Militias, Rebels and Islamist Militants

Human Insecurity and State Crises in Africa

Edited by Wafula Okumu and Augustine Ikelegbe
Militias,
Rebels and
Islamist
Militants

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

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Acknowledgements

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

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About the book

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

About the editors

Wafula Okumu holds a PhD from Atlanta University in the US. He is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), where he has served as Head of African Security Analysis Programme (A SAP). Before joining the ISS in 2006, Dr Okumu taught at McMaster University’s Centre for Peace Studies, Prescott College, Mississippi University for Women and Chapman University. He also served as a conflict analyst for the African Union and as an Academic Programme Associate at the United Nations University, Tokyo. His research work and publications have been on a variety of topics ranging from the use of child soldiers to human rights, democracy, terrorism, the African Union, African boundaries, peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance. In addition to his many publications in refereed journals, Dr Okumu has also co-edited (with Paul Kaiser) Democratic transitions in East Africa and (with Anneli Botha) Understanding terrorism in Africa series. He is the author (with Professor Sam Makinda) of African Union: challenges of globalisation, security and governance, and is currently working on two forthcoming titles on African boundaries and the African Union’s peace and security architecture.

Augustine Ovuronye Ikelegbe obtained a PhD in Political Science from the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. He is a Professor of Comparative Politics and Public Policy at the University of Benin and Adjunct Research Professor of Conflict Studies at the Centre for Population and Environmental Development, Benin City, Nigeria. He was a Visiting Fellow at the University of Wolverhampton, Wolverhampton 1999–2000; Visiting Fellow, the African Studies Centre, Leiden, 2004; and Head of the Department of Politics at the University of Benin, 2006–2008. Dr Iklelegbe has researched, published and consulted extensively on resource conflicts and the roles of militias, youth and civil society in the conflicts and politics of Africa. He is a co-author of Intergovernmental relations in Nigeria (PEFS – co-authored); Oil, resource conflicts and the post conflict transition in the Niger Delta region: beyond the amnesty (CPED); and Oil, environment and resource conflicts in Nigeria (LIT Verlag – forthcoming).
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Kasaija Phillip Apuuli holds a doctoral degree in International Law from the University of Sussex in the United Kingdom. He is a lecturer in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at Makerere University, Kampala in Uganda. He has done research for the Africa Peace Forum, the Conflict, Security and Development Group at Kings College London, and the Africa Security Sector Network on small arms and light weapons in UGanda, on the northern Uganda conflict and on security in the Great Lakes region. His work has been published as book chapters and in the African Journal of International Affairs, Criminal Law Forum, Journal of International Criminal Justice, East African Journal of Human Rights and Democracy, and Journal of Genocide Research. (E-mail: kasaijap@yahoo.com / pkasaija@ss.mak.ac.ug)

Bettina Engels is a post-doctoral research associate at the research unit for peace and conflict studies at Freie Universität in Berlin, Germany. She studied political science and rural development, and wrote her PhD thesis on the motives of non-state violent actors, focusing on the Forces Nouvelles in Côte d'Ivoire. Her current research interests are environmental security, food crises and local conflict in Niger and Ethiopia. (E-mail: bettina.engels@fu-berlin.de)

Eric George is the UNESCO Chair of Philosophy for Peace and lecturer in Peace, Conflict and Development Studies at the Universidad Jaume I in Castellon in Spain. He received his doctorate in International Studies (Peace, Conflict and Development) from the Universidad Jaume I. His research focuses on peace and security issues such as piracy, private security companies and religious militancy in Africa. (E-mail: eric_george@hotmail.com)

Ibaba Samuel Ibaba lectures in the Department of Political Science of the Niger Delta University on Wilberforce Island in Bayelsa State, Nigeria. He holds a PhD in Development Studies from the University of Port Harcourt. He has carried out extensive research on youth and armed non-state groups in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. His work has been published in the Journal of Research in National Development, Journal of Social Policy, Journal of Conflict Resolution, African Journal of Development Issues, Journal of Peace and Conflict Studies, and Nigerian Journal of Oil and Politics. (E-mail: eminoaibaba@yahoo.com)

Augustine Ikelegbe lectures in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at the University of Benin in Benin City in Edo State, Nigeria. (E-mail: austineikelegbe@gmail.com)

Mohammed Kabir Isa lectures in the Department of Political Science at Ahmadu Bello University in Zaria, Nigeria. He has more than a decade's teaching and research experience in the fields of local government administration, youth studies, ethnic conflict and social transformation. He is a member of the UNESCO-MOST Ethno-Net Africa at the University of Yaoundé in Cameroon and has published extensively. (E-mail: emkayisa@gmail.com)

Anne Kubai is an associate professor of World Christianity and interreligious Relations in the Department of Theology at Uppsala University in Sweden. She worked as the research director for the Life and Peace Institute in Uppsala in Sweden, a senior social scientist at the Department of Public Health Science, Division of International Health Care Research (IH CAR) at the Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm in Sweden, and head of the Department of Religion at the Kigali Institute of Education in Rwanda. Her research interests include religion and conflict, religion and international migration, religion and health, and gender-based violence in post-conflict societies and post-conflict social reconstruction. (E-mail: anne.kubai@teol.uu.se)

Macharia Munene is a professor of History and International Relations at the United States Institute for Peace in Nairobi, Kenya. He taught at universities in Kenya, the United States and Spain, and is a regular columnist for Business Daily in Kenya and a media commentator on topical issues. Professor Munene has been consulted by Kenya's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Foreign Relations, a nd the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission. He has published widely on topics related to diplomatic history, African history and politics, peace and conflict, Kenyan history, politics and foreign relations. (E-mail: gmmunene@usi.ac.ke)
Godfrey M Musila holds a PhD in International Criminal Law and Justice from the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. He was a senior researcher at the International Crimes in Africa Programme of the Institute for Security Studies before taking up his current position as Director of Research with Kenya's Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission. He has written and published widely in the fields of international law, international criminal justice and transitional justice. (E-mail: musila79@gmail.com)

Adams Oloo holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Delaware and is currently a senior lecturer in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at the University of Nairobi, Kenya. He has published articles on democratisation, legislative and electoral politics, civic society politics and national security. His current research interests are party politics, policy and security issues in Kenya. (E-mail: adams_oloo@yahoo.com)

Wafula Okumu is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria, South Africa. (E-mail: wafulao@hotmail.com)

Paul Omach is a senior lecturer in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at Makerere University in Uganda. He holds a PhD from the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa. He was a National Security Fellow at the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation at the University of California and a Batten-Rotary Visiting Research Fellow at the South African Institute of International Affairs in Johannesburg. His research on conflict, security, the state and international relations in Africa has been published in the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, African Affairs and South African Yearbook of International Affairs, and as book chapters. (E-mail: pomach@yahoo.com)

Justin Pearce is completing his doctoral studies in African Studies at Oxford University in the United Kingdom. He is a co-contributor to Oxford Analytica, a freelance journalist and co-consultant, a PhD candidate and B Sc in Politics, an MSc in Southern African Studies and co-responder. He has been conducting research on national security issues in conflict and conflict society, human rights and social policy since 2003. (E-mail: justinpearce@yahoo.com)

Krijn Peters is currently a lecturer at the Centre for Development Studies at Swansea University in Wales. He holds a PhD in Technology and Agrarian Development from the University of Wageningen in the Netherlands. He has been consulted by the World Bank, the European Union, the Royal Institute of Tropicals, the Special Court for Sierra Leone and non-governmental organisations such as Save the Children on issues related to armed conflict and post-war reconstruction. His research, focusing on disarmament, demobilisation and social policies of ex-combatants, child soldiers, transitional justice, and youth marginalisation and exclusion, has been published in books, monographs and journals such as International Migration, Journal of Peace, Conflict and Development, and Cultural Survival Quarterly. (E-mail: K.Peters@swansea.ac.uk)

Samson S Wassara is the vice-chancellor of Western Equatoria University. He has served as the dean of the College of Social and Economic Studies and director of the Centre for Peace and Development Studies at the University of Juba in Khartoum in Sudan. He holds a Doctorat en Droit, Nouveau Regime (PhD) in Public International Law (Hydro-politics and International Water Legal Regimes) from the University of Paris XI. Professor Wassara has conducted extensive research on peace, conflict, governance and development in Sudan. His work has been published as reports, book chapters and in the Journal of Scientific Research, Journal of Peace and Development Research, Dirasat Ifriqiyya, and African Journal of Political Science. (E-mail: samsonwassara@hotmail.com)

Aleksi Ylönen is currently teaching at Bayreuth International Graduate School of African Studies. He is a doctoral candidate in the International Relations and African Studies programme at the University of Turku, a National Security Fellow at the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation at the University of California and a Barrat-Rotary Visiting Research Fellow at the South African Institute of International Affairs in Johannesburg. His research on conflict, security, the state and international relations in Africa has been published in the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, African Affairs and South African Yearbook of International Affairs, and as book chapters. (E-mail: aeylonen@hotmail.com)
Foreword

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

Militias, rebels and Islamist militants: human insecurity and state crises in Africa is being published at a critical moment of assessing the costs of the actions of armed non-state groups in several instances, these groups have constituted themselves into major civil armed forces, alternative police or anti-crime forces, standing ethnic, religious and regional armies, morphous bands, armed wings of political parties, insurgents and movements fighting for self-determination. In several ways, the groups are specific responses to the multiple and deep crises of the state and to the challenges of development, democratisation and governance in Africa as a result of centralised, patrimonial, privatised and hegemonised state power, exclusionary politics, corruption, state malformation, de-constitutionalism, truncated transitions and successions, inequitable distribution and redistribution of public goods, inter-group tensions, poor leadership, and misuse and abuse of the state. Hence it is important for both researchers and practitioners to be conversant with the fact that remedies for addressing the threats of these groups do not lie solely in state responses such as military action or use of brute force by the police, but in building the capacity of states to govern well.

Third, the book will serve as a useful resource for both academics and practitioners in the sense that it seeks to establish a theoretical framework that links the formation and sustenance of armed non-state groups to how the state is governed and its capacity to guarantee human security. It also makes far-reaching proposals on how to effectively combat and prevent threats posed by these groups. Indeed, if Africa has to address the crisis of the arms flows and the cost of conflict, Oxfam International, the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and Saferworld estimated that between 1990 and 2005, conflicts cost Africa US$300 billion. This is equivalent to the amount of international aid the continent received during the same period. The formation of the African Union in 2002 was influenced by the realisation that ‘the scourge of conflicts in Africa constitutes a major impediment to the socioeconomic development of the continent and of the need to promote peace, security and stability’. Since then many concerted efforts have been made to minimise or eliminate these debilitating conflicts.

This book is a timely contribution for a number of other reasons.

First, it is being released at a time when armed non-state groups are becoming increasingly involved in African politics, particularly during and after elections. As representatives of marginalized and excluded groups seeking redress of their grievances. Even though militias, rebels and Islamist migrants are key players in African armed conflicts, no previous studies had been conducted to determine how they directly threaten human security and the state, or to critically analyse the various approaches to preventing and combating the associated threats. A mediating role in the resolution of conflicts that would bring about a durable understanding of the root causes of the most serious threats to human security on the continent, as it relates to its mission of generating knowledge that empowers Africa.

Dr Jakkie Cilliers
Executive Director
Institute for Security Studies
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List of acronyms and abbreviations

ADFD  Allied Democratic Forces
ADLFA  Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaïre
AENFA  Alliance of Eritrean National Forces
AFDA  Alliance de Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo
AFRICOMA  United States African Command
AFRCA  Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AIAIA  Al-Ittihad al-Islami
AIDSA  Acquired immunodeficiency Syndrome
AIS  Armée Islamique du Salut
AK-47  Avtomat Kalashnikova 47
ALIR  Armée pour la Libération du Rwanda
ALSA/ARS  Alliance for the Liberation of Somalia / Alliance for the Reliberation of Somalia
AMIS  African Union Mission in Sudan
AMP  Alliance pour la Majorité Présidentielle
ANRA  Armée Nationale de Résistance
ANC  African National Congress
ANSGs  Armed non-state groups
APCA  Arewa People’s Congress
APCP  All Peoples’ Congress Party
APRMA  African Peer Review Mechanism
AQIMAA  Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (L’organisation A l-Qaïda a u Maghreb Islandique)
APCN  All People’s Congress
APCLS  Alliances des Patriotes pour un Congo Libre et Souverain
APRDAA  Armée P opulaire p our l a R estauration d e l a R épublique e t l a D émocratie (Army f o r t he R estoration o f t he R epublic a nd o f D emocracy)
ATNMA  Alliance Touareg du Niger et du Mali
AUA  African Union
BAMOSDB  Bakassi Movement for Self-Determination
BOFF  Biafran Organisation of Freedom Fighters
CAR  Central African Republic
CDF  Civil Defence Force
CDUA  Civil Defence Unit
CNDDFDDA  Conseil National pour la Défense de la Démocratie / Forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie
CNDPC  Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple
CNA  Conseil National de Libération (National Liberation Council)
CNTAX  Concorde Nationale Tchadienne
COMA  Coalition for Militant Action
CP  Conservative Party
CPA  Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CSNPC  Comité de Sursaut National de la Paix et de la Démocratie
CSO  Civil society organisations
DRA  Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration
DDRR  Disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration
DIF/A  Darfur Independence Front/Army
DP  Democratic Party
DPA  Darfur Peace Agreement
DRC  Democratic Republic of Congo
EBA  Egbesu Boys of Africa
ECOMOG  Economic Community of West African States Monitoring and Observation Group
ECOWAS  Economic Community of West African States
EIJA  Egyptian Islamic Jihad
ELFA  Eritrean Liberation Front
EPRDF  Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front
EPLFA  Eritrea People’s Liberation Front
FACA  Forces d’Armées Congolais
FAN  Forces Armées du Nord
FARDC  Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
FAR  Forces Armées de la République Fédérale
FAR  Forces Armées Rwandaises (Rwanda Armed Forces)
FARS  Forces Armées Révolutionnaires du Sahara
FBI  Federal Bureau of Investigation
FDLR  Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda
FDLR  Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda
FDPC  Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain
FERA  February 18 Revolutionary Army
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

FII Finnish Institute of International Affairs
FIP Front pour l’Intégration et la Paix en Ituri
FIS Front Islamique du Salut
FLAA Front pour la Libération de l’Air et de l’Azawad
FLEC Frente de Libertaçao do Estado de Cabinda
FLN Front National de Libération (National Liberation Front)
FLNC Front de Libération Nationale Congolais
FLGO Forces de Libération du Grand Ouest (Forces for the Liberation of the Great West)
FNDIC Federated Niger Delta Ijaw Communities
FNLI Front des Nationalistes et Intégrationnistes
FNLA Frente Nacional da Libertaçao de Angola
FPR Front Patriotique Rwandaise
FRELIMO Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
FRF Forces Républicaines Fédéralistes
FROLINAT Front de Libération Nationale du Tchad
FRPI Forces de Résistance Patriotique d’Ituri
FUC Front Uni pour le Chagament Démocratique
G3 Gewehr 3 rifle
GIA Groupes Islamiques Armés
GICM Groupe Islamique Combatant Marocain
GLORIA Global Research in International Affairs
GoSS Government of Southern Sudan
GPP Groupe Patriotique pour la Paix
GSPC Groupe Salafiste pour la Prédication et le Combat
GWOT Global War on Terror
HIV Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRW Human Rights Watch
HSMF Holy Spirit Mobile Forces
ICC International Criminal Court
ICG International Crisis Group
ICGLR International Conference on Peace, Security, and Democracy in the Great Lakes region
ICJ International Court of Justice
ICL International Criminal law
ICT International Criminal Tribunals
ICTR International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
IDPs Internally displaced persons
IDMC Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IGAD Inter-governmental Authority on Development
IHL International Humanitarian Law
IHRL International Human Rights Law
IMF International Monetary Fund
IMN Islamic Movement in Nigeria
IPF IGAD Partners Forum
IRC International Rescue Committee
JEM Justice and Equality Movement
JIBWIS Jamaatul Izalatul Bid’ah Wa Ikamatus Sunnah
JI G Jihiadi Islamic Group
JIUs Joint integrated units
KAIPTC Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
KANU Kenya African National Union
KNCHR Kenya National Commission on Human Rights
KNYA Kenya National Youth Alliance
KPA Khartoum Peace Agreement
KPU Kenya People’s Union
LDUs Local defence units
LPC Liberia Peace Council
LRA Lord’s Resistance Army
LURD Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MAP Mass awareness and participation
MASSOB Movement for the Realisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra
MDJT Mouvement pour la Démocratie et la Justice au Tchad
MEND Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta
MFDC Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance
MLC Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo
MK Umkhonto we Sizwe
MNC Mouvement National Congolais
MNJ Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice
MODEL Movement for Democracy in Liberia
MONUC Mission des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo
MONUSCO Mission de l’Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en République Démocratique du Congo
MPCI Mouvement Patriotique de Côte d’Ivoire
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<td>MPRC</td>
<td>Mouvement Patriotique pour la Réstauration de la République Centrafricaine</td>
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<td>MPRD</td>
<td>Mouvement pour la Paix, la Reconstruction et le Développement</td>
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<td>MPLA</td>
<td>Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola</td>
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<tr>
<td>MRC</td>
<td>Mouvement Révolutionnaire Congolais</td>
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<td>MSS</td>
<td>Muslim Students’ Society of Nigeria</td>
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<td>MTNMC</td>
<td>Mouvement Touareg Nord Mali pour le Changement</td>
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<td>NATO</td>
<td>North Atlantic Treaty Organisation</td>
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<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organisation of African Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODM</td>
<td>Orange Democratic Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLF</td>
<td>Oromo Liberation Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONGC</td>
<td>Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONLF</td>
<td>Ogaden National Liberation Front/Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPC</td>
<td>Oodua People’s Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAC</td>
<td>Pan-Africanist Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAIGC</td>
<td>Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PALIPEHUTU</td>
<td>Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu (Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRA</td>
<td>Popular Resistance Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRISM</td>
<td>Project for the Research of Islamist Movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUSIC</td>
<td>Parti pour l’Unité et la Sauvegarde de l’Intégrité du Congo (Congolese Rally for Democracy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCD</td>
<td>Rassemblement Congolais pour l’Afpdp (Congolese Rally for Democracy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCD-ML</td>
<td>Rassemblement Congolais pour l’Afpdp – Mouvement de Libération</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RENAMO</td>
<td>Resistência Nacional de Moçambique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFC</td>
<td>Rassemblement des Forces pour le Changement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPF/A</td>
<td>Rwanda Patriotic Front/Army (Front Patriotique Rwandais)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPR</td>
<td>Rassemblement Populaire Rwandais</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RoC</td>
<td>Republic of Congo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSLMF</td>
<td>Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUD</td>
<td>Ralliement pour l’Unité et la Démocratie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RUF</td>
<td>Revolutionary United Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SADR</td>
<td>Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAF</td>
<td>Sudan Alliance Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBU</td>
<td>Small Boys Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCCL</td>
<td>Special Court for Sierra Leone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCUD</td>
<td>Socle pour le Changement, l’Unité et la Démocratie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLDF</td>
<td>Sabaot Land Defence Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLM/A</td>
<td>Sudan Liberation Movement/Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNA</td>
<td>Somali National Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNF</td>
<td>Somali National Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNM</td>
<td>Somali National Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPDC</td>
<td>Shell Petroleum Development Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLM/A</td>
<td>Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPM</td>
<td>Somali Patriotic Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSDF</td>
<td>Southern Sudan Defence Force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSAPO</td>
<td>South West Africa People’s Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TJRC</td>
<td>Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNCs</td>
<td>Transnational corporations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TPLF</td>
<td>Tigray People’s Liberation Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TSCTI</td>
<td>Trans-Saharan Counterrorism Initiative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCDA</td>
<td>Uganda Christian Democratic Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UFDD</td>
<td>Union des Forces pour la Démocratie et le Développement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UFDG</td>
<td>Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A major presence in the African states is the multiplicity of armed non-state groups (ANSGs) that range from armed bands, vigilantes, cultist groups, private security companies, criminal bands, community/ethnic/religious/regional armies, armed wings of political parties and private armies to militias, Islamist militants and rebel groups. These groups have been key players in the political violence that has severely undermined human security and the state needed to guarantee it. Particularly militias, rebel groups and Islamist militant groups have been major actors in the ethnic, regional, religious and political conflicts, resource conflicts and in insurgencies in Algeria, Angola, Burundi, the Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, the Republic of Congo (RoC), the Democratic
Republic of Congo (DRC), Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. Apart from the 19 civil wars and one interstate war in 16 African countries between 1990 and 2000, there have been numerous internal conflicts in which militias, militant Islamist movements and smaller rebel groups were in volved. These activities contribute to the understanding of the manipulations, the problem of the youth, economic decline, poor political governance and violence. From what perspectives can we seek explanations? How do group identities, social deprivation, resource competition, elite frustrations, and conflicts, are among the reasons for a growing interest in critically interrogating and understanding the phenomenon of ANSGs in Africa.

The increased incidence and activities of these ANSGs raise serious concerns about the institutionalisation of violence as a means of redressing grievances, its widespread use, and the persistence and seeming entrenchment of this phenomenon in some countries such as the DRC, Somalia and Sudan. The activities of these groups in national and regional conflicts have exerted a huge toll on the stability, development and security of Africa. Human insecurity has been a major casualty in terms of massive internal displacements, disruption of livelihoods, violations of human rights, heightened criminality, loss of lives and humanitarian crises.

Although ANSGs have existed in Africa in the pre-colonial, colonial and immediate post-independence periods, there has been a resurgence since the 1990s, with groups being formed for dissent, resistance, civil defence, and struggles for self-determination, political reforms and resource control. Also notable has been the persistence and seeming entrenchment of this phenomenon in some countries such as the DRC, Somalia and Sudan. The book seeks to analyse and understand ANSGs as institutions of struggle, opposition, resistance and violence in African politics; as part of a broad and larger politics of the struggles by identity groups and counter-elite for power, and resources and how these struggles are mediated by the state, ruling classes, political elite, civil society, neighbouring countries, and international organisations. This book is an attempt to answer some of these questions.

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The book highlights the growing role of ANSGs in the political and socio-economic landscape and the conflicts in Africa and their growing use of arms and violence, which traditionally were the monopoly of the state. The work also identifies the interfaces between the state, the nature of governance and politics with the emergence, activities and methods of ANSGs as well as with how they impact on the multiple crises of the state, governance and development in Africa. Further, the impact of ANSGs’ activities and engagements is examined, as well as the effect of internal conflicts, insurgencies and civil wars on human security and progress in Africa. This book is composed of case studies that utilise multidisciplinary approaches and concepts, a nalytical frameworks and perspectives drawn mainly from the social sciences and humanities. The specific case studies draw on historical, cultural, spatial and related contexts, and contemporary developments in Africa. Particularly, the book seeks to analyse and understand ANSGs as institutions of struggle, opposition, resistance and violence in African politics; as part of a broad and larger politics of the struggles by identity groups and counter-elite for power, and resources and how these struggles are mediated by the state, ruling classes, political elite, civil society, neighbouring countries, and international organisations. The book further investigates how ANSGs are transformed from civil struggle groups into militant and violent movements and how they are transformed in to non-violent political actors. Finally, the book makes a concerted effort to provide knowledge that could inform policy related to ANSGs in Africa.

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This chapter captures the major findings of the contributors in nine sections. The first section is an overview of the three types of ANSGs – militias, rebels and Islamist militants – that form the main topic of this study. The second section contextualises ANSGs in Africa. The third to fifth sections explore the social bases of militias and rebel movements, the causality and sustainment of armed conflicts and ANSGs and the nexuses between ANSGs, power, politics and violence. The sixth and seventh sections are exposés of how ANSGs threaten human security and undermine the state in Africa. The last two sections focus on the emerging regional dynamics and ramifications of ANSG activities, and draw some conclusions.

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

Militias

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

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

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

The more contemporary form, particularly in Africa, is that of small and mobile bands, usually youths, who are voluntarily and selectively recruited, poorly trained and moderately armed, and organised to respond to immediate challenges that may be national, regional, sectional, ethnic, religious and communal and that may relate to issues of power, resources, self-determination, freedom, insurgency or counterinsurgency. They may be formed by retired or current security personnel or by those with the relevant training and experience, and usually revolve around certain prominent commanders or war lords. They may be formed by retired or current security personnel or by those with the relevant training and experience, and usually revolve around certain prominent commanders or war lords. They may be formed by retired or current security personnel or by those with the relevant training and experience, and usually revolve around certain prominent commanders or war lords.

There are essentially two forms of militias in history: statist and non-statist or private militias. State militias are ‘paramilitary formations that organise in defence of the political order’ and proxies set up or cultivated as ‘adjuncts of state power’ and which fight for, on behalf of or at the behest of the state and state functionaries. Each of these is an armed formation, political parties, or informal armed wings of factions of the ruling class and political elite.

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constituted by law, its mobilisation, organisation, training, discipline, equipment, funding and deployment are regulated by the state. The reserve militia and the less formally organised state militias and alternative forces that existed in Europe and America between the 17th and 19th centuries fit into this mould. The modern version is the reserve army and standby forces of some states.6

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

There are a range of government or organised, patronised, supported or patronised some militia groups.8 In Sudan, the el-Bashir government has used the Janjaweed militias to fight rebel groups in the Darfur region. In Côte d’Ivoire the government has used the Young Patriots (Jeunes Patriotes) in the civil war to target northerners, immigrants and the French.9

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

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Political militias are ‘private armies of pro-regime strongmen’ or armed wings of political parties, sociopolitical movements and sometimes civil groups, that are sometimes mobilised to maintain in tectral order, co mbat o pposing g roups a nd perform cer tain c landestine p olitical r oles s uch a s co mmitting o r c ountering o f f ered or unter ing e lea nd p olitical v iolence.9 Examples are the Mambas, Cobras, Zolow and Ninja militias in the civil strife and power struggles in the RoC during the 1990s. Community, et hnic a nd r egional mi litias a re a rmed g roups m obilised a long i dentity lin es a nd c ommunities. T h e m odern v ersion is the reserve army and standby forces of some states.6

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Table 1–1: Types of militia in Africa

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

Source: compiled by authors.

Rebel movements

Rebel movements are organisations that essentially engage in armed opposition and resistance, and particularly in insurrection or in insurgency against governments and ruling regimes. It is the latter that defines the movement as rebel or creates the rebel tag. A rebel movement is a armed opposition or in insurgent organisations that are in incompatible with, disagrees with and challenges existing national governments. The central goal of a rebel movement is change in terms of displacement and replacement of existing governments, the change of existing frameworks to enable their participation in and possibly control governments, the devolution of authority to grant autonomy to regional governments or the redesign or redrawing of national boundaries to grant separate existence to some regional or ethnic homeland.

The concepts of rebel and rebellion are actually relative as they are merely labels that are based on perceptions and opinion. Further, the designations ignore the other side that is being violently challenged, usually the government or regime, in terms of character, legality and legitimacy.

There are different types of rebel movements. The liberation rebel movement resists colonisation and foreign domination and seeks independence, whereas the insurgent rebel movement seeks political change and political power. As Thompson notes, insurgent movements seek to ‘overthrow the existing state’ and replace it with a new political order and to ‘build alternative political authority’. The separatist, secessionist or irredentist rebel movement seeks a separate existence from an existing country or has secessionist objectives. The reformist rebel movement seeks to establish a new political system based on an ideology such as communism. Warlord insurgencies are closely knit groups built around leaders that seek to overthrow regimes/leaders but create ‘personal territorial fiefdoms’.

Rebel movements that have engaged in liberation struggles against colonial and foreign domination include the Mau Mau (Kenya), Front de Libération Nationale (National Liberation Front, FLN – Algeria), Movimento and recruitment, there can also be social movement or broad-based militias and warlord-based militias.

