggled to contain the insurgency in the Niger Delta until a disarmament, demobilisation and rehabilitation programme was accepted by the militias in October 2009.

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The phenomenon of armed non-state groups

Non-state in stitutions of violence represent the most powerful, explicit and resource for acquiring and accumulating power, created and made use of entrepreneurs of violence, institutionalised violence in politics, and created and made use of a culture of disenchantment and mass social discontent has emerged in several countries. This is evidenced by the persistence of emigration, frequent recourse to violent protests, urban and religious riots, the proliferation of arms and ANSGs, recurring identity wars and persisting insurrections, insurgencies and rebellions.

But African citizens are still engaging the states through struggles for relevance and political participation. The state thus constructed a terrain of violent politics, made violence a key resource for acquiring power, created and made use of entrepreneurs of violence, in institutionalised violence in politics, and created a public sphere in which violence and u ltimately ANSGs thrive. This is evident in the persistence of emigration, frequent recourse to violent protests, urban and religious riots, the proliferation of arms and ANSGs.

There are at least two issues here. The first is the nature of the state and politics. This is evident in the persistence of emigration, frequent recourse to violent protests, urban and religious riots, the proliferation of arms and ANSGs.
The state and governance as victims of ANSGs

State and governance crises did not just generate ANSGs. Rather, state and governance crises are, in a sense, victims of ANSGs. In many African countries, the phenomenon of ANSGs has revealed deep social and political challenges, such as deepening identity-based divisions, lack of discipline, organisational and infrastructure challenges, and the poor condition of the military and security agencies, the tortuous hold on power by the political elite, and the shallow social and administrative services. It could be said that some have created states within states.

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The state and governance crises generated political alienation and discontent, which created social bases for opposition, challenge and resistance to state authority. Social turmoil and disorder created parallel or alternate states, with organised structures of policing, crime management, revenue collection and even legal and policy frameworks. It could in fact be said that some have created states within states. Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d’Ivoire, Somalia, Rwanda, the DRC, Angola, the CAR and others have all at various times and to a varying extent been victims of state decline and failure, and ANSGs. The worst case has been Somalia, which has been immersed in war, internecine conflicts, pervasive violence, a breakdown of law and order and territorial struggles that continue to this day.

Specifically, ANSGs contribute to state collapse through the following:

- Accelerating the decline of state capacity, collapse of state authority
- Facilitating the loss of state control and territorial sovereignty
- Filling the institutional and governance vacuum left by fragile and collapsing states, their non-state counterparts and institutions

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Contributing to the proliferation of armed groups and ammunitions and the commercialisation of violence
- Participating in resource opportunism by plundering and marketing of natural resources and struggling for control of resource and trading sites and routes
- Exacerbating human security and humanitarian crises through internal displacements, swelling refugee camps, loss of property and livelihoods and horrendous violence against civil populations
- Accentuating conflict and collapse of formal economies by sowing ungodly, informal and illegal economies
- Engaging in violent confrontations with state military forces and other ANSGs and causing insurrections and civil wars
- Facilitating the disintegration of state military forces, the collapse of formal governments, and the takeover of territories and even state capitals
- Facilitating the emergence of diverse enclaves, held either by states or rebels and of multiple political authorities and governance systems

ANSGs thus accentuate the conditions in which dictators and consequences of failing and fragile states. Their actions and activities are directly related to the emergence of the phenomenon of ANSGs and the state and governance crises of the state.

CONCLUSION

ANSGs have been closely linked to the nature of African states and how they are governed. Their chapter has attempted to link these phenomena with the struggles for power and its consolidation and the nature of politics and governance in Africa.

I have shown that both are linked to deficits in leadership, administrative and institutional capability, in turn affecting political legitimacy and inequality and in equitable distribution of national resources. These are taken for granted and the economy, social and public order and political stability of states and have weakened the very fabric of African society – its social existence, social realities and livelihoods, social coherence and harmony, social confidence and trust. With all these factors, dwindling resources and declining legitimacy, the state could no longer guarantee socioeconomic progress, civil, individual and group rights, or security. These dwindling resources and declining legitimacy, the state could no longer guarantee coherence and harmony, social confidence and trust. With little capacity, the fabric of African society – its social existence, social realities and livelihoods, social distribution of national resources. These have taken their toll on the economy, social and public order and political stability of states and have weakened the very fabric of African society – its social existence, social realities and livelihoods, social coherence and harmony, social confidence and trust. With all these factors, dwindling resources and declining legitimacy, the state could no longer guarantee coherence and harmony, social confidence and trust.

In view of the connection between ANSGs and the state and governance crises, the state must respond to the threats of human security and official prescriptions by international financial institutions. African leaders, popolar groups and international leaders have to form state-citizenry pacts, build a state and institutional legitimacy and credibility, establish new platforms for mobilising the citizenry and build new commitments and followship towards the new Africa envisioned at independence.

African states have to do more in terms of building inclusive and sustainable. Africans should therefore reconstruct African states and governance systems by themselves in line with their hopes, needs, realities and existence.

The challenge is to rebuild the kind of states that the people actually yearn for: states that are responsive, sensitive to citizen pressures, guarantee human security and manage state affairs in a transparent and accountable manner. But the most important and daunting challenge is to build a state that can move Africa forward. The key is to respond to the threats of human security and official prescriptions by international financial institutions. African leaders, popolar groups and international leaders have to form state-citizenry pacts, build state and institutional legitimacy and credibility, establish new platforms for mobilising the citizenry and build new commitments and followship towards the new Africa envisioned at independence.
NOTES


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INTRODUCTION

In the last four decades there have been increased incidences around the world of the emergence and activities of militias, as well as armed opposition and Islamist militant groups. In Africa, many countries are hosts to such groups, with the most affected being Somalia, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Sudan. In Kenya, militias emerged as a result of bad governance, which has led to the marginalisation of communities, economic disparities, a rise in poverty levels, and the inequitable distribution of national resources and services. In this chapter two, militia groups in Kenya are studied, namely the Mungiki and the Sabaot Land Defence Force (SLDF), and the formation, agendas, leadership, organisation, activities, impact and state responses to these two militia groups in Kenya are addressed.

THE STATE, ETHNICITY AND MILITIAS IN KENYA

State policies in Kenya since independence have resulted in horizontal inequalities or systemic in equalities between groups. There is inequality between groups as...
generated powerful grievances that leaders exploit to mobilise people to political protest by calling on cultural markers (a common history, language or religion), thus exploiting the masses at group level. Mobilisation is particularly likely where there is political as well as economic inequality, not only because group leaders are being excluded from political power but also because most members of the group are economically deprived and consequently harbour significant grievances.

Studies suggest that in Kenya, the capture of state power by the Kikuyu and kindred g roups (t h e M eru a nd E mbu) syst ema tically impr oved t he chances of f access t o development resources of these groups, as well as to employment and education. All of this created a feeling of marginalisation among other competing ethnic groups. This was especially true of large ethnic groups such as the Luo and Luhy a, and later the Kalenjin.1

Subsequent regimes have attempted to rectify this state of affairs, but the end result has been a p olicies h ave en ded u p b eing a j ustification f or preferential treatment of groups hitherto excluded from such access. Upon coming to power in 1978, the new president, D aniel arap Moi, slowly but surely introduced a rectification p rocess t hat w ould, b y t he co me o f t he c entury, s ee t he K alenjin become the successors of the Kikuyu as far as control of the structure of privilege was concerned. The Moi regime, while it lasted, put in place mechanisms that it hoped w ould en sure t hat t he M eru o r t he K ikuyu w ould b e t he 'place som e' i n t he s tate p ower. Thi s trend has mostly been influenced by the need to survive the harsh economic disparities prevailing in the country.

This rise in militia groups in Kenya has also been linked to the government’s inability to provide security and deal with criminal gangs. An inadequate security and justice system, a lack of effective law enforcement and the presence of criminal gangs have contributed to the rise of militias and vigilante groups. These groups抽 utilised the political context to mobilise support among certain communities, particularly where there was a feeling of marginalisation and exclusion.

**THE ORIGIN AND RISE OF MILITIA GROUPS IN KENYA**

The history of militias in Kenya can be traced to the war waged by the Mau Mau against the British in the 1950s. The Mau Mau was an armed group of Africans –
predominantly Kikuyus – that rose up in protest against white rule. Among the grievances that led to this revolt were land scarcity, forced labour and meagre wages. The movement was, however, suppressed after a state of emergency was declared. Although the movement was eventually subdued, its contribution towards accelerating the pace to independence was immense.

In post-independence Kenya, the phenomenon of the militia group has its roots in the creation of a youth wing by the former ruling party, KANU. The KANU regime first used its youth wing to harass the first opposition party, the Kenya African Democratic Union, which existed for only one year after the attainment of independence. However, youth-wingers were used more forcefully after a split in KANU saw the formation of the Kenya People’s Union (KPU). KANU on various occasions deployed the members of its youth wing to intimidate and harass KPU’s supporters. The presence of these youth-wingers persisted even after the proscription of the KPU in 1969. Thereafter, all elections during the one-party era witnessed violence meted out by youth-wingers, with prominent politicians hiring them to harass and disrupt their opponents’ rallies. The youth-wingers served as a breeding ground for the rise of criminal gangs and militias after the country returned to multipartyism.

More specifically, the youth-wingers were instrumental in the formation and rise of the Mungiki in the post-1992 election period. They initiated militant resistance against groups that had been unleashed on the Kikuyus in well thought out violent attacks to rid the Rift Valley of ‘outsiders’. The Mungiki was forced to use a similar tactic to save its own.

During the multiparty period and particularly during the reign of Moi and KANU, these groups transformed themselves into criminal gangs and militias and through their violent acts intimidated and disenfranchised opposition supporters, especially in areas that were designated as ‘KANU zones’. In 1992, these groups were operating mainly from Moi’s political base in the Rift Valley, where the Kalenjin Warriors and Maasai Morans attacked rival ethnic groups. In 1997, these groups were being trained and armed in the Coast province (Kaya Bombo) and recruited, trained and organised in the Shimba hills, Kaya Waa and the Similani caves in the Kwale district, at the instigation of prominent politicians and with the support of the government and the military. They were subsequently deployed to foment ethnic violence in the run-up to the 1997 elections at the Coast.

As opposition groups became increasingly vulnerable to these state-sponsored militias, they resorted to creating their own militia groups to counter the state-sponsored militias and to provide protection for opposition parties during election campaigns. Some of the opposition-sponsored criminal gangs and militias were the Jeshi la Embakasi, Baghdad Boys and Amachuma.

The result has been a growth of self-styled militias, vigilante groups and organised criminal gangs in both urban and rural areas that have sprouted in almost every part of the country, posing an increasing challenge to a poorly trained and ill-equipped police force. The most notorious of these gangs were the Mungiki (Nairobi/Rift Valley/Central), SLDF (Mount Elgon), Kaya Bombo Youth (Mombasa/Kwale), Sungu Sungu, Chinkororo and Amachuma (Kisii/Nyamira/Gucha/Transmara) and Taleban, Jeshi la Mzee and Jeshi la Embakasi (Nairobi).

Table 6-1 shows the criminal gangs that are in operation in Kenya and the areas in which they operate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criminal gang</th>
<th>Area(s) of operation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amachuma</td>
<td>Kisi/Nyamira/Gucha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola Musumbiji</td>
<td>Western/Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baghdad Boys</td>
<td>Nyanza/Nairobi (Kibera)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banyamulenge</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charn Shitu</td>
<td>Mombasa/Kwale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinkororo</td>
<td>Kisi/Gucha/Transmara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas Muslim Youth</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndombolo ya Yesu</td>
<td>Nairobi (Kibera)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 Brothers</td>
<td>Nairobi (Kibera)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeshi la Embakasi</td>
<td>Nairobi (Embakasi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeshi la King’ole</td>
<td>Machakos/Makuini/Kitu/Mwingi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeshi la Mzee</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalenjin Warriors</td>
<td>Rift Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamjesh</td>
<td>Nairobi (Embakasi/Kasarani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaya Bombo Youth</td>
<td>Mombasa/Kwale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kosovo Boys</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuzacha Boys</td>
<td>Nairobi (Kibera)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maasai Morans</td>
<td>Rift Valley/Nairobi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most of these groups share a number of characteristics, the most common being their ethnic orientation. All the militias operating in the country have an ethnic composition as a result of the manner in which the regions in Kenya are populated. Each region is associated with a certain ethnic group. Most of the criminal gangs and militias that emerged with the re-introduction of multiparty politics were accordingly mobilised around ethnic identities, just like the political parties that were formed. These gangs operate largely on the basis of local political concerns and forms of mobilisation, which might include language, faith and traditional practices.

Thus, the Mungiki is associated with the Kikuyu, the Maasai with the Luo, the Chinkororo with the Kisii, the Angola-Musumbiji with the Luhya, the Kalenjin Warriors with the Kalenjin, the Masaai with the Maasai, the Kaya Bombo with the Coastal tribes, and the SLDF with the Sabaot.

Another common feature of these groups is that they are mostly young people who had lost land that had been their only means of livelihood. Th eir formation occurred as a result of the manner in which the regions in Kenya are populated. Each region is characterised by a certain ethnic group, and most of these have formed militias and criminal gangs.

### Origin and composition

The term ‘Mungiki’ is derived from the Gikuyu word *muring*, meaning masses or people. There is consensus among scholars that the Mungiki movement started in 1987. According to its founding leaders, the Mungiki traces its birth to dreams experienced by two schoolboys, Maina Njenga and Ndura Waruinge, in the Rift Valley Province. In these dreams, they claim to have heard God’s voice telling them to ‘go and liberate my people’. They accordingly decided to form the Mungiki after consultations with elders, including former leaders of the Mau Mau movement from one of which Ndura Waruinge is descended. The Mungiki ranks were swelled by members of the Kikuyu population who were affected by the clashes in Molo, Elburgon, Rongai, Narok, Eldoret in 1991 to 1993 and Njoro and Laikipia in 1998. The Mungiki traces its roots to this particular period because of the marginalisation of the Kikuyu population and the sufferings that emanated from their ethnic group in times of adversity as it repulsed its attackers.

While the movement seemed not to have a clearly spelled out programme and agenda, it is described as the most serious internal security threat to Kenya.
faces: the social cultural face (a snuff-sniffing, dreadlocked variety that is dying off), a economic face (mainly seen in the 
matatu industry) and a security criminal face.  

Recruitment takes place in four ways: people who just stroll in to one of its religious meetings out of curiosity, are inspired by its teachings and join the group; those who have heard about the movement from colleagues and friends or in the media and decide to join; those who have been recruited through forceful oath-taking that binds them to the ideals of the militia; and those who join because they have been denounced to the successful social activities of the group. Thelatter activities include restoring security in the slums or along matatu routes. Recently, the gang has resorted to brutal methods, which include blackmail, violence and death threats, to force young men to join its outfit. In one case it sawed off the arm of a man in Nyeri when he declined to join, but there are indications that hundreds of others have enlisted for fear of being killed. The brutal tactics resemble those of the Mungiki, which has between 1.5 and 2 million due-paying members, of whom at least 400,000 are women.

The Mungiki maintains control over its followers through a series of oaths, starting with the initiation of the killing, called kuhagira. Other oaths include an oath for repentance, called horohio; an oath to respect the members of the sect, called mbetika; and a continuous oath called esodus, which signifies the sect is near Canaan, or the end of the exodus; one to prepare for combat, called mbitika, which signifies the sect is near Canaan, or the end of the exodus. Other oaths include an oath for courage and conquering tactics. The rules urge members to spy on others and always be aware of what is happening around them and to be open to possibilities for extortion.

Religious roots

The Mungiki rejects Western customs and has, since its inception, sought to bring about the renaissance of the Gikuyu culture as a first step towards the liberation of the people. It advocated the return to traditional beliefs and practices and stressed the lost glory and dignity of the Agikuyu, which it sought to re-establish in the 'Kirinyaga Kingdom'. The fundamental principles of the Mungiki are cultural self-determination, self-pride and self-reliance. To this end, it has utilised traditional methods such as prayers, songs, prophetic utterances and ahth-taking and initiation rites to censor the forces of neo-colonialism. These have been used to protect a nd ensure that the beliefs of the Gikuyu, such as belief in God (Ngai), reverence of ancestors, belief in the sacredness of land, and respect for moral values. According to Mungiki tenets, the cultural re-engineering of the Agikuyu should apply to the whole country irrespective of differences in culture. The meshing of political and
religious themes is evident in Mungiki hymns and prayers. M. Ount K. Enya (Kiriinya) is believed to be the holy dwelling place of Ngai and members look for signs from the god, turning to him for directions towards the mountains in prayer and meditation.

Experts are still divided on whether the Mungiki is a religious or a political entity. Those who see it as a religious entity include Grace Wamue and Kwamchetsi Makokha. Wamue's insightful account relates to the spiritual and cultural philosophy surrounding the Mungiki's activities. The Mungiki calls for a return to African traditions and spiritual means of resolving social problems. The Mungiki's main objective, Wamue argues, is to mobilise Kenyan masses to fight against the yoke of mental slavery. The Mungiki sees the Bible as a tool of binding or gikunyo (meaning binding or mental slavery).

Makokha argues that the Mungiki has grown out of the mysterious and little understood ideology and theology of the group. Its members have a god on Mount Kenya whom they worship and to whom they pray. In his opinion, the movement could actually be religious and may just be uncertain about what doctrine to follow.

However, the Mungiki's adherence to traditional Kikuyu religion has been questioned, particularly because its leaders keep shifting their religious affiliations. For instance, the conversion of its leaders to Islam and Christianity creates more doubt given their stance against the latter. At some point in mid-2000, the Mungiki started to gravitate towards Islam. Eventually, on 2 September 2000, at a ceremony staged at Kamiti Maximum Prison in Nairobi and awaiting trial, Njenga announced that he had converted to Christianity, a notion that has been met with skepticism and criticism.

Evidence collected by Ruteere shows that the characterisation of the Mungiki as a religious movement is a deliberate tactic on its part. This strategy has served the movement well, for it has helped to attract sympathy from human rights organisations. After the government's initial crackdown on the movement in the early 1990s, the Mungiki's leaders sought protection from human rights groups. In fact, for several years, Mungiki members provided reliable information on prison conditions and gave detailed descriptions of the inhumane activities in Kenya's prisons to the Kenyan Human Rights Commission. This gesture helped the movement to maintain its credibility and to avoid being labelled as a political rather than a religious misson. This school of thought argues that the Mungiki's politics reflects a keen sense of frustration with the political system in which its followers' voices are barely heard. Mungiki members claim to represent the unfilled aspirations of the community. Like the Mau Mau, the land question is central to their politics. The movement is built upon dissatisfaction with marginalisation and deprivation of its constituency. This explains why the movement has been successful in recruiting...
members from a mong t he s quatters a nd s lum d wellers. Thus, al though t he Mungiki is depicted as a religious organisation or as a religio-cultural organisation, it r emains to a large extent an entity searching for power, particularly political power.

The quest for a living: tactics and strategies

The Mungiki is the most lethal militia group currently operating in Kenya. To meet its objectives, it has adopted the use of ‘cells’ similar to those used by Al-Qaeda to spread its influence and control over ethnic enclaves in primary market areas. In these communities, the Mungiki has taken over the provision of services such as ‘supplying’ water and electricity, management of transport, levying illegal taxes and extorting protection money. Organised crime’s tool of choice for infiltrating and t aking o ver co mmunities a nd n eighbourhoods i s f ear: in stilling i t a ndexploiting it. People are mugged and brutalised, and businesses vandalised. Then victims are offered a gu arantee of s afety for themselves, their families and their premises, in exchange for a fee. Those who resist are killed or maimed to serve as an example for others and to close the circle of f ear. Those who comply resign themselves to a life of servitude and exploitation.

Working in a t ight, di sciplined m anner, t he Mungiki has t aken o ver t he provision of f a cult environmental and casual labourers at construction sites have to pay an ‘access fee’ to be allowed to operate, with drivers par ting with 1 000 Kenyan shillings and conductors paying 400 Kenyan shillings.

In parts of Nyeri and Kirinyaga, vigilantes have taken on the Mungiki, but in Muranga’s, and especially the South District, bands of organised Mungiki youths man the feeder roads, beginning from the main Muranga–Makutano road. Every vehicle leaving the main road and entering the interior is stopped at makeshift roadblocks and the driver has to pay 50 Kenyan shillings. In this area villagers are charged for any commercial venture, however minimal.

The Mungiki obtains funds from membership dues, garbage collection, extortion money from residents for protection against theft and property damage, fees for the use of public toilets, income from control of matatu (a form of public transport) routes, charges to small businesses, and donations from politicians and businesspeople.

Each Mungiki member pays 3 Kenyan shillings per month, which according to the then national co ordinator, N dura W aruinge, adde d up to a total monthly income of 4,5 million Kenyan shillings by the mid-1990s. However, the precise income from membership remains as controversial as its operations, with figures mentioned by its leaders ranging from 1,5 million to 2 and lately (December 2009) 4 million. In reality the figure could be as low as a couple of thousand, particularly given the demographic pattern of Kenya. The Kikuyu constitutes 22 p er cent of Kenya’s close to 37 million people. For Mungiki to reach a figure of 4 million, close to a half the Kikuyu population would have to be members, and that is not the case.

Collection from the matatu industry is also a major source of funding. Before the O ctober 2003 r eforms, t he Mungiki controlled matatu operations o n b usy routes t o K ayo le, D andora, H uruma a nd K ariobangi in N airobi, w hile i t a lso controlled a nd collected le vies f rom routes o utside Nairobi. At t he p eak o f its influence, the Mungiki is said to have collected at least 10 000 Kenyan shillings per day per route, amounting to n early 200 000 K enyan s hillings p er d ay f rom a ll routes un der i ts co ntrol. The g angs collect 200 K enyan s hillings p er d ay f rom each 14-seater matatu and 250 Kenyan shillings from 25-seater minibuses. Matatu crews also pay a fee to be allowed to operate, with drivers par ting with 1 000 Kenyan shillings and conductors paying 400 Kenyan shillings.

The control of the ‘transport levy’ has led to constant violent confrontations between the Mungiki and other gangs. After the collapse of constitutional reforms in 2005, the Mungiki reclaimed its control of the matatu industry and tightened its grip on the lucrative matatu industry and the low-income residential areas of the city and other urban areas.

It also collects protection fees from slum residents. Households in M l ango Kubwa of Eastleigh, Mathare, Huruma, Huruma N gei, Kario, and Dandora, Baba Dogo a nd o ther e states h ave t o p a y b etween 30 a nd 50 K enyan s hillings e ach month, shopkeepers p ay 300 K enyan s hillings, kiosks a nd v egetable v endors 150 Kenyan shillings. Changa’aa brewers pay 300 Kenyan shillings a week and vehicles that deliver v egetables t o K oro rogo a nd K ariobangi 400 K enyan s hillings p er delivery. T rucks t hat de liver l ivestock a nd, b allast, c ement, s tones a nd o ther b uilding materials to sites in Eastlands also pay a fee. Workers such as masons, electricians and casual labourers at construction sites have to pay an ‘access fee’ to be allowed
into the yards. The gangs also run illegal water collection points where they charge between 10 and 20 Kenyan shillings for a 20-litre Jerry can of water tapped from city council pipes.39

In parts of Central Province, the Mungiki has been able to set up a formidable motorcycle taxi enterprise whose proceeds are used to bankroll its illegal activities. This, combined with extortion rings operating by the Mungiki, has enabled the underground gang to establish a well-moneyed outfit whose kitty runs into millions of shillings. Wealthy politicians and shrewd businessmen in the province have also fled their homes.41

Because of Mungiki activities, businesses have collapsed in most of the town shopping centres in Central Province, as traders have been forced to give up their businesses because they are unable to pay rents with the extortion fees (raising from 20,000 to 150,000 Kenyan shillings) demanded by the Mungiki. Rural areas have suffered too, and tea and coffee farms have been left unattended, for farmers have also fled their homes.41

Another source of funds for the Mungiki is the Kikuyu political and business elite. This was evident during the 2002 general elections, when Mungiki leaders suddenly started driving cars and owning plots and houses in upmarket areas, all without having a permanent source of income. During these elections, members of the group frequently met with KANU politicians and also received money and other items in return for getting members to vote for KANU in the elections.42 This also happened in the 2005 referendum and 2007 elections, when politicians paid the group to advance their cause. During the post-election crisis, the Kikuyu elites are reported to have paid the group for the reprisals of the killing of Kikuyus.

The Mungiki and politics

The Mungiki’s involvement in politics during the Moi and Kibaki regimes was based on a love-hate relationship. Both regimes tried to seek the Mungiki’s support during campaign periods such as the 2002 elections and the 2005 constitutional referendum. However, both regimes were hostile to the group in on-election years and prescribed it.

Before 2002, police constantly broke up Mungiki meetings, but in the run-up to the 2002 elections the group was allowed to hold rallies in Nairobi, Thika and other towns. Some KANU officials even participated in these meetings and donated money. The movement’s link to the government became evident when its two known leaders attempted to run for elections on the ruling party’s ticket. However, at the last minute, the ruling party succumbed to popular pressure and barred the Mungiki leaders from participation.

During the Moi regime, the group was allowed to demonstrate to show its support for the ruling party while at the same time criticising the then-official leader of the opposition, Mwai Kibaki. At one meeting, a red-shirted former Moi regime leader, Mungiki member of parliament (MP) Kihika Kimani paraded dreadlocked youths in Nakuru town, introducing them as repentant Mungiki followers.

The Mungiki entered the political fray in the run-up to the 2002 elections, when it used its national co-ordinator, Ndura Warunge, and the movement’s spiritual leader, John Maina Kamunya alias Maina Njenga, joined the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy – Kenya (FORD-K) political party and unsuccessfully vied for positions as secretary-general and vice-chairman of the party respectively. As the battle for Moi’s successor heated up, the Moi regime sought to bring the group into its fold by offering it the opportunity to support KANU’s presidential candidate, Uhuru Kenyatta, and on nomination day, hundreds of thousands of Mungiki youths marched through the streets wielding machetes, sticks or rocks in his support. Kenyatta was later forced to disown the sect as a result of intense public criticism.43 In addition, two legislators (who were staunch Uhuru supporters then), Kihika Kimani and Stephen Ndicho, threatened to unleash Mungiki on those opposed to Uhuru.

The Kibaki regime’s interaction with the Mungiki has been double-sided. On the one hand, there have been groups that have been sympathetic to the politics of the Mungiki leadership in the Kibaki government and used the Mungiki when the need arose. On the other hand, there are those of the opinion that the group is a threat to state security and ought to be eradicated. For instance, when the state engaged the gang with the aim of curtailing its operations, it used the Mungiki to support its proposals. For example, during the referendum campaign, the then special programme minister, Njenga Kibaki, and the former Mungiki coordinator, Ndura Warunge, met in Nairobi to discuss how the youth could be mobilised to support their proposal.

Subsequently, the Mungiki openly came out in support of the government position, holding rallies attended by well-known politicians.44 This again happened in the countdown to the 2007 elections.

During the post-2007 crisis, with other ethnic militias in turmoil and the Mungiki in disarray after a crackdown on its activities, it took some time for the
militia to regroup. The Mungiki acquired the tag of defender of the beleaguered Kikuyu in the Rift Valley and with political and financial support from senior members of the Kikuyu elite, swung into action and attacked members of the Luo, Luhyas and Kalenjin groups in Naivasha and Nakuru. The post-election violence may have had the unintended effect of rehabilitating the Mungiki in the eyes of the Kikuyu population, as some members were seen to be better protectors of the community than the Kibaki government in face of attacks by ethnic militias.

In April 2008, the group paralysed public transport and forced businesses in parts of Central and Rift Valley provinces to close for four days running; during the unrest 14 people were killed. It was only when the prime minister extended an olive branch to the sect members that they halted their riots. After rejuvenating its image among the Kikuyus in the reprisals after the first round of the post-2007 election violence, the gang has slowly regained its foothold in Central Province, and between October and December 2008 had a readiness to act in any necessary mechanism for charging illegal fees on business premises as well as matatus and boda bodas. During this period, the gang executed ten people in the president’s Othaya constituency, to prove it would maim and intimidate those who attempted to defy it.

The Mungiki has a long history of sympathetically receiving politicians. In April 2008 a group of politicians calling themselves ‘elders’ from Central Province and comprising members of the Kence (former Mathioya MP), Elias Mau (Maragua MP) and Jane Kihara (former Naivasha MP), dem anded the release of ten people in the president’s constituency, to prove it was possible to turn rhetoric into action, even as violence was escalating. In Central Province, politicians appeared uncertain about how to contain the Mungiki monster. Unable to find the exact cause for Mungiki lawlessness, MPs say it is difficult to eradicate the deep-rooted gang. At grassroots level, leaders who have spoken against the group a sking residents to report it to the police have received death threats. On the other hand, residents have accused senior politicians in the region of supporting Mungiki activities for political advantage. Some say that the support Mungiki adherents have been receiving from politicians since the run-up to the 2002 general elections has in fact strengthened the gang.

State response to the Mungiki

Right from the time the Mungiki was formed, relations between it and the state have oscillated between outright repression and periods of cohabitation. On the one hand, the state has persecuted, intimidated and jailed Mungiki followers; the state has always considered the Mungiki a clandestine movement that is bent on destabilising the government. On the other hand, government functionaries have made use of the group during elections.

During the Moi regime, the state has been accused of using Mungiki followers to help it win elections. In April 2000, Mungiki leaders were put on trial and received death threats. On the other hand, government functionaries have made use of the group during elections.

As a result of intermittent state harassment, Mungiki became confrontational from early 2000. For example, in April 2000, early 3000 Mungiki men staged a raid on Nyahururu police station to free three of their colleagues. As a result of
continuous atrocities perpetrated by the Mungiki and other militia groups, the government banned all militia groups in 2002 and the Kenyan president Moi ordered a crackdown on all illegal organizations. In October 2002, 26 members of Mungiki were jailed for three months, each for criminal activities in Nairobi. However, as the 2002 elections approached, the Moi regime relaxed its clampdown on the Mungiki, ostensibly to win its support for the KANU candidate, Uhuru Kenyatta. However, Uhuru lost to Mwai Kibaki, who inherited the Mungiki problem.

Under the Kibaki regime, Mungiki adherents were harassed, intimidated, persecuted, arrested and killed outside the legal system. As soon as Kibaki took power, the government initiated a crackdown of the group. In early 2003, the police destroyed the movement’s headquarters in N’g’arua in Laikipia, where the group had two shrines, at Sheria and Mwenje. In reaction, and hard on the heels of the police unit of killing between 100 and 500 Mungiki adherents, in November 2007, the KNCHR released a report suggesting that the police may have executed about 500 suspects Mungiki adherents between June and October 2007. The state’s brutal clampdown on the Mungiki was a response to a series of beheadings in Central Province and the killing by the group of three policemen in the Masiara area of Mathare.

In the period 2002–2008, the government initiated numerous occasions, and especially in 2003, 2006 and 2007, initiated crackdowns on the group. However, these initiatives resulted mostly in the group going underground only to resurface a little later. During these periods of repression, the group kept on changing its modus operandi so as to evade the police crackdowns. The gang’s capacity to mutate when faced with danger has made it very difficult for the state to destroy it. Initially, Mungiki members used to be the snuff-sniffing, dreadlocked variety. When it became apparent that this was an easy way for the security forces to identify and track them down, they changed their image to decently dressed young men and women. Recent attempts by the government to curb the matatu extortion wing have forced them to dress as modern teens, vendors etc. It is this ability to camouflage and change tactics and styles that has made it almost impossible to pin down the gang.

**THE SABAOT LAND DEFENCE FORCE**

The SLDF operates in the Mount Elgon and neighbouring Trans-Nzoia districts, which lie close to the border with Uganda on the slopes of Mount Elgon. Members of the Sabaot community primarily inhabit the area, but other inhabitants include the Ugik, Bukusu, Teso, Sbei and various Kalenjin subgroups. The Sabaot Land Defence Force (SLDF) was formed in 2006 and portrays itself as an organization akin to that of a transnational terrorist group. It set up an elaborate network covering all Nairobi’s shanty areas, with platoons operating in the Nairobi slums and hideouts in Mombasa, Muranga, Nakuru, Nyeri and Laikipia. Once celebrated as a showpiece of efforts by displaced and dispossessed Mungiki followers to eke out a legitimate living through agriculture, the movement’s farm in the Laikipia district became a ‘state house’ from which the training of its fighters out of sight of security forces was coordinated.

In 2006, the state’s affair forced the police to form Kwekwe, a hit squad comprising 14 officers who were sometimes reinforced by colleagues from other units, to fight the sect. Reports by the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR), Phillip Alston and civil society organizations have accused this police unit of killing between 100 and 500 Mungiki adherents. In 2007, the KNCHR released a report suggesting that the police may have executed about 500 suspects Mungiki adherents between June and October 2007. The state’s brutal clampdown on the Mungiki was a response to a series of beheadings in Central Province and the killing by the group of three policemen in the Masiara area of Mathare.

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Origin and composition

The Mount Elgon clashes are a result of the Sabaot displacements dating back to the colonial era and the skewed resettlement programmes since independence in 1963. The conflict was heightened by irregular allocation and grabbing of land in the settlement schemes, illegal resettlement, unhealthy competitive politics, unresolved land claims, and the 2006 evictions by the government.

The government has repeatedly failed to effectively resettle the affected groups in a manner deemed equitable to all the parties. Following lobbying by community leaders, the government moved people from Chepkitale in 1971/72 to Chebyuk, where it had opened up the Chebyuk Phase I settlement scheme. The scheme consisted of 1,489 parcels of five acres of land. In 1974, the government further issued a notice to de-gazette portions of the forest reserve consisting of 3,600 acres for resettlement. Unfortunately, this de-gazettement was never finalised. Instead, in the same year the landless Soy sub-tribe was added to the scheme and occupied what is now known as Teremisi sub-location, while the Mosop sub-tribe that had formerly inhabited Chepyuk was already inhabited by sections of the Sabaot community from the Soy sub-tribe. In 1989, the government settled people in the area, but the exercise was not completed. Some of the people were left landless and those who were lucky enough to get land lacked full legal ownership as the government failed to issue them with title deeds. However, this did not deter the people from taking and cultivating the land. They further started subdividing, leasing and selling it among themselves and to outsiders.

Chepyuk I and II were never completed and consequently the government cancelled the existing settlement schemes and embarked on the creation of a third scheme, Chepyuk III, in 2002. By 2006, when the government announced the scheme, consisting of 2,516 parcels of land, the beneficiaries were to be the Mosop sub-tribe that had formerly inhabited Chepkitale. Art of the Chepyuk was already inhabited by sections of the Sabaot community from the Soy sub-tribe. In 1989, the government settled people in the area, but the exercise was not completed. Some of the people were left landless and those who were lucky enough to get land lacked full legal ownership as the government failed to issue them with title deeds. However, this did not deter the people from taking and cultivating the land. They further started subdividing, leasing and selling it among themselves and to outsiders.

The conflict, which started as an inter-clan conflict between the Soy and Sabaot migrants, resulted in the Soy mobilising young people to defend their land and resist any evictions, culminating in the formation of the SLDF.

The SLDF is a non-state armed group mostly drawn from the Soy sub-clan of the Sabaot that emerged immediately after the 2002 elections. The recruitment and training of fighters began in March 2003, though violent attacks did not begin in earnest until 2006, in the wake of the implementation of the phase III resettlement programme. At that time, the SLDF actively resisted attempts to reallocate land. Violent clashes erupted when the Soy, who had settled in the area since 1971, were ordered to make way for new allottees who were mostly from the Mosop sub-clan. The Mosops were the SLDF’s initial target, as they were perceived to be favoured by the government in the land allocations. Consequently the SLDF started launching attacks, mainly against the Mosop clan.

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Organisational form

The history, organisation and funding of the SLDF show that land grievances, ethnicity, and violence, which were manipulated for political ends, are deep-rooted, with long-standing effect on the Kenyan political process. From 2006 to 2008, the SLDF was in effective control of the whole of the Mount Elgon district. There was virtually no government presence in the area and the militia, as a result, made its own laws that inhabitants were forced to obey. The militia established its own administrative system, complete with a mechanism for levying illegal taxes, and informal courts. The SLDF judicial system was used to punish those suspected to have corruptly acquired land, discipline wrangling couples, go after bad debts and punish thieves and drunks.

The militia has a clear organisational structure and chain of command. It consists of three separate divisions, namely a militia, a spiritual and a political wing. Wycliffe Matatia (SLDF deputy leader) led the militia wing and David Adai
Siche, a former police officer, was in charge of training the militiamen with the assistance of retired and serving army and police officers. The militia has used hi-tech weapons in its operations, including machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, hand grenades, land mines and rocket launchers. The SLDF’s weapons of choice were AK-47 and G3 rifles. By August 2008, the military had recovered a total of 95 guns and more than 700 rounds of ammunition from the SLDF. Other weapons, which the militia uses, include traditional weapons such as pangas (machetes), knives, and bows and arrows.

The spiritual wing was central to the SLDF military strategy. Jason Psongoywo Manyiror, the spiritual leader/prophet also referred to as ‘laibon’, led this wing. He administered the oath to all combatants and gave them special charms, ostensibly to bind them to the SLDF cause and imbue them with supernatural powers that would protect them from authorities and make them invincible to enemy bullets during combat. The spiritual wing played a central role in SLDF operations, encouraging young men to enrol in the militia and assuring them that they would enjoy mystical protection and be invincible. It also had the duty of rallying the community and politicians to the SLDF cause.

The third wing of the SLDF is the political wing. Believed to be the driving force behind the insurgency, this wing is at the same time the most elusive as it keeps on changing, whether by default or design. Apart from its self-proclaimed spokesman, John Kanai, many politicians have been linked to the militia, but there is no hard evidence as to which politicians or ideological groups are behind the SLDF.

From a small group of fewer than a hundred fighters at the beginning of the conflict, the SLDF has grown to an formidable force. In March 2008, Wycliffe Matakwei, the SLDF’s spokesman, stated that the militia had recovered a total of 95 guns and more than 700 rounds of ammunition from the SLDF.

The methods that the militia uses to sustain and finance its activities are akin to those used by the Mungiki – in fact it seems to have borrowed most of its modus operandi from the Mungiki. The SLDF collects ‘taxes’ from the population and effectively runs a parallel administration. These illegal taxes are imposed on the residents of the area, especially those with some source of income. Initially the group demanded 1 000 Kenya shillings (US$15) as a registration fee, while farmers were forced to remit part of the proceeds from sales of crops. The SLDF’s mode of operation has made it difficult for the police to combat it. Most of its members mix freely with civilians during the day or when not part of a combat squad. Only the militia’s commanders, trainers and elite fighters have specific hiding places in Mount Elgon forest, where they meet to review the situation and strategise. The SLDF delivers to operation squads at designated points near its targets and who, after the operation completes, return the weapons to designated points.

Members of the SLDF have also established kangaroo courts where they handle disputes and impose fines on victims. They are the self-appointed judges in cases ranging from petty theft and family conflicts to simple disputes. Perpetrators of domestic violence are punished by public flogging. In one incident, a villager who had impregnated a girl and refused to marry her was forced to pay a fine of 500,000 Kenyan shillings, half of which went to the militia. For their own security, government administrative officers (chiefs and their assistants) also refer cases and disputes to the SLDF as well as collect taxes for the militia. Those who do not comply are either killed or forced to flee the area. It is instructive to note that one chief – Bramwell Kiso Kiboi of Chepkube location – was abducted and held by SLDF militiamen for three days. He did not report the matter to the police upon his release for fear of reprisal by the militia.

Source of funds

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of produce like livestock, milk and crops to the group. The militia also collected a certain amount of food produce for every unit area harvested, for example, each household was required to surrender a 90 kg bag of maize for every acre harvested. The transport sector, too, was not spared. Indeed, public service vehicles remit part of their daily income to the militia. Apart from the taxes, the militia also collected a certain amount of food produce like livestock, milk and crops to the group. The militia also collected a certain amount of food produce for every unit area harvested, for example, each household was required to surrender a 90 kg bag of maize for every acre harvested.

The military established that SLDF was financially stable and had enough food supplies to last it for months. They were also employed to work-class youths. The support of powerful individuals for the SLDF, however, may have had a moral and political rather than a financial dimension.

The quest for land: tactics and strategies

The SLDF seeks to evict ‘non-indigenous people’ because it considers the region to belong to Sabaots and non-Kalenjins in the hope that a friendly central government will eventually legitimise facts on the ground.

Since its formation, the militia’s activities have expanded and become more violent and overtly political. In the run-up to and following the 2007 general elections, the SLDF supported certain political candidates and targeted political opponents and their supporters.

The conflict in Mount Elgon escalated and took on overt political and ethno-nationalist dimensions. The SLDF a lied i tself w ith the o pposition p arty, t he Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), and was fiercely intolerant of leaders and supporters of other parties, especially those from the ruling coalition that later became known as the Party of National Unity (PNU). The SLDF went so far as to intimidate a nd even execute PNU supporters. A s a r e sult, t wo O DM ci vic aspirants, Moses Makoit of Cheetahs ward and Nathan Warsama of Saurward, were elected unopposed.

At parliamentary level, the SLDF targeted the sitting Kanu MP, John Serut, who, although a Soy, was seen as acting against Soy interests. It targeted him and his family because it claimed he had used his position to secure the inclusion of the members of the Moap in the third phase of the resettlement programme, although they were seen as likely to vote for the PNU coalition in the general elections. The SLDF also targeted supporters of Serut. Serut survived an assassination attempt when SLDF gunmen opened fire at him as he gave a speech outside the district commissioner’s office in Kapsokwony in May 2007. He did, however, lose two brothers and a niece later on.

The SLDF promoted its favoured candidates in the 2007 elections in a vicious campaign that, according to local residents, amounted to a campaign of terror. The candidates favoured by the SLDF were all contesting on an ODM ticket. A chief
from the raid old member of Human Rights Watch that the government took a more serious stance and deployed the police, the General Service Unit and the Anti Stock-Theft Unit against the SLDF. However, these operations were sporadic and not sustained, and hence failed to eliminate the group. The army first became involved in July 2007, but the military presence was at a low level. The initial security response failed to contain the rapidly evolving armed group as it wreaked havoc in Mount Elgon and parts of Trans-Nzoia district.

Furthermore, during one police operation in the middle of 2007 at the Kabero, Kawkwas and Bukweno locations, 1,877 houses were burnt down and property of havoc in Mount Elgon and parts of Trans-Nzoia district.

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However, since the withdrawal of the military from the area, there have been reports that the ousted members of the gang are returning, as the re-emergence of violent incidences attest. There have also been reports of fresh recruitments in parts of Mount Elgon. One of the men who is believed to be a major force behind the militia, former police constable John Sichei, has also resurfaced.

Just like its counterpart, the Mungiki, the group seems to have learned how to survive government crackdowns. Towards the end of 2008, the group had once again started charging illegal taxes and attacking and maiming those who refused to comply. Nevertheless, the killing of core members of the SLDF has resulted in the group becoming a much less potent force and unable to inflict the kind of terror and hold it had over the residents of the area. The net effect of this has been the near disappearance of the organisation.

THE MUNGIKI AND THE SLDF: A COMPARISON

There are a number of similarities and differences between the Mungiki and SLDF, which to some extent demonstrate the difference in impact that their activities have had on the societies in which they operate. To start with, both the militia groups reflect a keen sense of frustration with the political system, in which their members’ voices have marginal impact. Mungiki members claim to represent the unfulfilled aspirations of the Mau Mau as an alternative political dispensation, while the SLDF seeks to amend the historical injustices related to land that was disinherit from the Sabaot. Although many armed groups in the country, the two militias have twin purposes, on the one hand land-related objectives, and on the other, furthering the political aims of certain leaders.

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Because of this operation the activities of the SLDF militia almost ground to a halt, as most of its leaders had either been arrested or killed while a majority of its members had either been killed or detained. Human rights groups such as the KNCHR and Human Rights Watch put the number of people killed during the operation at about 2,000. By June 2008, some 758 SLDF suspects had been arraigned in court on charges of promoting warlike activities.
However, the *Mungiki* differs from the SLDF when it comes to adaptation to other religions. The *Mungiki* shifts from one religion to another in times of repression by the state. Its leaders have thus at various times converted to Islam and Christianity to escape state persecution. As Ruteere has argued, the *Mungiki* appears to have embraced an instrumental view of religion and culture. This structure, which allows it to expand its influence, while restricting the possibility of solving the country's problems.90

The modes of operation of the *Mungiki* and SLDF are similar. They both use terrorist organisations’ classic methods of asymmetric warfare, in which they do not engage directly with the state’s instruments and war machinery, but strike and then leave the scene. Of the two militias, the *Mungiki* has the most elaborate cell structure, which allows it to expand its influence, while restricting the possibility of exposure of an entire network of gang members to law enforcement infiltration. This is one of the main reasons why the government has been unable to dismantle its network. Both groups assemble only when there is a job to be done, although the SLDF is more adept at this tactic. Their weapons are also similar, for both use mainly crude weapons such as machetes, clubs, and bows and arrows. They do occasionally use guns in their operations, although the SLDF is more likely to do so. Furthermore, both militias have instilled fear into the communities in which they operate, forcing them to give in to the demands of the militia groups. Both kill or maim those who resist them, to serve as examples to others, while those who comply resign themselves to a life of servitude and exploitation.

The activities of the two militia groups have also endangered human security in their areas of operation: economic security is under threat as trade, economic growth and development have been stunted and the socioeconomic infrastructure destroyed. Most residents of Trans-Nzoia and Central provinces have been forced to close their businesses as they cannot afford to pay the extortions demanded by the militias. Markets have shut down and residents and farmers are unable to make a living as they cannot till their lands and carry on their businesses. The end result has been food insecurity in the areas where the two militia groups are most active.

The militia groups have both recruited children of schoolgoing age into their ranks – willingly or unwillingly – hence interfering with their education. Poverty and the benefits associated with joining these militia groups have combined to force the youth out of school. According to the 2007 global report on human security, many boys are abandoning school and joining criminal gangs.91 The report points out that whereas education has been a major form of social capital investment, its value has been minimised in times of social poverty. During its heyday, the SLDF was reported to have recruited around 650 schoolgoing children. The *Mungiki* has had an even more ambitious recruitment programme with regard to school children and teenagers since February 2009. The areas most affected are the Kirinyaga, Murang’a, Nyeri, Nyandarua, Kiambu, Thika and Laikipia districts in Central Province and the slums of Mathare, Korogocho, Kayole and Dandora in Nairobi.92

The communities that suffer from violence committed by these two militias have petitioned the government to come to their rescue. The activities of the two militias have left a trail of destruction, death and displacement that have decimated people's livelihoods and destroyed their lives. This has led to a situation where the populations in the affected areas detest those same militias whose initial objective was to safeguard their interests. The SLDF originally defined its goals in terms of protecting the land rights of the Sabaot, while the *Mungiki*’s objective was, apart from returning the Kikuyu community to its traditional roots, to fight poverty. However, both groups have ended up inflicting suffering on the very people they had initially sought to benefit. Both effectively employed the use of violence to obtain compliance of local populations, in some areas subjugating a whole district.

Both the *Mungiki* and the SLDF have been subjected to massive crackdown operations by the government, with varying results. In 2007, the *Mungiki* was suppressed by means of extra-judicial killings that whittled down its members and forced it to go underground, while the SLDF was almost exterminated in 2008. However, both militias have since regained lost ground with the *Mungiki* being the most effective in this regard. The latest atrocities associated with the *Mungiki* took place on 20 April 2009 when they attacked Gathathi village in the Nyeri East district of Central Province and killed some 30 people in retaliation for the killing of 14 of its members. The SLDF is yet to regain its powerful position.

The SLDF crackdown was easy to implement since it was in a rural set-up that made it possible for the militia to infiltrate and carry out its operations. The *Mungiki* is estimated to have between 2,000 and 3,000 members and has to date killed about 20 *Mungiki* gang members.93 Although
these groups have countered and slowed down the activities of the *Mungiki*, they have been unable to destroy them completely. In many parts of the Central Province, known as the *Kengakenga*, which has dealt with the *Mungiki* in the same manner that the militia deals with groups opposed to it. It has formed an execution centre (aka ngaroo court) known as ‘The Hague’, where *Mungiki* adherents are executed through hanging, hacking or being set alight. ‘The Hague’ is situated about 3 kilometres from Kagumo town in Kirinyaga district. Close to 20 people have so far been executed here.

The SLDF has faced similar challenges from the Moorland Defence Force and the Political Revenge Movements formed by the Mosop to defend itself against SLDF attacks. These two groups helped the military during its operations against the SLDF.

The main differences between the two militia groups can be attributed to the fact that *Mungiki* is better organised and has a greater following than the SLDF, even though both of them have organisational structures that consist of military, spiritual and political wings. The SLDF operates mostly in the Mount Elgon region, with a few sporadic attacks in parts of the Trans-Nzoia district. The *Mungiki* is dominant in the Central, parts of Nairobi and parts of the Rift Valley provinces.

**CONCLUSION**

The grand coalition deal that had been brokered by the former UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan, includes a commitment to disband and demobilise Kenya’s militia groups, many of which were blamed for the violence that followed the disputed 2007 presidential elections. The instruments to set in motion this process are yet to be put in place more than a year since the deal was signed and most of the gaps still remain active. The SLDF, in particular, is a slow and costly holding regaining their hold on Central and Western provinces respectively.

The persistence of the *Mungiki* and SLDF is a measure of the state’s response to atrocities committed by these militias in recent years. They have failed to arrest, prosecute and punish members of these groups. The government’s response to atrocities committed by the two groups is largely rhetorical. In the majority of cases, the government has failed to act decisively. The proliferation of armed militias can be attributed partly to the failure by the government to arrest, prosecute and punish members of these groups. The question that should be asked is why the two groups persist despite the efforts by the state to stop or at least contain them.

Ever since militia groups developed with the return to multiparty politics in the run-up to the 1992 elections, the state’s reaction has been one of indifference. The government has taken an unsystematic approach to deal with illegal armed groups. The government’s response to atrocities committed by these militias has to date been largely rhetorical. In the majority of cases, the government has failed to act decisively. The proliferation of armed militias can be attributed partly to the failure of the government to arrest, prosecute and punish members of these groups. The question that should be asked is why the two groups persist despite the efforts by the state to stop or at least contain them.

The state’s response has been a mixture of sluggishness and brute force. With regard to the former, the police force has time and again failed to stop the violence committed by the two groups. With regard to the brute force, the police have been accused of extra-judicial killings in the case of the *Mungiki*, while the army was accused of torturing residents in its operation to contain the SLDF. In both cases, the public reaction has not eliminated the groups. The question that should be asked is why the two groups persist despite the efforts by the state to stop or at least contain them.

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It is evident that the rise of the *Mungiki* and SLDF is to some extent the result of the marginalisation of the two groups, economically and also politically. There is also no doubt that the two groups are linked with elites and politicians from their areas of operation. A crackdown on the groups must thus address this connection. But more importantly, the state must address the factors that contribute to the marginalisation of these groups, both economically and politically. There is also no doubt that the two groups are linked with elites and politicians from their areas of operation. A crackdown on the groups must thus address this connection. But more importantly, the state must address the factors that contribute to the marginalisation of these groups, both economically and politically.

**NOTES**


Marginalisation and the Rise of Militia Groups in Kenya


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INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the Rwanda genocide and entry into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) of the defeated Interahamwe and the Forces Armées Rwandaises (Rwanda Armed Forces, FAR) in 1994, the DRC in general, and the eastern DRC in particular, have never known peace. Rebel and militia groups have sprung up in the country to the point that one cannot keep track of who is who. The availability of mineral and other forms of natural wealth in the country has been one reason for the continued instability in the region. In fact, the rebel and militia groups (and at one time the neighbouring countries of Rwanda and Uganda) have transformed their military operations and presence in the country into self-sustaining activities, through the extraction and sale of natural resources. The instability occasioned by these groups has resulted in mass deaths, displacements and human rights violations.

This chapter discusses the current state of the conflict in the eastern DRC, paying due attention to the rebel and militia groups operating there. It sequentially
presents a short history of the conflict in the DRC from the time it became a personal possession of King Léopold II to the present, showing how the presence of natural resources in the country has led to it becoming a ‘geological scandal.’ It then presents the struggle for control of Congolese resources in the 1960s and 1970s, during which Mobutu adopted the strategy of ‘Zairenising’ foreign companies and the Belgians to extract the resources. The chapter next discusses the different rebel and militia groups that have existed and continue to exist in the eastern DRC, with a key observation that although the majority of the rebel groups in the eastern DRC were established by the neighbouring countries of Uganda and Rwanda, other non-Congolese groups have also taken advantage of the fluid situation to enter the fray. The next section of the chapter deals with the relationship between the different rebel and militia groups in the eastern DRC and the states of the region, with an observation that the relationship between the rebel and militia groups and the states of the region follows the maxim of ‘my enemy is my friend.’ The following section deals with the international and regional responses to the conflict in the eastern DRC, with a key conclusion that it is difficult to hold non-state actors accountable in an ongoing conflict situation. The chapter closes with a conclusion and recommends that the main strategy to defeat the numerous rebel and militia groups should involve three key trajectories: first, the groups should be confronted militarily; second, the DRC government should be supported to build strong institutions in the eastern DRC to ensure law and order; and third, the DRC should normalise relations with neighbours to the east, particularly Rwanda and Uganda, so that they do not support the rebel and militia groups in the eastern DRC and can move towards joint actions against these groups to eliminate them.

HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT IN THE DRC: FROM KING LÉOPOLD II TO JOSEPH KABILA

From King Léopold II to independence

In 1885 the DRC, which is more than 80 times the size of Belgium, was ceded by the major world powers to King Léopold II of Belgium as a personal possession. Léopold’s private estate – the Congo – was then baptised L’État Indépendant du Congo (Congo Free State) and Léopold’s colonial representatives embarked on the dual campaign of military pacification and economic exploitation of the region. The exploitation evolved primarily around the harvesting of wild rubber for export to Belgium. Léopold fondly referred to the Congo as his private estate which he ran as a ‘magnificent African cake.’ His brutal rule became associated with the image of ‘red rubber,’ denoting that it was stained by the blood of the Africans who were forced to gather it, and in 1908, in international reform movement led by E D Morel forced Léopold to transfer the Congo to the Belgian state. The transformation of the Congo from Léopold’s personal possession to a Belgian colony did not represent a major advance for the Congolese people, for Léopold’s rule was replaced by a colonial regime that was just as oppressive. According to Anstey:

[The Belgian Congo was a] vast territory which had been properly administered; a system of direct economic exploitation … an unfettered variant of … abuse and atrocity. … [This] legacy meant that Belgium had no relevant tradition of policy to invoke, [and] no positive aims regarding it.

Belgium’s colonial rule in the Congo relied on the triple objectives of economic exploitation and political and cultural repression. Nevertheless, resistance by the Congo natives was fierce and included army mutinies, strikes, and work stoppages by mining, industrial, transportation and public sector workers. On 4 January 1959, the Congolese working class staged a rebellion against the Belgians, resulting in the decision to grant independence to the Congo. In his New Year’s address in 1960, King Baudouin (the grandson of Léopold II’s nephew and successor, Albert I), announced the Congo was ould have its independence in 1960, but due to the friction between the Congo and Belgium, it was postponed until 1960 without undue haste.

From independence to 1997

The independence of the Congo on 30 June 1960 did not result in the transformation of the Congo into a peaceful one; a system was subsequently lurching from one crisis to the next. Belgian colonisation had blocked political development, so when the Congo was suddenly pitched into independence, the African elite was tiny, inexperienced and angry, which was a recipe for chaos.

On 5 July 1960, several units in the Congo were mutinied and demanded promotions, pay rises and the removal of white officers. As rioting and unrest spread, P. Rime M. inister P. Atrice L. umubma a tempted to control the country by promoting a II African soldiers to the nce, removing some Belgian officers, and after ppointing a Congolese, Joseph M. obutu, a s the quasi...
political overseer over the military structure.32 The Belgians reacted by sending more troops, which intensified the violence. By September 1960, President Joseph Kasavubu announced the dismissal of Lumumba as prime minister, who in turn fired the president. This crisis precipitated a takeover by Mobutu Sese Seko on 14 September 1960.

Between 1960 and 1965, the Congo experienced one crisis after the other, for example, attempts by some parts of the country like Katanga to secede. Lumumba, the popularly elected in dependence prime minister, was arrested, tortured and finally killed in 1961. On 24 December 1965, Mobutu, then chief of staff of the Congolese army, staged a second coup d'état and successfully captured power.

Mobutu ruled the Congo from 1965 to 1997 during which he nationalized copper, gold, diamonds, oil and silver, at the time of his death in September 1997, Mobutu left a impoverished population and wealth in the form of, inter alia, US$9.6 billion, whose internal currency was worthless, and whose government was non-existent.25 Furthermore, Kabila did not live up to the expectations of Rwanda and Uganda, which had expected him to wipe out the Hutu Interahamwe and the Ugandan rebels (the Allied Democratic Forces) and the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (which was based in the eastern DRC) at the time.

Because the Congolese government was weak for political control, patrimonialism and ethnic-centred politics, Kabila was able to restore the functioning of the state only to a modest level.26 He found himself in charge of a country whose national debt was non-existent.27 Kabila appointed a Rwandese officer, General James Kabarebe, as chief of staff to reorganise them. Rwanda and Uganda took advantage of the disintegration of the Congolese state and armed forces to create territorial spheres of interest from which they could plunder the Congo's riches.27

Since Kabila had not lived up to their expectations, Uganda and Rwanda had to find a new Congolese puppet. The opportunity presented itself when Kabila decided to send the Rwandan troops home at the end of July 1998. The rebellion against the Kabila government that began on 2 August 1998 was depicted by the Rwandan and Ugandan rebels as a civil war in which they were simply providing support to Congolese rebels to ensure security along their own borders. Clearly this was not true, as fighting initially occurred between Rwandan and Congolese forces against Kabila's loyalists. As soon as the war broke out, Kabila convinced his eventual allies (Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia and later Chad) that the DRC had been invaded by her eastern neighbours, so the former entered the fray to prop up Kabila's government.

