CONFLICT TRENDS

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BY **VASU GOUNDEN**

"Syria has become the great tragedy of the century – a disgraceful humanitarian calamity with suffering and displacement unparalleled in recent history." These words were spoken by António Guterres, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Guterres stated this following the release of a UNHCR report indicating that the number of refugees in Syria has passed the two million mark, with almost one million of these refugees being children. Alarmingly, this statistic of two million represents a rise of 1.8 million refugees in 12 months, up from 230 671 refugees reported in the preceding 12 months.

In the December 2012 editorial of *Conflict Trends*, I reported a death toll of 50 000 people in Syria between the start of the war in early 2011 and the end of 2012. Barely six months later, that number has more than doubled to over 110 000 people dead. Both the significant increase in the number of refugees and the doubling of the death toll signifies a marked escalation in the Syrian civil war.

The refugees are ironically hosted by Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan, which are all countries experiencing their own internal conflict and significant political challenges. These countries, as well as others in the region, including Iran, Israel and Saudi Arabia, are thus drawn into Syria's internal conflict. This adds a significant and complex regional dynamic to the Syrian conflict.

In addition, the role of the United States (US), France, the United Kingdom and Russia has internationalised this conflict further. Presently (3 September 2013), both the US and Russia have an armada of ships in the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Syria. The US and its allies are poised to strike Syria soon and Russia is presumably on standby to assist the Syrian government defend itself, should such an attack occur.

The implications for international peace and security cannot be overstated. Its consequences for the world are grave. There is potential for a conflagration of epic proportions in an already unstable region awash with weapons, including weapons of mass destruction and chemical weapons. The human costs will be devastating and the financial costs to the region and global economy will be high.

This will not be the first time that the world will experience war with such devastating consequences. There have been many examples in history where war has simultaneously consumed many nations and affected millions of people. However, the Syrian war is the first of such proportion in this century. This may be due to the sheer sophistication of modern weapons to create such rapid death, destruction and displacement. Whatever the explanation, how the Syrian war ends will determine the road we as humanity have chosen as we arrive at the crossroads of civilisation in this 21st century.

This region is not new to conflict. Centuries ago Greater Syria, which was made up of the territories today known as Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Israel and connecting three continents, was the battleground for the political destinies of dynasties and empires. It is once again the battleground of a conflict that extends far beyond the dead and displaced in Syria. How we handle the Syrian conflict today will determine the kind of civilisation we build tomorrow.

All who hold the highest offices in those countries that have a direct or indirect interest in the outcome of the Syrian war – including the Secretary General of the United Nations, who is the standard bearer of the collective interest of humanity – must take responsibility for shaping humanity's destiny. I hope they will have the wisdom, fortitude and humility to rise to the occasion. ▲

Vasu Gounden is the Founder and Executive Director of ACCORD.

THE OTHER SIDE OF DRONES: SAVING WILDLIFE IN AFRICA AND MANAGING GLOBAL CRIME

BY **JOHAN BERGENAS, RACHEL STOHL AND ALEXANDER GEORGIEFF**

On 23 May 2013, poachers brutally killed a rhinoceros in Lake Nakuru National Park, Kenya. Three days later, poachers attacked and killed two rhinoceroses in two separate incidents: at Solio Ranch near Nyeri in central Kenya, and at Ngulia Rhino Sanctuary in Tsavo West National Park. Just one day later, more poachers shot a rhinoceros at Meru National Park in northern Kenya. On 29 May 2013, two more rhinos were killed on a private ranch in Oserian Wildlife Sanctuary. All told, seven rhinoceroses were killed in less than a week, as poachers stepped up their deadly campaign in Kenya and throughout Africa. As the negative consequences of poaching are felt in Africa and around the world, governments and law enforcement may have a way to counter this threat: the use of unarmed surveillance drones.

The ethical and legal framework – or lack thereof – concerning the use of armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) has dominated the global debate over drones. Comparatively little attention is given to non-weaponised vehicles. Yet surveillance drones may be one of the sharpest tools available when managing transnational crime and terrorist threats. In addition, they can assist in furthering national economic development aspirations

Above: Small surveillance drones, such as the Raven, which Kenya currently operates can only stay aloft for about one hour. This limits the amount of loitering time and the amount of information the drone can procure in a given flight.

In 2012 alone, over 30 000 African elephants were illegally killed – the highest number of deaths in two decades.

in countries across Africa. As such, surveillance drones should be more broadly considered and governments, multilateral organisations and technology innovators need to work across the security–development spectrum to achieve mutually beneficial goals. In that vein, innovative partnerships to stop complex transnational challenges – such as illegal poaching – may also provide opportunities to bridge the security–development divide.

Managing skyrocketing levels of rhinoceros and elephant poaching in Africa is one of many contemporary transnational challenges where surveillance drones can play a critical role. The rise in poaching on the African continent has been charted by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and other preservation groups. In 2012 alone, over 30 000 African elephants were illegally killed – the highest number of deaths in two decades.[1] Today, however, poaching is not just a conservation issue, but is equally a terrorism and economic development concern.

The multifaceted nature of the poaching issue led United States (US) President Barack Obama, during his visit to Africa in July 2013, to sign an executive order that called for "enhanc[ed] coordination of US Government efforts to combat wildlife trafficking and assist foreign governments in building the capacity needed to combat wildlife trafficking and related organized crime".[2] The order establishes a

Presidential Task Force on Wildlife Trafficking, which will enable an integrated and comprehensive approach to mitigate the skyrocketing levels of rhinoceros and elephant poaching in Africa.

Central to US and African anti-poaching efforts is the need for countries to take a holistic approach to ensure that non-lethal drone technology is used in an effective manner, and that public–private sector partnerships are leveraged against the transnational criminals who kill defenceless animals and threaten African and US security.

The Poaching–Terror Nexus

Wildlife poaching threatens US national security because organisations – such as Al-Shabaab[3] and the Lord's Resistance Army[4] – are partially financed by the illegal trade of ivory and rhinoceros horn.[5] As these groups cement their strongholds, poaching has become an integral part of their survival and success.[6] Indeed, the increased carnage in 2012 led Hilary Clinton, then US Secretary of State, to initiate an intelligence effort to ascertain the impact of trafficking in high-value animal products on US national security. The report has not yet been made public, but the issue is increasingly at the forefront of policy discussions with African counterparts, as is evident by the July 2013 executive order on poaching.

Organisations, such as Al-Shabaab, are partially financed by the illegal trade of ivory and rhinoceros horn.

The executive order commits the US to provide US$10 million in additional aid to African states to manage poaching on the continent. These resources are much-needed for under-resourced and poorly equipped law enforcement authorities fighting well-armed poachers, who are usually part of sophisticated international trafficking networks.

BECAUSE OF THE HIGH PROFIT MARGINS, AL-SHABAAB IS ABLE TO DERIVE AN ESTIMATED 13–40% OF ITS FUNDS FROM THE SALE OF IVORY AND RHINOCEROS HORN

Throughout the continent, militant and terror organisations are acting with impunity. Since 2008, Al-Qaeda has relied increasingly on local organisations, including Al-Shabaab, to carry out attacks against Western interests. As a result, local Al-Qaeda franchise groups are developing means to fund their terrorist campaigns in conflict-torn countries, often through illegal channels.[7] For example, Al-Qaeda in the Maghreb region derives a large proportion of its funds from kidnappings and ransom payments. Other Al-Qaeda franchise groups have become involved in the drug trade, offering physical protection and safe passage to drug cartels. Likewise, Al-Shabaab is reliant on profits from the sale and transport of ivory and rhinoceros horn to Asia. As with other networks, these organisations utilise their contacts and connections to move illegal goods of all kinds effectively throughout the world.

The path of a single rhinoceros horn or elephant tusk from Africa to Asia is complex, but it is a lucrative business, as rhinoceros horns can sell for as much as US$50 000 per kilogram on the black markets in Asia. The path of ivory and rhinoceros horns often begins in Central and East Africa, where poachers take advantage of weak and overstretched law enforcement to target vulnerable elephant and rhinoceros populations, often in reserves with challenging topography, vast sizes, and minimal oversight and security. Once the poachers have garnered the valuable tusk and horn, they are quick to transfer it to traffickers, often organised by Al-Shabaab-funded brokers and facilitators. These brokers purchase the ivory for around US$50 per kilogram. Utilising the porous borders between Kenya and Somalia, the traffickers transport the products into the latter country. Once the goods have entered Somalia, they are quickly ferried to Al-Shabaab-controlled port facilities, where they are disguised among coal containers and smuggled onto larger transport vessels bound for the Gulf states and then on to East Asia. Once the goods enter Asian markets, ivory, for example, can fetch over US$1 000 per kilogram – a profit margin of over US$900.[8]

Because of the high profit margins, Al-Shabaab is able to derive an estimated 13–40% of its funds from the sale of ivory and rhinoceros horn. These profits allow the group to pay its soldiers wages – a major draw for poor, unemployed young males. Indeed, a new recruit can make up to the equivalent of US$300 per year; a large sum in the region.[9]

Poaching as a Development Problem

Poaching has manifested into a security challenge with a link to terrorism, but to African states it is also a threat to national prosperity and development opportunities. In Kenya, 25% of the gross domestic product comes from tourism – 70% of which is linked to wildlife.[10] A diminished wildlife population, especially the tourist-popular elephants and rhinoceroses, will have a direct threat on national prosperity and further economic development.

Kenya has recently experienced horrific wildlife losses – a condition that is a direct threat to Kenya's further economic development. The livelihoods of individuals associated with tourism in Kenya are also directly affected by greater

Poaching is not just a conservation issue; it is equally a terrorism and economic development concern.

An illegal consignment of five tonnes of ivory, confiscated from smugglers, is destroyed in Nairobi, Kenya. The confiscated consignment was recovered from smugglers in Singapore and originated from poaching activities in both Zambia and Malawi.

animal slaughtering, potentially increasing unemployment throughout the country.

The instability fuelled by groups such as Al-Shabaab and the Lord's Resistance Army have had adverse effects on international investment. International companies are unlikely to invest in and develop areas threatened by these rogue groups, further plaguing underdeveloped and war-torn areas of Africa. For example, the conflict with Al-Qaeda in northern Mali resulted in two major Italian companies leaving in 2012 and 2013: Eni, the oil and gas giant, and Illovo Sugar Ltd. Both companies cited security concerns and unstable markets as a result of the continued conflict with Al-Qaeda.[11] The conflicts spurred by Al-Shabaab in East Africa could parallel the situation in Mali, forcing major international corporations to reassess their ventures in the region.

Finally, poaching has an adverse effect on economic development by perpetuating the black market in East Africa and further fuelling corruption. The growing demand and price of ivory and rhinoceros horn will only increase the profits of black market traders, allowing them to expand and secure their markets by purchasing weapons and other illicit goods that are known detriments to national prosperity.

Developing Cross-cutting Solutions

In response to the serious security and development challenges arising from poaching and the associated international illicit trade of a variety of goods, Kenya and other African states are increasing their efforts against poachers and allocating more scarce resources to this campaign.

In its 2013–14 budget, the Kenyan government increased the country's security budget by US$218 million from the year before.[12] These funds are allocated to the research and development of new technology, procuring new security equipment and funding enhanced operations. No doubt, this new technology will be used against poachers, illicit arms trafficking and terrorists alike.

Although African governments are taking on the poaching challenge themselves, they need more resources to combat poaching effectively and comprehensively. Non-weaponised surveillance drones can play an important role in successfully combatting poaching and other transnational threats on the continent. In May 2013, the US and Japan agreed to assist Kenya in procuring drones, to be used for border security and countering arms trafficking (illegal arms both increase the risk of armed conflict and

improve the capabilities of poachers).[13] Arms trafficking is inextricably linked to poaching in Africa. The president of the WWF, Carter Roberts, has highlighted the link between guns and successful poaching, grimly noting that "the bad guys are extremely sophisticated. They have night-vision goggles. They've got helicopters. They have all kinds of funding and resources, and we need to up our game to combat what we're dealing with."[14]

To address the increased militarisation of poachers in Africa, wildlife protection organisations like the WWF are working with technology companies and local communities. These partnerships allow for innovative approaches that connect security and development, using technology to address complex challenges.

For example, Google is funding a WWF project focused on deploying drones in Africa to protect elephants and rhinoceroses.[15] While the drones are relatively cheap (as little as tens of thousands of dollars to buy and operate), they produce a critical surveillance capacity for national wildlife services, which often cannot access remote locations fast enough due to limited technical resources, manpower and topographical challenges. Drones increase surveillance capacity and, used together with other law enforcement techniques, deter poachers.

The use of drone technology to counter poachers has garnered both attention and success. In his recent remarks, Roberts further called for more "real-time data on the animals, real-time data on the poachers and then a software system that enables us to mobilize people to get to the right place at the right time".

In June 2013, researchers from the University of Maryland, US, successfully implemented an anti-poaching programme in South Africa, which has seen a tremendous rise in poaching since 2009.[16] Using analytic technology to predict the movement of rhinoceroses and poachers, Maryland's Falcon UAV was able to locate and track a rhinoceros and her calf and successfully identify a potential poacher nearby. During the week-long test phase, no rhinoceroses were killed by poachers in the Kruger National Park. This programme has both the potential to target specific incidents of poaching, as well as more generally deter poachers in the area.

ARMS TRAFFICKING IS INEXTRICABLY LINKED TO POACHING IN AFRICA

Successes in other regions point towards the importance of surveillance drones. In Nepal, for example, the WWF and Google partnered to establish a multimillion dollar plan to employ surveillance drones to counter rhinoceros poaching.[17] Since the programme was launched over two years ago, only two rhinoceroses have been killed. Comparatively, before the programme commenced, one rhinoceros was killed every month on average.

Surveillance drones seem to work because they provide a persistent "eye in the sky" over a vast area and are difficult to detect, especially at night. Current technology employed

REUTERS / THE BIGGER PICTURE

Drones increase surveillance capacity and, used together with other law enforcement techniques, deter poachers.

Surveillance drones provide a persistent "eye in the sky" over a vast area and are difficult to detect, especially at night.

by small drones has its limits. Small surveillance drones, such as the Raven, which Kenya currently operates, can only stay aloft for about one hour. This limits the amount of loitering time, and thus the amount of information the drone can procure in a given flight. Furthermore, because smaller surveillance drones fly at low altitudes at fairly slow speeds, they are vulnerable to on-the-ground weapons systems employed by criminal groups. Recent successes countering poaching are encouraging, but more can be done to leverage and expand these current programmes to overcome problems of funding, manpower and technological impediments.

A Way Forward

Counter-poaching initiatives provide an opportunity for new and innovative approaches to a security and development threat. Because many approaches to bridge this divide are in their nascent form, stakeholders can develop a systemic and systematic approach to address poaching and stop the related illicit networks. In other words, innovators can work together to change the framework used to address this complex transnational threat using a carefully thought-out, step-by-step approach.

Three key factors provide a way forward. First, success will require a holistic approach that includes states and

multilateral organisations working together across the security, development and environmental spectrum. Preventing poaching motivates all three communities, which should lead to innovative new partnerships. Non-traditional partners – such as the US Pentagon, United Nations counterterrorism units, national development agencies, the World Bank and the WWF – can find common ground and leverage each other's expertise, resources and technology for mutual benefit.

BECAUSE SMALLER SURVEILLANCE DRONES FLY AT LOW ALTITUDES AT FAIRLY SLOW SPEEDS, THEY ARE VULNERABLE TO ON-THE-GROUND WEAPONS SYSTEMS EMPLOYED BY CRIMINAL GROUPS

Information-sharing among a variety of groups is also vital. Because of the interconnectivity, counter-poaching programmes can also be leveraged to track other illicit transport networks across Central and East Africa. However, such an undertaking will require a unified commitment from governments to share information and expertise to counter trafficking routes.

Second, beyond the low-tech UAVs currently in use, more advanced non-weaponised drones should also be broadly deployed in an effort to increase effectiveness. Current small surveillance drones have limited altitude and flying times, whereas more advanced non-weaponised UAV systems can operate for longer time frames and at higher altitudes, increasing the potential to identify key elements of the illicit supply chain – including transhipment points, trafficking routes and middlemen.

One of the advantages of more advanced drones is that they can loiter above target areas for longer periods of time, and constantly collect data over large areas of land. Further, these more advanced surveillance drones can be programmed to send alerts when suspicious activities occur, overcoming the problem of human fatigue or distraction.

Third, the public and the private sectors should work more closely together from the outset. To develop and provide the right technology in the appropriate environment, technology innovators must be at the table at an early stage when governments design programmes to fight transnational threats. Early understanding of conditions on the ground, including local capabilities, is critical to matching needs with resources.

New partnerships rely on effective coordination with local governments and law enforcement. Incentivising a variety of stakeholders to take action against poachers is paramount. Including these stakeholders goes beyond just increasing the use of surveillance drones. Connecting public and private actors to develop vital confidence-building ties, to work together to acquire the most up-to-date intelligence and on-the-ground information, is crucial to counter-poaching and anti-trafficking success.