There is considerable fluidity in colouration and roles and in fact militias could, and do, wear different tags at different times. Community, ethnic and youth militias, for example, could be insurgent or counterinsurgent, political and non-government or even vigilante militias. Vigilante militias could become political and pro-government militias. Vigilante militias could be armed and conflict groups in the Niger Delta. Community-, et hnic- and youth-based. The Kamajor militias in Sierra Leone, though initially formed as a grassroots movement, became a grassroots movement, sponsored by community leaders and members. The Interahamwe in Rwanda was both a state militia and an ethnic militia.
Table 1-2: Types of rebel movements in Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rebel movements</th>
<th>Liberation movements</th>
<th>Insurgent rebel movements</th>
<th>Separatist rebel movements</th>
<th>Islamist rebel movements</th>
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<td>Oppression</td>
<td>Marginalisation</td>
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<td>Corruption of Islamic</td>
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<td>Political programmes/</td>
<td>Political Islam</td>
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<td>inclusion/reform</td>
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<td>Militant nationalist</td>
<td>Excluded politicians/youths</td>
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<td>Militant Islamic</td>
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<td>leaders</td>
<td>opposition</td>
<td>ethnoregional leaders</td>
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<td>Guerrilla warfare</td>
<td>Bloody protest</td>
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<td>methods of</td>
<td>Pitched battles</td>
<td>Pitched battles</td>
<td>Terror attacks</td>
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<td>territories</td>
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<td>Examples</td>
<td>Mau Mau (Kenya)</td>
<td>National Redemption</td>
<td>Rebel groups in</td>
<td>Armed religious groups</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>African Party for the</td>
<td>Front/Army (Sudan)</td>
<td>Sudan, Mali,</td>
<td>in Algeria, Somalia</td>
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<td>Guinea and Cape</td>
<td>Front (Sierra Leone)</td>
<td>Senegal, Ethiopia</td>
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<td>Verde (Guinea-Bissau)</td>
<td>Lord’s Resistance Army</td>
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<td>(Uganda)</td>
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Source: Compiled by authors.

Popular de Liberteção de Angola (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, MPLA – Angola), Frente de Libertaçao de M oçambique (Liberation Front o f Mozambique, FRELIMO – Mozambique), South West Africa People’s Organisation (SWAPO – Namibia), Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and Zimbabwé Africa People’s U nion (ZAPU) (Zimbabwe), Partido Africano para a Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde (APC) (Guinea and Cabo Verde), African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC – South Africa). Some of the liberation movements, for example the União para a Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, UNITA), as Pearce notes in chapter 13, started as liberation movements and then became reform insurgencies, while the Resistência Nacional e M oçambique (Mozambican National Resistance, RENAMO) was a reform insurgency. Both had elements of warlordism, however.

A distinguishing feature of the liberation movement as discussed by Musila (chapter 4), is that it is recognised in international law and subject to it. Some insurgent rebel movements grew out of grievances and agitation associated with identity-based exclusion and a utocratic regimes that abused and repressed the opposition and marginalised groups. According to Clapham the earliest versions of this group are anti-colonial insurgencies that grew out of grievances and agitation associated with identity-based exclusion and a utocratic regimes that abused and repressed the opposition and marginalised groups. Anti-colonial grievances were unpinned in insurgency movements in Ethiopia (Eritrea People’s Liberation Front, EPLF) and A lgeria (the Front de L ibération N ationale, FLN).

Post-colonial insurgencies have occurred in other regions, among others, Uganda (National Resistance Army, NRA), Chad (Forces A rmées du Nord / Armed Forces of the North, FAR), E thiopia (E thiopian P eople’s R evolutionary D emocratic F ront, ERPDF) and the DRC (Alliance des Forces D émocratiques p our la L ibération du C ongo-Zaïre / Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo/Zaire, ADLF). In Burundi, rebel groups such as the Conseil N ational p our la D éfense de la D émocratie / Forces p our la D éfense de la D émocratie (National Council for the Promotion of Democracy / Forces for the Defence of Democracy, CNDD-FDD) and the Forces N ationales d e L ibération (National Forces of Liberation, FNL), formerly known as the Parti p our la L ibération du Peuple H utu (Party for the Liberation of the Hutu People, PALIPEHU), have fought against marginalisation by the Tutsis in the government and military for over a decade. In Chad, the Union des Forces p our la D émocratie et le D éveloppement (Union of Forces for Democracy in Chad)
and Development, UFDD) has been fighting government forces in the east in a struggle to topple the government of Idriss Deby. Uganda’s Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) is perhaps one of the oldest rebel movements in Africa and the most regionalised. It has been fighting the Museveni government for over two decades. Bad governance based on ethnic and regional hegemonic rule, marginalisation and exclusion, fermented separatist rebel movements such as the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in Southern Sudan and Algeria’s Tuareg rebellion in the northern parts of Mali, Niger and South Algeria seeks an Azawad independent state. In the Casamance region of Senegal, the Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance (Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance, MFDC) has been waging a self-determination struggle since the 1980s. In Ethiopia, a separatist group, the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF), is fighting the Ethiopian government for the control of the oil- and gas-rich Ogaden region.

Militant Islamist groups

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

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

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

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

Most ANSGs are unstructured or loosely structured hierarchical organisations, whose members, usually between a hundred and some thousands, are trained in the use of modern light weapons by retired and disengaged military, police and other security agencies. They also include retired and disengaged military, police and other security agencies. Their arsenal usually comprises traditional weapons, assault rifles (the most popular being the AK-47), machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, bazookas, hand grenades and explosives.

ANSGs have a variety of characteristics and peculiarities. Some have been well organised, cohesive and disciplined, with a clear hierarchy and control over operations and activities, excellent leadership, organisational problems, and control and command problems and factional fighting, and are prone to internal dynamics and behaviour of followers as well as visionary, clear-headed and effective leaderships who weld the groups together, and inspire and sustain them. Among these are the NRA in Uganda and the EPLF in Eritrea. Clapham has noted that groups exhibiting these organisational and leadership characteristics were able to achieve success in the battlefield, a fair level of governance in the territories they inhabit.

The environment in which ANSGs operate determines specific organisational structures, strategies, operations and behaviours of members. For example, there exist more brutal methods of social control and more disjuncture in aspirations, values and goals in a symmetrical environments. Peters (chapter 14) points out that ANSGs that are challenged by unfavourable environments, such as restriction to jungle camps in inaccessible forests as in the case of the RUF in Sierra Leone, and sparsely populated villages as in the case of the NRA in Uganda, resort to forced conscriptions, abductions, forced labour, harsh punishments for escapees, confiscation of materials, and expulsion of communities.

The social bases of militias and rebel movements

The participation in ANSGs is dominated by foot soldiers who are male and young, unemployed and underemployed, school dropouts or poorly educated, with low levels of training, ideological leanings, dedication to goals, the quality of leadership, the nature of relations with host communities, the nature of threats faced and the nature of the environment. Zahar asserts that militia membership, objectives, structures and resource base determine the nature of militia-civil relations, treatment of communities and civilians and behaviour. Militias that are well-structured and organised with regard to chains of command and control, sanctions, processes and discipline, enforcement of standards of conduct, responsibility, de-escalation mechanisms, and compliance with rules.

Peters (chapter 14) notes that ANSG relations with communities and local people and the eventual attainment of their objectives. However, the majority of ANSGs are disorganised and undisciplined with loose control over operations and activities, poor leadership, organisational problems, control and command problems and factional fighting, and are prone to internal dynamics and behaviour of followers as well as visionary, clear-headed and effective leaderships who weld the groups together, and inspire and sustain them. Among these are the NRA in Uganda and the EPLF in Eritrea. Clapham has noted that groups exhibiting these organisational and leadership characteristics were able to achieve success in the battlefield, a fair level of governance in the territories they inhabit.
apprentices, artisans, street urchins and the urban and rural poor. They are largely marginalised, a lienated a nd f rustrated y ouths, w hose s pirations h ave b een blocked a nd w ho a re o ften s ubmerged in m oral cr ises, s ocially di slocated a nd suffer material hardship and misery. George and Ylönen (chapter 12) a nd K abir (chapter 11) a rgue that a lienated, f rustrated a nd di senchanted youths, w ho a re mostly urban and unemployed, together with poverty, are at the root of militant Islamist groups. Adams Oloo (chapter 6) locates the social base of the militias in Kenya in the lower class, among the unemployed youths, artisans, small traders, landless squatters, street children, hawkers, urban poor and slum dwellers.

Marginalised and alienated youths such as the Moryham youths in Somalia, the Raray boys in Sierra Leone, Bayaye in Kenya and Uganda, Machicha in Tanzania, Hittiste in Algeria, Tsotis in South Africa, Area Boys in Lagos and Yan Daba in Kano, Nigeria, have made up the core membership of several ANSGs. In Nigeria, the O bdua P eople’s C ongress (O PC) a ttracted a rtisans, t raders, un employed, peasants and the underclass in the densely populated areas of Lagos. However, at the t op e chelons o f ‘f m any mi li tias a nd r ebel m ovements a re a s prinkling o f e ducated and partly educated elements and activists who provide intellectual and general le adership, r elate t o o r li aise w ith t he o utside w orld a nd, in p articular, s p eak for t he gr oups. T his has b een es pecially t he c ase w ith t he et hnic m ittias in N igeria.22

The p lace o f w omen in ANSGs h as b een n eglected in t he li terature. Furthermore, w omen h ave o n t he w hole b een p resented m erely a s v ictims. B ut t hey p erform inportant r oles, s uch a s c arry ing f etish i tem s, f errying a rms, a ct ing a s spies o r i nformants and p roviding s uch s ervices a s c ooking, s ocial welf are a nd h ealth c are. W omen a lso a ct a s l ocal m otorisers o f b ehaviour a nd p eace-b uilders. T hey a lso a ct a s a moderating influence, a nd in t he Niger Delta r esource c onflicts, f or e xample, c ommunity w omen g roups h ave s ought to r estrain y outh v iolence a nd h ave p rotected t he ef fects o f v i clen ce o n t heir c ommunities, l ei lh eods, children a nd l ocal e conomies.23 A lthough A lice L akwena r emains t he m ost f amous r ebel l eader i n r ecent t imes, r ebel g roups s uch a s O NLF, E PLF a nd R PF a re k nown to h ave w omen in t heir r ank a nd f ile.

As f ar a s id enity is c oncerned, ANSGs t end to share id en tity co mmonalities s uch a s c ommunity, etnicity, region a nd r eligion. E ven w hen ANSGs h ave b road m embership o r a p an-identity s pread, t hey b egin w ith a co re id en tity a nd m ay h ave id en tity-based structures a t a s ubgroup a nd c ell l evel. A s Peters n otes (chapter 14), t he p oint o f e ntry a nd i nitial b ase o f m obilisation a nd r ecruitment i n ANSGs a nd i n surgencies a re of ten m arginalised a nd op pressed eth nic g roups, s uch a s t he M an o a nd G io g r oups i n C. h arles T aylor’s N ational P atri o tic F ront o f L iberia (NPFL), a nd t he M ende et hnic g roup i n F oday S ankoh’s RUF i n S ierra Le one.

At t he e arly s tages of d evelopment, m embership i s m ainly voluntary a nd b ased o n id en ty p atriotism, m obilisation a nd s olidarity a nd p articularly t he d epth o f f eelings a bout p erceived identity-based grievances. In s ome c ase s r ecruitment i s r estrained b y s pace, a rms a nd m aintenance r esources. H owever, a s e ngagements b road en a nd c onfrontations b ecome m ore ex tensive a nd s tressful, a nd s e as t he y b egin t o l ose c ontact w ith c ommunities, ANSGs m ay turn t o c onscriptions a nd f orced r ecruitment f rom w ithin a nd o utside t heir id en tity b ase. J uvenile s, y oung g irls a nd c hildren a re s omet imes c aptured, c onscripted a nd u sed a s spies, s ordaince c arriers, s ex s alves a nd ca nnon f ooder. In S ierra Leone, d rugs w ere u sed to p sy chologically p repare m em bers f or ac tion.24  Examples o f c hild r ebels a nd s e x s alves i n I nst i tute f or S ecurity S tudies (I S S) a nalysis o f r ebel g roups a nd f lags i n S ierra Le one, M useveni’s K idogos i n U ganda,25 a nd t he G ron na B oys i n Z imbabwe.26

The u se o f c hild r ebels i s q uite p revalent i n A frica. I n A ngola f or e xample, a bout 8 000 c hildren r egistered f or d emobilisation i n 2002, w hile i n M ozambique t here w ere a bout 300 000 c hildren u sed d uring t he w ar.27 T he r ecruitment a nd c irculation o f y ouths a nd c hildr ebel s a cross b orders w ere m ain f eatures o f t he c onflict i n t he M ano a nd G iou s. T hey w ere r ecruited f rom C ôte d ’Ivoire i nto L iberia, f rom L iberia i nto S ierra Le one a nd C ôte d ’Ivoire, a nd f rom G uinea i nto C ôte d ’Ivoire.28 I n n ort hern U ganda, t he LRA a bducted o r f orcefully c onscripted m ore than 60 000 y ouths, m ainly y oung a dolescents b etween 13 a nd 15 y ears o f age. T he LRA, l ike o ther r ebel g roups, p refers c hild r ebels b ecause o f t heir n et b enefits i n t erms o f i n doctrination a nd ef fectiveness.29 C hildren a nd y ouths a lso a ct as al most h alf o f t he m ittias a nd r ebel s i n t he DRC. A s a t F ebruary 2007, a bout 5 000 c hildren h ad b een d isarmed a nd d emobilised an d c ompared t o 115 000 a dult c ombatants, w hile a n estimated 15 000 – 20 000 c hildren c ompared t o 85 000 a dults w ere a w aiting d emobilisati on.30

ANSGs a lso d raw m embers f rom m igrants a nd f lags a cross b orders. B ettina E ngels (c hapter 3) i ntroduces t he c o ncepts o f r egional r ecruits (m igrants) a nd r egional w arriors (r ecruited f lags) t o e xplore t his p henomenon a nd a sserts t hat m ost ANSGs a re r egionally e mbedded. I n W est A frica, t here h as b een a h igh l evel o f m obility o f f lags a cross b orders b etween c ountries s uch a s L iberia, S ierra Le one a nd C ôte d ’Ivoire.
CAUSALITY AND SUSTAINMENT OF ARMED CONFLICTS AND ANSGs

Several explanatory perspectives and findings can be used to decipher the issues of causality and sustainment of armed conflicts and ANSGs in Africa. The point of departure for an analysis is a narrative perspective that provides explanations for conflicts and redress or justice around issues. The latter predicates causality or conflict ‘initiation or onset’ on grievances and the drive for redress or justice. The former predicates ‘shorter term post conflict peace durations’. Thus grievance and greed tend to have a symbiotic relationship with rebellion. To get started, rebellion needs grievance, whereas to be sustained, it needs greed. The latter predicates causality or conflict ‘initiation or onset’ on grievances and the drive for redress or justice. The former predicates ‘shorter term post conflict peace durations’. Thus grievance and greed tend to have a symbiotic relationship with rebellion. To get started, rebellion needs grievance, whereas to be sustained, it needs greed.

Between grievances and opportunism

Perhaps the most popular explanation in recent times is the ‘grievance versus greed’ discourse. The former predicates causality or conflict ‘initiation or onset’ on grievances and the drive for redress or justice. The latter predicates incentives for conflicts and rebellion on struggles over resource appropriation and control of opportunities and specific causes and struggles for lootable resources. This discourse is highlighted in the chapters by Kasaija, Wassara, Ibabu and Ikelegbe, and Kabir.

According to Collier and Hoeffler, most rebellions are either pure loot-seeking or combine justice-seeking and loot-seeking. In the latter, grievances could be a platform for agitation, it is merely a short-term smokescreen for larger and long-term interests and objectives of resource appropriation. The later works of Collier and Sambanis push the issue of the availability of lootable resources or ‘extortable economic rents’ beyond mere motivation to that of opportunities that make rebellion profitable. As Elbadawi and Sambanis have found, there is a positive and significant association between natural resources and violent conflicts and ANSGs. Though grievances exist and are articulated as a platform for agitation, it is merely a short-term smokescreen for larger and long-term interests and objectives of resource appropriation.

The thesis is based on evidence of the association between mineral wealth and the occurrence and duration of conflicts; the existence of violent struggles for resources in conflict regions; the concentration of conflicts in resource-rich zones of conflict regions; the profiteering from war and conflict by warlords, traders, and floodlighters; the high levels of economic crime and underground economies; and the involvement of merchants, syndicates and black marketing companies in resource-rich zones of conflict regions. Thus grievance and greed are mere starting points, and groups turn to loot for lootable resources. This thesis is based on evidence of the association between mineral wealth and the occurrence and duration of conflicts; the existence of violent struggles for resources in conflict regions; the concentration of conflicts in resource-rich zones of conflict regions; the profiteering from war and conflict by warlords, traders, and floodlighters; the high levels of economic crime and underground economies; and the involvement of merchants, syndicates and black marketing companies in resource-rich zones of conflict regions. Thus grievance and greed are mere starting points, and groups turn to loot for lootable resources.

However, in spite of some evidence from the cases of Liberia, Sierra Leone and the DRC, the greed thesis is simplistic, one-sided and weak in several respects. First, the larger issues such as the character of the state, regimes and governance, hegemonic struggles, the roles of politics and state failures and economic decline on which the causation and dynamics of civil wars are situated, are neglected in this thesis. Second, as emerging evidence suggests, the engagement in ANSG activities, violence and terrorism is not simply the result of the motives of people with a low level of education and low market opportunities, but a complex matrix of issues such as ideology, identity, localised and mundane reasons and personal motivations such as hate, vengeance and prestige. Third, as a meta-theory, greed ignores conflict histories and exonerates regimes and governments from greed. Alao and Olonisakin have noted that greed analysis tends to apply a broad brush explanation that ignores complex sociopolitical issues and political motivations that are ‘at the root of many contemporary civil wars’. For example, while focusing only on the rebel-based causes of conflict and violence, the thesis ignores the corruption, neo-patrimonialism, exclusion and marginalisation that characterise distributive politics, as well as the repression, abuses and legitimacy problems of regimes.

Besides, the combination of lootable resources and opportunism for rebels. Resources are not only strongly linked to both grievance and greed-based conflicts, but are more difficult to terminate and tend to have ‘shorter term post conflict peace durations’. Thus grievance and greed tend to have a symbiotic relationship with rebellion. To get started, rebellion needs grievance, whereas to be sustained, it needs greed.
In fact, Guichaoua has noted that the greed-based analysis is a historical and not comprehensive. Mkandawire has further pointed out that in some cases, the catalogue of cases usually packaged as evidence of greed in Africa’s resource wars, nowhere in Africa has a band of criminals grown into a rebel movement. Therefore, a more comprehensive analytical perspective has to be sought and applied in the analysis of conflict and ANSG causality.

The struggle for resources

The resource competition model situates conflicts in the mobilisation, organisation and collective actions in pursuit of valued resources, particularly where identity is associated with clear advantages in resource distribution and thereby conflicts are not perversely and proportionally related to inequalities of resource endowment and distribution.

Rather, conflicts are not comprehensive. Mkandawire has further pointed out that in spite of the presence of identity-based mobilisation and thus could escalate disputes into conflicts, conflicts are not perversely and proportionally related to inequalities of resource endowment and distribution.

Identity crisis

Identity and identity-based divisions and mobilisations along ethnic lines, as argued, are a decisive factor in the creation and use of tribal militias. In chapter 8, Ibaba and Ikelegbe state that oil theft syndicates in the Niger Delta armed, funded and used militias as guards and were instrumental in turning the militias into opportunistic, criminal and resource-theft elements.

The state and governance crises

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

As Norlen has found, ‘political variables especially political marginalisation are important in influencing the probability of observing a war event’ and inevitably engender secessionist ethno-territorial conflicts. This is particularly true where differences in modernisation and development, ensuing disparities and social inequalities contribute to the formation, funding, recruitment for diverse projects. In these circumstances violence and involvement into a massive youth and urban under-class that is available for mobilisation and recruitment by the ANSGs and even government counterinsurgency forces.

The elites further hijack conflict situations for personal interests. Chabal and Daloz have noted that ‘politicians bent on asserting themselves, latch on to legitimate popular grievances, and sometimes criminalise political conflicts and deploy criminal terror.’

In chapter 6, Oloo asserts that the militancy phenomenon in Kenya can be partly attributed to the manipulation and mobilisation of youths by political elites and the ANSGs. As Ibaba and Ikelegbe note in chapter 8, the political elite hire, arm and use militant youths and militias to intimidate opponents and perpetuate electoral abuses and violence.

### Economic decline and social ferment

In their chapters, Ikelegbe, Ibaba and Ikelegbe, Oloo, Omach, Kabir and Wassara highlight that the relationship between the African states and governance systems have become a major casualty of ANSG activities. George and Ylönen (chapter 12) and Kabir (chapter 11) have also found that corrupt and impious regimes, despised government and political elites have been major factors in the formation, funding, and recruitment of militant opposition groups.

Another key finding by Engels, Kubai, Oloo, Kabir, Ibaba and Ikelegbe is that youths have been the dominant base of recruitment and participation in ANSGs. This finding mirrors that of Abdullah and Muana, who point out that in Sierra Leone, youth problems have been the dominant base of recruitment and participation in ANSGs.

### The youth problem

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Leone, youths who were unemployed, poorly educated, school dropouts, or drug addicts who exhibited antisocial behaviour, social disaffection and rebelliousness, were critical participants in ANSGs.66 It is not difficult to understand the youth dominance in conflicts and ANSG activities, because of the ‘youth bulge’ and the ease with which they can be recruited, indoctrinated and utilised for violence, as well as manipulated and mobilised for diverse purposes. This is actually a question of social vulnerability. Economically diminished employment opportunities and rising impoverishment create disaffection, alienation and unruliness, which fuel crime, violence and rebellion. As Ikelegbe notes, these conditions have turned the youth on society in outrage, defiance, subversion and resistance and created a youth culture with elements of nihilism, fatalism, deviance, populism, resentment, impunity and violence.67

To the youth, participation in conflict violence actually represents an expression of power and seek personal opportunity and safety with insurgents. Moreover, young men proudly brandish AK-47 rifles and other sophisticated weapons. As Ikelegbe notes, the easy access to and supply of arms to ANSGs are critical to the onset and sustenance of violent conflicts. According to Ibaba is quite common to see in African armed conflicts images of young men proudly and Ikelegbe, the easy access to and supply of arms to ANSGs are critical to the onset and sustenance of violent conflicts. According to Michael Klare, arms proliferation has been victims and agents, or rather objects and subjects, of the diverse conflicts in Africa.

Globalisation and arms proliferation

Another key factor fuelling ANSG activities is the ready availability of weapons. It is quite common to see in African armed conflicts images of young men proudly brandishing AK-47 rifles and other sophisticated weapons. According to Ibaba and Ikelegbe, the easy access to and supply of arms to ANSGs are critical to the onset and sustenance of violent conflicts. Furthermore, Michael Klare argues that small arms represent a availability that fuels conflict initiation and tensification. Small arms can further be a status symbol and means of expressing power that attract the youth to resistance movements and crime. Small arms proliferation has been linked directly to violence in Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria.70 In many of the conflict regions there is a sizeable arms flow from other conflict regions and arms smuggling and trafficking across borders and along the coast, as well as on the high seas and in international waters. The theft, smuggling and sale of minerals and oil resources provided a abundant funds for the acquisition of arms in resource-rich regions.

Conflicts and ANSGs’ activities have largely contributed to the smuggling and proliferation of and the propensity to use guns in political violence and criminal activities. Africa has become a dumping ground for light weapons manufactured in Western and Eastern Europe and purchased from former conflict regions across the world. It was estimated that in 2004, of the 500 million illicit weapons in the world, 100 million were in sub-Saharan Africa and 8 – 10 million in West Africa.71 Indeed, the proliferation of illicit arms has been a destabilising factor and a major threat to the peace and security in Africa.72

Religion, culture and traditions

While historical and cultural orientations as well as heritage and religious deities and practices do not per se generate conflicts and violence, they could constitute the framework of di sposition a nd judgement and, of challenging the practices and conduct of state officials and local elites.73 Reno has also noted that some youths in ANSGs ‘seek personal opportunity and safety with insurgents’. The youth has therefore been victims and agents, or rather objects and subjects, of the diverse conflicts in Africa.
actually not only forms of expression of dissent but provide ideological and structural platforms for mobilisation and legitimisation. Olooloo, in chapter 6, adds that in the case of the SLDF, charms and oaths bound members to a common cause and were said to give them mystic protection that imbued them with supernatural powers and made them invincible.

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

Motivations and sustaining factors

With regard to what motivates the ANSGs and what keeps them fighting, Herbst has identified economic incentives, political indoctrination, ethnic mobilisation and coercion. On their own and in combination, these variables constitute the nucleus of the recruitment platforms of most ANSGs. As Collier, Hoeffler and Söderbom note, while greed fuels onset and initiation, the prolonged conflicts and wars tend to be underpinned by ethnic, religious and regional heterogeneity or diversity and particularly identity polarisation and fractionalisation. Beyond the ethnic basis, in the cases of political rebellion and conflicts and particularly those that have an ideological leaning, is political clientelism. The struggles for independence by movements in Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique and Equatorial Guinea, and to some extent the rebel movements in Uganda and Sierra Leone, contained elements of political indoctrination that were sometimes tinged with socialism. However, most rebel movements in Africa have not been ideologically oriented, and some claims to this effect were merely disjointed and haphazard thoughts provided by half-baked ideologues.

The existence of a positive perception of rebellion, or predisposing conditions for successful rebellion, is further crucial for achievement of its objectives. These conditions include the presence of charismatic leaders, the availability of funds and the weakness of state military and security agencies.

POWER POLITICS, VIOLENCE AND THE PHENOMENON OF ANSGs

The struggles for power

A key finding of this book is that the ANSG phenomenon can be linked to the struggles for power through the groups’ affiliations to some larger political groups, in both the government and opposition, on behalf of which they act. The phenomenon sometimes reflects the co-optation of the state to means to political and economic rights. This is why there is a large participation in ANSGs’ activities by persons who have lost confidence in public institutions, are disgruntled and discontented with existing power configurations and patronial networks, and who feel disadvantaged and precluded from existing pathways to power.

According to Ikelegbe (chapter 5), ANSGs flow from the nature of politics, the dynamics of power and its challenges, and particularly the politics of violence and the violence in politics that dominate the African political landscape. The phenomenon is further rooted in the politics of the zero-sum game, and the cutthroat pursuit for control of the state that utilises all means available, including fanning community, clan, ethnic, religious and regional acrimony. This is why some of the ANSGs in several countries developed from the youth wings of political parties, support groups of electoral candidates, and outfits formed to intimidate opponents during election campaigns. With time, as Olooloo (chapter 6) and Iba Aba and Ik Elegbe (chapter 8) point out, the groups became more autonomous agents of violence and mayhem. This is what happened in the case of some cult and militia groups in the Niger Delta in Nigeria since the 2003 elections and of the community bands and political militias in Kenya since the multiparty elections of 1992.

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

In fact, Osaghae et al, drawing on Tarrow and Medearis, posit that conflict and the ANSG phenomenon emerge from and are founded on social movements engaged in contentious collective action. These movements, which are the main channels of expression of disadvantaged, marginal and opposition groups and ordinary people in countries with dominant power structures and reforms and change. In Nigeria, for example, the Egbesu militia groups are anchored in a youth movement, while the OPC militia is a form of struggle of a broad movement in which those who wield state power use state institutions to coerce their clients, and are the instruments and platforms of counter-violence. ANSGs are products of this culture of political violence, and are the instruments and platforms of counter-violence.

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

In the end, the African political arena has become a theatre of state violence, and is the nature of the African state and leadership that has made violence a factor in the political terrain. Most post-colonial states have strict access to and use them to construct and maintain power and resources. While the ruling elite uses instruments of state violence, its rivals and those who have been excluded and marginalised create their own institutions of counter-violence. ANSGs are the products of this culture of political violence, and are the instruments and platforms of counter-violence.