At the time of the outbreak of the rebellion, Rwanda had helped to found a movement called the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (Congolese Rally for Democracy, RCD) led by Professor Ernest Wamba dia Wamba from the
In mid-1999, the RCD disintegrated into factions and the war was stalemated when neither side was able to marshal enough power to impose a military victory over the other. With weak domestic economies, the countries involved and their Congolese rebel allies relied on the DRC’s natural wealth to fund their continued involvement in the conflict. It must be observed that this policy of exploiting the DRC’s natural resources to support the war effort had been initiated by the AFDL, for even before coming to power Kabila signed mining concessions with private investors from all over the world to finance the war against Mobutu. Prunier gives the example of the ‘one billion dollar contract’ Kabila signed with American Mining Fields International on 16 April 1997, setting a precedent that was subsequently copied by numerous rebel and militia groups as well as the regional states of the DRC.

With the war hanging t by t he exha usted p arties w ent t o a stalemate, the exhausted parties went to Lusaka in Zambia, where a ceasefire agreement was negotiated and signed in July 1999. The agreement provided for, among others, a ceasefire, disarmament of all the non-government forces, the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the DRC territory and the holding of an Inter-Congolese Dialogue to find a new political dispensation for the country.

On 16 January 2001, Laurent Kabila was assassinated by one of his bodyguards. He was succeeded by his son, Joseph Kabila.

**STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF THE DRC’S NATURAL RESOURCES**

Since the late 1800s, the Congolese people have suffered at the hands of foreign and indigenous businessmen and political leaders intent on exploiting the DRC’s rubber, ivory, diamonds, gold, copper, cobalt, timber and other resources. Under Léopold’s rule, brute force was used to ensure local communities satisfied high rubber quotas set by the local Force Publique commanders and their business associates. If a village refused to submit to the rubber regime, everyone in sight was shot so that other villagers would get the message, or the right hands of locals were cut off after they had been killed by local chiefs ‘to show the [colonial] state how many [had been] killed.’

After a steep fall in rubber prices, Belgium set up companies such as Union Minière du Haut-Katanga and Compagnie du Katanga (later renamed the Comité Spécial du Katanga) to exploit mineral resources located by geological surveys conducted in the late 1890s. These were the companies that the new rulers of the Congo inherited at independence. In order to assert sovereignty over their natural resource exploitation, both the Lumumba and Mobutu governments began the process of dismantling the foreign companies’ hold over the country’s resources. The attempted secession of Katanga right after independence was supported by Belgium, because this would have enabled it to continue exploiting Congolese minerals located in the area. According to Lemarchand, the mineral reserves of Katanga province are so easy to access that they could be called a ‘geological scandal.’

**Map 7–1: DRC’s natural resources**

Sources: Jeune Afrique and United Nations.

Between 1964 and 1980, a number of rebellions were launched to dismantle the Congolese neo-colonial state. The Mulele rebellion began in 1964 but by 1968 had fizzled out after the assassination of its leader, Piere Mulele. The Conseil Nationale de L’libération (National Liberation Council, CNL), which was established by Lumumba’s followers after his assassination to liberate the country, did not last long either. Its leaders, such as O Lengaa, were lured out of the rebellion by Mobutu in 1965. Laurent Kabila was the
only party member who continued to wage a low-intensity struggle in the Fizi-Baraka area until the early 1980s, when he, too, retired to the world of business in the form of crossborder trading, particularly in gold and ivory. By the time of the formation of the AFDL, Kabila was living in Tanzania on the profits from mineral smuggling and extortion.

In a nefort w orest wntrol of fmineral explotation from foreign-owned mining companies, the Mobutu government enacted the Bakajika Law in 1966, in terms of which the state established its rightful claim to all land and mineral rights in the country. He also nationalised the giant company Union Minière du Haut-Katanga in 1967, transforming it into a state enterprise called the Générale des Carrières et des Mines. This was followed in 1973 by the ‘Zairenisation’ of all foreign-owned commercial, in industrial and agricultural enterprises. Mobutu encouraged state profit in crossborder enterprises, particularly in gold and ivory. By the time of the formation of the AFDL, Kabila was living in Tanzania on the profits from mineral smuggling and extortion.

CURRENT STATUS OF THE CONFLICT

The Inter-Congolese Dialogue was concluded in 2002 and all the foreign forces withdrew from the DRC in 2003. A transitional government incorporating most of the former rebel groups was established at the end of 2003, with Joseph Kabila as president. In 2006, general elections were held and Kabila won the presidency and his party, the Alliance pour la Majeurité Résidentielle (Alliance of the Presidential Majority, AMP) received the majority in Parliament. However, the provinces of North and South Kivu, and Ituri continued to experience insecurity and instability. The main source of the insecurity may be attributed to the presence of numerous rebel groups that continued to wage low-intensity struggles in the region, including remnants of M23, the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP), and former Séléka forces, among others (like the Lord’s Resistance Army, LRA) entered the country from outside because of the absence of a functioning state.

The conflict in Ituri Province intensified between 1999 and 2003 as a result of clashes over land between the Hema and Lendu ethnic groups. The situation was exacerbated by the presence of Ugandan soldiers who used the conflict between the two groups as a smokescreen for the unbridled exploitation of natural resources. Although the situation in Ituri has since stabilised, North and South Kivu continue to suffer from insecurity. In August 2008, renewed conflict broke out between FARDC and General Laurent Nkunda’s Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (National Congress for the Defence of the People, CNDP), which he established in 2006 to fight against rebel groups. Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, FDLR), which was composed mainly of former Interahamwe and ex-FAR and whose aim is to topple the government of Paul Kagame in Rwanda.

After several rounds of talks in N’gariro and Goma, the CNDP and the Congolese government signed a peace agreement on 23 March 2009. Earlier on, in January 2008, 22 armed groups and the DRC government signed the Goma Acts of Engagement, which, provided for groups to undergo a programme of disarmament, demobilisation, resettlement and reintegration. Despite this undertaking and the various peace agreements, the armed non-state groups continue to plunder the region’s natural resources, while simultaneously committing a variety of mass human rights violations that range from pillaging and burning of homes and stores to torture, abduction of children into militia groups, displacement of populations and murder.

THE ROLE OF MILITIAS AND REBEL MOVEMENTS IN THE DRC CONFLICTS

It can be argued that armed non-state groups first gained prominence in the DRC during the overthrow of Mobutu and subsequent wars that resulted in the disintegration of the government of Paul Kagame in Rwanda. Others (like the Lord’s Resistance Army, LRA) entered the country from outside because of the absence of a functioning state.

Structure, agenda and functioning of the various groups

Apart from the AFDL, which was established in 1998 in Rwanda, the National Congress for the Defence of the People, CNDP, which was established in 2006 to fight against rebel groups, and the RCD, which was formed in 1992, there are other armed groups operating in the region, including remnants of M23, the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP), and former Séléka forces, among others (like the Lord’s Resistance Army, LRA) entered the country from outside because of the absence of a functioning state.
active in North and South Kivu provinces, while the RCD-Kisangani (also called RCD-ML), supported by Uganda, was based at Kisangani and controlled parts of Ituri and Orientale provinces.

The disintegration of the RCD was occasioned by, *inter alia*, the leadership style of Wamba and different views on how to pursue the war against the Kabila government.""Although a section of the RCD-Goma faction (which was led by Wamba) favoured a warlike approach, between August 1999 and May 2000, Ugandan and Rwandan troops clashed on three occasions in the town of Kisangani for control of taxes or gratuities related to diamonds." Later on the RCD-Kisangani di-integrated in to other factions, including RCD-Nationale led by Roger Lumula and based at the town of Bafwasende.

As the war stalled, Uganda saw the need to create a new group and front to fight the Kabila government. Since Uganda controlled a large swathe of eastern DRC territory to the east and northeast, the military strategy that Uganda adopted involved empowering the Congolese people politically and militarily in the hope that they would overthrow Kabila themselves. Uganda therefore helped to found the Mouvement pour la Libération de l’Oubangui (Movement for the Liberation of the Ubangi, MLC) of Jean-Pierre Bemba. Bemba, a former businessman from Brussels, was introduced to Uganda President Yoweri Museveni by his Ugandan friends in the military and thereafter underwent military training at a Ugandan facility at Kyankwazi, after which he was put in a helicopter by the Ugandan military and flown to the eastern DRC. There he was introduced to the population as a savior and a liberator by his Ugandan handlers, and to buttress his liberator credentials, was given a uniform and gun and told to start recruiting supporters, thus giving birth to the MLC.

With the help of Uganda, the MLC was able to raise a force of between 15,000 and 20,000 members who operated in a region controlled by the Ugandan military. When President Museveni was asked why he was supporting many rebel groups, including RCD-Kisangani and the MLC, he replied that ‘a good hunter sends out several dogs because he cannot know in advance which one will be the best’. MLC rebels and the Ugandan soldiers exploited minerals and other natural resources such as timber in the region they controlled. President Museveni even allowed his group to use the military airport at Entebbe in Uganda to transport their ‘goods’ to and from the DRC cheaply. Young men from 12 to 18 years were reportedly recruited into the MLC and sent to mines to dig for gold on behalf of the Ugandans and Bemba.

After the start of the war in the east in August 1998, the Kabila government started supporting the Mai-Mai militias based in North and South Kivu provinces to fight the Rwandan occupation. The Mai-Mai militias considered themselves traditional warriors and believed that the use of magic made them invisible. The name Mai-Mai cuts across various ethnic groups in North and South Kivu. These warriors first came to prominence in the early 1960s when they allied with the leftist Mulelist rebellion that tried to topple President Mobutu.

Mai-Mai groups tend to shift alliances to achieve their parochial interests. During the 1996–1997 war, for example, they fought with Kabila, but after the AFDL came to power, they deserted and returned to their bases in North Kivu, from where they have been able to sow terror among soft civilian targets. Different actors have a loose ended loyalties to different bases. UPD, for example, they fought with Kabila, but after the AFDL came to power, they deserted and returned to their bases in North Kivu, from where they have been able to sow terror among soft civilian targets. Different actors have a loose ended loyalties to different bases. UPD, for example, they fought with Kabila, but after the AFDL came to power, they deserted and returned to their bases in North Kivu, from where they have been able to sow terror among soft civilian targets.

The Parti pour l’Unité et la Sauvegarde de l’Intégrité du Congo (Party for Unity and Safeguarding of the Integrity of Congo, PUSIC) was founded in 2002 by Chief Kaahwa Mandro Kango, who broke away from the Union des Patriotes Congolais (Union of Congolese Patriots, UPC) of Thomas Lubanga, who had, in turn, broken away from RCD-ML. When Lubanga started collaborating with Rwanda, Kaahwa decided it was time to break ranks with him and allied with Uganda to fight the UPC. However, eventually, with the pacification of Ituri Province, all militia groups operating there (including PUSIC) fell apart and disappeared.

The Patriotes Résistants Congolais (Congolese Resistance Patriots, PARECO) is one of the numerous militia groups that have sprung up in the eastern DRC. It is loosely allied to the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda and sometimes operates with FARDC to fight the UNDP. It was formed in 2007 from former Mai-Mai elements and is based at Kibua near the FDLR high command.

The Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) first entered the DRC in October 2005 in Orientale Province. In March 2002, the Uganda army launched ‘Operation Iron Fist’ to rout the LRA from its bases in Southern Sudan. This, *inter alia*, resulted in the rebels crossing the border from Sudan in to Ga ramba National Park in the DRC. Reports indicate that the LRA was present in the DRC as late as December 2008, when FARDC, the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) and the Uganda
People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) launched Operation Lightning Thunder to root out the LRA from its base in the Garamba National Park. According to reports, the LRA attacks have resulted in a 32 per cent increase in the number of internally displaced persons in Orientale Province. Mop-up operations named Rudia II against the group were carried out by the UPDF and FARDC but have not resulted in its complete eradication.

As can be seen from the above, many rebel and militia groups operating in the eastern DRC are connected either to each other or to the DRC government and the neighbouring countries. It should be noted that the impact of their activities on human security has been immensely negative. Of the more than four million deaths that have been recorded since the start of the conflict in 1996, the majority occurred in the eastern DRC. In their struggle to seize economic, political and military power, the militias, rebel movements and government soldiers (both national and foreign) have been guilty of the most horrific human rights abuses, including widespread killings of unarmed civilians, rape, torture and looting, and recruitment of child soldiers to fight in their ranks, leading to the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. The following figures will illustrate this point: between January and September 2007, Panzi Hospital in South Kivu recorded 2,773 cases of rape, of which 2,447 were attributed to members of the FDLR and Interahamwe. In Equateur Province, fighting in and around the areas of Dongo in late 2009 caused the displacement of approximately 60,000 people, while another 15,000 sought refuge in the Central African Republic (CAR).

Table 7–1 shows known Congolese and non-Congolese rebel and militia groups and their alliances in the eastern DRC.

Table 7–1: Rebel groups in the eastern DRC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rebel group</th>
<th>Nationality, founding date</th>
<th>Alliances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alliance des Forces Démocratique pour la Libération du Congo (AFDL)</td>
<td>Congolese, October 1996</td>
<td>Uganda, Rwanda, Angola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (Congolese Rally for Democracy, RCD)</td>
<td>Congolese, August 1998</td>
<td>Rwanda, Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie – Goma (RCD-Goma)</td>
<td>Congolese, August 1998</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie – Kisangani (RCD-Kisangani)</td>
<td>Congolese, May 1999</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie – Mouvement de Libération (RCD-ML)</td>
<td>Congolese, September 1999</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie – Nationale (RCD-Nationale)</td>
<td>Congolese, June 2000</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo (Movement for the Liberation of Congo, MLC)</td>
<td>Congolese, October 1998</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union des Patriotes Congolais (Union of Congolese Patriots, UPC)</td>
<td>Congolese, June 2002</td>
<td>Uganda, Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front de Libération du Congo (Congolese Liberation Front, FLC)</td>
<td>Congolese, January 2001</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mouvement des Patriotes Résistants Congolais (Patriots in the Congolese Resistance, PARECO)</td>
<td>Congolese, Date not available</td>
<td>FDLR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (National Congress for the Defence of the People, CNDP)</td>
<td>Congolese, December 2006</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda – Forces Combattantes Abacunguzi (FDLR-FOCA); previously called Armée pour la Libération du Rwanda (Army for the Liberation of Rwanda, ALIR)</td>
<td>Rwandan, 1999</td>
<td>DRC, PARECO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA)</td>
<td>Ugandan, 1988/89</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU)</td>
<td>Ugandan, 1988</td>
<td>Allegedly receives support from the DRC government</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Natural resource wealth: blessing or curse?

The DRC in general, and the eastern part of the country in particular, is incredibly rich in terms of natural resources, but this has long been described as a curse. Throughout the past century, irrespective of the governing system or political personalities in power, the natural resources have been systematically exploited for the economic benefit of a few at the expense of the vast majority of the Congolese people. The conflict in the eastern DRC is mainly about access, control and trade in minerals such as coltan, gold, cassiterite, diamonds, copper and cobalt, as well as timber. The eastern DRC also has deposits of cadmium, silver, zinc, uranium, coal, lead, iron ore and manganese. Table 7–2, and maps 7–2 and 7–3 show the location of these minerals in the DRC.

Table 7–2: Natural resources in the DRC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of mineral</th>
<th>Location (provinces)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amethyst</td>
<td>South Kivu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cadmium</td>
<td>Katanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassiterite (tin)</td>
<td>North and South Kivu, Katanga, Mamiema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coltan (columbite-tantalite)</td>
<td>North and South Kivu, Mamiema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper and cobalt</td>
<td>Katanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamonds</td>
<td>Kasai, Orientale, Equator, Mamiema, Bas Congo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>South Kivu, Orientale, Katanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>Equator, Katanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>Katanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manganese</td>
<td>Katanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyrochlore</td>
<td>North Kivu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>Katanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourmaline</td>
<td>South Kivu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uranium</td>
<td>Katanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolframite</td>
<td>North and South Kivu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zinc</td>
<td>Katanga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Global Witness, Same old story: a background study on natural resources in the DRC, June 2004; Global Witness, ‘Faced with a gun, what can you do?’ War and the militarisation of mining in eastern Congo, July 2009.
In the eastern DRC, minerals are often mined by unregulated artisans who are susceptible to exploitation by whoever wields the power of the gun, be it government soldiers, rebels or militias. The latter use methods such as direct extraction, extortion/confiscation, ‘taxation’ and coercion of the local population to obtain minerals.

Map 7–2: Natural resources in the eastern DRC

During their occupation of large parts of the eastern DRC, Rwanda and Uganda created rebel and militia groups to help them exploit the natural resources in the areas under their control. The government of Rwanda reportedly created a special ‘Congo Desk’ in the ministry of defence that coordinated the exploitation. In Uganda, high-ranking government and military officials created companies and proxy rebel groups to carry out exploitation on their behalf. The withdrawal of these countries from the DRC did not end the exploitation, as new groups emerged to take their place.

Because there are numerous rebel and militia groups operating in the eastern DRC now, the activities of only a few with regard to the illegal exploitation of natural resources are discussed below.

Collaboration between the DRC government and FDLR and PARECO

As noted above, the FDLR is composed mainly of the Interahamwe and former FAR soldiers who fled Rwanda after the 1994 genocide. It has been named the ‘most powerful and harmful politico-military rebel organisation in Congo’ and is known for committing serious human rights abuses against the Congolese population and engaging in the illegal exploitation of natural resources in areas under its control. The group has changed names a number of times, starting as the Rassemblement Démocratique pour le Rwanda (Rwanda Democratic Rally, RDR), and then the Armée pour la Libération du Rwanda (Army for the Liberation of Rwanda, ALiR). It changed its name to FDLR in 1999 after the US listed ALiR as a terrorist organisation.

One of the reasons why Rwanda sought to topple Kabila in 1998 was his putative support to the people who allegedly carried out the Rwanda genocide. By November 1997, allegations had started to emerge that Kabila had begun to negotiate with and to help the Hutu. These allegations proved to be true when the Interahamwe and ex-FAR fought on the side of Kabila when war broke out in August 1998.

Following the withdrawal of foreign forces and the establishment of the transitional government, the FDLR flourished in the Kivu provinces, with the ‘tolerance, collaboration and even active complicity of certain FARDC officers.’ The relationship between the FDLR and FARDC is rooted in the earlier years of the war when the two groups collaborated against the common enemy of Rwanda and its surrogate, RCD-Goma. Through mutual agreement, FARDC and the FDLR
have operated side by side, granting each other freedom of movement through the other's territory, allowing each other to trade without interference, and FARC even supplying the FDLR with arms, ammunition and uniforms and referring to their members as 'our brothers'.

Both FARC and the FDLR have engaged in the exploitation of resources in the areas they control. FARC was formed from the integration of various rebel groups (among them the RCD-Goma, ML C and Mai-Mai) with the government force then known as the Forces d'Armée Congolaises (Congolese Armed Forces, FAC), which was established after Laurent Kabila came to power. The demobilisation of the various rebel and militia groups, such as the CNDP, Mai-Mai, PARECO and PUSIC has resulted in some of their elements being integrated into the FARC through a process called brassage. It is reported that elements of FARC started exploiting minerals since it was deployed in the eastern Congo in 2006 after the election of Kabila. Two of the most lucrative mining sites, namely Bisie mine in Walikale territory and mining-rich zones in Kalehe territory, are controlled by FARDC. In most cases, FARDC soldiers mine the minerals themselves, although they often use the civilian population to do the digging for them.

According to reports, elements of FARC have seized the entire production of minerals from miners in some locations, but more typically they have taken a share as a form of payment while allowing the miners to keep the rest. In many mines under FARC control, specific mineshafts or areas are known to belong to particular local military officials. The yield from these mineshafts is collected and sold by agents acting on behalf of FARC officials. FARC soldiers also routinely extort minerals and money from civilians at military checkpoints along roads, in addition to imposing ‘taxes’ on miners.

The FDLR has diversified its sources of income by taking control of both legal and illicit commercial activities in areas it controls. This high remunerative predatory economic tactic has enabled the rebel movement hierarchy to sink deep and comfortable roots in the eastern DRC. The FDLR controls cassiterite mines at Lulingu and Lemera in South Kivu and at Nyabondo in North Kivu, and gold deposits Kilembwe in South Kivu. In addition, there are six roadblocks along the Shabunda-Bukavu road to ‘tax’ trade passing along roads under its control.

Map 7–3: Map of natural resources and conflict areas

Other activities engaged in by the FDLR and its civilian associates include taxing markets in Kibua and Nyabondo in North Kivu and in North Kibongwe, Sange and Kilembwe in South Kivu, producing a wide range of agricultural goods (e ven cannabis), exploiting timber in Pinga territory, poaching hippopotamuses and elephants for meat and ivory in areas under its control along Lake Albert in Lubero and trade in charcoal produced from wood cut in Virunga National Park.

PARECO is allied to the FDLR and thus extends its control with FARDC. However, this group is less homogeneous and thus has a less well-defined political or economic agenda. It would seem to be involved in mining and commercial activities, which has resulted in its elements being integrated into the FARDC through a process called brassage. It is reported that elements of FARDC have seized the entire production of minerals from miners in some locations, but more typically they have taken a share as a form of payment while allowing the miners to keep the rest. In many mines under FARDC control, specific mineshafts or areas are known to belong to particular local military officials. The yield from these mineshafts is collected and sold by agents acting on behalf of FARDC officials. FARC soldiers also routinely extort minerals and money from civilians at military checkpoints along roads, in addition to imposing ‘taxes’ on miners.

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The CNDP was established on 30 December 2006 by Brigadier-General Laurent Nkunda, who had fought with the RPA to oust the Hutu government, which had
carried out the genocide. He then joined the RCD-Goma faction and by 1998 had become one of its military leaders. In 2009 he was dictated by the K intsha government for war crimes and a warrant for his arrest was issued.

The CNDP is an armed non-state group although Nkunda has tried to present it as a political tool to clean up Congolese politics. The group has been accused of the FDLR as its main enemy and until this day is been attracting active Rwandan support. In fact, there is evidence that the Rwandan authorities have been complicit in the recruitment of soldiers (including children), have facilitated the supply of military equipment and have sent officers and units from the Forces Rwandaises de Défense (Rwanda Defence Forces, RDF) to the DRC in support of the CNDP. The group relies on the civilian population to dig for minerals and takes a proportion of the production. It controls coltan mines at Bibatama, a wolframite mine at Bishasha and cassiterite mines throughout North Kivu. It is also involved in mineral trade through extortion and imposition of taxes along roads in Sake, Mushake, Kilolirwe and Kitchanga, and at border crossings at Bunagana on the Uganda/DRC border, and collects significant sums from the charcoal trade from Virunga National Park. It controls coltan mines at Bibatama, a wolframite mine at Bishasha and cassiterite mines throughout North Kivu. It is also involved in mineral trade through extortion and imposition of taxes along roads in Sake, Mushake, Kilolirwe and Kitchanga, and at border crossings at Bunagana on the Uganda/DRC border, and collects significant sums from the charcoal trade from Virunga National Park.

In January 2009, the CNDP split when General Bosco Ntaganda deposed Nkunda as its leader and announced the transformation of the group into a political movement and integration of its fighters with FARDC. The CNDP relied on the civilian population to dig for minerals and took a proportion of the production. It controls coltan mines at Bibatama, a wolframite mine at Bishasha and cassiterite mines throughout North Kivu. It is also involved in mineral trade through extortion and imposition of taxes along roads in Sake, Mushake, Kilolirwe and Kitchanga, and at border crossings at Bunagana on the Uganda/DRC border, and collects significant sums from the charcoal trade from Virunga National Park.

The fighting that erupted in North Kivu in late 2008 and continued into 2009 between the forces of FARDC and the CNDP has been presented as an attempt by FARDC to force the CNDP to demobilise and integrate into the national force. However, this fighting was actually an attempt by the K intsha government to assert its authority over the eastern DRC. In fact, the CNDP had created a state within a state in the areas it controlled where it exploited natural resources and ‘exercised military, political and administrative influence’ in Masissi and some parts of Rutshuru. The arrest of Nkunda has not stopped the CNDP’s de facto control of North Kivu and to a lesser extent South Kivu. The above ‘taxation’ on commercial

Uganda–MLC collaboration

From the above it is clear that Uganda had a hand in the creation of the MLC and the mutual relationship was maintained throughout the war. The following two examples further illustrate the support Uganda gave to the MLC. First, when the Sun City I talks, as part of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, ended inconclusively in April 2002 a nd the embra project time mini ster, P resident Museveni immediately congratulated him on his support. Second, when differences emerged between the MLC and RCD-ML over the extraction of gold and the harvesting of timber and coffee in Orientale Province when the RCD-ML attempted to challenge the MLC’s monopoly over the production and trade in commodities, including diamonds, gold and coffee, in its territory.

INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL RESPONSES TO THE CONFLICT

Because state and non-state actors have generally coerced civilians to help with the illegal exploitation of the DRC’s natural wealth, it has resulted in human rights violations. These are in violation of international and regional human rights instruments such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights. The International Criminal Court found, for example, that Uganda had violated international humanitarian law and in this way attracted active Rwandan support. In the case concerning a reduction of RCD’s territorial control in the Congo (DRC v Uganda) the International Criminal Court found that the actions of various parties to the complex conflict in the DRC have contributed to the immense suffering faced by the Congolese population. The human rights violations have included
deliberate killing of civilians, rape, looting and some acts of cannibalism." The violations in particular the conflict in general have elicited regional and international responses, which are discussed next.

Regional responses

In 2004, under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union, the states of the region established the International Conference on the Great Lakes region (I CGLR) as a forum for resolving a root conflict, maintaining peace, security and stability, and laying the foundation for post-conflict reconstruction. In December 2006, in Nairobi, Kenya, the states concluded the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes region, which, \textit{inter alia}, provides for the conclusion of two protocols that are very germane to this discussion, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes region, which, \textit{inter alia}, provides for the inclusion of two protocols that have very germane to this discussion, the Protocol on Non-aggression and Mutual Defence in the Great Lakes region (article 5), and the Protocol against the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources (article 2). The latter protocol declares that the illegal exploitation of natural resources is a violation of the rights of member states to permanent sovereignty over their natural resources, and commits member states to end impunity for persons responsible for exploiting natural resources illegally. The protocol also calls upon every member state to ensure that all acts of illegal exploitation of natural resources are offences under its criminal law. Finally, the protocol calls on each member state to impose effective and deterrent sanctions commensurate with the offence of illegal exploitation of natural resources committed, including imprisonment for or in individual persons convicted of such offences.

The ICGLR has drawn up an action programme for the disarmament and repatriation of a large number of groups that might carry out hostile acts against a member state (article 3(h)), while it defines armed groups as any armed group that does not belong to, or is not officially incorporated into, the defence and security forces of member states (article 3(h)). Under the protocol, member states propose several measures to deal with the armed groups operating in the eastern DRC, particularly the presence of armed negative forces. It accordingly called for the forceful disarmament of the ex-FAR, the \textit{Interahamwe} and other armed groups. Between February and March 2005, it sent a preliminary evaluation team to make recommendations on how the disarmament would be carried out. This was followed in April 2005 by a meeting of the AU and military experts fromBurundi, Rwanda and Uganda, where a number of issues were discussed regarding political and military support as well as sources of supplies to these negative forces. This meeting also discussed the modalities of implementing the Peace and Security Council decision reached at the Libreville meeting in January 2005, expressing serious concerns over the security situation in the eastern DRC.

The protocol against illegal exploitation of natural resources aims at

- Genocidal forces of the FDLR operating from the DRC territory
- The LRA, People’s Redemption Army, Allied Democratic Forces and the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda
- Any group or militia that threatens the security and stability of the region, and
- Local defence militias opposed to central authority and armed dissident groups

Little is known about the implementation of this programme.

As a result of the fighting that erupted in the eastern DRC late in 2008, a large number of groups, including the ex-FAR, the Interahamwe and other armed groups, were in the eastern DRC, especially the presence of armed negative forces. It accordingly called for the forceful disarmament of the ex-FAR, the Interahamwe and other armed groups. Between February and March 2005, it sent a preliminary evaluation team to make recommendations on how the disarmament would be carried out. This was followed in April 2005 by a meeting of the AU and military experts from Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, where a number of issues were discussed regarding political and military support as well as sources of supplies to these negative forces. This meeting also discussed the modalities of implementing the Peace and Security Council decision reached at the Libreville meeting in January 2005, expressing serious concerns over the security situation in the eastern DRC.

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in the conclusion of the peace agreement between the government and the CNDP on 23 March 2009.

The AU’s Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy and Decision recognizes that natural resource governance lies at the nexus of peace, security, stability and sustainable development. In addition, the AU-New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) peace and security agenda, which was developed in 2003, identified t h e n e e d fo r a p plication in t he exploitation and management of Africa’s natural resources in situations of conflict, as one of the continent’s eight peace and security priorities. As a result, apropos the DRC, the Policy and Decision, * inter alia*, called on the DRC government to regulate artisanal mining to improve labour conditions, prevent human rights violations and ensure that artisanal mining contributes to poverty reduction and sustainable development.

**International responses**

**United Nations Security Council, MONUC and sanctions**

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has declared that the situation in the eastern DRC in particular and the DRC in general constitutes a threat to the maintenance of peace and security, in accordance with Resolutions 1493 (2003), 1533 (2004), 1596 (2005), 1640 (2005), 1649 (2005), 1684 (2006), 1713 (2006), 1725 (2006), 1735 (2006), 1743 (2006) among others. The Council has also imposed a travel ban to individuals supporting the illegal armed groups in the eastern DRC and committing violations of international law involving the targeting of women in situations of armed conflict, including killings, sexual violence, and forced displacement. In addition, it has sanctioned individuals obstructing the access to or the distribution of humanitarian assistance in the eastern DRC. The UNSC has also renewed the sanctions listed in various resolutions.

The Council, in Resolution 1807 (2008), extended the asset freeze and travel ban to individuals supporting the illegal armed groups in the eastern DRC and committing violations of international law involving the targeting of women in situations of armed conflict, including killings and sexual violence, and forced displacement. In addition, it has sanctioned individuals obstructing the access to or the distribution of humanitarian assistance in the eastern DRC.

**Sanctions in the eastern DRC**

Sanctions in the eastern DRC have been imposed on, among others, four FDLR leaders, namely Callixte Mbarushimana, Stanislas Nzeyimana, Pacifique Ntawunguka and Léopold Mujyambere. Although the FDLR military commander, Major-General Sylvestre Mudacumura, was placed on the sanctions list in 2005, this remains an essentially symbolic gesture because, like most of the sanctioned persons, he lives in Kivu province and has no bank account or any possibility of travel.

Although *Mission des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo* (MONUC) is the biggest UN peacekeeping mission in the world, with a Chapter VII mandate, it has not lived up to the expectations. For instance, the FDLR government and general population view the force with suspicion as a result of the history of the UN in the Congo. According to Prunier, the suspicion stems from, among others, the role played by the UN in the early 1960s. Second, troop numbers are small compared to the area that it is supposed to police. Third, when fighting has broken out between the different militias/rebel groups and/or between the militias/rebel groups and FARDC, as happened in 2004 in Bukavu between Nkunda’s troops and the FDLR, the FARDC troops seemed to be “demoralised and rudderless.” This is attributed to a lack of skills, resources and military equipment suited to counterinsurgency operations. Finally, while the UNSC has directed the FARDC in the protection of civilians and directed FARDC to cooperate with rebel/militias that
MONUSCO is supposed to do mobilise) a nd en gages in i llegal exp oitation of f natural resources and illicit trade in those resources.116

UNSC R esolution 1925 (2010) is t he l atest o n the S tate o f S tabilisation in t he DRC (M ONUSCO). I n t he r esolution t he Council authorises M ONUSCO t o o ut i ts p rotection mandate, in cluding p rotection of ci vilians, h umanitarian p ersonnel a nd h uman r ights def enders un der im munity t hreat o f h umanitarian v ioence, a s a f r e s t h e p rotection o f t he UN P ersonnel, f aci lities, i n stallations a nd e q uipment. Th e mission must al s o support governm ent efforts t o f ight impunity a nd ensure t he protection o f c i vilians a gainst v io lations o f i nternational h uman r ights a nd h umanitarian l aw, i ncluding a ll f orms of sexual a nd g ender-based v iolence.

During 2008, M ONUC, i n co llaboration w ith F ARDC, p lanned a nd b egan implementing a n o peration i n N orth a nd S outh K ivu c alled ‘K imia I ’ t ha t w as i ntended t o i ncrease m ilitary p ressure on t he FDLR. H owever, t he o peration w as c alled o ff a f ter t he r esumption o f f ighting b etween F ARDC a nd C N D P i n A ugust 2008. I n 2009, M ONUC a nd F ARDC laun ched Operation K imia II aga inst t he FDLR a nd o ther Congolese groups that s till r esisted i ntegration i n t o F ARDC. I n t he o peration M ONUC p rovided r ations, f uel s upplies, m edical p rotection a nd, i n t he c ase o f d ef enders, m edical p rotection.

The DRC is a m ember o f the Kimberley Process and has been involved since the negotiations stage. However, t he c ountry h as f ound it d ifficult t o i mplement t he K imberley P rocess r equirements b ecause, f irst, t he g overnment d oes n ot c ontrol t he t rade i n diamon ds f rom rebel-held a reas i n t he e astern DRC; s econd, t he g overnment f aces e normous c hallenges i n e nding e ndemic c orruption; t hird, e ven w hen t he g overnment h as d eployed i ts f orces i n t he e astern DRC, t hey h ave e n gaged i n t he s m uggling o f d iamon ds j ust l ike t he n umerous r ebel a nd m ilitia g roups w ho p ervade t he r egion.

The International Criminal Court

The DRC sig ned t he R ome S tatute o n 8 S eptember 2000 a nd d ep osited i ts r atification o n 11 A pril 2002. I n July 2003, t he O f fice o f t he P rosecutor s tarted t he i nvestigations i n t he K imberley P rocess i n t he DRC.

The Kimberley Process

The K imberley P rocess C ertification S chem e f or R ough D iamonds was e stablished t o f ind a s olution t o t he i nternational p roblem o f c onflict d iamonds t hat a re u sed t o f inance c onflict a imed a t u n d ermining l egitimate g overnments.122 T h e K imberley P rocess es tablishes t he f irst s tep t o e nforce t he r ight o f c onflict d iamonds t o b e i ncluded i n t he t rade a nd t h e r ight o f c onflict d iamonds t o b e s ubjected t o t he r egulation o f t he t rade.123 T he K imberley P rocess es tablishes t he f irst s tep t o e nforce t he r ight o f c onflict d iamonds t o b e i ncluded i n t he t rade a nd t h e r ight o f c onflict d iamonds t o b e s ubjected t o t he r egulation o f t he t rade.

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On 28 May 2008, Jean-Pierre Bemba was arrested in Belgium on four counts of war crimes and two of crimes against humanity.125 According to the warrant of arrest issued by the ICC, Bemba and his MLC had intervened in the conflict in the CAR in 2002–2003 and pursued a plan of terrorising and brutalising innocent civilians, in particular during an operation of forced looting.126 It is unfortunate that the ICC has indicted Bemba as a result of its investigations into events in the CAR and not on any crimes he may have committed during the long war in the DRC. Also, there are no charges relating to the plunder of Congolese natural resources, with which the MLC carried out during its occupation of large swathes of territory in Orientale and Equator provinces.

The failure to indict Bemba on crimes he may have committed during the DRC war has not gone unnoticed and the ICC has been criticised for allowing the rebel leader to ‘get away too lightly’, particularly in view of the prosecution of Thomas Lubanga with crimes relating to recruitment of children.127 This seeming contradiction highlights the problem that the ICC has experienced in the DRC, as in other countries, of not having the capacity to arrest the people for whom arrest warrants have been issued. The LRA’s Joseph Kony and his top commanders, for whom warrants were issued in 2005, are still at large, while that he issued against Sudanese President Omar el-Bashir is unlikely to be executed as long as he remains in power. This clearly shows that the ICC will face great difficulty in dealing with the numerous rebel and militia groups in the eastern DRC. It may indict rebel and militia leaders (for example Ntaganda), but it will be next-to-impossible to take the indicted persons into custody without the support of the relevant state.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The countries initially involved in the DRC conflict, particularly Uganda and Rwanda, had hoped to find Laurent Kabila and the AFDL a useful cover for their strategic objective of creating a buffer economic and political security zone in the eastern Congo. However, Kabila did not support the Congolese state in its efforts to build the capacity of the Congolese National Police and FARDC to ensure the maintenance of law and order. A foreign intervention is simply a temporary measure that does not address the basic causes of the conflict and so cannot redress the situation on a permanent basis. The rebel and militia groups that continue to exploit the fluid situation to perpetuate their existence? My recommendation is that the strategy to defeat these groups should be based on short- and long-term timelines. In the short term, the capacity of the MONUSCO and FARDC forces should be improved to enable them to defeat these groups militarily. Experience has shown that military pressure could lead to the demise of these rebel and militia groups in the eastern DRC. The military operations against the FDLR (Operation Kimia II and Operation Amani Leo), for example, resulted in the rebel elements abandoning their bases, pulling out of their positions in villages and losing access to markets, communication routes and some mining areas. Thus, as the result of these operations exemplify, military operations against the rebel and militia groups should be intensified and sustained.

In the long run, however, there is a need to rebuild the state institutions of the Congolese state is not strong in the east. This is, for example, observed that in the eastern DRC, possession of a gun is a sufficient excuse for the imposition of ‘taxes’ by the rebels and militias. Security sector reforms are thus needed to build the capacity of the Congolese National Police and FARDC to ensure the maintenance of law and order.

Furthermore, the countries of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC need to normalise their relations so that they support and sustain their support of the Congolese state’s efforts to support the Congolese state’s efforts. From the above, it is clear that the majority of the rebel and militia groups in the eastern DRC have links with other states in the region. The establishment of regional frameworks such as the ICGLR and its various pacts. A further step in combating illegal exploitation of natural resources in the region is to ensure that the exploitation is done in a manner that benefits the Congolese state.
promoting peace and security in the Great Lakes region and the elimination of the negative rebel and militia group elements. The normalisation of relations among the states of the region will eliminate suspicion(s) and promote cooperation and joint action to eliminate these groups and promote peace. This is in deed what happened in the case of the joint action taken by the DRC and Rwanda, which resulted in the arrest of Nkunda and the integration of most of his force into FARDC. Clearly, collaboration among the states of the region would be a powerful weapon for eliminating once-and-for-all the various rebel and militia groups that continue to sow unrest in the eastern DRC.

NOTES

1 The Democratic Republic of Congo has a number of names: Congo Free State (1885–1908); Belgian Congo (1908–1960); Democratic Republic of the Congo – Léopoldville (1960–1964); Democratic Republic of the Congo – Kinshasa (1966–1997); Republic of Zaire (1971–1997); and, since 1997, the Democratic Republic of Congo. Throughout this chapter I use the latter name.


4 Nzongola-Ntalaja, The Congo from Léopold to Kabila, 1.


6 Ibid.


8 Dunn, Imagining the Congo, 22.

9 Nzongola-Ntalaja, The Congo from Léopold to Kabila, 26.


11 Nzongola-Ntalaja, The Congo from Léopold to Kabila, 52.

12 Dunn, Imagining the Congo, 62.


14 Dunn, Imagining the Congo, 63.

15 Ibid.


19 It was composed of four groups, n amely t he Parti de la R évolution P opulaire (People’s Revolutionary Party, PRP), which was founded in 1968 by Laurent Kabila; Conseil National de Résistance pour la Démocratie (National Resistance Council for Democracy, CNRD), le d by Andre Kisasu Ngandu with a Lumumbist association; Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Zaïre (Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Zaire, MLRZ), le d by Masasu N’zinda; and Alliance Démocratique des Peuples (Democratic Peoples’ Alliance, ADP), le d by D ogrogatis B ugera w ith C ongolese Tutsi a ssociates. Kabila wa s n amed t he spokesperson of the group, Bugera secretary-general and Ngandu army commander. Ngandu was assassinated in January 1997.


21 G Nzongola-Ntalaja, Th e Congo from L éopold to Kabila, 224. In fact, at the start of the Second Congo War in August 1998, Ugandan soldiers were stationed on the DRC side of the slopes of Mount Rwenzori.

22 Nzongola-Ntalaja, The Congo from Léopold to Kabila, 227.

23 International Cr isis G roup (ICG), D emocratic R epublic o f Congo: a nalysis o f t he c onflict a nd p eace i n Z aire/Congo: analysing a nd e valuating i ntervention (accessed 30 July 2010).


25 Ibid.

26 Apropos Uganda, the government of Kabila and that of Museveni signed a memorandum of understanding for the Uganda army (in effect comprising the Uganda Peoples Defence Force and the Congolese Armed Forces) to conduct joint operations against Ugandan rebel groups operating in the DRC. In fact, at the start of the Second Congo War in August 1998, Ugandan soldiers were stationed on the DRC side of the slopes of Mount Rwenzori.

27 Nzongola-Ntalaja, The Congo from Léopold to Kabila, 227.

28 G P Runier, From genoc ide t o c ontinental w ar: t he ‘ Congoles e’ c onflict a nd t he c risis o f c ontemporary Africa, London: Hurst, 2009, 137.


32 Ibid, 164.

33 Global Witness, Same old story, 6.


35 For a full discussion see ibid, 128–131.

36 For a full discussion see ibid, 121–135.
Rebels and Militias in Resource Conflict in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo

Nzongola-Ntalaja, The Congo from Léopold to Kabila, 135.

Ibid, 147; Global Witness, Same old story, 8.

Global Witness, Same old story, 8.


Peace agreement between the government and the CNDP, Goma, 23 March 2009.

Ward, Rebels and militias in resource conflict.

K P Apuuli, The implications of the arrest of Jean-Pierre Bemba, 250.

Apuuli, The implications of the arrest of Jean-Pierre Bemba, 250.


Ibid.


K P A puuli, Th e implications o f t he a rrest o f Jean-Pierre Bemba, 250.

Global Witness, Faced with a gun, what can you do?, 43.

A process through which previously hostile groups are re-integrated into a national army.


Ibid, 27.


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Apuuli, The politics of conflict resolution in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 76.

Apuuli, The implications of the arrest of Jean-Pierre Bemba, 251.

Global Witness, Same old story, 13, 18.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, G res 2200A (XXI), 21 UN GAOR Supp (No 16) at 52, UN D oc A/6316 (1966); 99 UNT S 171; 6 ILM 368 (1967), ado pted on 16 December 1966 and entered into force on 23 M arch 1976, h ttp://www.umn.edu/humanrts/insfree/b3ccpr.htm (accessed 20 J uly 2010). S ee especially article 6(1): E very human being has a right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life; Article 7: N o one shall be subjected to torture, or t o cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment ...
entered in to f orce o n 21 O ctober 1986, h ttp://www.hrcr.org/docs/Banjul/afhr.html, (accessed 19 July 2010). See especially article 4: Human beings are inviolable. Every human being shall be entitled to respect for his life and the integrity of his person. No one may be arbitrarily deprived of this life; article 5: Every individual shall have the right to the respect of the dignity inherent in a human being and to the recognition of his legal status. All forms of exp loitation a nd deg radation o f t he m an, p articularly s lavery, s lave t radition, t orture, cr uel, inhuman or degrading p unishment a nd t r eatment, s hall be p rohibited; a rticle 21 (1): A ll p eople s hall be f ree to dispose of their wealth and natural resources ... 


Ibid, paragraph 219.

Ibid, paragraph 221.

Apuuli, The implications of the arrest of Jean-Pierre Bemba, 258.

The member states are Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, the DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Sudan, Uganda and Zambia.


African Union, 23rd meeting of the Peace and Security Council, Libreville, 10 January 2005 (PSC/AH/Comm. [XXIII]).

Priority 7 s tates: ‘Generating minimum standards for application in t he exploitation a nd management of Africa’s resources (including non-renewable resources) in areas affected by conflict.’


ICG, Congo: a comprehensive strategy to disarm the FDLR, 10.

Prunier, From genocide to continental war, 246.

Ibid, 298.

ICG, Congo: a comprehensive strategy to disarm the FDLR, 25.

UNSC, Resolution 1856 (S/RES/1856 [2008]), 22 D ecember 2008. The resolution mandates MONUC to use its monitoring and inspection capacities to curtail the provision of support to illegal armed groups that derive income from illicit trade in natural resources. However, the resolution does not cover FARDC.

See, generally, Global Witness, Faced with a gun, what can you do?


ICG, Congo: a comprehensive strategy to disarm the FDLR, 10.

UN Group of Experts on the DRC, Interim report.

Ibid, 6.

Ibid.


Global Witness, Same old story, 28.

Ibid.


Ward, Rebels and militias in resource conflict.

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Ward, Rebels and militias in resource conflict.

Reyntjens, The privatisation and criminalisation of public space, 597.
Militias, pirates and oil in the Niger Delta

Ibaba Samuel Ibaba and Augustine Ikelegbe

INTRODUCTION

Although the Niger Delta produces the bulk of Nigeria’s oil and gas wealth, it remains one of the least-developed parts of the country. This paradox has triggered a conflict that has lingered on for five decades. This conflict has recently been manifested through huge militarisation of the region, militia in surgency, hostilities between youth militias and the Nigerian military, militia attacks on the oil industry and consequent huge disruptions, the theft of oil by syndicates, and militias and intra- and inter-ethnic, community and militia conflicts. Since the late 1990s, militia groups such as the Niger Delta People’s Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), and Niger Delta People’s Salvation Front (NDPSF) have been conducting hostilities against the military and transnational oil companies.

Fundamentally, grievances against development neglect, alienation from the nation’s oil wealth, and oil-based environmental degradation are at the root of this militancy, but greed and the resultant commercialisation of violence have led to what Ik elegbe calls ‘deviant insurgency’. Specifically, the emergence of diverse militia activities (underpinned by opportunism and crime which disconnect such activities from the insurgency) has resulted in the branding of militias as criminals. More confusing are interconnections among militias,
pirates, cults, oil theft syndicates, syndicates that kidnap for ransom, armed gangs, thugs and bouncers. The interconnections denote a confused agenda and activities that tend towards self-destruction. In addition, there is an increasing presence of militias in politics and they are emerging as pseudo-governments in rural communities.

These matters, among others, raise pertinent questions:

- What is the nature and essence of militia groups in the Niger Delta?
- Can militias be separated from pirates?
- What are the critical factors and conditions that sustain militia groups?
- What are the roles of state and non-state actors in the emergence of militia groups?
- What is the impact of militia activities on the national economy and security?
- How have the state and transnational oil companies responded to the conflict?

In this chapter, we attempt to answer these questions and give a systematic analysis of the phenomenon of militias and pirates in the Niger Delta.

The chapter begins with an introduction that raises questions to be addressed. It then reviews the literature on resources and conflict, particularly how the ‘greed and grievance’ thesis applies to the Niger Delta; maps the violence and crises in the region and the activities and engagements of the militias with the Nigerian state and the transnational oil companies, and examines the factors and developments that underline the emergence of militia activities. It examines the diverse actors that are engaged in the conflict other than the militias, how they interact with the Nigerian state, and the international community. It also examines the responses of the Nigerian state, the transnational oil companies, regional organisations and the international community to the conflict. The chapter includes with the examination of current efforts aimed at resolving the conflict and raises issues needing further consideration.

Resources and conflict: the dilemma between greed and grievance

The current literature locates the causes of violence in the Niger Delta in the ‘greed and grievance’ perspectives of Collier and Hoeffler. Although grievances resulting from the socio-economic and political marginalisation of the minorities in the Niger Delta are seen to be the fundamental causes of the conflict,1 looting of oil wealth for selfish purposes is now seen to be driving and sustaining the conflict.2 However, according to Ukiwo, greed is held out as the main cause only because it exonerates the Nigerian state from culpability in neglect, underdevelopment and marginalisation of the region.3

Greed, corruption and grievance appear to be interconnected, and Billon has highlighted three points of contact.4 First, corruption can increase grievance. Second, corruption in governance in duces greed that motivates marginalised political and military groups to act for change. Thus marginalised groups could seek political power for personal aggrandisement. Third, political institutions such as conflict resolution mechanisms are usually undermined by political corruption. Thus, though Collier and Hoeffler’s ‘greed’ thesis may not aptly capture the Niger Delta condition, neglecting it could rob us of a clearer understanding of the conflicts in the region.

In the context of the ‘grievance versus greed’ thesis, two broad categories of actors are involved in the conflict – those driven or motivated by grievance and those motivated by greed. But if we agree that corruption is a product of greed, and that it induces marginalisation and inequality, we may conclude that greed also can be a source of grievance.

It is true that oil wealth has been transferred out of the Niger Delta for the benefit of the ethnic majorities that control the Nigerian state. But how much of this wealth has benefited the ordinary citizens of the majority ethnic groups? Is the scenario different in the Niger Delta where the leadership lives in affluence while the vast majority of the citizens live in abject and deepening poverty? It is evident therefore that the Nigerian state, the transnational oil companies, regional organisations and the international community are involved in the conflict – and that greed also is a source of grievance.

In the Niger Delta, the political leaders who champion the ‘grievance’ thesis have also frequently embezzled development funds through misuse of public offices. Following the implementation of the 13 per cent derivation funds in 2000, huge revenues have flowed into the Niger Delta. In comparison, the region has received far more revenue than the other geopolitical zones, but this has had little impact on the citizenry. For example, the six Niger Delta states were allocated about $221
MILITIAS, REBELS AND ISLAMIST MILITANTS: HUMAN INSECURITY AND STATE CRISIS IN AFRICA

Iaba Samuel Iaba and Augustine Ikelegbe

Resource rents, and the peaceful settlement of grievances … Viable social contract can be sufficient to restrain, if not eliminate, opportunist behaviour such as large-scale theft of resource rents, and the violent expression of grievance.11

Murshed and Tadjoeddin further mention in equitable distribution of resources, unstable polity and declining economic growth as capable of weakening the social contract.13 Clearly, this perspective provides a useful explanation for the conflicts in the Niger Delta. The issues of the national question and dissatisfaction with the country’s administrative and political structure and misgovernance are other factors that are clearly indicated.14 The nature and character of the state and corporate resource governance have been so inequitable and unfair that violent appropriation of resources has become the norm. Corruption and misgovernance have eroded confidence in the state and transnational oil companies. Electoral fraud has diminished the essence of the social contract and the general population has lost faith in governmental institutions at the three tiers of governance (federal, state and local). Frustration with the failure of governance explains to a large extent the diverse forms and dimensions of violent conflicts that plague the region. But apart from the issues of resource management and governance, there has been a breakdown of society’s social fabric. Social disorganisation has led to the collapse of societal control and traditional norms, and has resulted in deviant behaviour and crime.15

Violence and crisis in the Niger Delta

The conflict has taken several turns and dimensions that have to be presented for a clearer appreciation of the violence.

Mapping the Niger Delta conflict: from agitation to resistance

The neglect, marginalisation and underdevelopment that generated activism and fomented unrest in the Niger Delta began during the colonial administration.16 Indeed, the recent events defined by oil politics constitute merely the tipping point in a conflict dating back to the colonial era. Thus, conflicts in the Delta can be categorised as pre- and post-oil conflicts, with different strands of engagement characterising the post-oil conflicts.

The conflict can be mapped by means of the six phases in table 8–1.
Table 8–1: Trend of conflicts in the Niger Delta

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Agitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1950–1965</td>
<td>■ Civil agitation for special developmental attention because of unique ecological difficulties and for separate regions because of marginalisation by ethnic majority groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>23 February to 6 March 1966</td>
<td>■ Militant insurgent engagement by Adaka Boro and the Niger Delta Volunteer Service (NDVS) ■ Separation or autonomy as the goal of engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1970–1982</td>
<td>■ Agitations by host communities against transnational oil companies ■ Demands for basic social infrastructure and amenities, and payment of compensation for damages to land and property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1983–1990</td>
<td>■ Conflict between host communities and transnational oil companies over payment of adequate compensation for damages to land, water and property, and for development projects ■ Litigation and peaceful obstructions and protests as the instruments of engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1990–1996</td>
<td>■ Emergence of civil, community, ethnic and regional groups in response to state and transnational oil companies’ insensitivity and repression ■ Peaceful demonstrations by host communities and occupation of oil production facilities, demanding adequate compensation for damages and development attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1997–2009</td>
<td>■ Militant and militia actions against transnational oil companies ■ Demand for resource ownership and control by civil, political and militia groups ■ Violent confrontations and low-intensity war between militia groups and the military</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A number of issues are inextricably linked to the conflict:

■ Deprivation, neglect, underdevelopment and associated alienation have been at the base of the agitations and conflict since the 1950s

■ The insensitivity of the government and the failure of governmental institutions to address the issues effectively meant that the issues that caused the conflict remained unresolved

■ There was a loss of faith in the government and its institutions as well as in the oil companies. This resulted in the mobilisation of the people, particularly the youth and civil society, against the state and oil companies

■ State repression and excessive use of force turned peaceful civil disturbances into violent engagements, a s y outh a nd militia ac tivists ado pted a rmed confrontation both as a defence mechanism and as an effective instrument in the pursuit of their goals

Militias, pirates and cults in the Niger Delta

The insurgency in the Delta involves a welter of different groups – civil society organisations, mi litias a nd cults. M embships a nd roles o verlap because individuals and groups who identify themselves as, for example, militias may also be members of cult groups and be engaged in piracy. Radical ethnic, pan-ethnic and youth-based civil society organisations have been so militant that they have been erroneously listed as militias.

Civil society groups in the Niger Delta include the Ijaw National Congress, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, the Egbe maka National Congress and the Isoko Community Oil Producing Forum. Cult groups include the Greenlanders, Deegbam, Bushe Boys, Black Braziers, Icelanders, Vikings, Vultures, Germans and Mafia Lords. Militia groups include the NDPVF, MEND, NDPSF, the Niger Delta Militant Force Squad (NDMFS), and the Egbesu Boys of Africa. Whereas the civil society and militia groups are pan-ethnic and are therefore found in all states of the Niger Delta, the cult groups are based in particular localities. For example, the Deegbam is based in Port Harcourt in Rivers State. It is noteworthy, however, that because s ome o f t hem (s uch a s t he Vikings a nd Black Braziers) o riginated a s campus cults, they are found at nearly all tertiary institutions in the country.

The first manifestation of the militia phenomenon in the Niger Delta was between February and March 1966, when Adaka Boro’s Niger Delta Volunteer Service (NDVS), comprising members of the Ijaw youth organisations, voluntarily adopted a militant posture. The government, however, was unsuccessful in containing the conflict arising from political and resource marginalisation. The
The militias use essentially speedboats and guerrilla tactics when attacking oil and military in stalls. Although they have operated in the oil cities of Port Harcourt and Warri as well as other towns, their main targets are along the creeks, swamps, estuaries and waterways of the Delta. Their main strategy has been to disrupt oil production and compel government to negotiate with them on their demands. They have ac hieved this through issuing press releases, delivering threats to oil companies, attacking personnel and facilities of oil companies, disrupting oil production, kidnap oil workers or taking them hostage, and carrying out armed attacks and kidnapping oil workers or r t aking t hem h ostage, a nd c arrying o ut a rmed a ttacks a nd counterattacks against s ecurity f orces gu arding oil i n stallations a nd p atrolling waterways. Th e o bjectives o f t he mi litias i n clude en ding i njustice a nd ne glect, achieving ethnic emancipation and survival, true federalism, obtaining a greater share of the oil revenue, redressing marginalisation and underdevelopment caused by the Nigerian state and oil companies, acquiring ownership in the oil industry, promoting employment and economic empowerment, acquiring existing oil installations, increasing their political representation.

The militias can be categorised on the basis of objectives or ethnic composition. There are private militias (NDPVF, Adaka Marines, Martyrs’ Brigade, Niger Delta Vigilante, NDMFS and Niger Delta Coastal Guerrillas), ethnic militias (the Meinbutus, A rugbo F reedom F ighters, I duwini V olunteer F orce and Egbesu Boys) and pan-ethnic militias (MEND, COMA and the NDPSF).

Pirates are armed bands and gangs that attack boats and passengers along the coast and waterways. They often block and obstruct traffic on river routes, attack and seize boats, hold passengers hostage (demanding huge sums as ransom) and steal passengers’ possessions. Attacks on some of the waterway routes in Bayelsa and Delta states have been so frequent and violent that the state governments have created security outfits to contain the menace. In Bayelsa State, the government created the Bayelsa Volunteers consisting of about 5,000 youths, while the Delta State government created the Waterways Security Committee. The Joint Military Task Force has been patrolling and policing the waterways since the late 1990s to curtail, among others, the threat posed by pirates.