The use of non-weaponised drones in Kenya and in other African countries for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance purposes has great potential to impede illicit activities that fuel violence, crime and terrorist organisations, as well as undermine economic development. New innovative partnerships across the security–development spectrum and with private industry will be key to holistically managing this and other transnational challenges that threaten Africa's continued progress. ▲

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AT THE CROSSROADS: UNDERSTANDING EGYPT'S FALTERING TRANSITION

BY **HAZEL HADDON**

On 3 July 2013, General Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, the commander-in-chief of the Egyptian armed forces, appeared on Egyptian television to announce that Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi had been removed from his post and the constitution suspended. Only 12 months previously, Morsi had stood in Tahrir Square in Cairo after winning Egypt's first free presidential election and had taken an informal oath of office in front of gathered crowds, opening his jacket to show he was not wearing a bulletproof vest.[1] Morsi, a representative of Egypt's largest political organisation, the Muslim Brotherhood, went on to take executive authority from the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, in a historic transfer of power from military to civilian administration. A year later, Morsi's ousting at the hands of the leader of the military council was greeted by celebrations lasting for several days in public squares in Cairo.

On 4 July 2013, Egypt's membership in the African Union (AU) was automatically suspended by the organisation's Peace and Security Council, in accordance with its legal rules on unconstitutional transfers of power. The AU's clear response to the military ousting of Morsi contrasted with the ambivalent and conflicting messages sent by other international players; the United States, in particular, steered clear of the "coup" label which, if applied, would invoke legal review of American aid to Egypt.

While it is accurate to describe Morsi's ousting by the military as a coup[2] and to acknowledge the serious risks

Above: President Mohamed Morsi (left) was removed from his post on 3 July 2013 by General Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi (right), the commander-in-chief of the Egyptian armed forces.

Protesters opposing Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi shout slogans against him and Brotherhood members during a protest at Tahrir Square in Cairo (30 June 2013).

inherent in a return to military-led politics, international and regional observers would do well to recognise that the coup occurred as a result of an already-failing democratic transition. Morsi's presidency had met neither the aspirations of Egyptians who had demanded revolutionary change, nor the standards of democratic governance he claimed to represent.

Consensus Candidate

Although the Brotherhood had not supported the protests against Hosni Mubarak's regime in 2011, it was clear after Mubarak's ousting that the Brotherhood's unrivalled size and presence within Egyptian society would mean that it would dominate at elections, particularly in the face of a disorganised and Cairo-centric liberal opposition. Performing well in the 2011–2012 parliamentary elections secured the Brotherhood not only 47% of the seats,[3] but also ensured that the group would have a leading influence on the constituent assembly – a body to be selected by parliament to write Egypt's new constitution.

Initial post-revolution assurances by the Brotherhood that the group would not put up a candidate for the presidency were cast aside as rival Islamist politicians formed their campaigns. Khairat Al-Shater was the first choice to represent the Brotherhood in the elections, but he was excluded from the race because of legal irregularities. Mohamed Morsi, a senior figure inside the party with little public profile, was then selected to run.

After a diverse first round featuring 13 candidates, the second round pitched frontrunner Morsi against Ahmed Shafiq, a former air force commander and a senior figure in the Mubarak regime. A large part of the opposition chose to support Morsi, arguing that the Islamist political project he represented was less of a danger than a Shafiq presidency, which would represent continuity with both the Mubarak regime and with military rule. Morsi's victory with 51.7% of the final vote[4] was a result of his ability to draw on the support of this diverse group of voters. His presidency began, therefore, with a level of popular support and consensus about his status as a candidate representing change. Within the course of a year, that goodwill had been squandered.

Extra-legal Measures

Morsi's approach to governing was defined by partisanship and creeping authoritarianism. His administration justified its majoritarian approach by stressing Morsi's electoral mandate, yet his attempts to take

Supporters of the interim government installed by the army carry a soldier in celebration, in Cairo (17 August 2013).

over independent state institutions and his deployment of extra-legal or violent means to solidify his control clearly went beyond any democratic legitimacy he held as president.

The battle over the constitution-drafting process in late 2012 aptly demonstrates Morsi's autocratic and divisive approach to governing. The struggle over Egypt's new constitution, which was to be drafted by a constituent assembly selected by members of Egypt's parliament, was primarily fought in the courts, with ongoing and arcane legal battles over the constitutionality of the assembly's make-up.[5]

In the first few months of Morsi's tenure, leftist, liberal and revolutionary groups repeatedly criticised the body's perceived Islamist dominance and poor representation of women, Christians, youth and secularists. The assembly was ultimately boycotted by most secular and liberal parties, as well as all representatives of Egypt's churches, in protest of its Islamist bias.

In November 2012, with a decision by the High Constitutional Court to dissolve the assembly on the grounds of its unconstitutionality widely anticipated, Morsi issued a constitutional declaration that rendered both the presidency and the constituent assembly immune to judicial scrutiny. Within a week, a final draft of the constitution was produced by the assembly. The series of events was

met with mass protests on the streets of Cairo and other Egyptian cities.

Morsi's decree also included a provision dismissing the prosecutor-general and appointing a new figure to the key post. Although there had long been calls to replace the previous prosecutor-general, who had been appointed under Mubarak, Morsi's decree ignored Egyptian law, which mandates that the prosecutor-general can only be dismissed by judicial decree.

The events of November and December 2012 illustrate Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood's autocratic approach to power. Partisanship was fostered within the constituent assembly to ensure that the Islamist political project dominated the constitution-drafting process, at the expense of the consensus-building that such processes require, particularly at moments of major transition. When the Islamist dominance of the constitution-writing body faced legal challenges, the president resorted to extreme measures via his constitutional decree, giving himself wide-ranging executive and legislative powers effectively to avoid judicial scrutiny. In addition, the presidency attempted to secure control of key state institutions that were out of range of any democratic mandate – for example, the judiciary, through the appointment of a new prosecutor-general.[6]

Supporters of ousted President Morsi confront riot police and army personnel near Rabaa Adawiya Square in Cairo (14 August 2013).

Violence and Intimidation

While openly championing its democratic mandate, the Muslim Brotherhood organisation that stood behind Morsi's presidency at the same time deployed violence at street level to deal with challenges. Morsi's decree and the draft constitution provoked mass protests in Cairo and elsewhere. In a notorious incident outside the Ittihadiya presidential palace in northern Cairo,[7] Brotherhood supporters were reported to be detaining and torturing anti-government protesters, with the knowledge and consent of security forces.[8] On another occasion in December 2012, Morsi's supporters surrounded the High Constitutional Court and prevented judges from entering, putting direct pressure on the judiciary to prevent a verdict being reached on the constituent assembly.[9]

The followers of an ultraconservative Salafist sheikh closely allied with the Brotherhood, Hazem Abu Ismail, also acted as informal militias that threatened and intimidated Brotherhood opponents, protesting against the perceived bias of the media for several days in December outside Media Production City, the Cairo complex where many of Egypt's private television channels are based. On the day of the constitutional referendum, 15 December 2012, the group was also implicated in a violent attack on the headquarters of the liberal Wafd party in Cairo.[10]

The Morsi government justified its extra-legal replacement of the prosecutor-general through references to unfulfilled demands for transitional justice. Although these demands were very real, it is clear that after the new prosecutor-general, Talaat Abdullah, was appointed, prosecutions for speech crimes by Brotherhood critics rose dramatically. A number of key opposition and media figures were charged with speech crimes, including "insulting the presidency".[11]

Egypt's Coptic Christian minority also felt threatened, with incidents of sectarian violence rising with little response from Morsi's government or security forces. Under the new prosecutor-general, prosecutions for blasphemy crimes (aimed disproportionately at Egypt's Christians) rose dramatically.[12]

A Popular Coup

Morsi's ousting was the result of a genuine grassroots campaign. As has become characteristic of Egyptian politics, the political agenda was set by street action rather than by established political groups or parties.

In the spring of 2013, discontent with Morsi's rule began to crystallise around the "Rebellion" signature drive created

AS HAS BECOME CHARACTERISTIC OF EGYPTIAN POLITICS, THE POLITICAL AGENDA WAS SET BY STREET ACTION RATHER THAN BY ESTABLISHED POLITICAL GROUPS OR PARTIES

Members of the Muslim Brotherhood and supporters of deposed President Morsi protest his military overthrow (July 2013).

by a group of then-unknown activists. The petition campaign, which called for signatures in support of a vote of "no confidence" in Morsi and early presidential elections, had set the date of 30 June 2013 – the anniversary of Morsi's coming to power – for mass protests against the government. Well-established opposition groups sensed the momentum and lent their support to the campaign's goals and its plan for mass mobilisation.

In the months and weeks leading up to the date, regular demonstrations took place not only in Cairo and Alexandria, but in numerous other towns and cities across Egypt. Anti-government sentiment, helped by a stagnating economy and paralysing fuel shortages, cut across class and regional cleavages.

On 30 June 2013, unprecedentedly large mass demonstrations took place in urban centres all over the country.[13] Morsi and his government remained defiant and, as mass protests continued, offered only limited and superficial concessions. On 1 July 2013, the military issued an extraordinary declaration, calling on "political forces" to come together to meet the demands of the Egyptian people within 48 hours, or face an army-imposed roadmap. Two days later, Al-Sisi announced that Morsi was no longer president. He was replaced by the head of the High Constitutional Court. A new roadmap for constitutional amendments was laid out, to be followed by parliamentary and presidential elections.

Military Crackdown

Within days of Morsi's ousting, the new military-backed interim government had shut down pro-Brotherhood media outlets and placed arrests warrants on senior Brotherhood figures and the group's political allies. An attack on a pro-Morsi protest by military forces left 51 dead – a level of violence not seen since the 2011 revolution.[14] In addition, attempts to target the Muslim Brotherhood – the largest political organisation in Egypt – have predictably inspired violent responses at the hands of some of its partisans. State targets in Sinai are attacked daily, and there has been a dramatic spike in violence against Coptic Christians, with a number of killings. Compounding an already-divisive and polarised situation, the military-backed ousting, despite its popular support, risks sparking serious instability and large-scale civil strife.

Regional Implications

The AU's automatic suspension of Egypt – a major donor and an important member state – reflects a principled adherence to its policies on unconstitutional changes of government.[15] But the move, which was greeted with hostility by many Egyptian commentators and politicians, raises the question of what role the AU should seek to play in Egypt's upcoming transitional period.

Relationships between sub-Saharan Africa and those Arab African states that underwent revolutions in 2011 have, at times, been characterised by disconnection. The AU response to uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt was slow and passive, reflecting a broader institutional weakness in responding to crisis situations prompted by popular uprisings. In Libya, the AU was active and engaged, but its roadmap was ignored[16] and its role as representative of regional interests and local knowledge was filled instead by

the Arab League, which ultimately approved United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973[17] and the subsequent North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military intervention.[18]

The AU risks being sidelined once more by other international and regional partners, including the Arab League,[19] if it adheres doggedly to its own legal framework at the expense of a nuanced analysis of Egypt's political upheaval. The AU took a critical stance on a *coup d'état*, which has set in motion the risk of long-term instability and violence. But condemnation should not be accompanied by a withdrawal pending new elections, or by a failure to assess accurately the realities that led to the coup.

The AU should endeavour to acknowledge the autocratic realities of Morsi's presidency if it is to be taken seriously by Egyptians. It must also take steps not to disengage completely from Egypt until elections are held. Disengagement would result in an impoverished experience for Egypt; Egyptians would be denied the chance to benefit from African experiences of national reconciliation, conflict prevention and resolution, and transitional justice mechanisms during a critical moment of transition and instability. It could also mean a serious and long-lasting loss of influence for the AU in North Africa. ▲

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Endnotes

1   Michael, Maggie (2012) 'Egypt's New Leader Claims Revolution's Mantle', Available at: <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/egypts-new-leader-claims-revolutions-mantle> Accessed on: 15 July 2013.

2   The label is strongly rejected by many Egyptian supporters of Morsi's ousting – for example: Nowaira, Amira (2013) 'This is Not a Coup but the Will of the People', Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/jul/04/coup-egypt-mohamed-morsi-people> Accessed on: 15 July 2013.

3   BBC (2012) 'Egypt's Islamist Parties Win Elections to Parliament', Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16665748> Accessed on: 7 August 2013.

4   Weaver, Matthew (2013) 'Muslim Brotherhood's Mohammed Morsi Wins Egypt's Presidential Race', Available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/middle-east-live/2012/jun/24/egypt-election-results-live> Accessed on: 7 August 2013.

5   The first constituent assembly was dissolved by a court ruling in April 2012 on the grounds of unconstitutionality. The second assembly was formed in June 2012, a few weeks before Morsi took office.

6   The battle to control the judiciary continued into 2013, as the Brotherhood-controlled parliament attempted to push through a law on judicial powers that would lower the retirement ages of judges and effectively forcibly retire around a quarter of Egypt's judiciary – a move many judges saw as an attack on judicial independence. See, for example, Ahram Online (2013) 'Egypt Judges on Strike Over Judicial Authority Law', Available at: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/72598/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-judges-on-strike-over-judicial-authority-law.aspx> Accessed on: 15 July 2013.

7   Jarehi, Mohamed (2012) 'Al-Masry Al-Youm Reports On Brotherhood Torture Chambers', Available at: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2012/12/muslim-brotherhood-egypt-torture-chambers.html> Accessed on: 15 July 2013.

8   Torture was still used "systematically" by the state under Morsi, according to rights groups. See Nagi, Mohamed (2013) 'Systematic Sexual Torture Still Continues under Morsi', Available at: <http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2013/06/24/systematic-sexual-torture-still-continues-under-morsi/> Accessed on: 18 July 2013.

9   AlBawaba News (2012) 'Brotherhood Protestors Try to Block Egypt's Judges, Besiege Supreme Court', Available at: <http://www.albawaba.com/news/morsi-powers-judges-453658> Accessed on: 18 July 2013.

10   Fick, Maggie and Sabry, Mohannad (2012) 'Salafist "Hazemoons" Ponder Next Moves amid Egypt's Turmoil', Available at: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2012/al-monitor/salafist-hazemoons-egypt.html> Accessed on: 18 July 2013.

11   Youssef, Nancy A. (2013) 'In Mohammed Morsi's Egypt, Insulting President Still Leads to Charges', Available at: <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2013/06/03/192878/in-mohammed-morsis-egypt-insulting.html#.UeyfbY0yZqU> Accessed on: 18 July 2013.

12   Amnesty International (2013) 'Egypt's Worrying Rise in Criminal Blasphemy Cases', Available at: https://www.amnesty.org/en/news/egypt-s-worrying-rise-criminal-blasphemy-cases-2013-06-11> Accessed on: 18 July 2013.

13   In Cairo, Tahrir Square and its environs was packed by mid-afternoon, to the extent that new marchers had to be turned away. The wide boulevard leading to the presidential palace in another district of Cairo was also densely crowded, reflecting the unprecedented volume of people on the streets.

14   Kingsley, Patrick (2013) 'Killing in Cairo: The Full Story of the Republican Guards' Club Shooting', Available at: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/interactive/2013/jul/18/cairo-republican-guard-shooting-full-story> Accessed on: 20 July 2013.

15   A point made by Alex de Waal in: De Waal, Alex (2013) 'The African Union's Principled Stance on Egypt', Available at: <http://sites.tufts.edu/reinventingpeace/2013/07/09/the-au-stand-on-egypt/> Accessed on: 10 July 2013.

16   Koko, Sadiki and Bakwesegha-Osula, Martha (2012) Assessing the African Union's Response to the Libyan Crisis. *Conflict Trends*, 2012 (1), pp. 3–10.

17   United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973 of 17 March 2011 formed the legal basis for the subsequent NATO-led intervention in Libya, authorising the international community to take all necessary measures (short of a foreign occupation force) to protect civilians under attack in the country.

18   The presence of an alternative regional grouping is a particular challenge for the AU and other African actors in dealing with north Africa. In sub-Saharan Africa, subregional groupings such as regional economic communities and regional mechanisms form coherent blocs within the AU framework. But the Arab League has an entirely separate agenda and, in the Libyan case, could be used to advocate an entirely different approach to dealing with a crisis situation.

19   The Arab League was quick to express its support for the "June 30 revolution". See Kuwait News Agency (2013)'AU's Reading of Egypt's Conditions "Completely Wrong"– AL', Available at: <http://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2322166&language=en> Accessed on: 15 July 2013.