What has happened is the emergence of counter-violence and the institutionalisation of violence as a means of controlling and seeking power and economic opportunities. While the ruling elite uses instruments of state violence, its rivals and those who have been excluded and marginalised create their own institutions of counter-violence. ANSGs are the products of this culture of political violence, and are the instruments and platforms of counter-violence.

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In some instances, it was the states’ extreme brutality and excessive force that gave rise to the extreme counter-violence of militants and rebels. Indiscriminate and retaliatory violence, whether by the state or ANSGs, have compelled youths in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Mozambique, the DRC and other countries to join militant and rebel groups as a means of survival, protection or as elations of fellow members of ethnic and other identity groups on the one hand, and as a means of revenge against abuses and atrocities on the other. As Kwesi Aning and Angela McIntyre have noted, governments – like rebel forces – have used forceful recruitment strategies (including terror and abduction) in civil wars in for example Sierra Leone. Peters (chapter 14), Oloo (chapter 6) and Wassara (chapter 9) also note that tactics of underinsurgency tactics are sometimes brutal, in cluding summary executions of fighters and even relatives, sackings of communities, indiscriminate killings, torture and detentions, and destruction of property.

Between functionality and dysfunctionality

ANSGs are often demised by governments as bunches of criminals, mi screants, vagabonds and opportunists. The Emily Purse of states such branding is to delegitimise the groups and deprive them of sympathy. However, we would miss certain facts in situations if we were to use gory narratives and dynamics of the groups and if we assume that they are purely a symptom of the state’s malfunctioning. Accordingly, we would miss certain facts if we assume that they are purely a symptom of the state’s malfunctioning. However, we would miss certain facts if we assume that they are purely a symptom of the state’s malfunctioning.

ANSGs usually seek to attain certain goals, which often pertain to a change in the status quo with regard to equity, justice, sociopolitical rights, citizenship rights and inclusion, and the issues of the national question, restructuring arrangements and state reforms such as decentralisation. In certain situations ANSGs’ activities could be seen as the last resort for governance such as corruption, collapse of social services and lack of discipline among the regime elite. Some of the issues at stake are critical to eventual progress, stability, integration and development of the African state in question.

ANSGs are therefore in a sense a form of social action – defiance, opposition, challenge, resistance and protest – against the form and nature of the state and how it is governed. In fact, in some ways, though regime-based labels often play down this dimension, the phenomenon is a symptom of the structural and actual participation. The deprivation of citizenship rights and the abuse by state officials and institutions. According to Pearce (chapter 13), quoting Cohen, RENAMO was, f or ex ample, a voice of the的声音 of the 

**ANSGs AND HUMAN INSECURITY IN AFRICA**

The incidence of rebellions, insurrections, secessionist attempts, insurgencies and wars in each conflict cluster in western, central and northeastern/eastern Africa has a been associated with widespread human insecurity and catastrophic humanitarian crises. The crises in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa regions are currently the most serious on the continent. The culture of political violence and the prevalence of state violence is acute in the territories that are in the United Nations Development Programme’s (UNDP) Transparency International’s various indexes. The core areas of impact are the construction of a terrain of violence, in discriminate violence, exit option, plundering and the state’s disruption of economies and the deepening of poverty; the generation of internal displacements, refugees and humanitarian crises; and the accentuation of state and governance crises.
Regime of indiscriminate violence, crime and terror

In several countries the activities of ANSGs and government counterinsurgency organisations as well as the conduct of conflicts have caused a severe breakdown in public law and order. There is often a reign of harassment, intimidation, fear and terror, leading to general uncertainty. Civilians and local communities live in fear of attacks, punishments and retaliations. In the CAR, there have been reprisal attacks and mass punishments against civilians and communities.69 Most ANSG and counterinsurgency activities have been characterised by extensive, arbitrary and horrendous violence, physical abuses and atrocities, torture, in discriminate killings and executions. Rebel movements li ke the LRA and the RUF have used brutalities such as mutilations (amputations of arms and legs, slicing off of ears, chopping off of fingers), and indiscriminate killings of civilians by hanging them from trees and burning victims alive in the presence of horrified crowds, as strategies to intimidate the population and compel governments to negotiate with them.69

With regard to Sierra Leone, Peters (chapter 14) notes that RUF rebels and renegade soldiers raped, mutilated and burned alive hundreds, if not thousands, in their failed attempt to capture Freetown in 1998. Territories where groups such as the LRA operate are highly insecure and also prone to criminal activities such as armed robberies, assassinations, murders and rape. It is this terrible toll that makes wars in Africa seem like wars on civilians, as they suffer direct and indirect violence and loss of livelihood.69

Socio-economic disruptions and deepening poverty

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

The disruption of productive activities and commerce, the forcible appropriation of private properties and the resultant effects on living conditions, availability of goods and services and incomes produce deep and widespread poverty. Human misery depends with soaring living costs and unemployment. Using the case of Kenya to illustrate his arguments, Adams Oloo (chapter 6) asserts that the activities of ANSGs have stunted economic growth, destroyed livelihoods and caused food insecurity through the closure of businesses and markets and the abandonment of farms.

A regime of extortion and plundering

ANSGs in conflict situations in most cases engage in activities such as extortion and plundering to generate resources that are used to profit their leaders and to sustain the group’s activities. Usually, conflict and war economies are constructed through illegal taxes, levies and forceful contributions by workers, traders, shop owners, transporters, miners and farmers, who are forced to pay a surcharge fee based on an arbitrary calculation of their earnings. Locals are also subjected to forced payments for services such as protection and security of economic production, trade routes and markets. In some cases, local people are forced to pay a ‘tax’, compelled to hand over their produce or used as labourers and carriers of equipment. According to Oloo (chapter 6), militia in Kenya have an elaborate machinery and system of tax collection and extortion that includes a route or transporter’s levy, protection fees and levies on shops, farms and small businesses. In chapter 7, Kasaija also provides examples of how government soldiers, rebels and militia in the DRC have used methods such as direct extraction, extortion/confiscation, “taxation”, and coercion of the local population to extract the minerals.

In conflict environments, the groups help themselves to loottable resources. In the region of Niger Delta, the LRA and the RUF have operated in territories where groups such as the LRA operate are highly insecure and also prone to criminal activities such as armed robberies, assassinations, murders and rape. It is this terrible toll that makes wars in Africa seem like wars on civilians, as they suffer direct and indirect violence and loss of livelihood.

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Internal displacement, refugee and humanitarian crises

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

In the first six years of the conflict that started in 1991, about 300,000 people died in the first six years of the conflict that started in 1991. In Angola’s renewed fighting between the government and UNITA rebels in 1992, about 400,000 people were killed, 1.5 million were displaced and 330,000 became refugees. In the 16-year-old war in Mozambique, a bout three million people were killed in the first six years of the conflict that started in 1991.

In countries such as the CAR, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, the DRC and Sudan have been seriously weakened and rendered incapable of managing conflicts, providing social services and asserting their sovereignty over their territories. Kasaija (chapter 7), Ihaba and Ikelegbe (chapter 8) and Kabir (chapter 11) argue that ANSGs take advantage of weak and fragile states such as the DRC and Nigeria. Others that collapsed at some point, through the activities of ANSGs, such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and Somalia, became havens in which ANSGs and anarchical conditions flourished.

In countries such as the DRC, ANSG activities have accelerated state decline and exposed its weaknesses with regard to the provision of human security. State fragility is usually demarcated in terms of security apparatus failure, tendency to looting, ex cessive use of force, in discriminate violence against civilians, operational deficiencies and combat failures. The behaviour of state security apparatuses has contributed to regime collapses in such states as the CAR, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, the DRC and Sudan.

While state governments have to some extent contributed to the growth of ANSG activities in Africa, they have also been one of the major victims of the conflicts that accompany these activities. Many governments in countries such as the DRC, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, the DRC and Sudan have been seriously weakened and rendered incapable of managing conflicts, providing social services and asserting their sovereignty over their territories. Kasaija (chapter 7), Ihaba and Ikelegbe (chapter 8) and Kabir (chapter 11) argue that ANSGs take advantage of weak and fragile states such as the DRC and Nigeria. Others that collapsed at some point, through the activities of ANSGs, such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and Somalia, became havens in which ANSGs and anarchical conditions flourished.

ANSGs, STATE WEAKNESS AND COLLAPSE

Ikelegbe (chapter 5) and Wassara (chapter 9) point out that the e arly casualties in conflict situations plagued by ANSG activities is the weakening of the state capacity to provide public safety and security to the population. As conflict intensifies, the state becomes incapable of providing security as a public good due to the deploymen of state resources to protect the interests of local political authorities. In states without effective governance, some of whom sympathise with ANSGs or provide them with food and intelligence (see chapter 14). Militias and rebels usually react to government’s heavy-handed responses by targeting infrastructure that serves the public, which further weakens the state and makes it a re characterised by a Hobbesian state of nature: brutality, in solence, impunity and mayhem.

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Some rebel movements that gained more legitimacy due to effective leadership and organisation accentuated the collapse of regimes. Instability and political crises have also dogged countries such as Burundi, the CAR, Chad, the RoC, Côte d’Ivoire, the DRC, Nigeria, Uganda, Somalia and Sudan that have a history of military and political interventions.
militia and rebel groups, some operating for decades without being vanquished by government forces.

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

The impact of ANSG activities is felt far beyond the borders of the states within which they originated. ANSGs have regionalised human security and posed serious challenges to regional mechanisms for preventing, managing and resolving conflicts. Regional trends that dovetail with ANSG activities include humanitarian crises, human rights violations and use of violence as a tool for conflict resolution. As Munene (chapter 15) and Okumu and Ikelegbe (chapter 16) point out, addressing ANSGs requires approaches that include regional mechanisms, as national measures are constricted by international boundaries. Using the concept of a regional conflict complex, Paul Omach (chapter 10) identifies the central characteristic of regionalisation in terms of the Great Lakes region as, among others, a major source of interstate conflicts. In fact, the major difference in the activities and operations of ANSGs in the last two decades has been their transborder and transnational operations. ANSG orchestrates interstate conflict activities, as can be deduced from the post-attack military and police deployments, erection of roadblocks and checks, closure of banks, offices and shops, and desertion of the city centre. In Cameroon, armed groups allegedly linked to the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) militants have helped themselves to the country's mineral resources, while Munene (chapter 15) states that countries that intervened in the DRC became large exporters of minerals that were not produced in their countries. In other situations, too, neighbouring countries have benefited from illegal exploitation and theft of and trading in resources. In the Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Liberia civil wars, countries such as Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea and Liberia benefited from illegal trading and commercial networks. In Nigeria, stolen crude oil and refined products are smuggled and marketed along the coastal regions of West Africa.

Ibaba and Ikelegbe point out that the cross-border activities of ANSGs are fast spreading in West Africa. In February 2009, Equatorial Guinea alleged that the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) militants and the LRA; incursions of Uganda, Rwanda and Angola into Zaire, and interventions of Uganda, Rwanda, Zimbabwe and Angola in the DRC (see chapters by Kasaija, Omach and Wassara). Some governments have used rebel groups as instruments of foreign policy, as in the case of Sudan, which has supported the LRA in retaliation of the Museveni government's backing of the SPLA. The Rwandan and Uganandan governments have supported rebel groups in the DRC, apart from sending their forces to pursue rebel groups using the DRC as operational bases. According to Kasaija (chapter 7), these countries have had a hand in the founding, arming and assisting rebel groups such as the MLC (Uganda) and the CNDP (Rwanda) in the DRC.

Regionalisation of ANSGs and military interventions such as Rwanda’s, Burundi’s and Uganda’s support of rebels in the DRC and Angola’s and Zimbabwe’s support of the DRC government were often resource motivated. These interventions have been accompanied by resource exploitation by agents and government-authorised companies from Angola, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Kasaija and Wassara). Some governments have used rebels as instruments of foreign policy, as in the case of Sudan, which has supported the LRA in retaliation of the Museveni government’s backing of the SPLA. The Rwandan and Uganandan governments have supported rebel groups in the DRC, apart from sending their forces to pursue rebel groups using the DRC as operational bases. According to Kasaija (chapter 7), these countries have had a hand in the founding, arming and assisting rebel groups such as the MLC (Uganda) and the CNDP (Rwanda) in the DRC.

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In their chapters, Engels, Omach and Peters all note that it is not only ANSGs’ activities and state responses in terms of cross-border activities that have become characterised by emerging regionalisation, but also the fighters, particularly the youth and children. Thus Taylor’s NPFL recruited young fighters from Sierra Leone and Côte d’Ivoire. While Côte d’Ivoire assisted the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) with recruiting young people and child fighters from the refugee camps in the region, Côte d’Ivoire further enabled the recruitment of children from Sudan, the CAR and the DRC.

As the conflict inflicted a real and acute crisis, the complexity of alliances, pacts and support across borders, between states, between states and ANSGs, and between the international community and the states, increased. In the Mann R aven co-incident with conflict co-ordinates, Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire supported rebels in Liberia, which in turn supported rebels in Sierra Leone and government forces in Côte d’Ivoire. In Rwanda, Uganda supported the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF, Front Patriote Rwandais), and later fought with it to oust Zaire’s Mobutu from power for backing the Rwandan rebels. Interestingly, Rwanda and Uganda turned against Laurent Kabila, whom they had installed in power, and supported a rebel against his government that was then propped up by the Angolan, Namibian and Zimbabwian governments. Uganda and Rwanda later turned against each other and used rebels as proxies to enhance their interests in the DRC. Apart from using the LRA as a proxy against the Ugandan government, Sudan also supported rebels in Chad and the CAR, which in turn supported rebels in Darfur.

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

CONCLUSION

An understanding of the phenomenon of militias, rebel groups and militant Islamist groups is critical not only because the issues of causality, sustainability, social bases and nternal dynamics are central to managing and resolving conflicts, but also because they pose huge threats to the states’ capabilities to be governed well and to provide their populations with security. Underlying some aspects of fates and fragility, and thus the phenomenon of ANSGs and their activities is not only managed by managing and resolving conflicts, but because they pose huge threats to the states’ capabilities to be governed well and to provide their populations with security. Underlying some aspects of fragility and the provision of human security, are the complex relationships with community, ethnic and regional elites, political elites, state officials and international states, the opposition and resource-based companies and syndicates. Elements of power are based on grievances and the provision of human security, contributes to the emergence of ANSGs – which then threatens and accentuates insecurity. The ANSG phenomenon not only poses the greatest threat to statehood in Africa by accelerating its decline and collapse, but has also contributed to some of the greatest human tragedies in the world.

But the phenomenon itself is complex both in context, activities, engagements and effects. It has a complex relationship with community, ethnic and regional elites, political elites, state officials and international states, the opposition and resource-based companies and syndicates. Elements of power are based on grievances and the provision of human security, contributes to the emergence of ANSGs – which then threatens and accentuates insecurity. The ANSG phenomenon not only poses the greatest threat to statehood in Africa by accelerating its decline and collapse, but has also contributed to some of the greatest human tragedies in the world.

It is these complexities that complicate any attempt at analysis. Therefore it is not surprising that the phenomenon can best be understood by detailed, in-depth
studies of specific cases while bearing in mind the general characteristics, internal dynamics, driving forces, linkages with local and external forces, its politics and economics and the complex relations with international and local actors, their political, social, economic, and cultural contexts. Out of these, some general, systematic and analytically based conclusions can be drawn that would aid understanding and second in the management of ANSGs.

NOTES

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

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44 Guichaoua, The making of an ethnic militia.


47 Makandwire, Th e terrible toll of post-colonial rebel movements in Africa, 187.

48 Lyman, Th e making of an ethnic militia.

49 Mka ndawire, Th e making of an ethnic militia.

50 Augustine Ik elegbe, Youth conflicts in West Africa, 124–147.

51 Guichaoua, Economic agenda in civil wars

52 Ibn al R awan, How much war will we see? Economic agenda in civil wars in Africa

53 Augusto Mcllroy, How much war will we see? Economic agenda in civil wars in Africa

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56 Ibn al R awan, How much war will we see? Economic agenda in civil wars in Africa


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63 Rene, Th e making of an ethnic militia in collapsing states, 845.

64 Patrick C habal a nd Jan-Pascal D aloz, Afr ica w orks: d isorder as p olitical i nstrument

65 Rene, Th e making of an ethnic militia in collapsing states, 845.

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68 Rene, Th e making of an ethnic militia in collapsing states, 845.

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86 Rene, Th e making of an ethnic militia in collapsing states, 845.
INTRODUCTION

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

With over 250 wars1 around the world, the last century may have been the most brutal in human history, measured not only in terms of the number of casualties but also in terms of the changing nature of warfare, where 85–90 percent of the casualties were civilians. Admittedly, ‘the magnitude of this violence is staggering’2 and Africa is by far the continent most affected by collective violence.3 It is indisputable that most of this violence has been perpetrated by various factions and groups, which has generated low- and high-intensity intrastate conflicts, which have become one of the hallmarks of our time.

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Chapter 2

Historical and cultural dimensions of militia and rebel groups in Africa

Anne N Kubai

INTRODUCTION

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

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

- The first phase is the period before colonialism when reformers mobilised resistance against oppressive traditional rulers in societies with centralised sources of authority.
- The second phase is the scramble for Africa when colonial powers moved into Africa to annex their spheres of influence. Resistance to the imposition of European colonialism in Africa was in many cases ruthless and many lives were lost, since African warriors were no match for European armies with modern weaponry. This violence, one can argue, set the stage for the bloody resistance that was to become the hallmark of Africa’s history.
- The third phase is the liberation struggle, which pitted Africans against their colonial masters who they were determined to drive out of newly created states so that they could reclaim the land and freedom that the colonised peoples believed would be the products of self-rule and political independence.
- The fourth phase followed the realisation that the much-sought-after freedom that the colonised peoples believed would be the products of self-rule and political independence. Despite the dynamic influences of other cultures, particularly the process that accompanied by violence and it has been blamed partly for the current woes of the continent. It has been suggested that the colonial social and political institutions that were bequeathed to the independent African leaders were weak and underdeveloped, which did not augur well for future political stability of the newly created African states. The way power was transferred to the new African leaders at independence was to shape the future ideological trends and eventually the political and economic development of the citizenry of these new states. They had high expectations for development, but were challenged by a variety of vulnerabilities. Instability was an inherent part of the new state systems, which soon became manifest in security and violence. The background p artially shaped the environment that became a fertile breeding ground for the growth of militia and rebel groups within a few decades after independence in many African countries. This is presented by its proponents as the major factor for the proliferation of militia and rebel groups. But obviously there are other important historical factors, such as the Cold War and its aftermath – which changed the nature of conflict appreciably – as well as an increased population and the degradation of the environment, both of which have put tremendous pressure on African political regimes and generated the need for alternative sources of support to mitigate the prevailing circumstances.

In the African ‘traditional’ world view(s), most basic authority was vested in the head of the family, who enjoyed undisputed power as the family head and was the mediator with the world in matters of the family. The elders also accorded high social status and respect and power. Next in the hierarchical order of power were the clans and finally the chiefs, who held their positions for life. Despite the dynamic influences of other cultures, particularly the process that have utilised cultural resources especially for the recruitment into and mobilisation of militia and rebel groups. Cultural explanations include the African conceptions of authority and symbols.
bears such contested labels as ‘Westernisation’ and ‘modernisation’, there is no doubt that elements of African cultures are still vibrant and continue to shape the way people perceive themselves and their environment.

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

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

In the 19th century and the earlier part of the 20th century, many African societies put up strong resistance to European intrusion in Africa. A number of the rebellions were inspired by precolonial religious practices, beliefs and customs that continued to shape the political and social organisation of societies in Africa. The role of Islam, with its emphasis on the power and the “big man”, is significant in the context of local religious practices and beliefs.

In the 19th century, many African religious leaders in several states in West Africa had various grievances against the aristocracy, such as conscription into the armies to fight fellow Muslims and non-Muslims. The best known of these was the jihad of Uthman dan Fodio who, inspired by his deep knowledge of Islamic law and mystical visions, declared war against the co-ruler and his government. He was to shape the future of the West African societies.

In 1881 Muhammad Ahmad, believing that God had called him, declared himself the Mahdi or ‘the guided one who would come during the troubled times at the end of the world’ and accepted an oath of allegiance from local communities, gathering a large following that was mobilised against the Turco-Egyptian occupation.

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Historical and Cultural Dimensions of Militia and Rebel Groups in Africa

HISTORIES OF REBELLION AND RESISTANCE TO OPPRESSION AND FOREIGN INTRUSION

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intruders apostates and therefore worse than unbelievers. From his position as the Mahdi he attacked the oppressors and won the support of the Sudanese people, who resented the Turko-Egyptian administration.14 Not only did the Mahdi put up a formidable resistance to the British, but the history of the Mahadiyya had an enormous influence upon the geopolitics of present-day Sudan.

East African countries such as Kenya have a history of resistance dating back to the struggle against the establishment of colonial rule. The Nandi rebellion, which started in 1890 and lasted for 11 years, was so extensive that it was the earliest rebel movements in Kenya to oppose foreign intrusion. By 1900, the Nandi warriors had destroyed an important telegraph communications centre at Kitoto, in the Nandi valley, thus cutting off communications between the British government in London and its soldiers and the railway workers in Kenya and Uganda. Even after the British soldiers had mounted a massive attack on the Nandi fighters, the Nandi leaders declined to sign a peace agreement. Five decades later, the Nandi rebellion, which started in 1890 and lasted for 11 years, was one of the earliest rebel movements against colonial rule. The Nandi rebellion, especially if one takes into account that the countries where there were movements that proclaimed themselves to be harbingers of change were soon forced to stand up against colonial rule.

The Mahdiyya was the most serious crisis British colonial rule had to face in Africa.19 The Mau Mau mobilised people at grassroots level and mobilised a formidable resistance against the British administration. The Mau Mau was the most serious crisis British colonial rule had to face in Africa. The Mau Mau mobilised people at grassroots level and mobilised a formidable resistance against the British administration. The Mau Mau was the most serious crisis British colonial rule had to face in Africa.

The repressive German regime in what is now Tanzania bred discontent among the people and by 1905, an anti-British movement had been inspired by the Mahdi and the Mahadiyya. The Mahdi and the Mahadiyya were the most serious crises British colonial rule had to face in Africa.

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The real political heritages of African states at independence were the authoritarian structures of the colonial state, an accompanying political culture and an environment of politically relevant circumstances tied heavily to the nature of colonial rule.19

Though the implications of the nature of this change may have been lost on the people in the euphoric celebration of victories of independence, it did not take long for the flaws in the changeover to become clear. Within the first decade, many of the leaders proved to be dictators and resentment of the system was beginning to develop among the general population in the newly ‘liberated’ countries. What could have gone wrong with the ‘heroes’ of the liberation struggle, who had been hailed as the saviours of their people? The answer is simple: they were heirs to the colonial heritage at the dawn of a new era – the post-colonial era.

These historical examples of organised and violent resistance to oppressive rule and foreign intrusion make it possible to situate the phenomenon of militia and rebel groups within the history of resistance in Africa. This is particularly evident if one takes into account that the countries where there were movements that proclaimed themselves to be harbingers of change were soon forced to stand up against colonial rule.

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

The real political heritages of African states at independence were the authoritarian structures of the colonial state, an accompanying political culture and an environment of politically relevant circumstances tied heavily to the nature of colonial rule.
fitting into the shoes of those that they had replaced. Following this historical trajectory, the next scene of African politics was to be dominated by the emergence of all manner of civil groups in many of the countries, which claimed to be acting on behalf of the people. Some of these groups were self-help women and youth groups, welfare groups and nongovernmental organisations working outside a predatory government indifferent to the needs of its citizens and community against community, in shooting wars.20

Another important factor should be borne in mind, namely the nexus between an economic crisis and insecurity. As Abutudu observes:

Adjustment policies and neo-liberal reforms in general are so severe in their impact that they have tended to undermine the basis of the nation-state project in post-colonial Africa, compounding the weakness of the state, engendering mass hostility to it and underpinning its legitimacy.18

As the Commission on Human Security put it, poverty and the exclusion and deprivation of whole communities of people from the benefits of development, naturally co-occurs to the tensions, violence and conflict within countries19 – and there can be no doubt that deprivation contributes to conflicts and violence in Africa. The situation that has proved to be fertile ground for the emergence of militia and rebel movements in Africa is summed up as follows by Abutudu:

When people are deprived and are struggling to fulfill basic needs, they tend to be more prone to violence and crime rates increase and the youth tend to be drawn into delinquency. In such cases there is no peace and security for the individual or the society. Inextricably linked with the issue of peace and security, is the question of justice. I think that knowledge that a sense of frustration and despair, in equality and justice and discrimination in society can and often do lead to violent crime in the region. It is common knowledge that a sense of frustration and despair, in justice, in equality and discrimination in society can and often do lead to violence and conflict within countries and communities against community, in shooting wars.20

Furthermore, failure to meet the aspirations of the society usually leads to social upheavals, which in turn threaten the state. Where the national elites are not accountable to the people, the pattern is that when people begin to interrogate their relationship with the state, a sense of irritation and anger and eventually explodes. Hence I state that the emergence of militias in Africa could well be characterised as one form of social explosion.
TRADITIONAL CONCEPT OF AUTHORITY AND CONTEMPORARY POLITICS

For the purpose of this chapter, I espouse the view of culture as dynamic, aptly summed up as ‘the meanings, changing over time, that are generally attributed in a given community to repertoires of action’ by Ellis.21 A more expanded view is provided by Ali A Mazrui, who posits seven functions of culture in society, namely that it provides lenses of perception and cognition, motives for human behaviour, criteria of evaluation, a broad axis of identity, a mode of communication, a basis of stratification and a production and consumption.22 From this perspective both the emergence and actions (behaviour) of the rebel groups and militia can be situated within a cultural context.

Needless to say, traditional and modern political ideology denied how the role of the traditional ruler, who was the ‘pinnacle of power and all authority figures beyond the family level, which is filled by leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Mobutu Sese Seko of the former Zaïre, Hastings Kamuzu Banda of Malawi, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and even more recently, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. These leaders became, as was the case with the traditional kings and chiefs, invested with absolute power over their parliaments and citizens. They became the ubiquitous presidents as heads of the

African cultures remain vibrant and are playing a leading role in the efforts to cope with the forces affecting African societies. Questions of personal and collective identity and meaning frequently come to the fore as well as discontent with political oppression, foreign exploitation, and economic inequality and poverty.24

The appropriation of the African concept of authority serves well to illustrate the cultural dimension. In the traditional African communal life, a authority figures beyond the family level, which is filled by leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Mobutu Sese Seko of the former Zaïre, Hastings Kamuzu Banda of Malawi, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and even more recently, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. These leaders became, as was the case with the traditional kings and chiefs, invested with absolute power over their parliaments and citizens. They became the ubiquitous presidents as heads of the

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

Social control through shame and fear of transgressing taboos or upholding of dignity is also the reason behind the formation and maintenance of the various sodalities such as blood friendships, secret societies, age grades and joking relationships play a conspicuous political role, each one at its own level in African societies.25

The point here is that in different types of political and administrative organisations across the African continent, authority was generally concentrated in the person of the head of family at the family level, the king where kingdoms existed, or chief at community level. Magesa uses the case of Bunyoro to illustrate the role of the traditional ruler, who was the ‘pinnacle of power and all authority [flowed] from him’. He could take away chiefdoms even from hereditary holders and give them to persons loyal to him, and therefore more deserving of those positions. However, my aim is not to prove a det ailed account of the traditional political systems, but to illustrate how the cultural values and political ethos came to influence political practice in contemporary Africa, and hence pose a challenge to the Western character of the state.