These pirates are opportunistic e lements t hat m asquerade a s mi litias. W ith sm all a rms a nd opportunistic e lements t hat m asquerade a s mi litias, W ith sm all a rms a nd opportunistic e lements t hat m asquerade a s mi litias. W ith sm all a rms a nd opportunistic e lements t hat m asquerade a s mi litias. W ith sm all a rms a nd opportunist e lements t hat m asquerade a s mi litias. W ith sm all a rms a nd opportunist e lements t hat m asquerade a s mi litias. W ith sm all a rms a nd opportunist e lements t hat m asquerade a s mi litias. W ith sm all a rms a nd opportunist e lements t hat m asquerade a s mi litias. W ith sm all a rms a nd opportunist e lements t hat m asquerade a s mi litias. W ith sm all a rms a nd opportunist e lements t hat m asquerade a s mi litias. W ith sm all a rms a nd opportunist e lements t hat m asquerade a s mi litias. W ith sm all a rms a nd opportunist e lements t hat m asquerade a s mi litias. 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Ikelegbe succinctly describes the interconnection between militias and armed pirates:

There is a strong linkage between the militias, armed gangs and cultists, the pirates and the bunkerers. The boundaries between them may be fluid as one group could easily merge into the other. They are agents of larger bunkerers, guarding oil theft operations and guides to the boats, barges and ships of bunkers. They may be part of larger militias and armed bands that may be involved in popular violence.

Ukiwo states that to separate pirates from militias would be like separating Siamese twins rather than separating sheep from goats. The fact is that pirates have become militias, just as militias engage in piracy to mobilise resources to sustain insurgency or for personal enrichment. Piracy has thrived because of the loose control, lack of discipline and loss of focus among the militia groups.

Cults started out as violent secret campus fraternities that moved beyond the campuses in terms of membership, organisation and operations. Once outside the campuses, the fraternities became more extensive, armed, criminalised and brutal. More importantly, in Rivers and Bayelsa states they became extensions of, or were affiliated with or worked in collaboration with and under the control and direction of, the militia groups, from which they also received arms and funding. The cult groups, particularly, formed alliances with the NDPVF and NDV in their intensive internecine wars over territorial and resource control in Rivers State between 2004 and 2007.

Militias and military engagements

The region has been militarised since the early 1990s following the Ogoni protests and increased agitation and protests. Extensive militia dep loyments and operations have become militias, just as militias engage in piracy to mobilise resources to sustain insurgency or for personal enrichment. Piracy has thrived because of the loose control, lack of discipline and loss of focus among the militia groups.

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Militia activities and attacks have been quite intense since 2006. Between 2003 and 2005, there were several incidents, including eight attacks on the security forces/police in which 36 people were killed and two injured; five attacks on oil companies that led to the killing of eight people (five expatriates), while 18 expatriates were taken hostage. There were further 39 militia attacks between January and August 2006, in which 36 people were killed (including 21 soldiers and six naval personnel). Perhaps more significant was the bomb attack on Bori Camp, the headquarters of the amphibious brigade of the Nigerian army in Port Harcourt in Rivers State on 19 April 2006 and the 29 April 2006 attack on
The genesis of militias and pirates

The emergence of militias in the Niger Delta can be traced to historical and contemporary forces at five levels.34

The militarisation of politics

State power, institutions, resources and public office in Nigeria often have been privatised and manipulated for personal gain.35 Because of the state’s centrality to the politics of distribution, accumulation, welfare and development, it is an object of intense hegemonic struggle. This has spawned in tense, lawless and amoral struggles for power, leading to corruption, violence and conflicts. The nature of the state and state politics underlies and undermines electoral processes and has turned elections into fraudulent, violent and flawed exercises. The intense struggles for state power explain why extensive electoral irregularities and electoral violence have been perpetrated by armed thugs and bands, a point highlighted by Human Rights Watch:36

The transition to democracy in 1999 exacerbated youth militancy as unscrupulous politicians used hired ‘thugs’ to carry out violence to ensure their victory at the polls. Prior to the 1999 and 2003 federal state and local elections, all parties, but most effectively the ruling People’s Democratic Party (PDP), recruited and armed members of youth groups to intimidate opposing politicians and their supporters.

In the Niger Delta, elections have been violent and flawed because of the high stakes. Political parties and leaders have used youth groups to engage in electoral violence, buying them arms and paying them to use violence to intimidate opponents. This happened in Rivers State where the NDV and NDPVF were used in electoral violence.7 Cults, confraternities and armed bands have also been used in struggles and contestations for political power in the Niger Delta.

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Militia criminality has been manifested in participation in piracy, kidnapping, extortion, political in timidation, thuggery, electoral violence, and extortion. Mikhailovskaya’s analysis of the complex web in which militia activities and even conflicts are enmeshed and how these webs endanger national security. At the core of this complex web are conflict beneficiaries who profit from the conflicts and therefore have interests in conflict perpetuation for greater or sustained profits. However, we should note that militia engagements in oil theft are sometimes not simply for profit but to sustain and finance militia operations.33

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Patrons of the youth groups fail to meet the needs and aspirations of the youths because of their unrealistic demands. This results in the withdrawal of support/allegiance from the part of the groups and abandonment by the ‘principal’

Losing politicians also abandon the youth groups almost immediately after the elections because they cannot maintain these groups

However, the arms bought for youth groups by their patrons are not retrieved, and arms for mobilisation and operations are therefore easily obtained. This explains why incidences of militancy and militia operations and even violent crimes tended to increase significantly after the 1999, 2003 and 2007 elections.

**Inter-ethnic struggles and antagonisms**

One of the most significant outcomes of several decades of colonisation in Nigeria is ethnic consciousness and identity politics. Perceived domination and exclusion among the different ethnic groups in the country have engendered suspicion, and even palpable hatred, that have sowed the seeds of ethnic antagonism and violence. Inter-ethnic and inter-community conflicts have been quite pervasive in Nigeria. The defining aspect of these conflicts is the use of ethnic militias to carry out such conflicts.

In the Niger Delta, there have been several inter-ethnic conflicts, for example between the Ijaw and Itsekiri in Delta State; the Ogoni-Okrika and Ogoni against the Andoni in Rivers State; and between the Ijale and Arogbo Ijaw in Ondo State. The violence between the Itsekiri and Ijaw appears to be the most prominent and between Odimodi/Ogulagha and Isama/Gbarigolo (Delta State). Recent examples of inter-community conflicts include those between Alesa/Eleme and Okrika (Rivers State) and between Odimodi/Ogulagha and Isama/Gbarigolo (Delta State).

A number of factors have triggered these conflicts. The first is the divide-and-rule tactics that oil companies use to factionalise communities and turn one community against another through partisan and partial patronage. The second is land disputes arising from the high value placed on land precisely because of the oil it might contain. The third concerns the collapse of local governance systems and the erosion of the roles of elders in the moderation of social and communal life. The fourth is the generalised lawlessness arising from the collapse of local governance systems and the erosion of the roles of elders in the moderation of social and communal life. These have facilitated the tendencies towards the militarisation of inter- and intra-community feuds and the ready use of armed confrontations and violent conflicts to settle disputes.

**Inter- and intra-community struggles over oil resources**

Inter- and intra-community conflicts in the Niger Delta over oil resources have provided a fertile ground for militia activities and piracy. It is not that there were no conflicts between communities prior to the regional conflict, but the number and intensity of conflicts have increased due to the militarisation, arms proliferation and the preponderance of armed groups or bands. Recent examples of intra-community conflicts include those between Emadik/Epebu and Ogolomabiri/Bassambiri (Bayelsa State), between Bille/Ice and E kunuga/Okolomade, between Alesa/Eleme and Okrika (Rivers State) and between Odimodi/Ogulagha and Isama/Gbarigolo (Delta State).

As a result, factions and communities now generally use violent confrontations to deal with disagreements. The mobilisation, recruitment, training and arming of youths were common factors in all these conflicts. In Rivers State, cult groups were...
Militias, Pirates and Oil in the Niger Delta

Ibaba Samuel Ibaba and Augustine Ikelegbe

Map 8–1: Niger Delta region

Source: Yiruo Zhao (http://www.circleofblue.org/waternews/2009/world/war-on-water/).

recruited because of their fire-power and paid handsomely for their services in the conflicts.44 Ikporukpo captures part of these effects:

The militarisation of people, particularly the youths, has a number of implications. Many of these ‘warriors’ believe that there are economic gains in the plunder of another community. Such gains mean a lot to many unemployed individuals who may regard them as much more beneficial than employment. The result is that there may develop a group of individuals reluctant to work even if offered employment opportunities. Such individuals, often than not, become societal rejects. The boy soldier who is introduced to violence at an early age may become unemployable and in most cases not willing to be educated.45

Oil politics and the criminalisation of insurgency

Fundamentally, in surgency in the Niger Delta can be blamed on decades of neglect, militarism and injustice.46 Furthermore, oil politics is one of the underlying causes. Aaron, Ibeanu, Okoko et al, Ikien, Ikporukpo, Opuiri and Ibaba, Naanen and Nna47 have all noted that inequitable oil wealth distribution and allocation are the most critical factors in the crisis. Besides majority ethnic group domination, the centralised nature of federalism and revenue allocation, the abuse of human rights, oil-based environmental degradation and failure of corporate social responsibility on the part of oil companies lie at the root of the oil politics. The fact is that the rapacious tendencies of government and oil companies have given birth to ethnic nationalism in the Niger Delta.48

Although income from oil and gas account for about 90 per cent of export earnings, 40 per cent of the gross national product, and 84 per cent of government revenues,49 the Niger Delta that accounts for over 90 per cent of oil and gas production in the country suffers from neglect, underdevelopment and poverty.50 The dominant view is that the drastic reduction in the derivation share of revenue allocation, particularly between 1980 and 2000, may be attributed to the shift in revenue distribution and generation from the majority groups that control the state to the minority groups that lack power.51 The federal government under the hegemony of the northern region seized control of oil and gas revenues and diverted the dominant bases of revenue allocation from derivation to population, land mass and equality of states. This disadvantaged the Niger Delta and reduced the benefits from oil and gas to this area to a trickle.

The Niger Delta people attribute the situation to the politics of marginalisation of minority groups and Nigeria’s perverted federalism. The main source of friction is thus the reduction in the derivation share of revenue allocation, which is set out in table 8–2.
Table 8–2: Changes in the derivation component of revenue allocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Share of derivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960–1970</td>
<td>50 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970–1975</td>
<td>45 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975–1980</td>
<td>20 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980–1983</td>
<td>2 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984–1992</td>
<td>1.5 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992–2000</td>
<td>3 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 to date</td>
<td>13 per cent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This awareness has radicalised political actions and agitations for greater access to the oil wealth, and has resulted in the formation and proliferation of civil society groups and militant youth movements. Th e en suing mi litant y o uth mo vements. Th e ex suing m i litan cy a nd in surgency were criminalised by the commercialisation of violence. A n u mber of incen tives le d t o t h is. F ir st, t h e o il co mpan ies m ade i t co rporate p ractice t o a w ard surveillance contracts to youth groups to protect their facilities. The huge sums paid f o r s uch s ecurity co ntracts n ot o nly en sured g reater acces s t o a rms a nd firepower, but also led to the formation of splinter groups and violent competition among youth groups. Another factor is that chiefs, elites and politicians used youth groups to further their a gendas o f acc u mulation o f w ealth. Th is i s lin ked to t he r egion’s p redicament a nd t he radic alisation o f unrest infected the youth, w ho b egan t o s ee i t a s t heir r ole to ch anomi them the struggle. A n o t her hand, state governments in the region pay huge sums of money to steer militants away from violence. For example, the leader of the NDPVF has noted that at one time t he R ivers S t ate g overnment w as p aying mi litants 100 mi llion naira p er m onth to refrain from violence. These payoffs were intended to ensure that oil production continued and to secure the revenue allocations based on derivation.

A dominant engagement strategy of youths in the Niger Delta from 1997 was to convene summits and conferences to draw attention to the plight of the region and – m ore im portantly – t o d eclar e t heir s tand o n t hese i ssues. P erhaps t he m ost famous of such meetings was the All Ijaw Youths Summit in Kaiama, Bayelsa State, in December 1998. The Kaiama Declaration included the following:

- The Ijaws own all land and natural resources including mineral resources in their land
- All legislation (L and U se A ct, P etroleum D ecree et c) t hat dep rives a nd alienates the people from their natural resources stand abrogated
- All s ecurity f orces o f o ppression o f I jaw l and s hould be w ithdrawn immediately
All oil companies exploiting oil in Ijawland should cease exploitation and withdraw immediately until the issues being contested have been resolved.

The activities began as peaceful protests, but soon transformed into militant and violent confrontations. Significantly, it was the violent and repressive nature of the federal government’s response to the demands and peaceful youth protests that forced the youth to fight back in organised armed groups. They drew inspiration from the Adaka Boro revolt, which lasted for 12 days, in 1967. As noted earlier, Adaka Boro, an Ijaw from Kaiama in Bayelsa State, formed the NDVS and declared the Niger Delta Republic. The youth movements identified with the popular and heroic movement of Adaka Boro in their quest for freedom. Whereas Nigeria’s government considered him to be a criminal, he is revered and celebrated as a hero in Ijawland.

**Actors in the conflict**

Individuals, groups, security operatives and oil companies are central actors in the conflict. The actors differ in their roles in the conflict, their perceptions and goals, and the nature of their engagement. The conflicts in the region can be categorised

**Table 8–3: Actors in Niger Delta conflicts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of conflict</th>
<th>Source of conflict</th>
<th>Actors in conflict</th>
<th>Instruments/mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intra-community conflict</td>
<td>Struggles between groups, local governance organs/sub-structures and local elite for access to and distribution of oil-based resources</td>
<td>Community factions: Urban elites versus local elites Urban elites: Hijacking of community resources, disregard for local elites Local elites: Inciting youths and chiefs against the urban elites</td>
<td>Youths: Destruction of property owned by the elites, harassment of their relatives Elites: Fractionalisation of youth bodies through partisan support and patronage, attacks on rival groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community versus transnational oil companies</td>
<td>Community struggles for transnational oil company attention, community development projects, compensation for oil spills and memorandum of understanding with transnational oil companies</td>
<td>Youths, chiefs, elites, transnational oil companies security operatives and communities</td>
<td>Transnational oil companies: Fractionalisation of community leaders, refusal to pay compensation, breach of memorandum of understanding, payment of inadequate compensation Community: Attacks on oil installations, disruption of production, seizure of equipment, kidnapping of personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community versus state</td>
<td>Struggles against repression, inequitable share of benefits from oil</td>
<td>Community youths and security operatives</td>
<td>Community: Disruption of oil production, attack on security operatives State: Militarisation/military occupation, attacks, arrests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-community conflicts</td>
<td>Inter-community struggles for location and ownership of oil-based resources, access to oil resources and struggles for favoured distribution</td>
<td>Youths, chiefs and elites of the communities</td>
<td>Community: Attacks on rival community members and property</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Claims agents versus community**

- **Claims agents: Short-changing of community members**
- **Community: Refusal to pay agreed fees, rejection of double dealings**

**Youths versus community**

- **Youths: Overthrow of community leadership and usurpation of power**
- **Community: Inequitable distribution of resources that short-changes the youths**

**Youths versus chiefs**

- **Youths: Overthrow of community leadership and usurpation of power**
- **Community: Inequitable distribution of resources that short-changes the youths**
- **Youths: Dethronement of chiefs, attacks on chiefs**
- **Chiefs: Fractionalisation of youth bodies through partisan support and patronage, kidnapping, encroachment on land and fishing grounds, attack of community member(s)**
as in ter-ethnic, in tra-community, in ter-community, co mmunity-oil co mpany, community-state, in ter-militia/cult/confederation g roups a nd in tra-militia/cult/ confederation g roups, a nd mi litia/cult-oil co mpanies/Nigerian s tate. Th e ac tors h ave h ad d i verse o bjectives, p layed n umerous r oles a nd u tilised d i verse engagement methods.

It is clear that youths are key actors in the conflicts. Ikelegbe has noted that the current phase of agitation in the region has been taken over by the youths. However, it is significant that the youth movement is uncoordinated, and the associated disorderliness has cast doubt on the direction, content, and sincerity of the struggle.

Militias and interfaces with civil society, politics and governance

The analysis so far suggests that militia activities in the Niger Delta endanger the national economy, security, and development aspirations of the Niger Delta people. But the militia groups have continued to gain ground in numbers, camps, profile, and activities, and the Nigerian state has found the suppression or defeat of the militias difficult. This section of the chapter examines the dilemma faced by the federal and state governments in the Niger Delta. The first is the choice to act decisively in the common interest and end militia activities. The second option is to protect selfish and parochial interests, which in some instances are in tandem with the interests of the militant youth.

Militias in government

We n oted e arlier t hat t he u se b y p oliticians o f a rmed p olitical t hugs d uring elections partly laid the foundation for the formation of militia groups. It is also true that militia groups have provided support, or even sponsored candidates for elections. The involvement of militia groups in the electoral process has resulted in the leaders and members gaining political prominence. In Rivers State, for example, the ND PVF and the ND V were drawn in to the electoral process by opposing politicians. Their leadership and members were thus favoured by the government with regard to political appointments, contracts awards and monetary payments.

The role of the militia groups in politics, the electoral process and their relevance to politicians can be attributed to several factors. First, since 1999, elections in Nigeria and particularly in the Niger Delta have almost always been rigged. For this reason, politicians relied heavily on armed youths to ‘win’ elections through violent actions. Second, election rigging in the Niger Delta is particularly pervasive in the rural communities in the creeks and swamps that are under the control of the militia groups. The militant youth are particularly useful for campaigning in such difficult terrain and for rigging elections there. Third, governments in the Niger Delta use militia and cult group leaders to secure the release of hostages, a process that benefits both sides through the payment of huge sums of money as ransom in which some public officials also share. Fourth, state and local governments pay the militia groups to maintain the peace or cease disruptive violent activities.

Militias as pseudo-government

Universally, a g overnment p erforms t hree b asic f unctions, n amely t he maintenance of law and order, the facilitation of development and social progress and, somewhat more specifically, the promotion of social welfare and living conditions. However, the federal government in the Niger Delta has failed to effectively address the situation.

Sources:
groups and pirates taking over these functions in local communities. Some militia groups engage in the following governmental functions in host communities:

- Procurement of drugs for health centres or hospitals
- Payment of stipends to medical personnel to encourage them to be at their posts
- Payment of stipends to teachers to enhance their dedication
- Provision of power generators and/or supply of petrol/diesel to power generators
- Payment of examination and school fees for students in primary and secondary schools
- Scholarship awards to university undergraduates, including those at foreign universities (particularly in Ghana)
- Sponsorship of individuals to acquire vocational skills
- Provision of potable water
- Financial grants to traders, entrepreneurs and artisans

The militia groups perform these functions because governments at all levels are either unable or reluctant to fulfil these duties. Thus militant leaders have seen themselves as patrons, feel obliged to use part of their resources to support community development. This practice is common among militants based in the Ijaw communities of Bayelsa and Delta states and has resulted in some communities and local people identifying with the militia groups. These activities garner support for the militias, as they are seen by community members as not only benefactors but also an alternative to government.

Militias as members of civil society

Militias and civil society organisations (CSOs) in the Niger Delta have common origins and objectives, except that their methods of engagement differ. The paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty provided the context for the emergence of militias.

It is noteworthy that the youth movement that gave birth to ethnic and pan-ethnic youth associations emerged as part of a new social movement that started as a result of the agitation in the region, and that the youth groups were part of civil society. Some of these groups, such as the NDVF and the FNDIC, were militant and metamorphosed into militia groups. Furthermore, some segments of civil society have ended up sympathising with violent engagements because of government repression. In fact, several civil groups in the Niger Delta are pro-militia, either declaring their support for militia activities or actually taking part in their mobilisation. This may be one of the reasons why some CSOs such as the Ijaw Youth Council are sometimes listed as militia groups.

Impact of militia activities and the conflicts

Militia attacks have led to the seizure, occupation, destruction, vandalisation and disruption of numerous oil flows, pipelines and terminals, as well as equipment, helicopters and ships since 1998. The activities of the militias have caused considerable disruption to oil production, destruction of oil production facilities and in security to oil companies, equipment and staff. These activities have at various times led to a severe decline in oil production, with oil production along the eastern and western axis of the region being cut by 17 to 50 per cent. Oil theft, which is aided by and fuels the conflict, has caused heavy losses to the oil industry, particularly in terms of oil revenues. Between January and September 2008 alone, the country lost about US$20.7 billion to oil theft.

The local economy of the region has been devastated, too. Farming, fishing, trading, commerce, schooling and related activities have been abandoned in several communities due to hostilities and attacks. Pervasive insecurity and threats have exacerbated already precarious living conditions and livelihoods and raised living costs. Therefore, the conflict with the oil companies, particularly in terms of oil revenues. Between January and September 2008 alone, the country lost about US$20.7 billion to oil theft. The backlash is that it has strengthened the potential of undevelopment and poverty that contributed to the conflicts in the first place.

The conflicts have also disarticulated the people from the social values, order and law. The result is a situation where tradition,Virtual Power Generators and Diesel Generators: Understanding Their Roles and Applications in Electrical Power Systems. The local economy of the region has been devastated, too. Farming, fishing, trading, commerce, schooling and related activities have been abandoned in several communities due to hostilities and attacks. Pervasive insecurity and threats have exacerbated already precarious living conditions and livelihoods and raised living costs. Therefore, the conflict with the oil companies, particularly in terms of oil revenues. Between January and September 2008 alone, the country lost about US$20.7 billion to oil theft. The backlash is that it has strengthened the potential of undevelopment and poverty that contributed to the conflicts in the first place.

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Resource conflicts and the human security crisis in the Niger Delta

The protests, militia activities and military operations in the region have combined to enshrine a system of indiscriminate killings, raping, looting and destruction of property and homes. On the roads, along the waterways, in their communities a nd other public facilities, the people have been extensively harassed, flogged, beaten, detained and abused. Numerous settlements have been sacked or destroyed in the fighting between militias and the military and between the military and ethnic groups, communities and youth groups in the search for shelter in schools, hospitals and other public facilities. Local people, residents, bystanders and community members, particularly youths, the aged, women and children have been killed in the fighting. Another consequence of military operations and militia activities has been the destruction of anything that has been spared militia attacks and military operations. Homes have been burnt or destroyed, as have schools, churches, stores, businesses and social faci lities. Local people, residents, bystanders and community members, particularly youths, the aged, women and children have been killed in the fighting.

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Resource conflicts and regional and international interventions

In spite of the intensity of the conflict and regional and international ramifications for security and stability in the West African region, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has not significantly intervened. This is perhaps due to Nigeria's prominence in the regional organisation. However, there has been considerable in ternational in terest in the region due to the potential for future petroleum investments in the Niger Delta and the Gulf of Guinea. It is noteworthy that Nigeria accounts for over 60% of the oil in the Gulf of Guinea, and it is strategically important as a secure source of future petroleum needs of the United States. Furthermore, the effect of the insecurity and attacks in the Niger Delta on the volatility of oil supply and prices has raised international concerns and led to interventions to provide a secure and stable environment for sustained oil production and supplies. Second, countries whose citizens have been victims of kidnapping have tended to provide support to the Nigerian security agencies. Third, there have been attempts to support the Nigerian state or even intervene directly in its management of oil conflicts. The US has donated refurbished coast guard ships to the Nigerian navy. Fourth, there have been deployments and exercises in the Gulf of Guinea by the US Africa Command, which has become more active in the region as part of US government efforts to protect oil installations, offshore oil installations and shipments from the Gulf of Guinea.

Responses to the militias and conflicts by the Nigerian state and transnational oil companies

Response of the federal government

The central strategy of the Nigerian federal government has been to protect oil installations, pacify the region and create an enabling environment for continued oil production and supplies. Second, countries whose citizens have been victims of kidnapping have tended to provide support to the Nigerian security agencies. Third, there have been attempts to support the Nigerian state or even intervene directly in its management of oil conflicts. The US has donated refurbished coast guard ships to the Nigerian navy. Fourth, there have been deployments and exercises in the Gulf of Guinea by the US Africa Command, which has become more active in the region as part of US government efforts to protect oil installations, offshore oil installations and shipments from the Gulf of Guinea.

Apart from the military and repressive response, the government has tried to build peace through development engineering. Notable efforts include the establishment of the 1,5% Oil Derivation Fund for the Oil Producing States since the early 1990s. However, state repression turned the peaceful protests into violent confrontations as youth activists adopted armed confrontation as the mechanism for the pursuit of their goals. Apart from the military and repressive response, the government has tried to build peace through development engineering. Notable efforts include the establishment of the 1,5% Oil Derivation Fund for the Oil Producing States since the early 1990s. However, state repression turned the peaceful protests into violent confrontations as youth activists adopted armed confrontation as the mechanism for the pursuit of their goals.
centralisation, corruption, patron-client/predendant politics, and the lack of political will. While these intervention efforts raised expectations, their failure and the continued absence of economic development in the region have undermined community participation and input in the community development process. For example, the Shell Petroleum Development Company spent US$32 million on community development in 1997, US$42.6 million in 1998, US$60.23 million in 2000, and US$68 million in 2007. However, because of the absence of community participation and input in the community development process, these interventions have largely failed to achieve the desired goals of providing infrastructure and social services. Because company interventions were often compelled by violent community protests, there have emerged cascades of conflicts that have led to a vicious circle of violence as more conflicts meant more development attention.

Significantly, oil companies have been buying peace with phoney contracts and payments to community members in order to ensure uninterrupted oil production. But this has caused extensive division and conflict in the communities as diverse community groups struggled for community leadership to position themselves for patronage from oil companies. These struggles triggered intra-community conflicts that have escalated the violence in the region. Such conflicts have occurred in Ekenwi (Delta State) and Nembe, Ogbolomabiri, and Peremabiri (Bayelsa State).

Oil companies have been instrumental in the repression of protest activities in the region. They often use security operatives to break up demonstrations by communities or protect themselves against angry communities. The brute force employed by these operatives has sometimes resulted in deaths and destruction of property, as occurred in, for example, the Umuechem case. This has incensed the people who perceive the oil companies to be allies of the federal government. To make matters worse, oil companies do not only guard their premises and area of operations with heavily armed soldiers and policemen, but also armed and motivated them and thereby made them overzealous in harassing the local people. Armed youths have also been hired to protect oil installations, which aggravated inter- and intra-youth group squabbles and arms proliferation. However, in spite of operating under security shields, their facilities have been perennial objects of militia attacks.

CONCLUSION: ENDING THE VIOLENCE

The current discourse and opinion on the Niger Delta agree that military might is unlikely to provide a solution to the Niger Delta crisis. As Michael Watts emphatically states:

In the Niger Delta … militarisation cannot guarantee stability … Naked force, even with the best of American technical advisers and electronic gadgets, is doomed to failure and risks sliding more deeply into a low grade civil war – with the prospects of massive escalation of violence and attacks on oil installations.

Clearly, violent suppression of protests has led to vicious cycles of violence, and conflicts meant more development attention. Oil companies have been buying peace with phoney contracts and payments to community members in order to ensure uninterrupted oil production. But this has caused extensive division in the communities as diverse community groups struggled for community leadership to position themselves for patronage from oil companies. These struggles triggered intra-community conflicts that have escalated the violence in the region. Such conflicts have occurred in Ekenwi (Delta State) and Nembe, Ogbolomabiri, and Peremabiri (Bayelsa State).

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One neglected account of the failure to engineer development in the Niger Delta is the absence of democratic input. The report predicated the success of its recommendations on the establishment of democratic institutions, which suggests that the many years of authoritarian rule in Nigeria may have aggravated the crisis in the region.

The adoption of democratic principles such as the rule of law, fundamental human rights, rule by consent and public interest-based political participation will enhance accountability and transparency, which hich are fundamental to peace building in the Niger Delta. Lack of participation in due course is not chosen by the people, and that no social contract or compact have been established between the people and those who govern. The implication is that the needs and aspirations of citizens are not at the forefront of the government’s agenda and activities. The result is frustrated expectations that have led to violence. Ike Okonta sums up the role of democratic methods and democratically based negotiations are yet to be adopted as a mechanism for resolving the conflict. The processes of role consultation, dialogue, negotiation and agreements have been very poor. It should be noted that conflict resolution mechanisms, among others, are more effective in a democratic environment than violent confrontation. Thus, the democratisation of the conflict management process would be critical for securing peace in the Niger Delta.

Furthermore, it should be noted that democratic methods and democratically based negotiations are yet to be adopted as a mechanism for resolving the conflict. The processes of role consultation, participation, dialogue, negotiation and agreements have been very poor. It should be noted that conflict resolution mechanisms, among others, are more effective in a democratic environment than violent confrontation. Thus, the democratisation of the conflict management process would be critical for securing peace in the Niger Delta.

In Nigeria, elections—hich are one of the most critical aspects of democratic development and political problems. Tackling these challenges is further predicated on the willingness of the political leadership to commit ‘symbolic suicide,’ for democracy will be achieved only when the political leadership abandons its pursuit of parochial interests.

Finally, there is a need to rehabilitate a nd to integrate militant youths through projects such as the ‘arms surrender for cash payment’ in Rivers State in 2004–2005 and amnesty for militias that repudiate violence and surrender arms by the federal government in 2009–2010, has had some weaknesses. To have maximal conflict resolution effects, these projects should be carried out within a framework of peace agreements based on inclusive dialogue and in a comprehensive, planned, funded and effective programme that provides sufficient incentives for voluntary mass demobilisation, pro ductive economic engagement and sustained poverty, just as self-interested participation promotes corruption, which, in turn, deepens the inequalities that trigger conflicts. We contend, therefore, that the deepening of the democratic content of governance is the best option for securing peace in the Niger Delta.

Besides, something concrete has to be done to provide temporary economic support to militia members and leaders who have been receiving huge amounts from oil theft. Kidnapping and extortion from oil companies provide payments from oil theft, kidnapping and extortion from oil companies, payments from oil theft syndicates. Apart from efforts aimed at a militia amnesty, development and political reform goals would be futile without a fundamental and comprehensive resolution of the region’s development and political problems. Tackling these challenges is further predicated on the willingness of the political leadership to commit ‘symbolic suicide,’ for democracy will be achieved only when the political leadership abandons its pursuit of parochial interests.

NOTES


6 Ukiwo, Horizontal inequalities and insurgency in the Niger Delta.


8 Collier and Hoeffler, On economic causes of civil war; Collier and Hoeffler, *On the incidence of MILITIAS, PIRATES AND OIL IN THE NIGER DELTA*


11 Murshed and Tadjoeeddin, *Revisiting the greed and grievance explanations*, 104.


16 Ongwu, Local resistance and the state, 5–8.

17 Watts, Petro-insurgency or criminal syndicate?, 656.


20 Ukiwo, Horizontal inequalities and insurgency in the Niger Delta.

21 Ib u, Okonta, Behind the mask.

22 Ikelegbe, Beyond the threshold of civil struggle.

23 Ibid, 47.

24 Ukiwo, Horizontal inequalities and insurgency in the Niger Delta, 1175.

25 Ukiwo, Horizontal inequalities and insurgency in the Niger Delta, 1175.


27 Ibid, 18–19.


29 Watts, Petro-insurgency or criminal syndicate?, 653.

30 Ibid.

31 Agbu, *Ethnic militias and the threat to democracy*, 29.


34 Agbu, *Ethnic m ilitias a nd t he t hreat t o d emocracy*, 1175.


37 Agbu, *Ethnic m ilitias a nd t he t hreat t o d emocracy*, 1175.


40 Ukiwo, From 'pirates' to 'militants'.

41 C O O pukria nd I S iaba, *I nter-ethnic co nflicts in N igeria a nd t he n ational q uestion*, 21.


48 Ongwu, Local resistance and the state, 5–8.

49 Watts, Petro-insurgency or criminal syndicate?, 656.


52 Ukiwo, Horizontal inequalities and insurgency in the Niger Delta.
INTRODUCTION

Understanding the nature of rebellions and civil wars in Sudan requires a close look at the issues that contribute to suspicion, lack of confidence and mutual distrust in its heterogeneous society. The primary actors in the armed violence are the government, rebels and militia groups. Their commitment to the use of violence in addressing problems could be examined from the perspective of the economic and social structures of the country, ideologies, the quest for power at different levels, and the struggle for control of resources. It is difficult to disassociate the phenomenon of armed violence from the role of other factors influencing domestic conflicts. Human security is threatened by responses of governments, rebels and other militias that are directly involved in the different violent conflicts in Sudan.

The purpose of this chapter is to identify militia and rebel groups and review their roles and those of other actors in the Sudanese conflict situation. The chapter also examines factors of violence and the strategies actors adopt during the armed conflict. Hence, there are related concepts that should be explained in order to understand the nature of other armed Sudanese groups that operate across international boundaries.
The history of political instability in independent Sudan can be attributed to the colonial legacy that isolated Southern Sudan from Northern Sudan. Furthermore, the causes of rebellions and armed violence are rooted in the ethnic composition of Sudan, in historical grievances and economic disparities. Incompatible public policies and problems from marginalisation of the country's regions in terms of wealth and power-sharing are at the heart of centre-periphery disputes in the country. Nearly all rebel groups in the country claim that they are fighting because their regions have been neglected by Khartoum-based oligarchies since independence in 1956. Given the rise in the number of rebellions, post-independent regimes have used several strategies to undermine rebel groups in Sudan. The cheapest and most effective strategy to contain rebellions was to enlist civilians in militia groups. This chapter therefore attempts to provide an analysis of the Sudanese rebel groups, together with the government responses and the manner in which they manipulate ethnicity, social structure and ideologies to control power and economic resources. It also focuses on the responses of the international community to the problems related to the violence in Sudan.

THE NATURE OF CONFLICT AND SECURITY IN SUDAN

Sudan is a country subject to ethnic fusion over millennia. Its early history has revolved largely around expansion of Egyptian influences southwards through trade and conquests. Ancient in digenous kingdoms such as the Meroe, Alwa, Makuria and Soba, were infiltrated by the Arabs over centuries. The present Sudan is the product of the Turko-Egyptian military campaigns in search of gold and slaves led by Mohamed Ali from Egypt in 1821. The expansion of the invasion into the Blue Nile, the Nuba Mountains, and later to the southern part of Sudan, brought together populations with different origins. The ethnic invasion into the Blue Nile, the Nuba Mountains, and later to the southern part of Sudan, brought together populations with different origins. Ancient hatreds revive identity differentiations and violent rivalries, contributing to prolonged conflict in Sudan.

Historical grievances

The conflict in Sudan can be said to be partly a product of history and the colonial legacy. The slave trade during the Turko-Egyptian period and the Mahdist regime at the end of the 19th century left its mark on ethnic relationships in Sudan. Reference to native Sudanese by some northerners as slaves perpetuates distrust and indignation. These ancient hatreds revive identity differentiations and violent rivalries, contributing to prolonged conflict in Sudan.

With regard to Sudan’s colonial legacy, scholars such as Mohamed O Beishir, Sir James Robertson, Oliver B Albino, Robert O Collins and Severino Fuli argue that the British Southern policy was partly responsible for the north-south divide in Sudanese politics. The Southern policy formulated by the British colonial administration in the 1920s advocated separate development for Southern Sudan. This consisted of closing Southern Sudan to all Islamic and Arab influences in terms of trade, education and religion. This policy changed only after a national conference on 12-15 June 1947. The Southern Sudanese in the political system turned to self-determination of Sudan. However, the implementation of the Sudanisation programme resulted in a public outcry in Southern Sudan because the SUDAN government b ec ause t he ci vil s ervice wa s do minated b y some n ortherners a s s laves n ortherners. S outherners w ere di s appointed b y t he a c tion o f t he t ransitional government b ecause t hey h el d o nly six j unior admini stra tive p ositions. Th e s e developments were followed by the nomination of southerners in the Legislative Assembly in 1948. These developments led to the involvement of Southern Sudanese in the political system tuned to self-determination of Sudan. However, the implementation of the Sudanisation programme resulted in a public outcry in Southern Sudan because the Southern government was dominated by some northerners as slaves. Southern northerners were disappointed by the action of the transitional government because they held only six junior administrative positions. These developments were followed by the nomination of southerners in the Legislative Assembly in 1948. All these developments led to the involvement of Southern Sudanese in the political system tuned to self-determination of Sudan. However, the implementation of the Sudanisation programme resulted in a public outcry in Southern Sudan because the Southern government was dominated by some northerners as slaves. Southern northerners were disappointed by the action of the transitional government because they held only six junior administrative positions. These developments were followed by the nomination of southerners in the Legislative Assembly in 1948. All these developments led to the involvement of Southern Sudanese in the political system tuned to self-determination of Sudan.
MIILITIAS, REBELS AND ISLAMIST MILITANTS: HUMAN INSECURITY AND STATE CRISIS IN AFRICA

Samson S Wassara

The quest for cultural and ideological domination

Issues of national identity, ethnicity, language and religion are underpinned by debates about the contradictory nature of Sudanese politics that drives the society into rebellion. Sudan is diverse in terms of geography, culture and the people. Lesch describes in detail the diverse ethnic composition of the society and the contested national identity of Sudan. The ideological foundations of Sudanese politics were constructed on the platform of uniformities. It means the nationalist movements that stepped in to the shoes of colonial powers at independence formulated exclusive national policies based on race and religion.

Ethnic complex and economic marginalisation were important factors in subsequent rebellions against the political regimes in Khartoum. Lesch and Jok demonstrate that the military government of General Ibrahim Abboud took over power from civilian governments in 1958 to impose policies of Arabisation and Islamisation that previous civilian post-independent governments could not enforce. The military regime took repressive measures such as forced Islamisation of chiefs, changing weekends from Sunday to Friday (that is, observing Friday as the weekly day off for government, public and business offices instead of Sunday) and forcing parents to send children to Koranic schools (khalwas) to enforce cultural domination on Southern Sudan. Although the regime was brought down by popular demonstrations in 1964, the successive central governments continued similar policies until the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in 2005.

Power and political rivalry

Policy incongruities adopted by the post-colonial governments of Sudan contributed to the political violence and the emergence of rebel movements and militia groups on the political scene. The roots of the divisive policies and political rivalry could be traced back to the vision and subsequent split of the Graduates’ Congress into rival political associations in the 1940s. This organisation was created in 1938 by Sudanese civil servants to advocate self-determination during the colonial period. The Graduates’ Congress later fragmented into two political parties: Ashigga and Umma. Ashigga became the National Unionist Party in the 1950s and led to the transitional government under the last colonial governor-general of Sudan. These political parties were at the centre of the divisive and violent political developments after independence.

The first post-colonial elections in 1958 revealed serious divisions in the ranks of the northern parties. The Umma Party won the election, but could not attain a decisive victory to enable it to push an Islamic constitution through parliament. The severity of the political feud between the Umma Party and other political parties invited the Sudanese military to the political arena. This led to General Ibrahim Abboud taking power through a military coup d’état on 17 November 1958. The purpose of the takeover was to silence the demand of southerners for a federal system of government and to impose Arabisation and Islamisation by force. Abboud’s policies precipitated a national political divide and led to the emergence of the Anyanya movement in 1963.

At the time, competition for power between civilian and military elites became a new phenomenon in Sudanese politics. In fact, power oscillated between the military and civilian elites throughout the post-colonial history of Sudan. Rebellions were the common denominator in the rivalries between the military and democratic governments. Most regime changes took place in Sudan when an active civil war was raging in the country.

Economic and social exclusion

Historically, the colonial government was interested in a balanced economic growth. The focus on export-oriented development programmes such as cotton and gum arabic. Agricultural schemes and transport infrastructure were planned and developed to respond to British demand for these products. For this reason, railway lines and agriculture sprang up in central Sudan, while infrastructure in the outlying regions of southern and western Sudan was neglected. The colonial government of Sudan inherited the Gezira Scheme and Sudan Railways, in addition to a few light industries around Khartoum. There are manifest links between economic policies, welfare and conflicts in a given political system. Studies of...
conflict economics demonstrate that there is a potential for violence when glaring economic disparities characterise an economic system and armed conflicts have economic costs related to waging civil wars or preventing them. This was the situation in Sudan when Abboud’s military regime launched the first ten-year national development plan in 1960 and the subsequent five-year plans during Nimeiri’s military regime in the 1970s.

Plans formulated by the government reinforced concentration of development programmes in central Sudan. For example, new dams were built at Er Rusairis and New Halfa to boost irrigation projects in Khashm el Girba and Managil; sugar factories were constructed at Gunaid Hajr el-Asalaya and Kenana; and cement factories were built in Rabak and Atbara. These plans allowed a concentration of development activities in the centre of the country while outlying regions such as Southern Sudan, the Nuba Mountains, southern Blue Nile, eastern Sudan and Darfur were excluded from economic development, thus exacerbating feelings of marginalisation. The rebellions and civil wars after the independence of Sudan could be attributed to economic and social exclusion from national development plans.

**Oil exploration and exploitation**

A new factor that contributed to the existing problems was oil. Oil is also considered an immediate cause of the civil war that started in 1983. The discovery of oil in 1978 and how it was exploited was a major factor in triggering the conflict between the government of Nimeiri and the regional government of Southern Sudan in 1983. Oil exploitation in Southern Sudan adds to the region’s strategic importance and attracted transnational companies (TNCs) such as the American Chevron, the French Total, and the Canadian Arakis Energy Corporation. These companies were involved in oil exploration and exploitation in the region in the period 1978–1998. Patey refers to Chevron, Total and Arakis as first movers and to Talisman, OVM-Austria and Lundin Petroleum – which entered the race for oil in 1998–2003 – as Western juniors. But pressure from human rights groups forced out the first two in 2002 and 2003 respectively, leaving only Lundin Petroleum of Sweden still in operation in Sudan.

![Map 9–1: Oil exploration and conflict areas](http://www.rightsmaps.com/).
Asian TN Cs, such as the Chinese National Petroleum Corporation, the Malaysian Petronas and the Indian ONGC, filled the vacuum left by the departed Western oil investors. These TN Cs continued their operations in Sudanese oilfields despite criticism from human rights organisations. The Western countries acceded to the demands of the rebels and sponsored militias in the Unity State and northern Upper Nile to protect their business interests. The desire to control the oilfields became a decisive factor in the creation and use of tribal militia forces to ensure the security of TNCs in the oil areas. The relations between TN Cs and militia groups were not well received by the local population. The Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA). Oilfield security arrangements between the government, the TN Cs and the local militias targeted local communities that were uprooted and replaced by new settlers. Paul Wani Gore explains the demographic impact of oil exploration in the northern Upper Nile as follows:

First, during the civil war people were forced to leave their land in masses either as displaced people within the GoS controlled areas or behind the SPLA lines. The population in the area was thus drastically reduced. Second, those who remained behind were displaced or killed when oil was discovered on their land. About 80 villages were burned and the inhabitants were either killed or forced to escape from the advancing army and the militias who came to clear the area to make way for the oil companies.

Despite these incidents, the Arian TN Cs remained immune to human rights groups' protests to excesses committed by government forces and the militias in Sudan. They were interested in the exploitation of the oil at any cost. In 2004, China had the largest share (41 per cent) in Petrodar, a consortium of the China National Petroleum Corporation, Petronas (40 per cent) and other lesser companies. The Chinese brand of bilateralism with the government of Sudan was not linked to conflict resolution, as it kept aloof from the excesses committed by the government or its tribal militia in oilfields and even side with Sudan in multilateral forums such as the UN Security Council.

**REBEL GROUPS IN SUDAN**

Sudanese rebel groups can be defined as organised armed movements that have risen up against central governments in Khartoum to pursue identity, nationalism, justice, political rights and change in the political systems established since independence of the country in 1956. From the inception of the SPLA in 1983, the distribution of rebel groups has tended to stretch beyond Southern Sudan. Various rebel groups have emerged to seek justice for the marginalised peoples of Sudan through armed struggle. The history of rebel groups since independence reveals that Southern Sudan was the birthplace of these rebellions, leading the world to describe the conflict in the country as a south–north conflict. As different civilian and military regimes emerged and collapsed, there were also a multiplication of rebel groups in the transitional areas such as the Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile, as well as in other regions such as eastern Sudan and Darfur.

Although this chapter emphasises the SPLA and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM/A) rebel groups in Sudan, table 9–1 provides a summary of all the main rebel groups in Sudan from 1955 to 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rebel movement</th>
<th>Year launched</th>
<th>Estimated strength*</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Comments/notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Torit Mutineers</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Emidio Tafeng and Paul Ali Gbutala</td>
<td>Some disappeared into the countryside and others resettled in Congo-Léopoldville (Kinshasa) where they regrouped to launch the Anyanya I armed movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anyanya II</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Samuel Gai Tut; Akut Atem to 1975–1983; William Abdalla Choul; Gordon Koang</td>
<td>Remnants of the Akobo Mutiny in 1975 who escaped into Ethiopia. Leaders killed by the SPLA; dispersed and become government militia in Upper Nile. Choul and Koang replaced the murdered leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan People's Liberation Army</td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>125 000*</td>
<td>Dr John Garang, 1983–2005</td>
<td>Launched in 1983 and supported by the Ethiopian Derg. Operated in the whole Southern Sudan, parts of the Nuba Mountains, Blue Nile and eastern Sudan. Transformed into an army in 2005 after the CPA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REBELS, MILITIAS AND GOVERNANCE IN SUDAN

* Excluding joint integration units, police, prisons and wildlife services.

** The first recognised rebel group in post-colonial Sudan was the Anyanya movement. This rebel group concluded the Addis Ababa Agreement with the military government of Jaafar Nimeiri in 1972. The agreement granted the group a form of autonomy similar to the federal system southerners were calling for before the independence of Sudan. Disenchantment with the implementation of the agreement came to light when the Akobo Wau garrisons and Juba Airport soldiers mutinied during the period 1975–1976, which led to the establishment of the movement’s armed forces, the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), under the command of Gordon peeled Mount.

The launching of the SPLA on a divided platform of Sudan (secession versus unity) continued to be a source of conflict in the region. The movement would create a socialist-oriented united Sudan and that the movement would be supported by the Ethiopian government. The first paper presented by the Anyanya II leadership stressed the separation of Southern Sudan from the rest of Sudan. The agreement was rejected by the Ethiopian government in Qatar in February 2008. Signed a framework peace agreement with the government in Qatar in February 2010.

** The SPLA emerged as a result of accumulated grievances of Southern Sudanese against the central government in Khartoum, such as poor implementation of the Addis Ababa Agreement. The Ethiopian government requested the Southern Sudanese to submit concept notes outlining their goals and objectives to prove their support for the movement. The first paper presented by the Anyanya II leadership stressed the separation of Southern Sudan from the rest of Sudan. The agreement was rejected by the Ethiopian government in Qatar in February 2008. Signed a framework peace agreement with the government in Qatar in February 2010.

** The Southern Sudanese to submit concept notes outlining their goals and objectives to prove their support for the movement.

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**Table: Key rebel groups in Sudan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Front</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>6,000 to 7,000</td>
<td>Musa Mohamed Ahmed and Mabruk Salim Mubarak</td>
<td>An amalgam of rebel groups that operated under the umbrella of the Democratic National Alliance established in 1989. They signed the Eastern Sudan Peace Agreement in 2007.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan Liberation Army</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>8,000 to 9,000</td>
<td>Abdel Wahid el-Nur (2003 to date)</td>
<td>Operates in the three states of Darfur with a concentration around Jebel Marra Mountain. The SLA Abdel Wahid faction continues to wage an armed struggle to liberate Darfur.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Sources:**

Our objective was therefore to influence Anyanya II and to have them join us. The Anyanya II, on the other hand, were trying to influence us to join them. Thus, at the start … we had two movements with different objectives. While SPLM was for the unity of the Sudan, the Anyanya II was for the separation of Southern Sudan.

The SPLA ideology was subtle in the refinement of its ideology. Tenets of the manifesto rotate around issues such as creation of a new united Sudan that would provide equality and justice to marginalized areas; adoption of a socialist system of rule; restructuring of power of the central government to end the monopoly of power by groups of individuals such as cliques in Khartoum, and fighting against racism that minority groups have institutionalized and instrumentalized to repress people of the marginalized areas of Sudan.

Having successfully overcome the Anyanya II, the SPLA institutionalized the military command structure and political wing, t he S PLM. J ohn Ga rang became its chairman and commander-in-chief of the SPLA. Kerubino Kwayin Bol a nd W illiam N yuon B any w ere b oth promoted t o t he g rade of l ieutenant-colonel a nd w ere m ade d eputy chairm an a nd d eputy c ommander-in-chief a nd c hief of s taff f or s ecurity o perations. Salva K iir w as e levated t o t he grade of major a nd a ppointed d eputy c hief of s taff f or s ecurity o perations. Th e SPLA wa s f irst la unched. M any o fficers a nd o fficials def ected f rom t he government and the army to join the SPLA. They were absorbed into the existing military and civilian structure established by the movement.

The SPLA was successful militarily in its early days. This was reinforced by intensive propaganda campaigns from a radio transmitter in Ethiopia. The rebel group was able to build a credible army that managed to overtake and control main towns in Southern Sudan. With the exception of Malakal, the SPLA captured all towns east of the Nile by 1989. Military successes opened channels of communication with groups such as the National Alliance of Workers and political parties that were present in the SPLA. This led to an agreement: the Khartoum Peace Agreement (KPA). This agreement revealed a level of fragmentation in the ranks of the Nasir faction.

The SPLA received moral and military support from Kenya and Uganda after losing its rear bases in Ethiopia. With this support, it was able to reorganize to halt government offensives in a narrow strip of land along the border of Sudan with Uganda. This led to the Nasir group being isolated from neighboring countries, especially Ethiopia, which compelled the group to open communications with the NIF regime in Khartoum. This culminated in the CPA signing in Kenya. The government of Sudan exploited the situation to incorporate the disparate forces of the Nasir faction into the ranks of the SPLA.

These developments weakened the SPLA in the 1990s until the period leading to IGAD (Inter-governmental Authority on Development) rounds of negotiations culminating in the CPA signing in Kenya. The government of Sudan exploited the situation to incorporate the disparate forces of the Nasir faction into the ranks of the SPLA.
The message was appealing to the disillusioned leaders of the Nasir faction in the Khartoum government, who entered into negotiations with the SPLA in Nairobi and defected to the SPLA. These included senior leaders such as Riek Machar, Taban Deng Gai and Lam Akol. They were reintegrated into the rebel military structure and organisation. In a gesture of unity before the signing of the CPA, the SPLA reshuffled its command structure to include Riek Machar, by persuading Wani Igga to turn his portfolio of third-in-command over to Machar. The top four commanders of the SPLA were John Garang, Salva Kiir, Riek Machar and Wani Igga. This streamlining of command and the integration of former defectors into the ranks of the SPLA enabled the rebel group to conduct negotiations in Kenya as a united movement.

Although the political wing of the SPLA was not developed to the standard of the military wing, the rebel group was pragmatic in dealing with the international actors. John Garang’s support of Operation Lifeline Sudan enabled the SPLA to penetrate the Western world. The organisation shifted much of its resources to SPLA-controlled areas in the 1990s because of government intransigence towards the Western world. The SPLA also established the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Agency as an umbrella organisation for local Southern Sudanese non-governmental organisations (NGOs) based in Nairobi. It became the gatekeeper of both local and international NGOs operating in Southern Sudan. The SPLA used the agency to control civilians and assert its political dominance over external resources. Also, the SPLA created faith-based organisations such as the New Sudan Council of Churches, which were loyal to the council. This council enabled the SPLA to draw on Christian organisations such as Christian Solidarity International and the Samaritan Purse. These organisations, together with Sudanese churches, dislodged the SPLA from the Marxist-Leninist character it adopted to garner the support of Mengistu’s Derg in Ethiopia.

The SPLA learned from the mistakes that were made during negotiations of the Addis Ababa Agreement under Joseph Lagu in 1972. The first weakness of this agreement had been its vagueness and lack of guarantees to ensure its implementation. That the SPLA feared a repetition was demonstrated in the length of negotiations of the CPA and details of the agreement. Then John Garang made sure that there were many witnesses to the agreement. Another lesson learned by the SPLA from the Addis Ababa Agreement was in the area of security arrangements. The Anyanya forces (some 6,000 men) had been absorbed into the Sudan armed forces, while a further 6,000 men had been absorbed into the police, prisons and wildlife forces of Southern Sudan. Their most senior officers, including Joseph Lagu himself, had been transferred to the north without senior military leadership. The SPLA avoided a similar arrangement. However, its presence in the joint integrated units (JIUs) has not fostered integration in the proper sense of the word. The SPLA coexisted in designated units in the lo cation of deployment as stipulated in the CPA.
Consequently, it remained as an army with its own command during the interim period.

The Sudan Liberation Movement/Army

The SLM/A was founded by Abdel Wahid Nur, a lawyer, Abd al-Shafi, a student of education, and Abdu Abdalla, a graduate in languages. It emerged as an organised rebel group on the Sudanese political scene when M innawi, the secretary-general of the SLM/A, made its political declaration in a press release on 14 March 2003. In the declaration the movement claimed that Darfur had been an independent state from the 16th century to the second decade of the 20th century, when it was forcibly annexed to the modern-day Sudan. The SLM/A accused the post-independent regimes in Khartoum of systematically pursuing a policy of marginalisation, discrimination, exclusion and exploitation of Darfur while waging war against ethnic groups of marginalised regions such as the Nuba, Funj, Beja and Rashaida. The declaration further highlighted the monopoly of power and wealth in Sudan's successive civilian and military regimes in Khartoum.

The SLM/A also stated that its objective was to create a united Sudan on a new basis of equality, complete restructuring and devolution of power, even development, cultural and political pluralism, and moral and material prosperity for all Sudanese. It made the following statements:

- The unity of Sudan must be anchored on a new basis that is predicated on full acknowledgement of Sudan's ethnic, cultural and political diversity.
- There should be a de-centralised form of governance based on the right of Sudan's different regions to govern themselves autonomously through a federal or confederal system.
- Arab tribes and groups were an integral and indivisible component of Darfur social fabric that have been equally marginalised and deprived of their rights to development and genuine political participation.
- The SLM/A would work to achieve a common ground with the Democratic National Alliance and other political forces in order to remove the NIF’s dictatorial regime and establish a democratic system based on a new political dispensation of freedom, justice and respect for human rights, and equality for all Sudanese.

Table 9–2: Main Darfur rebel factions after the Darfur Peace Agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rebel groups / estimated military strength</th>
<th>Faction/year of establishment</th>
<th>Factional leadership</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SLM Mainstream</td>
<td>SLM 8 000 – 9 000</td>
<td>Abdel Wahid</td>
<td>The largest rebel group, which rejected the DPA and enjoys broad support in Darfur. The leader is rather isolated from his supporters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLM Government</td>
<td>Mini Minawi</td>
<td></td>
<td>Signed a peace deal with the government in May 2006. Weak after the signing of the DPA and many field commanders deserted the group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The declaration of the S LA resembled the SPLA manifesto in many respects, indicating that there were connections between the two. Although the latter had denied any relationships with groups on another war front in western Sudan, these have been confirmed by Wear and Whitehouse:

The SLAs’s connection to the south’s SPLA is not just alphabetic or ideological. Since 1991, when the US started to support him, John Ga Rang sought to open up a Darfurian front in his war against Khartoum. The International Crisis Group (ICG) reports that the SPLA gave military training to 1 500 Darfurians in March 2002. These then went on to become the core fighters of the S LA. Indeed the initial manifesto of the SLA was edited by the SPLA.
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MIILITIAS, REBELS AND ISLAMIST MILITANTS: HUMAN INSECURITY AND STATE CRises IN AFRICA

Samson S Wassara

Institute for Security Studies

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RESPONSES OF THE GOVERNMENT: ESTABLISHMENT OF MILITIA GROUPS

Militia g roups in S udan a re o ften hir ed a nd o rganised b y t he g overnment a s auxiliaries of the national army to fight rebels groups. They are heterogeneous in

However, according to Brosché and G ore et al armed conflict h ad started in Darfur b efore 2003. C onflicts b etween et hnic g roups h ave b een p art o f c ommunity relationships over local political issues and administrative boundaries for m ore t han f our de cades. Th e r e b el g roups in D arfar s uffered f rom factionalisation d ue t o et hnic d ifferences a nd m anipulation b y t he r egime in Khartoum. Table 9–2 p rovides a s ummary of the main Darfur rebel g roups and factions that were formed after the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) in Abuja in April 2006.

According t o P runier t here h as b een a n in creased f ragmentation o f r ebel g roups in w estern S udan a fter M inni M innawi o f t he S LM s igned t he D PA in Abuja. The SLM s plintered further when Minnawi signed an agreement with t he g overnment of Sudan in May 2006, as m ost of his commanders deserted him. A m ajor split occurred between Abdul Wahid al-Nur, who c ontrolled t he p olitical wing of t he SLM, a nd Minnawi, w ho c ontrolled its m ilitary wing. Groups s uch a s t he G roup o f 19 r emained a s um brella o rganisation t hat f ragmented f urther into SLM/Unity a nd SLM F ree W ill, as shown in t able 9–2 a longside.

Unlike in S outhern S udan, f ac tionalisation a ffect ed r ebel m ovements o f Darfur for a number of r easons. F irst, t here w as no h istory of a rmed m ovements from which t he c urrent rebel g roups could learn lessons, w hich meant that t hey w ere unpre pared in t he e xt reme f or a s ustainable a rmed a nd p olitical s truggle.

They launched a rebellion w ith t he h ope of f inding a q uick f ix t o t heir g rievances, b ut w ithout c onsidering t he p olitical e nvironment a nd t he in c ompatible e conomic a nd c ultural in terests o f t heir s ub-region. S econd, t he g overnment p layed a n important r ole in spli ting t he SLA. F or instance, t he SLM F ree W ill le ader ended u p a s g overnment m ini ster in F ebruary 2007. T he c ompeting in ternational i nterests o v er t he p ossibility of o il r eserves in Darfur a nd n orthern Chad a ttracted many p eace b rokers a nd s poilers. I t s hould b e n oted t hat t he r egions a djacent to Darfur h ave p otential o il r esources. F inally, t he in formal f ac tor in t he c urrent Darfur co nFLICT i s a c ultural c ompetition a mong A rab, E n glish a nd F rench speakers.

composition and operate under different names, often according to their geographic locations. They create new ethnic objectives while others are created by influential individuals with the goal of enriching themselves. They operate from internal social disorder with the support of the government and communities, making them self-paying because they keep all the loot acquired during an operation.