RETHINKING THE TUAREG FACTOR IN THE MALI CRISIS[1]

BY **DAVID ZOUNMENOU**

Introduction

Mali has been a battleground for more than a year now. While the armed conflict came in the aftermath of the Libyan crisis that left the regional security environment depleted, it also served as a catalyst for the collapse of state authority in Mali. This created conditions conducive for the proliferation of, and attacks by, radical religious armed groups in the northern regions of the country including the Tuareg armed movement, the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA). But, far from being a new phenomenon, the Tuareg-led armed insurrection in the northern regions is as old as the post-colonial Malian state, and continues to pose tremendous challenges in West Africa and the Sahel region for both regional and extra-regional actors. Currently known as "the belt of insecurity", the Sahel region has been home to some of the longest armed conflicts in African history.

The recent crisis in the region is seen as one of the most serious since the end of the cold war, with anticipated dire long-term impacts on the security of the region and

beyond. But while attention is predominantly focused on defeating the jihadist groups that have threatened the survival of the Malian state, one must not lose sight of the fact that the "Tuareg Factor" – as represented by the rebellion launched by the MNLA – remains serious, both in terms of appreciating the deterioration of the situation and attempting to frame long-lasting solutions. A critical concern is whether the image of victim, projected over the decades by some members of the Tuareg communities, still holds any relevance.

This article argues that, beyond the sometimes naïve simplification of the issues at hand, the Tuareg Factor in the ongoing crisis in Mali and any attempts to frame ways out of the crisis need to be understood within a historical trajectory that takes into consideration three key parameters: first,

Above: Soldiers from the Tuareg rebel group MNLA drive in a convoy of pickup trucks in the northeastern town of Kidal (February 2013).

People from northern Mali protest against the seizure of their region by Tuareg and Islamist rebels, in the capital city, Bamako (10 April 2012).

the post-colonial state in Mali and its African leadership's relations with the descendants of the Tuareg communities; second, the amalgamation created by the so-called war on terror; and, finally, the contradictions of the democratisation process of the 1990s. It concludes that any sustainable response to recurrent Tuareg armed rebellions and the creation of conditions for a lasting peace in the region will have to be broadened to incorporate the resentment of some radical elements within the Tuareg communities towards the post-colonial state under black African leadership in Mali.

Trends and Patterns of Past Tuareg Rebellions

In Mali, the combined effects of perceived political margin-alisation, socio-economic deprivation and environmental problems have undoubtedly culminated in cyclical violence since the early 1960s. Although these issues could have been attended to at the early stages, the leaders of the newly independent state of Mali failed to respond adequately. Indeed, while the leaders were aware that the nation-building process should encompass a coherent socio-economic and political process that was all-inclusive, governments' efforts were mostly concentrated in the capital cities – to the detriment of other regions or groups, which felt neglected and excluded. The ensuing resentment was heightened by the repression of the very first Tuareg revolt only three years after independence by Mali's first post-independence

president, Modibo Keïta. To date, this has left a legacy that still affects not just the confidence that the Tuaregs have in various government authorities, but also the institutions' approaches and responses to the problem.

The Popular Movement of the Azawad (MPA), led by lyad Ag Aghali, was among the first rebel groups involved in the armed conflict against Mali's authorities in the early 1990s. Yet, internal dissensions, particularly due to the rebels' lack of consensus over the relevance of negotiated solutions and equitable distribution of peace dividends, led to the splitting of the MPA into a number of factions. Hence, in Mali, key rebel groups then included the Popular Front for the Liberation of Azawad (FPLA), led by Rhissa Ag Sidi Mohamed, and the Revolutionary Army for the Liberation of the Azawad (ARLA), led by Abderrahmane Gala. The Democratic Alliance for Change (ADC) also came into being in 2006 under the leadership of Ibrahim Ag Bahanga, a veteran of the previous rebellions, to mark his opposition to the 2006 Algiers Peace Accord. This fragmentation symbolised not only a lack of a common front among the Tuareg rebels, but also made peace processes more complex. Three important peace agreements were signed in Mali between 1991 and 2006: the 1991 Tamanrasset Accord, the 1992 National Pact, and the 2006 Algiers Peace Accord.

It is undeniable that the agreements were not fully implemented. However, while insisting on challenges

A fighter with the Tuareg separatist group MNLA brandishes a separatist flag for the region they call Azawad.

to the implementation, one can easily fail to take note of what the government has done to accommodate the Tuareg demands, sometimes to the detriment of other marginalised and equally affected groups. This gives rise to several questions: were the broken promises enough to explain the resurgence of the armed conflict in Mali? Did the government have adequate resources to respond effectively to the rebels' demands, and was war the only option to make government uphold the agreements? Although there was a need to recognise the legitimacy of the Tuareg demands for social and economic improvement as citizens, there were other avenues for them to hold government accountable, particularly in a democratic system.

The Fallacy of Marginalisation and the Tuareg Independence Claim

The argument of marginalisation has been used and abused as if it were a cardinal excuse to launch a rebellion. It generally fails to take into consideration other compelling factors that fuel instability and define the overall context of the country and the region. Mali is a poor country, where conditions were made more challenging by the failure of the post-colonial state to extend effective control beyond the capital city, Bamako, and deliver essential services to citizens. Even those living in the capital do not always have their basic needs met by government.

Yet, it appears that various governments have taken some initiatives that deserve acknowledgement in the interests of social cohesion and peace with the Tuareg communities. In fact, between 1991 and 2006, out of 11 645 Tuareg combatants declared active, close to 9 000 were reintegrated into various national socio-economic structures such as the army and local administration, while almost 2 400 became employed in main government institutions as cabinet ministers and members of parliament.[2] Furthermore, government and rebels have established joint commissions for national consultation and the mobilisation of resources needed to promote the development of the northern regions of Mali. In August 2011, a US$65 million special programme for peace, security and development – *Programme spécial pour la paix, la sécurité et le développement au Nord-Mali* (PSPSDN) – was launched under the leadership of Mohamed Ag Erlaf, a Tuareg from Kidal.[3] It was supported by the European Union, World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, among others, and sought to address some of the socio-economic grievances aired by concerned communities. The programme also aims to reduce the influence of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) on the youth by offering them socio-economic alternatives. These indications showed the efforts by the government in Mali to meet part of its commitments toward the communities in the north.

Although insufficient and certainly fraught with challenges, it stands in sharp contrast to the argument that government has not responded to the demands of communities living in the northern regions. The search for dialogue with the insurgents – at least under presidents Alpha Oumar Konaré and Amadou Toumani Touré's administrations – provides evidence that governments in Mali have attempted to address the socio-economic grievances through peaceful mechanisms and concessions, which at times even exposed the weaknesses of the state and raised concerns over the credibility and authority of leaders.[4] Many Malian soldiers and civilians believed that government had capitulated to the demands of the northern insurgents and saw in this a symbol of national humiliation, given the dire conditions in which other communities across the country live.

One could also stress the fact that the 1990s democratisation process that provided yet another nation-building opportunity was manipulated, leaving the country with a fragile political consensus and weak institutions, including the security sector. Contrary to previous rebellions, the MNLA has raised the stakes by calling for an independent state of Azawad in northern Mali. The rationale has been that it would be able to fight terrorism in the region if it became independent. The creation of an independent state of Azawad by a few hundred rebels will likely be a source of further instability.

The MNLA: A "Trojan Horse" in the Search for Relevance and Legitimacy

Though the Western media discourse tends to paint the MNLA[5] as a voice of Tuareg victims of marginalisation, there is a general view in Mali that the MNLA is a "Trojan horse" that brought calamities upon the northern communities and the country. The poor state of relations between the state and the citizens of the peripheries is peculiar neither to the Tuareg nor to Mali. In many countries in Africa, governments are distant from the daily challenges of their citizens. What is referred to as "ungoverned spaces" in the literature finds resonance in the northern regions of Mali, where state authority was weakened further after the 2006 Algiers Peace Accord. The peace deal insisted on the demilitarisation of the "Tuareg Territories", which forced the government to limit the presence of its security forces in northern Mali. One of the immediate consequences of this has been the proliferation of militias, including the *Mouvement Patriotique Ganda Koy* (MPGK), *Ganda-Izo* and other Arab self-defence armed groups. It also provided the launching pad for a new Tuareg rebellion, led by the MNLA, in the northern region.

Significantly, the MNLA is faced with three sets of challenges. First, there is a concern that it is a threat to peace and stability. For many citizens, the MNLA is the door through which jihadist groups and other criminal organisations have invaded the country. This widely shared feeling is reinforced by the opportunistic alliance that helped the MNLA in the occupation of the three northern regions of Gao, Timbuktu and Kidal in March 2012. Indeed, although the MNLA benefited from weapons looted from deposed

Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's arsenal, the group's military capacity, resources and political weight were overestimated. Without the logistical and financial support of the Islamist rebel group Ansar Dine, the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJWA, or its French acronym MUJAO) and AQIM, and the confusion that followed the *coup d'état* of March 2012, the movement would have found it difficult to conquer the northern regions and attempt to enforce its independence claim. Yet, it did not take long for disagreements to emerge between these various groups, and for the MNLA to be defeated and expelled from the regions under its control by Ansar Dine and MUJAO.

Second, concerns over the legitimacy of the movement continue to gain momentum. If there is a consensus on the absence of socio-economic development in Mali, the same consensus does not exist for the legitimacy of the MNLA, which some believe does not represent the aspirations of the majority of the Tuareg. In a recent media interview, one of the candidates for the forthcoming presidential elections expressed perhaps what is in the mind of the majority of the citizens, both in the north and in the south. In substance, Modibo Sidibé, the flag bearer for the ruling coalition *Alliance pour la democratie au Mali* (ADEMA), pointed out that the MNLA is not representative of the Tuareg of Kidal, the Tuareg of the Northern Regions, or the Tuareg communities of Mali.[6] The armed group is made up of former Tuareg rebels who returned from Libya when Muammar Gaddafi's defeat by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) forces became imminent, and when the future of the Islamic Legion was compromised by a new political dispensation in Tripoli.

MALI IS A POOR COUNTRY, WHERE CONDITIONS WERE MADE MORE CHALLENGING BY THE FAILURE OF THE POST-COLONIAL STATE TO EXTEND EFFECTIVE CONTROL BEYOND THE CAPITAL CITY, BAMAKO, AND DELIVER ESSENTIAL SERVICES TO CITIZENS

Citizens believe that the MNLA leaders have little or no real knowledge of the realities of the regions they want to free from the authority of Mali.[7] They also indicated that first casualties of the rebellion are the Tuareg communities, which have to flee and seek refuge in camps across the borders.[8] Though the movement claims to have within its ranks members of other communities, the reality is that a small group who hailed from the noble family of the Adrar of Ifoghas and spent a substantive part of their lives in Libya, dominates the MNLA. Jokingly, many are of the opinion that the MNLA exists more on the Internet, television and hotel rooms than in reality. Fundamentally, this raises the question of the relevance of the movement and dashes the claim of popular support from the communities in the north

for its independence agenda. Many members of the same communities deny the MNLA the legitimacy to proclaim independence on their behalf.

Third, the movement's initiative to launch yet another devastating armed rebellion with the defection of former soldiers integrated into the national army raised the problem of loyalty towards Mali as an entity whose territorial integrity and sovereignty are protected by principles enshrined in various legal international instruments. To a large extent, the issue of loyalty affects the already difficult and fragile relationship between reintegrated former Tuareg combatants and other national army troops. If some soldiers and national authorities have accepted – not without reservations – the principle of reintegration of former rebel combatants with higher ranking in the spirit of peace, frequent defections have raised concerns over the commitment of former rebels to consolidate peace and pacific co-existence.

Incidents of defection during the fighting in Tessalit in January 2012 once again highlighted the challenge of loyalty.[9] Soldiers of the national army reportedly felt betrayed when their colleagues – mostly from the Tuareg community – defected to join the rebel forces with their weapons and strategic information. Mohamed Ag Erless and Djibril Koné, in their accounts of the events in a recently published book,[10] indicated that the incident was the fatal moment for former colleagues of the same army as vital information on strategies, logistics and the morale of national troops was sold to rebel forces. This enabled them to launch deadly attacks that claimed many lives, while leaving many more

wounded and imprisoned. Defections are far from peculiar to the military, as the administration also suffers from the phenomenon. The case of Alghabass Ag Intalla – a member of parliament, member of the ruling coalition Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA) and leader of the *Reseau de plaidoyer pour la paix, la securite et le developpement au Nord du Mali*[11] – is an indication of the scope of the problem. The Advocacy Network for Peace, Security and Development in Northern Mali was set up in 2009 in Kidal to promote dialogue as a strategy to tackle political, security and development challenges in the region. It benefited from government and external partners' funding. However, far from serving the purpose for which it was created, the network appears to be an instrument paving the way for the rebellion. Alghabass Ag Intalla is currently leading the High Council for a Unified Azawad (HCUA).

Currently, the MNLA finds itself in a political and strategic impasse. It is at pains to define a coherent political agenda, and has to take advantage of the presence of French troops deployed since January 2013 to fight against Islamist rebels in northern Mali. Yet, its future undoubtedly hinges on its ability to negotiate a decent way out of the quagmire. Libya, a country that has served as a refuge for members of previous rebellions, is no longer favourable to the current MNLA leadership. Over the years, Tuareg-led rebellions have enjoyed strong support from Libya.[12] If the late Muammar Gaddafi was providing substantial assistance to the rebels and acting as a shock absorber, the collapse of his regime has left a vacuum. Most of the leaders of the MNLA served

The Mbera refugee camp in southern Mauritania was established for people fleeing violence in northern Mali. It is home to more than 64 000 people according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (May 2012).

People walk around the burnt main market in Gao, which was destroyed during combat between radical Islamists and Malian and French forces (February 2013).

in the Islamic Legion, which has fallen into disgrace with the new political dispensation in Libya. Given the role some of the MNLA leaders played in supporting Gaddafi's regime, they would not be welcomed in today's Libya.[13]

THERE IS THE SENSE OF A SUPERIORITY COMPLEX SUBTLY MANIFESTED IN THE DECLARATIONS AND ATTITUDES OF THE MNLA LEADERSHIP TOWARDS THE GOVERNMENT IN BAMAKO

But it is more the frequency and permanence of the various declarations of the many MNLA spokespersons against the so-called "Bambara colonisation" – a reference to and expression of resentment against black African leaders of Mali – that raise further concerns. Rather than blame the poor implementation of past peace accords, the superiority complex of white-skinned Tuareg – mainly of the Ifogas caste in the Adrar mountains (Kidal) – is a root cause of the recurrent armed insurgencies in Mali. It highlights the key factor that has fuelled violence in Mali since the 1960s. The resentment between the "light-skinned blue men" of the desert and the largely black post-colonial leadership in Mali is not a new phenomenon. There is the sense of a superiority complex subtly manifested in the declarations and attitudes of the MNLA leadership towards the government in Bamako.

Yet, it is one of the key variables that has never been taken into consideration in the various attempts at resolving the conflict between the Tuareg and the state in Mali. This can no longer be ignored.

The Kidal Blockade: Unlocking the Contention

Kidal has over the years been known as the epicentre of Tuareg-led rebellions, as most rebellions begin and end there. A region twice the size of Benin is currently at the centre of what could be called the "Kidal Blockade". This is manifested at two levels: first, following the French-led military operation, the MNLA claimed that its troops were in control of the region. The Tuareg-led rebel movement also indicated that it would not allow the national army into Kidal. Second, the MNLA's reluctance to heed calls for immediate disarmament is seen as inspired by external support to the movement.[14] There is a growing perception that the decision of the French army to move into Kidal without the Malian national army is a sign of protection of the group. However, beyond that reading of the situation, fundamentally, the Kidal Blockade highlights the complexity of managing the deep-seated cleavages in Mali since its independence.

On the surface, there are a number of reasons why the national army was left behind. The lack of adequate capacity remains one of the major obstacles facing the Malian army. In that sense, in spite of recent initiatives, the defence and security forces in Mali are far from recovering their full operational capacity. Arguably, while the fear of

Members of separatist groups, including the MNLA, met with the Malian army, the United Nations Mission in Mali and French army officers, in Kidal, to establish a mixed security commission in the town, in accordance with a ceasefire agreement signed in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (23 June 2013).

reprisals advanced by French authorities and human rights organisations is understandable, the resistance displayed by the MNLA and the perception that the group is protected, need to be carefully handled.[15] As in any armed conflict pitting government forces against rebels, the risks of reprisals are real. The reasons for this are, on the one hand, the deterioration of social relations as a result of the atrocities committed by all parties and, on the other hand, the abuse of social status within the communities as the jihadists reigned supreme in the regions under their control.

The international media agencies reporting on the conflict tend to project the Tuareg as victims of national plans to deny them the right to existence. Such reports are seen by the public in Mali as a racially motivated sign of solidarity that fails to take cognisance of the root causes of intractable conflicts. These include peace dividends, a fractured and divided Tuareg rebel leadership, and social and political realignment leading to the end of privileges for some, due to the democratisation process.[16] Indeed, allegations of atrocities or genocide, mostly attributed to Malian national army soldiers, continue to feed the sentiment that the Tuareg are under threat because of their identity.