In line with this point of departure, I suggest that the personalised rule, with a high concentration of power and the practice of patronage relationships – which were soon to become the defining characteristics of the new African leaders – were informed by the traditional concept of authority based on ethnicity and kinship. The authority and power of the father in a family are reproduced in the role of the founding father of the nation, which was filled by leaders such as Such as A K. Wambe Nkrumah of Ghana, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Mobutu Sese Seko of the former Zaïre, Hastings Kamuzu Banda of Malawi, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and even more recently, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. These leaders became, as was the case with the traditional kings and chiefs, invested with absolute power over their parliaments and citizens. They became the ubiquitous presidents as heads of the
military, university chancellors and watukufu (Swahili term meaning glorious, exalted) figures after whom in stitutions o'f hig her le arning, r oads, s chools, hospitals and key intuitions in their states were named. Hence, not only does the traditional model for t he ex ercise o f a uthority b ecome in compatible w ith the Western norms of democratic governance, but it also reinforces militarism and promotes primordial loyalties, which are the fodder for militarism in Africa. In Somalia, for instance, a warlord is viewed in terms of traditional leadership based on the clan system. He (it is usually a man) not only receives, but also 'deserves' allegiance and support from members of his clan.

The contrivance of the public sphere for social expression and political action could not be more explicit than in the practice of sacking government ministers at will and expelling non-conformist and disloyal members from the ruling parties. These actions reflect the traditional exercise of authority and control of political organisation by a k ing o r c hief. This s tyle o f le adership b ecame en trenched in post-colonial Africa, too, and has largely shaped the current political and social trends in many African countries. It has become practice to quell the dissenting voices, often by using violence through the 'arms of government' such as the police and paramilitary forces. The unintended outcome of this practice is to strengthen the resolve of those who hold dissenting opinions and those who feel they are being strangled by the hold on power of the all-powerful president. Hence this is one of the factors that has engendered dissention, which has in turn nurtured the growth of rebel groups and militia. These include the Egyptian Boys of Africa, Ijaw Youths Movement, the Bakassi Boys in the Anambra and Abia movement for the actualisation of a sovereign state of Biafra, O'odua People's Congress, Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force, Chicoco Movement and Arewa People's Congress. Like the others, the Bakassi Boys in t he A namb ra and A bia states emerged as a resistance army in response to insecurity emanating from the 'threat of armed robbers' with the financial support of the traders who had been targeted by the robbers.

IN SEARCH OF IDENTITY

Perceived or real social dif ferences in t he et hnic, co mmunal and religious dimensions are responsible for shaping a people's world view. Hence, in the past, African cultural norms and values have been turned into a useful resource, aiding the formation of and recruitment for militia groups and rebel movements. Culture is the basis of identity, both individual and communal.

Normally young people are concerned about their identity, who they are and what they will become in the future. For answers to these questions they turn to the society: p eers a nd s urvivals, a nd n arratives a bout c orruption, violence, p olitical a nd c onomic a nd p overty. Th ese c ommunal experiences h ave over time contributed to the creation of deeply entrenched sentiments about social exclusion and marginality, especially among the young. A shared experience of brutalisation, abuse and marginalisation informs the worldview of those fighting for these movements.

To ci te N igeria a s a n exa mple, t he p olitical c limate a nd t he g eneral s ocial conditions, s ummed up b y A dejumobi a s t he 'c ontradictions a nd c risis s of t he N igerian s tate' during the Babangida and Abacha military regimes, created an environment conducive to t he em ergence o f et hnic militia a nd other mili tant groups. These in clude t he E gbesu B oys o f A frica, I jaw Y outh s M ovement, a movement for t he ac tualisation o f a  sovereignty s tate o f B iafra, O’odua P eople’s Congress, Niger Delta P eople’s V olunteer F orce, Chicoco M ovement and A rewa Peopl e’s Congress. L ike t he o thers, t he B akassi B oys in t he A namb ra a nd A bia states emerged a s a resistance army in response to insecurity emanating from the 'threat of armed robbers' with the financial support of the traders who had been targeted by the robbers.
decades, there is a plethora of agents that compete for influence and the choices the youth face are redefined beyond the limits of conventional social checks and balances. The cultural turbulence of our times is reflected in the behaviour and activities of the youth.

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

Thakur identifies three factors leading to the emergence of various militias in the case of the Kivu region of the DRC, namely personal enrichment; the power and security vacuum that generates the need to provide security for their people, reinforced by the ethnic configuration; and the current post-transition political climate that makes it possible for militant groups to emerge and thrive in this part of the country. However, in the case of the Kinyarwanda-speaking communities of the eastern DRC, the question of identity and citizenship came to the fore quite early during Mobutu’s regime and later became the central issue of the conflict. Laurent Nkunda, leader of the National Congress for the Defence of the People, a rebel group, was interviewed by the BBC in 2008 and asked why he was ‘fighting a democratically elected government’, his response was that ‘we are protecting our people’. This statement implies that the people that he was purporting to protect are identifiable as a particular group that feels either threatened or insecure.

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

**USE OF RELIGION**

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

> **In some cases, such as northern Uganda, established religious traditions are applied to new social conditions resulting in innovations of beliefs.** Basing oneself on the basis of existing traditions, new social conditions result in innovations that are based on the social context of religion and lead people to abandon their established religions and adopt new beliefs and rituals.

Innovative use of religious rituals and interpretations of scriptures and doctrines create a sense of novelty, of change in the status quo and hence provide some credibility to the rebel groups. By attacking the existing corrupt governments or unIslamic practices, these militias provide a new alternative, but also a sense of legitimacy to their cause.
In his brief overview of how he calls ‘an im portant feature of mi litarism’, Francis posits that there is a link between the activities and *modus operandi* of the militias and the belief in supernatural powers and occult practice. The hallmark of these organizations is their claim to supernatural powers through the use of oracular deities and secret societies and also their claims of ‘invincibility’ or being ‘inoculated’ against bullets and light weapons.

His analysis leads him to the conclusion that the use of oracular deities, juju warriors, and other activities, is understood from the perspective of the military and the psychological dimension of asymmetrical warfare.

However, Francis’s perspective has one notable drawback in that he sees merely a link between the way the militias operate and the belief in supernatural powers. His framework of analysis has not taken into consideration the centrality of religion in the African public space. This idea is aptly summed up by Kalu:

> In Africa, the political realm is sacralised or enchanted and politics is a religious matter precisely because it is a moral performance. Th e world view in African communities is charismatic as gods operate in the sky, land, water and ancestral world. Th ey des troy the boundaries between the sacred and the profane. Religion, culture and the modern public space are constantly vilified through the use of cultic elements acquired from the primal sector of culture and ethnicity become the organizing frameworks of human lives.

Therefore, a S F alola a rgues, t he im portance of f r eligion in a ny attempt to understand African life in all its social, economic and political aspects cannot be overestimated. Many militia groups use some or other form of ritual and many draw upon cultic practices to legitimise what they do. In addition, there are those who use the power of secret societies to maintain conformity. To understand the function of ritual, particularly in the recruitment into militia groups and the role of secret societies in sustaining them, one must understand the belief in supernatural powers through the use of oracular deities and secret societies.

> His framework of analysis of the appropriation of religious resources by the militias does not take into consideration the centrality of religion in the African public space. This idea is aptly summed up by Kalu:

In his brief overview of what he calls ‘an important feature of militarism’, De Waal, ‘Islamic ideology can be important in mobilising forces and in stilling discipline in the context of a weak state’ and in the present lawless situation in Somalia, *Al Shabaab* initially used the notion of the Islamic *jihad* to mobilise the support of the local people. However, it soon began to use extreme violence to secure conformity in its brand of Islam: *Al Shabaab*, among others, imposed a burdensome code of dress and behaviour and tightened its grip on the people living in the areas under its control. Failure to conform is punished by beheading and other cruel forms of execution. It is also perpetuates other atrocities, such as abduction and rape of women and girls, to intimidate the population.

Unlike the *Al Shabaab* movement, the *Mungiki* is a less organised clandestine group that has used oracular religious beliefs by presenting itself as advocate for the return to African culture. Ritual occupies a central place in its tenets and new members are initiated through rituals that are inspired by African traditional religious resources. The militias in the Horn of Africa and those in the southern part of Southern Sudan, the Central African Republic (CAR) and the bordering areas of the DRC.

It is not only true that ‘for Africa in general, change, especially abrupt transition, is mediated through that aspect of culture known as religion’, but also faith-based loyalties have an unchallenged ability to mobilise energies and tap into human spiritual and material resources. Among faith loyalties I include African traditional religious, Islamic and Christian spiritual resources. The militias in the Horn of Africa and those in the southern part of Southern Sudan, the Central African Republic (CAR) and the bordering areas of the DRC.
a return to African culture or a ‘re-traditionalisation’ of modern society. It is also known to offer sacrifices and perform acts of traditional worship. This particular militia group has distinguished itself as a religious movement, though there are social, political and economic reasons for its emergence. It uses culture as a means of expression of political dissent. However, it should be noted that one of the latest developments is the conversion of the Mungiki leader and a group of his followers to Christianity. They joined the Jesus Alive Ministries in October 2009. The implications of this conversion and identification with a Christian church for the Mungiki are not yet clear.

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

UNDERSTANDING MILITIA VIOLENCE AND ATROCITIES

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

… structural factors, others, of a more or less essentialist kind, [invoke] the cultural peculiarities of African societies. Others still relate the violence to the collapse of the very mechanisms or ideologies that constituted part of the cement that, until then, kept the nations together and societies in conflict together. In some strands of literature, it is even argued that the perpetration of violence is a mode of producing modernity.44

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

… it is persuasive to argue as Neil Whitehead … does, that ‘thinking of violence as a cultural form reveals that violence is often engendered not simply by adherence to globalised ideologies such as Christianity, liberal democracy, communism or Islam, but through the regional and scholarly responses’45 and hence shaping the appropriation of the old cultural values to produce a new cultural understanding of violence.46

A twofold argument is offered, which presupposes the notion of continuity and change in the cultural arena in which the communities today are confronted by the challenge of harmonising and blending the old and the emerging cultural practices. The most salient aspect across the broad spectrum of the militias in Africa is the ory of violence that is visited upon societies of which they are members? Antony Block provides an astute response to this question with his suggestion that violence can be seen ‘as a changing form of meaningful action’.47 He advocates for the study of violence ‘as a historically developed cultural form or construction’.48

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

On the one hand, this would seem to signify not only a loss of respect for age and kin, but ultimately loss of value for human life. It was a taboo, a curse, to hurt one’s parents, brothers and sisters and even those who were related through lineage and clan, let alone to shed their blood. On the other hand, while violence can be a mode of communication, it is suggested that the perceived cultural norms of violence are changing other world views48 and hence shaping the appropriation of the old cultural values to produce a new cultural understanding of violence. After all, the militia is as much a social as a political and economic phenomenon.
If one agrees with Mazrui’s thesis, culture is a part of a more complex and multilayered process that influences the behavior of individuals and communities. The question is, how can gender violence, which is the trademark of militia violence, be otherwise understood? As the white paper on cultural norms in Africa suggests, culture is a complex construct that shapes individual and collective behavior. It is a reflection of the prevailing gender power disparities within communities, as well as social, economic, and political expectations of women and men. The purpose of the widespread infliction of physical harm on the members of the ‘other group’ or ‘enemies’ – such as mass rape of women and girls and the mutilation of limbs – was first applied in Liberia. In their communities, the practice of traditional cattle raiding or the ‘warrior culture’ may have been reincarnated in militia activities, though the difference is that in traditional societies, the practice was subject to well-defined cultural norms, whereas in more recent times, the violence has been more widespread and indiscriminate, targeting women and children. The question is, how can this be understood? While wars and conflicts in Africa are often associated with the emergence of militia and rebel groups, it is important to note that the emergence of these groups is not solely a result of the breakdown of law and order, but also a reflection of the long history of resistance to corrupt and oppressive local rulers and violent resistance to the establishment of colonial rule. I have argued that as a result of a long and complex history of fighting for freedom, the culture of resistance took root in society and in the subsequent years manifested itself in resistance to mi srule in many countries of post-independence Africa.

It has been argued that the ‘failed state’ in Africa has largely contributed to the emergence of rebellion and militia groups in Africa. The seed of violence was sown by leaders who built their leadership upon ethnic and regional support, and excluded those who did not find favor with the government. This sense of ‘tribalism’ during the first decade after independence and the subsequent post-election violence in Kenya – among others, the political elite’s mobilization of the women – is a reflection of the prevailing culture of masculinity and courage, where the expectation is that they should protect their womenfolk, but also because women are perceived to be the guardians of culture. From this perspective, the violence that targets women is logical, because in this way the very core of the community, which is its cultural identity, is attacked. Furthermore, in the age of AIDS and HIV, rape (which has been classified as a weapon of war by the United Nations) is a lethal weapon, as it spreads the virus to thousands of women. In this way, rape is total and long term in its effect. And that is the objective.

As suggested above, the constructs of masculinity and power relations in traditional societies determine the gender role distribution at both the family and community levels. At the family level, children are socialised and raised to be brave men or women, who protect their families and resources. In some communities, such as the Murle of Southern Sudan, the Karamajong of northern Uganda and the Maasai of Kenya and Tanzania, women are perceived to be the guardians of culture. It is an expression of masculinity and courage, virtues all men should possess. The belief in women’s capacity to be the effective AK-47 rifle has not only revolutionised this age-old practice, but also provided a means of venting pent-up frustration of the youth who are exploited by both the elite and the elders at the community level. This is illustrated in the December 2007 general elections and the subsequent post-election violence in Kenya, in which militia groups, among others, received support from the political elite and mobilised them as ‘supporters’. Another example is the elders in the Rift Valley, who elevated the youth to the role of defenders of their community in terest. For some of the communities, it seems as if they practice of traditional cattle raiding or the ‘warrior culture’ may have been reincarnated in militia activities, though the difference is that in traditional societies, where the practice was subject to well-defined rules, today militia groups seize every opportunity to raid villages and visit untold suffering and abominable atrocities on the African population.

**CONCLUSION**

In this chapter I have traced the current militia and rebel movement phenomena to the resistance to corrupt and oppressive local rulers and violent resistance to the establishment of colonial rule. I have argued that as a result of a long history of fighting for freedom, the culture of resistance took root in society and in the subsequent years manifested itself in resistance to mi srule in many countries of post-independence Africa.

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

NOTES
2 M Mamdani, Good Muslim, bad Muslim, New York, Pantheon Books, 2004, 3.
6 Mamdani, Good Muslim, bad Muslim.
9 Francis, Civil militia, 14.
13 Ibid.
17 Abutudu, Human security in Africa, 212.
20 Francis, Civil militia.
23 Ibid, 231.
24 Ibid, 222.
26 S A dejumobi, Ethnic militias and the national question in N igeria, Social Science Research C ouncil, h ttp://programs.ssrc.org/gsc/gsc_quarterly/newsletter8/content/ adejumobi/printable (accessed 12 August 2009). See chapters 8 and 11 for details on how the state created conditions conducive to the emergence of militant groups in Nigeria.
28 Toyin Falola, The power of African cultures, 50–51.
30 Kastfelt, Religion and Africa’s civil wars, 12.
31 Francis, Civil militia, 17.
32 Ibid, 18.
34 Falola, The power of African cultures, 299.
35 Kastfelt, Religion and Africa’s civil wars, 6.
40 Ellis, Violence and history, 470.
41 Antony Block, cited by Ellis, Violence and history, 464.
42 Ibid.
43 Kali, Faith and politics in Africa, 4.
INTRODUCTION

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

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

Owing to insufficient data on non-state armed actors, and perhaps definitional vagueness, it is difficult to provide reliable numbers of contemporary armed groups in Africa, and how many members each one has.
The aim of this chapter is not to offer further definitions and typologies of armed non-state groups. Some blind spots in the current literature focus exclusively on specific types of actors without locating them in the broader scenery of state and non-state violence in Africa. However, this chapter emphasises some factors that have a crucial role in the emergence of armed non-state groups. These encompass four key features: ideology, identity, resources and social relationships. Without doubt, aims and motives are also highly relevant for analysis and policy recommendations, but they fail to function as a category of definition and classification of armed non-state groups.

Therefore, I suggest building a comprehensive framework of analysis of armed non-state groups upon their relationship vis-à-vis the state and society based on two dimensions: a relationship with the government and a tithe towards state monopoly of violence. Subsequently, a regime that national armies occupy a crucial role in the emergence of armed non-state groups. With regard to an armed group's relationship with society, it is in structural terms that insiders from w hich populations they claim to fight for and who are the people joining them. With regard to the level of social structures, two categories of social inequality entangled with each other are critical for explaining why people, in particular young men, join militia and rebel groups: generation and class.

The chapter concludes by emphasising that comprehensive analysis demands a typology: militias and rebels can be classified into four categories. The first category comprises liberation movements against colonial and white minority rule, encompassing in particular the de-colonialisation era in the 1950s. The second category covers revolts of territorial liberation and secession such as in Eritrea from the early 1960s onwards, the Shifta guerrillas in northern Kenya in the mid-1960s, the Biafran war (Nigeria) in 1967–1970, and the struggle for autonomy in Casamance (Senegal) and Southern Sudan in the 1960s and early 1980s. The third category covers wars of overthrowing a government and creating a different kind of state, but challenge neither territorial borders nor the state as an ordering principle in general. Such groups in clude rebels overthrowing a government and creating a different kind of state, but challenge neither territorial borders nor the state as an ordering principle in general. Such groups in clude the Tigray People's Liberation Front, established in 1996.

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

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Clapham's last group, the t hird category, covers the warlord in rebellions, is a ‘something called a struggle for autonomy in its ideological dimension’. ‘Warlord in rebellions’ lack discipline and ideology and feature a highly personalised leadership. Often drawing on spiritual or religious beliefs or on ethnic loyalty, they are in rebellions in countries like Somalia and Libya. They emerge in response to the Cold War, while movements following relatively coherent Marxist ideology, like the Eritrean People's Liberation Front or the Tigray People's Liberation Front, declined.

Clapham's typology highlights two aspects: that a m apping of contemporary rebels and militias in Africa. His chronological approach shows that a m apping of contemporary rebels and militias in Africa. His chronological approach shows that a m apping of contemporary rebels and militias in Africa.
The panorama of a мед in surgeries has changed due to influence of international political and economic conditions. This is not to say that while in the 1960s and 1970s a мед movements had sought for or the legimate cause of national liberation, contemporaneous in surgeries were ‘barbaric’, profit-oriented criminals as suggested by the ‘new wars’ discourse. Rather, one may observe shifts in the way a мед in a state or non-state groups rhetorically frame their actions and in the nature of their adversaries. Although colonial and white minority regimes have lost their role as a means to the main opponents of a мед in surgeries in Africa, some governments that emerged from former liberation movements became targets of armed non-state groups. The role of ethnicity, ideology, and leadership. Religion, ethnicity, and ideology are closely linked to the question of motives, mobilisation and recruitment. 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Although colonial and white minority regimes have lost their role as a means to the main opponents of a мед in surgeries in Africa, some governments that emerged from former liberation movements became targets of armed non-state groups. The role of ethnicity, ideology, and leaders affects the level of individuals within armed groups and is discussed in the last section of this chapter. Four issues are fundamental in order to capture the motives and mobilisation of a мед in non-state armed actors, namely ideology, identity, resources and social relationships.

Armed groups declaring their aim to be a coherent Marxist state project have declined a fter t he end of the Cold War, and some observers therefore have concluded a loss of ideological motives of rebellion in general. But a restriction of ideological motives to the Cold War implies too narrow understanding of ideology as such. If we define ideology as a set of beliefs and norms shared by a large group of people, fulfilling a political function and implying action-oriented political thoughts, ideological motives of armed groups in Africa. Ideology particularly affects the cohesion of an armed group. If members are bound by common ideologies and aims, the organisation is less likely to break up when leaders are killed or arrested.

Most militia and rebel groups are identity-based in one way or another, with ethnicity a мед in liberation of the most common reference of identity-based mobilisation. If in stance, ethnic militias in the Niger Delta or the ‘Beti’ militia at the University of Yaoundé in Cameroon. Some groups are basically constituted because of their common religious identity a мед in purposes (mi litant religious groups). Others mobilise around religious elements, but at the same time become ethnic militias or rebel groups (such as the Egbesu Boys in Nigeria or the Holy Spirit Movement and the Lord’s Resistance Army in Uganda). Many spiritually bound armed groups originate in traditions of re-colonialism, f or example in the cases of the Kamajores in Sierra Leone and the Dozo in Côte d’Ivoire.

Ethnicity i s t he m ost common r eference o f iden tity-based m obilisation. In several conflicts, it has become a resource for elites in order to stabilise their power claims and a frame for distributive struggles. Such distributive struggles emerge from discords on the allocation of economic resources (for example oil revenues in Nigeria and Sudan) or land entitlements (such as in the DRC and Côte d’Ivoire). Ethnic militias recruit strictly from one ethnic group and claim a common identity based on tradition and history. They often emerge from ethnic youth groups or local vigilantes. In other cases, rebel groups refer to ethnicity when they complain about a part of the population being excluded from social, political and economic participation (f or example in the case of the Mouvement Patriotique d’Côte d’Ivoire and the Tuareg rebellions in Mali and Niger).

MOTIVES, MOBILISATION AND RECRUITMENT

Clapham’s ‘residual categor y’ shows that he f ocus o f a мед in political aims (liberation, secession, overthrowing a government or regime) fails to capture the range of a мед in surgeries in Africa. He highlights three aspects that a comprehensive approach should add tionally cover: t he role of ethnicity, ideology, and leadership. Religion, ethnicity, and ideology are closely linked to the question of motives, mobilisation and recruitment. Therefore, a mapping of these actors has to refer to specific historical contexts.
Obviously, a ll a rmed g roups h ave t o g enerate s ome e conomic r esources t o sustain t heir ac tivities a nd b asic ex istence. F or s ome o f t hem – in a n y c ase f or mercenaries a nd s ecurity contractors – g enerating p rofit is t he core p urpose of t heir activities. Mercenaries and security contractors are not a n ew phenomenon on the African continent, but h ighlight t he c ontinuity of p rofit-oriented p rivate m ilitary a nd s ecurity firms b eing e n gaged in t he exp loitation o f r esources in Af rica.14 N evertheless, t he s pread of f p rivate s ecurity co ntractors h as c learly increased in n umbers a nd s cales sin ce t he e arly 1990s. T he p rivatisation a nd c ommercialisati on of s ecurity a re p art of t he g eneral p rocess of p rivatising state a uthority in t he c ourse o f g lobalisation a nd n eo-liberalism.15 E conomic motives h ave b een w idely de bated, aIso b eyond c ommercial ac tors s uch a s mercenaries a nd p rivate s ecurity co mpanies. A p art f rom t he de bate o n p rofit orientation (‘greed’) as a c ause o f rebellion,16 a w ide r ange of e conomic motives c an be identified. T he existence o r n on-existence o f n atural r esources is n ot a motive f or v iolence. B ut g rievances emerge f rom t he w ays resources a re distributed a nd t he q uestion o f w ho h as a ccess t o t hem.17 E conomic o pportunity s tructures d o n ot explain a rmed co nflicts in r esource-rich a reas. B ut t he e xtraction a nd t ransformation o f n atural r esources p roduce p olitical c onflicts a nd s ocial b ase, distribution o f revenues, organisation o f w ork a nd b earing t he c osts o f e cological destruction a nd damages t o h ealth.18

In a ddition t o i deology, et hnic loy alty a nd e conomic in centives, s ocial relationships a nd p er pressure are c rucial f actors f or e xplain ing t he a rrival o f a rmed g roups. I n a s tudy b y Yvan Guichaoua, m ore th an 80 p er cent o f t he in terviewed members o f t he O’d ua P eople’s C ongress in N igeria s aid t hey j oined t he g roup v ia fa mily o r p eer c ontacts.19 R elations o f p atronage a re l ikewise i nfluential. F urthermore, p eople f eel pressed b y f amily m embers o r p eers t o j oin a m ilitia o r r ebel g roups.20 E mpirically, w e c an hardly d istinguish t o w hat e xt families a nd p eer g roups f unction a s e ntryways t o a rmed g roups o r p ut p ressure o n p otential recruits t o join. T he id ea o f j oining a rebel g roup r arely a rises o ut o f t he b lue, b ut t he o cialisation i s c rucial f or p articipation in a rmed g roups. S ome p eople c i t e ‘f amily t raditions o f r esistance’,21 o thers b ecome s ocialised w ith i n r adical s tudent g roups d uring t heir s tudies (that is, t he p ro-governmen t m ilitias i n S udan a nd C àte d’I v oire).22 S tudents a ssociate s in g e neral a re o fte n i t e d t he elemen tal m ilieus f rom w hich m ilitia a nd r ebel g roups o r iginate.

W hile m ost m embers o f m ilitia a nd r ebel g roups j oin m ore o r l ess v oluntarily, o thers a re a d ducted a nd r ecruited f orc efully. A rmed g roups v a r y w ith t he ir a c tivities a nd s ocial b ase a nd b asic ex istence.

The dic hotomy o f t he c ategories ‘state’ v ersus ‘non-state’ i s f undamental in c ontemporary r esearch o n a rmed co nflicts. T ypologies o f a rmed g roups s tate t hat ‘the d esire f or p rofit’ a nd ‘the d esire f or p olitical r easons’ a re t wo d ifferent a pproaches c h a nge n early b e identified: c oncepts t hat b uild upo n a rmed g roups’ r elationships v is-à-vis t he s tate a nd s ocial b ase. W hile t he q uestion o f p olicy a nd m otives a re h ighly r elevant f or a nalysis a nd p olicy l ikewise, i t is l ess h elpful a s c a use o f d iversity o f a rmed g roups’ r elationships v is-à-vis t he s tate a nd s ocial b ase. F urthermore, t he d iversity o f p olicy a nd m otives a re h ighly r elevant f or a nalysis a nd p olicy. T he q uestion o f p olicy a nd m otives a re h ighly r elevant f or a nalysis a nd p olicy l ikewise, i t is l ess h elpful a s c a use o f d iversity o f a rmed g roups’ r elationships v is-à-vis t he s tate a nd s ocial b ase. F urthermore, t he d iversity o f p olicy a nd m otives a re h ighly r elevant f or a nalysis a nd p olicy.
MIILITIAS, REBELS AND ISLAMIST MILITANTS: HUMAN INSECURITY AND State Crises IN AFRICA

BETTINA ENGELS

example in S udan a nd t he Ga mbia). W hen g overnments es tablish mi litia a nd make use of them to threaten and fight civil opposition, oppositional groups (in particular s tudent a nd y outh g roups) w ill p ossibly s tart t aking u p a rms o r collaborating w ith-exiting a rmed g roups. Th ese d ynamics m ay q uickly s tart a vicious circle of v iolent action and reaction. In o ther c ases p oliticians p ay lo cal armed groups to act as personal protectors as well as to commit attacks on their adversaries (f or exa mple d uring t he 2003 e lections in N igeria).38 Misleadingly, armed non-state groups frequently are presented as if they were all directed against t he state or a government.

With r egard t o a rmed n on-state g roups' r elationships w ith t he s tate, t wo d imensions c an b e identified: t heir relationship towards t he state's monopoly of v iolence (r eplacement v ersus co existence) a nd t heir r elationship t owards t he government of the state where they operate (support versus overthrow).

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Vigilantism is a category of non-state or self-policing. It not only acts independently of national police agencies, but often does not co-operate with them and is prepared to break national law to achieve its goals of protection and investigation (or even trials and sentencings). It is characterised by reactive, ad hoc and often violent methods of control.35

Nonetheless, authorities sometimes encourage the establishment of vigilante groups. When the market in Onitsha (located in the state of Anambra in southeast Nigeria) suffered from extensive violence, the market authorities asked the government to invite the Bakassi Boys to intervene and protect the market and local population from the attacks. The Bakassi Boys thus partly replaced the state’s monopoly on violence (notably the police). The People’s Militia in Tanzania is formally regulated by national law and recognised as an integral part of Tanzanian security governance. The Ivorian government has regulated the Dozo to fight crime and reconstruct ‘public order’ in the 1990s. Fearing the hunters may become a paramilitary force similar to the Kamajores in Sierra Leone, Ivorian president Henri Konan Bédié and his minister of interior launched several actions to control the Dozo in 1999.77 These containment measures were among the reasons why several hundred hunters joined the 2002 rebellion in Côte d’Ivoire.