From an economic perspective, the militias are cheap to maintain because they do not receive regular wages from the government. Their work is voluntary and self-paying because they keep all the loot acquired during an operation. Tactically, the government depends on militia groups because the war zones in Sudan are very extensive, leading to thin distribution of professional army. A further reason for dependence on militia groups is that the military regime of Omer Bashir purged most of the professional officers from the army. The few remaining military and security officers were deployed around the national capital to protect the seat of the government, and light and heavy industries in central Sudan.

The various militia groups in Sudan are described in this study as ethnic and tribal. Other civilian paramilitary groups are recruited, trained and armed by the government for the purpose of waging proxy wars against rebels and communities supporting rebel movements. The formation of tribal militia groups started under Nimeiri in 1983 as a counterinsurgency strategy.

The military regime of Omer el-Bashir institutionalised all militia groups supported by the government after promulgation of the Popular Defence Act in October 1989. This Act legitimised militia and allied paramilitary groups as part of the national army. Scholars such as Salmon and Young examined the origins, composition and development of the Popular Defence Force (PDF). There were 12 militia groups distributed in different ethnic and regional parts of Sudan, but the number increased depending on new political developments. The PDF was headed by Brigadier Babiker Abdel Mahmoud Hassan, who was directly responsible to the president of Sudan. After 1990, all militia groups were organised into military formations modelled on the structure of the PDF, and trained and deployed in sensitive areas such as oilfields and other oil infrastructures such as pipelines and refineries. They study examines two militia groups in order to deepen the understanding of the counterinsurgency strategy of the government in Sudan.

The Southern Sudan Defence Force and tribal militia groups in Southern Sudan

The establishment of militia groups in Sudan is closely related to the geographic division of oilfields and other oil structures. The government responded to operations of rebel groups by creating the PDF in 1989. This umbrella organisation for all paramilitary groups that existed before the NIF came to power on 30 June of the same year. There are about 10,000 active members of the PDF, with 85,000 reserves. These forces were deployed alongside regular army units against various rebel groups. The SSDF was created in 1997 as a Southern Sudan component of the PDF and as part of the Khartoum Peace Agreement to bring all the tribal militia groups under a unified command of Paulino Matip, who was appointed the chief of staff of the SSDF. The Fertit Friendly Forces was under El Tom El Nour in Bahr el Ghazal, the Mundari militia under Clement Wani in Equatoria, and the Peace and Reconstruction Brigade under Sultan Abdel Bagi Ayi in northern Bahr el-Ghazal, and so on. Tribal war lords were given military titles and were authorised to control their areas in the sense that they permanently maintained this structure. The SSDF comprised a significant number of fighting forces at its peak of activity. DURING THE LAST YEARS OF THE SECOND CIVIL WAR, THE TERRITORIAL BOUNDARIES OF SOUTHERN SUDANESE ARMED GROUPS WERE REMARKABLY PERMANENT AND STABLE. The turnover of both territory and group affiliation — including ‘side switching’ between the government of Sudan and the SPLA — was high among militia groups. Young summarised the problem as follows:

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But arriving at an accurate count of SSDF members remains highly problematic. First, the numbers change constantly as recruitment within some groups is ongoing. Secondly, the SSDF is largely made up of non-regular forces – and the dividing line between civilians and combatants is extremely grey. Thirdly, some individuals may identify themselves as affiliated at one moment but then reject the label once a particular objective has been achieved or given up.33

The CPA progressively changed the relations between the militia groups and the SPLA. In the beginning they were angered because of their exclusion from the negotiation process in Kenya. Militia groups were not accommodated in the SPLA as was stipulated in the CPA when John Garang was alive. The ascendance of Salva Kiir to power after the death of Garang was marked by reconciliation between the SPLA and militia groups in the SSDF. The process of reconciliation was sealed by the Juba Declaration of 8 January 2006. This arrangement paved the way for absorption of about 18 militia groups under a number of warlords, while others joined the SAF as stipulated in the CPA. In short, the militias operating in Southern Sudan because they created insecurity and continuously switched sides can be referred to in the CPA as ‘other armed groups’. Table 9-3 is a sample extract from a longer table, compiled by Young and containing an exhaustive list of 60 different militia groups allied with the government army or the SPLA, which shows the heterogeneity of militia groups in Southern Sudan that constituted the SSDF before the Juba Declaration.

Table 9–3: Sample of militia groups according to the three regions of Southern Sudan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Militia group</th>
<th>Commander/leader</th>
<th>Areas of operation before the Juba Declaration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Sudan Unity Movement</td>
<td>Major-General Paulino Matip</td>
<td>Bentiu, Rubkona, Mayom, Makien Wankay, Nhialdui, Heglig and Kharasana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fangak Forces</td>
<td>Major-General Gabriel Tangyan</td>
<td>Bashlakon, Fangak, Deil, Kwerkan, Kwerdai, Faguer, Fag, Kaldak and Dor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pibor Defence Forces</td>
<td>Major-General Ismael Konyi</td>
<td>Pibor, Akobo Road, Likuangole, Juba and Bor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mundari Forces</td>
<td>Major-General Clement Wani</td>
<td>Terekaka, Juba road, Tali, Rejaf East, Kaltok, Gemeiza and Jebel Lado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equatoria Defence Force</td>
<td>Brigadier Fabiano Odongi</td>
<td>Torit, Juba, Torit Road and mountains around Torit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 9–3 continued:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Militia group</th>
<th>Commander/leader</th>
<th>Areas of operation before the Juba Declaration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Peace Forces (Fertit)</td>
<td>Major-General Eltom Elnur Daldoum</td>
<td>Bazia, Beitano, Taban, Bussere, Halima, Bagare, Mboro, Khor Gana, Deim Zubeir, Sopo, Raja and Tumsah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace and Reconstruction Brigade</td>
<td>Sultan Abdel Bagi Ayii</td>
<td>El Miram, Bahr el Arab, Agok, Malual, Tadama, Um Driesi and Bringi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The increase in numbers is attributed to disagreements between militia groups over integrating into the government army or the SPLA. Most of the militia groups were divided into two groups under new leaders who joined the government. For example, when Paulino M atip joined the SPLA under the terms of the Juba Declaration, his seniors lieutenants, G ordon K onga and Ga briel T anyang, established their own groups and allied with the Sudan government army. The huge number of militia groups complicated the implementation of the CPA in Southern Sudan because they created insecurity and continuously switched sides between the Sudan government forces and the SPLA depending on the benefits one of the two may offer. The militia groups that were dissatisfied with the CPA partners melted into communities and engaged in banditry and cattle rustling.

The Janjaweed in Darfur

The Janjaweed militia group became prominent after the Darfur rebellion in 2003. It is described as an ‘Arab’ paramilitary militia group on camels and horses and is known for perpetrating violence against civilians in Darfur.

The Janjaweed is a militia group organised by the government to wage war against rebel groups in Darfur. Its members are listed with the Sudanese army within the framework of the PDF and the military structure in Darfur known as the Border Intelligence and are recruited from two categories of ‘Arab’ tribesmen, namely cattle owners in the desert areas of North Darfur and cattle owners in South Darfur. The former comprise the Mahariya, I rayga, Mahamid and Beni Hussein who are camels in t he o ffensive against the civilians of Darfur, namely cattle owners in the desert areas of North Darfur and cattle owners in South Darfur. Th e f ormer are known for perpetrating violence against civilians in Darfur.

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Gore et al argue that ‘Arab’ paramilitary groups have been operating in Darfur since 1980 as Libyan proxy forces.\textsuperscript{35} After the victory of Habré over Libyan-backed rebel groups in Chad, they retreated to Darfur in 1988. Hoile confirms that there is a Chadian factor in the evolution of the Janjaweed.\textsuperscript{36} Armed ‘Arab’ groups known as the Islamic Legion, which operated in Chad but were based in Sudan and were allegedly equipped by Libya, were spotted in Darfur in 1987 during the government of Saddiq Al Mahdi. Authorities in the greater Darfur area described these armed groups as robbers and bandits.

Janjaweed militia groups have a well-structured leadership at the political and military levels. The known political organisers in Darfur were Ahmed Haroun and Ali Kushayb, who both hailed from South Darfur. The latter is the commander of South Darfur and one of the key commanders of the Janjaweed armed units in the three Darfur states. The other two Darfur states were commanded by Abdullah Mustafa Abu Shineibat (West Darfur), and both Mohamed Ali Hamiditi and Musa Hilal (North Darfur). Musa Hilal was the most notorious field commander in North Darfur. The government of Sudan directed operations of the Janjaweed against the SLM and the JEM, which draw support mostly from the ‘African’ tribes of the Fur, Zaghawa, Masalit, Dajo, Maidoub, Berti and Tunjur. The Janjaweed strategy was to destroy villages and, according to Brosché, 1,595 villages were destroyed in the period 2003–2007.\textsuperscript{37}

It should be noted that many Janjaweed attacks against civilian populations had both economic and racial motives. They exploited the readiness of the Janjaweed as counterinsurgency forces, with ex-collaborators serving in the various regions of the Darfur. Sudanese authorities took advantage of this readiness of the Janjaweed to do the fighting because they enabled them to build up and tighten the security around Khartoum where there are huge investments and oil business developments.

 Actors in the Sudanese conflict of Darfur maintain complex relations in the political processes. They deliberately destroy the infrastructure for education, health, and welfare. Rebels and former militia forces, under the auspices of the SPLA-A and former militia forces, under the leadership of Mahdi of the SLA-Abdul Wahid, initiated contact with the Bagdara and Abbala (Mahariyya and Mahamids) tribes at Wadi Toro and Sabanga in the northwest and the area of Jebel Marra.\textsuperscript{38} Agreements between the parties led to the opening of Arab-Fur markets in the rebel-held area of Jebel Marra.

The popularity of the rebel groups at the beginning of active rebellion in 2003 cannot be overestimated. The call of the rebel groups for an end to government neglect of Darfur was popular, also among the ‘Arabs’. Communities supported the rebels with food supplies and cash, and many youths joined the rebels. However, the DPA changed the degree of support to the government among African and Arab tribes. While the support for signatories of the DPA declined, the popularity of non-signtaries (SLA-Abdul Wahid and the JEM) was remarkable.\textsuperscript{39} Although ethnicity was a factor in the fragmentation of the rebel groups, the majority of Arabs remained neutral in the conflict. Tanner and Tubiana observed that Mujib ar-Rahman az-Zubeir of the SLA-Abdul Wahid initiated contact with the Bagdara and Abbala (Mahariyya and Mahamids) tribes at Wadi Toro and Sabanga in the northwest and the area of Jebel Marra.\textsuperscript{36} Agreements between the parties led to the opening of Arab-Fur markets in the rebel-held area of Jebel Marra.

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Small arms trade and the aftermath of the DPA lead to the opening of joint Arab-Fur markets in the rebel-held area of Jebel Marra. The call of the rebel groups for an end to government neglect of Darfur was popular, also among the ‘Arabs’. Communities supported the rebels with food supplies and cash, and many youths joined the rebels. However, the DPA changed the degree of support to the government among African and Arab tribes. While the support for signatories of the DPA declined, the popularity of non-signatories (SLA-Abdul Wahid and the JEM) was remarkable. Although ethnicity was a factor in the fragmentation of the rebel groups, the majority of Arabs remained neutral in the conflict. Tanner and Tubiana observed that Mujib ar-Rahman az-Zubeir of the SLA-Abdul Wahid initiated contact with the Bagdara and Abbala (Mahariyya and Mahamids) tribes at Wadi Toro and Sabanga in the northwest and the area of Jebel Marra.\textsuperscript{36} Agreements between the parties led to the opening of Arab-Fur markets in the rebel-held area of Jebel Marra.
Some of the destruction is an inevitable outcome of the war strategies and the tactics used during the civil war.

Sudanese conflict situations affected structures of government and rural economic systems in marginalized areas in the country. The nucleus of political systems is confined to garrison towns while the rural areas are the scene of military operations. Rebel and militia movements contributed to the systematic destruction of local authority that used to maintain law and order in rural areas.

As the civil war intensified, civilian populations were dislodged and resettled in peace villages, IDP camps in Khartoum, or around garrison towns. People holding guns were the sources of authority. For example, in Upper Nile, commanders of militia groups such as the White Army (Geish Mabor) acted as tribal chiefs. Actions of rebel and militia leaders disrupted customs, culture, civilian life and kinship structures and in the process destroyed human dignity. This resulted in the breakdown of law and order in society.

Roles of different rebels and militia groups in undermining rural economic systems could be seen in their capacity to brutalise civilian populations during hostilities in war zones. War tactics included destruction of crops and commandeering of livestock to bring dislodged populations to submission. In other cases, rural pastoralists found it difficult to move over long distances in search for richer pastures and the result was overgrazing and environmental degradation in war zones. The government-supported militia in oilfields stole livestock and drove away communities to leave space for oil exploration and exploitation. Similarly, some Nuba communities were dislodged and resettled and were resettled in peace villages. Finally, a huge disruption of the socioeconomic system was experienced in northern Bahr el Ghazal during the militia missions that accompanied trains from Babanusa to Wau. Civilian populations were subjected to systematic plunder of livestock, destruction of crops and abduction of women and children during these operations. A similar strategy was replicated in the Darfur region where civilian populations were displaced and ended up in camps. Although these camps were guarded by AU and UN peacekeepers, they have been subjected to attacks and raids.

Responses of actors and stakeholders

Responses of various stakeholders to armed conflicts are related to social and political structures of affected societies. These responses are as varied as they are multidimensional. Approaches and responses to the complex armed conflicts in Sudan could be explained in terms of the interests, positions and roles of the main protagonists. The complexity of Sudanese conflicts, with the increasing number of rebel groups, is a challenge for gauging political and community reactions, sentiments and sympathies.

Responses of local communities

Conflict-affected communities in Sudan have limited options in the face of the military, rebel and militia offensives in war zones and in destinations of flight from violence. In the experience of Sudan, the first response of communities is to avoid being trapped in war zones. Many people flee armed conflict and become internally displaced persons (IDPs) around garrison towns. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre there are about 2.7 million IDPs within Darfur and nearly 250,000 refugees from Darfur in eastern Chad.

The second option for communities is to protect their land and property from occupation by other ethnic communities. This is a patriotic approach that transforms community members into rebels and other paramilitary groups. People remaining behind during armed conflicts are emotionally attached to their ancestral lands to the extent that they become embroiled in the violence between the warring parties. In the name of defence of ancestral land, local communities seek protection from either side of the war and in extreme cases opt for self-defence groups, thereby militarising the conflict. The conflict strategy transforms communities into a source of power in the conflict or in the post-conflict period.

Militarist responses of the government

The government has used force to maintain unity since 1989, when it overthrew the ‘democratically’ elected government of Saddiq Al Mahdi. One of the main reasons for ousting the civilian government was that the latter was too weak to deal with the SPLA, which was the dominant rebel movement at that time. The combination of militaristic and diplomatic approaches began in 1994 under the auspices of the IGAD. However, it took more than a decade for the government to...
reconsider militarism as an approach to resolving the conflict with the SPLA in Southern Sudan and the three areas of Abyei, Blue Nile and the Nuba Mountains. Despite the CPA, there have been sporadic military operations in Abyei and South Kordofan, too. The Abyei Administrative Area experienced clashes between the government and SPLA forces in 2008. The government denied involvement and blamed the Miseriya militia and the SPLA for engaging in armed violence. President el-Bashir addressed the problem by issuing Republican Decree 146, and an agreement entitled ‘Roadmap for return of IDPs and implementation of Abyei Protocol’ was signed by the ruling National Congress Party and the SPLM.

Militarist tendencies persist in war-affected regions covered by peace agreements. For instance, violence erupted in Upper Nile (Malakal town) on two occasions in 2006 and 2009, resulting in heavy civilian casualties. The African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) lost ten soldiers on 29 September 2007 in its camp at Haskanita, with government and rebel groups trading accusations about the incident. Brosché confirmed that AMIS and UN experts were unable to identify the perpetrators of the incident. However, the assumption is that the government of Sudan was behind the attack, its purpose being to frustrate the possibility of strong action in the Darfur armed conflict. The AMIS was deployed in Darfur and was later transformed into UNAMID. D arfur was the scene of sustained military action by the Janjaweed and violence to solve problems. The essence of governance is at stake in Sudan, with consciousness about marginalisation and social exclusion and resorting to power.

CONCLUSION

Sudan experienced numerous conflicts in nearly all its regions except the extreme north. Sudan emerged as an independent country amid mutiny and rebellion. The length of the civil war and faulty policy development highlighted national consciousness about marginalisation and social exclusion to armed conflict. Violence to solve problems. The essence of governance is at stake in Sudan, with the n umber of armed rebel groups increasing in creasingly.
independence. This is an indicator that the underlying causes of conflict have yet to be addressed by the parties to Sudanese conflict. Human security is threatened in zones of armed conflict, which extends to peaceful areas inside and outside the country. This happens in terms of war-related migrants who try to escape the excesses of conflict. The Southern Sudanese are pressing for the referendum to take place as a whole. The Southern Sudanese are pressing for the referendum to take place in line with the terms of the CPA. If the referendum results are in favour of secession of Southern Sudan, there is a likelihood of more social and political instability in S Sudan that will certainly have an adverse effect on the African continent.

One key finding of this study is that rebel groups seek policy or regime change through violence, forcing governments to recognize their identities and their participation in the formulation of political, social and economic policies. Meanwhile, militia groups lack a vision of their own, but are part of war strategies of rulling elites that attempt to remain in power or pursue vested economic interests. In this respect, militia groups operate like mercenaries because their motives are primarily economic. They are empowered to loot and disrupt community livelihoods and force civilians into submission through the weapon of hunger. Both rebel and militia groups are sources of banditry and insecurity in the regions of S Sudan that have been affected by armed conflicts. For instance, the proliferation of small arms constitutes a major source of insecurity in S Sudan in the post-conflict period.

The future of Sudan will continue to hang in the balance as long as critical demands of the peripheral regions are not seriously addressed by the center. The demands revolve around the national questions of identity and culture clashes, economic development, power sharing and wealth sharing. Ethnic grievances expressed by the marginalized people are used to foment conflict. This can be prevented only if African countries take the lead in finding suitable compromises to ensure that peace prevails on the continent as a whole. The Southern Sudanese are pressing for the referendum to take place in 2011, in line with the terms of the CPA. If the referendum results are in favour of secession of Southern Sudan, there is a likelihood of more social and political instability in S Sudan, which will certainly have an adverse effect on the African continent.

NOTES
4. Beshir, The Southern Sudan: background to conflict, 73; Joseph L Ag, S Sudan: an odyssey through a state from ruins to hope, Khartoum: Mohamed Omer Beshir Centre for Sudanese Studies, Omdurman Ahlia University, 491–493.
5. Holt and Daly, A history of the Sudan, 126–127.
17. Arop S Wassara. Sudan’s painful road to peace, 333.
Since 1986, northern Uganda has been bedevilled by violent armed conflict between successive rebel groups and the National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/M) government led by Yoweri Museveni. The most resilient of these rebel groups has been the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), led by the enigmatic Joseph Kony. The armed conflict in northern Uganda is rooted in Uganda’s domestic politics and the problems of state-making and nation-building, including the lack of national integration and failure to build consensus on the role of the constituent groups in national politics. But the conflict has been regionalised. Louise Fawcett defined regionalisation as a situation in which inter- and intrastate conflicts spill over into neighbouring countries, link up with conflicts in those countries and also attract the intervention of international actors.

In northern Uganda, successive rebel groups, especially the LRA, organised and sought support externally and set up bases and ‘sanctuaries’ across the border and, in so doing, have destabilised regional security. The government of Uganda countered support for the LRA by supporting rebel groups in neighbouring Sudan.
and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and by intervening in conflicts in those countries. The conflict in northern Uganda has thus been linked to conflicts in neighbouring countries and in traregional conflicts in the Great Lakes complex. US intervention to safeguard its geostrategic interests against the threats of Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism increased the complexity of the conflict and has made it more difficult to resolve. The linkage of the conflict to a regional conflict complex contributed to transforming the LRA from a rag-tag rebel outfit to a formidable guerrilla force whose activities span state boundaries and have serious consequences for foreign policies of states and for regional security.

This chapter examines the regionalisation of the conflict in northern Uganda and the transformation of the LRA rebel movement into a regional actor in the security of East and Central Africa regions. It does so by examining the problems of state-making and nation-building and conflicts in Uganda; the regional security environment and relations of the countries in East and Central Africa; global geostrategic interests, and coincidence of the domestic, regional and global.

**INTERNAL CONFLICTS AND REGIONAL CONFLICT COMPLEXES**

Recent attempts at understanding the problem of internal conflicts, which have become the dominant threat to peace and security, have focused on the nature of the state and on domestic politics. A review of the debates on internal conflicts in Africa by Richard Jackson offers useful insights in this regard. Internal conflicts are the result of state-making and nation-building and of “accumulating, centralising and concentrating the power resources necessary for effective territorial domination.” State-making in Africa has been compared with the European experience, which took centuries and generated collective violence from arrangements that were not viable were either reformed or disappeared. But in Africa, external interference created and preserved several unviable states, added to the security predicament, and made conflict a characteristic of the continent. The historical process of state-making that Africa experienced resulted in the creation of ‘weak states’ lacking the attributes of ‘empirical statehood.’ Weak states lack domestic political and social consensus, the idea and institutions of the state are contested and governments face challenges to legitimacy and viability. Regimes rely on the suppression of opponents, the use of force and political cooptation to remain in power. In such situations threats to the stability of the state emanate from domestic sources. Security in a weak state is viewed in terms of factional struggles, whereby ruling cliques obscure the distinctions between regime security and state security of a single state. They ‘spill over’ into neighbouring states and are linked to conflicts in those states as well as to the security predicament of the continent.

The preservation and strengthening of a state becomes the priority of those states and with neighbourly relations. Politics and violence become harder to assess in the national security state, as outside powers and forces remain in power. In such situations threats to the stability of the state emanate from domestic sources. Security in a weak state is viewed in terms of factional struggles, whereby ruling cliques obscure the distinctions between regime security and state security of a single state. They ‘spill over’ into neighbouring states and are linked to conflicts in those states as well as to the security predicament of the continent.

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Recent studies have highlighted the regional and global dynamics of contemporary in-trastate conflicts. These dynamics have been labelled regional security complexes, regional conflict formations and regional conflict complexes. These studies build on the old analysis of regions, which is defined as the existence of distinct and significant subsystems of networks or relations among a set of states located in geographical proximity to each other. A region mediates the interplay of the state and the international system. Buzano observed that the ‘reality of state security in terdependence is un avoidable’, especially with nigh neighbours, because threats and friendship are most intensely felt at close range. Interaction between states results in a web of security and state crises. These interferences are co-ordinated by states in a relatively short time. This is in contrast to the European experience, where security is a product of negotiations and agreements that are considered apart from the others. This definition is consistent with the definition of state security in ‘regional conflict complexes’ as a regional security formation that is a subset of the others. This definition is consistent with the definition of state security in ‘regional conflict complexes’ as a regional security formation that is a subset of the others.
complex and tangled that they ‘cannot be easily de composed in to in dividual conflicts’. He defined ‘regional conflict formations’ as ‘a complex mixture of intra-national, intraregional and extraregional conflicts of violent character’.13 In a study of armed conflicts in the period 1989–1997, Wallenstein and Sollenberg identified 15 ‘regional conflict complexes’, which they defined as situations where neighbouring countries experience internal or interstate conflicts with significant links between the conflicts.14 This accounted for more than half of the conflicts that were taking place at the time. Links between conflicts impact on peace efforts since changes in conflict dynamics or resolution of one conflict will have an effect on a neighbouring conflict.

Conflict linkages are composed of numerous transnational networks, ranging from political to economic and social networks.15 Military networks increase activities like the cross-border flow of arms and combatants, overt and covert military intervention and harbouring of rebels from neighbouring countries. Political networks involve cross-border linkages between elites, personal connections and friendship between politicians, ideological affinity and historical antagonism. Economic and financial networks, especially those of an illicit nature, increase regional and global links of war economies and of conflicts. Rebel groups, criminal gangs and the state all rely on cross-border networks of the ‘shadow trade’ in looted goods and natural resources as a source of revenue. Social networks, such as the ex-student network of the political movements fostering social networks, facilitate illicit trade and arms transfers and promote the regional interconnectedness of conflicts.

The links between the conflict in northern Uganda and conflicts in neighbouring countries as well as intervention by extraregional actors, notably the US, led to regionalisation of the activities of the LRA. This has made the conflict more complex and difficult to resolve. The link between the conflict in Uganda and conflicts in neighbouring countries has increased activities like the cross-border flow of arms and combatants, overt and covert military intervention and harbouring of rebels from one country to another. Political networks involve cross-border linkages between elites, personal connections and friendship between politicians, ideological affinity and historical antagonism. Economic and financial networks, especially those of an illicit nature, increase regional and global links of war economies and of conflicts. Rebel groups, criminal gangs and the state all rely on cross-border networks of the ‘shadow trade’ in looted goods and natural resources as a source of revenue. Social networks, such as the ex-student network of the political movements fostering social networks, facilitate illicit trade and arms transfers and promote the regional interconnectedness of conflicts.

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STATE-MAKING AND INTERNAL CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

To understand the roots of conflict in northern Uganda and why it has been so intractable, it is important to examine the problems of state-making and nation-building. In Uganda, the social contract of independence dissipated fairly rapidly. Since then, violent internal conflicts have been endemic. This may be explained by the structure and processes of a weak state. The Ugandan state is a ‘dislocated polity’, characterised by the lack of a coherent political structure and social consensus and insufficient structural integration of the constituent regional, ethnic, religious and ideological parts.16 Internal threats to stability of the state and regimes are endemic and governments face challenges to their legitimacy and viability. In a weak state like Uganda, the political elite and political survival and maintaining an integrated state. It has to manage both internal threats from local ‘strongmen’ and external actors and maintain a struggle for political dominance.

The political struggles in Uganda after independence, specifically after the collapse of the semi-federal constitution of 1962, led to the first post-independent coalition government headed by Milton Obote, which reflected precisely such a struggle for political dominance. The first post-independence government was an attempt to de-legitimately balance the regional balance, ethnic and ideological interests. But this ultimately collapsed when Obote arrested dissident members of the cabinet, suspended the constitution and forced the Kabaka of the Baganda, the dominant ethnic group in Uganda, into exile in 1966.17 This resulted in a crisis of legitimacy and a political resolution. Obote began to rely increasingly on the army to maintain power, but it also gave the army a taste for power and in 1971 the army, under the command of Idi Amin, overthrew the government. Initially, Amin’s attempts to consolidate power and support a mong g roups t hat w ere h onest and o r b f or lo ng, v iolence, repression and terror, which the regime used as the methods of control, caused widespread alienation, generated bitterness and hostilities, and intensified ethnic and religious conflicts in Uganda.18 It was a resolution to overcome this and extensive d s ocial d i slocation a nd institutional decay. The presence of a large number of Ugandan exiles in Tanzania who were committed to the overthrow of Amin’s regime and Tanzanian hostility led to the influence of the political regime in northern Uganda, which was eventually overthrown in 1979 by a combined force of the Tanzanian People’s Defence Force and Ugandan guerrillas after the invasion and occupation of the Tanzanian territory north of the Kagera River by Amin’s army in October 1978.19

After the overthrow of Amin’s regime, the political order in northern Uganda was closely monitored by the anti-Amin coalition (which was hastily put together during the Moshi conference...
in Tanzania) was not able to fill. The major political actors of the time, most of whom were political returnees whose claim to a role in national politics rested on their ‘roles’ in the overthrow of Amin, were deeply divided along regional, ethnic, military, political and ideological lines. Intrigues and manoeuvres were rife, as different groups positioned themselves for political control, but the euphoria and hopes of a protracted fraternal reconciliation that followed the end of Amin’s brutal rule dissipated. The first post-Amin choice for the presidency, Yusuf Lule, held power for only three months, while his successor, Godfrey Binaisa, was deposed from office after nine months.

After the overthrow of Binaisa, a caretaker military council organised multiparty democratic elections in December 1980. Four political parties contested the elections: the Uganda People’s Congress (UPC) led by Obote, the Democratic Party (DP) led by Mujabura, the National People’s Movement (UPM) led by Yoweri Museveni, and the Uganda People’s Democratic Party (UPDA). The elections were held in a tense atmosphere of considerable controversy, mistrust, political violence, and threats of civil war. Allegations of irregularities favouring the UPC, which obtained the most parliamentary seats, created problems of legitimacy for the new government and triggered more armed conflict. Museveni, who had threatened to ‘go to the bush’ and wage war if the elections were rigged, formed a rebel group and launched a guerrilla war against the UPC government of Obote. The conflict in the southern parts of the country.

The immediate challenge to the NRM government emerged from elements associated with the parties the NRA defeated. A number of rebel groups of varying political and military significance took up arms against the NRA government. They included the Uganda People’s Democratic Army (UPDA), Uganda People’s Army, Ninth October Movement, Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (HSMF) and the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU).

THE REGIONAL CONTEXT OF THE CONFLICT IN NORTHERN UGANDA

From the outset, there was an overlap of the conflict in northern Uganda with conflicts in neighbouring countries. The overlap was created by, among others, a massive inflow of refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, and Burundi, a proliferation of armed groups across the border, a large number of armed Ugandan exiles in neighbouring Sudan, and a history of mutual suspicion and elite networks. The capture of state power in Uganda by the NRA after a guerrilla war and Museveni’s negative attitude towards the internationally acclaimed principle of state sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs of other states created anxiety among Uganda’s neighbours and heightened suspicion. During the OAU summit in Addis Ababa in July 1986, Museveni castigated African leaders for advocating the sanctity of state sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs of states in the face of oppression.
Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) rebels. The SPLA feared that the Sudan government would enlist the help of Ugandan refugees to fight against it. The NRA government, which was sympathetic to the SPLA, on the other hand feared that the Sudanese government would be strengthened by the influx of refugees. President Museveni had been under threat from dissident groups, particularly in the north of Uganda.

Following attacks on government army positions in Uganda by UPDA rebels, President Museveni accused the Sudanese government of providing support to the UPDA. He said that the Sudanese government wanted to use northern Uganda as a rear flank against the SPLA. Sudan strenuously denied a role in the attack and accused Uganda of supporting the SPLA and of trying to export its revolution. President Museveni denied the accusation, and tried to calm his neighbour’s fear:

[1] It is not our duty — not even our desire — to export this revolution to anybody else, or to any other African country. Likewise, it is not correct for anybody to seek to export counter-revolution to Uganda. Let us allow the people of each country to shape their destiny without interference from external quarter, be it brotherly or foreign.27

The conflict in northern Uganda also overlapped with internal conflicts in Kenya and South Africa. In 1990 Uganda and Sudan reached an agreement in terms of which Sudan provided a military team to monitor whether Uganda was supplying the SPLA. Th ese bilateral agreements were limited to confidence building measures such as a change of mil itary missions. They did not address the underlying issues in the conflict or face up to the reality that the ‘criminals’ were not only proxies; they had their own interests and strategies. Meanwhile, distrust and recriminations continued a mid occasions and raids by Sudan on Ugandan territory, and cross-border skirmishes involving armies of the two countries and rebel groups.

The conflict in northern Uganda also overlapped with internal conflicts in Kenya and South Africa. Like its neighbour, Sudan, Kenya had been under threat from dissident groups seeking to overthrow the regime of President Moi. Since the abortive coup in 1982, Moi’s regime had been under growing threat from dissident groups. There were fears that Museveni’s cause would be strengthened by the influx of Kenyan refugees. President Moi had staked his reputation on brokering the peace agreement between Museveni’s NRA rebels and the Okello government.28 Moi also felt personally insulted when Museveni marched to Kampala and took power by force after signing a peace agreement that he had facilitated. Moi had staked his reputation on brokering the peace agreement between Museveni’s NRA rebels and the Okello government.29 Faced with internal threats, he began in 1987 accusing Uganda of supporting Kenyan insurgents and dissidents and of training Kenyan youth and helping others to travel to Libya for military training.30 On its part, Uganda accused Kenya of allowing insurgents to use Kenya as a rear position and transit route. Suspicion was heightened by the capture in November 1987 of Brigadier Smith Opon Acak and Major John Olwol, two former officers of the UPDA rebel group and armed attacks against the NRA in Uganda.

The NRA government used a combination of military and diplomatic initiatives in its response to the conflict in northern Uganda. In an address to the nation on the anniversary of Uganda’s independence, President Museveni declared that ‘fighting and annihilating these types of elements is a justified cause’. He embarked on a diplomatic offensive to criminalise rebel groups, a mong others referring to them as ‘the elements that have caused untold suffering to the people of Uganda, violated human rights, murdered people, destroyed the economy and violated the sovereignty of the people of Uganda.’ Criminalisation of rebels was aimed at rationalising the government’s militarist policies and mobilising international support. The government sought to delegitimise opposition of the Ugandan diaspora, which was critical of the NRM government and sympathetic to the rebels. Internationalisation added to the complexity of the conflict.

After more than a year of military stalemate, the NRA government agreed to grant amnesty to those who renounced rebellion. It also agreed to negotiate with the UPDA, the main rebel group operating in northern Uganda. At the time the UPDA was under pressure from the Holy Spirit Movement, a splinter rebel group led by Joseph Kony, which was emerging as a formidable and contending rebel group. Negotiations between NRA and UPDA commanders began in earnest in March 1988, culminating in a cease-fire agreement on 31 January 1988. However, a split occurred within the ranks of the UPDA: the larger faction under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Angelo Okello Okeno surrendered and was integrated into the NRA, while a smaller faction under Brigadier Ong Odek defied the peace talks and the settlement, and opted to continue fighting. According to a former UPDA rebel, some Ugandans in the diaspora advised the UPDA not to agree to the
terms of the settlement. The peace initiative failed to acknowledge the complexity of the conflict. It did not include strategic actors like members of the Ugandan diaspora or other national and regional actors. As Wallensteen and Sollenberg argued, it is vital for any peace initiative to acknowledge regional conflict complexes where they exist and develop processes that involve them all.

The faction of the UPDA rebel group, which disassociated itself from the peace agreement, allied with Kony’s Holy Spirit Movement to form the Uganda Christian Democratic Army. In 1992, the group was renamed the Lord’s Resistance Army. By then, Kony had purged the group of other leaders and consolidated his control over the group. The LRA is an arcane rebel movement, of which little is known, due to the failure by its leadership to present a coherent programme to the public, apart from the obvious objectives of overthrowing the government of Museveni. The organisation comprises former soldiers and children soldiers who have been forcibly recruited and are a highly mobile guerrilla group, with the deplorable reputation of killing civilians and committing other human rights abuses. Kony, who claims to be a spirit medium, started his rebel ‘career’ as ‘spiritual adviser’ to a UPDA battalion commanded by Major Opia. After Major Opia died in a battle in 1987, Kony took command of the unit and formed the Holy Spirit Movement. He embarked on forcible recruitment of former soldiers and UPDA rebels and abduction of civilians, mainly children, to build his force.

The LRA emerged as the most formidable rebel group in the 1990s, after the surrender of the UPDA. But the LRA co-incided with a decline of support for or rebels among civilians and the loyalties of opposition leaders. By 1992, the loss of civilian support began to impact on the group, which also lost a number of its fighters when they surrendered to the government. Thus in intermediaries, they LRA co-acted to form the Uganda Christian Democratic Army. In 1992, the group was renamed the Lord’s Resistance Army. By then, the LRA had purged the group of other leaders and consolidated its control. The LRA is an arcane rebel movement, of which little is known, due to the failure by its leadership to present a coherent programme to the public, apart from the obvious objectives of overthrowing the government of Museveni. The organisation comprises former soldiers and children soldiers who have been forcibly recruited and are a highly mobile guerrilla group, with the deplorable reputation of killing civilians and committing other human rights abuses.

Renewed hostilities followed the collapse of peace talks and the LRA launched numerous attacks to prove that it was still a force to be reckoned with. It intensified its guerrilla activities and abducted children and took them for training in Sudan, which has been providing substantial logistical support for the group. The conflict thus became closely intertwined with the conflict in Sudan and the global and geostrategic issues such as the US-led war against terrorism. The LRA became an actor in regional security, and a pawn in relations between Sudan and Uganda.

In October 1994, Uganda cancelled the agreement it had reached with Sudan in 1990 allowing Sudan to station a military monitoring team in Uganda, accusing the team of engaging in activities incompatible with its mandate. Uganda broke off diplomatic relations with Sudan in April of the following year on the grounds that it was supporting its dissidents. During this period, the Ugandan government’s position was not supported by other states. The US imposed economic assistance to Sudan in 1991, the European Community halted non-humanitarian assistance to Sudan and the United States imposed sanctions on Sudan to force it to hand over suspects implicated in the assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. A peace agreement was reached in February 1994 when Museveni gave an ultimatum to the LRA to surrender within seven days or face military action. Museveni accused the LRA of dishonesty and lack of good faith, and argued that the LRA was using the negotiations to rebuild its capacity through recruitment and that it was negotiating with the government of Sudan for military assistance. Others blame political rivalry between local politicians, while others blamed NRA military officers for sabotaging the negotiations.

The role of the LRA in the regional conflict complex

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Subcommittees on Africa and on Operations and Human Rights, US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Susan Rice, acknowledged that the US had delivered ‘non-lethal, defensive military assistance’ to Uganda ‘to help improve the effectiveness of its military to defend itself against Sudanese sponsored aggression, in particular that of the LRA’. The US provided US$3,85 million in financial years 1997 and 1998 in addition to a US$400 000 in international military education and training programme to improve professionalism of the Ugandan army. I have also pointed out elsewhere that the US used the conflict in northern Uganda as a proxy to supply the SPLA, with which the UPDF shared military facilities. US policy was inf luenced by perception of Museveni as a reliable partner and as a n ‘interlocutor’ in the region. In the process, the conflict in northern Uganda and the LRA were linked to a complex constituting the Great Lakes conflict in particular that of the LRA ‘. The US provided US$3,85 million in financial years 1997 and 1998 in addition to a US$400 000 in international military education and training programme to improve professionalism of the Ugandan army. I have also

Between 1995 and 1998 Uganda fought proxy wars with Sudan that drew in Ethiopia a nd Er itrea, b oth m embers o f t he ‘new f rontline s tates’ a gainst t he Islamist regime in Sudan. Both countries had broken off diplomatic relations with Sudan after accusing it of destabilising their co untries by s upporting d issidents and s ponsoring the s pread of I slamic f undamentalism. U gandan t roops m ade periodic incursions into Sudan in pursuit of the LRA and two other Uganda rebel groups, the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) and Uganda National Rescue Front II (UNRF), and also in support of the SPLA. The WNB F and UNRF II r ebel s operated f rom b ases in S udan a nd Z aire. B etween 1994 a nd 1997, t he WNB F launched a s eries o f a ttacks i n t he W est N ile, f rom t heir b ases in S udan a nd Z aire. In September 1996, between 600 and 800 WNBF soldiers were reported to have entered Uganda through Zaire. They, among others, destroyed bridges, mined roads and attacked refugee camps. Museveni reasoned that Sudan and Zaire under Mobutu intended to ‘keep the Ugandan army pinned down’ and make it in capable of coming to the aid of Rwanda, which was under threat from former Forces Ar mées Rwandais and Hutu Interahamwe militias operating from bases in eastern Zaire.

In 1996, Uganda, together with Rwanda and Angola, which felt their security was threatened by Mobutu, intervened in Zaire in support of dissidents fighting to overthrow his regime. WNB F camps in northea stern Z aire w ere o verrun b y Ugandan government troops, and the security of the border areas was handed over to the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo rebels, who were fighting against Mobutu’s government. In March of the same year, the SPLA destroyed WNB F bases in Sudan and captured a number of its soldiers, while others surrendered to Ugandan government troops.

**REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTIONS**

Concerns about the inter-linkage of conflicts in Uganda and Sudan in the regional conflict complex and the increased threats to regional stability led to numerous interventions in the form of mediation, among others, by Libya, Iran and Malawi, without much success. The complexity of the conflict, multiplicity of issues and lack of sin cerity b ogged do wn t he negotiations. Nonetheless, widespread abduction of children by the LRA and their use as child soldiers and sex slaves, together with other gross violations of human rights and abuses, led to widespread international pressure on Sudan and Uganda to seek a peaceful end to the conflict. Former US President Jimmy Carter, acting through the Carter Center, brokered an agreement between Uganda and Sudan that had succeeded in December 1999 in Nairobi and witnessed by the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children and some friendly foreign governments. Under the accord, Uganda and Sudan agreed to cease hostilities against each other, stop supporting each other’s dissidents, exchange prisoners of war and facilitate the return of war captives, and restore diplomatic ties by the end of February 2000. Although a lack of trust stalled the process of implementation, the accord provided the basis for future relations. In the course of 2000, intense diplomatic activities by the Carter Center and UNICEF, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and some friendly foreign governments, Libya and Egypt resulted in the signing of a new agreement.

In the wake of improved relations between Sudan and Uganda, the International Organisation of Migration (IOM), UNICEF and the governments of Sudan and Uganda repatriated about 323 people who had been abducted by the LRA between 1998 and 2000. A turning point in relations between Uganda and Sudan occurred on 12 January 2002, when Presidents Omar el-Bashir and Mubarak were received by President Museveni in the Ugandan capital of Kampala. The improved relations between the two countries culminated in the signing of a new agreement.

To provide a limited list of operations within which the borders of Sudan and Uganda were threatened, the LRA was operational in Sudan and Uganda, and the borders were a source of conflict between the two countries. In March 2002, the Ugandan government soldiers were deployed as far as Juba, the regional capital of Southern Sudan.
REGIONAL CONFLICT COMPLEX: DYNAMICS AND TRANSFORMATION

The improvement in the relations between Sudan and Uganda reflected the interplay of domestic, regional and international developments. Since the mid-1990s, the Khartoum government had been under growing international pressure to prove its anti-terrorist credentials. Sudan had been internationally isolated since 1991 and subject to UN sanctions since 1996. Sanctions were beginning to have an impact on the regime in Khartoum. The costs of armed conflict and pressure from various dissident groups were a loss for the government. As a result, the Khartoum regime ended the alliance with the radical National Islamic Front Party of Al Hassan Turabi and also ratified the 1997 Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism and the 1999 International Convention for the Suppression of Financing Terrorism. Uganda was also under international pressure to peacefully resolve its conflicts with the Khartoum government, and the killing of civilians by the LRA. The military solution to the conflict had proved ineffective and the new frontline alliance had floundered with the Eritrean conflict and the conflict in the DRC. In 1999, the government reluctantly agreed to grant amnesty to rebels and the Amnesty Act was promulgated in 2000.

The 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington D.C., and the resultant US ‘war on terror’, added a new dimension. After the attacks, rebel groups began to be viewed as potential terrorist organisations and possible cells in an international network of terrorist organisations. Most states were therefore at pains to prove their anti-terrorist credentials. In December 2001, the US added the LRA and the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) rebel groups in Uganda to its list of ‘Terrorist Entities’. Designed to protect the safety of the country and its citizens under the new US Patriot Act, both rebel groups were being supported by Sudan. In March 2002, Uganda followed suit and passed the Anti-Terrorism Act, thereby criminalising the LRA and other rebel groups. Thus Uganda and Sudan were able to cooperate between them as a demonstration of their coordination and readiness to support the international community in its efforts to combat terrorism as reflected in UN Security Council Resolution 1373.

Following the signing of the protocol of 10 March 2002, under which Sudan allowed the Ugandan army to carry out military operations against the LRA in Southern Sudan, the Ugandan army launched Operation Iron Fist to destroy the LRA rebels at their bases in Southern Sudan. The Ugandan government had for a long time argued that cooperation between Sudan and Uganda was vital for defeating the LRA and for ending the conflict in northern Uganda. Intervention by the Ugandan army into Southern Sudan had a domino effect, for instead of destroying the LRA, it elicited counter-violence against the civilian population in Southern Sudan. The LRA was also under international pressure to peacefully resolve its conflict with the Ugandan government. As a result, the LRA was offered an opportunity to exit its conflict with the Ugandan government, leading to the formation of the Declaration of the LRA’s New开始

In November 2003, Jan Egeland, the UN Under Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief, referred to the conflict as one of the world’s largest neglected humanitarian emergencies and called for the Security Council to address the human crisis in northern Uganda. Among other things, he stressed the importance of exploring all peaceful avenues to resolve the conflict, including through creating a climate in which solutions were dialogue-based. The Ugandan government described the Security Council’s statement as ‘unacceptable’ and the call by the Permanent Representative of Canada to the President of the Security Council for the situation in northern Uganda to be put on the agenda of the Security Council as ‘unjustified’. It reiterated its view that the situation in northern Uganda is an internal matter on which it is the only one who can recommend, call for, and initiate action as it sees fit. It insisted on a military solution to the conflict, and demanded a regional military approach involving the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC), United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNIMIS), African Union Forces in Sudan, the SPLA, Sudan and DRC to disarm the LRA. In doing so, the Ugandan government contradicted itself and unwittingly acknowledged the regional and global entanglement of the conflict.

The demand and by the government of Uganda for a regional military offensive against the LRA did not receive a sympathetic hearing and relations between Uganda and the DRC were less than cordial. Uganda had only recently ended its military intervention in the DRC and support from various rebel groups had ended. The government of the DRC had also filed a case against Uganda with the International Court of Justice, accusing Uganda of illegal exploitation of natural resources from

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the DRC. The SPLA and the government of Sudan had just signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the autonomous government of Southern Sudan had been established. As the organisation leading the government of Southern Sudan, the SPLA was trying to enlist support and cooperation of the various armed groups in the south, including former allies of the LRA. Engaging the LRA militarily would create a split and jeopardise efforts aimed at unifying the various factions in the south, and unleash serious reprisal against civilians. A military campaign against the LRA would be burdensome for MONUC in the northeastern DRC and UNMIS and African Union forces in Sudan who were too thin on the ground and overstretched. The UN and AU were therefore reluctant to take on another conflict.64

The government of Uganda contributed further to internationalisation of the conflict by referring the LRA to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC opened investigations against the LRA in July 2004 and in October 2005, issued arrest warrants against five top LRA commanders for committing war crimes and crimes against humanity. Adam Branch65 correctly argued that the government of Uganda was using the ICC as a political instrument to advance its militarisation of the conflict and was criminalising the LRA as a means of delegitimising its political and military opposition. The government expected to benefit from internationalisation of the conflict and hoped that the ICC indictment would put pressure on the government of Sudan to stop supporting the LRA, which would accelerate the demise of the rebel group. However, the ICC indictment made the conflict more complex and entangled in the politics of international criminal prosecution and has proved to be an obstacle to peaceful settlement of the conflict rather than a help.

When conflicts are entangled in a regional complex, the dynamics or resolution of one of the conflicts has an effect on neighbouring conflicts. Improvement in relations between Uganda and Sudan, and the signing of the CPA between the government of Sudan and the SPLA, affected the conflict in northern Uganda and the LRA. The establishment of the autonomous government in Southern Sudan, in line with provisions of the CPA, deprived the LRA of the freedom to operate from bases in Southern Sudan and of direct support from the government of Sudan. It prompted the LRA to shift its base from Southern Sudan to Garamba National Park in the northeastern part of the DRC. Ugandan security officials66 suspected that the relocation was done with the help of the government of Sudan and full knowledge of officials in the DRC. There were also fears by Ugandan security officials that the relocation was done with the help of the government of Sudan and full knowledge of officials in the DRC. There were also fears by Ugandan security officials that the relocation was done with the help of the government of Sudan and full knowledge of officials in the DRC.

Relocation by the LRA to the northeastern part of the DRC resulted in LRA attacks spreading to a wider area. The LRA has been accused of attacking civilians...
The regionalisation of rebel activities: the case of the Lord’s Resistance Army

Paul Omach

and humanitarian workers in Southern Sudan, a nd im peding repatriation of Sudanese refugees from the DRC, the CAR and Uganda. A high-profile LRA attack in the DRC took place on 23 January 2006 when the rebel group attacked a detachment of MONUC forces on 6 December 2006 to assess the situation and the context of negotiations.

For cessation of hostilities, the LRA adopted the tactic of walking out and ‘stalling’ the talks as negotiating the terms of surrender for the LRA. It rejected LRA calls taking hard-line stances. From the onset, the government viewed the purpose of the DRC in pursuit of the LRA and to assist the SPLA. This has resulted in military strikes against LRA rebel jungle hideouts in the Garamba National Park.

Transformation in the regional conflict complex also acted as a spur for the historic Juba peace talks between the LRA and government of Southern Sudan. Museveni, the Ugandan leader, released a video in which he accused the government ofSouthern Sudan knew that if the conflict in northern Uganda did not end, it would complicate the implementation of the CPA and lead to a fresh outbreak of conflict in Southern Sudan. Therefore, the government of Southern Sudan was intent on getting rid of the LRA factor and strengthening its position in dealing with the government of Sudan.

Initially, Ugandan President Museveni insisted on an unconditional surrender by the LRA, but he later agreed to take part in the peace talks with the LRA. In an address to the nation, the president acknowledged that there was tremendous pressure on the government to negotiate with the LRA rebels. At the time Uganda was preparing to host the prestigious Commonwealth heads of states and government meeting in Southern Sudan.

Agreements were also later reached on the other items on the agenda. However, the failure of Kony to show up in Riekwangba for the signing of the final agreement raised doubts about the future of the peace talks. Demands by the LRA led to a clarifica­tion of issues, including some already agreed upon, which raised the profile of the negotiations. Other African countries like Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa sent observers, while NGOs such as Caritas, Saint Egidio and Pax Christi also acted as observers and peace advocates. Despite initial challenges, in an unprecedented development, the LRA and government of Uganda signed a landmark agreement in August 2006. Agreements were also later reached on the other items on the agenda. However, the failure of Kony to show up in Riekwangba for the signing of the final agreement raised doubts about the future of the peace talks. Demands by the LRA led to a clarifica­tion of issues, including some already agreed upon, which raised the profile of the negotiations. Other African countries like Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa sent observers, while NGOs such as Caritas, Saint Egidio and Pax Christi also acted as observers and peace advocates. Despite initial challenges, in an unprecedented development, the LRA and government of Uganda signed a landmark agreement in August 2006.

Regionalisation of Conflicts and Rebel Activities

The preceding discussion shows that the conflict in northern Uganda has been very dynamic. It evolved from a local and national level conflict that was rooted in the problems of a weak state, to a regional level conflict with global dimensions. Weak in ternal governance, factionalism and lack of political pluralism played a key role in shaping the conflict. The UPDF has made periodic incursions into Southern Sudan and the DRC in pursuit of the LRA, and has also assisted the SPLA.

TheCoordinates of the regional conflict complex are fluid and dynamic. The conflict is
also linked by networks of illicit trade in natural resources, such as timber and minerals, which has sustained the conflict.

Against the background of regionalisation, the LRA rebel group has changed over time from an organisation made up of former soldiers of the defeated UNLA who were fighting to recapture state power, to an army of predominantly children abducted from northern Uganda. It has operated as a proxy in the war between Uganda and the US on the one hand, and the Islamist government in Sudan, which the US accused of sponsoring fundamentalism and terrorism, on the other. Since 2007, the LRA has been abducting civilians from the DRC and Southern Sudan and conscripting them into its ranks. Inevitably, the composition and interests of the LRA have varied and changed with time. The conflict also attracted other actors: the US added the LRA to its list of ‘terrorist organisations’, and humanitarian agencies and the ICC also intervened in the conflict. This has made the conflict more complex, and has had an impact on the search for a negotiated settlement. In addition, the interaction between the LRA and its enemies within the region and other actors has evolved over time. The character of the LRA might change as its interaction with other actors continues to change. Any analysis and intervention to resolve the conflict must take note of the dynamic nature of the conflict.

Regionalisation of rebel activities and links between conflicts in neighbouring countries mean that changes and dynamics in one conflict have effects on other conflicts within the region. The signing of the CPA in Sudan in January 2005 and election in the DRC in 2006 had an impact on both the LRA and the conflict in northern Uganda. It lessened the value of the LRA in Sudan, so that Southern Sudan was not willing to continue hosting the UPDF on its territory, while in the DRC efforts were made to integrate various rebel forces into the national army. Efforts to resolve the conflict in the DRC through peaceful means provided a solution to the problem of the meddling by the UPDF in the conflict. Apart from directly intervening in the DRC, the UPDF had also been providing support for rebel groups in the DRC. These developments influenced the strategic options and choices of both the LRA and the government of Southern Sudan (G0SS) and provided an impetus for the Juba peace talks.

The implication is that co nflicts that are in linked need to be addressed within a regional framework. Attempts must be made to involve all stakeholders, at the local, national, regional and global levels. Conflicts that are entangled in a regional web cannot be meaningfully addressed in isolation of other conflicts that impact on it.

CONCLUSION

Since the 1990s, most violent conflicts have an intra-state nature. An explanation for these conflicts can be found in internal discord, linked to the political authority and legitimacy of governments. But contemporary conflicts are not only in internal, they are also regional. The dilemma has become more acute since September 2001, when rebel groups began to be viewed as terrorist organisations, although opinion is divided on this classification. Thus, countries like the US and Uganda added the LRA to the list of terrorist states, but other countries still feel that Uganda should engage with the LRA and seek a peaceful solution to the conflict. There is a need to develop a coherent policy on how to engage rebel groups. To label them as a terrorist and preclude any engagement with them is not a useful option. The voices of rebel movements must be heard. However, engaging rebel groups should not be misconstrued for condoning their criminal activities.

Emphasis should also be placed on understanding the domestic contexts that lead to conflicts and the emergence of rebel groups, and on trying to address them. The order of reas where rebels operate and their involvement with state authorities is a matter of administrative control. Establishing an effective state authority and meaningful administration over frontier territories would be important steps towards addressing the regionalisation of conflicts.
It is a los vital to examine existing regional security frameworks and their suitability for helping the grievances of the rebel groups to be heard, for these are often left out of national negotiations. Conflict management needs to have a regional awareness and take into account various dimensions of regional interlinkages. It should not be restricted to individual states or conflicts, because the resolution of conflict in one country may require resolution of other conflicts within the region.

NOTES
15. Wallensteen and Sollenberg, Armed Conflict and Regional Conflict Complexes.
36. Wallensteen and Sollenberg, Armed Conflict and Regional Conflict Complexes.
Confidential interview, Kampala, November 2007, cited in Omach, Elusive search for peace in northern Uganda.

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Chapter 11

Militant Islamist groups in northern Nigeria

Muhammed Kabir Isa

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the activities of militant Islamic groups in northern Nigeria and recounts how in recent times they have capitalised on the opportunity provided by the current democratic dispensation to increase their activities as non-state actors. The objective is to interrogate the challenges and threats posed to state power and its territorial integrity by the growth and spread of militant Islamic groups in northern Nigeria, particularly since the 1980s. A major aim is to provide an explanation of the resurgence and re-emergence of these groups in northern Nigeria. The chapter also assesses the trends and dynamics that have accounted for the emergence of groups such as the Maitastine sect, the Zakzaky Shiite movement, and the Nigerian Taliban in Yobe State and its subsequent transformation into Boko Haram.

Pertinent questions that the chapter seeks to answer are:

- How has the emergence of militant Islamic groups/movements in northern Nigeria posed a challenge and threat to the power of the secular state and its sovereignty?
- What are the historical trends and dynamics associated with the emergence of the militant Islamic groups in northern Nigeria?
What are the conditions that breed militant Islamism?

What roles do religious doctrine, sociopolitical realities or ideology play?

The analysis is based on the assumption that the emergence, growth and spread of militant Islamist groups in northern Nigeria pose a challenge to the legitimacy of the state and are symptomatic of the weak nature and character of the state. The causes and consequences of the resurgence of militant Islamist movements and their challenge to the political status quo are discussed in the context of existing political realities.

The Nigerian state has, over the years, been characterised by a singular, unmitigated despotism, capricious governement policies, fiscal crises, debt-ridden economy, inequalities and in justices, ad hoc overnanche, large-scale corruption, fractionalisation of the ruling class, weak political and economic institutions, and a near absence of security of lives and property. The current economic crisis manifested by the harsh realities of existence reinfurces the challenges to the legitimacy of the militant Islamist groups. They seemingly complement in way in which the state manages the emerging issue of militant Islamic groups points to one fact – the inability of the ruling class to properly manage the state affairs.

ISLAMISM AND MILITANT ISLAMISM – CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Studies on Islamism, jihad, fundamentalism and mi li tancy are re vived a nd divergent, specifically in terms of their perceptions. Daniel Pipes, an editor of the Middle East Quarterly, is a leading scholar among those who perceive Islamism and militant Islamism as a dangerous threat to the political stability of the world. He views Islamism as fundamentalism, which holds that modern Muslims must return to the roots of their religion and accept the theories of modernisation that perceive religion as antithetical to the development of democratic, modern societies. Hence, Islamism and other politico-religious movements are considered to oppose modernity, while opportunistically tapping its achievements for developing its own tenets. Islamism conceptually is about political movements that pursue Islamic legitimacy of the state by the formation of Islamic political movements. The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Algeria, the Salafist groupings under the banner of Wahhabism, al-Qaeda, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and Algeria, the Hizb ut-Tahrir, and the Taleban in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Simply lumping together these varied and distinct streams of Islamist groups, for example by implying that the Wahhabism of the Taleban and the Salafism of al-Qaeda constitute a homogeneous brand of Islam, is likely to add to the confusion.