Mali has come under attack by a small group that threatens its history, institutions and citizens because of the resistance to accept the notion of the post-colonial state and its black leadership.[17] There is anger on both sides and suspicion among the citizens, which continue to sustain an unhealthy social and security situation. Because of the atrocities committed by the Tuareg who returned from Libya, other Tuareg communities have suffered revenge attacks. In fact, the relationship is not only broken between the state and the MNLA rebels, but also between members of communities at all levels of society. Ultimately, there is a need for negotiation – but the modalities, actors, format and outcomes need to be thoroughly worked out.

Towards National Dialogue and Reconciliation?

A preliminary peace deal, signed on 18 June 2013 in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), was a major step forward as it created the conditions for the presidential elections held on 28 July 2013. This agreement allowed a minimum deployment of the administration to oversee the vote in Kidal (still under the control of rebels), and a small national defence and security forces contingent. The agreement makes provision for the final rounds of negotiations to resume two months after the elected president has been sworn in and formed his government. However, it has not definitively resolved the issue. It is now clear in the minds of key protagonists in the conflict that whatever agreement or arrangement is reached in any eventual negotiation process, the issue of the territorial integrity of Mali is likely to be non-negotiable.[18]

The establishment of the Commission for Dialogue and Reconciliation, led by Mohamed Salia Sokona with assistance from 30 commissioners, is an important step in providing a much-needed platform for national healing. Meanwhile, the reconciliation that Mali needs is neither procedural nor institutional. It needs bottom-up strategies that can win the hearts and minds of citizens.[19]

The mandate of the commission is quite comprehensive, as it seeks to identify main interlocutors within political parties, social and community organisations; record incidents of abuse that have taken place since the beginning of the conflict; and suggest ways to seek redress for the victims while providing mechanisms to foster social cohesion and national unity. Meanwhile, dialogue and reconciliation alone will not heal Mali. The initiative needs to be integrated into profound political and social reforms that restore the credibility of the democratisation process. It also needs to be grounded in a local value system that ensures ownership by and participation of the communities. Suggestions of a national political dialogue to redefine a new political consensus have raised fears on the part of some political elite in Bamako, who have seen the initiative as an attempt to stage a civilian *coup d'état*. The arrangements of the political roadmap, adopted in January 2013 by the National Assembly, responded more to the imperative of satisfying external partners than laying foundations for the state and political reconstruction process that many are calling for.

Conclusion

The key problem at the heart of the violence between elements of the Tuareg communities and governments in Mali since the 1960s needs to be located in the Tuareg communities' reluctance to acknowledge or accommodate the existence of the post-colonial state and its leadership. This has affected the loyalty of some communities and has a detrimental impact on the integration process of former rebels, resulting in a constant resorting to war. During one of the public debates in Bamako initiated by the *Mouvement Malivaleurs*, a participant indicated that what is happening to Mali is the result of unscrupulous individuals who betrayed the state-building project, manipulated the norms of peaceful co-existence, promoted ethnicity, destroyed existing structures to promote respect for authority, and truncated Mali's modernisation.[20] He insisted on the necessity of reinventing the state and its relations with various communities, and the imperative of rethinking the notion of citizenship. ◣

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Endnotes

1   This article is based on field research carried out between 2008 and 2013 on the Resurgence of Tuareg-led Rebellions.

2   Confidential documents obtained from government authorities in Mali during field research, 13–23 February 2013.

3   For details on this, see Coopération Mali Union Européenne (n.d.) *Paix et sécurité: le programme spécial pour la paix, la sécurité et le développement au Nord Mali*, Available at: <http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mali/documents/projects/paix_et_securite_fr.pdf> Accessed on: 13 May 2013.

4   For example, rumours spread in Bamako about the complicity between state leaders and the MNLA leadership, which received large amounts of money from the government for them to renounce their war project.

5   The MNLA, which emerged in October 2011, reignited the claim of secession from Mali, which was already envisaged by the previous rebellions, through its attacks on government in January 2012.

6   Interview with presidential candidate Modibo Sidibé on RFI, 7 May 2013, Available at: <http://maliactu.net/modibo-sidibe-pilier-du-systeme-att-fait-le-bilan/> Accessed on: 7 May 2013.

7   Interviews with leaders of civil society organisations in Bamako, February 2013.

8   "Tuareg communities are the main victims of the armed conflict lunched by the MNLA." Interview with a member of the Tuareg community in Bamako, 13–23 February 2013.

9   See Keita, Kalifa (1998) *Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg Insurgency in Mali*. Washington: Strategic Studies Institute; and Ag Erless, Mohamed and Koné, Djibril (2012) *Le Patriote et le djihadiste*. l'Harmattan et la Sahelienne, January.

10 Ibid.

11 Advocacy Network for Peace, Security and Development in Northern Mali.

12 Keita, Kalifa (1998) op. cit.

13 The Libyan dynamic served two main purposes. It provided a refuge for the Tuareg rebel leaders, and it also used them to provide military support to the defunct Gaddafi's regime. During the war between Chad and Libya (1980–1987), Muammar Gaddafi relied heavily on Tuareg military assistance with the creation of the Islamic Legion.

14 There is a concern over the instrumentalisation of the MNLA for the control of the region and its natural resources.

15 There is concern that this might ruin the overwhelming support that France enjoyed with its successful military intervention in Mali.

16 The rule of the majority introduced by the democratisation process has favoured the rise to leadership positions from below, reversing power relations between the "noble caste" and the rest.

17 See Toure, Moussa (2013) '"*Assez du racism anti-noir et du negationisme du lobby pro-touareg": authentique proprietaire du sol n'evoque jamais son partage*', Available at: <www. Maliweb.net/contributions/2013/02/13/article, 127467.html.>

18 In the numerous communiqués released by the MNLA, the rebel movement expressed its willingness to negotiate, as well as its readiness to recognise the territorial integrity of Mali. Many have expressed doubts over the real intentions of the movement, whose leaders have not yet renounced their project to create an entity independent from the central authority of Bamako.

19 For a detailed analysis, see Theroux-Benoni, Lori-Anne (2013) Mali in the Aftermath of the French Military Intervention. *ISS Situation Report*, February.

20 *Mouvement Mali valeurs'* public debate, held on 2 February 2013 in Bamako, brought together prominent but also ordinary individuals to have an open debate on a variety of issues of national interest. The Institute for Security Studies research team was invited to attend and contribute.

INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICT IN SOUTH SUDAN: A CHALLENGE TO PEACE

BY **LUKONG STELLA SHULIKA** AND **NWABUFO OKEKE-UZODIKE**

Introduction

The Republic of South Sudan is a multi-ethnic sovereign entity, consisting of 10 states and comprising a culturally diverse population. While this ethnic diversity speaks to the country's rich national heritage, it has also always been a source of internal ethnic discord in South Sudan. Since South Sudan gained independence on 9 July 2011, the country has witnessed localised inter-ethnic conflicts, most notably arising from disputes rooted in grazing land, cattle raiding and access to natural resources – predominately in Jonglei State of Greater Upper Nile Province. Despite multiple, concerted and ongoing national and local efforts to address the security challenges arising from ethnotribal disagreements, this phenomenon still persists and renders the overall situation rather fragile.

This article seeks to examine the impact of ethnic conflicts on peace efforts in South Sudan. It argues that the seething inter-ethnic clashes are serious constraints and a source of threat that stands to obfuscate South Sudan's successful transition to sustainable and effective post-conflict recovery and long-term peacebuilding.

Above: South Sudan has witnessed localised inter-ethnic conflicts, most notably arising from disputes rooted in grazing land, cattle raiding and access to natural resources.

Dinka people protest against the settlement of the Massireya in their area (January 2011).

Ethnicity as a Source of Conflict: An Overview

Ethnicity is a social phenomenon that describes "the condition of belonging to an ethnic group, the sense of ethnic identity felt by members of an ethnic community".[1] The term ethnicity has featured prominently in conflict literature and discourse, especially as it relates to Africa. As many African countries are multi-ethnic, political instability and violent and prolonged social conflicts in more than half of Africa's conflict societies are believed to be largely rooted in ethnic cleavages, disharmony and inequalities.

While ethnicity carries with it the dual potential to be a source of conflict in heterogeneous societies or a feature of diverse societies that celebrate their unity in diversity, thereby promoting national cohesion, the virtues of ethnic relationships are not the subject of this article. Inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic relationships are often clouded by incompatible interests; inequitable access to political space, economic and other opportunities; and intergroup identity competition. They can also be accompanied by bigotry and conflict, which can – and has, in most cases – escalate into civil wars.[2] Conflicts in countries such as Rwanda, Kenya, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Sudan, for example, have predominantly been presented as revolving around competing opinions of ethnic identity, manifested in political, economic and sociocultural

inequalities. As a result, these conflicts have profoundly impacted political choices and inclinations, perceptions of prospects for economic and social development and security, and a sense of respect for the human rights of individuals and groups.

In spite of the fact that more than 60 ethnic groups make up South Sudan, the main inter-ethnic rivalries are limited to the major ethnic groups of the Dinka and the Nuer and, to a lesser degree, the Murle. In South Sudan, intercommunal conflicts between the Dinka and the Nuer on the one hand, and the Nuer and the Murle on the other, pre-date Sudan's independence in 1956.[3] The divergent views and approaches of the Nuer and Dinka – the two largest ethnic groups that dominated the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) during the second Sudan civil war – also provides a reference point for South Sudan's present-day ethnic disagreements. The SPLM/A struggle against the Khartoum government for the liberation of the then-southern Sudan region was clouded by two opposing visions: the Dinka advocated for a united Sudan where all Sudanese are liberated and treated as equal citizens, whereas the Nuer's vision of liberation was tantamount to an independent South Sudan.[4] Thus, the divergence of visions within SPLM/A on southern Sudan's future translated into latent (and occasionally active) divisions in the ranks of

A Murle family at their burned out shelter in Pibor following ethnic clashes (April 2012).

the South Sudan liberation movement. From 1991 to 1995, these disagreements led to widespread unrest between the fragmented groups of the Dinka and Nuer populations, as well as attacks and counterattacks against villages and communities of the two opposed ethnic groups within South Sudan.[5] It further generated the "conflict of ethnic politics" that led to the intensification of inter-ethnic clashes – which, due to its increased targeting of women and children, was described as one of the worst and bloodiest conflicts in the history of southern Sudan.[6] These long-drawn ethnic differences not only disrupted social, economic and political relations between the southern Sudan communities in pre-independence South Sudan, but have continued to sow seeds of dissonance between and among local ethnic communities – despite the country's new sovereign political status.

In many post-conflict situations, elites have drawn on the political capital of their ethnic affiliations and loyalties to encounter political and governance challenges. According to David Carment and Patrick James, ethnic divisions and mobilisation along new politically based identities is a feature of transitional societies, where human and civil populations are able to respond to changes in political power.[7] Given this, they argue that when states are faced with the relatively important and daunting responsibilities of political and economic liberalisation and development, ethnic resentment can be nurtured and ethnic animosity

further influenced by institutional, political and international decision-making and relations.[8] In South Sudan, ethnic discord remains among the major challenges impacting on the effectiveness of the country's transformation and peacebuilding efforts. High levels of poverty, the relatively high dependence on oil resources as a main source of revenue, and the limited political and economic opportunities accessible to the many but small ethnic groups, play a crucial role in fuelling ethnic tensions in South Sudan. The current situation could evolve into widespread violent conflicts with the undesirable consequences of severe societal disintegration, which will hamper investment, economic prosperity and welfare; increase public and political corruption; cause political instability; and, in the worst case scenario, descend into a civil war.[9] In Kenya, for example, the wave of inter-ethnic conflicts that plagued the country in 1991 had devastating consequences for civil society and the political and socio-economic development of the country as a whole. The conflicts were largely attributed to the scramble for scarce national resources and land, and to attempts by influential leaders to create crises that would pave the way to re-establish an ethnic-based federal system of government.[10] While Kenya's ethnic crisis averted a civil war, the consequences were disastrous: indiscriminate loss of human lives, enormous destruction of human and economic resources, food insecurity and the disruption of agricultural activities, the permanent alteration of the land tenure

South Sudanese who fled ethnic violence carry their food aid from a World Food Programme distribution centre in Pibor, Jonglei State (January 2012).

system, an increase in ethnic enmity and intolerance, and the embracing of ethnic politics.[11] The Kenyan example is consistent with that of the DRC, Sudan, Burundi and Rwanda (except that in the latter cases, the ethnic conflicts descended into civil war), and provides the precedent against which to juxtapose the perils and potential impact of the growing ethnic discontent in South Sudan.

The Dimensions of Inter-ethnic Conflicts in South Sudan

Peace and security remain important to development. Addressing and resolving internal conflicts and disagreements and establishing stabile peace are the central building blocks to achieving South Sudan's desired development and peacebuilding objectives: "…building a viable and constructive political, socio-economic and peaceful sovereign nation-state that is free of any form of conflict."[12] According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), South Sudan is faced with major political and socio-economic challenges, which continue to be exacerbated by intercommunal animosity, insurgency by rebel groups and localised conflicts over land and natural resources. These are further aggravated by the mass arrival of South Sudanese refugees from Sudan and other parts of Africa.[13]

The manifestation of ethnic antagonism with regard to state politics and political power in South Sudan is predominant in the intra-ethnic rivalry between the Dinka Bahr el Ghazal and Dinka Bor,[14] and the inter-ethnic competition between the Dinka (Dinka Bahr el Ghazal and Dinka Bor) and Nuer ethnic groups, wherein the Nuer contest the domination of political and economic space by the Dinka. These inter-ethnic conflicts are perpetuated on the premise that the priorities of central and state governments are primarily centred on privileging and promoting the interests of SPLM members and its military wing – organisations that heavily draw their membership from the Dinka, to the exclusion of other ethnic groups.[15]

In addition, a report of a focus group interview conducted by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs highlighted that such centralisation and monopoly of power is the result of power imbalances and domination in South Sudan.[16] These imbalances have resulted in the absence of efficient and transparent public administration and financial management systems. Many have also identified inequalities as the cause of corruption, discrimination, tribal conflict, unfair government employment practices and the marginalisation and exclusion of smaller ethnic groups from state politics, and the de facto denial of these minority ethnic groups of the legitimate right to share the gains of independent South
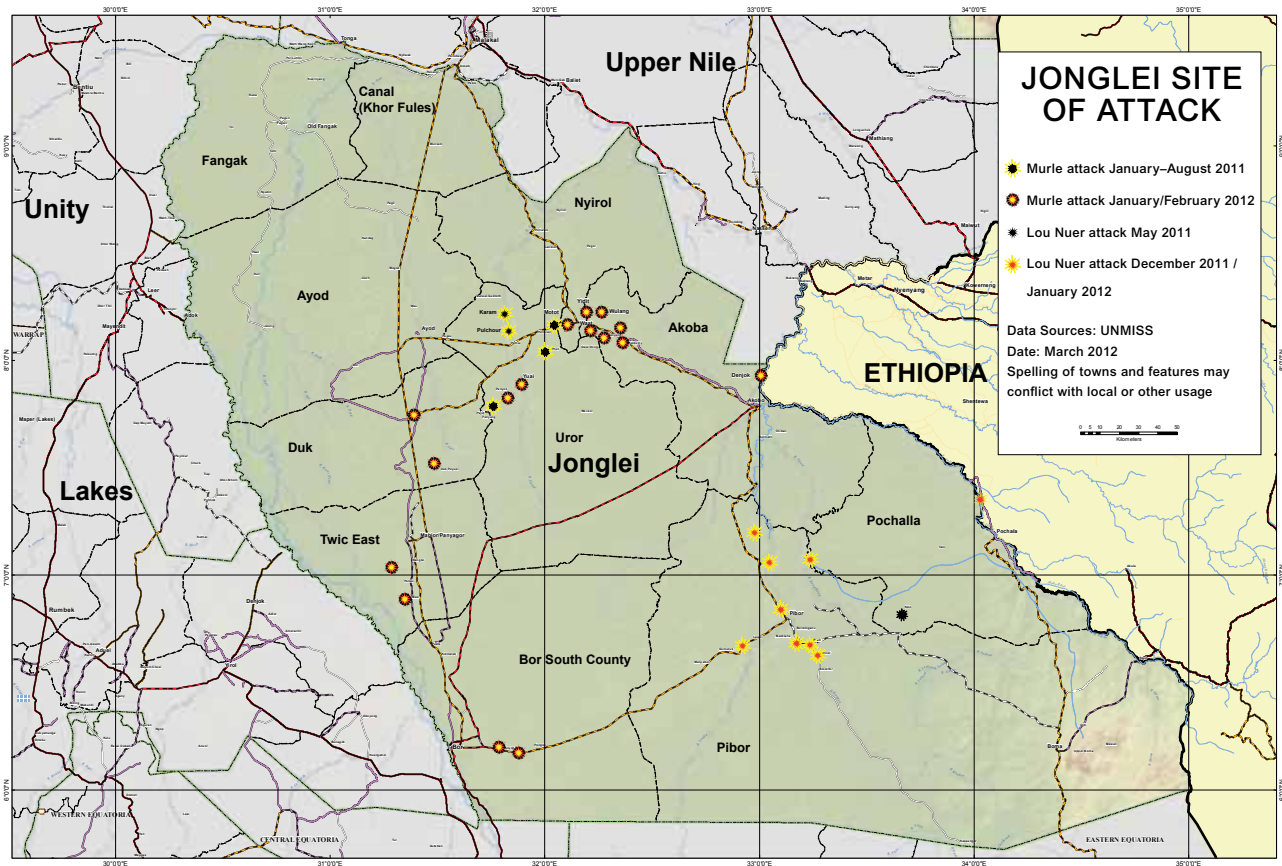
This map highlights the localities in Jonglei State, South Sudan, where the Murle and Lou Nuer communities carried out several intercommunal attacks against each other from January 2011 to February 2012.[17]

Sudan.[18] The inability of the elite to equitably include all South Sudanese in the sharing of independence dividends is believed to have fuelled the formation of rebel groups, such as the South Sudan Liberation Army (SSLA), South Sudan Democratic Movement/Army (SSDM/A) and the National United Front (NUF), among others. These groups have been responsible for numerous attacks in parts of Unity State, which produces a third of South Sudan's total oil output.[19]

Another dimension of ethnic conflict in South Sudan centres on issues of cattle raids and grazing land, mostly between the Murle and Nuer, as well as between the Nuer and Dinka. These ethnic clashes have dominated divisions between the two groups long before the outbreak of the Sudan civil wars, and are a major source of instability, especially in Jonglei State. Since South Sudan's independence, the internecine conflicts between the ethnic groups have continued to spread and intensify, with severe consequences.