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

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

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

In a quest to determine who the state and non-state actors are that are fighting against each other in contemporary Africa, one cannot but focus the analysis on the military, which usually is the main state actor of violence. National armies have been a main source of insecurity and armed conflict, taking into consideration the fact that between 1956 and 2001, 80 successful coups d’etat, 108 failed coup attempts and 139 reported coup plots were documented in sub-Saharan Africa.79 A high number of states in Africa began as militia co-ops. Rights of...
movements that originated from military coups might start with a relatively small group of (former) militaries and grow as people who did not belong to the military previously join them as ‘volunteers’ (this happened in, for example, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone). (Former) members of the national armies who participate in armed non-state groups range from demobilised soldiers from other states to the phenomenon of ‘sobels’. The central role national armies play in the formation and advancement of non-state armed actors is plausible, because the latter need weapons and military know-how that the former can provide.

The main reason why soldiers (notably lower ranks) launch what Jimmy Kandeh calls ‘coup from below’ or ‘subaltern coups’, is based in the relationship between the military and the political powers. Whereas some armies, as in the case of Togo, were ethnically based from the start, others have been instrumentalised and split up in the course of political power struggles. Soldiers launch rebellions because they feel excluded, demobilised or denied promotion, often and split up in the course of political power struggles. Soldiers launch rebellions because they feel excluded, demobilised or denied promotion, often because members of the president’s ethnic group, region or clan are favoured. This has been the case in, for instance, the Kivu provinces of the DRC and in Côte d’Ivoire. On the individual level, ‘being a military’ is at the same time a category of identity and profession. The division of the national armed forces may signify for those concerned a threat to their identity and social status, their material livelihood, and in some cases to their physical livelihood, too. From this perspective, the (perceived) division of the armed forces is a strong motive for rebellion for people who claim a share of resources for the groups they represent. It is instructive to note to what extent a rebel group or militia relies on the support of those populations for whom they claim to fight. In many cases, the social base for rebellion is located in different nation-states. This is unsurprising in view of the fact that borders (all over the world, not only in Africa) are artificial. Furthermore, diasporas play a central role for several armed groups as a means of mobilising resources and as a recruitment base. Although some members come from far-off diaspora communities, the vast majority of fighters come from the country in conflict itself or from the region, notably from neighbouring countries. People migrating across territorial borders to another state to join an armed group are sometimes presented as having a profit motive and not attracted by the rebel group’s political aims. They may move with the allure of gain to other parts of the continent.41

One can distinguish different categories of people who migrate to join an armed group based on their reasons. ‘Regional recruits’ are persons who did not belong to armed non-state groups previously but migrated to a conflict area for the purpose of joining such a group. ‘Regional warriors’ are combatants who have not yet been socialised within a non-state armed group and who migrate individually or as a group within a sub-region from one armed conflict to another. At least in their own view, participating in armed conflicts seems to offer them their best and possibly only chance of survival.42

Conflict-induced migration is not only a humanitarian catastrophe but also a two-way process. Some people flee areas of armed conflict, but at the same time some migrate into a conflict zone to join the warring factions. They may likewise come from within the country in conflict or from other, mostly neighbouring countries. The analysis of which local youths and which regional recruits join a militia or rebel movement sheds light on how ethnic and religious identities are mobilised by armed groups. The mobilisation of collective identity constructions is without doubt an important factor explaining the recruitment, mobilisation and cohesiveness of armed groups. But as scholars, we should remain careful not to reproduce existing and seemingly ‘reliable’ categories just because it is simple and possible.

Social Embeddings, Identity and Migration

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

All armed groups refer to societal bases in that they claim to fight for a specific population defined by markers like region, ethnicity or religion. They accuse the government of excluding certain social groups politically, economically or of repressing them by violence but also take over other governance functions that they represent. It is instructive to note to what extent a rebel group or militia relies on the support of those populations for whom they claim to fight. In many cases, the social base for rebellion is located in different nation-states. This is unsurprising in view of the fact that borders (all over the world, not only in Africa) are artificial. Furthermore, diasporas play a central role for several armed groups as a means of mobilising resources and as a recruitment base. Although some members come from far-off diaspora communities, the vast majority of fighters come from the country in conflict itself or from the region, notably from neighbouring countries. People migrating across territorial borders to another state to join an armed group are sometimes presented as having a profit motive and not attracted by the rebel group’s political aims. They may move with the allure of gain to other parts of the continent.41
easy to do. The construction of identity in African armed conflicts is not restricted to colonially shaped categories of ethnicity and religion. By focusing an analysis exclusively on these categories, one would be prone to systematic blind spots in research on armed groups.

Neither alleged ethnic loyalties nor socioeconomic factors suffice to explain where the ‘regional recruits’ come from. Most often, people who migrate across territorial borders to join a militia or rebel group come from countries that have multiple and complex relationships of migration and history. For the ‘regional warriors’ (such as the Sierra Leonean fighters in Côte d’Ivoire) social, cultural and historical relationships are less relevant. They themselves state that poverty and lack of opportunities are their motives for joining a militia group.44 In West Africa, most regional warriors began their ‘careers’ as forcefully recruited children or youths in Sierra Leone or Liberia. Several hundred fighters were, for example, recruited in Liberia for the warring factions in Côte d’Ivoire, rebels and armed groups loyal to the government alike.45 Some did not even know for which side they were fighting.46 When fighting in Côte d’Ivoire stopped, some moved on to Niger and joined the Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice. There is a dearth in reliable data on regional warriors, which could possibly be ascribed to the fact that this category forms a small minority of the total militia and rebel fighters in Africa even though it has received relatively major attention from the media and non-governmental organisation (NGO) observers. It is furthermore important to note that regional warriors are hardly those who start an armed conflict but will join it only temporarily.47

The occurrence of regional recruits and regional warriors indicate that there is a ‘regional factor’ that plays an important role in the emergence of armed non-state groups and intrastate conflict (for example in Uganda, Sudan and the DRC).48 Most militia and rebel groups are regionally embedded. The war in Liberia started with fighters crossing the border from Côte d’Ivoire; ten years later, Liberian and Sierra Leonean combatants went to Côte d’Ivoire to join both the government and the rebel forces. Rebellion is a social process of conflict. Rebellion in a nearby area seems to make violence an attractive option in another state or region. Armed conflicts in a sub-region facilitate recruitment even in countries that have been relatively stable for a long time, like Kenya or Côte d’Ivoire.

Once a rebellion has started, there is a need for fighters: the most common and efficient way of recruiting is through word of mouth. Refugee flows increase the risk of conflict in host and origin countries as population movements expand rebel social networks and refugee/internally displaced persons (IDPs) become places of recruitment, too. Flight and displacement are possible factors explaining why some regions in the world experience more violent conflicts than others.49 The regional factor – encompassing general regional embeddings, the ‘experience of conflict’ and refugee dynamics – may also explain the occurrence of ‘conflict clusters’ in Africa (the Mano River region, the Great Lakes region, the Horn of Africa, as well as Chad, Sudan and the CAR).

THE YOUTH CRISIS AND MILITANCY IN AFRICA

The question of why so many people and especially young men are willing to join militia and rebel groups is crucial for academic analysis, peace and development policy. Criticising the ideas of ‘loose molecules’ and ‘lumpen youth’, social anthropologists in recent years have focused on the ‘youth crisis’ in Africa. Economic crises and increasing poverty contribute to the growth of armed groups’ recruitment potential. But assuming a causal relationship between marginalisation and militia membership seems too simple: rank and file members of militia and rebel groups are indeed frequently marginalised in multiple ways, but usually they are no more marginalised than their peers.50 The introduction of the concept of ‘youth’ as a social category closes this analytical gap.51 Generational categories are neither fixed nor stable but continuously produced and reproduced in social and cultural negotiation and change.52 Therefore, youth cannot be defined based on chronological age or as a fixed demographic cohort.

The concept ‘youth’ is, to adopt Durham’s phrase, a ‘social shifter’: it is a relational concept situated in a dynamic context, as social and cultural variables as gender, religion, class, responsibilities, expectations, race and ethnicity play an important role in defining who are regarded as young persons or youth – and the ways young persons are perceived do not necessarily coincide with their self-definitions.53

In African contexts, being young often implies potentially being excluded, exploited and marginalised. Consequently, youth is not desirable but a social status one tries to escape.54 Resulting from the socioeconomic crisis, low levels of formal education, and lack of access to land and other sufficient means to earn a living,
Generation is a category of social cleavages and conflicts. Originating from the material conditions of life, it is closely linked to the category of class: class-based social inequalities induce the gap between youth and elders (see Richards on the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone).

In the generation conflict, youth feels less threatened by physical than by ‘social death’. Typical ways for the youth to escape a social adulthood: leaving the parental house or village, becoming economically independent and able to build up an own family. From this perspective, joining an armed group is a balancing act between ‘social death and violent life chances’, as Henrik Vigh put it, and an opportunity to escape the social status of youth. Non-state armed groups create some sort of order and social organisation in conflict torn societies, and they offer a basis for social identity, integration and mobility. Being a rebel is a possible entrance to social adulthood: leaving the parental house or village, becoming economically independent and able to build up an own family.

The function of the leaders of armed groups as role models is crucial. Most rebel group members. As Morten Boås has shown, using the biography of Sam Bockarie as an example, ‘being a rebel’ can represent a desirable social identity:

For many angry and marginalised young men, he is do ut h ad b ecome a r ole model as well. The full tragedy of the situation is exposed only when we take into consideration that by Sierra Leonian standards, Bockarie lived a successful life … whereas the ordinary Sierra Leonian dies a s a p oor man w hom no body k nows about or pays much attention to, Bockarie died as a rich and famous man.

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

They are frequently supported and sometimes even controlled by outside actors, no least of which are the governments and militaries from neighbouring countries. The mi liet le aders, t he hig her a nd lo wer ra ns f ro m w hic h a rem d os t at e g roups o riginate, a t so r e flect t he w a y m y litia a nd r el ebel g roups a re em bedded w ithi n s occie. L eaders a nd hig her-r ank ing o fficers h ave b een a filiated m ainly w ith the miltary and student organisations, whereas lower ranks originate from the student a nd t he r ural m y litia. T he f ormer o bservation e jects Mka ndawire’s thesis o f p ost-colonial A frican r el ebs ‘h aving li ttle i n co mmon w ith t he peasantry.’ The former supports t he a ssumption t hat n ational a rmies p lay an cr ucial r ole in t he f or mation o f a rem d on-st at e g roups (a s i n t he c ase o f, f or instance, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Niger and Sierra Leone).

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I identified four key factors in order to construct a comprehensive framework of analysis of militia and rebel movements in Africa. The first referred to motives, mobilisation and recruitment of armed non-state groups. I have argued that four types of motives and entryways play a role: ideology, identity, resources and social relationships. Arguing that motives are essential but not sufficient for the analysis of armed groups, I next suggested mapping militia and rebel groups along their relationship to the state. The relationship between armed groups and the state has two dimensions: a) a relationship of client and leader (a liaison or opposition) and with the monopoly of violence (replacement or coexistence). The relationship between rebel groups and the state is a complex one shaped by the fact that national armies play a crucial role in the emergence of armed non-state groups. With regard to the relationship between armed groups and the society they operate in, emphasis is put on the social embeddings of militia and rebel groups. These embeddings are rooted in the territorially defined social structures of inequality, notably class and generation.

Complex social phenomena such as armed groups dem and comprehensive p olitical s olutions. I t herefore co nclude b y s tressing t he importance of mapping rebel groups in conflict resolution and management. The
features of armed groups on-state groups and ayalised in their chapters and herefore present specific challenges. However, conflict management should not build on overall aims of armed groups alone. The relationship with the state and society and the different social contexts of the different members of armed groups are also highly relevant for a comprehensive approach to conflict management. An armed group’s relationship with the monoply of violence (replacement or coexistence) is so of particular importance during the first stage of conflict building, when security has to be restored in a country of conflict. The relationship between an armed group and the government (alliance or opposition) is especially relevant with regard to prevented mediation and negotiation strategies.

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

**NOTES**


15. Ibid, 183.


21. K K amp wirth, *Women a nd g uerrilla m itt uses (R) evolutions: N igeria, E t a l uva, C uba, A nti oque, U ruguay, C itizenship a nd Wa r: A c h a s t uit y of c onflict a nd t he r epublic of n s of c oexistence, R eal m a tures of c ivil wa r, W orld Bank*, 19, 160.


28. P P olitzer, *Neither t errorists n or f reedom f ighters: a rmed g roups a nd c ommunity m embership i n the w ar economy*, *Development and Cooperation* 1 (2003), 31–32, 32.
32. Mair, The new world of privatised violence, 12.
36. Ibid, 226.
48. HRW, Youth, poverty and blood, 41f.
INTRODUCTION

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

Current African experience demonstrates that the activities of armed non-state groups did not cease with the hoisting of independence flags. For various historical reasons, new struggles emerged in many countries not long after these celebrations had ended. Some of these conflicts can be explained by oppressive dictatorships, ethnic and religious struggles for power and resources and abortive...
ARMED NON-STATE ENTITIES IN INTERNATIONAL LAW: STATUS AND CHALLENGES OF ACCOUNTABILITY

GODFREY MUSILA

In this chapter, we will explore the place of non-state entities in international law. The activities of armed non-state actors in general have invariably remained a subject of concern, as they operate against or threaten to overturn existing social, economic and legal orders. While their activities are often perceived as criminal (petty or organised and mafia-like) motives or espousers of pseudo-religious messages, the international community has consistently attempted to deal with these new non-state entities – rebel movements, militias and other armed groups – by their very existence, these entities operate against or threaten to overturn existing social, economic and legal orders. Further, armed conflicts in various parts of the continent have resulted in decisive conclusions. In some countries, the activities of armed non-state groups have resulted in a take-over of power, such as in the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (then Zaire), Mozambique, Angola, Sudan, the Comoros and Nigeria. While the activities of some of these movements have resulted in decisive conclusions, elsewhere they have been regarded as criminal (or terrorist) in various national systems and in international law. It is true that by their very existence, the international community's constitutive set-up is influenced, or was influenced by international law. What is the place of these groups under the various branches of international law? It then addresses how in international and national legal regimes have held them accountable, and some of the challenges of holding perpetrators accountable. The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 is often pinpointed as the starting date of the modern sovereign state and the foundation of an international community of states in a horizontal, co-equal relationship. The Peace of Westphalia, or the Westphalian model of international law, established the state as the central actor and sole subject of international law. The establishment of the League of Nations and later the United Nations in 1945 did not change the position of the state as the dominant actor in international life. Today, while there are some exceptions due to developments in the last 60 years as discussed in the following sections, contemporary international law is still built on this basic premise. The international community is still founded in either criminal (petty or organised and mafia-like) motives or espousers of pseudo-religious messages. The Mungiki in Kenya and similar criminal gangs and sects are a good example (see chapter 6).

The fact that the activities of armed non-state actors in general have invariably been regarded as criminal (or terrorist) motives or espousers of pseudo-religious messages, the international community has consistently attempted to deal with these new non-state entities – rebel movements, militias and other armed groups – by their very existence, these entities operate against or threaten to overturn existing social, economic and legal orders. Further, armed conflicts in various parts of the continent have resulted in decisive conclusions. In some countries, the activities of armed non-state groups have resulted in a take-over of power, such as in the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (then Zaire), Mozambique, Angola, Sudan, the Comoros and Nigeria. Experience from some African countries also shows that some armed non-state groups may not necessarily have grand political objectives, as in the case of international liberation movements and rebel movements whose ultimate goal is either to take power or reach an accommodation for a new political dispensation. While this category may be appropriated by political organisations for their own ends, it remains founded in either criminal (petty or organised and mafia-like) motives or espousers of pseudo-religious messages. The Mungiki in Kenya and similar criminal gangs and sects are a good example (see chapter 6).

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The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 is often pinpointed as the starting date of the modern sovereign state and the foundation of an international community of states in a horizontal, co-equal relationship. The Peace of Westphalia, or the Westphalian model of international law, established the state as the central actor and sole subject of international law. The establishment of the League of Nations and later the United Nations in 1945 did not change the position of the state as the dominant actor in international life. Today, while there are some exceptions due to developments in the last 60 years as discussed in the following sections, contemporary international law is still built on this basic premise. The Peace of Westphalia, or the Westphalian model of international law, established the state as the central actor and sole subject of international law. The establishment of the League of Nations and later the United Nations in 1945 did not change the position of the state as the dominant actor in international life. Today, while there are some exceptions due to developments in the last 60 years as discussed in the following sections, contemporary international law is still built on this basic premise. 

This chapter has three parts. The first part provides the theoretical framework and clarifies some of the basic concepts. It also outlines the place of non-state actors in international law generally. The second part deals with issues related to legal responses by states and the international community of states to rebels and militia. The last part concludes the chapter with findings and recommendations.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND BASIC CONCEPTS

Locating non-state actors in international law

The Peace of Westphalia of 1648 is often pinpointed as the starting date of the modern sovereign state and the foundation of an international community of states in a horizontal, co-equal relationship. The Peace of Westphalia, or the Westphalian model of international law, established the state as the central actor and sole subject of international law. The establishment of the League of Nations and later the United Nations in 1945 did not change the position of the state as the dominant actor in international life. Today, while there are some exceptions due to developments in the last 60 years as discussed in the following sections, contemporary international law is still built on this basic premise. The Peace of Westphalia, or the Westphalian model of international law, established the state as the central actor and sole subject of international law. The establishment of the League of Nations and later the United Nations in 1945 did not change the position of the state as the dominant actor in international life. Today, while there are some exceptions due to developments in the last 60 years as discussed in the following sections, contemporary international law is still built on this basic premise.
There are many instances where the state-centric structure of international law is well illustrated. The classical sources of international law depend on the interaction of states in the form of treaties and other agreements of a similar nature as well as customary law as the practice of states. In other words, only states can conclude treaties with each other. While churches, international organisations and other entities may send envoys to other territories, diplomatic relations are conducted only between states. Emphasising further that the state is still the main actor in the international sphere, official forums such as international courts and international organisations are largely reserved for states. However, international organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are routinely granted special or observer status at state and intergovernmental forums such as the AU and the UN. International law, too, has yielded in a number of areas, in particular to accommodate the changing role of non-state actors. One example is non-state entities under international law, granting limited rights only where such non-state actors are recognised, they have limited rights only.

While these recent developments in international law have altered the notion of sovereignty by limiting states’ freedom of lawful action, these have been slight and have left the basic structure of international law unchanged. Although individuals can enforce human rights against their state, this remains dependent on diplomatic protection through state representatives when rights of a national are violated by another state. A national can enforce human rights before international courts and commissions either as beneficiaries of procedures of petition against states or as subjects of punishment for crimes committed.

For purposes of this chapter, it is crucial to comprehend the state-centric structure of international law for at least three reasons to be expounded upon later:

- This structure of international law serves national interests and theoretical national intellectual framework for discussion but also explains the place of the relevant non-state entities under general international law with the effect that even where such non-state actors are recognised, they have limited rights only.
- It rationalises responses to hostile forces by states and regional organisations such as the AU.
- It sheds light on the challenges of establishing accountability for crimes committed by these entities or their members.

Crowding out the state? A variety of non-state actors

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

**Militias**

A militia group is in essence a group of armed citizens recruited – often on an ad hoc basis – to supplement the regular armed forces engaged in active hostilities. The militia, although composed of members who receive regular remuneration, is subject to regular arm’s length regulation. For instance, groups such as the Mai-Mai (Militia) of the Congo are consistently referred to in literature as a military group associated with the army. In countries where militia or volunteer corps constitute the army, or form part of it, they are included under the denomination of ‘army’.

The **Interahamwe** of Rwanda fought alongside Rwandan armed forces (Forces Armées Rwandaises, FAR) during the 1994 genocide, is a good example of a militia group. IHL requires that such a militia fulfills certain conditions: to be a group of persons responsible for its own actions.

To be a group of persons responsible for its own actions, it must be able to conduct its operations in accordance with the laws and customs of war.

The term militia is not always used in this strict sense, but tends to be used loosely to refer to any group of fighters operating a longside the main warring parties in an intrastate conflict – governmental and rebel forces – whether such a group of fighters is affiliated with the government forces or not. In the DRC, for instance, groups such as the Mai-Mai are consistently referred to as militiamen. With respect to Al Shabaab fighters in Somalia and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda, which are both a militia in the strict sense of the term. However, it should be noted that while these entities are not considered as part of the regular armed forces, they are included in the category of ‘army’ for the purposes of this chapter.
groups involved in a armed conflict against government forces in their respective countries, references to them as ‘militia’ are not consistent. While there is proof that the Mai-Mai and other similar groups hare fought alongside government forces, the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) o r a affiliated t hemse lves with t o objective, t he Mai-Mai has generally operated in dependently. Further, there is no evidence that other than arms a nd log istical assistance, t he Mai-Mai fighters h a d r eceived an y financial recompense or salaries from the government. The Mai-Mai does therefore not fit into the strict category of militia recognised under IHL.

As w ill be seen later, t he dif ficulty in fact ually establish t he iden tity o r category o f a group en gaged in a armed co nflict p osesses c hallenges f or establishing the accountability of perpetrators of crimes. In general, the ease with which individuals can be held accountable depends on what set of rules applies, which in turn may depend on the category of the group to which the individual belongs – w ether t o a regular armed force and associated militia or t o a rebel group.13 For our purposes – except w hen discussing s pecific rules applying t o recognised categories of fighters under international law – the term ‘militia’ is used in the second colloquial sense to refer t o any n on-governmental a rm ed g roup, whether affiliated to a regular army or opposed to such an army.

National liberation movements

While national liberation movements (NLMs) are not the focus of this study, one cannot fully grasp the position of a rebel group in international law, in particular a rebel movements, without looking at NLMs, in a sense a new phenomenon of NLMs by making a declaration to the depository (the Swiss Federal Council). In Africa, the ANC, SWAPO and the FRELIMO (Mozambique), the Popular de Liberación de Sagua el Hamra y Río de Oro [POLISARIO] Front in Western Sahara and Hamas and Fatah in Palestine); and against racist regimes (the ANC and the Pan-Africanist Congress in apartheid South Africa) in the exercise of their right to self-determination.23 Further, under Article 96 of Additional Protocol I, the leadership or authority representing the people struggling against a colonial, alien or racist state that is a party to the Protocol can undertake to apply the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocol by making a declaration to the depository (the Swiss Federal Council). In Africa, the ANC, SWAPO and the Eritrean Peoples’ Liberation Front are known to have made declarations to uphold
the relevant provisions of IHL during their armed struggles in South Africa, South West Africa (Namibia) and Ethiopia respectively.24 These NLMs are parties to an armed conflict and have rights and duties under international law – if they received recognition. However, rebels engaged in war with a state could be regarded as belligerents – and thus have rights and duties under international law – if they were in a state of armed conflict. It is noteworthy that in contemporary international law, all parties to an armed conflict are bound by the laws of war irrespective of whether they are recognised or not.25 This is particularly important in light of the fact that states rely on this principle to justify their actions.

**Belligerents, insurgents and rebels**

Belligerents are parties to an armed conflict. Before granting the status of belligerents, rebels are in variably states. However, rebels engaged in war with a state could be regarded as belligerents – and thus have rights and duties under international law – if they received recognition. It is noteworthy that in contemporary international law, all parties to an armed conflict are bound by the laws of war irrespective of whether they are recognised or not.25 This is particularly important in light of the fact that states rely on this principle to justify their actions.

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**Insurgents and rebels**

Insurgents are armed elements that rise up in rebellion against a consti tu ted authority, but are not recognised as belligerents. Where there is no recognition of insurgency as belligerent status, the group may still claim rights under international law, such as the right to self-determination. However, if the group is recognised as a belligerent, it gains greater legal standing and protection.

**Norm generation, legislation and enforcement action**

When faced with new phenomena, states often come up with ways to adapt and respond to them. In a society of laws, the response is often to promulgate new laws, if those in existence are found to be inadequate. The state established as the main actor in the international sphere, the emergence of new non-state actors, wars of liberation and beyond posed a challenge for the international legal order. By 1949, only wars between states were recognised and regulated by international law. The four Geneva Conventions, which provided extensive rules on the conduct of parties during armed conflict and methods of waging war, reflect this reality. Only a singular identical article in all the four conventions relates to conflicts not of an international character or internal armed conflicts (‘civil wars’).26

With the emergence of new actors, the international community responded by generating new norms. A recent example is the recognition of NLMs as independent states, which adopted, under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross, two new instruments in 1977. Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 expanded the scope of international armed conflicts from interstate wars to cover conflicts in which NLMs were involved. As noted already in the discussion on NLMs, armed conflicts in which peoples are fighting against colonial domination, occupation or racist regimes in the exercise of their right to self-determination were now to be governed by international law.27 NLMs would have rights and duties under this new regime, a far cry from the position held by authorities at the national level (such as Israel and South Africa) that what they faced at home was not a group bearing such rights but a group of common criminals and terrorists. After this point, the position of the UN and the then OAU with respect to these territories was guided by this new dispensation.

Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions effectively recognised that rebels fighting governments in various internal armed conflicts had rights and duties normally due and applicable to states.
duties. However, there was reluctance on the part of states to grant any status to groups fighting established governmental authorities. Clapham has noted that at the time of the drafting of Additional Protocol II, several states stated that their conviction that insurgents engaged in a civil war were simply criminals, and that the protocol conferred no international legal personality on them. This stance has not changed among states faced with armed groups. However, the fact that this treaty contains obligations for rebels, even when not recognised by the states, is no longer in doubt. This is discussed further below.

At national level, states have responded by legislating against armed groups. Almost invariably, states in Africa and elsewhere have refused to recognise armed groups even when their struggle is based on well-articulated political objectives. The result has been proliferation of security laws that regard those involved as criminals and terrorists. Such action at the national level has been coupled with a refusal to ratify or apply international treaties that grant status to rebels/armed opposition groups. In some cases, states or a collection of states have adopted the judicial route to punish perpetrators of international crimes from, among others, the ranks of rebels and militias. The Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) has so far prosecuted individuals who led rebel groups, for crimes committed during the war in Sierra Leone. For its part, the International Criminal Court (ICC) is already prosecuting various individuals who led rebel groups in the eastern part of the DRC for war crimes and crimes against humanity. ICC arrest warrants have been issued against LRA leaders in Uganda.

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

To reinforce its stance on non-state actors (NLMs and rebels), the international community – in the form of the UN and AU – has often taken various ‘enforcement actions’ to reiterate its stand. The support by international players for NLMs has been more overt than that for rebels/armed opposition groups. International bodies are known to have imposed embargoes and other sanctions on states in which or against which NLMs are fighting (for example on apartheid South Africa) to express disapproval of actions taken by those states. Support for rebels in certain cases has been forthcoming, but has been less overt. For example, certain countries supported the Rwandan Patriotic Front rebels before and during the genocide in 1994. Similarly, Uganda, Cyrus Reed points out, supported the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in Southern Sudan, with Khartoum backing the LRA in return. More often than not, rebel activity is met with open condemnation, embargoes and other sanctions. Th e UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, which imposed travel bans and asset freezes on terrorist groups, have been the main criticisms of the international judicial response to the Rwandan genocide. The International Criminal Court (ICC) is a ready prosecutor of rebels and armed groups, for crimes committed during the war in Sierra Leone. For its part, the International Criminal Court (ICC) is already prosecuting various individuals who led rebel groups in the eastern part of the DRC for war crimes and crimes against humanity. ICC arrest warrants have been issued against LRA leaders in Uganda.