Islamism does have its roots in both the Salafiyah movement and the radical Islamic organisations currently competing for political power. Islamism independently in the country where it is found and constitutes a political force, and to consider its developments in that particular cultural context. Esposito further maintains that Islamism is a political programme. Islamism, which in Arabic denotes al-’islamiyya, is a set of ideologies depicting Islam not only as a religion but a political system comparable to socialism or capitalism and which holds that modern Muslims must return to the roots of their religion and unite politically by the formation of Islamic political movements (al-harakat al-islamiyya al-siyasiyya). However, this does not imply that there are universally accepted conceptions of Islamism.

He posits that there is a need to appreciate each case of fundamentalism and Islamism independently in the country where it is found and constitutes a political force, and to consider its developments in that particular cultural context. Esposito further maintains that Islamism is a political programme. Islamism, which in Arabic denotes al-’islamiyya, is a set of ideologies depicting Islam not only as a religion but a political system comparable to socialism or capitalism and which holds that modern Muslims must return to the roots of their religion and unite politically by the formation of Islamic political movements (al-harakat al-islamiyya al-siyasiyya). However, this does not imply that there are universally accepted conceptions of Islamism.
and also the leading political role played by Shia scholars (ulama) and religious authorities of the Shiite over time have unified Shiite Islamism, saving it from fragmentation and degeneration.11

Nevertheless, the principal responsibility for militant Islamism lies with Muslims and, more specifically, with the A. Rabs. How can they confront these responsibilities? Should the response be national or international, theological or philosophical, intellectual or political, repressive or accommodating, Muslim or Arab?12

Islamism as a concept also increasingly denotes the political manifestations of Islam. Leading Islamic thinkers such as M. Hammad, J. al-Din, A. Afgani, S. A. M. A. M. S. A. T. S. I. O. A. I. N. (Egypt) and the Ayatollah Khomeini (Iran)13 have aspired to apply many aspects of the Shariah, particularly that dealing with revival and revitalising modern society, creating pan-Islamic political unity, and eliminating non-Muslims and particularly their goals by employing tactics such as temporary withdrawal from society.14 The faithful can also be urged to target state institutions and symbols that are regarded as secular or state tate in instruments, or a gencies that are perceived to be tools of oppression and domination.

There a re t hree m ain va rients of m ilitant I slamism: the t echnical m ilitancy against Muslim regimes that are considered to be impious (such as in M orocco, Libya and A. lgeria), the re dentionists fighting t o re em the l and r uled by n on-Muslims or under occupation (such as in Nigeria) and the global militants waging a jihad against the West.19

**ISLAMISM AND MILITANT ISLAMISM IN NORTHERN NIGERIA**

Contemporary militant Islamist movements in northern Nigeria can be identified by the manner in which they pursue the principles of Islam. They seek to achieve their goals by violently confronting the symbols and institutions of state power, authority and legitimacy with the ultimate aim of taking over state power. Further, they seek to capture the state through legal and democratic means or through a violent revolution, coup d’etat or secession.17

Militant Islamists radically reinterpret traditional Islamic concepts, particularly its views of battles or jihads, when mobilising the faithful by warning them against ‘enemies of Islam’ and urging them to defend the faith. The faithful are encouraged to train, organise and participate in the actualisation of their goals by employing tactics such as temporary withdrawal from society.18 The faithful can also be urged to target state institutions and symbols that are regarded as secular or state in instruments, or agencies that are perceived to be tools of oppression and domination.

There are three main variants of militant Islamism: the technical militancy against Muslim regimes that are considered to be impious (such as in Morocco, Libya and Algeria), the redentists fighting to redeem the land and ruled by non-Muslims or under occupation (such as in Nigeria) and the global militants waging a jihad against the West.
This belief in the resurgence of the Mahdi is widely accepted by Sunni and Shiite Muslims in northern Nigeria (a swell as local Islamic community/order), even though the Shi’ite (Shia) sects view the Mahdi as the hidden Imam. Therefore, Muslims have come to define and justify most and any attempts at eviving religion through militant Islamism to fight injustices and oppressions as part of their religious obligations. Ultimately, the belief is that a charismatic Islamic leader would emerge to oust an existing order of injustice and inequality and establish in its place one that is equal and just, as enshrined by the Qura’an and the Sunnah or practices of the Prophet Muhammad. It is therefore not uncommon for the followers of organised Islamist movements to identify their leaders as the Mahdi and to also refer to him as a mujaddid (reviver or reformer).  

One of the major trends that have characterised northern Nigeria from the early 19th century to the present is the emergence and/or resurgence of revivalists, reformists, radicals, fundamentalists and revolutionary Islamist movements. Most of these movements have aims that vary, such as the establishment of a new Islamic order that would develop and ensure almost every period, opposed and in some cases totally rejected established and existing Islamic scholarship. Mohamed, for example, is the leader of the movement and has established leaders, in turn, as the Mahdi and to also refer to him as a mujaddid (reviver or reformer).  

A cursory examination of the recorded history of the resurgence of Islamism and militant movements in northern Nigeria reveals that they are recurring phenomena that is similar to the 19th-century jihad of Uthman dan Fodio. The key to understanding contemporary militant Islamism in northern Nigeria is to comprehend the role and place of the Sokoto caliphate, a regional order that was established to exist coexist with secular Western rule through a regional network. Islamist movements in northern Nigeria have capitalised on this network to create transnational connections with global Islamic society.  

The most recent militancy has been spurred by both the economic crisis and governance deficiencies at all levels of the Nigerian government, as well as opportunities provided by the opening up of the democratic space. But it is mainly based on the traditional protest agendas of challenging and undermining the post-colonial secular state. This has been accompanied by the phenomenon of prolonged military rule and its institutionalisation of permanent transition, which led to increased repression of freedoms and popular opinion. It has also caused increased disarticulation from the legitimacy of the state. This situation intensified different forms of identity mobilisation and consciousness on the ethnic, regional, religious, communal and minority political levels.  

Identity consciousness is often positive in local communities and societies but can be complex. Religious and political leaders, such as religious and political figures, have complex political and economic power.

THE STATE AND RESURGENCE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN NIGERIA  

In Nigeria, the burgeoning capitalist class comprises not only the comprador and indigenous businesspeople but also state emplaces freedom from the colonial and military service, the military and the police. The state itself over the years became the major source, facilitator and protector of their wealth, either through deliberate policies such as indigenisation, commercialisation and privatisation, or through corruption. It is fundamental given the critical role of the state in capital accumulation in the post-colonial era that political contestation would be based on capturing state power. Hence, the competition for state power is intense between the competing sections of the polity. This is especially true in view of the expanded revenue base the state has acquired from petroleum export earnings, which has risen dramatically from the 1970s.

The historical origin of the state in the colonial era and its role in the accumulation process in the post-colonial era. The existence of the ruling class revolves around the state from which it derives its origin and wealth by employing every available means to secure power and access. Thus, the competition for state power is intense between the competing sections of the polity. This situation intensified different forms of identity mobilisation and consciousness on the ethnic, regional, religious, communal and minority political levels.  

Identity consciousness offers positive features of plural societies but can also be complex. Religious and political leaders, such as religious and political figures, have complex political and economic power.
The accentuation of religious identities and the phenomenal growth of religious revivalism exploded in the era of the post-adjustment economy. The rise of religious identity is linked to the phenomenon of increased economic hardship under the structural adjustment programme, which accounted for the sharp rise in religious activities and the mobilisation of religious identities in competitive politics. Ibrahim convincingly showed that ‘the dynamics of religious movements in contemporary Nigeria is very complex and cannot be reduced to a simple “revivalist movement” or a mechanical response to political and economic crisis’.

However, he observed that it is fundamentally important to comprehend the multiplication of religious movements in Nigeria and the intensification of their fervour within the context of economic and social crises. One should also consider the conditions created by the failures of the military transition programme to democracy, failure of the civilian and democratic processes, and most importantly amid these failures and crises, the attempt by the common people to seek and produce autonomous spheres of meaning and actions in the context of the severity of economic hardships created by the mortgaging and sale of the state through the policy of privatisation of the state and its investments.

It is safe to postulate at this juncture that colonial and post-colonial Nigeria had been characterised and dominated by regimes that have been repressive and, over time, these regimes imposed their ideologies and political authority on the people. Ibrahim also avers that ‘the repression, imposition of an official ideology, and the excesses of the party machine forced people to retreat into ideological domains not controlled by the state and it would seem that religion is the major expression of this possibility’.

In the past decade, Nigeria has witnessed some mainly Muslim states in the north transform their legal systems to conform to Shariah, with penal laws that apply severe punishment for crimes. The judiciaries in these states were reorganised and in some instances created to administer purely Shariah law. In furtherance of Shariah law, state policies were aimed at cleansing society in order to establish social justice through organising Zakah collection and distribution to the needy, banning begging, rehabilitating the destitute and prostitutes, improving education, and creating a state-controlled and funded security machinery called Hisbah to function alongside the Nigerian police force.

Several reasons have been advanced to explain the advocacy of Shariah implementation in Nigeria. One explanation is that the Nigerian federation is becoming more decentralised and part of the decentralisation is taking the form of cultural self-determination. In Yorubaland, this cultural self-determination assumed the form of Yoruba nationalism, in Igboland it manifested in demands for confederation, while in the Muslim north it took the shape of Shariah advocacy.

A second explanation for the ascendancy of Shariah was its use as a bargaining chip by the north, which was losing political influence and relevance in the Nigerian federation. In order to reassert the region’s influence, its dominant class employed Shariah as a negotiating chip for a new national pact among contending national forces.

One of the triggers of Shariah advocacy in some northern Nigerian states was the resentment of being at the periphery of Nigerian politics and its power configuration. There were times when the northern political leaders had powerful political positions in Nigeria and others when the northerners accepted their economically marginal position. However, with the federal elections of 1999, the balance of political power shifted to the south without a marked transformation in the economic marginality of the north. Hence, the politics of Shariah advocacy was part of a protest against regional economic inequalities in Nigeria.

Map 11–1: Nigerian map of states with Shariah laws and principles

The 12 northern states, in green, that have adopted Shariah laws and principles are Borno, Yobe, Gombe, Bauchi, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Sokoto, Kebbi and Niger. The northern states that have not adopted Shariah are Adamawa, Taraba, Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Kogi and Kwara.
Another factor that maintained their support was the implementation of Shariah in some northern Nigerian states, which was unconnected to the desire of Muslims to embrace Islamic law to govern their lives, coupled with social dislocation and neglect through Uthman Dan Fodio's jihad.44

The rising popularity of militant Islamist movements in northern Nigeria can be attributed to a combination of factors, including increased inequality, injustices, poverty, failed social services, and corruption. These Muslims—largely peasants, unemployed or landless proletariats—spurred to have their progress, which their elites were incapable of providing. They believed that obedience to God is a means of achieving peace and the failure of Western-trained elites to deliver services through Western secular technology.

Ironically, Islamist militant movements regard themselves as pragmatic and modern adaptations of Western-styled organisations that are better suited to deliver the services demanded by large educated cohorts of Muslim youths in northern Nigerian cities. These movements have evolved into today's militants in northern Nigeria.

The contemporary militant Islamist movements and organisations in northern Nigeria are quick to adopt Western information technology to advance their cause, reach out to adherents and solicit funds, as well as to connect to other global Islamic movements.36

The leadership of the then Hausa societies and their associates of ungodly practices, which had been corrupted by practices and customs considered to be unIslamic. Early Islamic militants under the banner of the Quadriyya accused the leadership of the Hausa societies and their associates of ungodly practices leading to 'polytheism' and 'syncretism'. This laid the basis for Ibn Fodio's Sokoto jihad, which challenged unjust and corrupt rulers, particularly their distortions of the Islamic system.40

According to Uthman Ibn Fodio's manifesto, 'Jihad' was aimed at teaching and spreading pristine or true Islam and the establishment of a system of government based on the Shariah.41 With support from Hausa and Fulani peasants, Uthman Ibn Fodio succeeded in establishing an Islamic political order governed by the Amir ul-Muminin (commander of the faithful), who later transformed himself into the Sarkin Musulmi (ruler of Muslims). The jihad challenged a nd questioned the management of religious and political power in northern Nigeria and succeeded in replacing the Hausa aristocratic group with an intellectual and scholarly elite that led the emirates across the region. The administrative structures put in place after the jihad represented the sy mbolic importance and place of the Sokoto caliphate today.

The jihad of Uthman Ibn Fodio continues to exert a great cultural influence in northern Nigeria. A t i ts inception, the caliphate state em phasised justice, t he
removal of unfair taxes, and an Islamic education for the Hausa communities. The *jihad* was also a challenge to the ‘polytheism’ and ‘syncretism’ that was prevalent in the Hausa states at the time.⁴² To date, the *jihad* has represented one of the major landmarks in the political history of events of Islam in northern Nigeria and West Africa as a whole. It was a turning point that shaped the history of West Africa in the 19th century.⁴³

Under colonialism, the greatest challenge to the state and colonial authority came from the *rise* of the *Mahdist* militant Islamist movement (Mahdiyya), with *Mahdist* as its guiding philosophy and principle. The *Mahdist* movement evolved as a trans-Saharan anti-colonial Islamic fundamentalist movement. Its origins can be traced to a messianic doctrine that proffered that at the turn of each century, a *Mahdi* would emerge with powers to strengthen Islam and make justice triumph. The doctrines held that when a Mahdi emerges, he would attract a large followership of Muslims in his quest to establish justice and Islamism in society. Most Muslims look towards the arrival of the Prophet Mohammad’s flight from Mecca to Medina in 621 AD (the *Hijrah*), after the sultanate fell to British imperial and colonial rule in the 1900s. In 1907, in the British protectorate of Western Nigeria, Sultan Attahiru and his reject the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates as satanic and evil.⁴⁴

The *Mahdist* militant Islamist movement considered British colonial rule and the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates as satanic and evil. The movement was inspired by the resistance of Sultan Attahiru and his rejection of British to recognise and allow the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates as satanic and evil. The *Mahdist* movement was also a challenge to the ‘polytheism’ and ‘syncretism’ that was prevalent in the Hausa states at the time. ⁴² To date, the *Mahdist* movement has represented one of the major landmarks in the political history of events of Islam in northern Nigeria and West Africa as a whole. It was a turning point that shaped the history of West Africa in the 19th century.⁴³

Recent militant Islamist movement in northern Nigeria: the *Maitastine* and *Shiite* movements

It should be stated clearly that the reason for classifying the *Maitastine* movement with the *Shiite* is not because they share common doctrinal beliefs, approaches or principles, but rather because of certain shared characteristics. Both movements emerged at about the same time, and it is likely that the same conditions dictated the logic of their emergence. In addition, they both have a radical and revolutionary anti-establishment stance and share the total rejection of the existing state or order through a *jihad* or a ranian-styled *revolution* that would ultimately replace the corrupt, Western-styled secular state with an Islamic state.

Apart from these similarities, there was no distinct link between the two movements in terms of Islamic doctrines and principles. As a matter of fact, the *Shiite* movement took a lesson from the state handling of the *Maitastine* movement to replacing the state or order through a *jihad* or a ranian-styled *revolution* that would ultimately replace the corrupt, Western-styled secular state with an Islamic state.

The *Maitastine* radical militant Islamist movement became very popular in the early 1980s in the city of Kano and other areas of northern Nigeria. It came to the limelight as a result of its prolonged and violent confrontation with the security and military agencies, hence the reference to the 1980 *Maitastine* civil disturbance in Kano. This violent confrontation later spread to other cities of northern Nigeria.

The *Maitastine* was a n a *nti-status q uo* movement driven by Islamic fundamentalism. Its members are a n *anti-establishment* movement who challenge
both the do minant relig ious a nd o th er au thorities, and in deed t he l arger Muslim ummah (community). Th e m ovement wa s f ounded b y A lhaji M arwa Maitastine, who was killed in a co nfrontation with the political authorities in the 1980s disturbances in w hich m ore t han 4 177 p eople died.47 The movement has been classified as radical and militant with a millenarian belief largely because of its expressed perceptions that the dominant Muslim population is derailing from the tenets of the Qur’an and getting richer and more Westernized to the detriment of the lowly, poor and non-Westernized segment of society.48

The Maitastine movement represents a radical al s hift f rom t heir f orms o f f Islamism movements because it operated at variance with established or accepted beliefs or theories, especially with respect to Islamic beliefs in junctions (heterodox movement). The Maitastine movement believed that it had to adhere to the Qu’ran only, a tendency towards an obsession with the Qu’ran and a rejection of the Hadith and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad as n o d other r elated s anctioned o fficial s ources o f Islamic law. Members of the movement live in secluded quarters isolated from other members of society while ejecting everything that is Western, especially education, schools and material things like radios and wristwatches. They are opposed to influence and accepted a s su ch c ondemn m aterial w ealth a nd t he r ich.49 The members exhibit in tense hatred f or a g ents of t he s tate s uch a s th e p olice a nd a rmed f orces. Th e re sults o f f elings p artly con tributed t o t he r ecurrence o f v iolent confrontations with the security and military agencies in Kano and other parts of northern Nigeria in the 1980s.50

It was believed that the group had been completely suppressed by the state in 1980, but it resurfaced in 2005 in the Jigawa and Kano states of northern Nigeria. This move brought about the infiltration of the movement by Shiite doctrines, and El-Zakzaky later identified with the Muslim and secularist at the same time; in fact, secularism is disbelief.51

The Muslim Brothers, then under the leadership of El-Zakzaky, do not regard themselves as members of an organization, but claim total commitment to Islam. As such their aim is to establish a ‘nation which should be wholly Islamic; Islamic in the sense that it considers Allah as the Lord of the nation’.52 To the Muslim Brothers, no Muslim can be a Muslim and a secularist at the same time; in fact, secularism is disbelief.53

When it was initially established, the Muslim Brothers was a purely Sunni group. However, the close association of its leaders with the Tariqat resulted in the transformation of the movement into a Sunni group and a Shiite group. The Shiite splinter group has rejected other Muslims for having gone astray while maintaining that their beliefs constitute only of genuine Muslims and righteous servants of God. The members rejected other Muslims for having gone astray while maintaining that their beliefs are the ones that have been classified as radical and militant with a millenarian belief largely because of its expressed perceptions that the dominant Muslim population is derailing from the tenets of the Qur’an and getting richer and more Westernized to the detriment of the lowly, poor and non-Westernized segment of society.48

The Muslim Brothers attracted members from mainly the youthful segment of society, particularly from universities, and secondary schools. Initially, it was a m ore o f a n e lite I slamic va nguard in i t s membership and recruiting style. It saw itself as a missionary and revolutionary group that sought to address the ills of Muslim society. Its initial doctrine, among others, focused on the ills of the Muslim ummah in Nigeria, including moral laxity, un-Islamic practices, dissatisfaction with governance by Muslim leaders, and the lack of access to political expression, particularly participatory politics, under an authoritarian regime. The situation in Nigeria – particularly under military rule – was exacerbated by serious economic and social crises that resulted in the vast majority of people suffering poverty, unemployment and underemployment. The Muslim Brothers offered the anxious youths seeking change, a brighter future.54

The first group of contemporary Muslims in northern Nigeria to be classified as radical and militant islamists were the Muslim Brothers led by Ibraheem el-Zakzaky. He was a student at the Ahmadu Bello University at the time of the 1970 Iranian revolution and was inspired by it to lead the MSS. El-Zakzaky used the MSS to mobilize Muslim students to advocate in 1978 for the inclusion of the Shariah penal code law in the Nigerian constitution and later for a revolution that would lead to a transformation of the Nigerian secular state into an Islamic one. These firebrand revolutionary tendencies led him to confront the agencies of the state, which ultimately led to his expulsion from the university.55

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In the past, the disregard for state authority of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) was exhibited in a number of confrontations with the state. Its leader, el-Zakzaky, spent in total about nine years in nine different prisons from 1981 to 1998, under different administrations and regimes. The Shi'ite denounced the state and government, disregarded party politics and elections, was contemptuous of Nigeria's constitution, refused to recognise its laws, refused to respect the national anthem and national pledge, and disregarded the Nigerian flag. In other words, the Shi'ite rejected every symbol of Nigerian statehood. The Shi'ite faction had open confrontations and running battles with security agents of the state for several years that often resulted in the loss of lives and property. Bloody confrontations and clashes have characterised its relationship with the state and the mode of state responses until 1999, the beginning of the era of democratic enterprise in Nigeria.

Over time, the IMN has strategised and changed tactics. It is no longer a confrontationist group, a symbol of power that they had denounced in the past. In fact, between 1999 and 2007 the leader of the movement was a senior special adviser to the governor of Kaduna State, which guaranteed him direct access to the corridors of power and 2007 the leader of the movement was a senior special adviser to the governor of Kaduna State, which guaranteed him direct access to the corridors of power. While it is true that the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) was exhibiting some of the same symbols of power that they had denounced in the past, it retains its confrontational disposition. It is now a movement that operates like a state within the state in Lebanon.

The emergence of neo-militant Islamist movements in northern Nigeria: the Nigerian Taleban or Boko Haram phenomenon, 2001–2009

The emergence of a nebulous neo-militant Islamist movement in the eastern part of northern Nigeria in 2001 should not be equated to or classified with established Sufi Sunni movements such as the following:

- The Tijaniyya and Quadriyya, which have spiritual and commercial links with other Sufi orders in West and North Africa
- The Wahhabi Izala movement, which runs a charity and first aid organisation and has links with the Saudis
- The Salafyya movement, which runs schools and business outlets, or
- The militant Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) (formerly under the banner of M uslim B rotherhood), which is a militant group with open confrontations with the state and the mode of state responses until 1999. The group has coopted by dominant state elements such that they are espousing and using the same symbols of power that they had denounced in the past. In fact, between 1999 and 2007 the leader of the movement was a senior special adviser to the governor of Kaduna State, which guaranteed him direct access to the corridors of power and 2007 the leader of the movement was a senior special adviser to the governor of Kaduna State, which guaranteed him direct access to the corridors of power. While it is true that the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) was exhibiting some of the same symbols of power that they had denounced in the past, it retains its confrontational disposition. It is now a movement that operates like a state within the state in Lebanon.

The emergence and subsequent transformation of this movement are linked with the dissatisfaction associated with the weak economic base of the contemporary Nigerian economy, which is characterised by poverty, deteriorating social services and infrastructure, educational backwardness, rising numbers of unemployed graduates, massive numbers of unemployed youth and lawless conditions in agriculture, inadequate and near lack of support for agriculture, and the weak and dwindling productive base of the northern economy. According to this movement, the current democratic enterprise has produced a set of political leaders who lead by deception and profess to be reintroducing Islamic legal principles despite a massive collapse of services, poverty, failed governance, absence of social justice and a fair electoral process that produced consensus candidates that lack legitimacy. These corrupt and power-hungry politicians hijack votes and are self-imposed leaders. They declare billions of fictitious amounts of money as assets to be recouped as investments through falsification and overpricing of contracts – all of this in spite of the existence of a framework of due process and diligence in contracts awarded and procurements.

The neo-militant Islamist movement was aimed primarily at overthrowing the present ‘Western’ and ‘secular’ state order in Nigeria and replacing it through violent means. It is also a movement that has links with the Saudis and has links with Hezbollah (with which it is linked and which operates like a state within the state in Lebanon).
its early formative stage in 2001 sought for self-exclusion of its members from the mainstream corrupt society by living in areas outside or far away from society in order to intellectualise and radicalise the revolutionary processes. It would ultimately lead to a violent overthrow of the secular state. It also advocated for the strict application of Islamic law and transformation of Muslim society through a violent armed and revolutionary takeover of the secular state, which was seen as evil and unjust. The movement also sought to eliminate external influences and innovations in the practice of Islam. However, it did not reject or refuse to use technological elements such as motorcycles, cars, cellular phones and AK-47 guns, and other benefits that modernity confers on society and which are derived from Western civilisation.

The Muhajirun, Hijrah or Ahl al-Sunna Wal Jamaāḥ – as it was known before its metamorphosis into Boko Haram – aptly fits the description of a neo-militant Islamist movement. Although its Islamic doctrine was in spired by the Afghan Taleban of the late 1990s, it has no established link with the Afghan group. The members of the Muhajirun group met in Maiduguri – once the ancient capital of the Kanem-Borno Empire, the earliest Islamic empire in the region before the advent of the Sokoto Caliphate – to an uninhabited area between Yobe State and the Niger Republic called Kanamma. It was from this location that it began to launch its attacks. Their first victims were members of the local community with whom it clashed over farmlands and fishing grounds. Subsequently it began launching attacks on the symbols of state authority such as the police stations in Kanamana, Geidam and Damaturu, the state capital of Yobe State. In some of the raids on police stations it stripped them of caches of arms and ammunitions, burned them down, and killed several police officers. A fiercer attack on Kanamana police station was led by ‘Aminu Tasheen-Ilimi, an unemployed youth and is based on a cell network to ensure adequate training and skills in the use of weapons as well as ideological orientation.

In 2003, the then governor of Yobe State intervened by requesting the Nigerian army to deal with the militants when it became clear that the Nigerian police could not contain them. At least 18 people were killed in a fortnight of clashes between the group and a combined force of the army and the police. A fiercer escalation of conflict, the co-operation between the authorities had allowed the group to evolve into a public security threat. Related questions were how the group obtained arms and weapons training and who its internal and external sponsors and links were. It was obvious that the militants had an extensive network of cells that recruited members from places as varied as influential and affluent backgrounds. The movement recruits its followers from unemployed youth and is based on a cell network to ensure adequate training and skills in the use of weapons as well as ideological orientation.

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civilisation could be seen in the light of the class consciousness of the group, in that the elites of northern Nigeria had failed to live up to expectations and deliver on promises made, especially regarding the establishment and enactment of the Shariah and principles in Muslim–dominant states in northern Nigeria.65

The word boko is derived from the English word ‘book’ and was coined at the inception of colonialism in northern Nigeria.66 It has come to mean the ability to read and write, especially in the Western-styled educational system, as distinct from the Islamic, Arab and Middle Eastern educational systems, which existed in northern Nigeria before being dislodged by colonialism. It served as a rejection – and in its ardiest form a s a r esistance – t o co lonial im position o f W estern education a nd i ts sys tem o f c o lonial s o cial o rganisation, w hic h r eplaced a nd degraded the earlier Islamic order of the jihadist state.

Islamic scholars and clerics who once held sway in the caliphate state and courts, assigned the name boko to northern elites who spoke, acted, ruled and operated the state like their Western colonial masters. It is not uncommon to hear in discussions among Islamist scholars and average northerners that poverty and collapsed governance – the bane of the region – can be blamed on the failures and corrupt attitudes of yan boko (modern elites trained at secular schools) who have acquired a Western education and are currently in positions of power. As such, the system represented by the yan boko is unjust, secular and has no divine origin. It is therefore unIslamic, which in turn accounts for its ineptitude and corruptness.

All of this forms a sound basis for the ideological orientation and mobilisation of unemployed and unskilled Muslim youths in northern Nigeria. These youths have unfettered access to Islamic education in which the criteria for admission are informal and less cumbersome as long as one can serve one’s master/tutor for the duration of one’s study in farmlands and in petty trading in urban centres – a s opposed to access to Western education that is restricted by entry requirements and that is not readily available.

In colonial a nd p ost-colonial northern Nigeria, acquisition o f a W estern education b ecame t he sine qua non o f b etter s tandard o f l iving a nd a k ey t o opportunity, a means of uplifting one’s position and access to power. In the poststructural ad justment era o f t he l ate 1980s, a n ew form o f n eo-liberal m arket economy wa s u shered in t hat p rivatised t he s tate a nd r esulted in un i versit y-educated graduates struggling to find employment. Employment became a matter of a patron-client relationship, coupled with access to state power.

The idea of boko is not just about rejecting Western education per se; it is a judgement of its failure to provide opportunities for better lives and thus became a symbol for the Boko Haram movement to capitalise on the shortcomings of yan boko. Subsequently it was coupled with haram (forbidden). The movement used the term to mobilise unemployed, unskilled and poverty-stricken youths to join its cause, dislodge the secular, boko-controlled state in Nigeria, and in introduce the strict application of Shariah law and the creation of an Islamic state. This partly explains why Boko Haram’s primary targets of a attack were sy mbols o f t he state such as security agencies, which had become widely despised.

Boko Haram considers itself to be the law enforcement a gent a gainst those opposed to its doctrine. It thus targets a nd Islamic clerics who have adapted to a nd followed Western-styled democracy and secular ideology. The July 2009 encounter left about 700 people dead in Maiduguri alone and displaced about 5,000 in just five days. It was reported that, in B auchi, about 50 m embers o f t he s ect h ad b een k illed a nd hundreds arrested. Between 2003 and 2009, the group had grown to such an extent that it was able to mobilise thousands of members from Katsina, Damaturu and Potiskum to rally behind their leader, Muhammad Yusuf. The security forces had to use intensive fire power to dislodge the group and its leaders from their hideout. The arrests of some Chadians led to speculation that there could be a n international dimension through a network of Chadian and Nigerian rebels.

A chilling revelation is that some of the captured graduates belonging to the movement are children of the affluent in society. The fact that most investigations initiated by the government in the past few years were never concluded leads some to conclude that the current investigations would suffer the same fate as previous ones. For example, six years after the 2003 in cident nothing has been heard of a report or government white paper about the outcome of the investigation on the neo-militant Islamist movement’s activities, or about its source of funds, support
base, recruitment style and networking, and – most importantly – sources of arms and ammunition.

The resurgence and spread of this and similar groups confirm that the state in Nigeria is weak and incapable of managing militant Islamists or groups such as those in the Niger Delta because of its weak character, inaptitude and corrupt nature of the leadership and its ruling class. The state seems to lack a common approach of dealing with armed non-state groups. Although the state responded with mass and unprecedented force to the *Boko Haram* uprising and the Niger Delta insurgency, it has so far extended amnesty only to the Niger Delta militants. It is obvious that the presence of natural resources such as oil has influenced the different approaches taken by the government to address militant uprisings in different regions of the country.

**Global and regional response to militant Islamic groups in Nigeria and Africa**

The significance of this study also lies in the 11 September 2001 attacks on American soil. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, US foreign policy dramatically changed from the Cold War and immediate post-Cold War era to a heavy focus on defining, conceptualising, preventing and combating global terrorist threats against American interests and allies. The aftermath of 9/11 included a change in US foreign policy towards countries with predominantly or substantially Muslim populations. Muslims in Nigeria, North Africa, and elsewhere were perceived to espouse radical views or the ideology of Islam that threatened American interests. Islam was intrinsically and incorrectly linked to terrorism and regarded as a menace to the West. The state’s inability to govern adequately, corruption, misperceptions of Muslims, by the development of events post 9/11, as terrorist suspects and Islam as an anti-Western ideology.

Americans and their Western allies evolved a number of misconceptions and prescriptions about Islam, Islamism and militant Islamist movements in Africa.

First, they view Muslims in Africa as generally attracted to a radical ideology that is promoting violence against Western interests. Second, they see this form of terrorism as a threat to their national security and the interests of the US. This was to be realised through ‘active security missions’ that address the underdevelopment and poverty that are making Africa a fertile breeding ground for terrorists. In essence, AFRICOM is a reincarnation of the US ‘manifest destiny’ policy that seeks to save Africans from their inability to rule themselves and to transform the conditions under which they can be turned into terrorists.

Although Nigeria is one of the countries AFRICOM has targeted to benefit from its wide range of programmes, its government has been eager to attract investment. However, AFRICOM has gone ahead and included northern Nigeria in the Pan-Saharan region that it is monitoring for terrorist threats. It is interesting to see how the leadership in Abuja will behave in the future in terms of
accepting American assistance to deal with Islamic militancy in the northern and the insurgency in the Niger Delta regions. Such acceptance could imply acknowledgement of the state's incapacity to deal with national security threats and also inflame anti-government and anti-Western passions.

CONCLUSIONS

It is fast becoming obvious to social observers and scholars alike that in the years ahead religion as a social phenomenon – more than any other social variable such as ethnicity – will take centre stage in the discourse on Nigeria's political landscape. It will play a major role in shaping the future direction of the country. Many factors account for this tendency towards what is termed 'religious essentialism'. This phenomenon, which is also termed militancy, extremism, radicalism and fundamentalism, has as its potential effect ending acr oss national boundaries. Nigeria's religious and political leadership must be accountable to the population for how it uses these resources. The state in Nigeria must be accountable to all Nigerians, regardless of their identity (religious, ethnic, regional and other affiliations).

The best guarantee for a peaceful and prosperous Nigeria is one that is not threatened by the rise of religio-political rhetoric. As the epistemology of state institutions, power-over-governance, and the spread of political ideas, religion is increasingly being used to justify the weakening power and legitimacy of the state in order to assert their doctrines and philosophy. In some instances, avowed militants use extremist movements to create quasi-states within the Nigerian state, thereby further weakening national leadership. In such circumstances, religion becomes a viable alternative for social discourse and activity. Militant religious and social movements of varying persuasions, and activities, promote good governance, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The state in Nigeria must ensure the realisation of rights, equity and justice for all Nigerians, regardless of their identity (religious, ethnic, regional and other affiliations).

Militancy, extremism, radicalism and fundamentalism means or ideologies are used to fill alternative spaces that the state has either failed to provide or closed; or they are a reaction against alienation from modern institutions of governance that fail to deliver social services and other benefits to the people. The search and quest to re-assert identities, institutions, values and norms that make meaningful sense to the averager citizen in Nigeria cannot be wished away, particularly amid the decaying infrastructure and social services in the country. The search is for alternative or new orders that are particularly attractive to the vulnerable and disempowered. Militant and extremist organisations and networks, proselytise radical ideas and recruit new members. The activities of these radical groups could be inadvertently assisted by the failed neo-liberal policies of structural adjustment, negative consequences of globalisation, the poorly performing Nigerian economy, and the state's failure to deliver social services and other benefits to the citizens. The state in Nigeria must pursue a social and economic policy that will ensure the realisation of rights, equity and justice for all Nigerians, regardless of their identity (religious, ethnic, regional and other affiliations).

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NOTES

1 Politically, Nigeria is divided into 36 administrative divisions, referred to as states, and one federal capital territory, namely Abuja. Northern Nigeria is a large geographical area and contains 19 of the 36 states that make up the administrative units of Nigeria. The country is further constituted into six geopolitical zones, of which three are part of northern Nigeria. The northwest zone is made up of Kano, Jigawa, Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Birnin Kebbi and Sokoto, a national north-central zone of Niger, Kwarar, Bembe, Kogi, Nasara and Plateau states. See Nations Online: countries of the world, Federal Republic of Nigeria – co-ordination profile, http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/first.shtml (accessed 9 June 2009).
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Introduction

This chapter examines the most prominent and current major armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria, and Morocco. It discusses their common features and differences, including ideology, recruitment and particular features such as development and activities. Contemporary armed Islamist groups in these three countries have emerged as a violent manifestation of Islamist opposition against the state, which originated in Egypt in the 1960s, but also draws inspiration from earlier forms of Islamism. Their emergence is simultaneously a response to state policies, social crisis and international factors.

Since the 1970s, the appearance of social, political and financial Islamist networks has culminated in the unprecedented internationalist character of the now ‘global’ jihad. These networks have become in increasingly important in the recent development of networks against the state, which originated in Egypt in the 1960s, but also draws inspiration from earlier forms of Islamism. Their emergence is simultaneously a response to state policies, social crisis and international factors.

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recruiting practices since the 1990s, resulting in a combination of both internal and external activities, while apparently lacking, however, any strategic cohesion.

The major groups discussed in this chapter are the *al-Jihad/Egyptian Islamic Jihad* (EIJ) in Egypt, the *Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat* (*Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat*, GSPC) / *al-Qaeda* in *t he Land of t he Islamic Maghreb* (AQIM) in Algeria, and the *Moroccan Islamic Fighting Group* (*Groupe Islamique Combattant Marocain*, GICM) in Morocco. The EIJ and AQIM insert themselves within a historical legacy of armed Islamist violence, which has now assumed a more international approach, while the GICM can be deemed more clearly a direct product of this recent internationalisation.

The chapter is organised in the following manner: the next section provides a general overview of the evolution of armed Islamist groups and their ideology within the broader context of Islamism, and examines the external factors that have influenced this evolution. It is followed by a third section that provides an outline of the internal factors that have impacted on the development, activities and recruitment practices of the groups as well as on their internationalisation. The fourth section examines the global war on terror (GWoT) and how initiatives of those groups and organisations that now recognise some degree of distinction between the political and the religious, and pursue societal reform ‘institutionally’.

The final section contains some concluding remarks.

**IDEOLOGY AND EXTERNAL FACTORS IN THE EVOLUTION OF ARMED ISLAMIST GROUPS IN EGYPT, ALGERIA AND MOROCCO**

Violent forms of Islamism and their extremist manifestations exemplified in the actions of armed Islamist groups to challenge the religious authorities. In this context, these groups represent a particular and distinct trajectory of ideological fervour that can be traced back to the historical roots of armed Islamist violence, which has now assumed a more international approach, while the GICM can be deemed more clearly a direct product of this recent internationalisation.

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Islamism, political Islam and *Salafi jihadism*

The armed Islamist groups active in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco are *Sunni* in orientation and *political Islam* is analytically useful in assigning a classification to those groups possessing certain characteristics within Islamism. Political Islam as an expression first gained currency after 1979 in the context of Iran’s Islamic Revolution as the combination of Islam and politics became perceived as a threat in the West. In the process, it established the lasting perception that the linking of Islam and politics was a radical deviation from a historical constant in Muslim societies. The Muslim Brotherhood is emblematic of those groups and organisations that now recognise some degree of distinction between the political and the religious, and pursue societal reform ‘institutionally’ through a usual integration of political processes. Muslim Brotherhood organisations are present throughout the Middle East as well as in Afganistan, and have influenced the traditional understanding of Islamic holy texts, they have favoured an interpretation of Islam that is compatible with elements of political modernity, including the role of Islam as a global community and the importance of modern state structures and their institutions.

The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt by Hassan al-Banna in 1928. Against the background of Ataturk’s abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate four years earlier, g rowing W estern influence on M uslim c ountries, I slam as a r eligion m ay b e said t o be in herently p olitical. Nonetheless, t he t erm ‘p olitical’ I slam i s a nalytically u seful in a ssigning a classification to those groups possessing certain characteristics within Islamism. Political Islam as an expression first gained currency after 1979 in the context of Iran’s Islamic Revolution as the combination of Islam and politics became perceived as a threat in the West. In the process, it established the lasting perception that the linking of Islam and politics was a radical deviation from a historical constant in Muslim societies. The Muslim Brotherhood is emblematic of those groups and organisations that now recognise some degree of distinction between the political and the religious, and pursue societal reform ‘institutionally’ through a usual integration of political processes. Muslim Brotherhood organisations are present throughout the Middle East as well as in Afganistan, and have influenced the traditional understanding of Islamic holy texts, they have favoured an interpretation of Islam that is compatible with elements of political modernity, including the role of Islam as a global community and the importance of modern state structures and their institutions.

The fourth section examines the global war on terror (GWoT) and how initiatives of those groups and organisations that now recognise some degree of distinction between the political and the religious, and pursue societal reform ‘institutionally’ through a usual integration of political processes. Muslim Brotherhood organisations are present throughout the Middle East as well as in Afganistan, and have influenced the traditional understanding of Islamic holy texts, they have favoured an interpretation of Islam that is compatible with elements of political modernity, including the role of Islam as a global community and the importance of modern state structures and their institutions.

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Arab M uslim w orld a nd t he im ported m odernist v isions o f n ationalism, secularism a nd p rogress le d t he B rotherhood t o a do p t a n o utspoken a nti-Western outlook based on respect for Islamic values. The Brotherhood's popularity grew and the organisation extended its reach beyond Egypt and into neighbouring countries through a combination of social work, preaching (da’wa), and ‘Islamic’ anti-colonialism.4

In 1954, t wo y ears a fter E gypt’s i ndependence, t he c lash b etween N asser's n ationalism a nd the I slamism of t he B rothers r esulted in t he organisation b eing b anned a nd v iolently s uppressed. T he e nd s uppressed w as f irst t ryed t he B rotherhood t o a do p t a n o utspoken a nti-Islamic r eforms. Since its b eginnings in t he ear ly 20th c entury, S alafism has looked to t he teachings of t he ‘venerable ancestors’, t he

al-Salaf a l S alih, fo r g uidance, a nd i t ini tially s ought t o t ake e lements o f m odernity t o p repare I slamic s occiety f or t he c hallenges o f t he c ontemporary world. S alafists e ventually b ecame i ncreasingly co ncerned w ith t heir e xistence t o o Western influence a nd d eveloped w hat w ould t urn o ut t o b e lo ng-las ting l ink s with t he W ahhabist I slam of S audi A rabia. T he o pposition to p olitical I slam reflects a p a n-I slamist, a nti-nationalistic d octrine t hat h as f aced li ted co nvergence o f i nterests f or d ecades b etween r eligiously c onservative S unni r egimes a nd W estern i nterests o pposed t o A rab n ationalism. M oreover, S a udi A rabia’s w ealth h as enabled t he K ingdom t o e xport W ahhabist I slam a nd s olidify t he connection t o t he S alafis, w hile e xtending i ts influence i n the c ontext o f i ts r ivalry w ith Iran.6

T he S alafis p lace g reat i mportance o n a s trict a dherence t o ‘I slamic’ i ndividual b ehaviour a nd a do pt a c o nservative f undamentalist i nterpretation o f I slam. T he e mphasis o n p reaching a nd t he p romotion o f Islamic v irtues a nd v alues r eflects t he tr aditional S alafi c oncern w ith p reserving a nd u ni ting t he M uslim c ommunity o f b elievers (ummah) a nd r ejecting t he lim ited y of modern concepts s uch a s t he n ation-state a nd s ocial a rgument. T he S alafis a ccept t he de jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r igous b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical a c tivism. N onetheless, t heir r eligious a uthorities, t he U lema, h ave c alled a t tention t o co rruption a nd t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical a c tivism. N ontheless, t heir r eligious a uthorities, t he U lema, h ave c alled a t tention t o co rruption a nd t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a and p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h ave a ccepted t he d e jure a nd p ract ied d e jure r eligious b attle, ra ther t han p olitics, a nd o pposed t he M uslim Brotherhood's p olitical h istory. T hey h
interpretation, *jihad* may be conducted internally against Muslim rulers, globally against the West or be irredentist in character, as in the case of Palestine.11

The *Salafi jihad* adopts the thought of Qutb when it considers violent action against Muslim rulers de emed *kufr* a r eligious d uty. A s le ader o f t he M uslim Brotherhood in Egypt during the 1960s, Sayyid Qutb called for the overthrow of the n ationalist N asser r egime, w hic h e co nsidered unI slamic f or p lacing t he Brotherhood in E gypt during the 1960s, Sayyid Qutb called for the overthrow of M uslim r ulers de emed *kufr* and believed that Muslim society was reverting to a s tate of p re-Islamic ig norance (*jamaliya*). B y ado pting these views, t he contemporary *Salafi jihadists* have dep arted sig nificantly f rom t he t raditional *Salafi* respect for Muslim authorities, provided these abide by Islamic principles. *Salafi jihadists* have objected to the strategic alignment of Muslim governments with the West in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Algeria. In line with this criticism, beginning in t he 1980s, t he focus of t he *Salafi jihad* expanded to include Western interests in Africa, Europe, America and South Asia.

**After ideology: external factors in the evolution of armed Islamist groups**

The evolution of armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco has been marked b y our k ey m i lestones: t he ini tial r esponse t o Q utb's ide e as a nd t he accompanying radic alisation o f c er tain e lements w ithin a w ide co mmunity; t he o f f ense and e ventual v ictory o f a m ultinational M uslim f ighting i nstitute for Security Studies o rce in A fghanistan and c reation of jihadi salafist n etworks; t he r eturn of t hese c ommatants t o t heir h ome c ou ntries a nd t he ir c ontribution t o a n inter nal jihadi against unIslamic regimes, and finally, t he global jihadi targeting enemies of Islam around the world.12 These milestones have been reached against the background of a s tate of p re-Islamic ig norance. By adapting these views, t he contemporary *Salafi jihadists* have dep arted sig nificantly f rom t he t raditional *Salafi* respect for Muslim authorities, provided these abide by Islamic principles. *Salafi jihadists* have objected to the strategic alignment of Muslim governments with the West in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Algeria. In line with this criticism, beginning in t he 1980s, t he focus of t he *Salafi jihad* expanded to include Western interests in Africa, Europe, America and South Asia.

**The evolution of armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco**

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**The evolution of armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco**

The evolution of armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco has been marked by our key milestones: the initial response to Qutb’s ideology as a new trend and the accompanying radicalisation of certain elements within a wider community; the offensive and eventual victory of a multinational Muslim fighting force in Afghanistan and creation of jihadi salafist networks; the return of these combatants to their home countries and their contribution to an internal jihadi against unIslamic regimes, and finally, the global jihadi targeting enemies of Islam around the world. These milestones have been reached against the background of a state of pre-Islamic ignorance. By adopting these views, the contemporary Salafi jihadists have departed significantly from the traditional Salafi respect for Muslim authorities, provided these abide by Islamic principles. Salafi jihadists have objected to the strategic alignment of Muslim governments with the West in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Algeria. In line with this criticism, beginning in the 1980s, the focus of the Salafi jihad expanded to include Western interests in Africa, Europe, America and South Asia.
politically active. The Afghan experience created opportune conditions for the reinforcement of Saudi- and Pakistan-funded elite and the fostering of a common Islamic identity between the armed Islamist opposition in Egypt and Algeria. It allowed, for instance, the EIJ to tap into private financing to fund its activities, permitting operations without a formal social constituency, and facilitated an eventual merger with al-Qaeda in 2001. EIJ was founded in Afghanistan during the 1980s before becoming active in Egypt, and exerted influence over Osama bin Laden, a son of an important Saudi family and a founding member of al-Qaeda.

The radicalisation of the returnees was compounded by the difficulty of reinsertion of the veterans into civilian life, leading some Algerian mujahedeen to influence the creation and strategies of both the FIS and the Groups Islamiques Armés (GIA). Finally, following the Soviet defeat, the US turned its attention away from Afghanistan, leaving Saudi Arabia and Pakistan less subjected to American influence as they reconfigured their relationship with the armed groups. In the five years that elapsed between the first World Trade Centre attacks in New York in 1993 and the bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, the US paid little attention to the activities of armed Islamist groups.15 During the 1990s, however, a number of US foreign policy decisions shifted the attention of the jihadists from targeting the regimes of Islamic countries to a global jihad against external enemies.

Armed Islamist groups interpreted the 1991 US-led Gulf War in Iraq and the deployment of troops in Somalia in 1993 as evidence of US imperial designs on the Muslim world, and responded with their own February 1993 attacks in New York. While relations with the West and the issue of how to confront or coopt violent forms of Islamism were already factors before 1991, there was a confrontational atmosphere that accompanied the crisis in Muslim countries such as Egypt and Algeria largely failed to reach their objectives in the 1990s and groups such as the EIJ and the GSPC reoriented their struggle to include international objectives and remote enemies such as the US, Israel, and Western allies. Groups of more recent creation such as Morocco’s GI CM have focused directly on international targets and, together with the EIJ and the GSPC, claim membership with the al-Qaeda network.

While this international tendency continues to be prevalent, internal agendas persist as well, binding together the in ternal and international struggles against Qutb’s jahiliya. This is the case with the Algerian AQIM, which continues to target the regime and its allies in Algeria. Salafi jihadism also continues to be oriented towards jihadi regeneration in the absence of international objectives and remote enemies such as the US, Iraq, and the insurgents’ ejection democracy and Shia rule and seek to establish an Islamic emirate,20 taking aim at the ‘sheikist’ Salafists and more moderate Muslim Brothers known to seek political compromises with secularists.21 In Saudi Arabia, the close connections between Salafis and Wahhabis and a regime aligned with the US have combined to place the Kingdom in a delicate position in relation to the ‘politically radical wing of neo-fundamentalism’.22 As the next section will explore, the development and activities of armed Islamist groups co-ordinate and respond to the demands of its ideology constantly adapting to internal and external factors.

**INTERNATIONAL FACTORS IN THE RECRUITMENT AND ACTIVITIES OF THE MAIN EGYPTEAN, ALGERIAN AND MOROCCAN ARMED ISLAMIST GROUPS**

A number of internal factors help one understand the rise of armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria, and Morocco. This section identifies and examines these factors and their influence on the recruitment and activities of these groups, and concludes by looking at the recent trend towards internationalisation.
Internal factors and general recruitment trends

Since independence, post-colonial regimes in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco have engaged in a authoritarian and repressive policies, which lay emphasis on coercion and co ncentrations of state resources at the expense of individual freedoms. This has resulted in growing economic imbalances, a deepening disillusionment has contributed to the conditions conducive to political extremism manifested in a variety of forms. These include the formation of political parties, the creation of alternative Islamic networks, and the formation of armed Islamist groups. In Egypt, Algeria and Morocco, the state's withdrawal from impoverished areas has led to a growing Islamisation of society and the instrumentalisation of religion in the context of a regional Islamic resurgence. The origins of al-Jihad relate to the Egyptian state's increasing ideological repression weakened the violent elements under Kamal Habib in Alexandria, the groups of Mohammad Abd al-Salam Farag in Cairo and Zuhdi's branch in Assiut. Some Islamist groups, such as the Salafi in Algeria, have sought to establish an alternative community through the provision of services and Islamic order and the creation of a network of Islamic networks. Others have engaged in providing education and social services through charitable activities, civil society, student unions, professional labour organisations, social enterprises and associations. These groups also appeal to liberal professionals and members of the urban middle classes against the wall of despondency and pessimism, in increasingly youthful, urbanised and literate populations in Arab countries no longer willing to see their dignity, their worth as reflective of a social crisis not addressed by state policies. It is symptomatic of day-to-day life in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco, that the state's withdrawal from impoverished areas has led to a growing Islamisation of society and the instrumentalisation of religion in the context of a regional Islamic resurgence. The origins of al-Jihad relate to the Egyptian state's increasing ideological repression weakened the violent elements under Kamal Habib in Alexandria, the groups of Mohammad Abd al-Salam Farag in Cairo and Zuhdi's branch in Assiut.
group, JI G) in to t h e n e w m o v e m e n t.35 The le adership o f al-jihad was further reinforced by a member of Egyptian military intelligence, Abbud al-Zumur, who orchestrated the group’s armed activities. Al-jihad rejected both Sadat’s credentials as a pious M uslim le ader a nd t he s tate’s i nstrumentalisation o f r eligion.34 Borrowing the arguments put forward earlier b y Qutb, al-jihad embarked on a campaign of violence against the regime and propagated popular mass rebellion. Despite o rchestrating t he a ssassination o f Sad at o n 6 O ctob er 1981, al-jihad’s p lanned I slamic r evolution f ailed t o m aterialise a nd o nly i solated di sturbances t ake place near Assiut. The state retaliated by imprisonment al-Zumur, Farag and a number of al-jihad leaders as well as Sadat’s assassin, Khaled al-Islambouli.35

Armed Islamist groups in Egypt regained strength in the early 1990s with the return of t he mujahedeen from Afghanistan. They reinforced their presence in urban a reas o f C airo a nd n eighbourhoods o f C airo a nd A lexandria b y e mploying a mix ed strategy of conviction and intimidation while continuing to targer t he Egyptian p olitical e lite.36 Obtaining f inancing u sed a s an e xten sion o f S audi f oreign p olicy,37 the movements w ere d riven m ostly b y s tudents o f lower s ocioeconom ic s tandin g a nd t he urb an m idd le-cla ss o u rgeosie, i m posing m orality and discipline through an authoritarian community.38 Their appeal to the middle classes was brief, however, as the poorer cadres of the society and eventual power base of the groups turned increasingly violent, targeting the middle classes which then turned to the state structures for stability and protection.39

One p rincipal c haracteristic o f al-jihad’s recruiting s trategy w a s r eligious agit ation. It u sed a s t rategy o f n etwork o f p rivate m osques, s ome S au di- f un d ed, in w hich r adical preachers such as Muhammad Abd al-Salam Farag engaged in recruitment. In its heyday during the 1990s, the organisation also recruited from the ranks of the p residential gu ard, t he c i vil s ervice, m ilitary in telligence, t he m edia a nd f oriegn p olitics.40 Farag’s b ranch o f al-jihad in C airo w a s c o m posed o f f ive t o s ix a utonomous and loosely linked cells presided over by ‘emirs’41 such as Ayman al-Zawahiri, and controlled through a common strategy. In Assiut, the other main al-jihad branch operating under Karam Mohammed Zuhdi consisted of a number of small groups in university towns recruited through kinship and tribal bonds.42

In t he e arly 1990s, a l-Zawahiri a ssumed t he le adership o f t he EIJ fac t ion, breaking r anks w ith t he imprisoned a nd a d dres sing t he g roup in to a network isolated from a clear s ocial s consti tuency43 and increasingly targeting the Egyptian r egime. I n 1990, f ive m embers o f t he o rganisation w ere a rrested f or a ssassinating t he s peaker o f t he n ational a ssembly, a nd f rom 1992 t o 1997 t he EIJ was engaged in isolated attacks designed to p ally t he r egime’s t ourism in dustry, ending t he N ovember 1997 massacre in Luxor. On 25 June 1995, it staged an assassination atempt o n P resident M ubarak d uring an O rganisation o f A frican U nity (OAU) summit in Ethiopia in collaboration with the Sudanese intelligence, which included as protagonists individuals claiming affiliation with al-Qaeda. By this time, however, Egypt’s armed Islamists had already begun to shift their focus to international targets, as the EIJ moved closer to the networks orchestrated by Osama bin Laden.

The EIJ’s current base resides principally with an exiled leadership in Western countries and, to a lesser degree, in urban centres of northern Egypt. In 1998 the group announced that it had joined al-Qaeda, with which it merged in 2001. Bin Laden has provided f inancing to the group through the Faisal Islamic Bank and the A l-I Shamal I slamic B ank in S udan, w here h e w as h osted b y t he c ountry’s I slamist r egime f r om 1992 to 1996. The international activities of EIJ are attributed to t h e in fluence o f a n al-Zawahiri, w hose p rom inence in t he o rganisation h as c onvinced s ome f ollowers to as sociate t hemselves w ith al-Qaeda. Divisions within EIJ appeared in December 2007 when imprisoned leader Sayed Imam abandoned the use of violence and announced the cessation of armed activities.

There i s n ow e vidence t hat t he in ternet h as g a ined i mportance a s a n i nternational t ract tool. Al-Qaeda has reportedly recruited individual cells by facilitating operations within Egypt through information sharing, training and networking.44 On 23 F ebruary 2009, a b omb exploded in C airo’s Khan al-Khalili market k illing a F rench t ourist. The a ttack w as a lledgedly p erpetrated b y an isolated g roup p ossibly inspired b y t he internet,45 or a ‘self-starter’, rather than a ‘commanded’ or ‘guided’ group.46

**Algeria**

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**Algeria**

By the late 1980s, an Islamist movement consisting mostly of university professors and students had taken form in response to state repression in Algeria. This group recruited largely by reaching in ‘popular neighbourhoods’ where local ulama enjoyed support. Unlike Egypt, where the regime had weakened the Islamist regime from 1992 to 1996. The international activities of EIJ are attributed to the influence of a man al-Zawahiri, whose prominence in the organisation has convinced some followers to associate themselves with al-Qaeda. Divisions within EIJ appeared in December 2007 when imprisoned leader Sayed Imam abandoned the use of violence and announced the cessation of armed activities.

There is now evidence that the internet has gained importance as an international recruitment tool. Al-Qaeda has reportedly recruited individual cells by facilitating operations within Egypt through information sharing, training and networking. On 23 February 2009, a bomb exploded in Cairo’s Khan al-Khalili market killing a French tourist. The attack was allegedly perpetrated by an isolated group possibly inspired by the internet, or a ‘self-starter’, rather than a ‘commanded’ or ‘guided’ group.46
of the democratic process. This culminated in the creation of the FIS in March 1989 as an Islamist alliance of various groups.48

The early success of the FIS stemmed from its ability to unite the poor urban youth with the pious bourgeoisie un der the same Islamist ideology in order to challenge the regime. A nd p rovide a n alternative p roject. T h e GIA m ovement a nd i ts constituency. Factions dominated by the mujahedeen leadership migrated to the ranks of the more radical and violent GIA, rallying the urban youth underclass and opposing any compromise with the regime. The GIA deliberately targeted civilians and its violent action alienated many more moderate pious bourgeoisie who hewed to its support behind the *Armée Islamique du Salut* (AIS), the armed wing of the FIS, ultimately resulting in a reconciliation of sorts with the regime in a process that mirrored the Egyptian experience.49

By 1998, popular support for the GIA had eroded dramatically and the global *jihadist* movement offered an alternative, particularly for the Salafi jihadists from Afghanistan. This resulted in Hassan Hattab breaking from the GIA to form the *Groupe Islamique de Combattant de Maroc* (GICM) in September 1998, publicly announcing its support for the FIS and its activities. In September 2006, the group officially announced its adherence to *al-Qaeda*, changing its name to *Al-Qaeda in the Land of the Islamic Maghreb* (AQIM). AQIM has since continued to attract young people detached from the nationalist project of the FIS and more attracted to *jihadist* ideology. As in Egypt, these organisations police their neighbourhoods and enforce their interpretation of a strict moral and legal Islamic code. Yet, rather than being led by prominent individuals as with *EIJ*, any Islamist individuals to whom at least one other person is willing to pledge allegiance can potentially achieve the status of *emir*.50

The GICM represents the increasingly international approach adopted by the armed Islamist groups since the 1990s. Th e GICM appears to have maintained contacts with violent Algerian Islamists in France and Belgium, and its activities have included propaganda, recruitment for international *jihad* and coordination of local cells through what is portrayed as the *international al-Qaeda network*. The May 2003 Casablanca and March 2004 Madrid bombings as well as accusations of serving as a logistical base for *al-Qaeda* have placed the group under renewed media-savvy AQIM has produced propaganda videos in the local Berber language and couched its recruitment in terms of historical grievances by calling for the reconquest of al-Andalus, which in cludes large parts of Spain, and a nd a t a centu ry o f f oreign do mination. T h is h as b een c ombined w ith m ore t raditional preaching in mosques, the in vocation o f a pervasive s tate o f s ocial m alaise a nd humiliating images of Muslim immigrants in Western countries.51

This propaganda has been used to raise the profile of the international *jihad*, most notably in Iraq, above internal concerns and to facilitate the recruitment of young people detached from the nationalist project of the FIS and more attracted to *jihadist* internet sites. New recruits have reportedly been sent to ‘radicalising training camps’ for three to six months either to prepare them to fight in Iraq or oblige them, knowingly or not, to take part in suicide attacks in Algeria.52 This demonstrates that both AQIM’s internal and external agendas remain significant and interlocked.