The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) registered and reported on the escalating inter-ethnic clashes between the Nuer and Murle, and the Murle and the Dinka Bor, between December 2011 and January 2012.[20] In the period 23 December 2011 to 4 January 2012, some 6 000 to 8 000 armed Nuer youth combatants carried out more than 21 attacks in the Pibor district (home to the Murle ethnic group), in brazen reprisals for earlier attacks and cattle raids by Murle fighters on Nuer districts. From 27 December 2011 to 4 February 2012, a small group of young Murle militants retaliated by staging 44 attacks on Nuer and Dinka Bor villages. As South Sudan celebrated the anniversary of its independence in 2012 and 2013, reports of ethnic dissension and the threat of renewed intercommunal conflicts have been unsettling. The outcomes of these potential clashes could be incalculable in terms of devastating long-term consequences for affected communities. In the past, clashes resulted in the burning down of villages; looting and destruction of private and public property; cattle raiding and slaughtering; massive extermination and abduction of people, especially children; and a surge in the number of internally displaced persons and refugees seeking asylum in neighbouring states and border countries.[21]

The upsurge of ethnic tensions in South Sudan have led to the increased use and possession of small firearms, especially by the youth, who feel they were not afforded equitable opportunities to access services normally provided by the state, such as security and the rule of law. Left to their

own means, the disillusioned youth also sensed a communal obligation to protect their ethnic communities, identity and property.[22] This situation strengthened and reinforced the youths' subnational loyalties to their respective ethnic affiliations, jeopardising efforts to forge a cohesive South Sudanese national identity. This status quo, and if there are no genuine initiatives to address the root causes of the youth challenge, represents a high risk with potential for widespread violent conflict. The prospect for such conflict is more likely given South Sudan's demographics – youth under the age of 18 years comprise a 51% majority of the country's population, with 72% under the age of 30 years.[23] Moreover, this generation of youth grew up experiencing the effects of violent conflict with minimal opportunity to experience peace. Handling the youth issue is critical to the success of all other endeavours in South Sudan.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Ethnic diversity is a multifaceted natural feature that characterises nations across the globe. Multi-ethnic national composition is a challenge, but countries that embrace diversity and enlist its virtues thrive. Ethnicity has challenged post-cold war Africa more than any other continent, and South Sudan is no exception. When internal ethnic divisions and conflicts prevail among communities and uncertainty rules, the core of sustainable peace and stability is seriously challenged. This state of affairs, which engenders social, political and economic grievances, has led to entrenched insecurity, as manifested in the ongoing ethnic conflicts within and between the various South Sudanese communities over resources, power-sharing, land and livestock.

As a late comer to the pitfalls of mismanaging multi-ethnic societies, South Sudan has the opportunity to learn from the failed experiences of other countries in Africa and beyond, such as the DRC, Rwanda, Burundi and Syria. This places South Sudan in a better position to chart strategies and adopt promising reforms that will open up equitable political and economic space to South Sudanese, irrespective of their ethnic affiliations. Thus, as part of the conflict resolution and management strategy, the Government of South Sudan and its stakeholders should engage conflict parties and communities in comprehensive interactive dialogues and problem-solving processes on land reform and management policies. On the issue of land reform, whether it is in the form of land redistribution, redefinition or the maintenance of property rights, policies should be

Youth from the Luo Nuer carry their guns as they walk home in Yuai Uror county. Clashes between the rival Luo Nuer and Murle continue in this region (July 2013).

accompanied by projects that promote sustainable land use and the development of resources.

Furthermore, unlike other multi-ethnic countries, South Sudan's situation of ethnic disharmonies is complicated by many other challenges, including unresolved issues with Sudan. Nonetheless, failure to recognise the impending danger that ethnic disharmony constitutes is not a choice, as the consequences are too grave for the future of newly independent South Sudan. The prevailing ethnic discord, the sporadic but deeply disruptive ethnic-based conflicts with the attendant loss of human lives and property, the disillusionment of youth and their strengthening sense of ethnic affiliation, the stagnating economy, and the fact that today's South Sudan youth never had the opportunity to know and experience peace, remain some of the serious concerns in South Sudan's peace efforts. These factors, combined together, dictate that tackling ethnic conflict should be accorded the highest priority, in order to build national cohesion and put South Sudan on the path of sustainable peace, stability and prosperity. This noble goal is achievable if the South Sudanese embrace their diversity to solidify national unity. This could be possible by enlisting the influence and power of all ethnic leaders to mobilise

MULTI-ETHNIC NATIONAL COMPOSITION IS A CHALLENGE, BUT COUNTRIES THAT EMBRACE DIVERSITY AND ENLIST ITS VIRTUES THRIVE

their supporters to collaborate in sustained inter-ethnic cooperation. South Sudan's ethnic diversity is an asset that should be capitalised upon to help the country conquer its current challenges. The dividends of sovereign South Sudan should trickle down to the entire population – and this will, in turn, cultivate confidence in the emerging state's national character and perpetuate collaboration among the populace. The sense of belonging to a nation that cares for its citizens would not be limited to ethnic leaders but would permeate the entire society. It would also create a sense of obligation and reciprocation of the ruling parties to cooperate with the traditional leaders, as well as unleash a self-perpetuating cycle of mutual trust that would strengthen internal cohesion.

The tools for building a cohesive nation-state are to be found in a blend of modern techniques and in the traditional conflict resolution mechanisms inherited through generations of various ethnic groups. By espousing its traditional institutions, South Sudan can establish a solid political, economic and social infrastructure in an integrated traditional framework of conflict resolution mechanisms, and participatory and inclusive approaches to building state institutions and accelerating modernisation. Given this, it is imperative that the government and stakeholders support the establishment of community-based conflict prevention and mitigation mechanisms – inclusive of local leaders, women, youth and civilians – to develop skills to address conflict without violence. Programmes should be established that support revolutionary and innovative policies for good governance and create a viable political framework that seeks to end ethnic conflict and paves the way for economic development – primarily agriculture as the main activity of the overwhelming majority of South Sudanese. South Sudan's challenges are huge, and the required efforts are enormous. But, the strategic benefits these efforts can bring to South Sudan's current and future generations are worth it. ▲

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10 Nyukuri, Barasa Kundu (1997) *The Impact of Past and Potential Ethnic Conflicts on Kenyan's Stability and Development.* A paper prepared for the USAID Conference on Conflict Resolution in the Greater Horn of Africa, University of Nairobi, pp. 8 and 12.

11 Ibid.

12 Government of the Republic of South Sudan (2011) 'South Sudan Development Plan 2011–2013: Realising Freedom, Equality, Justice, Peace and Prosperity for all', Available at: <http://www.jdt-juba.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/South-Sudan-Development-Plan-2011-13.pdf> Accessed on: 16 October 2012.

13 UNHCR (2013) '2013 UNHCR Country Operations Profile – South Sudan', Available at: <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4e43cb466.html> Accessed on: 28 January 2013.

14 The Dinka community is divided into two main groups: Dinka Bahr el Ghazal and Dinka Bor. Historically, these two groups have often disagreed, unless facing a common enemy, especially the Nuer. The conflict between the Dinka and Nuer has pre-existed independence and they clash for political, social, cultural and economic (cattle) reasons.

15 Haile, Elizabeth Tesfaye (2012) 'South Sudan's Post-independence Challenges: Greed or Grievance?', Available at: <http://www.monitor.upeace.org/innerpg.cfm?id_article=855> Accessed on: 12 July 2012.

16 Cook, Traci D. (2011) *Building a Nation: South Sudanese Share their Thoughts on the Creation of a Successful State.* Report on Focus Group Discussions. Washington, DC: National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, p. 7.

17 United Nations Mission in South Sudan (2012) *Incidents of Inter-communal Violence in Jonglei State.* UNMISS Geographical Information System. (Between January 2011 and February 2012, the Murle and Lou Nuer communities in Jonglei State, South Sudan, witnessed several outbreaks of intercommunal violence perpetrated by members of the two ethnic groups).

18 Cook, Traci D. (2011) *op. cit.*, pp. 7 and 9.

19 Haile, Elizabeth Tesfaye (2012) *op. cit*.

20 United Nations Mission in South Sudan (2012) *op. cit*.

21 Ibid.

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EXPLORING THE NEXUS BETWEEN ETHNICITY AND TERRORISM IN AFRICA

BY **HUSSEIN SOLOMON**

Introduction

There are 3 315 ethnic groups on the African continent that are part of Africa's 54 "nation-states".[1] In recent years, we have witnessed an upsurge of secessionist movements, which have led to the dismemberment of Ethiopia and Sudan. There are calls for secession across the length and breadth of Africa as certain groups feel marginalised from the largesse of the state, whilst others are deemed to be appropriating more than their fair share. The perception is that those monopolising political power (and, therefore, state resources) often belong to a particular ethnic, racial or religious identity. Those opposing and seeking to replace them, meanwhile, also mobilise along similar identity lines. In the meantime, the post-colonial African state has singularly failed to create an overarching national identity and a common citizenship for all those within its territorial

Above: Historically, the Tuaregs in Mali resented their separation from their kin in other countries. They viewed themselves as Arab and not African, and believed that their nomadic way of life was better.

Map No. 4231 Rev. 3 UNITED NATIONS

Department of Field Support

Women wave the flag of the Tuareg separatist group, the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) on a street in Kidal (June 2013).

boundaries. This tension between the state and various substate identities has been exploited by Islamist groups in Africa, and can be clearly witnessed in Mali and Nigeria.

Mali and Nigeria: A Case of Reinforcing Identities

One reason for the crisis-prone character of the African state is the nature of the historical processes that led to its formation. The call for a separate Tuareg homeland – Azawad, as the Tuaregs identify northern Mali – is not new and can be traced back to the 15th century, when the Tuaregs were dislodged by the encroaching Songhai empire. Indeed, the current wave of Tuareg nationalism has its origins in the latter part of the 19th century, and has to do with the way in which ethnic Tuaregs were later incorporated into the Malian state by French colonialists.[2] On 28 December 1893, French troops entered Timbuktu and claimed this desert town as a French possession, prompting resistance by the indigenous Tuaregs. This resistance continued until 1917, when Tuareg chiefs reluctantly surrendered to French rule following a series of bloody defeats.[3]

The Tuaregs were eventually incorporated into the state of Mali, which achieved independence from France in 1960. However, the Malian Tuaregs resented the separation from their Tuareg kin in countries like Niger, Burkina Faso, Algeria, Libya and Mauritania.[4] More importantly, the Tuaregs saw themselves as being different from – and superior to – other Malians, viewing themselves as Arab and not African[5] and

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Map No. 4228   UNITED NATIONS

Department of Peacekeeping Operations

REUTERS / THE BIGGER PICTURE

People from northern Mali march against the seizure of their home region by Tuareg and Islamist rebels, in the capital city, Bamako (10 April 2012).

believing their nomadic way of life was better than the sedentary way of life of the townsfolk, crop farmers and settled villagers in the south.[6] The Tuaregs' attitude towards their fellow citizens in the south of the country is best reflected in a statement by a Tuareg chief, following Malian independence in 1960: "What can blacks rule over when they are only good to be slaves?"[7]

Such negative stereotypes existed on both sides of the north-south divide. Many Malians in the south viewed the Tuaregs as "...a bunch of white, feudal, racist, pro-slavery, bellicose and lazy savage nomads",[8] pointing to a widely held perception of the Tuaregs as a backward people. Given this perceived clash of cultures, it is not surprising that, from the beginning, the Tuaregs never viewed the government in Bamako as legitimate. Tuaregs were also aggrieved by the policies of modernisation and sedentarisation pursued by successive post-independent governments in Bamako.[9]

In Nigeria – with its 160 million people divided into 350 ethnic groups, speaking 400 languages[10] and where 50% of the population is Muslim, 40% are Christian and a further 10% follow various indigenous faith traditions[11]– the legitimacy of the state is also in question due to its history. To understand Nigeria's federal system, we need to understand British colonial rule, which began in 1852 and

Members of a Boko Haram splinter group at a media conference in Maiduguri, Borno State in northern Nigeria (February 2013).

ended with independence in October 1960. Under the British, religious and ethnic divisions were reinforced as the British imposed differentiation in how they governed the north, west and east of the country.[12] Differential governance systems reinforced existing ethnic, cultural, economic and religious divides. Small wonder then that, since independence, Nigeria has been beset with the problem of secession.

To compound matters further, Nigeria has experienced questionable leadership who, in the words of Wole Soyinka, have "... no idea of Nigeria and no notion of Nigeria as a spatial and structural instrument of the construction, expansion and popularisation of egalitarian social life".[13] Far from attempting to overcome these divides, Nigeria's political (and military) mandarins have cynically exploited the country's fault lines – whether regional, religious or ethnic – for personal advantage. Islamist fundamentalist vigilante gangs in northern Nigeria have, at various stages, been co-opted by politicians in numerous instances for political profit and material gain.[14] There is evidence, too, that northern political elites exploited Boko Haram's[15] founder, Mohammed Yusuf, in 1999, as a cynical response to the population's desire to curb spiralling crime levels with the introduction of shari'a law.[16] Having used shari'a law and Yusuf's support as a vote-accumulating tactic, these politicians then discarded Yusuf.[17] Feeling used, an embittered Yusuf then went on to form Boko Haram in 2002.

In the cases of Mali and Nigeria, ethnic identity is reinforced by regional and religious identities – a situation scarcely conducive for nation-building. This, however, is made worse by the issue of relative deprivation. In Mali, for instance, whilst the poverty rate averaged 64% in 2004, the figure was much higher in the Tuareg-dominated north: Timbuktu had a poverty rate of 77%, while for Gao it was 78.7% and in Kidal it was a staggering 92%.[18] It is under such circumstances of poverty and despair that radical ideologies find fertile ground. Whilst the world's average gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is US$10 000, Mali, which is among the world's 25 poorest countries, has a GDP per capita of US$700. The figure for Afghanistan is US$600 and, for Somalia, it is a mere US$100.[19] In a similar vein, it is no coincidence that northern Nigeria, which happens to be the poorest part of the country, has been more prone to radical Islamist uprisings than elsewhere. Whilst 27% of the population in the south live in poverty, the number escalates to 72% for those living in the north.[20] It is no surprise, then, that Yusuf first attracted Boko Haram supporters following his railing against deteriorating living standards in the

UNDER THE BRITISH, RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC DIVISIONS WERE REINFORCED AS THE BRITISH IMPOSED DIFFERENTIATION IN HOW THEY GOVERNED THE NORTH, WEST AND EAST OF THE COUNTRY

north and state corruption.[21] Iyad Ag Ghali, leader of Mali's Islamist Ansar Dine, also mobilised his constituency on the basis of the growing impoverishment of the north in the midst of plenty.[22] Islamists, therefore, have exploited this growing polarisation and added radical Islamism to an already volatile ethnic, racial and regional mix.

Given the economic divide between the north and south in both Nigeria and Mali, reinforcing the sectarian divides, the north has rebelled against its respective capital several times. In Nigeria, for instance, the current conflict in the Hausa-Fulani north has been replicated several times in the recent past. For instance, the Islamist Yan Tatsine Millenarian Movement of December 1980, led by Mohammed Marawa, has been described as "...an overt critique of materialism and inequality that has accompanied the petroleum boom in Nigeria".[23] Much of this movement's rhetoric is visible in the pronouncements and statements emanating from Boko Haram.