In line with the stance adopted by states, international judicial action has been largely selective in its approach, the UNSC has acted to create tribunals to punish perpetrators of international crimes from, among others, the ranks of rebels and militarists, the general trend at the national level is to demonise armed opposition groups followed by some form of compromise and accommodation.
Political responses of international (UN) and continental (AU) actors

Apart from the legal responses discussed above, other more significant ways in which states have supported or opposed the activities of non-state actors are for the most part political. Legal responses cannot be delinked entirely from political responses. Legal approaches necessarily in volve political and di plomatic demarches to t he UN, A U and n ational le vels. S ome co untries have publicly supported di plomatically a nd m aterially t he ca use of r ebel s and o ther armed opposition groups. Examples abound on the continent: Algeria has openly supported the POLISARIO Front for many years, while Morocco withdrew from the OAU in protest following the OAU’s decision to admit the exiled Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) as a member state.48 Several African countries are said to have supported the ANC and others in their struggle against apartheid South Africa.48 In Sudan, support for the SPLM/A struggle against Khartoum by Libya, Uganda and Kenya has been documented.48 More recently, Eritrea has been linked with the Oromo Liberation Front rebels in Ethiopia48 and Somalia.48 For its part, Sudan has been mentioned in connection with Sudanese and Chadian rebels in Chad as well as the LRA in Uganda,42 while Chad is said to have supported rebels in Darfur.48

While the UN and AU have been guided generally by UN Charter principles on sovereignty and non-intervention as well as resolutions on friendly relations between states and non-fragmentation of territory,47 the two bodies have not shied away from positions that have proved to be controversial. With respect to Western Sahara, the UN and OAU championed the elaboration of the 1975 Settlement Plan that was accepted by Libya, Uganda and Kenya has been documented.48 Later in 1975, the UN General Assembly requested that the ICJ ad visory opinion or pinion on scussed a b ove, c learly taking a stand on the issue after Morocco appeared to go back on its commitments. For the most part, however, there are many examples where states choose not to take a stand on contentious issues, p referring to let m atters play out w ithout interference. S ome r esolutions ad pted b y t he A U h ave b een p re-emptive of f opposition ac tivity, s uch a s i ts s tance on t he e xisting p olitical p riorities a nd interests of the two in ternational o rganisations a s t he m ajor g lobal a nd r egional p owers. However, an outline of f relevant cases in t his regard is beyond the scope of t his chapter.

Establishing accountability for acts of rebels and militias

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

The complexity of conflicts has rendered the application of these entities. These in clude t he multiplicity of wrongful acts that may be committed by rebels and movements, the complexity of relationships these entities may have with states and multinational companies, and the differences in rules of responsibility under various branches of international law (human rights, humanitarian law and international criminal law).

With recourse to examples from the continent, this part identifies and discusses the opportun y for rebels and militia in complex conflicts, and urges states to take ‘all legal and regulatory measures’ to deal with individuals involved.45 This indicates a firm position against rebel or armed opposition group activity.

It is noteworthy that irrespective of firm normative positions by both the UN and AU, political or diplomatic responses to rebels, militia and armed opposition groups have been as varied as the existing political priorities and interests of the two in international organisations as the major global and regional powers. However, an outline of relevant cases in this regard is beyond the scope of this chapter.

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

Within the context of international law, breaches are c ommitted b y mi litias, rebels and armed opposition groups can be categorised as human rights violations (under human rights law, irrespective of the debate on whether or not rebel movements are re b ound b y w ond b y h uman r ights t reaties); b reaches un der IHL,
including war crimes, where the wrongs are committed within an armed conflict (war) as p prohibited b y t he G eneva C onventions a nd A dditional P rotocols; a nd international crimes such as crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide under various international in struments in cluding t he T orture C onvention, t he Genocide C onvention, t he G eneva C onventions a nd P rotocols a nd t he R ome Statute of t he I CC. It sues o f acco untability w ill b e di scussed in t erms o f t he se in struments a s w ell a s v a rious m echanisms (t ribunals) es tablished t o p unish perpetrators.

The list of atrocities committed during many of Africa’s conflicts is endless. This section, therefore, gives only a snapshot of some of these. In Rwanda, while the s laughter o f c lose t o a mi llion p eople in t hat co untry’s g enocide h as b een attributed largely to the government and Interahamwe, a militia group affiliated to the government, the RPF was active during that period, too.50 In northern Uganda, abductions of children, enslavement of f g irls, m urder, t orture, m utilation a nd d estruction of p roperty by t he L RA are w ell documented.51 In the DRC, atrocities have b een co mmitted b y v arious a rmed g roups, in cluding t he Mai-Mai, Forces D émocratiques d e l’I libération d u R wanda, C ongrès N ational p our l a D éfense d u P euple and o ther groups active in t he e astern p art of t he co untry.52 Murder, rape and o ther f orms o f v iolence s tand o ut a s s ome o f t he m ost c ommon crimes.53 Apart f rom violations against in dividuals and p rivate p roperty, r eports h ave l inked a number o f a rmed g roups to t he plun der o f Congo’s natural wealth, w hich h as in t urn o ccasioned n umerous atrocitys.54 Many com panies a nd s ome r egional g overnments h ave b een l inked to w hat h as b een ap tly t ermed Congo’s w ar economy.55 Comprehensive acco untability m ust a ddress a ll t h e se e nsions o f t he conflict.

Accountability under international human rights law

International human rights law (IHRL) – contained in numerous treaties adopted since 1945, at both the global and regional level – confers upon individuals certain rights a nd im poses o bligations o n s tate. Th e s pectrum o f individual, a nd t o a limi ted e xtent c olective, r ights in cludes c ivil a nd p olitical r ights as w ell as socioeconomic and c ultural r ights. Conceptually, IHRL en gages state r esponsibility at the in ternational plane such that final responsibility for the respect and f ullment of human rights obligations lies with the state. Accordingly, apart from refraining from infring ing on these r ights and t aking p ositive m easures to p romote the e njoyment of r ights, states are r equired to p rotect their c itizens and all others on their territories from violations by private entities. Within this state responsibility framework, responsibility for human rights violations by non-state entities such as rebels and militia ultimately lies with the state. It is, therefore, up to the state to ensure that these rights are not violated or when violated, individuals have access t o effectiv e r emedies. W hen a n in di vidual b rings a p etition t o a n international tribunal such as the African Commission or Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights, complaining of human rights violations, it will be against the state and not a rebel formation or militia.

It is clear, therefore, that t he co nceptual f ramework w ithin w hich IHRL operates is t he first challenge – o r o bstacle – in a n attempt t o enforce human rights a gainst a nd on-state ac tors. W hile i ts eems p aradoxical t hat s tates w eakened by w ar o r t hose u nable t o exercise p ractical so vereignty o v er t erritory under r ebel co ntrol s hould b e r equired t o b ear r esponsibility f or v iolations b y r ebel s o r m ilitia, conceptually, the international human rights framework admits o nly s tate r esponsibility.56 The Forces N ouvelles in Côte d’Ivoire, w hich h ave controlled virtually the entire northern h alf of that c ountry for s everal y ears now, h ave n o in ternational r esponsibility f or h uman r ights, b ut c an b e r equired t o a ccount in national c ourts.

Some c ommentators57 have s uggested t hat c ertain non-state a c tors h ave human r ights o bligations, w hether t hey h ave c onsented t o t hem o r n ot. T omuschat s uggests t hat NLMs – a n essentially g overnment-like f ormation – a re b ound by IHRL, noting t hat ‘a movement struggling to b ecome t he legitimate government of t he nation concerned is t reated by t he international c ommunity as an a ctor who, a lready a t t he b ron c tage, s ubject t o t he es sential o bligations a nd r esponsibilities e n o t s tate m ust h ave r esponsibility f or v iolations b y rebels o r militia, a nd not a rebel formation or militia.

Another c hallenge in es tablishing acco untability o f r ebel s a nd m ilitia a rises f rom t he in volvement of multinational/transnational companies in the theatres of war. Within the human rights framework states have t he ultimate responsibility for protecting c itizens a nd o thers from v iolations attributable to such c ompanies. The fact t hat a c tion against t hem could j eopardise i nvestment, coupled w ith t he f act t hat some o f t hese com panies a re ‘stronger’ a nd r icher t han t he states f rom w hich t hey o perate, p ose s e rious c hallenges f or acco untability. S uch s tate t akes l ack t he
capacity of armed forces their own laws, in particular in a conflict situation. The merging of multinational/transnational company interests with those of armed non-state actors complicates the problem further. In an nutshell, IHRL is not sufficiently adapted to deal with some of the more difficult issues alluded to here. Attempts to deal with accountability for multinational/transnational companies in such circumstances have yielded only informal commitments.

Accountability under international humanitarian law

It has already been noted that IHL or the laws of war regulate the conduct of armed conflict: the means of waging war, protection of certain groups of people and what forms legitimate objects for attack. Non-state actors who may not be held accountable under IHRL do not escape responsibility entirely because IHL, unlike IHRL, recognises certain non-state actors. Further, since rebels and militia are most active in times of armed conflict, IHL is perhaps the most relevant body of law. The activities of militia in terms of IHL (that is civilian fighters and volunteers forming part of governmental forces) are described in the introductory section above, are governed by rules of IHL applicable to the regular armed forces, which in turn depend on whether the conflict is international or internal in character. Additional Protocol I and other specialised rules govern NLMs or insurgents operating within the context of an international armed conflict, while common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions excludes ‘internal disturbances and tensions, such as riots, isolated and sporadic acts of violence and other acts of a similar nature’ from the definition of internal armed conflict. However, once an internal tribunal is established, the fact that the existence of a non-armed conflict was not recognised is irrelevant.

Second, there is no independent international tribunal established under IHL treaties that relies on states to prosecute serious breaches of the Geneva Conventions. Not many states, having denied that there is an armed conflict on their territory, have in practice prosecuted perpetrators. Neither has the principle of universal jurisdiction provided for in the Geneva Convention been regularly used to this end. Prosecutions of perpetrators in African conflicts have, for the most part, been carried out by European and North American courts or international tribunals such as the ICTR and SCSL.

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

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

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

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

Accountability under international criminal law

International criminal law (ICL) is the branch of public international law that is concerned with the prohibition and processes of punishment of international crimes. Cassese observes that it is the body of international rules that prescribes international crimes, requires states to prosecute and punish at least some of those

Challenges to establishing accountability under international humanitarian law

There are a number of challenges to establishing accountability for breaches of IHL. First, since IHL applies only in times of conflict, initial problems arise from the characterisation of a situation where a rebel force is armed. A rule 1(2) of Additional Protocol II excludes ‘internal disturbances and tensions, such as riots, isolated and sporadic acts of violence and other acts of a similar nature’ from the definition of internal armed conflict. The refusal of states to accept that there is a problem in their territory, or that an existing conflict situation involving the use of arms between state security forces and rebels does not meet the threshold for the application of IHL, means that these rules do not apply to non-state actors. It was noted that in terms of IHL, ‘internal disturbances and tensions, such as riots, isolated and sporadic acts of violence and other acts of a similar nature’ fall below the threshold for the application of the laws of war. However, once an international tribunal is established, the fact that the existence of a non-armed conflict was not recognised is irrelevant.

Second, there is no independent international tribunal established under IHL treaties that relies on states to prosecute serious (grave) breaches of the Geneva Conventions. Not many states, having denied that there is an armed conflict on their territory, have in practice prosecuted perpetrators. Neither has the principle of universal jurisdiction provided for in the Geneva Convention been regularly used to this end. Prosecutions of perpetrators in African conflicts have, for the most part, been carried out by European and North American courts or international tribunals such as the ICTR and SCSL.

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International criminal law (ICL) is the branch of public international law that is concerned with the prohibition and processes of punishment of international crimes. Cassese observes that it is the body of international rules that prescribes international crimes, requires states to prosecute and punish at least some of those

Challenges to establishing accountability under international humanitarian law

There are a number of challenges to establishing accountability for breaches of IHL. First, since IHL applies only in times of conflict, initial problems arise from the characterisation of a situation where a rebel force is armed. A rule 1(2) of Additional Protocol II excludes ‘internal disturbances and tensions, such as riots, isolated and sporadic acts of violence and other acts of a similar nature’ from the definition of internal armed conflict. The refusal of states to accept that there is a problem in their territory, or that an existing conflict situation involving the use of arms between state security forces and rebels does not meet the threshold for the application of IHL, means that these rules do not apply to non-state actors. It was noted that in terms of IHL, ‘internal disturbances and tensions, such as riots, isolated and sporadic acts of violence and other acts of a similar nature’ fall below the threshold for the application of the laws of war. However, once an international tribunal is established, the fact that the existence of a non-armed conflict was not recognised is irrelevant.

Second, there is no independent international tribunal established under IHL treaties that relies on states to prosecute serious (grave) breaches of the Geneva Conventions. Not many states, having denied that there is an armed conflict on their territory, have in practice prosecuted perpetrators. Neither has the principle of universal jurisdiction provided for in the Geneva Convention been regularly used to this end. Prosecutions of perpetrators in African conflicts have, for the most part, been carried out by European and North American courts or international tribunals such as the ICTR and SCSL.

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

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

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

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The q uestion o f s electivity continues to dog t he o peration of ICL. To b egin with, t he N UNSC de cisions t o es tablish t ribunals s uch a s t he ICTR h ave b een s elective, and not entirely driven by a principled and consistent pursuit of justice. As a result, militia and other armed actors in a number of African conflicts have escaped justice for some of the most egregious crimes. At the operational level of the tribunals, various factors have conspired to ensure that some actors are not brought to account. The role of the RPF during the genocide and the failure by the ICTR to prosecute any member of the RPF remain highly contested and have cast doubt on the impartiality of the tribunal.

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

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

**Measures of accountability under national law**

The typical response by states in Africa – a s elsew here – w hen faced by armed threats or opposition from within has been to deny the armed groups’ existence or to refuse totally to recognise such groups by labelling their members as common criminals, subversive elements or terrorists. The last label has gained particular

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

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

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

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currency in recent years, in densifying with the much-reviled and controversial ‘war on terror’. In fact, it seems the labelling of even legitimate political opponents and other dissidents as terrorists is one of the most potent weapons wielded by challenged African regimes. The reason is not difficult to find. This strategy tends to secure international partners for the regime’s cause more readily than accepting some o f these groups for what they really are – legitimate opposition trying its hand at what seems a more persuasive method. Governments have reacted in an almost knee-jerk fashion to deny and refuse to recognise these armed opposition groups.

Experience shows that even when recognition, rights and duties are accorded unequivocally by in international law to a group as discussed above, no government would admit that it is a colonial or racist outfit or that it is in a lien occupation of territory. In recent times, it was no surprise that apartheid South Africa consistently labelled the ANC and other armed groups in South Africa as criminals, saboteurs, communists (connoting subversives) and terrorists. While this label had no significance whatsoever in terms of international law (IHL, in particular Additional Protocol I, as set out above), which by application of the law recognised the ANC as a legitimate resistance movement, the apartheid South Africa treated them as terrorists and prosecuted them under state security laws. The recent prosecution and sentencing to death of numerous members of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in South Africa and the Mavumila respectively as combatants and thus prisoners of war when captured, a apartheid South Africa treated them as terrorists and prosecuted them under state security laws. The recent prosecution and sentencing to death of numerous members of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in South Africa and the Mavumila respectively as combatants and thus prisoners of war when captured, apartheid South Africa treated them as terrorists and prosecuted them under state security laws.

This chapter showed that while international law – human rights, humanitarian and criminal law – are clear definitions on national liberation movements, legal and, by extension, political responses by states and international organisations to the activities of armed non-state actors have been varied. Political responses range from covert support to outright condemnation and sanction, and are often coulored by contextual considerations, in particular the in terests of regional and global hegemons.

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

In view of some shortcomings in the various legal regimes, establishing accountability for wrongs committed by armed non-state actors such as rebels and militia requires the use of a combination of approaches at the national as well as international level. However, there is lack of coherence among the multiplicity of actors who have a temptation to Hag rapple with the activities of armed non-state entities at the national and national levels.

Where the UN and the AU do adopt a legal response, attention should be paid to how these approaches fit in with approaches at the national level in order to ensure that all the important aspects are addressed. In particular, national tribunals and other mechanisms at that level, which have an important role but are rarely well considered, should be integrated in the response.

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

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

The fact that IHRL – the laws of war – is a known topic is not remedied. The Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols do contain an obligation for states to disseminate the information and ensure that those who may need to apply it, are informed. Apart from incorporation in the security curricula, it makes sense that the citizenry should be informed on a continent accustomed to armed conflict. Incorporating relevant aspects of IHRL in schools, in particular in vulnerable societies, should be encouraged. The possibility exists that knowledge of the rules and consequences of breaching them could have a favourable effect on the behaviour of non-state actors.

States also undertake to respect and ensure respect for the rules of IHRL. This would be in line with the requirements of ICL, in particular the Rome Statute of the ICC, that states should take measures to domesticate the statute and prosecute perpetrators. States have the primary responsibility in this regard. Questions can be raised with respect to the willingness of various African governments to prosecute perpetrators of crimes committed. However, the willingness of governments to prosecute perpetrators may depend on an assessment of their ability to do so, which in turn depends on the availability of necessary criminal justice infrastructure. In debates around the contested role of the ICC in Africa, the AU has conceded as much. For instance, in countries such as the DRC and Kenya, the independence of the judiciary and capacity of existing systems have raised concerns. To address these problems, a mini-sternal meeting of African states party to the Rome Statute has recommended that the capacity of African states to prosecute international crimes by themselves should be improved.

NOTES


3 Schreuer, Waning of the sovereign state, 448.

4 See African Union, Decision AHG Dec 160 (XXXII), taken by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Lusaka in July 2001, The African Union made history on 29 March 2005 when it launched the term E economic, S ocial and C cultural C ouncil in A ndis A bba, Ethiopia. The Council is an advisory organ of the AU consisting of a variety of civil society organisations from member states.

5 Individuals can bring petitions concerning human rights violations against states for redress. Examples at regional level in clude the A frican Commission (a nd C ourt) o n H uman a nd Peoples’ R ights, E uropean C ourt o f H uman R ights a nd C ourt a nd C ourt o n H uman a nd Peoples’ R ights, E uropean C ourt o f H uman R ights a nd C ourt o n H uman a nd Peoples’ R ights, E uropean C ourt o f H uman R ights a nd C ourt o n H uman a nd Peoples’ R ights, E uropean C ourt o f H uman R ights a nd C ourt o n H uman a nd Peoples’ R ights, E uropean C ourt o f H uman R ights a nd C ourt o n H uman a nd Peoples’ R ights, E uropean C ourt o f H uman R ights a nd C ourt o n H uman a nd Peoples’ R ights, E uropean C ourt o
Commission) on Human Rights. At the United Nations level it includes the Human Rights Committee.

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

7 Scheuer, Waning of the sovereign state, 448.

8 See Martti Koskenniemi, The future of statehood, 406.

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


11 Ibid.

12 Noel King, Congo’s army vows to disarm armed non-state entities in international law: status and challenges of accountability (accessed 10 February 2010). See also The Hague Convention, (IV) Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land, article 1 of the regulations annexed to the Convention, 18 October 1907.

13 See for instance Abdulkarim Jimale, ibid.


16 On NLMs generally, see Georges Abi-Saab, Wars of national liberation in the Geneva Conventions and Protocols, apply to rebel movements.

17 Andrew Clapham, Human rights obligations of non-state actors in conflict situations, 12 December 1973. This r esolution p receded t he adoption o f the A partheid Convention that declared the crime of apartheid to be a crime against humanity.

18 At the level of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), groups such as the ANC, POLISARIO Front (Western Sahara), SWAPO, FRELIMO, and Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front (Zimbabwe) were recognised.

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


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

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

23 See also United Nations, General Assembly, Resolution 3103 (XVIII): Basic principles of the legal status of the combatants struggling against colonial and alien domination and racist régimes, 12 December 1973. This resolution preceded the adoption of the Apartheid Convention that declared the crime of apartheid to be a crime against humanity.

24 See Clapham, Human rights obligations of non-state actors in conflict situations, 494; see also the other examples given by Michel Veuthey, Guerillers et droit humain, Geneva; International Committee of the Red Cross, 1983, xxvi.

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

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

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

28 See Geneva Conventions, common article 3.


30 The Geneva Convention that declared the crime of apartheid to be a crime against humanity.

31 See also United Nations, General Assembly, Resolution 3103 (XVIII): Basic principles of the legal status of the combatants struggling against colonial and alien domination and racist régimes, 12 December 1973. This r esolution p receded t he adoption o f the A partheid Convention that declared the crime of apartheid to be a crime against humanity.


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government was able to apply security laws and to prosecute Nelson Mandela and others for treason.


34 Ibid.

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

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

37 The Special Tribunal for Sierra Leone has tried or is trying the following: Moinina Fofana


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45 See for instance M artin P laut, B ehind t he LR A’s t error t actics, B BC, 17 F ebruary 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/afrika/7885885.stm (accessed 4 March 2010), quoting the deputy governor of t he S outhern S udan s tate of t he W estern E quatoria in w hich C ol Joseph N gere alleged t hat Khartoum was s o continuing t o g ive clandestine s upport t o t he LRA, A although Khartoum strenuously denies t his. However, in LRA A rebels seek refuge in Sudan’s Darfur, *New Vision*, 11 March 2010, http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/10/712559 (accessed 4 March 2010), it is noted that Sudan’s support for LRA ended in 2002.


47 See UN, G enerat al A sembly, R esolution r elating t o t he Declaration on P rinciples o f International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, Resolution 2625 (XXV), 24 October 1970.


49 See African Union, African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, adopted by the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly, held in A ddis Ababa, Ethiopia on 30 January 2007, articles 2(4), 3(10) and 14(2).


54 See in particular C L Mbombo and C H Bayolo, The curse of f g o ld: D e m ocratic R epublic f t h e Congo, h t t p://www.hrw.org/en/node/11733/section/1 (accessed 11 March 2010).


57 See the ICC case in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Prosecutor v T h o m a s L u b u n g o, and in the DRC, Prosecutor v G e rmain K at a n g a and M a t h e u Ngudjolo Chui.

58 See section on definitions above.

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


61 Additional Protocol II, article 1.

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

63 Beyond t he African s hores, I s rael c ont inues t o u se simi lar a rgum ents t o t he r espect t o P alestinian fighters. See Clapham, Human rights obligations of non-state actors in conflict situations, 495; w ho n otes t hat ‘ arguments b efore S outh A fr ican a nd I s raeli j udges t hat t he liberation m ovements a re e ntit led t o priv il eg es u nder in ternational l aw h a ve n ot m et w ith s u cce ss.’

64 The practice of the international criminal justice system has not provided a workable model to ensure respect for the present Convention in all circumstances.

65 See also S ierra Leone T ruth a nd Reconciliation Commission, Untitled, 2004, 131.


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

68 See section on definitions above.

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


71 Additional Protocol II, article 1.

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

73 Beyond the African shores, Israel continues to use similar arguments with respect to Palestinian fighters. See Clapham, Human rights obligations of non-state actors in conflict situations, 495; who notes that ‘arguments before South African and Israeli judges that liberation movements are entitled to privileges under international law have not met with success.’

74 Additional Protocol II, article 1.


76 See F rans V iljoen a nd L irette L ouw, S tate c o mpliance w ith t he r ecommendations o f t he ICC, ICC prosecutes only if the state is ‘unable or unwilling’ to do so.

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


79 See Godfrey M Musila, Between rhetoric and a c t ion: t he p olitics, p rocesses a nd p ractice of t he ICC’s w ork in t he DRC, Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies, 2009, 35–36.

80 See AU, Concept recommendation 7.
INTRODUCTION

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

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

It is obvious that as the dominant social force and power formation in Africa, the structure, conduct and operation of post-colonial states, and their governance systems are strongly linked to the Africa condition and human insecurity. These are therefore critical variables in the attempt to understand and explain the Africa condition and human insecurity. These delineations are fluid and overlapping. For example, weak and failing states may be fragile, just as fragile states are often weak and collapsing or collapsed. These deprivations are fluid and overlapping. For example, weak and failing states may be fragile, just as fragile states are often weak and collapsing or collapsed. However, as Milliken and Krause have noted, state failure (functional failure) precedes state collapse (institutional collapse) and state collapse may be the extreme end of a continuum of the state’s performance of functions of statehood. Further, a state has legal or juridical and functional or substantive dimensions. With regard to the first, the state is a legal entity that is recognised de jure as a sovereign authority while with regard to the second, the state is defined by its de facto or empirical attributes, that is, the actual exercise of powers, occupation of roles, and performance of functions of statehood. Further, a state has in institutional and functional attributes. The former relates to the structural apparatus of government and the exercise of public authority, while the latter relates to the critical roles, needs and expectations that are performed or fulfilled. The ability a state to perform identified critical state functions is dependent on capacity. State power and capacity can be measured in terms of the effectiveness of secured control of territory, the supremacy of laws over society, the operational capabilities to extract revenues, make and implement binding rules and regulate society, and the effectiveness of control over resources and people. Bräutigam identifies extertive regulatory, admini-strative and technical capacities as critical to state execution of its essential roles. These relate to the ability to raise revenue, establish and enforce guiding rules in economy and society, manage manpower, resources and services efficiently and accountably, and acquire and deploy knowledge and expertise required to conduct its affairs. Grindle identifies four types of capacity essential to state functioning, namely political capacity (responsiveness to demands and social pressures, accountability, effectiveness of conflict resolution), institutional capacity (the ability to construct effective national regulatory agencies), technical capacity (ability to construct and manage macro policies) and administrative capacity (effective management of public and social order and justice, the ability and potential for the achievement of identified critical state functions).

The chapter begins by elaborating the central concepts and examining state formation, state crisis and the crises of governance and development in Africa. Then the chapter investigates the links between the state and governance crises and the phenomenon of ANSGs and violence. It also looks at the reverse side of the coin, namely how the state and governance in Africa have been victims of the non-state institutions of violence. Finally, the chapter concludes by recommending that the best approaches to containing the threats of ANSGs to human security will entail extensive reconstruction, rehabilitation and reform of state and governance institutions.

THE NATURE OF THE STATE

The state is a set of interconnected and coordinated institutions that are concerned with the organisation of power and the structured domination and ordering of society. Essentially, a state monopolises certain powers and roles, namely the making and execution of binding rules, the control and utilisation of institutions of organised violence, the legitimate use of physical force, the extraction of resources, including taxation of citizens, the right to political allegiance of citizens, the right of adjudication and mediation in disputes between citizens and the right of representation in the international community. The state also performs certain core or critical functions and responsibilities, such as the control of territory and population, the guarantee of safety, security, public and social order and justice, the provision of public goods, social services, infrastructure and economic progress, and the promotion of the wellbeing and welfare of citizens.
institutions are manipulated by privileged groups to perpetuate inequity, injustice, perversion and oppression.13

State fragility is characterized by susceptibility and vulnerability to internal and external shocks and strains, a tendency towards violent conflicts, civil strife and violent crimes, the proliferation of non-state institutions of violence and small arms, a lack of stability and order, and a lack of economic regulation and internal order.14 The vulnerabilities em ance from corruption, inequality, discriminatory policies, conflict-ridden regions, a lack of state capacity to discharge basic functions of statehood.15 Most fragile states are collapsing public services and infrastructure, declining economies and lack of fiscal capacity to discharge basic functions of statehood.16 The critical issue is the collapse of the extractive, allocative, and developmental state functions. A failed state is unable to transform society into a modern industrial one, improve economic performance, prevent or alleviate poverty and create prosperity.17

State failure has to do with functional dimensions of statehood.18 It denotes that a state has lost certain powers and privileges and become unable to perform certain roles.19 The critical issue is the collapse of public authority over territory and people.20 State institutions, authority and powers fall apart and leave a vacuum of authority and roles.21 Government is not able to exercise collective will, and functions that define statehood can no longer be performed.22 Public services and security roles shrink or collapse entirely.23 There is a loss of formal controls over territory, the citizenry, resources, a lack of economic regulation and internal order, and the reach of the state is severely limited.24

The collapsing state is more juridical than substantive because of the measurement and standards of its goodness and effectiveness.25 However, it is obvious that many states are in crisis, although it should be noted that state weakness or functional problems of statehood are more pervasive while incidences of state collapse are rare. As Milliken and Krause have noted, whether in weak or even decadent forms, maintenance of the state is the norm.26

Goverance represents the processes entailed in the exercise and management of the collective will of a people.27 It refers to the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a nation’s affairs or more specifically, the manner in which government exercises political power over people.28 Good governance, for example, has been a popular concept in development, aid and donor vocabulary and scholarly treatment since the 1980s, and has remained so in the local and international development agenda.29 It is often taken to mean certain qualities and characteristics of rulership, and certain norms that are held to be ideal, appropriate and acceptable.30

There are, however, more specific attributes that characterise good governance. These are, among others, the legitimacy of the government; the existence of the rule of law or systems of constitutional politics; systems of broad participation and accommodation; the accountability to the governed; the existence of defined and predictable systems of rules, procedures and processes; open, clear and transparent systems of management of government affairs; collective decision-making, and the recognition of individual and collective rights and freedoms.31 This list is by no means exhaustive.