**Morocco**

The *Groupe Islamique de Combat Marocain* (GICM) was formed during the 1990s around a nucleus of Moroccan Afghan veterans en dorsing a rigorous interpretation of the *Quran* and *Sunna* and the rejection of a state not based on Islamic law.53 The founding of the GICM co incided with the Moroccan state’s conquest of Al-Andalus, which includes large parts of Spain, and anger at a media-savvy AQIM has produced propaganda videos in the local Berber language and couched its recruitment in terms of historical grievances by calling for the reconquest of al-Andalus, which in cludes large parts of Spain, and a nd a t a 355

The GICM represents the increasingly international approach adopted by the armed Islamist groups since the 1990s. Th e GICM appear to have maintained contacts with violent Algerian Islamists in France and Belgium, and its activities have included propaganda, recruitment for international *jihad* and coordination of local cells through what is portrayed as the *international al-Qaeda network*. The May 2003 Casablanca and March 2004 Madrid bombings as well as accusations of serving as a logistical base for *al-Qaeda* have placed the group under renewed...
scrutiny. According to newspaper accounts, the GICM has received funds from al-Qaeda and its European financiers, and logistical support, training and religious education from the Taleban, the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, the Algerian GIA and GSPC, and several other violent extremist groups. As far as its internal jihad is concerned, however, the GICM has been unable to build a agenda that successfully challenges the religious legitimacy of the monarchy in the eyes of the general population.

INTERNATIONALISATION

The armed Islamic groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco have shown a growing international orientation since the late 1990s through their al-Qaeda affiliation. This should not be interpreted as a "national" or in internal a gendas and activities, particularly in the case of Algeria, while recognising that the frustrated attempts at in ternal jihad in the 1980s and 1990s have led to a demand for improved religious legitimacy. Algerians, moreover, have adhered in large numbers to conservative, non-political, non-violent Salafi organisations, or simply a spire to leave the country.

Outside North Africa, recruitment into armed Islamic cells has also taken place. It has been achieved by drawing on a sense of alienation and separation, humiliation, religious commitment, peer pressure, the ummah as an alternative to the European concept of nation, and emphasising the importance of violent jihad. Radical imams and activists have used in doctrination, subversion and socialisation as methods of recruitment and political propaganda, at times resulting in violent acts that seek to emulate the jihadist cause in Iraq.

Moreover, the internet continues to attract followers to the al-Qaeda agenda in the transnational ummah with jihadist networks extending into Western countries. Recruiting activities are known to have taken place in mosques in Hamburg, London, Massey and Montreal. Whereas internet propaganda reaches sections of disgruntled second-generation immigrants in the West, it alone appears insufficient for successful recruitment, but in the medium term, the exact nature of the activities of armed Islamic groups and the perceived threat of violent Islamism is a matter of concern across the region.

In North Africa, the uncertainty concerning the exact nature of the activities of armed Islamic groups and the perceived threat of violent Islamism is a significant issue. Western countries have led the US to turn its attention to the vast lands that lie to the south of these countries.

The global war on terror and armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco

The global war on terror (GWoT) has had important repercussions in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco. These three countries have all collaborated with the US-led war on terror. However, this has been a struggle for them, as the actions and presence of violent actors have been perceived by the regimes as a threat, but as a beneficial to stability and security. While officially meant to offer new measures against the threat of armed Islamist groups in the region, initiatives such as the TCTI have created a framework by which regimes can gain access to new resources in exchange for a more muscular foreign presence to penetrate the region.

The global war on terror and regime response to armed Islamist groups

Egypt, Algeria and Morocco openly supported the US in 2001 and 2002, but found their domestic support compromised by the decision to invade Iraq, an event met with demonstrations of anger across North Africa. Morocco is considered by the US to be a key non-NATO partner and reports have suggested that terrorist suspects were questioned by Moroccan authorities on behalf of US intelligence services. Egypt has also provided interrogation services, although it has kept its support low profile in an effort to reconcile public opinion and the annual US$2 billion in aid received from the US. One report on Algeria already noted in 2004 that states openly supporting the war on terror risked finding the threat of extremism increasing rather than diminishing. For these regimes, US involvement may undermine the strategic weakness, dependent nature and possible legitimacy deficits of the states concerned.

Joining the war on terror, however, also conceivably offers an opportunity to settle political scores and gain newfound international legitimacy. In exchange for support, demands for im provements in the region and a reduction in the visibility of political extremism, regimes are able to maintain the threat of the Islamist threat. Egypt has had a state of emergency in place since...
Armed Islamist groups and the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative

Algeria and Morocco have both collaborated with the US on its Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative (TSCTI), a program that includes Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, Nigeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Senegal. The stated objective is to help secure the region from potential terrorist threats and underlies the fear that the Sahara may become, or may already be, a base for terrorist camps. It thus seeks to enhance the military capabilities of regional states to support the eradication of violent non-state actors. The programme is headed by the US State Department and includes the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Department of Defence. Its anti-terror activities range from ‘diplomacy, development assistance, and military activities aimed at strengthening partner countries’ counterterrorism capabilities and inhibiting the spread of extremist ideology.

The rationale for the TSCTI is arguably based on what Keenan has referred to as the ‘banana theory of terrorism,’ whereby terrorists coming out of Afghanistan move through Iraq and into the Horn of Africa and the Sahel to receive al-Qaeda training before making their way to North Africa, Europe and the US. This threat was magnified by the March 2004 Madrid train bombings, leading to the fear that armed Islamic groups now have a firmly established capacity to support the resurgence of violent non-state actors. The programme is headed by the US State Department and includes the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Department of Defence. Its anti-terror activities range from ‘diplomacy, development assistance, and military activities aimed at strengthening partner countries’ counterterrorism capabilities and inhibiting the spread of extremist ideology.

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While Egypt’s position as a major US partner in the region remains uncontested, Algeria has sought to challenge Morocco’s privileged role by emphasising its own experience with violent Islamism and portraying the country as a bastion of regional and international security. Algeria has received US army training and accepted the presence of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Moreover, it is suspected that some sectors of the armed forces connected to the oil industry are receptive to the US securitisation of the Sahara, since it may in fact be beneficial to their interests. This situation reflects the Algerian leadership’s propensity to continue its exclusive governance, this time by using US military support to monopolise oil-generated revenue. For the US, it remains unclear how strongly democratisation, good governance or respect for human rights should be prioritised.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco emerged in the generalised context of a crisis of the post-colonial state. As such, these groups initially sought to provide an alternative Islamic political order and violently challenged their respective regimes in order to acquire a de facto hegemony. A counterinsurgency strategy of the now global jihad is no longer clear. While there is no denying that the global jihad has appealed to individuals across the world and at times produced spectacular and devastating results, the route chosen by political Islamists where regimes have allowed Islamic parties to enter the political arena appears to have yielded more results in terms of setting the groundwork towards the creation of an Islamic society, albeit one that incorporates some elements of modernity.

This political Islam, however, has been the subject of intense criticism not only from Salafi jihadists, but also from non-violent and apolitical Salafi movements. In countries such as Algeria, a tendency to withdraw completely and without momentum a nd en joying greater popular support the global jihad. The emphasis on the security of the state as opposed to that of the individual, which partially explains the appeal of radical Islamist ideas among the poor and disgruntled...
sectors of the population and within the ranks of a frustrated middle class. This frustration and disenchantment have affected a number of individuals and have been underestimated, but for the most part they do not appear to be channelled towards violent jihad.

Moreover, although the perpetrators now come from across the Muslim world, the ranks of armed Islamic groups do not appear to have swelled proportionally to the level of dissatisfaction felt by the general population. Armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria, and Morocco, weakened internally by a combination of lack of popular support and regime crackdowns in the context of the war on terror, have embarked on a campaign to compensate for their internal failures by increasingly emphasising external agendas. Armed Islamist groups have thus been portrayed as real threats to the prevailing status quo by both their respective states and the international community, irrespective of their actual capacity. This explains why regional and international contexts have become pertinent, or in some cases, even a dominant part of their agendas and activities.

Despite lacking common strategic unity, these groups do continue to pose a threat. This threat, however, does not appear to lie in their capacity to destabilise regimes or the wider international community. Above all, it is a menace to the security of the individual citizen falling victim to an isolated manifestation of armed Islamist activity in Egypt, Algeria, Morocco and elsewhere.

NOTES

2. This a broad classification is further divided by I international C risis G roup, Understanding Islamism, 3–5.
3. Ibid, 2.
5. Ibid, 41.
6. Bassan Tibi, Political Islam, world politics and Europe, Abingdon: Routledge, 2008, 101, refers to ‘institutional Islam’ as a ‘peaceful variety of political Islam’ that has issued reservations about its democratic credentials. See chapter 7, Political decline and democracy’s decline to a voting procedure.
9. Ibid, 12.
12. Ibid.
14. In Afghanistan the externally recruited mujahedeen were often considered ‘Arabs’ and ‘Afghans’ upon return to their countries of origin.
17. Ibid, 55.
18. According to M Hafez, Suicide b ombers i n I raq: t he s trategy a n d i deology o f m artyrdom, Washington, D C: United States Institute for Peace, 2007, 66–70, these five concepts are a tawhid (unity of God) as a way of life, hakimiyat Allah (God’s sovereignty) over right and wrong, bid’a as strict interpretation of a n Islam, takfīr with Muslims acting outside the creed either to repent or face execution, and jihād in terms of violent struggle.
20. Hafez, Suicide bombers in Iraq.
22. Olivier Roy, Globalised Islam: the search for a n ew ummah, 233, suggests neo-fundamentalism is less historically ambiguous than ‘salafism’.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
31. Peter R N eumann a nd B rooke R ogers, R ecruitment a nd m obilisation f or t he I slamist mi li tant a nd mi litias, REBELS AND ISLAMIST MILITANTS: HUMAN INSECURITY AND STATE CRISIS IN AFRICA
The government’s promotion of Islamism resulted in a proliferation of private mosques (ahli) away from the regime control. These became meeting places for militants and recruits, reinforcing the Muslim Brotherhood and more radical groups. Providing identity and community discourse along with services and welfare became paramount in the Islamist project, facilitating recruitment and training of radicals ([I. E]sposito, The Islamic threat: myth or reality?, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992, 138–139). These mosques found fertile ground in Upper Egypt and Alexandria, as well as in the Ain Sams and Ain Mbaba's neighbourhoods in Cairo, employing a mix of strategies of conviction and intimidation; S Ismail, The politics of urban Cairo: informal communities and the state, Arab Studies Journal 4(2) (1996), 119–132.


Farag’s group claimed that the state’s measures to incorporate Islamic law (Sharia) in 1980 as the ‘main source’ of legislation was hypocritical because it coincided with a clampdown of Muslim Brothers and Islamist student organisations as an extension of a policy of reappraisal with Israel.


Kapel, La yihad.

Immigration a nd refugee B oard of C anada, Egypt: R ecruitment b y I slamist mi litant g roups, including methods and incidence.

‘Emir’ in this context refers to a representative of an armed Islamist group in Egypt or Morocco who assumes the religious title in part to boost his legitimacy and facilitate recruitment.

Sageman, Understanding terror networks, 134.

Ibid, 148.

Immigration a nd refugee B oard of C anada, Egypt: R ecruitment b y I slamist mi litant g roups, including methods and incidence.


Neumann a nd R ogers, R ecruitment a nd mobilisation f or t he I slamist mi litant m ovement in E gypt, 26.

Kapel, La yihad, 269.


Ibid, 400.


Boubekeur, Salafism and radical politics in post-conflict Algeria, 10.
From rebellion to opposition: UNITA in Angola and RENAMO in Mozambique

JUSTIN PEARCE

INTRODUCTION

It is tempting to consider Angola and Mozambique as two countries with parallel histories. Both were colonised by Portugal and remained under colonial domination for more than a decade after the de-colonisation of most of the continent. Both became independent in 1975 with governments dominated by Portuguese-speaking urban elites that had nationalist aspirations but which were firmly rooted in particular regions and whose rhetoric inclined to the left. Both of these governments were seen as a threat by apartheid South Africa and by right-wing elements in the West. Both Angola and Mozambique experienced internal conflicts that were fuelled by opposition movements: Resistência Nacional d e M oçambique (RENA M O) in Mozambique and União p ara a I ndependência T otal d e A ngola (UNITA) in Angola. The international détente that late 1980s led to internationally supported peace processes, which envisaged the ruling parties and rebel movements in Angola and Mozambique competing at the ballot box.

From that point, the well-known stories diverge. Angola returned to war only months after the 1992 elections, and peace did not arrive definitively until after the
From rebellion to opposition: UNITA in Angola and RENAMO in Mozambique

UNITA'S BEGINNINGS

UNITA's origins in the Bakongo ethnic group of northern Angola, discriminated against southern broke away and founded UNITA on the grounds that the FNLA, based among the Ovimbundu migrant labourers who were working in the north at the time. Before 1974, UNITA guerillas were a rebel to infiltrate a western Angola from bases in independent Zambia. But the colonial government's suppression of anti-colonial activity prevented UNITA from operating in the Central Highlands, the region with which it is usually associated and in which it made its strongest identity-based claims.

It was only after the coup of 25 April 1974 in Portugal that the liberation movements were able to operate freely in the colonies. When UNITA, the MPLA and the FNLA arrived in the Central Highlands, the lack of previous politicisation meant that they were received as strangers and outsiders. The three movements competed in an open field for the support of the local population. It was, however, UNITA that succeeded in making the most forceful identity-based claims to the people of the Central Highlands. Saëmbi used his facility with the Umbundu language to persuade the people of the Central Highlands that he and UNITA could represent their interests better than the Portuguese-speaking MPLA and FNLA. FRELIMO remains firmly in power, with UNITA and RENAMO looking weaker than ever before. To understand why these parties have not become effective players in a multiparty democracy.

Guerrilla warfare against the MPLA

The following 12 years were crucial in shaping the character of UNITA as it established itself in rural Angola. The MPLA and FNLA had been active for several years before UNITA's inception in 1966. Saëmbi, formerly an official in the FNLA, broke away and founded UNITA on the grounds that the FNLA, based among the Bakongo and hnic group of northern Angola, discriminated against southern Angola.

The following year, 1973, UNITA guerillas were able to infiltrate eastern Angola from bases in independent Zambia. But the colonial government's suppression of anti-colonial activity prevented UNITA from operating in the Central Highlands, the region with which it is usually associated and in which it made its strongest identity-based claims.

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Relations between the two liberation movements detriorated during 1975 and their rivalry became an all-out struggle to take unique control of the state upon independence. The support that UNITA had mobilised in the 18 months following the coup, Portuguese cou pregnant 70 ams, and the MPLA was able to move in and establish itself in Huambo on the same day that the MPLA's president, Agostinho Neto, declared independence in Luanda. Saëmbi's reign in the city of Huambo lasted only until February 1976, when UNITA was expelled by Cuban forces allied to the MPLA.

...
the areas where UNITA was well established: here, bases became the home to soldiers, to political officials, and to professionals such as teachers and nurses, and were central to UNITA’s relationship with the farming population. UNITA would establish a relationship with the soba (village chief), persuading him of the need for the village to supply food to UNITA. A UNITA loyalist in the village would be recruited to coordinate the rendition of a quota of food production to the people at the base. Teachers and nurses would go into the villages to offer education and health care to the local population. UNITA tried to convince people that it was the defender of their own best interests against a hostile MPLA. This type of relationship between UNITA and the people reached its most sophisticated expression with the establishment of Jamba, UNITA’s bush capital in Cuando Cubango province, in the early 1980s. Jamba’s location, far from the Ovimbundu heartland, was determined by ease of access for the South African planes that supplied it. But to the people who spent time there, Jamba was ‘almost like a city’ or ‘a state within a state’. Its hospitals, its schools, its international air links and its visits from South African dignitaries were seen as evidence of UNITA’s potential as a government in waiting.

A parallel state?

As UNITA built its bases in the untried area of Jamba, the MPLA was establishing its state in the towns. Within these enclaves, the MPLA’s state-building efforts included the establishment of a system of state-run shops that ensured low-cost food for the urban population, which was issued with ration cards. People who lived in the city during this period would speak with approval of the MPLA’s efforts to keep a supply of food coming into a city, which, thanks to the war, was virtually cut off from its agricultural hinterland. They also spoke of the provision of education and services under the MPLA: services that were more securely under UNITA’s control. UNITA also conducted raids on areas where they might be controlled by the government and placing them in areas temporarily, it would take the peasant population with it, removing people from areas where they might be controlled by the government and placing them in areas that were more securely under UNITA’s control. UNITA also conducted raids on government-held areas, or attacked groups of people as they journeyed from one town to another. The people kidnapped in these attacks were typically put to work for UNITA, sometimes as soldiers or porters, but often in professional roles. The movement of people was a provider of services and from UNITA as a military movement. UNITA tried to convince people that it was the defender of their own best interests against a hostile MPLA. This type of relationship between UNITA and the people reached its most sophisticated expression with the establishment of Jamba, UNITA’s bush capital in Cuando Cubango province, in the early 1980s. Jamba’s location, far from the Ovimbundu heartland, was determined by ease of access for the South African planes that supplied it. But to the people who spent time there, Jamba was ‘almost like a city’ or ‘a state within a state’. Its hospitals, its schools, its international air links and its visits from South African dignitaries were seen as evidence of UNITA’s potential as a government in waiting.

Identity politics

To each of the political movements, the people under its control were ‘our people’, and those under the control of the other side were ‘enemy people’. People came to identify themselves as ‘government people’ or ‘UNITA people’. Yet these identities were not a matter of political choice, they were a matter of necessity. To profess to be a ‘UNITA person’ in government territory was to risk death, and vice versa. Hence the paradox of political identities in wartime Angola: identities had to be maintained as a matter of life or death, yet the depth of the conviction that these identities was questionable, and identities could (and had to) be changed as one passed from the control of one armed force to another.

Those people who lived close to the frontlines of military control would talk about both sides as predators. But those who spent extended periods under the control of one or other or both sides, exposed to the state-building efforts of either or both, were likely to speak of knowledge of the legitimacy of the movement, or movements, with a sense of experienced. When the Angolan experience such a protracted conflict, several interviewees answered a long line of ‘there were two governments – the MPLA and UNITA – and both wanted power’. The concept of political identity was important for understanding political developments after the end of the war.

The peace process and renewed war

The Angolan peace process that culminated in the 1991 Bicesse Accord was largely a product of the détente in international politics of that period and the ‘end of history’ narratives that accompanied it. It took little account of Angola’s internal
politics. A s I h ave outlined, t here was n o space f or p olitical c hoice in w artime Angola. Politics was un derstood as compulsory identification w ith a m ov em ent that was in w eak in a particular region of the country by force of arms. Angola in 1992 r emained divided militarily bet ween the MPLA and UNITA; there was n o reason w hy a n otional ceasefire w ould change the way in w hich political control was un derstood. The 1992 e lection results largely reflected the p attern of military control as it was at that stage of the conflict. V oting was a matter of endorsing the authority of t he p arty in c harge, hence UNITA’s s trong s howing in t he C entral Highlands.

The circumstances and actions that led to the return to w ar early in 1993 a re beyond the scope of this chapter; suffice to say that they reflected the c ontinuing aspirations t o an absolut e p ow er b y b oth p arty s t o t he co nflict, n either o f w hich c omplied w ith t he s pit rit o f t he p eace c ontrac t, a nd b oth o f w hich h ich ac ted in a provocative manner. It was only after the Lusaka Accord of 1994, when the UNITA deputies elected in September 1992 t ook up t heir seats in p arliament, that w e can s tart t o t alk a bout UNIT A’s r ole a s a n oposition m ov em ent. B ut t he p arliamentarians’ r ole was c ircumscribed by the e xtraordinary s ituation in w hich th ey f ound th emselves. W ith the leadership on b oth s ides dedicated to w inning the conflict by m ilitary m eans, there was no space for d emocratic e ngagement. E ven if UNITA at the t ime had had the p olitical im agination to m obilise in t he c ivilian sphere, it w ould have b een impossible to do s o t hanks to the repressive p olitical c limate in Luanda at the t ime. A fter 1998, the c ivilian w ing of UNITA was further w eakened by t he e mergence of UNITA R enovada, a s plit in t he p arty that w as engineered by t he g overnment in a w a y t hat w as m ade p ossible by t he MP LA’s c ommand of the f inancial and j udicial r esources of t he s tate. Messian t argues that t he B iccesse A ccord en trenched a m ilitary l ogic in p olitics b y v irtue o f b eing a

neither side c ommitted c ompletely w ith t he Lusaka Accord; as t he a greement collapsed, t he government’s e ndgame to t he w ar comprised a c ounterinsurgency s trategy a ined a t d es troying UNIT A’s a gricultural b as e. Th e r esult wa s t he displacement o f s everal m illion r ural p eople, m any o f w hom t hus e nt ered government c ontrolled territory in some cases f or t he f irst t ime e ver, o r at lea st for t he f irst t ime since t he 1992 e lection.

From m ilitary collapse to p olitical deat h

The m emorandum of u nderstanding s igned by t he Angolan A rmed Forces a nd UNITA a fte r Sa vimbi’s d eath in F ebruary 2002 l aid o ut a p rocess w hereby t he p eople still remaining u nder UNITA control at t hat p oint w ould be r econstructed into c ivilian s ystems. S imultaneously, th ose UNITA leaders w ho had b een in t he b ush w ith S avimbi w ere r elocated to L uanda, f ar from t he m ov ement’s c ore constit uency in t he C entral Highlands.

The m assive m ov ement o f p eople a t t he e nd o f t he w ar m ay h ave b een c onceived f or m ilitary purposes, b ut it a lso h ad p olitical c onsequences. P olitical identity w as st ill equ ated w ith p olitical control, and t he s tate remained i dentified w ith t he MPLA. P eople w ho m ay h ave spent d ecad es unde r t he c ontrol o f UNITA now became ‘g overnment p eople’. T his p rovided t he c ontext f or t he p arliamentary e lections of 2008, in w hich a c lear MPLA v ictory in t he provinces of t he C entral Highlands c ontrasted w ith UNITA’s e lection s ucc ess in t he region in 1992. The notion t hat t he s hifting ‘UNITA p eople’ w ere n ow ‘g overnment p eople’ wa s r econstructed b y t he MPLA’s f irm c ontrol of state r esources t hroughout t he n ational t erritory. In s ome c ases, b eing e mployed in g overnment s ervice a fter t he e nd o f t he w ar w as c ontinuous on j oining t he p arty.

T he MPLA b egan p romoting its e lectional m essage m onths b efore t he o fficial s tart of t he c ampaign, a nd w as h elped b y t he b ias t owards t he p arty in s tate m edia. P arty c ampaigners p resented t h eirs a s a nd g rain t o r ural c ommunities, a nd m otobikes t o t he c hiefs. A t t he s a me t ime, t he g overnment h urried t o f inish p rojects s uch a s a n ational r oads, e lectricity i nfrastructure a nd c entre r enovation schemes. T hese w ere inaugurated d uring a n a tional t our b y P resident dos Sa ntos in t he e arly e lection, in w hic h t he n ew p rojects w ere p resented as t he g ift of t he MPLA. A ll th is h elped t o p roject t he MPLA as t he p arty o f p eace a nd r econstruction, s et 0 p oint o f t he p rocess h at w as f urther e mphasised b y r eferences t o t he MPLA’s a nd g ove rnment s ustained d estruction. I nterviews w ith v illagers r evealed t hat p olitical t hinking w as st ill g uided b y an e ith er-or l ogic l earnt d uring wart ime.

UNITA h ad n either t he s pace n or t he r esources t o p romote a n a lternative m essage. T h e p arty h ad l ittle m ore t han i ts s tatutory a llocation f rom t he s tate b udget, w hic h in a n y c as e w as d isbursed s everal w eeks l ate, a fter t he e lectional
campaign had supposedly begun. Nor could UNITA call upon its old foreign allies, since in international opinion h ad d uring t he 1990s s hifted t owards a n MP LA government whose control of the country’s oil resources appeared unchallenged.7 This shift in opinion was manifested, inter alia, in government’s support for UN sanctions against the diamond trade with UNITA, and later for t he Kimberley Process t hat e xclude f rom i nternational m arkets di amonds min ed in rebel-held a reas. B y t he t ime of t he p arliamentary e lection in 2008, UNIT A’s former foreign allies showed little interest in challenging the MPLA’s domination of the political system.

Already c onstrained b y a l ack o f r esources, UNIT A’s m ost s killed le aders appeared more dedicated to reconstructing the party as a national force in Luanda than to mobilising in the party’s heartland. Those who remained in the provinces seemed to be concentrating their resources on providing for the welfare needs of those p eople w hose p ro-UNITA co nvictions r emained s trong en ough t o k eep them w ith t he p arty. Th ose w ho s till iden tified t hemselves a s ‘UNITA p eople’ would h abitually a pproach t heir lo cal p arty b ranch f or h elp w ith m oney in a n emergency, or to find a j ob in a b usiness run by a UNITA supporter. Many of th ese people felt that their continued adherence to UNITA prevented them from seeking jobs in the state sector, and they saw UNITA as the body to which they should turn for welfare. UNITA, in the eyes of its followers, played a state-like role for t hose w ho s till i dentified t hemselves a s ‘UNITA p eople’.8

It was significant that in 2008 UNITA achieved its best result (31.37 per cent of the p arliamentary v ote) in C abinda, a lo ng w a y f rom i ts h istoric h eartland. C abinda has a well-organised civil society, which had coalesced around demands for a utonomy s tronger t han t he p arty. Th ose w ho s till i dentified t hemselves a s ‘UNITA p eople’ would h abitually a pproach t heir lo cal p arty b ranch f or h elp w ith m oney in a n emergency, or to find a j ob in a b usiness run by a UNITA supporter. Many of th ese people felt that their continued adherence to UNITA prevented them from seeking jobs in the state sector, and they saw UNITA as the body to which they should turn for welfare. UNITA, in the eyes of its followers, played a state-like role for t hose w ho s till i dentified t hemselves a s ‘UNITA p eople’.8

Political engagement in wartime

Yet des pite i ts f oreign o rigins a nd l ack o f a c onistent p olitical p rogramme, RENAMO s ucceeded in s ome a reas in es tablishing a p olitical r elationship w ith rural Mozambicans as opposed simply to subordinating them in a regime of fear.12 The nature of the relationship between RENAMO and the civilian population has been the subject of controversy among observers of Mozambique.13 What is clear, however, is that RENAMO’s w ays o f o perating p ermit t he g eneration o f n e w s tructures to emerge. During the war, RENAMO was best able to establish a relationship with the r ural p opulation in t hose a reas w here FRELI MO’s r ural de velopment p olicies, p articularly v illagisation, e arned t he a dm ission o f t he fa rmers.14 Opposition t o v illagisation w as m ost m arked in t he s outh, w here p easant f armers h ad n o exp erience o f l iving in l arge v illages. Geffray g oes s o f a s t o s uggest t hat peasant farmers in Nampula Province were in conflict with FRELIMO before RENAMO even arrived, and the rebel movement simply took advantage of existing r ievances in m obilising t he fa rmers. B y co ntrast, RENAMO’s r elationship w ith p eople in t he s outh wa s l argely o ne o f t error a nd predation, a fa c t t hat R oesch a ttributes t o s outhern fa rmers b eing m ore e nthusiastic about FRELI MO’s a gricultural r eform p olicies than w as t he c ase in t he n orth.15 Yet even within t he s outhern p rovince of G aza, R oesch f ound t here w ere d ifferent a ttitudes t owards FRELIM O’s a gricultural p olicies than w as t he c ase in t he n orth.16
Ethnicity was another tool that RENAMO used to gain adherence in certain areas. RENAMO made claims to ethnic solidarity with the Ndau (Shona-speaking) people of central Mozambique, an area quite distinct from Nampula, where RENAMO was able to make its strongest political claims. But even if RENAMO’s principal association was with the Ndau, RENAMO nevertheless managed to make identity claims in the north as well, capitalising on the historic marginalisation of the Makua people of the region.

An influential analysis by Gersony divides RENAMO’s areas of influence into zones of taxation, control and destruction. Tax areas were those with a dispersed population that was left alone in exchange for tribute. Control areas were those where RENAMO organised labour. Destruction areas were where RENAMO had no hope of establishing political relationships, and relied on pure terror. According to Vines the major function of RENAMO’s control areas was:

… to provide food and services for the organisation … RENAMO obtains most of its labour forces from the other two zones, ‘tax’ and ‘destruction’ areas. Its workforce is therefore predominantly captive, detained against its will and forbidden to depart. RENAMO exploits those very areas from which its first constituency of support was drawn – rural peasant communities.

Vines nevertheless observes that RENAMO’s relationship with the population in control areas was not only one of forced labour:

Despite the overall picture of RENAMO’s harsh treatment of the population it encounters, there is another side to its administrative practices. When RENAMO enters a district for the first time there is some attempt to win over peasant support. Already in the early 1980s RENAMO played in this way on local discontent with FRELIMO’s ac hievements, particularly about the lack of consumer goods and villagisation, to obtain sympathy …

Promise of power and land has also been one of the offers RENAMO has made in rural areas to obtain support … Further confirmation that RENAMO was attracting the disgruntled and the power-hungry came in 1982 through research conducted by FRELIMO. It showed that many of the rebels in Inhambane province were failed local election candidates from 1978, who saw RENAMO as an alternative method to take power.
to bring RENAMO back in.\textsuperscript{24} Yet fears that this situation of divided military control would destroy Mozambique’s electoral process just as it had done in Angola two years earlier proved to be unfounded, possibly because FRELIMO avoided any action that might have provoked a reaction from RENAMO.\textsuperscript{25}

**Electoral gains**

Some have suggested that RENAMO’s threatening behaviour was able to mobilise local sentiment of discontent with the government in Maputo. In certain provincial urban centres, notably the city of Beira, RENAMO proved able to make its strongest political and ethnic claims during the war, namely in the area’s proximity to South Africa helped it to attract investment. After 1994, RENAMO was able to build on the political base that had been developed by the growing wealth gap served to consolidate RENAMO’s position as a political force in the north.\textsuperscript{23} RENAMO’s success meant it was able to win votes above and beyond those of the people in the areas that it controlled. UN figures suggest that at the time of the peace accord, RENAMO managed to win votes above and beyond those of the people in the areas it controlled.\textsuperscript{27} However, its support remained concentrated in those regions where it had been able to make its strongest political and ethnic claims during the war, namely the centre and centre-north of the country. Its worst results were in the south, where even the areas that RENAMO had controlled during the war voted for FRELIMO: this was a reaction to the brutality practised by RENAMO in the areas where it had never managed to consolidate its power by political means during wartime. Cahen suggests that for RENAMO, having a political programme was less important than being able to mobilise local sentiment in Maputo.

After 1994, RENAMO was able to build on the political base that had been confirmed by the elections. Fortuitously for RENAMO, the farmers of northern and central Mozambique – those who were RENAMO’s key constituency during the war – were the same people who were worst hit by the economic liberalisation programme that international financial institutions obliged FRELIMO to adopt as a condition for loans to finance redevelopment. The result was a migration of farmers from the state, from the market and from development, not just since FRELIMO’s coming to power but in many cases since the beginning of the century.\textsuperscript{26}

**Waning support**

This apparent firming of RENAMO’s political position in the decade following the first elections led commentators to suggest that the party was emerging as a dominant player in Mozambique. In other words, RENAMO’s share of the vote was greater than the population that it controlled at the end of the war. However, its support remained concentrated in those regions where it had been able to make its strongest political and ethnic claims during the war, namely the centre and centre-north of the country. Its worst results were in the south, where even the areas that RENAMO had controlled during the war voted for FRELIMO: this was a reaction to the brutality practised by RENAMO in the areas where it had never managed to consolidate its power by political means during wartime. Cahen suggests that for RENAMO, having a political programme was less important than being able to mobilise local sentiment in Maputo.

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patronage. In another example of patronage politics, \textsuperscript{32} RENAMO granted timber concessions to businessmen in areas that it controlled.

What is significant about these instances is that they reflect a change in the party hierarchy favored by Manuel Pereira. \textsuperscript{36} Simango, the ‘natural’ RENAMO candidate for the city leadership, pushed aside the illustration of RENAMO’s leadership problems. Intraparty tensions saw Daviz Joaquim Chissano, who gained 52.29 per cent of the vote, less than five percentage points behind incumbent president in contrast to the 1999 presidential election, in which Dhlakama received 47.71 per cent.\textsuperscript{20} The result was a tension between the new, urban RENAMO cadres and the old guard whose sense of entitlement was derived from the time they spent in the bush. When fears were raised of defection from RENAMO, President Machel dismissed her having appeared on a platform with Simango, while reports suggested that Trinta and Namburete were also close to Simango.\textsuperscript{37}

Thus RENAMO approached the 2004 elections without having consolidated the gains it had made in the previous ten years. The elections were characterised by a sharp drop in turnout compared with the previous national elections of 1999.\textsuperscript{35} Such voter apathy, much remarked upon by political commentators, was far more damaging to RENAMO than to FRELIMO: RENAMO received 1.6 million votes in 1999 but only 900,000 in 2004. For those who took a negative view of the status quo, FRELIMO had not delivered, but RENAMO had not delivered either, and manifestly had nothing to deliver. Moreover, the idea of democracy, which had been so prominent in the political discourse that surrounded the end of the war, had also failed to present the better life that was promised. In other words, those who were dissatisfied with the government’s performance appeared to have become dissatisfied with the political system as a whole. Rather than voting for the opposition, they saw no reason to participate in the democratic process at all. In 2004, Dhlakama managed to gain only 31.74 per cent of the vote, just under half the 63.74 per cent received by FRELIMO’s candidate, Armando Guebuza. This is in contrast to the 1999 presidential election, in which Dhlakama received 47.71 per cent of the vote, less than five percentage points behind incumbent president Joaquim Chissano, who gained 52.29 per cent.

Events surrounding the 2008 municipal elections in Beira provide further illustration of the opposition’s political problems. Intraparty tensions around D’aviz Simango, the ‘natural’ RENAMO candidate for the city leadership, pushed aside the party hierarchy.\textsuperscript{34} Simango stood on a platform that sought to put the local needs of Beira ahead of national political concerns. He won convincingly, apparently having the support of a large number of people who would otherwise have voted for RENAMO. As Luís de Brito’s analysis makes clear, RENAMO’s failure in this case was due to a decision-making process that favoured the views of party elites above those of the mass support base. Simango was expelled from RENAMO in September and went on to form a new political party, the Mozambique Democratic Movement. Early in March 2009, RENAMO’s political commission sacked the head, deputy head and spokesperson of the parliamentary group, Maria Moreno, Usis Tinta and Eudardo Namurete. These developments are reminiscent of the dismissals in terms of their having appeared on a public platform with Simango, while reports suggested that Trinta and Namburete were also close to Simango.

The lesson of Beira for RENAMO was that the party was able to capitalise on the popular discontent—but only for as long as RENAMO was prepared to put the wishes of potential voters ahead of the priorities of the party hierarchy. The more recent events give credibility to Brito’s warning that the crisis surrounding the Beira local elections bodes ill for RENAMO and in deed for the future of the multiparty system in Mozambique.

\section*{THE BURDENS OF OPPOSITION}

This chapter has so far attempted to trace the continuities between RENAMO’s and UNITA’s history as rebel movements, and the difficulties they have faced in becoming effective opposition parties in peacetime. It is, nevertheless, evident that some of the most serious challenges that they face are the same difficulties that all opposition parties have in common. It would be short-sighted to look at UNITA’s and RENAMO’s problems without considering the role that the opposition parties have in common. It would be short-sighted to look at UNITA’s and RENAMO’s problems without considering the role that the opposition parties have in common. It would be short-sighted to look at UNITA’s and RENAMO’s problems without considering the role that the opposition parties have in common.

\textsuperscript{38} At present, these phenomena are the result of the greater concentration of Angolans in the hands of the state, and Angolans’ il-based economy that the aves t he p arty-state cash-rich. The opportunities for patronage enjoyed by ruling parties encourage them to swallow sections of the opposition, while themselves remaining in tact: witness the large
number of defections from UNITA and other opposition parties to the MPLA in the months preceding the 2008 elections in Angola.

On the level of public discourse, all the opposition parties suffer from under-representation in the media: more so in Angola than in Mozambique. But here the former rebel movements have a particular problem over and above the difficulties faced by parties that do not have a litary history. The MPLA and FRELIMO have virtually monopolised nationalist discourse in their respective cotntries, each party portraying itself and itself alone as the guardian of the national interest. RENAMO’s own history makes it difficult to put forward a credible nationalist version of events that tends to be evoked by the movements’ leadership in making their claims to political legitimacy: a legitimacy that would be denied by those who saw the rebel movements as violent and predatory. Yet the examples of UNITA and RENAMO illustrate that this political relationship, forged in wartime, has nothing in common with the workings of a political party in a democracy. For

the rebel movements in the bush power, achieved by force of arms, came first. The political relationship came later, and it was an exclusive one. The political relationship did not consist in people choosing a movement to lead them: it consisted of a political-military elite determining the terms of engagement between the movement and the population. At no stage was there a question of political choice for the people under the control of the movement. In Angola, UNITA and the MPLA were perceived as ‘rival governments’. There is evidence to suggest that RENAMO, too, saw itself and presented itself as an organisation with the prerogatives and responsibilities of a state. Both movements claimed exclusive power, and the exclusive right to exercise the prerogative of violence, in the territory and over the people they controlled.

Once the two movements are understood in this way, it should become clear why their transition to working within a democratic polity has not been easy. The post-war transitions of the early 1990s appear to have been based on the assumption that the rival movements represented the interests of different groups within the population, whose differences could best be resolved at the ballot box. People would vote for the party of their choice, and in this way the election would become an expression of popular will within a single polity, this polity being associated with a non-partisan state and a common vision of nationhood. Such a vision had little in common with the nature and the modus operandi of UNITA and RENAMO – n or in deed of the MPLA and FRELIMO – in the 1970s and 1980s, yet the elections were organised on a basis of assumptions that ignored these factors. Indeed, in steady of a striking the former rebel movements in the MPLA and not everyone s opposition political parties, it might be more instructive to ask why it was ever assumed that rebel movements – and, for that matter, authoritarian party-states – were capable of transforming themselves into political parties worthy of the name.

The examples quoted earlier from Manning’s research illustrate how the relationship did not consist in people choosing a movement to lead them: it consisted of a political-military elite determining the terms of engagement when compared with those parties whose origins are in civil society.46

In wartime, both UNITA and RENAMO engaged with populations in ways that ranged from terror and coercion to the cultivation of a consensual political relationship between the political movement and the people under its control. The latter case represents the more positive face of the rebel movements, and it is this version of events that tends to be evoked by the movements’ leadership in making their claims to political legitimacy: a legitimacy that would be denied by those who saw the rebel movements as violent and predatory. Yet the examples of UNITA and RENAMO illustrate that this political relationship, forged in wartime, has nothing in common with the workings of a political party in a democracy. For
This strategy is sustainable for neither side, given that the superior resources enjoyed in each case by the government. While patronage politics is not unique to former rebel movements, the quasi-governmental character of RENAMO and of UNITA in the bush meant that both movements – and their constituents – entered the democratic era with entrenched ideas about the responsibilities of the political movement towards those under its control, and with no tradition of articulating popular demands within a democratic system. REM ANO’s mayhem started too break the mould by adopting a more socially engaged style of politics, for example, Beira, but then high-handed leadership reversed its successes. It is too soon to tell whether UNITA will illieve its sons from its small factional ga-ins in Cabinda.

CONCLUSION

Given the youth of Angolan and Mozambican political systems, it was possible to make definitive judgements regarding their success and failure as opposition movements. First, it is difficult and perhaps meaningless to disentangle assessment of the parties themselves from the assessment of democratic systems as a whole. A restrictive constitutional system limits opposition parties’ possibilities for action, but at the same time a system that offers opportunities to opposition parties is of little value if the parties do not actively seek to define and defend the political space that is available to them. UNITA in this sense is at a particular disadvantage, given that the MPLA government used the smokescreen provided by the resolution of war in the 1990s to strengthen its grip on the institutions of state in a manner contrary to the democratic promises of the post-Bicesse constitution. Second, success and failure are relative; however, at the time of writing it is evident that neither UNITA nor RENAMO is a serious contender for government, nor is either party in a position to bring strong pressure to bear on legislation in parliament. In terms of these minimal definitions, neither party can be described as effective.

The reasons for this is a complex, a set of stories outlined in the chapter demonstrate, and the differential trajectories followed by UNITA and RENAMO should serve as a warning against making blanket assumptions about the political efficacy of former rebel movements. Similarly, there are no obvious comparisons to be drawn between UNITA’s and RENAMO’s post-war trajectory and those of other African guerrilla movements.

First, the nature of warfare was different. When Christopher Clapham has presented an influential typology of guerrilla warfare; he identifies liberation in insurgencies (which sees in dependence from a colonial power), separatist in insurgencies (which sees profound changes in a state or region of a nature which it seeks to overthrow, and which may involve the creation of a personal fiefdom separate from the existing state structures and boundaries). UNITA defies categorisation here, since it began as a liberation movement that became a reform insurgency that also had elements of warlordism. RENAMO likewise straddles the latter two categories, if not the first. Clapham himself acknowledges that reliance on such typologies ‘runs the risk of oversimplified categorisations on movements whose character is both changeable and mixed.’ This is particularly true of a movement like UNITA, which existed for over 30 years and adapted to different political and military circumstances.

Second, cases in which former armed movements became civilian opposition parties are extremely rare, which again leaves us little basis for comparison. Let us consider the various uprisings in independent African states that have ended in a change in the political order: Ethiopia, Eritrea and Rwanda present cases of rebel movements that came to power by force of arms rather than by converting themselves into civilian opposition movements. Sudan presents a unique case in that the CPA ensured the admission of the Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement rebels to government as junior members of a coalition at the national level, but also as the governing party in a new devolved regional government. Since then, the CPA and the more powerful Eritrean People’s Liberation Movement have determined by their own power to respect the CPA in a dependent Southern Sudan. Liberia’s post-war settlement served to accommodate several former rebel leaders as public office bearers, and with only one election having been held since the end of the war, there is no evidence of any other former rebels making headway in opposition politics. In Burundi, the Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie, a former rebel group associated with the ethnic Hutu majority, gained power in a free election in 2005 that resulted from a peace settlement. It took several more years, to 2009, before a smaller rebel group, the Forces Nationales de Libération, laid down its arms and transformed itself into a political party. Its effectiveness as an opposition party has yet to be demonstrated.
The cases most comparable to Angola and Mozambique are those of Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): these provide examples of former rebel movements attempting to operate as political parties, though making less impact than either RENAMO or UNITA. In Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), formed by Foday Sankoh, faced an uphill task convincing the public to vote for the party. Yet the military origins of UNITA and RENAMO tell only part of the story. The different choices by the two parties made after the elections of the early 1990s also affected their later fortunes, UNITA’s unwillingness to play an oppositional role after 1992 contributed in the end to the greater consolidation of power by the MPLA, while RENAMO’s participation saw its support grow during the decade following the elections, as it turned its back on its military origins and managed to mobilise support within a democratic system. Both movements have been constrained by the habits of the past.

If the Angolan and Mozambican cases allow few points of direct comparison with other African conflicts, what then do they have in common with each other? In both Angola and Mozambique, a government opposed by a single rebel movement, and each of the rebel movements was highly centralised around a charismatic leader: this largely eliminated the possibility of rogue troops and splinter groups threatening the peace. However, in the Angolan case it also made it easy for Savimbi to emobilise his forces when they were not available to UNITA as it emerged from the last phase of the war in 2002. Particularly in the case of Angola, the superiority of the MPLA, while RENAMO’s participation saw its support grow during the decade following the elections, as it turned its back on its military origins and managed to mobilise support within a democratic system. Both movements have been constrained by the habits of the past.

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demonstrate that former rebel movements come with a legacy of political arrogance and authoritarian methods. As a contributor to a new and participatory democratic system, a former rebel movement has a natural advantage over a newly established party.

NOTES


2 The observations made about UNITA’s wartime strategies, unless otherwise attributed, are based on interviews conducted by the author in Angola in 2008 with people formerly attached to UNITA. The analysis of Mozambique relies more on existing literature on the continent.


5 Ibid, 49.

6 In the 2008 elections, the MPLA gained 82 per cent of the vote in Huambo province and almost 75 per cent in Bie, in contrast to 1992, when UNITA achieved a majority in both provinces.


8 J Pearce, *La Unita à la recherche de ‘son peuple’: carnets d’une noncampagne sur le planalto*, *Politique Africaine* 110 (2008), 47–64.


15 Roesch, *Renamo* and the peasantry in southern Mozambique, 469, describes RENAMO as ‘very much a N dau political project’ . V ines, *Renamo: terrorism in Mozambique*, attributes the association between RENAMO and the Ndau to the fact that the Ndau inhabit the area closest to the Zimbabwe border from which the first RENAMO insurgents arrived, and the choice of Ndau as a ‘lingua franca’ in the RENAMO military.

16 Gersony, *Summary of Mozambican refugee accounts*.


18 Ibid, 93.

19 Roesch, *Renamo* and the peasantry in southern Mozambique, 472.


23 Messiant, *MPLA et UNITA*.


25 Contrast this with the actions of the Angolan government in the months following the 1992 elections: see Messiant, *MPLA et UNITA*.


28 Cahen, *Check on socialism in Mozambique*, 56.


32 Ibid, 185.

33 Ibid, 188.

34 Ibid, 188.
African rebel movements emerging after the end of the Cold War have readily been dismissed as lacking any clear ideology or political agenda, let alone representing the voice of the people. Evidence for this can be found in the uneasy, if not oppressive, relationship these movements have with local communities and in the need to increase their ranks by force, rather than on a voluntary basis, or so it is argued.1 On top of that, African conflicts are presented as having clear dividing lines between, on the one hand, civilians—often portrayed as passive victims—and, on the other, atrocious rebels. The conflicts in Sierra Leone and Uganda and their respective rebel movements, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), are repeatedly used as examples to underline this thesis.

Material presented in this chapter, collected from former RUF combatants and civilians who lived in RUF territory, gives reason to doubt these rather one-dimensional perceptions.2 Instead, the data hint at a much more complex local communities, militias and rebel movements: the case of the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone

KRIJN PETERS

INTRODUCTION

African rebel movements emerging after the end of the Cold War have readily been dismissed as lacking any clear ideology or political agenda, let alone representing the voice of the people. Evidence for this can be found in the uneasy, if not oppressive, relationship these movements have with local communities and in the need to increase their ranks by force, rather than on a voluntary basis, or so it is argued.1 On top of that, African conflicts are presented as having clear dividing lines between, on the one hand, civilians—often portrayed as passive victims—and, on the other, atrocious rebels. The conflicts in Sierra Leone and Uganda and their respective rebel movements, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), are repeatedly used as examples to underline this thesis.

Material presented in this chapter, collected from former RUF combatants and civilians who lived in RUF territory, gives reason to doubt these rather one-dimensional perceptions.2 Instead, the data hint at a much more complex...
relationship, constantly changing over the course of the war. Accounts of ex-RUF combatants and civilians who lived in rebel-controlled areas suggest that a wide and diverse range of interactions were taking place, in which both the RUF and civilians ‘move’ through an unstable political landscape. I use the concept of ‘social navigation’, as developed by Mats Utas and Henrik Vigh. Social navigation can be described as ‘the way in which agents seek to draw and actualise their life trajectories in order to increase their social possibilities and chances in a shifting and volatile social environment’.

In their work, Utas and Vigh focus mainly on (ex)combatants in Liberia (Utas') and Guinea-Bissau (Vigh'), but the framework of social navigation is also helpful for understanding the trajectories of other combatants in other conflicts (including those of Sierra Leone and Uganda). Equally, I believe, the concept of ‘social navigation’ is useful to understand how civilians (are forced to) ‘move’ in a war context. As Vigh explains, ‘navigating the terrain of war is primarily a question of evaluating the movement of the social environment, one’s own possibilities for moving through it, and its effect on one’s planned and actual movement’, and this is what civilians in war zones have to do all the time in order to survive.

Rather than ‘evaluating the social environment’, Vigh argues for ‘evaluating the movement of the social environment’ acknowledging the rapidly changing and fluid social terrain created by war. For instance, the RUF in 1991 was not the same movement as the RUF in 1995, or in 1998 or in 2000. Among the features that changed (on several occasions during the course of the war) were its military tactics, its mode of conscription, the level of civilian support, the number and nature (local, national or international) of enemies and allies, and the kind of atrocities it committed. As the RUF created and responded to new situations, these in turn offered new possibilities and terminated previous ones for civilians living in the danger zone, requiring active navigation. I thus suggest an approach in studying local communities in war zones that is able to take this constantly moving terrain into account and acknowledges civilians in war zones as active survivors rather than passive victims.

Four different phases in the conflict are discussed below. In each of these phases, the RUF did undergo significant changes and as a result represented a different social environment that local communities had to navigate. I will discuss some of the attitudes and responses of the local communities to the demands of, and situations created by, the rebel environment, and show how these changed during the course of the war. On several occasions I refer to the conflict in Uganda and the LRA, with which, I believe, the RUF shared considerable similarities. The phases distinguished in the conflict are as follows:

- **Phase I (1991–1993): conventional warfare, from the RUF inursion to its near defeat**
- **Phase II (1994–1996): bush camps, from the establishment of isolated RUF jungle bases to their destruction**
- **Phase III (1997–1999): collaboration, from joining the military junta to the Lomé Peace Accord**
- **Phase IV (1999–2002): stalemate, from territorial occupation to demobilisation**

### Preamble: the making of the Revolutionary United Front

In 1978, Sierra Leone became a one-party regime under the authoritarian rule of President Siaka Stevens of the All Peoples’ Congress Party. Political opposition was either oppressed or bought off by Stevens. Radical students in Freetown and some other major towns, interested in socialism, Gaddafi’s ‘Green Book’ and Pan-Africanism, organised themselves in the Mass Awareness and Participation (MAP) movement and became increasingly proactive in their protests against the regime. Forced into exile by the regime, MAP leader Alie Kabba then approached the Sierra Leonean Pan-African Union (PANAFU) with the request to gather candidates for revolutionary training in Libya, but PANAFU rejected the idea of an armed struggle. Nevertheless, in 1980, a group of 50 Sierra Leoneans travelled to Benghazi, Libya, to receive military training. Among them was Foday Sankoh, a former corporal in the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force (RSLMF) and future leader of the RUF. After Sankoh returned to Sierra Leone and further organise his rebellion, he met with Charles Taylor – leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). The NPFL – with the support of Sankoh and a group of Sierra Leoneans – in 1989. Fifteen months later, the RUF used NPFL-controlled territory to start its incursion into Sierra Leone.

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**LOCAL COMMUNITIES, MILITIAS AND REBEL MOVEMENTS: THE CASE OF THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT IN SIERRA LEONE**

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Phase I (1991–1993): Conventional warfare; from the RUF incursion to its near defeat

In March 1991, a militia group fighting against the RUF (see below):

civilians, as explained by an administrator within the Civil Defence Force, a counterinsurgency tactics of the army as the main reason why she joined the RUF:

This is underlined by a female ex-RUF combatant who refers to the NPFL.12

Krahn. A brutal counterinsurgency by Doe's forces only played in the hands of the marginalised and oppressed by the authoritarian President Samuel Doe, an ethnic relatively small force. However, it quickly increased its ranks by effectively

1989, the NPFL entered Liberia (from Côte d'Ivoire), it also did this with a NPFL rebels had previously employed this tactic in Liberia. When, in December 1989, the NPFL entered Liberia (from Côte d'Ivoire), it also did this with a

NPFL. Stevens and his handpicked successor Momoh relied more on a special and well-armed police force unit, the Internal Security Unit, than on any real capacity to deal with military threats – it was clear to the insurgents that they had to embark on a massive recruitment campaign to increase the movement's numbers. The NPFL rebels had previously employed this tactic in Liberia. When, in December 1989, the NPFL entered Liberia (from Côte d'Ivoire), it also did this with a

The counterinsurgency of [among others] the Sierra Leone army was quite ruthless, as was the case in President Doe's counterinsurgency in neighbouring Liberia, the response by the Sierra Leonean army did not make things much better.13 In a number of cases it sealed the fate of the voluntary and forced rebel recruits and civilians, as is explained by an administrator within the Civil Defence Force, a militia group fighting against the RUF (see below):

The counterinsurgency of [among others] the Sierra Leone army was quite ruthless, straight from the beginning. As and this makes it likely that the soldiers would kill you.15

If a summary execution was waiting for them, they were looking for an opportunity to escape to the bush and fought against Obote for the next five years. In 1986, Museveni seized power, ignoring negotiation attempts by Tito Okello, an Acholi who had overthrown Obote the previous year. Ethnic groups from the northern part of the country) institution, which had less affiliation with civilians living in Mende-dominated areas. In Uganda, the first president, Milton Obote, himself a Langi from the northern part of the country, relied heavily on the army dominated by northerners. Idi Amin, who ousted Obote in a coup in 1971, massacred thousands of soldiers from the Langi and Acholi ethnic groups.16 Amin was overthrown in 1979 and Oboite came back in power as a result of a controversial election in 1980. Yoweri Museveni, who helped in the overthrow of Amin, took his forces to the bush and fought against Obote for the next five years. In 1986, Museveni seized power, ignoring negotiation attempts by Tito Okello, an Acholi who had overthrown Obote the previous year. Ethnic groups from the south and southwest dominated Museveni's National Resistance Army, and this may explain to some extent the unscrupulous behaviour of a section of his soldiers when on a mission in Acholiland.

To copt the NPFL's tactic of recruiting a mong oppressed etnic groups – perhaps on the suggestion of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) – the RUF tried to exploit the resentments of local people against the All People's Congress (APC) regime. The APC – a party mainly representing the interests of the Temne ethnic group – was widely condemned by the Sierra Leone population. This resentment turned into open hatred in the eastern part of the country, which formed the political homeland of the banned Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), an organisation that mainly represented the Mende etnic interests. Nevertheless, the reality on the ground was more complicated. Many civil servants and police officers of Mende ethnicity had little choice but to cooperate with the APC regime. Others, whose political or economic positions were endorsed by the regime, often in exchange for loyalty to the APC, acted as brokers and patrons for the peasantry. Local communities, militias and rebel movements: the case of the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone

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It was in 1993 that the rebels captured my brother. Then the soldiers came to our village. They accused my father that he had given his son to the rebels. To punish him for that they killed him. That was the reason for me to join the rebels. At that time, if you only were giving water to the rebels, the soldiers would kill you.15

Part of the explanation for these particular brutal counterinsurgency practices and the opposite effect they had on ending the war or winning the support of the local population may be found in the ethnic manipulation of the military forces. For instance, a fter a coup in 1980, President Doe turned the Liberian national army into an ethnic Krahn-dominated force that went on the rampage in Gio- and Mano-dominated areas. Stevens and Momoh made the Sierra Leonean army an almost completely ethnic Temne, Koranko and Yalunka (all ethnic groups from the northern part of the country) institution, which had less affiliation with civilians living in Mende-dominated areas. In Uganda, the first president, Milton Obote, himself a Langi from the northern part of the country, relied heavily on the army dominated by northerners. Idi Amin, who ousted Obote in a coup in 1971, massacred thousands of soldiers from the Langi and Acholi ethnic groups.16 Amin was overthrown in 1979 and Oboite came back in power as a result of a controversial election in 1980. Yoweri Museveni, who helped in the overthrow of Amin, took his forces to the bush and fought against Obote for the next five years. In 1986, Museveni seized power, ignoring negotiation attempts by Tito Okello, an Acholi who had overthrown Obote the previous year. Ethnic groups from the south and southwest dominated Museveni's National Resistance Army, and this may explain to some extent the unscrupulous behaviour of a section of his soldiers when on a mission in Acholiland.
populations at all levels were thus navigating the pre-war (but clearly not peaceful) terrain to the best of their abilities.

The indiscriminate killings by the rebel forces were associated with the APC regime did not evoke the widespread support among the population in the eastern districts the RUF had hoped for. The larger part of the population – although in favour of change and perhaps even endorsing an armed struggle – judged their own possibilities for surviving and moving through these insecure times the highest if they did not join. But at this level were the voluntary conscription, in particular among a class of socio-economic marginalised young people, often belonging to the weaker lineages in society. The labour of some of these youngsters had been exploited by landlords or families-in-law (as part of a bride price). Others were school dropouts.