In Mali, a similar dynamic was played out with the Tuaregs. Given the deteriorating living standards in northern Mali and faced with an uncaring government, Tuaregs rebelled in 1963–1964, 1990–1996, 2006–2009 and since January 2012.[24] In each of these rebellions, the causes and grievances were of a decidedly local nature: issues of economic marginalisation, policies pertaining to sedentarisation pursued by Bamako and, very importantly, broken promises on the part of the Malian government towards the Tuaregs. For example, the Touré regime further

IN A SIMILAR VEIN, IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT NORTHERN NIGERIA, WHICH HAPPENS TO BE THE POOREST PART OF THE COUNTRY, HAS BEEN MORE PRONE TO RADICAL ISLAMIST UPRISINGS THAN ELSEWHERE

alienated Tuaregs in the north – the region most severely affected by poverty – by not keeping promises made at the end of the Tuareg rebellion of the 1990s to develop northern Mali. Although an agency was established with donor money to oversee this development, it disbursed little funding and was primarily used by President Amadou Toumani Touré as a vehicle through which to co-opt northern political elites.[25] Most Tuaregs did not benefit from the creation of this developmental agency. Consequently, with the passing of time, there was growing militancy and radicalisation amongst Tuaregs. This radicalisation was greatly assisted in the case of both Mali and Nigeria by the presence of Islamist preachers from Pakistan (Dawa al-Tabligh) and Saudi Arabia (Wahhabis), who have been making tremendous inroads among the local population, at least since the 1990s, and who have displaced more moderate Sufi Islamic scholars and preachers.[26] As a consequence, local grievances have now taken on an

It is under circumstances of poverty and despair that radical ideologies find fertile ground.

The Ansar Dine constituency was mobilised on the basis of the growing impoverishment of northern Nigeria.

increasingly international bent: occupation of Muslim lands (Afghanistan and Iraq), support for Israel and drone strikes in Pakistan.

Implications for Counterterrorism

From the perspective of counterterrorism, current approaches with military bias need to be jettisoned in favour of a more holistic approach. For a start, policymakers should distinguish clearly between substate terrorism (largely driven by local grievances) and international terrorism, and do all they can to ensure that substate

FOR A START, POLICYMAKERS SHOULD DISTINGUISH CLEARLY BETWEEN SUBSTATE TERRORISM (LARGELY DRIVEN BY LOCAL GRIEVANCES) AND INTER-NATIONAL TERRORISM, AND DO ALL THEY CAN TO ENSURE THAT SUBSTATE TERRORISM DOES NOT MORPH INTO INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

terrorism does not morph into international terrorism. The best way this can be achieved is by focusing on the root causes driving terrorism, as opposed to focusing on the symptoms. Increasingly, military authorities are coming to similar conclusions. Rear Admiral Richard Hunt, a former commander of the United States (US) Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CTJF-HOA), stated: "We feel the best way to counter terrorism is to go after the conditions that foster terrorism."[27]

This does not mean that the military should not be used; rather, its use should be more the exception than the norm and should form part of a broader, more holistic strategy with an emphasis on the political, diplomatic and economic dimensions of engagement. This holistic perspective was also alluded to by the RAND Corporation's Project Air Force, which urges policymakers to adopt a long-term perspective seeking to eradicate the conditions that give rise to terrorism or extremist elements. RAND's senior policy analyst, Angel Rabasa, eloquently argued: "This will occur only if hard security measures are linked with a broader array of policies designed to promote political, social and economic stability. Otherwise, there is little chance that counterterrorism will work."[28]

Such an approach at addressing root causes will need to grasp the implications of dysfunctional African states from a holistic counterterrorism perspective. This would imply the US adopting a much more critical engagement strategy in its actions with African political elites. This strategy should be designed to get African leaders to create more democratic – and, ultimately, more inclusive – polities; that is, states which actively unite the different ethnic and religious groups under the common flag of equal citizenship for all.

From the perspective of the African Union (AU), its Counter-Terrorism Centre in Algiers would need to be mainstreamed and become better incorporated into the broader Peace and Security Council of the AU as well as into the respective regional economic communities. In addition, AU structures involving governance and development also have a role to play within the broader counterterrorism framework. 🅰

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CELEBRATING NELSON MANDELA'S LEGACY: A COLLOQUIUM ON DIVERSITY, COHESION AND INTEGRATION

BY **BUNTU SIWISA**

Introduction

"Ours is essentially a tragic age, so we refuse to take it tragically. The cataclysm has happened… we are among the ruins, we start to build up new little habitats, to have new little hopes… We've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen."[1]

D.H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

There is no better way of describing South Africa's past, present and future, as it wrestles with its hold on diversity, social cohesion and integration. These are themes that reverberate through the nation's political narrative – at times petering out and coalescing, and on other occasions coming out asunder.

The faith in Mandela and his legacy, particularly on these themes, was highlighted recently during the week of his birthday celebrations. In less than 20 years of democratic constitutional rule in South Africa, there has never been such outpouring of love, warmth and support for Mandela in one focused moment in so many places all over the world. Once again, South Africa stood firm and united as the nation and the world pledged to continue working towards the goal of understanding the fullness of humanity. From our disparate ends, we have come to cherish all of Mandela's values:

Above: Nelson Mandela was recognised and celebrated at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town, South Africa on the eve of his birthday (17 July 2013).

collectivism, truth, justice, non-violence, reconciliation, forgiveness, selfless leadership, patience, diversity and unity, and dialogue.

A Colloquium on Diversity, Cohesion and Integration

The recognition and the celebration of these values were clearly highlighted at the Castle of Good Hope in Cape Town, South Africa on 17 July 2013, at "A Colloquium on Diversity, Cohesion and Integration: The Legacy of Nelson Mandela". Convened on the eve of Mandela's birthday, the colloquium followed closely on the heels of the week-long series of national and international events celebrating his birthday and legacy. It was organised by the Office of the South African Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), Marius Fransman, and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD). The theme was partly inspired by South African President Jacob Zuma's State of the Nation Address, where he reiterated the need for South Africa's focus "…on preserving and promoting our country's cultural heritage with particular emphasis on our liberation struggle".[2]

Mandela's legacy is key in teaching us how to overcome challenges regarding diversity, social cohesion and the attainment of integration. This idea is acutely reflected in how the African National Congress (ANC) moulded and was, in turn, fashioned by these themes in its South African struggle journey. Phillip Bonner[3] pointed out that there were various challenges during the struggle that the ANC utilised as a springboard to reimagine and reconstitute itself continually, coming out of them stronger and better organisationally. Its non-showing in the Alexandra bus boycott of 1944, and the role usurped by Hyman Basner's African Democratic Party (ADP), partly led to the formation of the ANC Youth League. This, in turn, placed emphasis on the mobilisation of the urban "masses" and was a first attempt at concretising social cohesion. The 1949 Cato Manor riots, which saw bloody clashes between Africans and Indians, galvanised thoughts on joint mobilisation between these two groups; this was yet another opportunity for working on social cohesion. The Sharpeville massacre of 1960[4] accelerated the implementation of the ANC's armed struggle. And 16 June 1976[5] led to a "…refocus on the internal, the urban and the youth"[6].

A cross-cutting array of guests from national and provincial tiers of government, embassies, traditional leaders, political parties, religious groups, civil society and local communities attended the colloquium in Cape Town. The speakers included:

- Marius Fransman – deputy minister of International Relations and Cooperation;
- Joel Netshitenzhe – executive director of the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection;
- Reverend Michael Weeder – Dean of St George's Cathedral in Cape Town, South Africa;
- Dr Brigalia Bam – chancellor of the Walter Sisulu University, former chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission, member of the South African Council of Churches, and member of the African Panel of the Wise;
- Dr Agostinho Zacarias – South African resident coordinator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and
- Clementine Nkweta-Salami – regional representative for southern Africa of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

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Griqua Royal House delegates: right to left: Headman Samuel Snyders; Commissioner Kenneth Visser; Chiefs Anzol Pietersen and Neville Daniels

The Colloquium and the Castle of Good Hope

Fransman opened the session with a moment of silence, praying for Mandela's health. The chief executive officer of the Castle of Good Hope, Calvyn Gilfellan, explained the history and the significance of the venue. It is the oldest and largest colonial building in South Africa (built between 1664 and 1674). It became the seat of the Cape colonial governor, and the centre of military, social and political life of the colonial Cape in the late seventeenth century and much of the eighteenth century. Khoi-khoi people called it "Kui Keip", meaning "stone kraal".[7]

Gilfellan pointed out that the Castle was an "uncomfortable venue", with the bones of our Khoi-khoi people, slaves and African forefathers buried there. Indeed, following the battles of Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift in 1879,[8] King Cetshwayo kaMpande, king of the AmaZulu, and some of his wives were for a time imprisoned there. Convicts and *drosters* (escaped slaves, outlaws and "rebellious natives") were executed in the Castle.[9] As such, Gilfellan maintained that the lack of comfort with some of the venue's history rendered it more poignant in deliberating on the political and socio-economic ills of South Africa.

Marius Fransman reminded the audience that the objective of the colloquium was to engage South Africans on the challenges of consolidating and deepening cultural diversity, social cohesion and integration.

Marius Fransman: Department of International Relations and Cooperation

Fransman raised the issue of the national question against the background of social cohesion and integration. He maintained that there is a need to embed social cohesion further through advancing the "Mandela Revolution", which gave rise to national reconciliation. He reminded the audience that the objective of the colloquium was to engage South Africans around the challenges of consolidating and deepening cultural diversity, social cohesion and integration. Fransman stressed South Africa's lack of depth and sincerity in contending with the lingering effects of apartheid and colonialism that militate against the rooting of diversity, social cohesion and integration. "Did we undervalue the impact left by colonial rule? Did we grapple with that adequately?" he asked.

Reverend Michael Weeder: St George's Cathedral

Weeder opened his remarks by paying homage to the strong martyrs buried in the Castle of Good Hope. The emphasis of his address lay squarely on community identity dynamics; multi-culturalism; language in relation to culture; and how language reinvents community identity. He made these points through the narrative of the history of the 'Maasbanker' in Cape Town. The term, in Afrikaans, is loosely derived from 'Mozambican.' Although it was reserved for Mozambican foreigners who had settled in Cape Town, it was
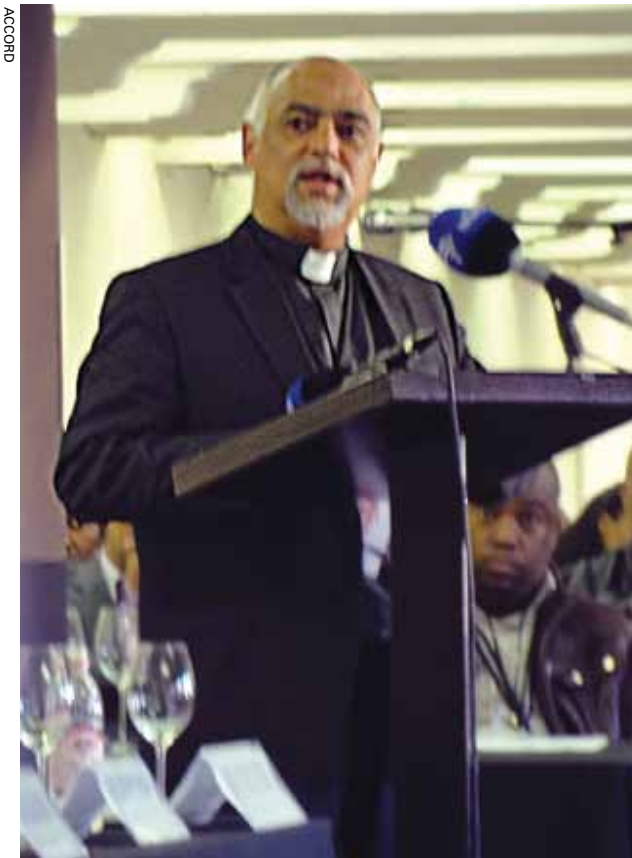
Michael Weeder maintained that the cornerstone of community identity is the non-existence of individual ownership and the assumption of responsibility for people's struggles by a community in a collective manner.

later associated with the dark-skinned 'Coloured' people of South Africa. And so a new community came to be based on a perception of language and identity.

Weeder also maintained that the cornerstone of community identity is the non-existence of individual ownership and the assumption of responsibility for people's struggles by a community in a collective manner. In this regard he referenced the 'first spear lifted' by the Khoi-San people in the Cape region, in the 1500s, against Portuguese marines who had captured their children.

Joel Netshitenzhe: Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection

Stretching the debate further on this matter, Netshitenzhe pointed out that reconciliation in South Africa has not yet been fully achieved. Since 1994, the link between nation-building, reconciliation and national development remains tenuous. He cautioned that if attempts to engender social cohesion are not addressed at the root level, both black and white South Africans will lose.

He revisited the question of the quality and perspectives of our current leadership. He argued that the conduct of today's leadership raised questions about whether we have dropped Mandela's baton of national development. Business leaders, for example, simply repackage social community programmes and put them forward as their contribution to national development. He urged today's business leaders to pay attention to social fissures and address the lingering question of how to take society to a higher trajectory of economic growth for everyone's benefit.

Joel Netshitenzhe pointed out that reconciliation in South Africa has not yet been fully achieved.

Buntu Siwisa of ACCORD and Brigalia Bam of Walter Sisulu University at the Colloquium on Diversity, Cohesion and Integration: The Legacy of Nelson Mandela.

Clementine Nkweta-Salami addressed the topic of the vulnerability of refugees and asylum-seekers, and how their role in society is a reflection of the state of a nation's social cohesion.

This question is reflected in the incongruity between economic growth and the widening gap between the rich and poor in South Africa. It fits squarely with the unresolved interaction between class and race. He pointed out that between 2003 and 2008, a period that recorded high economic growth in South Africa, the gap between the rich and poor remained widened. This was a result of white people's capital ability to adapt and take advantage of opportunities presented by high economic growth.

Dr Brigalia Bam: Walter Sisulu University

Bam outlined Mandela's appreciation of diversity, and the emphasis he put on ensuring that he reached out to different sectors of society in achieving social cohesion and inclusivity. She pointed out that Mandela highly appreciated religious groups and attached a great deal of importance to the work they undertook. He also ensured the inclusion

of women in leadership, and Afrikaners, in his pursuit of various political work that impacted on social cohesion. Bam concluded her address by stressing the centrality of churches in working consistently on matters pertaining to reconciliation. She emphasised that "social cohesion is for all of us. Everything that we can do for our communities becomes a contribution to a bigger cause."

Clementine Nkweta-Salami: UNHCR

Nkweta-Salami addressed the topic of the vulnerability of refugees and asylum-seekers, and how their role in society is a reflection of the state of a nation's social cohesion. She pointed to the unique and special role that South Africa accorded refugees and asylum-seekers, in that the country has a liberal asylum legislation, where refugees and asylum-seekers enjoy the freedom to live and to work. South Africa receives the largest number of asylum-seekers and refugees in Africa – mainly from Zimbabwe, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and Ethiopia – and 25% of them reside in the Western Cape.

Nkweta-Salami stated that refugees and asylum-seekers are unfairly blamed for criminal activities in poor communities, hence the occurrence of xenophobic-related attacks. Therefore, treating foreigners, refugees and asylum-seekers in a humane and hospitable manner is central to building and consolidating social cohesion.

There is a need for South Africans to engage sincerely with the issue of the unwarranted association of foreigners, refugees and asylum-seekers with crime. South Africans need to be educated at grassroots level on the vulnerabilities and the role of refugees and asylum-seekers in communities. The role and the significance of refugees and asylum-seekers is visible in communities, as they bring much-needed skills and business ideas. She urged people "…to not forget the aspirations of the powerless and the voice of the silent".

Dr Agostinho Zacarias: UNDP

Zacarias stressed the often-forgotten historical interaction between South Africans and foreigners, which has helped to define the mosaic of South Africa's diversity. He provided the example of the historical relations between South Africans and Ethiopians in KwaZulu-Natal as early as the 1900s, in their fight against the implementation of the 1913 Land Act.[10] As much as South Africa has embraced refugees and asylum-seekers, South Africans have also been well-received and well-treated as refugees and asylum-seekers in the past, when they were in exile. In the early 1960s, many South Africans who converged in Tanzania and Zambia came together to foster a spirit of African unity. "There was a sense that we were united by a common purpose. We were one people," Zacarias said. He also highlighted the need to think of other symbolisms that can help to create or foster solidarity among ourselves. In remembering the legacy of Mandela, Zacarias reminded us that all of these values are "…very central in what Mandela was trying to do with South Africans and the international

community", as various international organisations – such as the United Nations – in the past have provided "…voice to the voiceless". To that effect, South African identity is embedded in the international community.