There are clearly two dimensions here: the political and the institutional or bureaucratic dimensions. The political dimensions are underscored in the political liberalization and reforms in Africa. In this w e i t h his t e, the U nited N ations Development P rogramme (UND P) defines good governance as the hat w hich i s participatory, transparent, accountable, effective, equitable and promotes the rule of law.32 The bureaucratic dimension involves relationships between rules and procedures, and the recognition of individual and collective rights and freedoms.33 This list is by no means exhaustive.
The nature of governance and governance systems is critically important to growth, development and political stability. It derives from the capacity and effectiveness of institutions and management with regard to the character, substance, content and empirical existence of statehood. There is more external recognition of the state than institutionalised, formalised, and typically as far as certain attributes are concerned. State power is concentrated, executive, presidential and ruling cliques. The governance apparatus is centralised and monopolistic, just as the political process is monopolised by the ruling parties, its actual hold on power is tenuous, with weak authority and limited legitimacy, which it maintains by pushing out or marginalising social groups, communities and individuals. The states are actually paradoxical, powerful but weak, repressive but feeble, a solutionist but fragile, expansible but collapsing. Though state power is concentrated and consolidated in the hands of a few elite members of ruling parties, it is actualised by consolidating power and very little authority and though intensely hegemonic, many groups are excluded and outside its control.

The development of the state crisis relates to precolonial, colonial and post-colonial experiences. Significantly, it was created by the nature of the struggles for the acquisition of political power and the consolidation of power over and beyond the rule of law. Consequently, the state is irrelevant for failing to meet needs and aspirations and not being sensitive to, and supportive of, the people. Despite its power and prominence, the state is irrelevant for failing to meet needs and aspirations and not being sensitive to, and supportive of, the people. However, the development of the state crisis relates to precolonial, colonial and post-colonial experiences. Significantly, it was created by the nature of the struggles for the acquisition of political power and the consolidation of power over and beyond the rule of law.
In fact, the immediate post-independence period was characterised by a statist expansion, penetration of public corporations and enterprises, and the expansion of state growing reliance on security agencies for the maintenance of public order. The struggles for power and its consolidation led to a concentration of power in the state, characterized by personalisation and manipulating the political apparatus and state institutions. The nature of politics has been inimical and subversive and has undermined development. Patronage politics in the context of economic decline has tended to exacerbate corruption and violence. Rent-seeking politics has undermined the capture of state power and created a bogus, consumptive and ostentatious lifestyle.

Further, there was a steady degeneration of the structures and practice of power and authority. From federalism and devolution of powers, there was a move to executive decrees and fiats, constitutional limitations of power, and the development of multiparty systems. The struggles for power and its consolidation led to a concentration of power in the state, characterized by personalisation and manipulation of the political apparatus and state institutions. The nature of politics has been inimical and subversive and has undermined development. Patronage politics in the context of economic decline has tended to exacerbate corruption and violence. Rent-seeking politics has undermined the capture of state power and created a bogus, consumptive and ostentatious lifestyle.
participation, encouraged corruption and arbitrariness, destroyed the integrity of state in situations and weakened the efficiency of the economy and the social sector.

The nature of statehood has therefore been weakened in Africa. In fact, Osaghae’s observation that many states in Africa are fragile and distressed was reiterated in the World Bank report of 2006 that listed 26 fragile states, of which 14 were in sub-Saharan Africa. Sub-Saharan African countries also dominated the lowest rungs of the United Nations Human Development Index in 2006. Foreign Policy’s Failed States Index of 2008 listed 11 African states (Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, the CAR, the DRC, Guinea, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, Zimbabwe) among the 20 states it designated as weak and failing.

These classifications were based on critical indicators of weakness, fragility, failure and collapse, such as the state of stability, security and legitimisation, the levels of group grievances, factionalisation of the state, cooperation among political elites, the levels of external intervention and displacement of persons.

The major indication of state misgovernance and weakness is the prevalence of a politics of violence and of violence in politics. There are strong links between politics, political officials, the ruling classes and the constitution of political and economic institutions. A major indication of state misgovernance and weakness is the prevalence of a politics of violence and of violence in politics. There are strong links between politics, political officials, the ruling classes and the constitution of political and economic institutions.

State weakness, fragility and collapse in Africa

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

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The crisis of governance and development in Africa

Post-independence regimes were primarily concerned with two projects, namely nation-building and economic development. The first, in dependence, opened avenues for aspirations and led to the post-colonial state-citizenry pact, which evolved around social welfare and socioeconomic progress, with the public sector showing remarkable growth in the 1960s and economic upturns in the 1970s in line with ambitious socioeconomic programmes.

However, by the late 1970s, economic decline had almost wiped out initial progress, manifesting in a collapse of export commodity prices, an oil price crisis, exceptionally poor performance and losses in the public enterprise sectors, and corruption in the management of the few resources that remained. States became debt-ridden and had to depend on credit for the acquisition of essential goods. Industrial capacity utilisation declined and states began to fail in providing citizen needs, welfare, wellbeing and progress, culminating in a disintegration of the social contract between states and their citizens.

The fallout of the struggles for power and its consolidation and the ensuing economic downturn was the decline in the leverage of the people, genuine political participation and public representation. These, along with the broken social contract, began to translate into crises of legitimacy. The citizens began to react to the growing tensions by means of protests, strikes and riots. With the loss of internal legitimacy, a new wave of protests threatened regime power, and there emerged a crisis between states and their citizens.

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The implementation of these programmes led to unemployment, deteriorating living conditions, socioeconomic hardships, the collapse of the social service and welfare systems and further economic decline. This led to a decline in support for corrupt, authoritarian and violent regimes, leading to the collapse of regimes such as that of Mobutu in Zaire and in general forced economic and political reforms and opened up the political spaces to pluralism by conducting multiparty elections.

However, apart from Botswana, Mauritius and South Africa, where democracy and democratic governance had been fairly successful, democracy has remained tenuous and unconsolidated. African countries had to solicit credit and assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The structural adjustment programmes forced states to implement austerity measures, such as job cuts, devaluation, privatisation, commercialisation, the institution of market forces and import liberalisation. The implementation of these programmes led to unemployment, deteriorating living conditions, socioeconomic hardships, the collapse of the social service and welfare systems and further economic decline. This led to a decline in support for corrupt, authoritarian and violent regimes, leading to the collapse of regimes such as that of Mobutu in Zaire and in general forced economic and political reforms and opened up the political spaces to pluralism by conducting multiparty elections.

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Africa’s governance crisis has remained profound and extensive, largely because of feeble standards, socioeconomic hardships, the collapse of the social service and welfare systems and further economic decline. This led to a decline in support for corrupt, authoritarian and violent regimes, leading to the collapse of regimes such as that of Mobutu in Zaire and in general forced economic and political reforms and opened up the political spaces to pluralism by conducting multiparty elections.
The nature of African politics and the public arena it created simply did not facilitate good governance and development. Rather, as C. Hazan et al. note, it prevented any real representation and participation, popular engagement in public policy formulation and direction, meaningful access to government, meaningful deliberations and consultation and consideration of public interests in the public agenda. There was no public consent, no institutional and public checks and balances were weakened, decision-making power was limited to a few persons or groups, diversity of opinion, criticism and dissent were constrained and popular influence and pressure on governments were limited.

In addition, governmental capacity and effectiveness were undermined. Larger bureaucracies remained inefficient, in competent and uncommitted, exploitative, corrupt and oppressive. State officials are some of the best paid in the world, and yet loot the treasury. Political leaders politicise identities, in creased exp enditure, in troduced di visions and co nflicts and turned the military in to an intervention force in politics, government and society. As a consequence of the above, most states in Africa failed to achieve economic progress and wealth or guarantee citizens’ wellbeing and security.

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

The misfortunes and sorry situation of African states, and the governance and development crises can be illustrated with reference to Nigeria. With a population of about 150 million and vast human and natural resources, Nigeria is about the seventh largest producer of crude oil in the Organisation of Petroleum Producing Countries (OPEC) and the largest in Africa. It has earned over US$400 billion from oil exports. A spoilt a nd social services and most public agencies are reconfigured with the prism of ethnic interests. Rarely do public institutions work effectively or are officials impartial and fair, for elite group interests take precedence and create an environment of arbitrariness and abuse of power. Public offices and resources are privatised for personal and primordial benefit.

The nation’s vast resources have been wasted and mismanaged or stolen and laundered by means of a host of self-interest, in consistent, in appropriate and misplaced policies and corruption. Public officials and public sector management are wasteful, profligate, wasteful and ostentatious. Public institutions work effectively or are officials in partial and self-interest, for elite group in interests the ake precedence and create an environment of arbitrariness and abuse of power. Public offices and resources are privatised for personal and primordial benefit.

As the state has failed to perform its critical roles, citizens and communities have resigned themselves to poverty and social services such as water and sanitation and have left the country with an economy, in which oil and gas account for more than 95 per cent of export earnings and 80 per cent of federal government revenues. In the mid-1960s, Nigeria was on a par with or better than most of the Asian countries, but typical of most African countries, it is very far behind them today. It now occupies the unenviable position as one of the poorest and most fragile states of the world.

The economy has been in decline since the early 1980s, and a nd has grown only marginally since the late 1990s. The non-oil sector, particularly agriculture and solid mineral production, has suffered a huge decline. Industrial capacity utilisation is less than 30 per cent and the country remains very import dependent. Public utilities and social services are a re inadequate, in efficient and a nd shoddy a nd public infra structure is co llapsing. Th e c urrency h as b een fa lling against major world currencies since the late 1980s. P overty h as de opened a nd living co nditions and a nd m aterial w ellbeing h ave been f allen. Th e p er c apita income in 2002 was about a quarter of that in the mid-1970s, while the poverty rate has increased from about 46 per cent in 1976 to about 76 per cent in 2009. Infant and maternal mortality rates are among the highest in the world.
electricity for themselves, at least most of the time. There is huge insecurity of lives and property b ec ause o f hig h v iolent c r ime r a tes. N eighbourhoods a nd communities provide their own s ecurity and safety, sometimes by hiring ethn ic militi a g roups. D e epening p overty a nd l ack o f s upport h ave fr ustrat ed ci tizens a nd d eprived g roups b ecause o f hig h v iolent c rime r a tes. M any have a lso j oined s ocial c onflicts, b ased o n r eligious f undamentalism, c ultis m a nd b anditry, p rimordial c onflicts such as c ommunal, et hnic, religious a nd r egional g roups, a nd p olitical c onflicts such as patronage and violent networks in search of platforms for social assistance.

The nation has been devastated by deep ethnic, regional and religious divisions and conflicts. The violent and deadly contests for power have produced a regime of assassinations, unresolved murders, electoral violence and violent clashes. Inter-and in tra-communal a nd et hnic c onflicts, a nd in t er- a nd in t ra-militia, c ult a nd re ligion a nd g roups, h ave le d t o a co ndition o f p ervasive s ocial s trife, s ocial u nrest a nd r eligious f undamentalism, w hic h h ave c aus ed n um ous de aths a nd displacements. About 30 000 people are estimated to have died in community and political violence between 1999 and 2009, while about 3 million were displaced. Displacements. About 30 000 people are estimated to have died in community and political violence between 1999 and 2009, while about 3 million were displaced.

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Reponses of citizens and popular groups

The decolonisation and immediate post-independence eras in Africa were years of activism a nd h ope f or t he o rdinary ci tizens a s t hey j oined t he p rotests a gainst colonial rule, responded to the nationalist sentiments and joined the struggle for decolonisation. There were huge aspirations that indigenous rule would accelerate development and social wellbeing. After independence the citizens sought avenues for more engagement, for state intervention to alleviate their social problems and for s tate-directed de velopment. Th ese h opes b egan t o f ail w hen t he citizenry was ditched and its participation, relevance and interests rubbished by t he re ligious f undamentalism, c ultis m a nd b anditry, p rimordial c onflicts such as c ommunal, et hnic, religious a nd r egional g roups, a nd p olitical c onflicts such as patronage and violent networks in search of platforms for social assistance.
social restiveness. Goaded by crises, state authorities and non-state actors have emerged to challenge the state monopoly of violence and security, creating a multitude of armed non-state groups (ANSGs) that represent the most powerful, explicit, and self-interested instruments of political violence.

The phenomenon of armed non-state groups

Non-state actors play a significant role in the security and political landscape of Africa. Armed non-state groups (ANSGs) often emerge as a result of state weakness, failure, and irrelevance. These groups, whether armed movements or private militias, are able to maintain a monopoly of violence and power, despite the challenges presented by the state. ANSGs are particularly relevant in areas where citizens remain restless and civil society is engaged in communal and individual safety and security as misgovernance, poverty, crime, violence, insecurity, and identity-based tensions and conflicts persist.

The state thus constructed a terrain of violent politics, made violence a key resource for acquiring power, and used this to exclude and marginalize the opposition. The mobilisation of opposition elements against state brutality and repression, the growth of legitimacy crises, and state violence became the instrument to suppress dissent, challenges, and resistance. State weaknesses, failure, and irrelevance are clearly indicated in the militia and rebel movements. Ordinary Africans began to use thugs, armed bands, and political parties to establish a political and public terrain or sphere in which violence and political asymmetry were prominent.

The role of armed non-state groups in Africa

The proliferation of armed non-state groups has emerged as a result of state weakness, failure, and irrelevance. These groups are often formed to challenge state authority, state monopoly, and state failure, and they represent the most potent instruments of political violence and repression. ANSGs have become the tool for either consolidating power or contesting it, depending on the political reality. Their emergence and growth have been fueled by increased state authoritarianism and declining legitimacy crises.

There are two issues here. The first is how the nature of the state and state crises are constructed. The second is how the crises of the state and governance are structured in ways that promote a zero-sum game in politics. This is evident by the fact that many of the state crises have persisted. However, because corruption, self-interested government, abuse of power, and civil rights have remained poor and vulnerable, the state has become the target for armed non-state groups.

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public and social order and peace. Second, the decline of state resources, roles and capacity leads to an inability to provide economic opportunities, social services and facilties, em ployment a nd g ood li ving co nditions. Thir d, s tate w eakness c reates a g rowing s tate ir relevance a nd t he p romotion o f iden tity g roups a nd movements to a fill t he vac uum. F ourth, s tate w eakness h eightens t he q uest f or identity s olidarity, as sertion and mobilisation, and c reates a f ertile e nvironment in which non-state a ctors c an t hrive. T ypically, in w eak s tates the non-state a ctors, groups a nd individuals t ake on s tate r oles a nd fill t he v acuum o f s ocial a ssistance, welfare a nd security a nd the maintenance of s ocial order, but a re not moderated, regulated or organised. In the absence of s tate c ontrol, r egulation a nd any f orm o f la wful d eterrence, i t i s n ot s urprising t hat t he b ehaviour a nd practices of t hese g roups b ecome l awless a nd disorderly. T h ese em ergent a c tors in g overnance a nd s ecurity t hus in cubate c riminality, excessiv e a nd a busive f orce a nd v iolence. F urther, the p olitical a nd c onstitutional e nvironment a nd w eaknesses o f t he A frican s tates are f ertile b reeding g rounds f or extr aconstitutional a ctions, v iolent p olitics, c hallenges o f s tate a uthority, p olitical c onflicts a nd o riginally w eakened s tate controlled t erritory a nd s overeignty a nd t he c risis o f s tate c apacity, c o llapse o f s tate i nstitutions a nd t he p orosity o f b orders. T h e s tate a nd g overnance c risis generated p olitical a lienation a nd d iscontent, wh ich c reated t he s ocial b ases f or o pposition, c hallenge a nd r esistance t o s tate a nd g overnance. R ather, s tate a nd g overnance c risis a re, in a s ense, v ictims o f A NSGs.

The state and governance as victims of ANSGs

The state and governance crises generated political alienation and discontent, which created the social bases for opposition, challenge and resistance to state authority and in stability, social turmoil and social disorder — conditions for organised crime, smuggling, civil strife, urban riots, banditry and in security in which non-state institutions operate and thrive. Vulnerable and dominated groups also used and mobilised ethnic identity and non-state institutions to challenge the state. Thus the state has been more susceptible to challenge.

Weak and deteriorating social services, mass unemployment, poor education systems, economic decline, stagnation and regression, de-industrialisation, urban decay, de opening p overty, c ollapsing a nd c orrupt la w e nforcement a gencies a nd widespread in security, un controlled a nd un g overned s paces a nd w eak, un stable a nd v iolent t errains a re t he c onditions in w hich t he m ilitias, I slamist m ilitant g roups a nd r ebel m ovements a re b readed. A s Clapham p ut it, m isgovernance in states such as Liberia and Uganda destroyed not only the ‘existing basis of statehood’ but was ‘sufficient to induce resistance’.

Accelerating the decline of state capacity, col lapse of state in institutions and state failure of state authority

Facilitating the loss of state-controlled territory and sovereignty of state and state emergence of ungoverned and ungovernable territorial spaces

Filling the institutional and governance vacuum left by fragile and collapsing states and co n structing a lternative p olitical in stitutions a nd a uthority in regions outside state control.


- Contributing to the proliferation of armed groups and their activities, which can lead to increased commercialisation of violence.
- Participating in resource opportunism through plundering and exploiting national resources.
- Exacerbating humanitarian crises and security threats through internal conflicts and external interventions.
- Engaging in violent confrontations with state military forces and other ANSGs.
- Facilitating the disintegration of state military forces and the collapse of formal economies by growing underground economies.
- Accentuating the collapse of formal economies by increasing illegal trading sites and routes.
- Exacerbating human in security and humanitarian crises through internal displacements.
- Contributing to the proliferation of arms and ammunition.

These actions have created a quest for primordial identities through which citizens could assert themselves, and opportunities for non-state actors in the form of diverse groups and even ANSGs to challenge state power and roles.

In view of the connection between ANSGs and the state and governance crises, the approach to containing their threats to human security will entail extensive reconstruction, rehabilitation, and reform of state and governance institutions. This should be the task mainly of African leaders who should put the African people at the centre of the state’s existence. While external interventions could make a positive contribution, their aim is primarily to promote Western interests.

The challenge is to rebuild the kind of states that the people actually yearn for: states that are responsive and sensitive to citizen pressures, guarantee human security, and manage state affairs in a transparent and accountable manner. African leaders, popular groups, and activists have to form state-citizen pacts, mobilising the citizenry and building new platforms for containing the threats to human security. But the most important and daunting challenge is to build quality leadership that can move Africa forward.

African states would have to do more in terms of building inclusive and equitable distributions of national resources and building capacity for conflict resolution and the promotion of peace. The new Africa envisioned at independence.

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INTRODUCTION

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

THE STATE, ETHNICITY AND MILITIAS IN KENYA

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

Studies suggest that in Kenya, the capture of state power by the Kikuyu and kindred groups (the Meru and Embu) systematically improved the chances of access to development resources of these groups, as well as to employment and education. All of this created a feeling of marginalisation among other competing ethnic groups. This was especially true of large ethnic groups such as the Luo and Luhya, and later the Kalenjin.1

Subsequent regimes have attempted to rectify this state of affairs, but the end result has been the formation of groups that have tended to exclude from such access. Upon coming to power in 1978, the new president, Daniel arap Moi, slowly but surely introduced a rectification process that would, by the close of the century, see the Kalenjin and the Luo become the successors of the Kikuyu as far as control of the structure of privilege was concerned. The Moi regime, while it lasted, put in place mechanisms that it hoped would ensure that it would not be ousted from power in any future elections. This was not to be, as the manoeuvres by the regime in the run-up to the third multiparty general elections in 2002 succeeded in galvanising the polity, and in particular the Kikuyu, to form a coalition of parties headed by their own in the hope that if they capture power, they will benefit from access to state resources.2 Electoral politics in Kenya thus consists of highly cohesive bloc-voting ethnic groups. Kenyans generally vote for the same party as their ethnic kin, and particularly so if a contending party has a representative from their ethnic group. Kenyans vote for the same party as their ethnic kin, and particularly so if a contending party has a representative from their ethnic group.

The history of militias in Kenya can be traced to the war waged by the Mau Mau against the British in the 1950s. The Mau Mau was an armed group of Africans – 

THE ORIGIN AND RISE OF MILITIA GROUPS IN KENYA

The history of militias in Kenya can be traced to the war waged by the Mau Mau against the British in the 1950s. The Mau Mau was an armed group of Africans –
sponsored militias and to provide protection for opposition parties during election campaigns. Some of the opposition-sponsored criminal gangs and militias were the Jeshi la Embakasi, Baghdad Boys and Amachuma.

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

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

Table 6–1: Criminal gangs in Kenya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criminal gang</th>
<th>Area(s) of operation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amachuma</td>
<td>Kisii/Nyamira/Gucha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola Musumbiji</td>
<td>Western/Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baghdad Boys</td>
<td>Nyanza/Nairobi (Kibera)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banyamulenge</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charo Shitu</td>
<td>Mombasa/Kwale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinkororo</td>
<td>Kisii/Gucha/Transmara</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dallas Muslim Youth</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndombolo ya Yesu</td>
<td>Nairobi (Kibera)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42 Brothers</td>
<td>Nairobi (Kibera)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeshi la Embakasi</td>
<td>Nairobi (Embakasi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeshi la King’ole</td>
<td>Machakos/Makueni/Kitu/Mwingi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeshi la Mzee</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalenjin Warriors</td>
<td>Rift Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamjesh</td>
<td>Nairobi (Embakasi/Kasarani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaya Bombo Youth</td>
<td>Mombasa/Kwale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kosovo Boys</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuzacha Boys</td>
<td>Nairobi (Kibera)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maasai Morans</td>
<td>Rift Valley/Nairobi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

predominantly Kikuyus— that rose up in protest against white rule. Among the grievances that led to this revolt wereirse and s caricity, forced labour and m eqage wages. The m ovement was, however, suppressed a fter a s tate of emergency was declared. Although the movement eventually s uffocated, it ts co ntribution towards accelerating the pace to independence was immense.

In post-independence Kenya, the phenomenon of the militia g roup h as i ts roots in the creation of a y outh wing by the former ruling party, KANU. The KANU regime first used its youth wing to harass the first opposition party, the Kenya A frican D emocratic U nion, w hic h ex iited f or o nly o ne y ear a fter t he attainment of independence. However, youth-wingers were used more forcefully after a split in KANU saw the formation of the Kenya People’s Union (KPU). KANU on various occasions deployed the members of its youth wing to intimidate and harass KPU supporters. The presence of these youth-wingers persisted even after the proscription of the KPU in 1969. Thereafter, all elections during the one-party era witnessed violence meted out by y outh-wingers, w ith p ersistent politicians helping them to harass and disrupt their opponents’ rallies. The youth-wingers served as a breeding ground for the rise of criminal gangs and militias after the country returned to multipartyism.

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

During the multiparty period and particularly during the reign of M o i a nd KANU, these groups transformed themselves into criminal gangs and militias and through their violent acts intimidated and disenfranchised opposition supporters, especially in areas that were designated as ‘KANU zones’. In 1992, these groups were operating mainly f rom M o i’s p olitical base in t he R ift V alley, w here t he Kalenjin Warriors and Maasai Morans attacked rival ethnic groups. In 1997, these groups were being trained and armed in the Coast province (Kaya Bombo) and recruited, trained and organised in the Shimba hills, Kaya Waa and the Similani caves in the Kwale district, at the instigation of prominent politicians and with the support of the government and the military. They were subsequently deployed to foment ethnic violence in the run-up to the 1997 elections at the Coast.5
Most of these groups share a number of characteristics, the most common being their ethnic orientation. All the militias operating in the country have an ethnic composition as a result of the manner in which the regions in Kenya are populated. Each region is associated with a certain ethnic group, and militias and criminal gangs are formed around a certain ethnic group. Most of the criminal gangs and militias that emerged with the reintroduction of multiparty politics were accordingly mobilised around ethnic identities, just like the political parties that were formed. These gangs often operate on the basis of local political concerns and forms of mobilisation, which may include language, faith and traditional practices.

Thus, the Mungiki is a group that draws its strength from the Kikuyu community. It has been described as the most serious internal security threat to Kenya.8

**Origin and composition**

The term ‘Mungiki’ is derived from the Gikuyu word *mwing*, meaning masses or people.9 There is consensus among scholars that the Mungiki movement started in 1987.10 According to its founding leaders, the Mungiki traces its birth to dreams experienced by two schoolboys, Maina Njenga and Ndura Waruinge, in the Rift Valley Province. In these dreams, they claim to have heard God’s voice telling them to ‘go and liberate my people’. They accordingly decided to form the Mungiki after consultations with elders, in cluding former leaders of the Mau Mau movement from one of which Ndura Waruinge is descended.11 The Mungiki ranks were swelled by members of the Kikuyu population who were affected by the clashes in Molo, Elburgon, Rongai, Naro and Eldoret in 1991 to 1993 and Njoro and Laikipia in 1998. The Mungiki traces its roots to this particular period because of the marginalisation of the Kikuyu population and the sufferings that emanated from the ethnic clashes in the country, especially in the Rift Valley. In these circumstances, the Kikuyu community sought to form a group that would represent their interests and defend their rights.

While the movement seemed not to have a clearly spelled out programme and agenda, its main aim was the economic emancipation of Kikuyu families that had been forcibly evicted from their homes in the Rift Valley province. The Mungiki had become a threat to the government, which it accused of starting and fuelling ethnic clashes. Reminiscent of the Mau Mau style of mobilisation of the 1950s, the Mungiki reportedly began administering oaths as a way of uniting its members. The Mungiki has several followers in different regions of the country, including Nairobi, Central and parts of Rift Valley provinces.