By the end of the 1980s, the extent of support trickling down to the end of the patrimonial chain, where most of the rural youngsters were positioned, dried up – a nd t he y oungsters t ried t o s urvive b y d oing p iece j obs (a nd sometimes committing petty crimes) in urbanised centres or in the country’s countryside. Or they ran away from their villages to escape the made-up charges of kangaroo courts controlled by the rural elite. For these rural vagrants, the RUF’s populist ideology of ‘no more slave, no more master’ and its promises of free education and medical care for the ‘masses’ must have sounded attractive and of particular relevance to their own situations.

In contrast, young people from stronger lineages or more firmly tied to a patrimonial network were much more likely to join the Civil Defence Force (CDF) militia. This is confirmed for instance by William Reno, who shows how the level of control over youth (more particularly, illicit diamond mining gangs) by chiefs determined whether these gangs joined the RUF or were turned into militia units to defend local communities. Similarly, support for the (chiefly aligned) CDF – a militia that was based on the hunter guilds called the Kamajosia in Mende – in the main villages in the east of the district was high her than in the south. In many isolated villages, which often have their origin as a main village’s farming outpost, staffed by a do mestic slaves. The above shows that a commander or fighter – the majority of the civilians were under the protection of a specific commander or fighter. My own commander, M Rogers, was not too bad. At least he was much better than M [the RUF commander in charge during the second RUF occupation]. Rogers talked for the civilians [pleaded on their behalf], for all civilians. His wife is from W [a nearby village].

It was important to have a good relationship with the commander, so whenever he asked you do something, you do it quickly and do it right. Then he can protect you. If you give him a sm all present or a s pacitive victim, he is t o lik e you. The majority of the civilians are un der the protection of a specific commander or fighter. My own commander, M Rogers, was not too bad. At least he was much better than M [the RUF commander in charge during the second RUF occupation]. Rogers talked for the civilians [pleaded on their behalf], for all civilians. His wife is from W [a nearby village].

On 29 April 1992, a successful coup was staged. The National Provisional Ruling Council, headed by the 27-year-old Valentine Strasser, took power and was much more favourably predisposed towards the Mendes. However, the regime made the tactical mistake of sending some of the APC loyalist and predominately Freetown-based army commanders to frontline positions to let them, too, taste the bitterness of war. These commanders had little interest in fighting for their new masters and sabotaged the struggle against the rebels by looting rather than protecting villages provided by villagers and/or new recruits from the area. In more than a few cases, the RUF and the other factions were used by civilians to settle local disputes, as is evident from a comment made by a former RUF clerk:

The civilians played a double role. They were going to the RUF and from there to the SLA [Sierra Leone Army] and then to the CDF [Civil Defence Force]. So that is how he RUF became suspicious. Many civilians sed the factions for taking revenge on each other for old quarrels and grudges. So the enemy of the RUF was not only the CDF or the SLA, but the whole society. Many of the earlier atrocities of the RUF can be explained by this double role of the civilians.

The above comment suggests aagentive – that is, expressing a agency – role by local communities/people. Rather than being passive victims, they were active survivors, in some cases using the armed factions to their own benefit. Clearly, civilians caught up in the war terrain tried to build up some relationship with the armed groups to increase their possibilities for survival. This is also illustrated by the following comment of a civilian who remained in his village throughout the war (first under RUF control, then under Sierra Leone Army [SLA] control, and then again under RUF control).

It was important to have a good relationship with the commander, so whenever he asked you do something, you do it quickly and do it right. Then he can protect you. If you give him a small present or a pacitive victim, he is to like you. The majority of the civilians are under the protection of a specific commander or fighter. My own commander, M Rogers, was not too bad. At least he was much better than M [the RUF commander in charge during the second RUF occupation]. Rogers talked for the civilians [pleaded on their behalf], for all civilians. His wife is from W [a nearby village].
and towns. The ‘soldier by day, rebel by night’ or ‘sobel’ phenomenon was born. Nevertheless, a successful campaign by the RS LMF, Kamajors, Guinea’s soldiers (in Sierra Leone) and the United Liberian Movement for Democracy (a rebel movement created by Liberian exiles in Sierra Leone opposed to the NPFL and the RUF), the rebels found themselves nearly defeated by the end of 1993. Driven back to the far east of the country, they abandoned their heavy equipment and ‘disappeared’ in the Gola Forest, a long strip of primary rainforest along the Sierra Leone/Liberian border.

Phase II (1994–1996): Bush camps, from the establishment of isolated RUF jungle bases to their destruction

The RUF did not disappear for long, however. Early in 1994 it started to establish jungle camps in inaccessible terrain all over the eastern and southern half of the country, including the so-called ‘Zogoda’ in the Kambui South Forest Reserve, where rebel leader Foday Sankoh stayed most of the time. From these camps the RUF launched hit-and-run campaigns or sent fighters on ambush missions. The movement had completely changed its strategy from a more or less conventional rebel force aiming to conquer towns and mining areas – and ultimately the capital Freetown – to a forest-based guerrilla movement with very little control over any territory. These isolated bush camps were under closed canopy and provided protection to the RUF, but at the same time created a considerable dilemma with regard to recruitment. During the first years, the RUF at least partly relied on voluntary recruitment. Sometimes volunteers stepped forward after the RUF explained its ideology in the villages and communities; sometimes those interested in joining the RUF actually went to RUF territory to join up. If it had had control of villages and towns, it could have rounded up people and forced them to join or have sedled lightly or subtle or coercive measures or ukng recruitment. However, a forest-based guerrilla movement these possibilities no longer existed.

During these years, few volunteered and even if potential conscripts had the intention of joining the RUF, it was not easy to find a camp and reach it unharmed; both the army and the rebels were highly suspicious of everyone moving around in the combat zones. To increase its ranks, the RUF during this period depended mainly on the abduction of people, as the following statement of a former RUF commander attests:

We got our manpower mainly via capturing people. It was not easy for civilians in the government territory to get accurate information about the RUF and its aims and objectives, so they were not likely to join out of free will. But once we captured them we started to sensitise them and people started to join the movement because of the ideology and because they were not harassed any more.

The environment in which the LRA in Uganda – the other rebel movement infamous for its abductions of (predominately) under-age combatants – operates shows some similarities with the RUF in phase II. When the LRA moved its military bases to Southern Sudan, it increasingly became detached from the local population, which was forcibly resettled by the army to so-called ‘protected villages’. Moving in terrain sparsely populated by civilians, conscription by abduction seemed to be the only way open for a movement that could not rely on voluntary conscription to fill its ranks.

Abductees quickly found out that it was better to become a fighter than remain a RUF civilian in the camp (or for that matter, an LRA civilian) and be extremely vulnerable to ‘harassment’ (read: forced labour, physical punishments, rape etc). The RUF acknowledged that forced recruitment was not the preferred option because of the risk forcibly recruited people present if they manage to escape, but it had several ways of preventing defection. A mixt ure of warning against desertion by publicly punishing those who attempted to do so, a nd rewarding those who showed willingness to fight for the RUF’s cause with higher ranks and privileges, turned out to be quite effective in limiting desertion. Added to this was the tight security around the camps – probably as much to prevent enemies from entering as to prevent RUF conscripts from escaping – and the hostile attitudes of the army towards everyone who was suspected of being a rebel or coming from its territory. Even upon reaching their home area, escapees were far from safe – or so the RUF conscripts believed – as the following statement by another former RUF fighter confirms:

The reason for their [the RUF conscripts] loyalty was that when you are away from your brothers or family during the war for a long time, they will consider you as their enemy, especially if the people hear that you are rebel. No sooner you come to
Moreover, communities within the RUF zone were under strict orders to return escapees. Similarly, Ugandan camp dwellers who had welcomed ‘home’-deserted LRA combatants were sometimes hacked to death by LRA fighters. This happened at, for instance, the Pagak camp in May 2004.

Because of its change in tactics, the RUF no longer had to limit its actions to the eastern part of Sierra Leone. Virtually all villages and communities were now within the RUF unit’s reach, which sometimes travelled for days along the country’s numerous bush paths to suddenly appear and launch their hit-and-run actions. Local communities served as little more than a source of manpower, food and other essentials to the RUF, obtained by intimidation or violence. The military, restrained by its heavy equipment to the more inhabited areas and passable roads, hardly represented a threat to the remote RUF camps or was in a position to protect local communities (if it was willing to do so in the first place).

It became clear that if local communities wanted protection against the RUF (and the ‘sobels’), they had to organise it themselves. Hence, the birth of the Kamajor militia. Kamajors (in Mende kamajoi or kamasoi [singular], Kamajoisia [plural]), were specialist (bush animal) hunters and had superior knowledge of the forest and its bush paths. Helping the army from the early days of the conflict as scouts, they were subsequently organised by local chiefs to protect villages and increasingly did go on the offensive. A similar development took place in Uganda where (state-sponsored) homeguard groups of local defence units (LDUs) were established in early 1990 in answer to the ambushing and hit-and-run actions of the LRA. As a result, the RUF backpedalled (cf. a militarily force with no capability to engage in sustained action). Local communities served as little more than a source of manpower, food and other essentials to the RUF, obtained by intimidation or violence. The military, restrained by its heavy equipment to the more inhabited areas and passable roads, hardly represented a threat to the remote RUF camps or was in a position to protect local communities (if it was willing to do so in the first place).

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Phase III (1997–1999): Collaboration, from joining the military junta to the Lomé Peace Accord

Although a peace accord was signed, few soldiers, CDF fighters or rebels registered for the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme. There were high levels of distrust between the different factions and a number of violent clashes were reported during the first post-Abidjan months. In February 1997, Sankoh was arrested in Nigeria on weapon charges and kept in custody at the request by the Sierra Leonean government. It increasingly became clear that the peace accord would not hold and that the war was not over yet.

Nevertheless, the successful military coup on 25 May 1997 transferred power to a coalition government, which eventually led to the signing of the Lomé Peace Accord in 1999. This accord included a commitment to the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme, which was intended to address the root causes of the conflict and to prevent a recurrence of violence.
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junta from the capital, the major towns and the mining areas. But it failed to crush the RUF/AFRC completely.

Again, there are some striking similarities with Uganda, where the army launched a major military campaign in 2002, the ‘Iron Fist Offensive’, to deal with the LRA once and for all. The campaign included some 10 000 a rmy troops, the use of military gunships, US logistical support and the open support by the SPLA (post-September 11, t he LRA wa s p ut o n t he US t errorist li st a nd p ressure o n President Omar el-Bashir’s government in Sudan was increasing).42 However, the campaign failed and the LRA moved into new territories.

Similarly, the AFRC/RUF forces in Sierra Leone regrouped during the second half of 1998. Starting from their bases in the east (RUF) and north (AFRC), they recaptured town after town. On 6 January 1999, the combined forces attacked Freetown and entered the eastern part of the city. After several days of intense fighting the RUF/AFRC forces were beaten back by ECOWOG troops, but an estimated 6 000 people (civilians and fighters) died. Th e rebels and renegade soldiers raped, mutilated and burned alive hundreds, if not thousands, of civilians, taking random revenge on the capital’s inhabitants who they perceived as betraying the RUF/AFRC cause.

So again the rebels were driven back, but this time it was clear that no military victory would be possible for either side. The international community pushed for new peace negotiations and in July 1999, the Lomé Peace Accord was signed between the RUF and the SPLA government. The accord promised a blanket amnesty for all fighters and commanders and a government of national unity that included cabinet posts for the RUF and AFRC.43

Phase IV (1999–2002): Stalemate, from territorial occupation to demobilisation

Again, disarmament and demobilisation of fighters did not really take off. At the time of the signing of the Lomé Accord, the RUF was in control of a large cigar-shaped area – which included the diamond mining areas in the eastern district of Kailahun all the way to the western district of Port Loko. It was reluctant to hand over its territories or even allow access to government officials or UN military observers. For nearly two years – until DDR really started in May 2001 – the RUF was the de facto government in these areas and again the relationship between the RUF and the civilians changed significantly. For instance,
although the RUF had already created a so-called G5 branch to deal with civilian and ci vilian-military affairs early on in the conflict, t his b ranch n ow q uickly expanded to deal with issues such as land disputes, theft, accusations of adultery and local quarrels. 44

With the RUF claiming to be the (de facto) ‘government’ in the areas under its control, local populations could expect at least some level of service provision by the new authorities. In fact, when the RUF launched its struggle in 1991 it propagated an ideology of free education and medical health care to all. 45 Some of the larger phase II jungle camps had primary schools, and medicines were provided to the fighters and their families free of charge. 46 In phase IV the RUF made some attempts to institutionalise these services in its occupied territory, or so the accounts suggest. Perhaps this was not more than a kind of opportunistic and last minute attempt by the RUF to win the hearts and minds of the people, but equally it can be argued that only at this stage – when not all efforts and resources had to be directed towards fighting – was the RUF in a position to implement its ideology. In any case, the following comments by two civilians who lived in RUF territory suggest that there was indeed some level of free education and health care under the RUF ‘government’:

Here in Pendembu there were free medicines, but not too much. There was also free primary education. 47

There were no medicines so we treated ourselves with the native ones [herbs]. But there was a school and it was free education. The teachers were not paid. Six of my grandchildren were in that school. There was no harassment taking place at all. 48

Controlling the major diamond mining areas, but without the constant risk of being attacked or bombed by ECOMOG fighter jets, the RUF’s approach to mining did start to change somewhat. Previously, mining operations had been likely to be less constant or frequent, but very intensive and heavily dependent on forced labour. During phase IV, mining became more formalised and the RUF experimented with various mining schemes to regulate the mining of diamonds, as is evident from the following extract from an interview with a village chief:

It was from ’98 that the RUF was in control of Tongo and Kono, right up to the end of the war. I came here in 2000. The arrangement in place at that time was one pile of gravel for the RUF and one pile for yourself. But if you add a range of expenditures [fuel, equipment, food for the miners etc] yourself. If a big diamond was found in the RUF pile they could confiscate your pile as well because they then expected something in return. But if they did not find a good diamond they leave your pile untouched. They introduced these mining licences ... Later in 2000 they banned the card system [mining licences] and introduced two days of labour for the RUF and three days for yourself. 49

In pre- and post-war Sierra Leone, mining was based on a two- or three-pile system. 50 One pile of gravel (the gravel might contain the diamonds) is for the landowner, one is for the supporter (who pays for the fuel, equipment and food) and one is for the labourers. The rebels used a similar system, with the RUF ‘government’ taking the position (a nd t he pile) of the landowner and the three days for the labourer replacing the pile system with a number of days of labour. Evidence suggests that the RUF system became less exploitative after phase III. 51 However, it is important to point out that, at the same time, an increasing number of RUF and AFRICAN commanders arranged their own mining operations, and some of them used a much more exploitative system of mining.

This ‘governmentalisation’ of the RUF can be observed with regard to agriculture. Ex-RUF fighters (both rank and file and commanders) claimed that farming was a central part of the RUF’s ideology. 52 In phase II, most RUF bases had their own rice farms in proximity to where fighters and civilians worked (the latter most likely as forced labourers). According to an ex-RUF fighter:

Every base got its own [rice] swamp. In a circle of about five miles around the base no civilians were living. Beyond that civilians were living in villages under the control of the combatants. Th ere were t he [rice] swamps located w here b oth t he civilians and the combatants worked. 53

During phase IV, accounts seem to suggest that the RUF enforced its ideas about food production in most of its territory, as is suggested by the following comments by a civilian in the Kailahun area:

In G [a village in eastern Sierra Leone] we laid [made] upland [rice] farms. All the landowners had fled, so it was all common land now. We were farming for ourselves and there was a community [RUF] farm. For the community farm, the seed rice was provided by the RUF. There was a [RUF] government store, and the seed rice in

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there was given to the farmers for their own in individual farms, but they did not provide us with food for work when we worked on the community farm. We had to work one day a week on the community farm. The produce from our own farms was for us to keep. If you sell it to the Guinean border, you have to give some commission to the RUF.54

As with many of the landowners in the mining areas, the (bigger) farm and planning owners were often the first to flee (or to be killed). By confiscating this land for community farming activities, the RUF in effect implemented its own rough-and-ready land reform agenda. This must have been an attractive element to a rural underclass lacking secure land entitlements. However, the RUF replaced the ‘village farm or field’ by a ‘community farm’ on which civilians and fighters had to work. The harvest of these community farms went straight to the RUF and was used to feed the fighters or traded.

The number of days civilians in RUF territory had to work on these farms varied, but seemed to be lower in phase IV. The RUF also introduced ‘government stores’ that acted as seed banks. Various accounts suggested that these operated on a no- or low-interest basis, reflecting the RUF’s socialist ideas about agriculture. Overall, the accounts above do not seem to indicate an extremely high degree of civilian labour exploitation by the RUF during phase IV, but it is important to acknowledge that other informants in dicated high her levels of exploitation, in particular when civilians lived closer to the frontline or within the territory of a particularly unscrupulous commander.55

THE RESPONSES OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO MILITIA AND REBEL ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA

Above, the conflict in Sierra Leone was discussed, with a special focus on its main rebel movement. I showed how the RUF’s multiple changes in (military) strategies offered new opportunities for or ci vilians to be spared, while frustrating other possibilities. It is clear that in situations of prolonged armed conflict civilians and local communities are forced to respond and act for their survival. In essence, three responses are possible:

- Try to limit any chance of further contact with rebel or militia groups by physically distancing oneself from the danger or war zone. Escaping violence by moving to safer areas is a response employed by millions – in 2008 there were an estimated 10 million war-induced refugees in the world. The number of internally displaced people (IDPs) was even higher: 26 million in 2008. Civilians can decide to move to safer areas (such as urban centres in non-violent parts of the country, special camps, or they can stay with relatives) as a pre-emptive measure, but more likely they have already experienced some level of disturbance and violence. In a number of cases (for example in Uganda), people are forced by the government to move to camps. In other cases, a move can follow the destruction of a village by fighting forces. Neither IDP nor refugee camps are necessarily zones of safety. IDP and refugee camps (in particular if the refugee camps are looted and lose their order) are frequently targeted by both militias and rebel movements in search of manpower, food or for acts of retaliation. The levels of structural violence (resulting from war-induced trauma, for instance) and sexual harassment can be significant within the camps.

- Stay in a dangerous conflict zone, but try to limit risks by limiting contact and exposure to the fighting forces. Large numbers of civilians in conflict zones decide not to run away but to stay in their villages and communities (at least to start off with). They try to survive the threats posed by the various fighting forces by employing various tactics. Temporarily (days or sometimes even weeks), hiding in the bush or in farming fields when there is an attack or the threat of it has enabled civilians to remain in their communities for extended periods. Clearly, information and early-warning mechanisms are crucial for this (civilians on the run from a village are a clear signal). In other cases, fighting forces have a constant or highly frequent presence in villages and communities so that it does not become feasible to hide anymore. Key to surviving in these situations is to keep a low profile, be obedient and mind one’s own business, and not give any reason to be singled out or draw attention.

- Remain in one’s village in a dangerous conflict zone and actively support a militia or rebel organisation. One de liberately builds up a relationship with a fighting force, beyond and above a certain compliance that may take place under the previous response. Local community members can support the fighting faction financially, with manpower – for example a family member or child is enlisted in the armed group, and not for acts of retaliation. The levels of structural violence (resulting from war-induced trauma, for instance) and sexual harassment can be significant within the camps.
of fighters and commanders were often not adequate. As a result, few civilians took the risk to remain in their communities when there were rumours that an attack might take place (in return, this fearsome reputation was sometimes used by the RUF as a military tactic). In the conflict (1977–1992) in Mozambique, the Mozambican National Resistance Movement, RENamo, had a similar reputation for being extremely brutal, in particular in the southern areas, instilling fear among the people and causing mass displacement.

Is the fighting force roaming, which may make it possible for civilians to temporarily hide (and also hide their most precious possessions), or is it static and likely to stay for prolonged periods in one community/village? In the latter case, such a response is unlikely to be feasible. Communities under prolonged control of the RUF – such as in its stronghold in Kailahun District – had to find ways of surviving this occupation, and often built up some relationship with fighters and commanders. However, the phase characterised by the RUF hit-and-run attacks did not allow such a response and it was often difficult to take cover in time when there was yet another surprise attack. The conflict in Côte d’Ivoire between government forces and the Patriotic Movement of Côte d’Ivoire (later joined by two other factions forming a politico-military alliance called the New Forces), quickly resulted in a split of the country (including an internationally monitored buffer zone) with the New Forces controlling the northern half of Côte d’Ivoire. At least in this case communities in the different parts of the country knew with which armed group they were dealing.

Is the fighting force predatory on the community for its survival? If so, communities can be exploited beyond their point of survival. Evidence suggests that in areas under rebel control, the New Forces often operated with impunity, looting and burning villages, and committing atrocities.

Variables for the fighting force

- Does the fighting force have a clear and meaningful ideology or political agenda that is likely to attract the support of civilians? Clearly, this was one of the weaker points of the RUF, which had little to offer beyond a superficial and populist critique of the political and economic state of the country. In contrast, the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front, which successfully fought against the Derg regime and overthrew Ethiopia’s dictator Mengistu, had a political agenda that included an end to early marriages, equal divorce rights, equal access to education and equal property rights. Many – including women and girls – joined voluntarily.

- Does the fighting force behave well and are there means to address misconduct and harassment of fighters towards civilians, which would allow civilians to stay in their communities without too much risk? The RUF quickly became known as a fierce rebel movement, and mechanisms to control the behaviour of fighters and commanders were often not adequate. As a result, few civilians took the risk to remain in their communities when there were rumours that an attack might take place (in return, this fearsome reputation was sometimes used by the RUF as a military tactic). In the conflict (1977–1992) in Mozambique, the Mozambican National Resistance Movement, RENamo, had a similar reputation for being extremely brutal, in particular in the southern areas, instilling fear among the people and causing mass displacement.

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Is the ethnic, religious, national or political composition of the fighting force similar to that of the community? If not, there is a greater risk that civilians will be harassed by the fighters. The atrocious behaviour of the Liberian ‘special forces’ within the RUF in the early days of the insurgency is explained by many ex-combatants and affected civilians as a result of the fact that these Liberians were fighting in a nother country than their country of origin. This would imply, on the other hand, that Liberian fighting forces in Liberia would have a cleaner record, or that Sierra Leonean RUF fighters behaved better in their own country, and both assumptions have proven to be wrong. However, the multiple insurrections by Rwandan forces into the Democratic Republic of Congo and their atrocious behaviour to local civilians makes one wonder if there is after all some truth in this argument.

Variables for the community

Is the location of the community within or close to a war zone, which increases the risk of encountering violence? Communities in Sierra Leone that were close to or within contested areas hosted relatively large groups of fighters that were often in ‘fighting mode’. Community members sometimes have to move de eper into RUF territory where fighters were under less pressure. Villages that changed hands on multiple occasions were particularly vulnerable to suspicion and retaliation, and were more likely to be abandoned. Outram – referring to a 1994 report by the Catholic Church of Maryland County – notes that: ‘A report of an NPFL attack on Pleebo, Maryland County, in October 1994, held by the LPC [Liberia Peace Council, one of the armed factions], states that a fighter taking the town of the NPFL m.ordered ci villians, targeting church and medical personnel and any persons suspected of aiding or supporting the LPC, often merely on the grounds that they had remained in the town while it was under LPC control.’

Does the physical location of the community restrict the possibilities of the community to go to safer places, for instance because of its remote location (no easy access to main roads), the inhospitable terrain or because the nearest safe area (such as a neighbouring country) requires a journey through a region controlled by the RUF-controlled eastern part of Sierra Leone did find themselves locked in place at some point by an increasingly hostile army and civil defence forces to the west and United Liberian Movement for Democracy forces to the east. Here, the experience of large numbers of young Southern Sudanese (nicknamed the ‘lost boys’ of Sudan) who walked hundreds of kilometres – first to Ethiopia and then to Kenya – to escape the violence during Sudan’s second civil war (1983–2005) between the government and the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army/Movement comes to mind.

What is the strategic importance of a community or village? Communities near bridges, a cr ossroads, lose to min g a reas et c. May a il b ecome hig hly contested in the conflict and are likely to experience more fighting. In Sierra Leone, communities within the diamond mining district experienced high levels of violence due to the frequent attacks by the different fighting forces for control over the area, with a result in mass displacement. B ecause of the risk of fighting between the Angolan government and UNITA in 1992, nearly 400 000 people died, 1,5 million were displaced and 330 000 became refugees; the closer the government forces came to UNITA-controlled diamond areas, the fiercer the fighting became.

What is the nature of counterinsurgency? If it is discriminate and unscrupulous, it reatining a ll ci villians co ming f rom r elocations. Potential r elocation co laborators, ci villians c an b ecome lo cked in p lace. Thi s happened in the early stages of the conflict in Sierra Leone but also during the January 1999 attack on the town. Then, ci villians f rom the east astern a nd ECOMOG-controlled part, not a nd b ecause t hey could have been killed by the AFRC/RUF, but also because ECOMOG soldiers were executing suspected rebels in the area. The experience of thousands of young Southern Sudanese (nicknamed the ‘lost boys’ of Sudan) who walked many hundreds of kilometres – first to Ethiopia and then to Kenya – to escape the violence during Sudan’s second civil war (1983–2005) between the government and the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army/Movement should be questioned in the first place.

Is the community capable of, willing and supported in actively defending itself? The rise of the Kamajor/Civil Defence Force in the conflict is a clear example. The example of the Ugandan National Resistance Movement in Sudan, although in its case the objectives of the Khartoum government should be questioned in the first place.
These are just a selection of the variables that influence the behaviour of factions and the responses of civilians/communities. Most, if not all, of these variables can change over the course of a conflict: a faction can become more exploitative and hostile to civilians (perhaps in reaction to a lack of military success) over time, or a particular community may experience less harassment by a faction (because a particular unscrupulous commander is stationed somewhere else and replaced by another with a different ethnic background) than that of the fighting force to fear for their lives and thus flee.

In short, there are few, if any, general patterns that can be distinguished in the responses by communities to the threat posed by armed militias and rebel groups. Rather, the response is based on a complex equation with multiple variables – and I have not even brought ‘opportunity’ (in other words luck) or ‘psychological traits’ (such as resilience) of community members into the equation. Moreover, the responses are not even fixed over time. While it is important to guard against an over-rationalisation – amid an attack few would remain fully capable of making completely calculated decisions – by war-affected civilians, it would be wrong not to acknowledge the tactics and strategies these civilians employ to survive in a situation created by protracted armed conflict.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have described some of the responses of local communities to the demands of, and situations created by, a rebel environment. I have also shown that these environments are constantly changing, requiring a new, more active and flexible ‘navigation’ by civilians in the war zone in order to survive in a stable and safe environment. Within the narrow concept of military or national security, there is little scope for individuals and communities to employ to survive in a situation created by protracted armed conflict.

Starting from the observation that: ‘Belligerent groups are likely to tolerate civil recolonisation of at least parts of the war-shattered zone, to ensure better supply of basic commodities,’ Richards gives the example of market women in government territory who have found ways to navigate the numerous checkpoints and trade palm oil from rebel-controlled plantations for items of interest to the combatants. This example of the ‘attack trade’ – first described with reference to the Biafra war, ‘may be one of the important processes through which the civil agrarian zones in war-torn Sierra Leone get back on their feet, and extend “peace from within”’. Initiatives based on this idea of ‘peace from within’ also materialised in phase IV, giving rise to the RUF’s ‘process of governmentalisation.’ This was made possible because the RUF’s survival wa s challenged ad n sim ultaneously by a nd some other opportunistic peace spoiler:
The overall observation must be that rebel movements are (of course) not static entities and that their composition, agenda, targets and strategy can and are likely to change over time. This affects the relationship they have with local populations, but these changes are also the result of the responses of civilians to the actions and threats posed by the rebel organisations. Interventions, whether they are aimed at brokering a ceasefire or planning the best counterinsurgency strategy, should take these relationships into account and how they impact on each other into account.

NOTES


2 The material presented was collected during fieldwork undertaken in three periods, namely November/December 2001, November/December 2002 to October 2003 and November/December 2006. (See Krijn Peters, Expert report on the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, unpublished report, 2007.) The first two periods of fieldwork collection formed part of my PhD research. The last period formed part of the preparation of an expert witness report on the RUF, requested by the Sesay defence team of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. I applied the notion of ‘agency’ as follows: ‘The notion of agency attributes to social actors the capacity to process social experiences and to devise ways of coping with life, even under the most extreme forms of coercion. Within the limits of information, uncertainty a nd the o ther costraints (f or exa mple p hysical, n ormative or p oliticaleconomic) that exist, social actors are “knowledgeable” and “capable”. They attempt to solve problems, learn how to intervene in the flow of social events, round them, and monitor continuously their own actions, observing how others react to their behaviour and taking note of the various contingent circumstanc es.’ N L ong, From paradigm lost to paradigm regaining? The case of the actor-oriented sociology of development, in N Long and A Long (eds), *Battlefields of Knowledge, the Interlocking of Theory and Practice in Social Research and Development*, London: Routledge, 1992, 22–23.

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5 M Utas, Agency of victims: young women’s survival strategies in the Liberian civil war, in Filip De Bock and Alinda Honwana (eds), *Makers and Breakers: Children and Youth as... (forthcoming, 2010).


29 Peters, Footpaths to reintegration, 63.


31 Allen, Trial justice, 77.

32 For example, on 24 January 1995 the town of Kambia in the far west of the country close to the Guinean border was attacked by the RUF.


34 Other hunter guilds involved in the war included the Tamaboros (Koranko ethnic group) and the Kapras (Tenne ethnic group).

35 Allen, Trial justice, 47.

36 Peters and Richards, Why we fight.


38 Peters, Footpaths to reintegration, 78.

39 Ibid, 54.

40 Interview conducted as part of the preparation of Peters, Expert report on the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone.

41 Ibid, 59.

42 Allen, Trial justice, 50–51.

43 Paying the price: the Sierra Leone peace process, Accord (9), 2000.

44 The author studied over a hundred RUF intelligence (G5, in internal defence unit, intelligent officer branch, etc) documents dealing with these issues, gathered by the Issa Sesay defence team of which many were produced by RUF G5 branches. Originality of the documents has been confirmed by another external expert.

45 RUF/SL, Footpaths to democracy.

46 Peters, Footpaths to reintegration.

47 Peters, Expert report on the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, 58.

48 Ibid, 64.

49 Peters, War and the crisis of youth.


51 Peters, Expert report on the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone; Peters, Armed conflict, youth and the rural crisis in Sierra Leone.

52 Peters, Footpaths to reintegration.

53 Ibid, 81.

54 Peters, Expert report on the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, 63.

55 Peters, War and the crisis of youth.


62 Outram, It’s terminal either way, 361.


67 Other viable routes for the community are: (1) The king of the villages will give a community member a large sum of money in order to escape; (2) the community can be encouraged to receive financial aid; (3) If the micro-political pre-war relations within the community give reason for some to fear that these can be exploited by fellow civilians/fighting factions; and (4) Ethnical, political or religious composition of the community and if these characteristics are a reason for the war and can therefore something which can agitate factions.


70 Richards, Fighting for the rainforest, 155.

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid, 156.
INTRODUCTION

States are expected to maintain general harmony and satisfaction among the people, or generic peace, as well as to keep the peace, meaning law and order. Most states, however, tend to concentrate on keeping the peace at the expense of maintaining generic peace and result in confrontations. This is particularly the case with fragile states, which, argues Eka Ikpe, lack the ‘capacity and resilience’ to protect themselves from various challenges. This means that they cannot protect citizens, absorb shocks and manage conflict without resorting to violence.

Fragility creates an environment for violence because of the perceived inability of security forces in a state to command trust. Such states become breeding grounds for illicit activities that compound their problems. If properly handled, the agitations can lead to reforms or semblances of reform as a way of keeping the peace, for it is the unheeded calls for reforms that lead to rebellions. When the point of rebellion has been reached, it means that the ruling elite would have lost legitimacy in the eyes of the ruled, who have transferred their loyalty to new groups or leaders. In the process, different types of militia and rebels emerge.
Militias and rebel groups tend to destabilise individual states and their regions and some have extensive ra-continental ra misfactions and even some of these challenges constitute constituencies, whether at the state, regional or international levels. Militias are organised and often armed groups that operate within a state and sometimes appear to be condoned. They generally do not challenge the legitimacy of the government. Rebel movements, however, do not consider the government to be legitimate and may aim at overthrowing it. Since rebels can transform a local conflict into a much wider issue that calls for solutions beyond the capacity of any single state, it calls for concerted effort within the region to resolve the conflict, on a regional or even continental basis.

Responses to militia and rebel movements, whether at state, regional and international levels, vary according to the challenges they present. Responses include attempts at suppression of political acco mmodation through constitutional restructuring in the form of power-sharing. If unresolved, it could lead to state fragmentation and separation. Regional as well as continental players, worried about their complex interests, contribute to each of the responses.

**STATE RESPONSES**

State responses generally include suppression, creating counterinsurgency forces, constitutional restructuring and various military operations, w hether in the form of foreign interventions. In the case of Kenya, for instance, Mwai Kibaki’s administration repeatedly tried to crush the Mungiki by arresting its members and leaders in paramilitary operations. Mungiki operations, however, appeared to decline only after its leader, Maina Njenga, was released from prison. Njenga then linked up with former President Daniel arap Moi in a crusade for peace in which he advised his estimated five million followers to change their ways.

At times, states engage in deception and portray questionable behaviour as inevitable and in the best interests of the country. To deal with perceived threats, they encourage pro-government militias or even create counterforces to militias in the form of special units. In Sudan, the government initially encouraged Arab militias to counter the advances of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). In Uganda the government encouraged and trained the Arrow Boys and Amuka Boys supposed ly to protect the citizens, while its soldiers were fighting Joseph Kony’s Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in the north. This was in the hope that the government would be able to disarm the militia once the LRA had been defeated. In Rwanda the state helped to create the Interahamwe as a way of ensuring that assumed threats in the challenge posed by the Hutus, but then it seemed to lose control of the group. The danger is that such counterforces could embarrass those who start or condone them when they become uncontrollable and take the law into their own hands.

Another type of response is to engage in constitutional restructuring, a socioeconomic and political redistribution mechanism to deal with two internal challenges. The first is the political differences among politicians and the second is the friction between the idea of state and the idea of nation. Accommodating political differences takes into account political interests of key players who have the proven ability to exercise influence on militias to disrupt or continue to disrupt the peace if they are not addressed. Of various options, all of them focusing on political control, power sharing has in creasingly become the accepted mode of constitutional restructuring.

This is the friction between the idea of state and the idea of nation. Accommodating political differences takes into account political interests of key players who have the proven ability to exercise influence on militias to disrupt or continue to disrupt the peace if they are not addressed. Of various options, all of them focusing on political control, power sharing has increasingly become the accepted mode of constitutional restructuring. This is the friction between the idea of state and the idea of nation. Accommodating political differences takes into account political interests of key players who have the proven ability to exercise influence on militias to disrupt or continue to disrupt the peace if they are not addressed. Of various options, all of them focusing on political control, power sharing has increasingly become the accepted mode of constitutional restructuring.

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**STATE, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES TO MILITIA AND REBEL ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA**

**MACHARIA MUNENE**
Although Kenya did not intervene, Ethiopia and Uganda did in the name of the African Union.

**CLUSTERS OF CONFLICT AND REGIONAL RESPONSES**

The calls for intervention focus attention on the role of neighbours in a given region, particularly on the African continent. Political disputes among leaders that degenerate into disruption of the peace have garnered an assortment of regional responses. The presence of rival militias and rebel movements in a state or in the region makes intervention problematic, yet Africa, as a continent, has had to deal with such people, and Liberia was forcibly acquired for that purpose. The blacks, who went to be free in West Africa, whether in Sierra Leone or Liberia, became members of the privileged class that tended to dominate the ‘natives,’ which in turn created simmering resentments. When Doe, a Krahn rather than an Americo-Liberian, took power in 1980, he gained popularity for executing 13 Americo-Liberians at what became known as the ‘Libyan Beach Party.’

Conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone erupted in the 1990s, starting with Taylor’s forces by July 1990, its started fragmenting into feuding power-seeking groups that seemingly threatened the rest of West Africa. Taylor had broad-based support in Liberia when Taylor launched his attack in December 1989, after mysteriously escaping from a Massachusetts jail, before spreading to neighbouring Sierra Leone. Taylor had broad-based support in Liberia (including current President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, who donated US$10,000) and was also supported by radio. Despite these undertakings, disputes in one country spread to neighbours and led to the development of some four geographical clusters of conflict, namely the Mano River cluster, the Southern Africa cluster, the Great Lakes cluster, and the Horn of Africa cluster. In each cluster, militia and rebel activities that started in one country tended to spread to neighbours and become regional problems.

**The Mano River cluster**

The conflicts in West Africa revolved mainly around the Mano River and attracted their fair share of regional intervention. Although the Mano River cluster affected mostly Sierra Leone and Liberia, it disrupted Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire, too. Sierra Leone and Liberia are products of post-American revolution debates on the future of free blacks in North America. To start with, the English created Sierra Leone as a place to take blacks from Nova Scotia or slaves caught on the high seas rather than take them to Canada or Britain. The ‘returnees’ became the Krios, who dominated the digenous populations. Liberia was a producer of free blacks among slaves in the United States. Given that free blacks were suspected of inspiring slave revolt, the US did its best to find an alternative place for such people, and Liberia was forcibly acquired for that purpose. The blacks, who went to be free in West Africa, whether in Sierra Leone or Liberia, became members of the privileged class that tended to dominate the ‘natives,’ which in turn created simmering resentments. When Doe, a Krahn rather than an Americo-Liberian, took power in 1980, he gained popularity for executing 13 Americo-Liberian top officials from the previous government at what became known as the ‘Libyan Beach Party.’

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tried to intervene di plomat ically b ut fa iled. EC OWAS, le d b y Nigeria, t hen transformed itself into a military organ called ECOMOG to intervene and restore peace in Liberia.30 Not all member countries were willing to send troops and so ECOMOG seemed to become part of the problem as other countries questioned Nigeria's role and activities.31 ECOMOG eventually helped to settle the L iberie rial civil wa r b y p romising T aylor imm unity f rom in tern ational p rosecution and a nd asylum in Nigeria. Nigeria's foreign affairs minister, O leyumi Ade ni ji, asserted that the a sylum was a g iven ' on h umanitarian g rounds in o rder t o s ave t he Liberian people from fighting, in order to save the peace process' and voiced that Nigeria would 'not be harassed by anybody' to hand over Taylor because 'that is not what a sovereign country would do.'32 Pointing out that if Nigeria reneged on the asylum, 'nobody w ill r espect u s,' Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo insisted that 'nothing should be done to erode the credibility of Nigeria.'33

The impression created was that since the level of conflict in the Mano River cluster declined, providing a safe haven to warlords might be a way for regions to end pro longed co nflicts in t heir c lusters. Thi s t ype o f f r esponse, h owever, wa s eroded in 2006, w hen P resident O basanjo, un der p ressure f rom US P resident George W B ush, reneged on Taylor's asylum. By handing over Taylor, Obasanjo eroded the credibility of Nigeria, which then undermined Nigeria's standing as a possible mediator in other conflicts.35

The Southern Africa cluster

The response to rebel movements in the Southern Africa cluster had two racially opposed aspects. The first responses came from 'white' political entities trying to survive in the midst of increasing pressure for change.40 South Africa, South Africa, South West Africa, Mozambique and Angola. The OAU expected every member to contribute financially according to ability, to assist such freedom fighters.41

On their part, the racist regimes tried to put up a united front against what they believed was an affront to the Western way of life. This was particularly the case in the 1960s, w hen, o ther t han S outh Africa, o nl y t he P ortuguese co lonies a nd Rhodesia r emained a s b asions o f f r eedom f ighters in the remaining col onial states, namely Rhodesia, South Africa, South West Africa, Mozambique and Angola. The OAU expected every member to contribute financially according to ability, to assist such freedom fighters.42

Two, just as South Africa appeared to have the tacit support of the West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f t he West, black South Africans fighting a partheid had b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o of Angola (MPLA). South Africa had also responded to the presence of the MPLA in Angola with an invasion, condoned by the US, and thereby made Angola an ideological and physical battleground in the Cold War.43

South Africa and Rhodesia adopted a strategy of destabilisation of anti-racist forces in the neighbouring states. Given that FRELIMO worked closely with the Zimbabwean liberation movement, South Africa supported a rebel movement called the National Resistance Movement (MNR or RENAMO) to destabilise Mozambique. When President S outh Africa had also responded to the presence of the MPLA in Angola with an invasion, condoned by the US, and thereby made Angola an ideological and physical battleground in the Cold War.43

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The Great Lakes cluster

Zimbabwe and South Africa were both members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The purpose was to lessen the economic dependence of the 'frontline' states on South Africa, but SADC also aimed at coordinating its support for anti-apartheid forces operating in their own countries. This objective changed when apartheid was defeated.
presidents of South Africa, Gabon, Mozambique, Nigeria, Namibia and Malawi, were witnesses to the 2004 declaration by the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region (ICGLR), which was sig ned in Dar-es-Salaam by the presidents of 11 African countries (Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Republic of Congo and South Sudan). The de claration stressed that member states had committed themselves to preventing 'any direct or indirect support, delivery of arms or any other form of assistance to armed groups operating in the region' and also to neutralising, disarming, arresting and transferring to relevant international tribunals the perpetrators of genocide and also subversion against each other. They agreed to 'neutralise, disarm, arrest and transfer to relevant international tribunals the perpetrators of genocide' and also committed themselves to prevent 'any direct or indirect support, delivery of arms or any other form of assistance to armed groups operating in the region'.

To prove it was serious, ICGLR officials faciliated the arrest and transfer to The Hague for trial by the International Criminal Court (ICC) of Jean-Pierre Bemba.42

The D ar-es-Salaam Declaration was one of the regional responses to the crisis in eastern Zaire, which was signed in Dar-es-Salaam by presidents of 11 African countries (Angola, Burundi and particularly Congo. It was a response to the challenges posed by rebel movements a nd civil wars.43 With the emergence of Mobutu as the strong man soon after Lumumba, Joseph Mobutu ultimately replaced Lumumba and plunged the Congo, which he renamed Zaire, into protracted chaos that affected the neighbours for a long time.44 With the em ergence of Mobutu as the strong man, there was a mass slaughter of the Tutsis. A government-sponsored militia, the Interahamwe, went on a rampage in 1994 and killed more than 800,000 people.45 The mass killings stopped when the RPF, operating from Uganda, took over control of the country and former government officials as well as the Interahamwe militias ended up in eastern Zaire, where they became a source of concern for the cluster.

By the late 1980s, Mobutu had become a regional embarrassment for other leaders in the Great Lakes cluster. Their response to the crisis in eastern Zaire was twofold, with countries united but then turning on each other. At first leaders – Paul Kagame of Rwanda, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and José dos Santos of Angola – formed a temporary alliance to support a rebellion against Mobutu.46

The second response led to the fragmentation of the alliance as allies turned on each other. Each appeared bent on exploiting the natural wealth in the Congo and some became big exporters of minerals not found in their own countries. The allies started accusing each other of all sorts of things, and Kabila kicked Kagame's men out of Kinshasa and then Museveni and Kagame turned on each other in the eastern Congo. S tate in terests took centre stage. Th ey all started t u rning against each other, with proxies within the eastern Congo.

The Horn of Africa cluster

Some countries in the Great Lakes cluster are linked to the Horn of Africa cluster, which is a complex problem with many dimensions. The region is one of the most complex in terms of the impact of, and responses to, rebel movements and militias. It is a cluster in which conflicts tend to be in multiples of seeming in compatibles and there have been at least four border disputes, two of them in the form of 'proxy wars' in which rebels are used against other states.47

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They suffer, notes Ruth Iyob, from a ‘crisis of identity, stemming from the contest for hegemony by Christianity and Islam and African and Arab civilisations’.

At one time, Pan-Ethiopianism appeared to be the dominating influence in the region in competition with Arab Muslim influence, which was expanding southwards. Both Ethiopia and Sudan stressed historical claims that pre-dated one time, Pan-Ethiopianism appeared to be the dominating influence in the region. The region remains volatile especially with regard to the question of Somalia, which has called on its neighbours to intervene and save it.

In the Horn of Africa cluster, the organisation for responding is the IGAD and it has had mixed results. It still faces challenges relating to disputes over borders mainly between Ethiopia and Eritrea, a nd other rivalries in Somalia. With the support of the AU and the international community, IGAD has had some limited successes in establishing a government in Somalia, although it remains fragile, and in facilitating a settlement of the dispute between the SPLA and the government of Sudan.

EXTRA-CONTINENTAL RESPONSES

Extra-continental forces, termed the ‘international community’ in reference to powerful North American and Western European countries, affect developments in Africa and respond in roughly four overlapping ways. The first is a temporary promotion of anti-government leaders to oust regimes or support leaders of such regimes against the rebels. Such people, whether they are leaders of regimes or rebel movements, are discarded once they have outlived their usefulness. The second is to mount intervention, either unilaterally or through recognised international organs like the UN or the OAU/AU. The third is to accept a stalemate and pressure the parties to negotiate and accept a power-sharing deal. The fourth is to mobilise the International Criminal Court (ICC) to try specific persons.

There are times when all four appear to apply and they all find in tectual support in the assertions of ‘experts’ on Africa. Given that the power to define is the power to destroy or create, the ‘experts’ tend to guide the responses with their commentaries portraying sovereignty in Africa as a reality, a phantom or mirage. Jeffrey Herbst, other than recommending redrawing of African boundaries rather than try to resuscitate failing states, wanted the UN to decertify or deregister some countries from the roster of sovereign states. Christopher Clapham, believing that the existence of some states is itself a threat to security, thinks that the sovereignty...
of African states should be shared with an external entity.44 Advocates of coups and arming rebel groups target mainly R obert M ugabe, t he im perial ‘ bogeyman’.45 Thus, James Kirchick of The New Republic begged outgoing US President George W Bush to enhance his legacy as a liberator by invading Zimbabwe in order to ‘liberate’ millions.46 And Paul Collier, claiming that military ‘coups’ in Africa are ‘progressive’, wanted the new US president, Barack Obama, to use ‘moral authority’ derived from his ‘African identity’ to help mount coups.47

Congo is a good example of international response of f promoting and then dumping leaders. Soon after Congo became independent in 1960, Patrice Lumumba annoyed extra-continental forces with his nationalist policies on Congo. Immediately, interference from the US and Belgium, assisted by France, Britain and South Africa, plunged that country into chaos. They were supported by Congolese politicians who had little time for Lumumba’s political and economic nationalism.48 As a result, Joseph M obutu became president of Congo but after he outlived his usefulness, he became expendable. The effort to distance themselves from some of their own creations was partly because these countries considered that relying on individual leaders in a symbiotic relationship was in itself unreliable.49 The US, among others, started to shift positions and to abandon what former secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, termed ‘the essence of post-war American foreign policy’.

The French have a record of giving the second type of international response, namely intervention.50 Considered a ‘traditional gendarme’ in Africa,51 the French response has tended to be one of intervention either to ensure survival of its men in power or to depose them after they had outlived their usefulness.52 There were times, therefore, when the French used mercenaries who had little time for Lumumba’s political and economic nationalism. Jacques Foccart, the principal adviser of the French government on Africa, in Rwanda, the French helped to train and arm the Interahamwe, which was largely responsible for the genocide.53 Despite French support the rebel RPF won, which accounted for the subsequent hostility between France and Rwanda. The image of France as a supporter of mass killers accounts for the French attempt, according to current president N ikolas Sa rkozy, to ‘rid the relationship between Africa and France of the fantasies and the myths that pollute it’.54 It was Bernard Kouchner, Sarkozy’s current foreign minister, who founded Médecins Sans Frontières in 1971, and later advanced the idea of the right to humanitarian intervention.55

Americans also engage in different types of intervention, directly or indirectly, and they find it difficult to refrain from total involvement, particularly of a military nature. After the disaster in Somalia, however, they tend to look for different ways of responding to threats to their interests and find allies among rebel movements and militias. Former American secretary of state, Condoleezza Rice, asserted in 2008 that the US was called to lead in dealing with a new perspective on what constituted threats to an international order that reflects our values.56 This might have been a way of curbing ‘impunity’.57 Through the ‘three Ds’ of diplomacy, development and defence, AFRICOM is supposed to solve security problems without extra-continental intervention, while keeping American troops out of Africa for decades to come or ‘the next 50 years’.

African states, however, showed reluctance to host AFRICOM, in the light of the Bush ‘grand strategy’ of pre-emptive strikes based on suspicions of dictatorial inclinations or non-cooperation with, and possible questioning, of US hegemonic desires.58 AFRICOM is expected to outsource services to private security companies,59 which, according to Andrew Bearpark, director-general of the British Association of Private Security Companies, ‘carry out activities previously performed by national militaries’.60 African states resist hosting the command for fear it might be used to stage quick attacks on neighbouring countries or even destabilise the host country.

The third response is to try a multilateral approach to negotiated settlement in a perceived stalemate between governments and rebels. The Germans, preferring to side with the US and France, opt for coordinated responses from the West in stemming threats.61 They want ‘conflict prevention’ measures to ensure ‘development’ at the grassroots level and to address ‘the root causes’. They are also aware that general elections are potentially dangerous for the leadership and for the country.62 Germans consider the ‘exit option’ of quitting.63 The Germans, not alone in seeking root causes, often join others in imposing power-sharing in order to end a perceived stalemate.

The fourth type of extra-continental response combines both of and other governments with the a rest the other agreements with rebel movements to be tried at The Hague by the ICC as a way of curbing ‘impunity’. Although the US refused to be a member of t he ICC, it is active in referring African cases to international criminal tribunals. This happened to Charles Taylor in 2007.64

By relieving the Interahamwe, the French were able to ensure that the leader supposedly destroys the country.65 Germans consider the ‘exit option’ of quitting.66 The Germans, not alone in seeking root causes, often join others in imposing power-sharing in order to end a perceived stalemate.

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taken to trial at The Hague. Despite accusations of selective justice and targeting Africans, particularly when it picked on Sudan’s President Omar el-Bashir, and of ignoring perpetrators of atrocities in big powerful countries, the threat of being referred to the ICC has acquired international political currency in Africa as a warning to both rebel movements and most governments.

From the above, it is clear that there is a great variety in ext ra-continental responses and that they are affected by perceived interests. There are times when they encourage rebel movements to destabilise leaders of target states without direct intervention. Sometimes they intervene directly and impose a person of their choice as the new ruler on a given state. They also put pressure on the parties in conflict to negotiate and reach power-sharing settlements. Most recently, they have used the ICC to give political warnings to leaders of both regimes and rebel movements.

CONCLUSION

The response to the presence of militias and rebel movements in any place and at any level is determined by the interests being advanced and protected. At the state level, the government responds to the wishes of some of the militias and rebel movements, or succumbing to pressure and getting out or agreeing to decapacitate the state. Some militia are sponsored by influential people in governments, others are co-opted after being established and perhaps being hard to control, and they are generally used to under-rebel movements. There are rebel movements plotting to oust target regimes or to strengthen leaders of such regimes against the rebels. Protection for such leaders is withdrawn once they outlive their value. At times, the support takes the form of unilateral or multilateral intervention supposedly on humanitarian grounds. An alternative, when there is a perceived stalemate, is to pressure the parties concerned to settle through power-sharing arrangements. In recent times, the extra-continental powers respond by using the ICC as a warning to force leaders of regimes and rebel movements to behave. Irrespective of how it is achieved, it surrenders power to the rebels or opts for a power-sharing deal. In most cases, the state tends to respond by suppressing the rebellion and trying to deny it legitimacy or eventually cutting a deal on an aspect of autonomy or even separation.

States in a region worry about growing instability in an area within the region. This is because the ac tivities of some of the militias and rebel movements, as well as the responses from governments, tend to generate refugees who flee to neighbouring states and also to create regional instability. The region then responds in several ways, depending on whether the rebel objective is to take over power or fragment the state. It tries to mediate and often suggest power-sharing deals. The region is likely to support the existing government if it considers the rebels to be the problem, or may support the rebels if the government is considered to be the problem. On the issue of separation, however, regional neighbours tend to insist on the sanctity of the state as constituted.

On the regional front, there have been limited successes in terms of settlement but not of resolution of conflicts. In part, the seeming success in the Mano River cluster was due to the strong action taken by ECOMOG, led by Nigeria, as well as the support of extra-continental forces, a ll driven by the interests of some of the militias and rebel movements plotting to oust target regimes or to strengthen leaders of such regimes against the rebels. Protection for such leaders is withdrawn once they outlive their value. At times, the support takes the form of unilateral or multilateral intervention supposedly on humanitarian grounds. An alternative, when there is a perceived stalemate, is to pressure the parties concerned to settle through power-sharing arrangements. In recent times, the extra-continental powers respond by using the ICC as a warning to force leaders of regimes and rebel movements to behave. Irrespective of how it is achieved, it surrenders power to the rebels or opts for a power-sharing deal. In most cases, the state tends to respond by suppressing the rebellion and trying to deny it legitimacy or eventually cutting a deal on an aspect of autonomy or even separation.

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Power sharing is often an external imposition either by regional neighbours or by extra-continental forces. The support takes the form of unilateral or multilateral intervention supposedly on humanitarian grounds. An alternative, when there is a perceived stalemate, is to pressure the parties concerned to settle through power-sharing arrangements. In recent times, the extra-continental powers respond by using the ICC as a warning to force leaders of regimes and rebel movements to behave. Irrespective of how it is achieved, it surrenders power to the rebels or opts for a power-sharing deal. In most cases, the state tends to respond by suppressing the rebellion and trying to deny it legitimacy or eventually cutting a deal on an aspect of autonomy or even separation.

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Notes

2 Eka Ikpe, C hallenging t he di scourse o n fragile s tates, Conflict, Security a nd D evelopment 7(1) (2007), 85–124, 86.
3 Gumisai Mutume, Or ganised cr im e t argets w eak A frican s tates, Africa Renewal, United Nations Department of Public Information 21(2) (July 2007), 3.
Activities of armed non-state groups (ANSGs) have had devastating consequences for civilian populations as well as the infrastructure that supports their welfare. The African adage that 'when two elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers' is true of armed conflicts, for civilians are not only strategic targets but also bear the brunt of the consequences. African battle spaces are characterised by young boys carrying weapons taller than they, government forces and armed groups violating international humanitarian and human rights laws with impunity, terrified and massively displaced civilians, and carcasses of destroyed homes and infrastructure.

ANSGs are not uniquely or exclusively an African phenomenon, for they are common in many political systems, including advanced societies such as the United States (Michigan Militia Corps), Canada (Front de Libération du Québec, Quebec Liberation Front), Italy (Brigate Rosse, Red Brigades), Spain/France (Basque nationalists). What is unique to African conflicts is the alarmingly high level of loss of human life and destruction of property that militant and rebel groups and violent conflicts cause, the longevity of some of these groups, the...
seeming inability of governments to handle them, and the penchant of African governments to create fertile grounds from which such groups emerge.

Although these groups have profound impact on African politics, economic and social development, currently no dedicated research is being carried out to determine how many there are or to analyse the impact of their activities on the livelihoods of populations and capacities of states to function. Attempts made thus far have related to analyses of their histories, roots, objectives, motives and modi operandi, and the impact of their activities on socioeconomic systems. The difficulties of pinpointing the exact or even approximate number of groups and their membership, and the effects that they have on society, state, governance and human security, partly stem from the lack of data and the state security policy of denying that they exist or inflating their numbers for budgetary reasons or to prevent ANSGs from covering up serious governance and security situations that could damage their reputations and scare away foreign investments.

Nevertheless, there is a need to monitor and document ANSGs’ activities and to study them from a multidisciplinary perspective. One of the key findings of this work is the use of multidisciplinary approaches and concepts as well as analytical frameworks and perspectives drawn mainly from the social sciences and humanities to shed light on how militias, Islamic militants and rebel groups in Africa are formed and affect human security and state capacity, on the one hand, and how they can be understood and dealt with at different levels, on the other hand.

This chapter highlights some of the key findings and conclusions of the work and captures the key policy recommendations that can be used to prevent ANSGs and violent conflicts in which they are engaged from undermining human security and state capacity to provide public services.

TOWARDS ADDRESSING THE ANSG PHENOMENON IN AFRICA

In trying to understand why the ANSG phenomenon has become prevalent in Africa, we can see its emergence from the various chapters that policymakers are palpably challenged when it comes to designing measures that can effectively prevent and confront these groups. This could be explained partly by policymakers’ use of ne-dimensional approaches to understand the ANSG phenomenon, denying them law by ignoring policies that contribute to these groups’ formation, and using ill-conceived measures to confront them. While some of the governments’ measures used to confront these groups have achieved limited results, most of them, such as use of brute violence, have been counter-productive, as they end up recruiting sympathisers and followers for these groups. The lack of appropriate approaches and resources to confront ANSGs has been accompanied by the use of excessive force that violates international humanitarian and human rights laws, and criminalisation of these groups. The lack of appropriate approaches and resources to confront ANSGs has been accompanied by the lack of appropriate approaches and resources to confront these groups. These states alienate themselves from local populations, increasing both sympathy and support for the ANSGs.

The unconventional ANSG tactics, in turn, impair the state’s ability to provide public goods and services, alienating it from the population, which perceives it to be too weak and ineffective to exercise its legitimate roles. The legitimacy of the state is further eroded when its responses are heavy handed, fail to protect civilians and the unconventional ANSG tactics, in turn, impair the state’s ability to provide public goods and services, alienating it from the population, which perceives it to be too weak and ineffective to exercise its legitimate roles. The legitimacy of the state is further eroded when its responses are heavy handed, fail to protect civilians and state capacity to provide public services.