Conclusion

Mandela's values are simple and yet colossal. They have been imprinted on South Africa's national character. Through them, the world has applauded and replicated our Truth and Reconciliation Commission and liberal constitution. Through the principles of negotiation and forgiveness, we have spread the values and techniques of mediation that have been used to broker peace and consolidate democracy in other countries too, such as, Burundi.

Since the Madiba[11] magic years of 1994–1999, South Africa has faced trying times, peppered with fissures in the ruling party, poverty, allegations of corruption, the fight against violent crime and other socio-economic challenges. However, it is reassuring that together we have the benchmark of Mandela's values to remind ourselves of what makes us a nation, and what goals we aspire to hold on to. It is these values that keep the nation united in challenging times. And it is these values that we will hold onto to remind us of who we are as a nation. ◭

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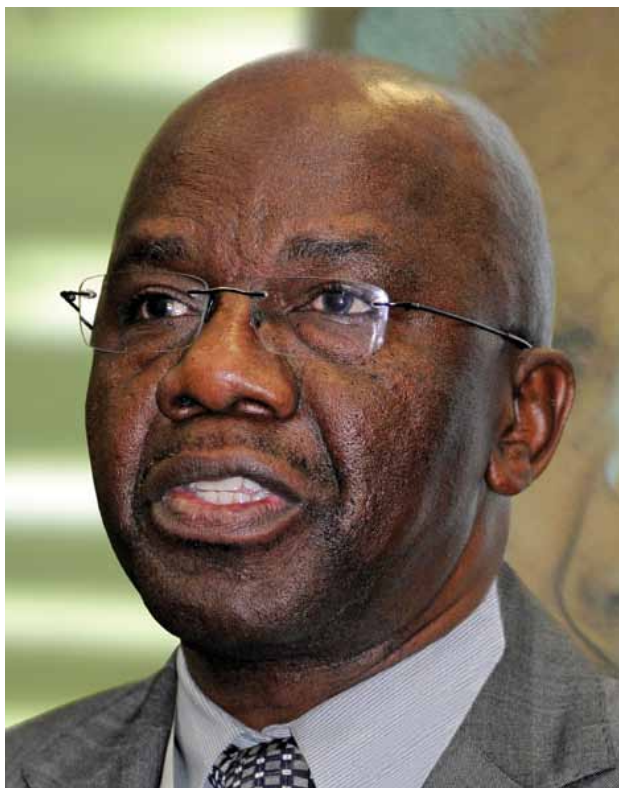
Agostinho Zacarias reflected on the often-forgotten historical interaction between South Africans and foreigners, which has helped to define the mosaic of South Africa's diversity.

Dr Buntu Siwisa is the Manager of ACCORD's Knowledge Production Department.

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4   The Sharpeville massacre of March 1960 followed the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania's (PAC) campaign on the burning of passes, which were central in regulating the movement of Africans in urban areas. The PAC, led by Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe, broke away from the ANC in 1959 over the land-related clauses in the Freedom Charter. The burning of the pass laws campaign had originally been planned by the ANC to take place on 30 March 1960. However, the PAC pre-empted the ANC and staged the campaign 10 days earlier. The Sharpeville campaign, which saw some 5 000 to 7 000 people participating, led to the deaths of 69 people – including eight women and 10 children – and 180 injured. It resulted in the condemnation of the South African Government by the international community and the United Nations. The PAC nearly eclipsed the ANC through this campaign, through its ability to mobilise urban masses effectively. Shortly afterwards, the ANC launched its military wing, Umkhonto weSizwe (MK).

5   When black school students in Soweto, South Africa started protesting for better education on 16 June 1976, police responded with teargas and live bullets.

6   Bonner, Phillip (2012) op cit. p. 10.

7   African Ghost-hunting Safaris (n.d.) 'Africa's Haunted Castle, Goede Hoop', Available at: <http://www.vanhunks.com/cape1/castle1.html>.

8   The Battle of Isandlwana on 22 January 1879 saw the defeat of a modern British army. This shocked the British Empire and the British Government, then led by Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, as this was the first time that a subject army of the Empire defeated a modern British army. It was for this reason that the king of the AmaZulu, Cetshwayo kaMpande, following the defeat of his army at the Battle of Rorke's Drift in 1879, was imprisoned at the Castle of Good Hope and on Robben Island. This signified his importance and the centrality of the Zulu kingdom in the standing of the British empire in South Africa.

9   Ibid.

10 The 1913 Land Act, subsequently named the Bantu Land Act, 1913 and the Black Land Act, 1913, was the first major piece of segregation legislation passed by the Parliament of the Union of South Africa. It deprived black South Africans of the right to own land, and prohibited the sale of land among the different races of South Africa. The Act created a highly skewed distribution of land between black and white South Africans, with white South Africans, who made up 20% of the population, owning 80% of the land.

11 "Madiba" is Nelson Mandela's clan name and what he is affectionately called by South Africans.

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH POLITICAL PARTIES: AFRICA'S RECORD IN DEMOCRACY-BUILDING[1]

BY **VICTOR SHALE**

Introduction

The existing literature on Africa's decolonisation struggles tends to pay fairly cursory attention to the contribution of women in the liberation movements' struggle for freedom, and as political leaders in their own right in the post-colonial democracy-building experience. Reference to women's contributions also does not quite capture the challenges and realities facing women.[2] This article argues that political parties can be a useful vehicle through which the bane of gender inequality occasioned by social and cultural practices and perpetuated by the limitations of the historiography of African politics can be addressed better. It is in political parties where an ideal understanding that

"politics and political parties are not only a male game but for both genders" should be inculcated. In what follows, the history of political parties in Africa is briefly addressed, after which the participation, particularly of women, in political parties as they contribute to the democratisation process, is examined. Is women's participation equal to their male counterparts and if not, what are the grey areas? The article concludes with recommendations.

Above: Political parties are the gateways to political office and are key to advancing women's full participation in the political process.

Women candidates attend a conference to empower women voters and politicians in Tripoli, Libya (June 2012).

Etymology of African Political Parties and their Functions

Political parties are essential in the democratisation process, hence there is a commonly held view in political discourse that democracy without political parties is a distant mirage. Political parties have to be understood within the overall theory and practice of democracy. In Africa and elsewhere, political parties have become a useful vehicle for contesting power in a democratic setting. Put differently, political parties are a critical linchpin for the institutionalisation, nurturing, deepening and consolidation of democracy.[3] However, political parties in Africa have two fundamental flaws. First, given the patriarchal and cultural value systems, political parties that delivered independence were usually led by men. Second, political parties resembled the very colonial system they replaced, because they were formed on the same European political culture.[4]

Therefore, although independence came with the hope for the promotion and protection of civil liberties that had been suppressed by the colonialists, that dream was deferred when the post-independence political parties basically continued from where the colonialists left off. Despite promises by independence movements, post-colonial states continued to uphold the discriminatory practices against women that colonialism had instituted.[5] Indeed, the literature is awash with evidence that soon after independence, the

ruling parties did not waste time in stifling the democratic space, disguising this as nation-building.[6] This exacerbated inequalities in society and, in most cases, women were the most affected. The continent's return to multiparty political dispensation in the late 1980s and early 1990s came with a renewed promise that political parties would carry out democratic reforms, which had hitherto been suppressed by single party regimes.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Political Parties: Myths and Realities

Gender equality and women's empowerment in political parties in Africa is a mixed bag, as experiences differ by region and country. Given this, it is neither possible nor desirable to make sweeping generalisations about its progress or lack thereof. However, there is common consensus on the centrality of political parties in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, irrespective of their geographic location. For some, political parties are the gateways to political office and are the key to advancing women's full participation in the political process. It is not enough for parties to establish women's wings or place women at the bottom of party lists; they must develop real avenues for women's leadership roles.[7] Parties play a critical role in "opening the door" for women to enter and participate in decision-making. After all, in parliamentary

A man walks past defaced posters of independent female candidates in Tripoli, Libya (July 2012).

systems, it is only through political parties that anyone can be elected into office.[8]

Yet, one of the inauspicious facts about the majority of parties in Africa is that they do not show much commitment to gender equality beyond written expressions. This is despite the fact that political leaders have committed their countries – and, by extension, their own political organisations – to international declarations and protocols, particularly those that seek to address gender inequalities. These include the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979); the African Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women (2003); the Solemn Declaration of Gender Equality Africa (2004); the South African Democratic Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development (2008); the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and

YET, ONLY THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (ANC) OF SOUTH AFRICA AND THE SOUTH WEST AFRICA PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION (SWAPO) OF NAMIBIA MEET THE GENDER PARITY TARGETS STIPULATED IN THE PROTOCOL

Governance (2007); as well as the African Union Gender Policy (2009). The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted in 2000 by 189 nations of the world also have as one of the eight MDGs the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women. The MDGs set an indicator that at least 30% of representation in decision-making processes should be by women, and should be achieved by 2015.

Despite subscribing to them, the sluggish implementation of and artificial adherence to these protocols owes largely to four main factors: the history of political parties, structural defects in the parties, the internal functioning of parties, and the party system. The history of colonial and post-independence political parties, as discussed earlier, shows that they have their roots in both the colonial culture and patriarchal ideology that still dominates most political parties today. In the SADC region, which is considered to have made some progress, half the ruling parties have adopted quotas regarding gender equality, in line with the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.[9] Yet, only the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa and the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) of Namibia meet the gender parity targets stipulated in the protocol. In some cases, political parties have been found to have opportunistically considered gender as a ploy to receive donor funding. This was the case in Lesotho in 2002, where parties only inserted gender-related sections

Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma of South Africa is the chairperson of the African Union Commission.

in their manifestos after donors provided some funding (as an incentive) to parties that referenced gender in their manifestos.[10]

The irony is that even Africa's much-vaunted shining democracies, Botswana and Mauritius, are among countries which have a poor record in gender equality. There is no gainsaying that there is an almost total indifference by parties – or what can be called "internal party conspiracy" to set women up for failure. The case of political parties in Botswana illustrates how nettlesome the issues of gender equality and women's empowerment can be to most parties. None of the parties that contested Botswana's 2009 elections had gender parity in mind when nominating their candidates. There were no deliberate efforts made to ensure gender balance in candidate nominations. This was largely due to the internal conflicts these parties experienced ahead of the elections. It is to be expected that under the conditions of contaminated intraparty and interparty democracy, it becomes difficult for political parties to deal with gender parity and other election-related issues soberly. Table 1 compares how Botswana's three main parties fared in relation to gender parity in their nominations of candidates for the parliamentary elections in 2004 and 2009. Out of a total of 147 candidates in 2009, only a paltry 10 were women, representing 6% of the candidates from these parties. Of these, only two women made it to parliament.

Table 1: Number of nominated women parliamentary candidates by party (2004 and 2009) in Botswana

Political party	Number of seats contested		Number of women candidates		Seats won by women	
	2004	2009	2004	2009	2004	2009
Botswana Congress Party (BCP)	50	42	2	5	0	0
Botswana Democratic Party (BDP)	57	57	8	3	4	2
Botswana National Front (BNF)	42	48	4	2	0	0

Source: Independent Electoral Commission, Botswana, 2009

Literature finds the fault lines in patriarchy and cultural stereotypes the key reasons for parties to overlook women during nominations.[11] The literature does not, however, address the logic-defeating tendency of nominating women for window dressing by parties. For instance, in Botswana, following the BDP's influential fall-out with its secretary

Women's leagues are not necessarily the appropriate structures to drive the gender parity agenda, unless they are equipped with meaningful powers to effect change.

general, who was also its candidate for the Gaborone Central Constituency in 2009, that party replaced him with a woman candidate, almost on the eve of the elections. This constituency was won by the opposition BCP candidate, who is one of Botswana's political heavyweights. So, it is neither farfetched nor unfair to suggest that the female candidate was set up to fail. Having sacrificed its secretary general for petty intraparty squabbles, the BDP threw a female candidate into the proverbial lion's den with inadequate campaigning time. One would have expected the party to nominate one of its heavyweights to rescue the situation under the circumstances. But the loss would likely have been too embarrassing to any of the top leaders, and therefore not worth the risk. To avoid the embarrassment, the party selected a female candidate for the election in that constituency, under what can be interpreted as false pretences of empowering women. It is this kind of experience that is inimical to democratic principles, and is sheer tokenism at play.

The lack or absence of gender equality implementation also owes to the relegation of gender issues to women's leagues and wings. A false assumption is that they are naturally better placed to deal with gender issues. Women's leagues are not necessarily the appropriate structures to drive the gender parity agenda, unless they are equipped with meaningful powers to effect changes that would ensure gender mainstreaming in all the formal party documents and processes. Many parties have not effectively provided mechanisms for women's participation. The party system also renders gender equality a distant mirage, because it shapes the behaviour of parties and their responsiveness to gender equality. Africa's violent political terrain means that it is difficult for women to participate in party political business, as they are usually the ones who bear the brunt of political violence. Failure by parties to ensure gender equality breeds similar consequences for the country, because it ends up with little or no female members of parliament.

TO AVOID THE EMBARRASSMENT, THE PARTY SELECTED A FEMALE CANDIDATE FOR THE ELECTION IN THAT CONS-TITUENCY, UNDER WHAT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS FALSE PRETENCES OF EMPOWERING WOMEN

Actions to Ensure Gender Equality

In a representative democracy, the representation of women and their participation in political decision-making processes should start in political parties. A common way of ensuring women's participation in parties has been the use of quotas. A good example in this case is that of the ANC in South Africa, whose constitutional provisions make it mandatory that all its decision-making structures should reflect a 50% representation of men and women. While quotas have worked for some countries, they are not a long-term solution for the promotion of women's participation. Gender quotas should be used alongside genuine transformation that seeks to empower women in political parties and at all spheres of government. Parties have to transform genuinely to empower women and reflect the value system of the society in which they exist so that they can articulate the views, needs and aspirations of that society. Gender mainstreaming should also be enforced through regulation. Thus, there must be a party law that demands gender parity as a prerequisite for the registration of parties. In the absence of a party law, electoral law should have a similar provision. In Zimbabwe, for instance, the new constitution provides for a proportional representation electoral system, which caters for 60 seats for women over and above the 210 constituency seats.[12] The 60 seats are allocated proportionally to the number of votes each party receives in an election. Regulation has been effective in other countries such as Kenya, as a deterrent to regional and ethnic parties dominating. Political parties in Kenya are required by law to meet a certain threshold for membership representation in every region of the country. This ensures that Kenya does not end up with extremist and/or ethnic parties only.

Conclusion

This article began by affirming the centrality of political parties in democracy-building, as well as that political parties can and should promote gender equality and women's empowerment in democracy-building. It argues that due to a history of patriarchy and colonialism, gender parity is conspicuously absent in the formal instruments of most political parties, as well as in their processes. The article, therefore, concludes that two key critical measures have to be taken if political parties are to be assets instead of liabilities in advancing gender equality in democracy. First, political parties must ensure the equal representation of men and women within their structures through introducing quotas on candidate nominations and contestation of all party positions. This can be at local and national levels, as is the case with the ANC in South Africa. Second, gender parity should be enforced through external regulation, such as a party law, where conformity to a set threshold becomes a prerequisite for any party to qualify either for registration or for contesting an election. ◭

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Endnotes

1   This article is based on a paper presented at the East African Community (EAC) and SADC Subregional Roundtable on Gender in Democracy Building in Tanzania, in October 2011.

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11 Selolwane, O.D. and Shale, V. (2006) Opposition Politics and the Challenge of Fragmentation in Botswana. *Journal of African Elections,* 5 (2), pp. 122–141.

12 The constitution was overwhelmingly approved through a national referendum held on the 16 March 2013. The "yes" votes were 3 079 966 out of 3 259 455 valid votes, translating into 94.4% in favour of the new constitution (Zimbabwe Electoral Commission 2013).

DECENTRALISING LIBERIA'S SECURITY SECTOR: THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ACTORS IN JUSTICE AND SECURITY DELIVERY

BY **TRINE NIKOLAISEN**

This year, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) will start reducing its troop presence, from approximately 8 000 to 3 750. In this context, the government of Liberia, together with the United Nations (UN), is rolling out a network of regional security and justice hubs across the country. The aim is to decentralise security, justice services and personnel to increase citizens' access to justice and avoid the creation of a security vacuum.

The Regional Hub Project was the centrepiece of the Statement of Mutual Commitment, adopted by the Liberian government and the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) as Liberia was placed on the PBC agenda in 2010. In February 2013, the first regional hub was opened in Gbarnga, Bong County, with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) as implementing partners. It is intended as one of five regional security and justice hubs and will serve communities in Bong, Lofa and Nimba counties – an overall population of over one million people.[1] The five hubs are

Above: Since the United Nations Mission in Liberia will start reducing its troop presence in the country, the government of Liberia and the United Nations is rolling out a network of regional security and justice hubs across the country.