State governance

One of the key findings of this study is that weak and badly governed states in Africa have a tendency to generate ANSGs or to create fertile grounds for their development. A badly governed state marginalises, ex cludes, impoverishes and suppresses some segments of the population because of their identities and relations with the centre of power. Some victims of misgovernance pick up arms to redress their grievances. In reaction, states have clamped down on them with an excessive use of so-called legitimate violence. By using excessive force to legitimate themselves, these states alienate themselves from local populations, increasing both sympathy and support for the ANSGs.

The unconventional ANSG tactics, in turn, impair the state’s ability to provide public goods and services, alienating it from the population, which perceives it to be too weak and ineffective to exercise its legitimate roles. The legitimacy of the state is further eroded when its responses are heavy handed, fail to protect civilians or treat local populations as accomplices or sympathisers of ANSGs. Some African military forces even have a tendency to use brute force to generate ANSGs by reclaiming areas that had been abandoned by customary law. ANSGs’ activities are thus proportionately used to generate violence, sometimes against civilians. When the military and police use excessive force and extra-judicial means to extract information about ANSGs and discourage civilians from engaging in illegal activities, they are more likely to turn to more violent and aggressive tactics.
from supporting them, they put all members of the population at risk, especially when government forces withdraw from an area after operations. While ANSGs extensively and commonly use terror as a tactic, some states have chosen to respond with similar tactics. There is a growing tendency in Africa for states to delegate conflicts to rebels [and militias] rather than use their own forces. However, such a strategy can lead to international condemnation, as happened in the case of the Janjaweed in Darfur.

Although ANSGs are, to a large extent, a product of weak and failing African states, their activities have threatened human security and contributed to the crisis of the state, which manifests in the inability to provide public goods and services and use violence in the national interest only. Apart from contributing to the mushrooming of ANSGs in Africa, the crisis of the state has lent credibility to some of these ANSGs to challenge its legitimacy. Indeed, there is a high possibility for opportunistic rebel groups to emerge where governments lack the legitimacy, capacity and resources to govern and control their territories.

In his chapter on the crises of the state and governance (chapter 5), Ik elegbe argues that the rise of ANSGs is the result of the inability of African states to provide public goods and services due to their age and other characteristics, and has created a political environment that allows state abuse and misuse. The tragedy of state weakness and failure, and its consequences for human security, can best be overcome through completion of the nation-building project, immunisation of the state against an egotistic national elite, and establishment of durable governance processes that enhance national interests. The nation-building project should aim specifically at addressing questions of identity, and include economic development, equitable distribution of national wealth, inclusion of all citizenry in national matters, and balanced use of state power. National development policies should aim at promoting ‘national cohesion, stability and unity’.

Ironically, despite ANSGs’ grievances against the state for failing to provide public goods and services, they too are:

... unlikely to deliver public goods and services that are necessary for development. Instead, such rebel organisations will end up in conflict with their own people, taking advantage of the absence of state control to extract resources from the territory or population and, where in surgery is successful, may implement authoritarian structures no different than those set in place by their predecessors.

Youth factor

Although the book does not have a chapter dedicated to the role of the youth in ANSGs, the chapters by En gels, Ik elegbe, Ibaba, Kabir and Oloosh show that the youth have been the dominant base of recruitment and participation in the ANSGs as a result of their high levels of unemployment, poor education and addiction to drugs. Ikelegbe points out that conditions in Africa that made the youth turn on society in the 1980s, to force the government to resign and to set up the Uganda National Resistance Movement in February 1981. Sabine Carey argues that the youth are out to exploit their material situation and lure them into political militia and rebel groups. African governments need to provide greater incentives for the youth to engage in productive activities rather than join violent groups that terrorise the population to survive.

Political elite manipulation

In gaining a deeper understanding of the relationship between the youth and ANSGs, special attention should be paid to how political elites govern the state, manipulate groups and use violence to maintain control of the state. This calls for critical interrogation of how elections are held, how free and fair they are, and the role that violence plays in the electoral process. In all the cases examined in the book, there are strong links among politics, opportunistic politicians and elites, unemployed youth and badly governed states. When stakes are high in elections, politicians turn to political gangs to intimidate opponents and voters. After the elections, these political gangs are either transformed into criminal gangs or into rebel groups, as was the case with Yoweri Museveni’s Popular Resistance Army in Uganda that was launched in February 1981 to protest the outcome of the election that returned Milton Obote to power in December 1980. Sabine Carey argues that the risks of rebellion and insurgencies in sub-Saharan Africa increase because of the way elections are carried out – from multiparty presidential elections to no
elections at all – with the latter increasing the chances of political instability and large-scale violence.

Some of the hitherto abandoned elite-sponsored political violent gangs, as is the case in Niger Delta, later transformed themselves into militias and criminal gangs. As the he examplifies, the Mungiki shows, these groups exploit the power vacuum created by the wakening state to expand their operations, and marginalise other citizens against the state, thus removing the state from direct threats to opponents. When these threats reach a certain level, the ruling elite forms state militias that it uses against opponents, thus removing itself from direct accountability. In Africa, there is a tendency for national elites to use any means at their disposal to capture state power and monopolise it, to exclude others and marginalise other citizens against the state, thus removing it from control of the state.

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Controlling borders and border areas

Borders and border areas arefavoured by rebel groups because they enable them to extend their territory regionally and transnationally. These border areas become even more sought after if they contain natural resources. If a rebel group is able to control the border, it enables it to smuggle minerals out of the country and finance its activities. Darfuri rebels, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in Uganda, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) and other groups with similar goals have developed operations in border areas because these areas are weak, allowing them to move across porous and poorly controlled borders in order to expand their influence. The failure of the state to provide security to its citizens and enforce laws undermines state legitimacy. Parallel governance systems that weaken state legitimacy and use ungoverned spaces and provision of social services undermine state legitimacy.

Institute for Security Studies

MIILITIAS, REBELS AND ISLAMIST MILITANTS: HUMAN INSECURITY AND STATE CRises IN AFRICA

Wafula Okumu and Augustine Ikelegbe

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Idean Salehyan points out that the artificial partitioning of Africa and the marginalisation of ethnic groups across borders are exploited by ANSGs such as the FDLR and the LRA. This is because ANSGs that rely on sociocultural and sociospatial settings in the transnational rebellions still continue to threaten and undermine the livelihoods of citizens in countries such as Rwanda.

Due to the artificial co-locating of ethnic groups across borders, communities that straddle state boundaries are not bound by territorial borders. In most cases, locals protect themselves and their property by taking up arms and forming self-defence units. However, in some cases, locals support rebels or join them to ensure their property and families are safe from attacks. At the end of a conflict, these local communities are usually afraid to hand over their weapons or reveal their actual involvement in the conflict. While some of the former combatants are reluctant to come forward to be demobilised for fear of being held accountable for their actions during the conflict, others are disinclined to hand over their weapons while their security and safety are not guaranteed and mutual mistrust between communities continues to prevail.

Peters’ chapter (14) reveals that the strength of the relationship existing between rebels and local communities is critical in determining the timing and type of intervention in a conflict. For instance, at the early stages, when rebels have friendly relations with local communities, they can be intransigent, as their anti-establishment message, cloaked in the form of grievances against the government, resonates with locals. However, the situation changes when, at a later stage, a rebel group alienates itself from the local population often through the brutal tactics it employs, so that it loses the ground advantage. In such a case, it is easier for the government to succeed in ending the conflict by exerting military and diplomatic pressure. However, militia groups must ensure adequate protection of civilians or re-establish the rule of law and justice, and promote peaceful procedures.

Local communities respond to ANSGs in varied ways. In most cases, they flee their homes and seek safety in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps or across borders. In some cases, locals protect themselves and their property by taking up arms and forming self-defence units. There are also cases where locals support rebels or join them to ensure their property and families are safe from attacks. At the end of a conflict, these local communities are usually afraid to hand over their weapons or reveal their actual involvement in the conflict. While some of the former combatants are reluctant to come forward to be demobilised for fear of being held accountable for their actions during the conflict, others are disinclined to hand over their weapons while their security and safety are not guaranteed and mutual mistrust between communities continues to prevail.

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Approaches to Confronting the ANSG Phenomenon in Africa

Local responses

How an ANSG behaves determines, to a large extent, the support it receives from the local population and the level of success in meeting its objectives. ANSGs rely on local support to launch their campaigns against the state. Capitalising on local support for the style knowledged o f t he s tate b oundaries, T ransboundary t he e b e groups r e difficult to manage due to the external resources, sanctuary and support that they receive, while the least sen t heir dep endence ‘ on t he g oodwill of t he host s tate s ‘ as the case in Rwanda.

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Conclusion

The threats posed by ANSGs to human security are significant and require urgent action. The government must work with local communities to prevent the spread of violence and ensure peace and security. It should build trust with local communities by engaging them in the decision-making process and providing them with the necessary resources to prevent the spread of violence. Additionally, it should work with international partners to address the root causes of violence and instability in the region. In conclusion, the government must take a proactive approach to dealing with the threats posed by ANSGs in order to protect the citizens of the region and maintain peace and security in the area.
Apart from its leadership and organisation, the endurance and success of a rebel group depend on the alarge degree, on the loyalty of their supporters and on the availability of capital to finance the logistics of a military campaign. Consequently, it has to tap into two sources: '[E]conomic and dowments, which come from diverse sources, including natural resource extraction, tax collection, and criminal activity or external patronage; and social dowments, in cluding shared beliefs, expectations and norms that may exist in (or be mobilised from within) certain ethnic, religious, cultural or ideological groups.' Therefore, a strategy for confronting ANSGs must aim at denying them such resources, because their availability, particularly at the beginning, determines the type of members and the way in which they are recruited, and how they commit to the group's objectives. The ability of ANSG leaders to gain access to and use these resources determines how its members behave vis-à-vis civilians and how long it lasts. Further, if there are few resources, members would probably engage in looting and other criminal activities to acquire funds. However, if they do have access to natural resources, they could create a war economy in which they play different roles.

In countries where ANSGs are a factor in natural resource curse, an emergence of armed non-state groups' Ibaba and Ikelegbe, Olooo and Wassara also call for special attention to the role that state violence plays in generating rebel activities. A common state response to rebel activities is the use of brute force, aimed at eliminating the groups, in police and military operations and the activities of paramilitary and pro-government militia groups. In a statement given before the United Nations Human Rights Council, Professor Philip Alston, the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, pointed out that 'hyper-active death squads' bring 'no relief' to the ANSG violence. Instead, they have only succeeded in undermining the rule of law, distracting the police from their protection and investigative roles, fuelling the cycle of violence and tarnishing the government's reputation. Alston advised governments to come up with a 'detailed and convincing strategy for combating violence, extortion and other crimes by gangs', and avoid making statements that the government will 'crush' or 'smash' such groups.

Governments' in decisiveness and implementation are also gendered impunity and emboldened these groups. Though state responses are a key factor in containing ANSG activities, if an operation is carried out in ways that alienate the local population, it ends up driving it into the arms of the rebels. Ibaba and Ikelegbe argue that 'violent repression of conflicts will accentuate insecurity' and 'sweeps the causes of agitation and dissent under the carpet for a moment,' only for them to 'flare up again, often with disastrous consequences.'

Addressing the ANSG phenomenon is not solely a law enforcement measure calling for the application of brute force, as this approach not only violates human rights through arbitrary executions and instilling fear in civilian populations, but also generates counterviolence and lawlessness, which these groups exploit. This is clearly illustrated by Olooo's analysis in chapter 6 of the factors that contribute to the armed groups in Kenya. The two main reasons why there is a 'proliferation of armed militias' are 'the failure by the government to arrest, prosecute and punish members of these militias' and poor governance, which high public interest-based political participation [which] will enhance accountability and transparency' and, by extension, popular participation in government.

State responses

In her chapter on the analysis of ANSGs through the comprehensive framework of their 'relationship with the government and attitude towards state monopoly of violence', En gels points out that a nationwide mobilisation of forces, aimed at eliminating the groups, in police and military operations and the activities of paramilitary and pro-government militia groups. In a statement given before the United Nations Human Rights Council, Professor Philip Alston, the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, pointed out that 'hyper-active death squads' bring 'no relief' to the ANSG violence. Instead, they have only succeeded in undermining the rule of law, distracting the police from their protection and investigative roles, fuelling the cycle of violence and tarnishing the government's reputation. Alston advised governments to come up with a 'detailed and convincing strategy for combating violence, extortion and other crimes by gangs', and avoid making statements that the government will 'crush' or 'smash' such groups.

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generate conditions such as poverty that lead to the emergence of these groups. This means addressing this phenomenon requires a comprehensive approach that includes punishment for impunity, democratization of governance, protection of human security, equitable distribution of national wealth and/or resources, and promotion of peace values.

The failure of brute force to repress the ANSG phenomenon and rebellion and the sinister motives that sometimes underlie such an approach are demonstrated by the following examples. When the Mengistu government was confronted by a rebel insurgency in the Ogaden in 1980, it adopted a policy of depopulating the region. Calling it ‘a final solution’ to the Somali insurgencies, the government aimed at forcing an exodus of Somali-speaking Ethiopians ‘as a way of ending the 20-year-old guerrilla war in the Ogaden’.34 The policy entailed government soldiers ‘machine gunning herds of camels, robbing and burning fields, destroying settled farms and taking a way young men to fight in Ethiopia’. Although Ethiopia had defeated the Somali army that invaded the region in March 1978, a rebel group, the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), continued to wage an irredentist war with the support of Egypt and Iraq. When the front ceased to exist in 1989, a splinter group formed the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF). In northern Uganda, the government of FM useveni established a system to protect the local population from the LRA rebels and also depopulate the rural areas in order to allow mopping up by the military.35 This encampment of local populations was also aimed at controlling the local populations and ensuring they neither supported the LRA nor dissented against the government. Nevertheless, argues Chris Dolan, the local population was subjected to social torture through enforced depedency on a protection system that threatened its social, economic and psychological wellbeing. The ‘protected villages’ that were set up in northern Uganda (which turned out to be squalid internal displacement camps) were criticised by human rights groups for making the residents more vulnerable to various violations by the Uganda People’s Defence Force (UPDF) and the LRA. Dolan argues that ending the LRA insurgency has not been in the government’s interests, as that would have deprived it of its reason for controlling a population regardless of their identity.40

Counterinsurgency against the LRA, apart from serving this purpose, has also been used to enhance economic interests of the military through dubious purchases of weapons and hiring of ‘ghost soldiers’.41

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Some governments use the presence of ANSGs to militarise the state by pointing out that their activities are inimical to state and human security. For that reason, governments proceed to increase military budgets, and adopt draconian laws and measures that in the short and long term severely undermine state legitimacy and the culture of human rights. In Kenya, there are a series of measures that target the Special Branch, a military intelligence organization that has been replaced by the National Intelligence Service responsible for setting up and sustaining a rebel group, the February 18 Revolutionary Army, in the early 1990s to boost and justify its high budget allocations to security apparatuses.39

With regard to North Africa, George argues that confronting Islamist militants could be complicated by the fact that their link to the ‘global jihadi is no longer clear’. The approach of some states to allow Islamist political parties has yielded some positive results when combined with changes in government policies that target a ‘frustrated middle class’ and the poor and disenfranchised sectors of the population.38 They recommend that states should seize the opportunity when ‘frustration and disenchantment [are not being] channelled towards violent jihadi’ to improve the human security of their citizens. In chapter 11, Muhammad Kabir also highlights this critical role of the state in providing social and economic benefits as a preventive measure for growth of ANSGs, by arguing that it is a capacity that should be strengthened to provide public goods and services, proactively respond to the needs of its citizens, guarantee a democratic society, equitably distribute national resources, and ‘pursue a social and economic policy that will ensure the realisation of rights, equity and justice’ for all citizens regardless of their identity.40

African governments could learn some useful lessons from law enforcement in the United States in particular how it has set up 500 unorganised militia groups such as the Hutaree, which is not part of the National Guard or the Naval Militia.41 Between 27 and 29 M arch 2010, a joint anti-terrorism taskforce comprising state and local police forces, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives carried out special operations that led to the arrest of five members of the Hutaree militia in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana after collecting intelligence on the group’s intentions to commit mass violence. Apart from monitoring the group’s use of media such as YouTube, Facebook, radio, roadcasts, e-mail and voice communications, law enforcement agencies also infiltrated the group and gained knowledge on its plans, which made it possible to contain it.42 The government’s special operation
effectively prevented an uprising that the group had intended to trigger by killing police officers to provoke a heavy-handed government reaction.43

African governments have traditionally sought to subjugate insurgencies through military force, as most consider negotiating with opponents to be a sign of weakness. Consequently, most armed conflicts between government forces and ANSGs, such as that between the Government of Sudan and the SPLA, take long to end. Of ten, the insurgent groups eventually negotiate to win autonomy in government, as was the case with the SPLA, RENAMO (the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, Mozambican National Resistance) and RUF.

Transforming ANSGs into civil actors: cases and challenges

How can ANSGs be transformed into parties that vie for and properly use political power? The answer could be of interest to the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM), which recently won elections in south Sudan and is poised to run as the newest state in Africa after a referendum next year.44 Many rebel groups find it difficult to transform into a political party or to function in a democratic political system. With a few exceptions, rebel groups such as the RENAMO in Mozambique and UNITA (the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola, National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) in Angola have found the political terrain too rugged to navigate with a guerrilla mindset and modus operandi. These groups, as Justin Pearce put it in chapter 13, ‘have suffered as a result of a particular kind of authoritarian leadership’. As Pearce notes, the performances of these groups in post-conflict political environments prove that a political relationship, forged in wartime, has nothing in common with the workings of a political party in a democracy.45

Although Uganda’s National Resistance Army (NR A) and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) stand out as good examples of rebel groups that successfully transformed themselves into respectable ruling parties, the SPLM has been learning the ropes of governance and statecraft, it has faced serious questions of legitimacy and human rights. The fallout from the April 2010 elections seems to have generated splinter groups that wanted to use violence to gain acceptance in the new political dispensation.

An interesting transformation of an ANSG in to a political party is that of Kenya’s outlawed Mungiki sect, which transformed itself into the Kenya National Youth Alliance (KNYA). Despite its proscription, jailing of its members and being targeted by special police squads for elimination, the Mungiki has become a force to reckon with on Kenya’s political landscape. Claiming millions of members, it has recently attempted to influence political developments in the country by either sponsoring politicians or having its members run for office. A part f from forming KNYA, which later became the Progressive Party Alliance, to overcome its scary image of a murderous and bloody sect, some Mungiki leaders have either converted to Christianity or joined establishment politicians to promote causes such as adoption of a new constitution that seeks to address Kenya’s long-standing historical grievances and injustices.

However, Denis Tull and Andreas Mehler are opposed to providing rebels with a share of state power, as it creates an incentive for groups to seek power through insurgent violence.46 Ian S. Pears notes that whereas opportunities between governments and ANSGs because it is ‘a surprisingly unstable form of government that … provides o nly a short-term reprieve from violent conflict’, it is ‘virtually unworkable’ beyond the transitional phase, as it is difficult to implement, and ‘does not resolve conflict but in stead m a y o nly temporar ily di spl ace t he dis perse of s uch p oliticians’ more malevolent intentions’. Among power-sharing agreements that failed were those entered into in Sierra Leone, Angola and Rwanda.47

While groups such as the RPF captured power after the failure of the Arusha Peace Agreement because of its failures and the discord among the disputants, some ANSGs have been successful in transitioning to political parties. The example of the SPLM is a case in point. During the 22 years it fought a bush war against the north, the SPLM was never run as a democratic outfit and is known to have dealt mercilessly with dissent. Nevertheless, the SPLM has found the political terrain too rugged to navigate with a guerrilla mindset and modus operandi. These groups, as Justin Pearce put it in chapter 13, ‘have suffered as a result of a particular kind of authoritarian leadership’. As Pearce notes, the performances of these groups in post-conflict political environments prove that a political relationship, forged in wartime, has nothing in common with the workings of a political party in a democracy.45

Governments must develop coherent approaches for addressing ANSGs based on an understanding of their objectives and the reasons that gave rise to them, instead of fanning the need for them, as recent examples of this have been the case in Kenya. Instead of using force to eliminate them, using brute force to eliminate them, governments have attempted to integrate them into the political process, a strategy that has been successful in countries such as Kenya, where the process of political transition has been peaceful and democratic.
Regional responses

Saleyhan argues that although ‘building domestic institutions and state capacity, fostering economic growth, reducing corruption and power-sharing among ethnic groups’ have been offered as strategies for confronting ANSGs, they should be undertaken within a regional framework.53 However, ‘regional strategy does not deny the importance of local policing and service provision. Rather, it adds meaningful international cooperation among states in the mix of solutions to a civil conflict’.54

Conflicts in which ANSGs are supported by other states are difficult to address unless these states are committed to a bandon the support and in terests of regional integration, peace and stability. The best example of the use of a regional framework for such a purpose is the International Conference on the Great Lakes region (ICGLR) of Africa. A regional pact, such as that of the ICGLR, is a n appropriate measure or confronting ANSGs. However, it must be fully implemented and supported by all participating governments. An initiative such as that by the African Union to transform borders into bridges of cooperation and integration could eliminate conditions that allow rebels to operate and persist within the region.55

Furthermore, initiatives such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) could be very effective tools for preventing ANSGs if they are fully implemented. This proviso also applies to the APRM, which aims at improving governance and effectiveness of African states. For instance, in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended the north–south war in Sudan, and the peace process facilitated by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) that ended civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone. The successes of these agreements can be measured by how they address the root causes of the conflicts to produce durable solutions that halt the di stribution of natural resources, build state institutions that respect human security, and establish processes that allow eductive and democratic engagement between citizens and communities and with the state. The biggest challenges facing regionally facilitated peace agreements are the lack of resources and weak monitoring regimes to ensure full implementation. Poor implementation of a peace agreement can have catastrophic consequences, as Gilbert K. Hadiagala noted: ‘Rwanda’s genocide resulted in a complex of political, economic, and social factors. The agreement sought to transform the existing dominant ethnic basis of power, and in the process caused an extremist reaction’.56 This agreement was also expected to be implemented in a high-security environment, in a volatile region a nd funded by the sponsoring states.56

Poor implementation of a peace agreement can have catastrophic consequences, as Gilbert K. Hadiagala noted: ‘Rwanda’s genocide resulted in a complex of political, economic, and social factors. The agreement sought to transform the existing dominant ethnic basis of power, and in the process caused an extremist reaction’.56 This agreement was also expected to be implemented in a high-security environment, in a volatile region and funded by the sponsoring states.56

As Engels (chapter 2), Omach (chapter 10) and Munene (chapter 15) point out, there are rebel activities that transcend national boundaries and dimensions. Addressing rebel activities in conflict clusters such as the Mano River and Great Lakes regions can be very complicated due to the skill with which these groups tactically and strategically use porous borders. In the Mano River conflict...
cluster, for example, rebel groups formed networks and worked closely together, which required a regional framework that included local, national, regional and international actors to address the rebel activities. Such a framework, according to Omach, should focus on border areas and aim to establish ‘effective state authority and meaningful administrative territorial order’ (as a step towards addressing the regionalisation of conflict). Saleyhan proposes that international law strengthen the UN Charter. He proposes that ‘the UN Security Council must treat deliberate support for another state’s rebel organisation an act of war and adopt an equivalent response’.

International responses

International discourses on African human security have, since 11 September 2001, focused on the security-development nexus and securitisation of poverty-stricken Africa. Rita Abrahamsen argues that by linking the source of its security threats in Africa to poverty and low development levels, the West has justified militarisation of its foreign policy to root out radical elements. It is further argued that the high poverty levels and poor governance in Africa are threats to Western security. A state’s hostile actions towards the West, a state’s support for rebels or armed groups, or its failure to prevent the spread of radicalism in its territory, are seen as threats to Western security. Therefore, approaches for confronting militant and armed Islamist groups in Africa should be based on the understanding that these groups play in illegally exploiting natural resources such as coltan to finance their activities.

This leaves a question: what are the best international approaches for addressing ANSG threats to human and state security in Africa?

Although each ANSG activity has elicited different international responses, the most common are the failure to fight against those that support them. Other responses have been regional initiatives such as the ICGLR’s Pact on Security, Stability and Development, which designates the LRA as a terrorist organisation and calls for its dismantling. This leaves the question: what are the best international approaches for addressing ANSG threats to human and state security in Africa?

The countries in the Great Lakes region are aware of the role of rebel and militia groups in illegally exploiting natural resources. The region’s natural resources, such as coltan, are vital for financing their activities. The United States has offered a certification scheme for the Great Lakes Pact in implementing the US policy on the LRA. The latest international attempt to stamp out rebel activities is the US-led Resistance A my Di disarmament and a nd N outhern U ganda R ecovery A ct 2009, which designates the LRA as a terrorist organisation and seeks to eliminate the threats it poses to ‘civilians and regional stability’ through ‘political, economic, military and intelligence support for viable multilateral efforts to protect civilians … to apprehend or otherwise remove Joseph Kony and his top commanders from the battlefield … to disarm and demobilise Lord’s Resistance Army fighters’. This would entail co-terminating t o a s sist U ganda a nd C ongolese t roops t hrough AFRICOM and diplomatically engaging with regional mechanisms, including the Tripartite Plus Commission and the Great Lakes Pact, to implement the US policy on the LRA.
those natural resources with the highest potential for illegal exploitation by rebel
groups and others financing armed conflicts. This certification mechanism has yet
to be designed, developed and implemented due to a lack of political will and
financial commitment by the governments in the region and the international
community.

Other international responses have included deployment of AU and UN forces
and arraignment of rebel leaders such as Joseph Kony and Thomas Lubango, and
President Omar el-Bashir, before the International Criminal Court (ICC) for
violations, assess its validity, and write reports that are quickly made public and
undermining the leadership for behaviour change and participation in the programme
seem to be bearing fruit, as the rebels undergoing the training have shown a keen
interest in learning about international humanitarian laws and applying them in
the field.69

In addition, the international community can employ a variety of instruments
to confront ANSGs and eliminate or limit their negative impact on civilians and the
state:

- **Name, shame and target ANSGs for national, regional and international action.** In order to do this, ANSGs should be closely monitored by national and international organisations that ‘gather information on human rights violations, assess its validity, and write reports that are quickly made public and placed in the hands of key policymakers and the media’. However, Weinstein and Jeffrey Herbst70 question how naming and shaming in the media can influence the behaviour of a rebel group such as the LRA, which does not seem to care how it is viewed by Ugandans and the international community. Indeed, the LRA has been known to engage in atrocious acts to draw attention and generate publicity for itself. Naming and shaming will be effective only if they lead to serious consequences for ANSGs.

- **Impose sanctions on ANSGs to influence their behaviour.** Regional and international governments can take measures such as travel bans, asset freezes and restrictions on arms transfers, the freezing of foreign aid and political activities abroad. Economic sanctions can also be imposed on individuals who support ANSGs.

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Commodities emerging from conflict areas. Such sanctions ‘are designed to criminalise specific suppliers within a network other than those in duty’. Sanctions against ANSGs can take two forms.

The first type aims at gaining ‘economic leverage over combatant factions by limiting their capacity to trade in particular commodities’. These sanctions specifically target governments that support rebel groups and leaders of the groups. However, if these sanctions work, they must be monitored on the ground and states must cooperate to enforce them. Although the record of commodity sanctions has been mixed, the impact of the UN’s sanctions to weaken UNITA has been cited as a successful example.

The second type is certification of commodities from conflict areas, which ‘to prevent the trade in a specific commodity from particular producers’ from being sold on international markets. Since certification of commodities ‘cooperate by not buying un-certified products. Although these regimes provide leverage over a particular group in a particular conflict’ they send a strong message that a group’s economic resources are insecure. Apart from the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for Rough Diamonds, another example of eliminating trade in conflict natural resources is the Great Lakes region’s ‘mineral certification of origin scheme’. If effectively carried out, sanctions and certification regimes ‘can provide firms that purchase a and states that consume these commodities’ to operate by not buying un-certified products. Although these regimes provide leverage over a particular group in a particular conflict’ they send a strong message that a group’s economic resources are insecure.

The effectiveness of sanctions will depend on the following: the economic incentives for settlement or behavioural change. The side effect of this prescription is that when a non-state armed group is denied access to economic endowments such as natural resources that sustain it, it will probably resort ‘to looting to maintain its membership’.

Legal approaches for addressing the ANSG phenomenon in Africa

Legal measures can be taken at national and international levels to address the ANSG phenomenon in Africa. At the national level, one of the most common legal measures is seeking of a amnesty. Ibaba and Ikere (chapter 8) suggest that amnesty p programs, which a re part of p ackages t hat in clude e econ omic empowerment, s hould p rovide r eintegration o f f ormer c ombatants a nd s hould in clude t he e stablishment o f y oth-based c onflict p revention projects. Amnesties have been widely applied and used concurrently with other measures. For instance, the Ugandan government has offered amnesty packages to LRA combatants under a law guaranteeing them a resettlement package that includes a lump sum of about US$150, a mattress, blanket, hoe and some seeds. Although the Ugandan Amnesty Commission claims to have demobilised 16 245 individuals and provided reintegration support to 14 604 others, the effectiveness of the programme has been widely questioned, as some of its beneficiaries were never fully integrated, have returned to rebel ranks or have taken up a life of crime to survive. The effectiveness of the Nigerian amnesty programme, which was launched in October 2009 to end militia activities in the Niger Delta region and is currently being implemented, is also being assessed. The effectiveness of the Nigerian amnesty programme, which was launched in October 2009 to end militia activities in the Niger Delta region and is currently being implemented, is also being assessed.

Apart from the use of non-incarcerating mechanisms such as a amnesty and a truth commissions, the concept of the amnesty is gaining ground in the international community. Legal approaches for addressing the bedlam caused by ANSGs such as the Mungiki, Mai-Mai and Boko Haram are complicated by the fact that they cannot be classified in terms of international law definitions of militias and self-determination groups. Even those
groups that are fighting for national liberation, and are effectively recognised by the Additional Protocol to the Geneva Convention, have been denied recognition by states that instead treat them as criminals or terrorists. This has conveniently allowed governments to apply national criminal laws to deal with these groups. Regardless of whether the state regards ANSGs as rebels, criminals or terrorists, they are obligated under international humanitarian laws to handle them in ways that do not violate their rights. On their part, ANSGs are also obligated to observe and respect international human rights and humanitarian laws.

Some rebels groups have made it easy for governments to brand them criminals due to their lack of liberation credentials, criminal conduct and destruction of civilian population livelihoods. In response to threats posed by rebel groups, Musila (in chapter 4) points out that while some states have enacted national laws that categorise them as criminals or terrorists, others have refused to ratify or apply international laws that would give them legal status. This further complicates peacemaking efforts, as governments take obdurate positions of not negotiating with ‘terrorist’ or ‘criminal’ groups.

Currently, the international community is inclined to hold leaders and members of ANSGs accountable for violations of international humanitarian and human rights laws. A part from the application of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and the ICC, that have been used to deter and punish ‘human rights violations committed by armed non-state groups’. The main aim of these trials and tribunals is ‘to send a strong signal to perpetrators and would-be perpetrators that they will be held individually accountable for human rights violations they commit’. However, in order for these trials and tribunals to be effective in deterring and punishing perpetrators of violence, the behaviour of ANSGs and their leaders, they must be seen to restore justice and punish perpetrators of violence. Drawn-out trials such as that of Charles Taylor and the perpetrators of the 1994 Rwanda genocide at the ICTR, as well as the seeming powerlessness of the ICC to arrest Joseph Kony and his commanders, have lowered the expectations many had of these in instruments of international justice to contribute to the promotion of peace and justice in Africa.

Julian Ku and Jide Nzelibe argue that if ANSGs are operating in weak states, they are more likely to be deterred by informal sanctions such as death, imprisonment and torture than by international criminal tribunals. The awareness of leaders such as Kony of ‘the significant risk of prosecution and imprisonment than by international criminal tribunal (ICT) proceedings’ is ‘the sig nificant constraints ICTs face in adminis tering sanctions’ also make international justice ineffective in en ding ANSGs’ violence. Instead of looking to ICTs to punish and deter in international criminal tribunals, more effort should be put in to developing a new framework for addressing humanitarian atrocities by building robust international justice institutions that can incapacitate domestic offenders, leaders of such states will be more likely to be held accountable for international crimes.

Okechukwu Oko argues that although ‘the criminal process can be deployed to engineer compliance with the law and to deter would be perpetrators of evil … the objectives of using criminal prosecution to re-establish social equilibrium and promote reconciliation … are simply unattainable’. It is unrealistic to assume that ‘international criminal iminical prosecutions will reconcile mutually distrustful ethnic groups with a long history of reciprocal hatred’. In the sense that the aim of such prosecutions ‘is to a proportion b lame and punish the guilty’, they fail to address other sources of conflict such as s state w eakness, p oor g overnance, in equitable allocation of resources, corruption and marginalisation that destabilise national states. Legal measures would address the underlying causes only if they were undertaken in concert with political reforms and national socioeconomic development. Oko cautions further that ‘traditional notions of the criminal process cannot address the type of violence committed by groups against other groups. Furthermore, it is not clear that international criminal prosecution can deter evil’. A bigger challenge for en orcing international justice in Africa lies in African governments’ reluctance to support prosecution of African leaders in international criminal tribunals for their crimes. African governments are not willing to support international criminal justice in Africa, partly due to their lack of participation in international justice mechanisms such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) or the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. The willingness of African leaders to support international justice depends on their perception of the benefits and costs of participation. If African leaders perceive that participation in international justice mechanisms is costly and does not provide benefits, they are unlikely to support them. In conclusion, international justice mechanisms are not effective in ending the violence committed by ANSGs. International justice mechanisms must be strengthened and made more effective in order to achieve their objectives of promoting peace and justice in Africa.
CONCLUSION

As stated above, this book is an exercise in bringing about a greater and deeper understanding about ANSGs in Africa by providing a comprehensive framework of analysis that categorises them and analyses each group’s motives, mobilisation and recruitment, as well as its relationship to the state as either an instrument or victim of its violence. Such a framework will assist with the conduct of in-depth studies on ANSGs as needed to knowledge that informs efforts to confront their threats to human and state security. The utility of such a framework in policy formation lies in providing information on options for dealing with ANSGs that transcend a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to prevent and combat ANSGs activities, as it recognises that each group has unique characteristics requiring tailor-made measures. The exercise of generating effective policy responses should start with a thorough mapping of a group’s background, raison d'être, organisational structure, leadership, modes of operation, and sources of sustainability and support. This should be followed by an analysis of factors that make different factors motivate a group to engage in ANSG activities that make it difficult to formulate common strategies for containing their activities. ANSG activities undermine human security and the state capacity to fulfil social contract obligations. With the weakening of the capacity of African states to deliver public goods and services, it is most likely that ANSGs may continue to threaten human security for the foreseeable future. Based on this finding, an effective way to prevent and confront ANSGs is to build state capacity to fully implement national development policies.

There is no single effective measure for addressing the ANSG phenomenon; a combination of measures is needed. For instance, it would be simplistic to assume that holding free-and-fair elections would guarantee good governance and install good leadership. Ensuring that elections are not fraudulent could pre-empt action by disgruntled losers to adopt the rebel route (as Museveni did in 1982) or cause others to adopt the rebel route (as Museveni did in 1982) or cause others to adopt the rebel route (as Museveni did in 1982). There is a high likelihood that its citizens could be lured into joining ANSGs, as the case studies in this book have shown. But citizens also have the responsibility of ensuring that good leaders run their states properly and according to their wishes, which means that the citizenry must possess the ‘software of peace’ that enables it to live in just, democratic and fair societies. Citizen knowledge of international humanitarian law and the consequences of violating these laws could help them to block politicians or warlords from forming militias and launching attacks against civilians. Monitoring and documenting activities of politicians and other political opportunists are critical for holding them accountable through local legal systems or international bodies such as the ICC.

Ultimately, the responsibility for ensuring that good leaders run their states properly and according to their wishes, which means that the citizenry must possess the ‘software of peace’ that enables it to live in just, democratic and fair societies. Citizen knowledge of international humanitarian law and the consequences of violating these laws could help them to block politicians or warlords from forming militias and launching attacks against civilians. Monitoring and documenting activities of politicians and other political opportunists are critical for holding them accountable through local legal systems or international bodies such as the ICC.

On the other hand, if elections are used to promote sectarian, elite, individual or group interests, they will most likely be accompanied by violence or plant its seeds. In addition, Africa needs to revise the methods of holding elections, immunise the state from being captured by rapacious elites who use it to maintain patronage-client systems, and change the mode of political engagement from a zero-sum game to a positive-sum game, which benefits all and does not allow a loser to be excluded. A state’s abuse of its monopoly on violence to legitimise themselves) and political elites (who must desist from using the youth and violence to gain and retain power). A state’s abuse of its monopoly on violence to legitimise themselves) and political elites (who must desist from using the youth and violence to gain and retain power). A state’s abuse of its monopoly on violence to legitimise themselves) and political elites (who must desist from using the youth and violence to gain and retain power). A state’s abuse of its monopoly on violence to legitimise themselves) and political elites (who must desist from using the youth and violence to gain and retain power). A state’s abuse of its monopoly on violence to legitimise themselves) and political elites (who must desist from using the youth and violence to gain and retain power). A state’s abuse of its monopoly on violence to legitimise themselves) and political elites (who must desist from using the youth and violence to gain and retain power). A state’s abuse of its monopoly on violence to legitimise themselves) and political elites (who must desist from using the youth and violence to gain and retain power). A state’s abuse of its monopoly on violence to legitimise themselves) and political elites (who must desist from using the youth and violence to gain and retain power).

2 For a detailed analysis of the nexus between state, governance and rebel formation, see Denis Tull, *The reconfiguration of political order in Africa: a case study of North Kivu* (DR Congo), Hamburg: GIGA, 2005.


5 Wssara, chapter 9.


7 Ikelegbe and Garuba, Youth conflicts in West Africa, 124–147.

8 The Popular Resistance Army (PRA) later merged with the Uganda Freedom Fighters (UFF) led by Yusuf Lule, to become the National Resistance Army (NRA).


10 An example of using militia to cover up a state’s role in violence against civilians is Sudan, where the government supported militia groups such as the Janjaweed in Darfur to confront rebels who were challenging their marginalisation from the centre of power in Khartoum.


12 Ololo, chapter 6, 176.

13 See Shultz and Dew, *Insurgents, terrorists and militias*, 266.


15 See Omach (chapter 10) and Kasaiga (chapter 7).

16 Saleyhan, *Rebels without borders*, 162.

17 Ibid, 163.


20 Ibid, 176.

21 See Shultz and Dew, *Insurgents, terrorists and militias*, 266.


23 Ibid.

24 For a detailed analysis on how rebel groups recruit members, see Weinstein, *Inside rebellion*, 8–16.


27 Ibid, 7.


29 Ibid and Ikelegbe, chapter 8, 248.

30 Engels, chapter 3, 84.


32 Ibid and Ikelegbe, chapter 8, 247.

33 Ololo, chapter 6.


35 Ibid.


37 At the height of the war with the LRA, the Uganda People’s Defence Force deployed more than 5,000 ‘ghost soldiers.’ See Jenkins Kiwanuka, Ghost soldiers delayed end of northern war, *Monitor*, 29 May 2008.


39 See George and Ylönen, chapter 11, 360.

40 Kabir, chapter 11, 334.


This question is a nuanced one, often asked: What role do former combatants play in shaping the outcomes of armed conflicts in Africa?


Saleyhan, Rebels without borders, 162.

Weinstein, Inside rebellion, 343.


Weinstein, Inside rebellion, 344.


Weinstein, Inside rebellion, 347.

Ibid. 348.


Weinstein, Inside rebellion, 348.

Ibid. 349.


Democratic R epublic o f C ongo, K enya, R wanda, R epublic o f C ongo, S udan, U ganda, Tanzania and Zambibia.


Saleyhan, Rebels without borders, 162.

Weinstein, Inside rebellion, 343.
Militia and rebel groups in post-independent sub-Saharan Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name of group</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Time period and further notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>Frente Nacional da Libertação de Angola</td>
<td>FNLA</td>
<td>Established 1954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola</td>
<td>MPLA</td>
<td>Established 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola</td>
<td>UNITA</td>
<td>Established 1966, supported by US during the Cold War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>Force pour la Défense de la Démocratie</td>
<td>FDD</td>
<td>Established 1994, Hutu-Guerrilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu – Forces Nationales de Libération</td>
<td>PALIPEHUTU - FNL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>Union des Populations du Cameroun</td>
<td>UPC</td>
<td>Established in 1948, led by Ruben Um Nyobé; anti-colonial movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>Mouvement Patriotique pour la Restauration de la République Centrafricaine</td>
<td>MPRC</td>
<td>Established 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement</td>
<td>UFDR</td>
<td>Established 2006, umbrella group (Groupe d’Action Patriotique pour la Libération de Centrafrique + Mouvement des Libérateurs Centrafricains pour la Justice + Front Démocratique Centrafricain)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rebel motives are also unpacked by Halvard Buhaug, Relative capability and rebel objective in civil war, *Journal of Peace Research* 43(6) (2006), 691–708.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Group/Party</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Founded/Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Armée Populaire pour la Restauration de la République et la Démocratie</td>
<td>APRD</td>
<td>Established 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain</td>
<td>FDPC</td>
<td>Established 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Union des Forces Républicaines</td>
<td>UFR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Armée Nationale de Résistance</td>
<td>ANR</td>
<td>Led by Mahamat Garfa (until 1994 commandant of the national armed forces); active in Eastern and Southern Chad, split off in 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Concorde Nationale Tchadienne</td>
<td>CNT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Comité de Sursaut National de la Paix et de la Démocratie</td>
<td>CSNP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Forces Armées du Nord</td>
<td>FAN</td>
<td>Led by Hissen Habré; first rebel movement in Africa since anti-colonial struggles to seize power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Forces Armées de la République Fédérale</td>
<td>FARF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Front de Libération Nationale du Tchad</td>
<td>Frolinat</td>
<td>Established 1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Front Uni pour le Changement Démocratique</td>
<td>FUC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Mouvement pour la Démocratie et la Justice au Tchad</td>
<td>MDJT</td>
<td>Established 1998, northern Chad, ceasefire 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Mouvement pour la Paix, la Réconstruction et le Développement</td>
<td>MPRD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Rassemblement des Forces pour le Changement</td>
<td>RFC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Socle pour le Changement, l’Unité et la Démocratie</td>
<td>SCUD</td>
<td>Established 2005, eastern Chad</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Union des Forces pour la Démocratie et le Développement</td>
<td>UFDD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (RC)</td>
<td>Cobras</td>
<td></td>
<td>Second half of the 1990s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Alliance de Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo</td>
<td>AFDL</td>
<td>Established October 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple</td>
<td>CNDP</td>
<td>Established 2006, North Kivu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Conseil National de Libération / Armée Populaire de Libération</td>
<td>CNL/APL</td>
<td>1964–1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Confédération des Associations Tribales de Katanga</td>
<td>Conakat</td>
<td>1960–1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Forces Démocratique pour la Libération du Rwanda</td>
<td>FDLR</td>
<td>Estimated 9 000 fighters; former Rwandan military and militia participating in the 1994 genocide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Front de Libération Nationale Congolais</td>
<td>FLNC</td>
<td>Established 1968 by former army officer Nathaniel Mbumba; military defeat 1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Front Nationalistes et Integrationistes</td>
<td>FNI</td>
<td>Agreed to disarm in August 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Forces de Résistance Patriotique d’Ituri</td>
<td>FRPI</td>
<td>Established November 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Group / Movement</td>
<td>Founded / Established</td>
<td>Note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Groupe Patriotique pour la Paix</td>
<td>GPP</td>
<td>Established 2002, umbrella group of pro-government militia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Union des Patriotes pour la Libération totale de la Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>UPLTCI</td>
<td>Established 2003, pro-government militia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>Front pour la Restauration de l’Unité et de la Démocratie</td>
<td>FRUD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia/Eritrea</td>
<td>Alliance of Eritrean National Forces</td>
<td>AENF</td>
<td>Established 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia/Eritrea</td>
<td>Eritrean Liberation Front</td>
<td>ELF</td>
<td>Established early 1960s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Ethiopian Democratic Union</td>
<td>EDU</td>
<td>Conservative/monarchist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia/Eritrea</td>
<td>Eritrean People’s Liberation Front</td>
<td>EPLF</td>
<td>Established 1970, split off to form the ELF; EPLF + EPLF overthrew the Ethiopian government in 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia/Eritrea</td>
<td>Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front</td>
<td>EPRDF</td>
<td>EPRDF + EPLF overthrew the Ethiopian government in 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromiya</td>
<td>IFLO</td>
<td>OLF splinter group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Ogaden National Liberation Front/Army</td>
<td>ONLF/A</td>
<td>Established 1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Tigray Liberation Front</td>
<td>TLF</td>
<td>Established 1974 as a students’ organisation, dissolved 1976 by the TPLF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Tigray People’s Liberation Front</td>
<td>TPLF</td>
<td>Established 1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gambia</td>
<td>Green Boys</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pro-government, reported to be affiliated with the ruling APRC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Mai-Mai militia</td>
<td></td>
<td>Collective term for local militia in the Kivus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo</td>
<td>MLC</td>
<td>Established shortly after the beginning of the war in 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Mouvement National Congolais/Lumumba</td>
<td>MNC/L</td>
<td>1960/61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Mouvement National Congolais/Kalandji</td>
<td>MNC/K</td>
<td>1960/61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Mouvement Révolutionnaire Congolais</td>
<td>MRC</td>
<td>Agreed to disarm in August 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie</td>
<td>RCD</td>
<td>Split after the war of 1996/97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>RCD – Mouvement de Libération</td>
<td>RCD-ML</td>
<td>Established 1999, North Kivu, supported by Uganda, split from the RCD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Union des Patriotes Congolais</td>
<td>UPC</td>
<td>Established 2002, led by Thomas Lubanga, Ituri region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Congrès des Jeunes Patriotes (‘Young Patriots’ including student militia)</td>
<td>Cojep</td>
<td>Supports President Laurent Gbagbo (but not government controlled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Forces Nouvelles de Côte d’Ivoire (alliance of Mouvement Patriistique de Côte d’Ivoire, Mouvement pour la Justice et la Paix and Mouvement Populaire pour le Grand Ouest)</td>
<td>FNIC (MPCI + MJP + MPIGO)</td>
<td>Alliance of the FNIC formed in 2003 during the war; political leader Guillaume Soro (now prime minister); supported by traditional Dozo hunters (especially in 2002/03), <a href="http://www.fninfo.ci">http://www.fninfo.ci</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Front de Libération du Grand Ouest</td>
<td>FLGO</td>
<td>Established 2002, ‘patriotic’ youth militia in the Western region (loyal to the president/government side, fought against MJP and MPIGO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Front pour la Sécurité de Centre-Ouest</td>
<td>FSCO</td>
<td>Established 2002, pro-government militia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Established</td>
<td>Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée</td>
<td></td>
<td>Armed conflict against the government of Guinea in 2000/01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>Union des Forces pour une Guinée Nouvelle</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>Rassemblement des forces Démocratiques de Guinée / Rally of Democratic Forces of Guinea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>Young Volunteers</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea-Bissau</td>
<td>Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde / Frente da Tutta para la Independencia Nacional da Guiné</td>
<td>PAIGC/FLING</td>
<td>Seized power after independence in 1975; overthrown by a coup in 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Rebellion</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anti-colonial revolt 1952–56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Shifta</td>
<td></td>
<td>Secessionist/separatist war 1963–67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Lofa Defence Force</td>
<td>LDF</td>
<td>Loma-dominated, allied to Charles Taylor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Liberian Peace Council</td>
<td>LPC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy</td>
<td>LURD</td>
<td>Established 1993, partly proxy of the armed forces of Liberia, fought against NPFL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia</td>
<td>INPFL</td>
<td>Split to form the NPFL in February 1990 because of personal rivalries between Prince Johnson (INPFL) and Charles Taylor (NFPL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>National Patriotic Front of Liberia</td>
<td>NPFL</td>
<td>Established 1989, led by Charles Taylor; overthrew Doe's regime in September 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Movement for Democracy in Liberia</td>
<td>MODEL</td>
<td>Established in early 1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>United Liberation Movement for Democracy</td>
<td>ULIMO</td>
<td>Established 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>JINA (secret organisation)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Established 1945, anti-colonial movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>Mouvement de la Renovation Malgache</td>
<td></td>
<td>Established 1945, anti-colonial movement, military defeated 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>PANAMA (secret organisation)</td>
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<td>Established 1945, anti-colonial movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Alliance Démocratique du 23 mai pour le Changement</td>
<td></td>
<td>Established 2006, former combatants of the 1990s Tuareg rebellion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Armée Révolutionnaire de Libération de l'Azawad</td>
<td>ARLA</td>
<td>Tuareg rebellion 1990–1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Front Populaire pour la Libération de l'Azawad</td>
<td>FPLA</td>
<td>Tuareg rebellion 1990–1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Front Islamique Arabe de l'Azawad</td>
<td>FIAA</td>
<td>Tuareg rebellion 1990–1996</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Front National pour la Libération de l'Azawad</td>
<td>FNLA</td>
<td>Tuareg rebellion 1990–1996</td>
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<td>Front Uni de la Libération de l'Azawad</td>
<td>FULA</td>
<td>Tuareg rebellion 1990–1996</td>
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<td>Mouvement Populaire de l'Azawad</td>
<td>MPA</td>
<td>Tuareg rebellion 1990–1996</td>
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<td>Mali</td>
<td>Mouvement Populaire pour la Libération de l'Azawad</td>
<td>MPLA</td>
<td>Tuareg rebellion 1990–1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Mouvement Touareg Nord-Mali pour le Changement</td>
<td>MTNMC</td>
<td>Founded 18 September 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauretania</td>
<td>Frente Popular de Liberación de Seguia el Hamra y Rio de Oro</td>
<td>Polisario</td>
<td>1975–1991</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Frente de Libertação de Moçambique</td>
<td>FRELIMO</td>
<td>1964–1974</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Resistência Nacional Moçambicana</td>
<td>RENAMO</td>
<td>1975–1992, supported by US during the Cold War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Region/Group</td>
<td>Established/Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Namibia</td>
<td>South West Africa People’s Organisation / People’s Liberation Army Namibia</td>
<td>SWAPO/PLAN Established 1960</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>Forces Armées Révolutionnaires du Sahara</td>
<td>FARS</td>
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<td>Niger</td>
<td>Front Démocratique pour le Renouveau</td>
<td>FDR 1990s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice</td>
<td>MNJ Established 1991</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Ahlul Sunnah Jamaa</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Al-Sunna Wal Jamma (Followers of the Prophet)</td>
<td>Established 2002, also known as Taleban</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Arewa People’s Congress</td>
<td>APC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria (south-east)</td>
<td>Bakassi Movement for Self-Determination</td>
<td>BAMOSD Declared ‘secession’ from Nigeria in 2006</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria (south-east)</td>
<td>Bakassi Boys</td>
<td>Established 1999</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria (south-east)</td>
<td>Bakassi Freedom Fighters</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria (Biafra)</td>
<td>Biafran Organisation of Freedom Fighters</td>
<td>BOFF Name was given only at the end of the Biafran war (1967–1970)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Egbesu Boys of Africa</td>
<td>EBA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria (North)</td>
<td>Hisba</td>
<td>Established 2001</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria (Biafra)</td>
<td>Movement for the Realisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra</td>
<td>MASSOB Established 1999</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta</td>
<td>MEND Active since January 2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Niger Delta Volunteer Force</td>
<td>NDVF</td>
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<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Niger Delta Vigilante</td>
<td>NDV Leader Ateke Tom</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>O’odudua (also O’odua) People’s Council</td>
<td>OPC Established 1994, south-western Nigeria</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Zamfara State Vigilante Service</td>
<td>ZSVS Established 1999</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>Forces Démocratique pour la Libération du Rwanda</td>
<td>FDLR Established 2000; DRC and Rwanda agreed to disband the FDLR in December 2008</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>Front Patriotique Rwandaise</td>
<td>FPR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>Interahamwe, Hutu Militia</td>
<td>Interahamwe was not formally dissolved after the 1994 genocide but merged with the Hutu Militia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Armed Forces Revolutionary Council</td>
<td>AFRC Defected members of the armed forces</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Civil Defence Force</td>
<td>CDF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>Revolutionary United Front</td>
<td>RUF Entered 1991 Sierra Leone, supported by NPFL Fighters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>West Side Boys</td>
<td>WSB Led by Foday Kailay</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>Al-Ittihad al-Islami / (Islamic Union)</td>
<td>AIAI Established 1992</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>Alliance for the Liberation of Somalia / Alliance for the Reiberation of Somalia</td>
<td>ALS/ARS Established 2007</td>
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<td>Appendix</td>
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<td><strong>Somalia/ Djibouti</strong></td>
<td><strong>Front de Libération de la Côte des Somalis</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Somalia</strong></td>
<td><strong>Northern Frontier District Liberation Front</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Somalia</strong></td>
<td><strong>Popular Resistance Movement in the Land of Two Migrations</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Somalia</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rahanweyn Resistance Army</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Somali Democratic Movement</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Somali National Alliance / United Somali Congress</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Somali Salvation Democratic Front</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Supreme Islamic Courts Council</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Union of Islamic Courts</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Western Somali Liberation Front</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Umkhonto we Sizwe</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sudan</strong></td>
<td><strong>Eastern Front</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Janjaweed, Furans and Malhiyat</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sudan</strong></td>
<td><strong>Justice and Equality Movement</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Justice Front</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sudan</strong></td>
<td><strong>New Sudan Brigade</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Popular Defence Forces</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sudan Alliance Forces</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sudan Liberation Movement/Army</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Sudan</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Beja Congress</strong></td>
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<td><strong>United Front for Liberation and Development</strong></td>
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<td><strong>United Revolutionary Force Front</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Allied Democratic Forces</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Uganda</strong></td>
<td><strong>Front for National Salvation</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Holy Spirit Mobile Forces</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Uganda</strong></td>
<td><strong>Uganda National Rescue Front</strong></td>
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**FLCS** | NFDFL |
| Established 2007 |
| Established 1995/96, allied with SDM |
| Established 1992, southern Somalia |
| Established July 1992 as an alliance of parts of the USC and the Somali Patriotic Movement; led by Mohammed Farah Aidid |
| Established 1991 |
| Established 1982, declared independent republic of Somalia in 1991 |
| Established 1989 |
| Established 1978, declared autonomy of the Puntland region in 1998 |
| Established 1991, supported by Eritrea |
| Established 2005, ceasefire |
| Arab and Fur militias first mentioned in 1994, Darfur |
| Established 2007, Arab militia |
| Established 1995, eastern branch of SPLA |
| Government-controlled armed group |
| Established 1994 |
| Established June 1992 at the University of Khartoum |
| Established 1983, Southern Sudan |
| Established 1993, eastern Sudan |
| Established 2007 |
| Established 2007 |
| Established 1995 |
| Established 1973 |
| Established by Alice Auma (Alice Lakwena) (later her father, Severino Lukoya) since August 1986 |
| Established 1987 by Joseph Kony |
| Led by Yoweri Museveni, seized power in 1986 |
| Former Save Uganda Movement, 1980s |
| 1986–1988 |
| Established 1979, defeated by the NRA in 1986 |
| 1980–1986 |
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Throughout Africa, armed militia, rebel and militant groups continue to threaten state sovereignty and to destabilise the security of some of even the strongest economies on the continent. The question is: How should African states respond to the challenge posed by such armed groups? The impressive range of case studies gathered here, ranging from the pirates of the Niger Delta and the rebels of the eastern DRC who prey upon rich natural resources, to the cultural and religious advocacy by Kenya’s Mungiki and the armed Islamists of Northern Africa, reveals the complexity of the problem. For all those who wish to understand the contribution these groups make to continuing insecurity in African states, this collection of well-researched case studies is essential reading.

David M Anderson
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Militias, rebels and Islamist militants is a carefully researched study which shows that armed non-state actors have become major contributors to human insecurity on the continent. It analyses the causes of the phenomenon and its consequences on the populations and the capacity (or lack of it) of states to protect against it and deal with it. The book also provides practical suggestions on how to deal with this phenomenon. It is highly recommended reading for scholars, researchers, policy makers and anyone seeking a deeper understanding of militia, rebel and Islamist militant groups and the impact their actions have on human insecurity and the state crisis in Africa.

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Deputy Joint Special Representative for the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operations in Darfur (UNAMID) and former Deputy Force Commander and Chief of Staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR)

Wafula Okumu and Augustine Ikelegbe have done a sterling job in assembling a wide cross-section of able Africanist scholars to analyse the challenging dynamics of violence perpetrated by armed non-state groups which continues to undermine the emergence and maturation of African states in the post-colonial and post-Cold War eras. Africa needs concrete proposals on how to address the human, national and regional insecurity posed by rebel, militia and Islamist militant groups. This book is a must-read for both intellectuals and practitioners interested in promoting human security in Africa.

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Executive Director
The African Public Policy & Research Institute (APPRI)

Understanding the genesis and evolution of violent armed groups in Africa is a critical enterprise as part of the effort to contain the phenomenon of weak, failed and failing states in Africa. This book contends that armed militia and insurgent groups with a variety of assorted grievances have proliferated in Africa because of the profound crisis that has bedevilled the project of post-independence nation building on the continent. Militias, rebels and Islamist militants discusses the worrying trend that has emerged from the progressive militarisation of societies and polities across Africa and the formidable challenges of restoring a healthy balance between civilian and military institutions. It reminds one that violent groups and movements are not simply going to fade away and that there is a need for vigorous efforts to check their proliferation.

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