Map No. 3775 Rev. 7   UNITED NATIONS
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Cartographic Section

to be strategically and geopolitically situated throughout the country, with each hub servicing three of Liberia's 15 counties.

THE LIBERIAN PROCESS IS HIGHLY INTERNATIONALISED, AND HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON EXTERNAL DONORS

The Regional Hub Project reflects a decentralisation process within an essentially state-centric approach; security and justice services are being relocated from state to county level in an effort to reach the population in the periphery. This article examines the implementation of the Gbarnga Hub from the perspective of access to justice. Focusing on the end users, it argues that the hub's success should be measured against its ability to support the provision of equal access to security and justice services for all in the region. In contexts of limited state capacity, non-governmental organisations (NGOs)[2] fill a variety of supplementing and enabling roles in service delivery. Nevertheless, they remain largely overlooked, especially within the justice and security

sector. Taking the implementation of the security and justice hub in Gbarnga as the context, this article sheds light on the role of NGOs in facilitating access to security and justice in Bong County.

The Monrovia Focus

The Liberian security sector reform (SSR) process is commonly referred to as a "root and branch" process, as the security institutions were dismantled and rebuilt from the ground. However, state-centric SSR has increasingly come under criticism. The Liberian process is highly internationalised, and heavily dependent on external donors. The tendency has been to focus on national-level institutions and structures in the capital region, causing Monrovia to receive a disproportionate amount of international assistance in security and justice initiatives relative to outlying areas.

The systematically underserved rural communities are left to depend on the presence of UNMIL troops and traditional authorities for safety and justice. Liberia has a dual customary and statutory justice system, within which tribal courts under the executive branch coexist with the formal courts of the judiciary.[3] In rural areas, informal and traditional authorities

The Regional Hub Project was the centerpiece of the Statement of Mutual Commitment, adopted by the Liberian government and the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission.

constitute the primary sources of security and justice services for the majority of the population.[4]

The Underserved Periphery: Perceptions from Bong

Bong County is the sixth largest in Liberia and the third most populous. According to the 2008 census, it has a population of close on 330 000, making Bong home to almost 10% of the national population. The county was the heartland of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) between 1989 and 1996, and was devastated during the civil war. With the main exceptions of the county's administrative centre, Gbarnga, and the Bong Mines, Bong is characterised by small-scale trade, subsistence agriculture and minor rubber and palm plantations.[5] The infrastructure is poor – the highway from Monrovia to Nimba through Bong is not yet repaired, the dust roads turn to mud during the wet season, the piped-water system is non-operational, and people still rely on private generators. On the positive side, the Chinese are currently reconstructing the highway and most towns are served by mobile telecommunications.

The primary responsibility for providing security during times of peace resides with the Liberia National Police (LNP). Out of the current 4 500 LNP officers, approximately half of them are stationed in the capital. By the end of 2010, the LNP's presence in Bong was approximately 100 personnel, deployed at 10 police stations. Figures compiled for the 2008 County Development Agenda estimated that most coastal counties had a police-to-citizen ratio of 1:900, whereas the ratios in hinterland counties stood at 1:1 700. In the counties of Bong and Nimba, both falling under the jurisdiction of the Gbarnga Hub, the ratio is less than 1:3 300.[6]

Increasing deployment is difficult, however, as there is a perception that there are better career opportunities within the LNP's special units in Monrovia. Moreover, the logistical situation in Bong is very poor. The main LNP station in Gbarnga has no online case filing system and no secure radio communication; it has no budget for fuel, photocopying case documents or feeding detainees. Due to a lack of vehicles, LNP officers have to use motorbikes or taxis to get to crime scenes or to transport suspects to court or prison.[7] The logistical constraints make the LNP effectively incapable of conducting patrols, leaving huge areas of the county more or less inaccessible to the police.

Nevertheless, the relationship between the LNP and Liberian citizens is remarkably good for a post-conflict society. People generally tend to request increased police presence, and the 2011 UN Rule of Law Indicators Report revealed that almost 77% of respondents fully or partly agree that the LNP does as much as it can to serve its communities.[8] Lack of capacity is a constant challenge in the rural districts, and is in no way unique for Bong. The Regional Hub Project is intended to rectify this situation.

Implementation of the Regional Hub in Gbarnga

The Gbarnga Hub was officially opened in February 2013. The construction process suffered several delays, but when fully staffed later this year will house a total of 139 people, including police and other law enforcement personnel, courts, corrections and immigration services. By bringing them together under one roof, it is maintained that Liberia can improve economies of scale, facilitate cooperation and interoperability between agencies and overcome some of

the pressing logistical challenges.[9] The hub concept is often described and understood as a "one-stop shop". This is more of a donor slogan, however, as most of the services are to be delivered *from* the hub, not *at* the hub site.

Fifty-one Police Support Unit (PSU) officers are currently deployed at the hub site. The PSU is an elite wing of the LNP, trained to handle security issues related to riots and mass demonstrations. The PSU only responds to the LNP regional commander's request for assistance, but also carries out "confidence patrols" three times a month to increase the citizens' feeling of safety and confidence in the police. According to the PSU commander at the hub, the patrols normally involve gathering the townspeople and chiefs in the Palava hut to inform them about the PSU's mission and discuss local security concerns.

The Border Patrol Unit (BPU) exists within the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN). It has a rotating deployment of 45 officers stationed at the hub. The BPU responds to challenges in the border areas. It goes on patrols three times a month – in Bong, Lofa and Nimba respectively – during which it monitors the security situation, advises the BNI officers at the border stations, and strengthens the local manpower when necessary.

In addition to the two response units, the hub houses a Public Service Office (PSO), intended to function as the interface between the hub and the local communities. The PSO is responsible for civic education activities to inform citizens about the hub, and refers citizens to the appropriate actor, either at the hub or externally, based on the nature of their cases. Outreach activities take place in concurrence with other entities at the hub. As a neutral actor in relation to the other security and justice institutions, the PSO is also responsible for a complaints mechanism, where people can file complaints against the police, the courts and so on.

A new magisterial court is being built at the hub site, replacing Gbarnga's old one. The court building is yet to be completed, but when fully operational will include prosecutors, public defenders and three human rights monitors.

The Probation Service is new in Liberia, piloted in the counties of Monteserrado, Bong, Lofa and Nimba. It focuses on restitution and the rehabilitation of juvenile and first-time offenders, as an alternative to prison. If an offender is accepted into the programme, the probation officers will follow up as he or she goes through rehabilitation, skills training and returns to the home community.

Lastly, the implementation of the Gbarnga Hub has brought with it an extension of the Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) Crimes Unit to the region. This is an outreach unit that focuses on sexual offences, particularly rape cases. The unit consists of two sections: the Victim Support Unit (VSU) and the Case Liaison Section (CLS). The VSU has two officers with backgrounds in social work. They provide support to SGBV survivors through psychosocial counselling; transportation to hospital, police or court; and emotional and practical support during the trial. The three case liaison officers are responsible for one county each, and are intended to function as a bridge between the police and the court. This entails following up on specific cases to ensure effective case processing, and raising awareness and

Prince Zeid Bin Ra'ad Zeid Al Hassan (left), Chair of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission, and its eleven-member delegation, visit the site of the security and justice hub under construction in Gbarnga, Liberia (13 June 2011).

Bong County has always had a poor deployment of police due to many logistical and capacity constraints in the county.

building capacity for police officers, justice personnel and health personnel on issues related to investigating SGBV cases and dealing with survivors.

Barriers to Accessing Justice

It is expected that the hub will be fully operational within a few months. However, systemic issues such as poor infrastructure, inefficient bureaucracy, corruption and limited human and material resources threaten its sustainability.[10] Admittedly, early in the process, the deployment of the PSU has been described as the biggest success of the Gbarnga Hub so far. The forward operational base reduces response time and ensures a higher permanent presence of police in the region. Unfortunately, the unit currently only has two vehicles at its disposal, of which only one vehicle functions. As the BPU has two robust pick-up trucks, it occasionally provides the PSU with transportation. This is far from an ideal situation, however, as there is no guarantee that the police will have the capacity to respond to sudden security incidents.

Nevertheless, for most rural Liberians, geographical distance is not the only barrier to accessing security and justice services. For many, lack of awareness of rights and available services, lack of resources, or lack of trust in security and justice processes are equally serious obstacles. Access to information represents a major challenge throughout Liberia, which has an illiteracy rate of approximately 40%.[11] As mentioned, the PSO is responsible for providing information to citizens about the hub's services and how to access them.

However, its capacity is extremely limited, as there is only one officer stationed at the Gbarnga Hub. He alone is responsible for Bong County, with two colleagues in Nimba and Lofa reporting to him. As of June 2013, the PSO officer in Gbarnga was neither aware of the existence of any official information strategy, nor did he have a budget for this specific purpose.

The Peacebuilding Office's perception survey from 2012 found that the vast majority of citizens of the Gbarnga Hub region had little or no knowledge about the formal justice system in Liberia. It should be no surprise, then, that there is a general lack of awareness of the hub's existence, its function and how to access the services provided by it. A quick count at a civil society meeting held at the Gbarnga Hub on 22 June 2013[12] revealed that less than half of the attendees (mostly from Bong) had heard about the hub prior to the meeting, and of those who had heard about it, very few people knew its function. Only having seen the infrastructure from the outside, informants repeatedly described the hub as "military barracks". Perhaps equally worrying, some women's organisations expressed very high expectations about its future services and capacities.

Creating Awareness and Filling Gaps

Given the Liberian state's limited capacity, NGOs play a vital role in ensuring that rural citizens get information about rule of law and access to justice. The Ministry of Justice, the Carter Center and the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (JPC) have worked together since 2007 to develop a community legal advisor (CLA) programme to

help rural citizens navigate through the formal, informal and traditional dispute mechanisms. According to the JPC's office in Gbarnga, it currently has 29 mobile CLAs in the hub region (nine in Lofa, nine in Nimba and 11 in Bong County), who travel by motorbike to local communities to provide free information about the laws. The CLAs target local citizens, justice officials and customary leaders. Drama, group dialogue and radio shows are commonly utilised to inform people about topics such as inheritance law, the law on rape, the criminal justice system, trial-by-ordeal or the constitution. Moreover, the advisors are trained in mediation and can negotiate smaller disputes or refer cases as needed to lawyers or other authorities.[13] Considering the formal justice system's limited capacity, successfully preventing smaller cases from going to court is advantageous. In increasing awareness about the law and available dispute mechanisms and helping to find informed and practical solutions to people's problems, the CLAs essentially build local capacity for accessing justice and fill a gap between the formal justice sector and traditional forums in rural areas.

Team-based Targeting of SGBV

Combating impunity for SGBV is high on the Liberian government's agenda. The Women and Children Protection Section (WACPS) is a specialised LNP section working exclusively on issues related to women and children. However, like the rest of the LNP, and especially in rural areas, it does suffer a severe lack of resources.[14]

In Bong, the LNP WACPS is working in close collaboration with the new SGBV Crimes Unit at the hub, and a free hotline has been established between the two units. According to the WACPS officers at the Gbarnga police station, the introduction of the SGBV Crimes Unit has changed their poor working conditions fundamentally. Importantly, the Crimes Unit has a motorbike and a vehicle and is able to provide transportation of victims to the hospital or to courts, and for LNP officers to do crime scene investigation.

This is a positive development, but the involvement of non-governmental actors should not be underestimated. There is a team-based targeting of SGBV taking place in Bong, and a SGBV Task Force – consisting of WACPS, the SGBV Crimes Unit, the JPC NGO, the Foundation for International Dignity (FIND) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) – meets monthly to share information. For years, the NRC has provided widespread training on SGBV and relevant laws to legal actors, police units and local communities. The NRC and the LNP WACPS have been collaborating closely on handling and preventing SGBV incidents, and the WACPS remains highly dependent on the NRC's expertise and resources. Importantly, NRC provides SGBV survivors in Bong with psychosocial counselling, transportation and emergency accommodation and provisions. In fact, SGBV survivors often come directly to the NRC for help, as it is well known in the local communities. The NRC then arranges transportation for the victim to the

police and to hospital, and supports the victim throughout the eventual process of going to court. Moreover, the NRC has helped strengthen data collection and analysis of national reporting rates of SGBV. Developing and distributing standardised forms to local NGOs, such as the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET), and monitoring SGBV court sessions has helped establish a national SGBV database with the Ministry of Gender and Development.[15]

ULTIMATELY, RURAL LIBERIANS WILL CHOOSE TO TAKE THEIR DISPUTES TO THE JUSTICE MECHANISM THEY TRUST AND PERCEIVE TO BE MOST EFFICIENT

As Liberia is moving into a post-UNMIL phase, the NRC is planning its exit strategy. This will happen in parallel with the hub unit taking over many of the services that the NRC currently provides. The NRC's exit is thus directly linked to the government's decentralisation strategy. That NGOs draw down to avoid duplicating or substituting public services is positive, provided that the state is able to provide these essential services. However, the predictability of supplies from Monrovia remains a huge issue of concern in Bong.[16] To ensure continued access and the sustainability of services, it is essential that NGOs such as the NRC are recognised and included in the decentralising process.

Recognising the Role of NGOs in Security and Justice Delivery

The Regional Security and Justice Hub model is essentially about integrating the rural population in the formal security sector. Although decentralising security and justice services is an important step in the right direction, it does not guarantee rural citizens' access to these services. Recognising this, academics are increasingly advocating for a security and justice model where the emphasis rests on the quality and efficacy of services received by the end user, regardless of who delivers them.

This article has focused on the role of NGOs in contexts of limited state capacity. In Bong and elsewhere, NGOs build local capacity for seeking justice by increasing citizens' understanding of the laws and of their rights, they function as mediators between the formal and informal justice structure, and they provide resources for individuals who would not otherwise have the opportunity to seek formal justice.

Ultimately, rural Liberians will choose to take their disputes to the justice mechanism they trust and perceive to be most efficient. From a perspective of access to justice, it follows that the Regional Hub Project should be measured against whether people in the periphery realistically can *access* formal services, not necessarily by whether they choose to *use* this channel.[17] But to make informed choices, citizens must be aware of their options and have real

access to both formal and alternative justice mechanisms. NGOs play an indispensable role in empowering them to do so.

Recognising the role of NGOs opens up a space for better and more realistic planning and coordination between government structures and NGOs, to ensure that essential gaps in security and justice delivery are filled and duplications avoided. Both in Bong and in the future expansion of the Regional Hub Project, the Liberian government would be wise to develop partnerships actively with NGOs that are already providing services on the ground. **A**

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2   The term is used broadly here to refer to both local community groups and local branches of international service-providing NGOs concerned with the provision of public goods.

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4   See: Denney, Lisa (2012) Non-state Security and Justice in Fragile States: Lessons from Sierra Leone. Overseas Development Institute Briefing Paper, 73, pp. 1–4; Lawrence, Michael (2012) Towards a Non-state Security Sector Reform Strategy. SSR Issue Paper, 8, pp. 1–39; Baker, Bruce and Scheye, Eric (2007) *Multi-layered Justice and Security Delivery in Post-conflict and Fragile States. Conflict, Security & Development*, 7 (4), pp. 503-528; and Scheye, Eric (2011) Local Justice and Security Providers in South Kivu: Going Local to Support Youth - Neighborhood Watch-Community Development Groups, The Clingendael Institute Report, pp. 1–23.

5   Reeve, Richard and Speare, Jackson (2012) *Security and Justice from a County Perspective. Bong County, Liberia*. London: International Alert.

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8   Nielsen, C. John (2013) Interview with UN Police Commissioner on 27 June. Monrovia, Liberia. See also: Liberia Peacebuilding Office (2012) *Perceptions of Justice and Security in the Gbarnga Hub Region. Report on Baseline Public Perception Survey*. Monrovia, PBO.

9   Keane, Rory (2012) Reviewing the Justice and Security Hub Modality as Piloted in Liberia. *Stability Journal*, 1 (1).

10 On 27 June 2013, AllAfrica.com reported that 75 BPU officers stationed along the Liberian-Ivorian border threatened to abandon their stations, as they had neither received salaries over the last three months, nor the promised per diems. Earlier this spring, approximately 60% of the PSU officers at the Gbarnga Hub went absent without leave as a result of the site's malfunctioning water system. The latter situation has been addressed, but it remains symptomatic of the logistical situation outside Monrovia and underscores the vulnerability of the regional hub concept.

11 According to the CIA World Factbook, the overall Liberian literacy rate is 60.8% (male: 64.8%, female: 56.8%). See: Central Intelligence Agency (2013) 'World Factbook: Liberia', Available at: <www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/li.html> Accessed on: 20 August 2013.

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16 The Liberian government established a safe house for victims of domestic abuse in Gbarnga in January 2013, but failed to provide food and other necessary supplies for the victims. The NRC provided these services for several months.

17 Liberia Peacebuilding Office (2012) *Perceptions of Justice and Security in the Gbarnga Hub Region. Report on Baseline Public Perception Survey*. Monrovia: PBO.