**THE MUNGIKI**

At its inception the Mungiki was basically an outfit whose main agenda was the economic emancipation of Kikuyu families that had been forcibly evicted from their homes. The movement seemed not to have a clearly spelled out programme and agenda, its main aim being the economic emancipation of Kikuyu families that had been forcibly evicted from their homes in the Rift Valley province. The Mungiki had become a threat to the government, which it accused of starting and fuelling ethnic clashes. Reminiscent of the Mau Mau style of mobilisation of the 1950s, the Mungiki reportedly began administering oaths as a way of uniting its members. The Mungiki has several followers in different regions of the country, including Nairobi, Central and parts of Rift Valley provinces.
faces: the social cultural face (a sniff-sniffing, dreadlocked variety that is dying off), a n economic face (mainly seen in the matatu industry) a nd the security criminal face.12

Recruitment takes place in four ways: people who just stroll in to one of its religious meetings out of curiosity, are inspired by its teachings and join the group; those who have heard about the movement from colleagues and friends or in the media and decide to join; those who have been recruited through forceful oath-taking that binds them to the ideals of the militia; and those who join because they have been deared to the successful social activities of the group. Th e latter activities include restoring security in the slums or along matatu routes.13 Recently, the gang has resorted to brutal methods, which include blackmail, violence and death threats, to force young men to join its outfit. In one case it sawed off the arm of a man in Nyeri when he declined to join, but there are indications that hundreds of others have enlisted for fear of being killed. The brutal tactics resemble those of the SLDF, which slashed off people’s ears and fingers to force them into submission.14

The Mungiki maintains control of its followers through a series of oaths, starting with the initiation of kuhagira. Other oaths include an oath for repentance, called horohio; one to prepare for or co mbate, called mbitika; a nd a continuous oath called esodus, which signifies the sect is nearing Canaan, or victory.15

Its membership cuts across all ages and sexes but draws the bulk of its followers from the lower classes, mostly former street children, unemployed youths, hawkers, artisans, small traders in the informal sector, and the security industry.16 Other oaths include an oath for taking that binds them to the ideals of the militia; and those who join because they have heard about the movement from colleagues and friends or in the media and decide to join; those who have been recruited through forceful oath-taking that binds them to the ideals of the militia; and those who join because they have been deared to the successful social activities of the group. Th e latter activities include restoring security in the slums or along matatu routes.13 Recently, the gang has resorted to brutal methods, which include blackmail, violence and death threats, to force young men to join its outfit. In one case it sawed off the arm of a man in Nyeri when he declined to join, but there are indications that hundreds of others have enlisted for fear of being killed. The brutal tactics resemble those of the SLDF, which slashed off people’s ears and fingers to force them into submission.14

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The Mungiki operates with a chilling set of rules and a strict code of conduct. Mungiki operatives stick to the 48 rules of the gang, which call for unpredictability and in visibility. Most of these rules evolve around personal survival, alertness, courage and co operating tactics. The rules urge members to stay on others and always be aware of what is happening around them and to be open to possibilities for extortion.16

Religious roots

The Mungiki rejects Western customs and has, since its inception, sought to bring about the renaissance of the Gikuyu culture as a first step towards the liberation of the people. It advocated the return to traditional beliefs and practices and stressed the lost glory and dignity of the Gikuyu, which it sought to re-establish in the ‘Kiryinaga Kingdom’. The fundamental principles of the Mungiki are cultural self-determination, self-pride and self-reliance. To this end, it has utilised traditional methods such as prophecy and terance and a nd initiation rites to censor the forces of neo-colonialism. These have been used to protect a nd phold such as asic va lue s a nd b eliefs in God (Ngai), reverence of ancestors, belief in the sacredness of land, and respect for moral values. According to Mungiki tenets, the cultural re-engineering of the Gikuyu should apply to the whole country irrespective of differences in culture. The meshing of political and
religious themes are evident in Mungiki hymns and prayers. MOUNT KENYA (Kirinyaga) is believed to be the holy dwelling place of Ngai and members look for signs from the god, turning their faces towards the mountain in prayers and hymns.

Experts are still divided as to whether the Mungiki is a religious or political entity. Those who see it as a religious entity include Grace Wamue and Kwamchetsi Makokha. Wamue’s insightful account relates to the spiritual and cultural philosophy surrounding the Mungiki’s activities. The Mungiki calls for a return to African traditions and spiritual means of resolving social problems. They reject Christianity, stating that it corrupts African values. The Mungiki’s main objective, Wamue argues, is “to mobilise Kenyan masses to fight against the yoke of mental slavery.”

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

However, the Mungiki’s ad herence to traditional Kikuyu religion has been questioned, particularly because its leaders keep shifting their religious affiliations. For instance, the conversion of its leaders to Islam and Christianity creates more doubt given their stance against the latter. At some point in mid-2000, the Mungiki started to gravitate towards Islam. Eventually, on 2 September 2000, at a ceremony held in Mombasa’s Saka Mosque, 13 of its leaders (among them Njenga) announced that he had left the movement. He staged a nother conversion, this time to Christianity, and changed his name to Ezekiel Waruinge. Maina Njenga found himself at odds with the new government and was subsequently arrested on murder charges in 2004, but later acquitted. He was re-arrested in February 2006 and held in prison on charges of administering an illegal oath and possession of weapons. In February 2006, while in custody at Kamiti Maximum Prison in Nairobi and awaiting trial, Njenga announced that he had converted to Christianity and was baptised in a publicised ceremony at the prison. In June, he was sentenced to five years’ imprisonment for illegal possession of a gun and marijuana.

Evidence collected by Ruteere shows that the characterisation of the Mungiki as a religious movement is a deliberate tactic on its part. This strategy has served the movement well, for it has helped to attract sympathy from human rights groups. After the government’s initial crackdown on the movement in the early 1990s, the Mungiki’s leaders sought protection from human rights groups. In fact, for several years, Mungiki members provided reliable information on prison conditions and gave detailed descriptions of the humane activities in Kenya’s prisons. The movement has popularised its case within international human rights commissions. This provided the US State Department regularly mentioned the Mungiki as an example of religious persecution by the state. The treatment of the group as a religion by the state, as reported by the UN Special Rapporteur, Philip Alston, can also be seen in this light.

In the light of these activities, the Mungiki’s politics reflects a keen sense of frustration with the political system in which its followers’ voices are barely heard. Mungiki members claim to represent the unfilled aspirations of the Mau Mau, for an alternative political dispensation. Like the Mau Mau, the land question is central to their politics. The movement is built on dissatisfaction with marginalisation and deprivation of its constituency. This explains why the movement has been successful in recruiting
members from a mong t he s quatters a nd s lum d wellers. Thus, a lthough t he Mungiki is depicted as a religious organisation or as a religio-cultural organisation, it r emains to a l large ext ent an entity s earching for p ower, p articularly p olitical power.

The quest for a living: tactics and strategies

The Mungiki is the most lethal militia group currently operating in Kenya. To meet its objectives, it has adopted the use of ‘cells’ similar to those used by Al-Qaeda to spread its influence and control over ethnic enclaves in primary market areas. In these communities, the Mungiki has taken over the provision of services such as ‘supplying’ water and electricity, management of transport, levying illegal taxes and extortion, protection money. Organised crime’s tool of choice for infiltrating and taking over communities and neighbourhoods is fear: in stilling it a nd exploiting it. People are mugged and brutalised, and businesses vandalised. Then victims are offered a gu arantee of safety for themselves, their families and their premises, in exchange for a fee. Those who resist are killed or maimed to serve as an example for others and to close the circle of fear. Those who comply resign themselves to a life of servitude and exploitation.

Working in a tight, di sciplined m anner, t he Mungiki has taken over the provision of services in some parts of Central Province complete with its own elaborate tax collection machinery and a judicial system to boot. In parts of Nyeri and Kirinyaga, vigilantes have taken on the Mungiki, both in Murang’a, and especially the South District, bands of organised Mungiki youths man the feeder roads, beginning from the main Murang’a–Makutano road. Every vehicle leaving the main road and entering the interior is stopped at makeshift roadblocks and the driver has to pay 50 Kenyan shillings. In this area villagers are charged for any commercial venture, however minimal.34 In parts of Ruiru, Muthaiga and other estates have to pay between 30 and 50 Kenyan shillings each day for routes under its control.35 The gangs collect 200 Kenyan shillings per day from each 14-seater matatu and 250 Kenyan shillings from 25-seater minibuses. Matatu crews also charge for the permission to operate, with drivers paying up to 1,000 Kenyan shillings and conductors paying 400 Kenyan shillings.

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

It also collects protection fees from slum residents. Households in Mlango Kubwa of Eastleigh, Mathare, Huruma, Huruma Ngei, Kariobangi, Dandora, Baba Dogo and other estates have to pay between 30 and 50 Kenyan shillings each month, shopkeepers pay 300 Kenyan shillings, kiosks and vegetable vendors 150 Kenyan shillings. Chang’aa brewers pay 300 Kenyan shillings a week and vehicles that deliver vegetables to Koroogocho and Kariobangi pay 400 Kenyan shillings per delivery. Trucks that deliver sugar and, ballast, cement, stone and building materials to sites in Eastlands also pay a fee. Workers such as masons, electricians and casual labourers at construction sites have to pay an ‘access fee’ to be allowed to deliver materials to sites in Eastlands also pay a fee.
into the yards. The gangs also run illegal water collection points where they charge between 10 and 20 Kenyan shillings for a 20-litre jerry can of water tapped from city council pipes.39

In parts of Central Province, the Mungiki has been able to set up a formidable motorcycle taxi enterprise whose proceeds are used to bankroll its illegal activities. This, combined with extortion rings operating by the Mungiki, has as turned the underground gang into a well-monetised outfit whose kitty runs into millions of shillings. Wealthy politicians and businesspeople in the province have suffered too, and tea and coffee farms have been left unattended, for farmers have also fled their homes.41

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

The Mungiki and politics

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

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

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

The Mungiki entered the political fray in the run-up to the 2002 elections, when its national coordinator, Ndura Waruinge, and the movement’s spiritual leader, J ohn M aina K amunya, were backed by the then-official leader of the opposition, Mwai Kibaki. At one presidential rally, former Molot Coordinator, Ndura Waruinge, met in Nairobi to discuss how the youth could be mobilised to support the coalition government and used the Mungiki to support its proposals. For example, during the referendum campaign, the then-special programme minister, N jenga K arume, and the former Molo member of parliament (MP) Kihika K imani paraded dreadlocked youths in Nakuru town, introducing them as repentant Mungiki followers.

The Kibaki regime’s interaction with the Mungiki has been double-sided. On the one hand, there have been groups that have been sympathetic to the politics of the Mungiki leadership in the Kibaki government and used the Mungiki when the need arose. On the other hand, there are those of the opinion that the group is a threat to state security and ought to be eradicated. For instance, when the state engaged the gang with the aim of curtailling its operations, it used the Mungiki to support its proposals. For example, during the referendum campaign, the then-special programme minister, N jenga K arume, and the former Molo member of parliament (MP) Kihika K imani paraded dreadlocked youths in Nakuru town, introducing them as repentant Mungiki followers. Subsequently, the Mungiki leader openly came out in support of the government position, holding rallies attended by well-known politicians.43 This again happened in the countdown to the 2007 elections.

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

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

The *Mungiki* has also attracted sympathy from politicians. In April 2008 a group of politicians calling themselves ‘elders’ from Central Province arranged a meeting comprising Njenga Karume (former minister of defense), Joseph Kamotho,Resize text| Erastus Muwanga,Resize text| and Etter P rotectors of t he c ommunity than the Kibaki government in face of attacks by ethnic militias. and his colleagues to discuss how to contain the gangs. This was followed by a group of politicians calling themselves ‘elders’ from Central Province and with political and financial support from senior politicians in the region of supporting *Mungiki* activities for political advantage. Some say that support *Mungiki* adherents have been receiving from politicians since the run-up to the 2002 general elections has in fact strengthened the gang.

**State response to the *Mungiki***

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

During the Moi regime, the state made various attempts to contain the *Mungiki* in Central Province and Rift Valley provinces. On 10 March, 2000, a group of politicians in Central Province and with political and financial support from senior politicians in the region of supporting *Mungiki* activities for political advantage. Some say that support *Mungiki* adherents have been receiving from politicians since the run-up to the 2002 general elections has in fact strengthened the gang.

### *Mungiki* in L. akipia

Subsequently, raids and arrests against *Mungiki* adherents became quite frequent as the government sought to stamp out the group before eventually deciding to collaborate with it in the run-up to the 2002 elections. In fact, from early 2000, *Mungiki* organisers in the country have been infiltrating the group and setting up pseudo-*Mungiki* monster. Unable to find the exact cause for the *Mungiki* monster, the government has moved to eradicate the deep-rooted gang. At grassroots level, leaders who have spoken against the gang have been subjected to death threats. On the other hand, residents have accused senior politicians in the region of supporting *Mungiki* activities for political advantage. Some say that support *Mungiki* adherents have been receiving from politicians since the run-up to the 2002 general elections has in fact strengthened the gang.

As a result of intermittent state harassment, *Mungiki* became confrontational from early 2000. For example, in April 2000, a group of politicians in Central Province and with political and financial support from senior politicians in the region of supporting *Mungiki* activities for political advantage. Some say that support *Mungiki* adherents have been receiving from politicians since the run-up to the 2002 general elections has in fact strengthened the gang.

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continuous atrocities perpetrated by the Mungiki and other militia groups. In October 2002, 26 members of Mungiki were jailed for three months each for criminal activities in Nairobi. However, as the elections approached, the Moi regime relaxed its clampdown on the Mungiki, ostensibly to win its support for the KANU candidate, Uhuru Kenyatta. However, Uhuru lost to Mwai Kibaki, who inherited the Mungiki problem.

Under the Kibaki regime, Mungiki adherents were harassed, intimidated, persecuted, arrested and killed outside the legal system. As soon as Kibaki took power, the government initiated a crackdown on all illegal organisations. In October 2002, 26 members of the movement’s headquarters in Ngarua in Laikipia, where the group had two shrines, at Sheria and Mwenje.

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Origin and composition

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

The government has repeatedly failed to effectively resettle the affected groups in a manner deemed to be equitable to all the parties. Following lobbying by community leaders, the government moved people from Chepkitale in 1971/72 to Chebyuk, where it had opened up the Chebyuk Phase I settlement scheme. The scheme consisted of 1,489 parcels of five acres of land. In 1974, the government further issued a notice to de-gazette portions of the forest reserve consisting of 3,600 acres for resettlement. Unfortunately, this de-gazettement was never finalised. Instead, in the same year the landless Soy sub-tribe was added to the scheme and occupied what is now known as the Teremis sub-location, while the Mosop sub-tribe that had formerly inhabited Chepkitale. Part of the Mosop occupied the Emiya sub-location.

In 1979, a group of Sabaot leaders sent a de-legation to then President Moi asking him to resettle the landless Sabaots. This resulted in Chebyuk Phase II, known as Cheptoror, consisting of 2,516 parcels of land. The beneficiaries were to be the Mosop sub-tribe that had formerly in habited Chepkitale. They argued that Chebyuk was already inhabited by sections of the Sabaot community from the Soy sub-tribe. In 1989, the government settled people in the area, but the exercise was not completed. Some of the people were left landless and those who were lucky enough to get land lacked full legal ownership as the government failed to issue them with title deeds. However, this did not deter the people from taking and cultivating the land. They further started subdividing, leasing and selling it among themselves and to outsiders.

Chebyuk I and II were never completed and consequently the government cancelled the existing settlement schemes and embarked on the creation of a third scheme, Chebyuk III, in 2002. By 2006, the government had reallocated land and allocation in Chebyuk III, p people had already developed the farming parcels, while others had sold or leased out the land to fellow Sabaots and others. The beneficiaries were to be the Mosop sub-tribe of the Mosop clan. The Mosops were the SLDF’s initial target, as they were perceived to be favoured by the government in the land allocations. Consequently the SLDF started launching attacks, mainly against the Mosop clan.

The conflict, which started as an inter-clan conflict between the Soy and other communities who had purchased land in the area, changed to a war between the SLDF and the Mosop clans, spreading as the SLDF began targeting members of other communities who had purchased land in the area. In fact, over time it acted against all immigrants who were allocated land in the area. It also targeted corrupt officials who had presided over the allocation process.

Organisational form

The history of organisation begins with the Sabaot LDF, which was formed in 1997 to defend their land and resist any evictions, culminating in the formation of the SLDF. The SLDF is a non-state armed group mostly drawn from the Soy sub-clan of the Sabaot that had emerged immediately after the 2002 elections. The group trained and recruited fighters in March 2003, though violent attacks did not begin in earnest until 2006, in the wake of the implementation of the phase III resettlement programme. At that time, the SLDF actively resisted attempts to re-allocate land. Violent clashes erupted when the Soy, who had settled in the area since 1971, were ordered to make way for new allottees who were mostly from the Mosop sub-clan. The Mosops were the SLDF’s initial target, as they were perceived to be favoured by the government in the land allocations. Consequently the SLDF started launching attacks, mainly against the Mosop clan.

The SLDF has a clear organisational structure and is led by Wycliffe Matakwei (SLDF deputy leader) and Davide Mako (SLDF leader). The organisation consists of three separate divisions, namely military, spiritual, and political. The SLDF judicial system was used to punish those suspected to have corrupted acquired land, discipline wrangling couples, and punish thieves and drunkards. The militia established its own administrative system, complete with a mechanism for levying illegal taxes, and informal courts. The SLDF judicial system was used to punish those suspected to have corruptly acquired land, discipline wrangling couples, and punish thieves and drunkards.

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Siche, a former police officer, was in charge of training the militiamen with the assistance of retired and serving army and police officers. The militia has used hi-tech weapons, operations, including machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, hand grenades, land mines, and rocket launchers. The SLDF’s weapons of choice were AK-47 and G3 rifles. By August 2008, the military had recovered a total of 95 guns and more than 700 rounds of ammunition from the SLDF.70 Other weapons, including pangas (machetes), knives, and bows and arrows.

The spiritual wing was central to the SLDF military strategy. Jason Psongoyo Manyiror, the spiritual leader/prophet also referred to as ‘laibon’, led this wing. He administered the oath to all combatants and gave them special charms, ostensibly to bind them to the SLDF cause and imbue them with supernatural powers that would protect them from authorities and make them invincible to enemy bullets during combat. Their spiritual wing played a central role in SLDF operations, encouraging young men to enrol in the militia and assuring them that they would enjoy mystical protection and be invincible. It also had the duty of rallying the community and politicians to the SLDF cause.67

The third wing of the SLDF is the political wing. Believed to be the driving force behind the insurgency, this wing is at the same time the most elusive as it keeps on changing, whether by default or design. Apart from its self-proclaimed spokesman, John Kanai, many politicians have been linked to the militia, but there is no hard evidence as to which politicians or ideologues are behind the SLDF.64

From a small group of fewer than a hundred fighters at the beginning of the conflict, the SLDF has grown to an formidable force. In March 2008, Wycliffe Matakwei claimed to be commanding a force of 35,000 men, a figure that was obviously overstated.69 Nevertheless, the Western Kenya Human Rights Watch (WKHWRW) has estimated the militia to be 3,000 men, by no means a small outfit.70 The SLDF has at least 30 cells of about 100 people each. Most of the cells are manned by retired security personnel who make at least one son available for training and duty. The SLDF has at least 30 cells of about 100 people each. Most of the cells are manned by retired security personnel, foreign mercenaries, and child soldiers.71

The SLDF’s methods of operation have made it difficult for the police to combat. Most of its members mix freely with civilians during the day or when not part of a combat squad. Only the militia’s commanders, trainers, and elite fighters have specific hiding places in Mount Elgon forest, where they meet to review the situation and strategise. They are able to move weapons, which it delivers to operation squads at designated points near its targets and who, after the operation, meet the carriers and return the weapons to designated points.71

Members of the SLDF have also established kangaroo courts where they handle disputes and impose fines on victims. They are the self-appointed judges in cases ranging from petty theft and family conflicts to simple disputes. Perpetrators of domestic violence are punished by public flogging. In one incident, a villager who had impregnated a girl and refused to marry her was forced to pay a fine of 500,000 Kenyan shillings, half of which went to the militia.72 For their own security, government administrative officers (chiefs and their assistants) also refer cases and disputes to the SLDF as well as collect taxes for the militia.73 For their own security, government administrative officers (chiefs and their assistants) also refer cases and disputes to the SLDF as well as collect taxes for the militia.73

He did not report the matter to the police upon his release for fear of reprisal by the militia.74

Source of funds

The methods that the militia uses to sustain and finance its activities are akin to those used by the Mungiki – in fact it seems to have borrowed most of its modus operandi from the Mungiki. The SLDF collects ‘taxes’ from the population and effectively runs a parallel administration. These illegal taxes are imposed on the residents of the area, especially those with some source of income. Initially the group demanded 1,000 K enyan shillings from each person, but later it demanded individual monthly payments levied according to an individual’s level of income. Teachers and civil servants were forced to part with a portion of their salaries (between 2,000 and 5,000 K enyan shillings) as a protection levy, while farmers were forced to remit part of the proceeds from sales.
of produce like livestock, milk and crops to the group. The militia also collected a certain amount of food produce for every unit area harvested, for example, each household was required to surrender a 90 kg bag of maize for every acre harvested.

The transport sector, too, was not spared. Indeed, public service vehicles remit part of their daily income to the militia. Apart from the taxes, the transport sector is also an important source of revenue for the SLDF. The militia also collected a portion of the transport sector's earnings, which they used to support their activities.

The military established that SLDF was financially stable and had enough food supplies to last for several months. They also used their political influence to gain control over the region. The SLDF also used its financial resources to support political activities and campaigns.

The SLDF and politics

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

The conflict in Mount Elgon escalated and took on overt political and ethno-nationalist dimensions. The SLDF a llied itself with the opposition party, the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), and was fiercely intolerant of leaders and supporters of other parties, especially those from the ruling coalition that later became known as the Party of National Unity (PNU). The SLDF went so far as to intimidate and even execute PNU supporters. As a result, two ODM civic aspirants, Moses Makoit of Cheptais ward and Nathan Warsama of Sa sur ward, were elected unopposed.

At parliamentary level, the SLDF targeted the sitting KANU MP, John Serut, who, although a Soy, was seen as acting against Soy interests. It targeted him and his family because it claimed he had used his position to secure the inclusion of the members of the Mosop clan in the third phase of the resettlement programme, although it was not supposed t o b e p art of t he plan.

The SLDF has employed a number of strategies to achieve its ends, including killings, kidnappings and torture. The SLDF has not only killed persons who they perceived as being opposed to their objectives but also targeted innocent individuals who break its code (by breaking its taboo against the drinking of alcohol, for example). It also attacks in individuals who have land disputes with other landowners sympathetic to the SLDF or those who are seen as helping to undermine the militia’s activities.

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from the old IC members. If human rights Watch t hat t he in cumbent councillor for Emia ward, Nickson Manyu, has been warned at gunpoint not to contest against the ODM candidate. He also reported widespread intimidation and electoral violence.**

**State response to the SLDF**

The government was initially reluctant to tackle the SLDF menace as it considered the group to be simply a rag-tag unit that would cease to exist with time. It was in 2007, when the group acquired more power, that the government took action. The police, the General Service Unit and the Anti-Stock-Theft Unit against the SLDF. However, these operations were sporadic and not sustained, and hence failed to contain the rapidly evolving armed group as it wreaked havoc in Mount Elgon and parts of Trans-Nzoia district.

Furthermore, during one police operation in the middle of 2007 at the Kabero, Kakkwes and Bukwen locations, 1,877 houses were burnt down and property of undisclosed value was destroyed as a result of the operation. The police officers acknowledged that the militia was bigger and better organised than it realised and then deplo yed the Kenyan army in a joint operation with the police. It was codenamed *Operation Okoa Maisha* (Operation Save Lives) and was launched in March 2008, after the December 2007 election, in a bid to regain state control of the Mount Elgon district. However, once again the military was accused of gross human rights abuses and had to withdraw from the area.

Because of this operation the activities of the SLDF militia almost ground to a halt, as most of its leaders had either been arrested or killed while a majority of its members had either been killed or detained. Human rights groups such as the KNCHR and Human Rights Watch put the number of people killed during the operation at about 2,000. By June 2008, some 758 SLDF suspects had been arraigned in court on charges of promoting warlike activities.**

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

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

**THE MUNGIKI AND THE SLDF: A COMPARISON**

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

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However, the Mungiki differs from the SLDF when it comes to adaptation to other religions. The Mungiki shifts from one religion to another in times of repression by the state. Its leaders have thus at various times converted to Islam and Christianity to escape state persecution. As Ruteere has argued, the Mungiki appears to have embraced a more strident view of religion and culture. This shift of religion when under attack is part of its arsenal for political survival as well as a protest at what it sees as the failure of Christianity to provide a solution to the country’s problems.

The modes of operation of the Mungiki and SLDF are similar. They both use terrorist organisations’ classic methods of asymmetric warfare, in which they do not engage directly with the state’s instruments and war machinery, but strike and leave the scene. Of the two militias, the Mungiki appears to have_braced a_n in strum ental_v_iew of r_eligion a_nd_culture. This change of religion when under attack is part of its arsenal for political survival as well as a protest at what it sees as the failure of Christianity to provide a solution to the country’s problems.

The communities that suffer from the violence committed by these two militias have petitioned the government to come to their rescue. The activities of the two militias have left a trail of destruction, death and displacement that have rotated large numbers of people from rural to urban settings. The activities of the two militia groups have also endangered human security in their areas of operation: economic security is under threat as trade, economic growth and development have been stunted and the socioeconomic infrastructure destroyed. Most residents of Trans-Nzoia and Central provinces have been forced to close their businesses as they cannot afford to pay the extortions demanded by the militias. Markets have shut down and residents and farmers are unable to make a living as they cannot till their lands and carry on their businesses. The end result has been food insecurity in the areas where the two militia groups are most active.

Both kill or maim those who resist them, to serve as examples to others, while those who comply resign themselves to a life of servitude and exploitation.

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

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

The SLDF crackdown was easy to implement since it was in a rural set-up that made it possible for the military to infiltrate and carry out its operations as opposed to the crackdown against the Mungiki, which operates mostly in urban surroundings and whose members could easily go underground.

Other vigilante/militias, such as the Taleban in Nairobi and the Bantu, have challenged the Mungiki. The Bantu militia is estimated to have between 2,000 and 3,000 members and has to date killed about 20 Mungiki gang members. Although
these groups have countered and slowed down the activities of the Mungiki, they have been unable to suppress them completely. In many parts of the Central Province, the Kengakenga, which has dealt with the Mungiki in the same manner that the militia deals with groups opposed to it. It has formed an execution centre (a kangaroo court) known as ‘The Hague’, where Mungiki adherents are executed through hanging, hacking or being set ablaze. ‘The Hague’ is situated at Kangenya, about 3 kilometres from Kagumo town in Kirinyaga district. Close to 20 people have so far been executed here.3

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

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

CONCLUSION

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

The persistence of the Mungiki and SLDF is an indicator of how deeply marginalised these groups are, economically and politically. There is also no doubt that the two groups are linked with elites and politicians from their areas of operation. A crackdown on the groups must thus address this connection. But more importantly, the state must address the factors that contribute to the marginalisation of these groups, for if this is not tackled, they will never be eradicated.

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

Ever since militia groups developed with the return to multiparty politics in the run-up to the 1992 elections, the state’s reaction has been one of indifference. The government has taken an unsystematic approach to deal with illegal armed groups. The government’s response to atrocities committed by these militias has dated largely rhetorical. In the majority of cases, the government has failed to act decisively. The proliferation of armed militias can be attributed partly to the failure by the government to arrest, prosecute and punish members of these militias. It can also be attributed to the abject poverty experienced by many unemployed youth in different communities.

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

NOTES


18 W amue, Revisiting our indigenous shrines through Mungiki, 12 March 2009.


22 W amue, Revisiting our indigenous shrines through Mungiki, 12 March 2009.


24 K agwanja, Warlord d emocracy.


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INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

From King Léopold II to independence

In 1885 the DRC, which is more than 80 times the size of Belgium, was ceded by the major world powers to King Léopold II of Belgium as a personal possession.4 Léopold’s private estate – the Congo – was then baptised l’État Indépendant du Congo (Congo Free State) and Léopold’s colonial representatives embarked on the dual campaign of military pacification and economic exploitation of the region.5 The exploitation evolved primarily around the harvesting of wild rubber for export to Belgium.6 Léopold fondly referred to the Congo as his private estate which he ran as a ‘magnificent African cake.’7 His brutal rule became associated with the image of ‘red rubber’, denoting that it was stained by the blood of the Africans who were forced to gather it, and in 1908, an international reform movement led by Ed Morel forced Léopold to transfer the Congo to the Belgian state.8

The transformation of the Congo from Léopold’s personal possession to a Belgian colony did not represent a major advance for the Congolese people, for Léopold’s rule was replaced by a colonial regime that was just as repressive.9 According to Anstey:

[The Belgian Congo was a vast territory which had not been properly administered; a system of direct economic exploitation … an unfettered variant of abuse and atrocity. … [This] legacy meant that Belgium had no relevant tradition of policy to invoke, [and] no positive aims regarding it.10

Belgium’s colonial rule in the Congo relied on the triple objectives of economic exploitation and political and cultural repression. Nevertheless, resistance by the Congo natives was fierce and included army mutinies, strikes, and work stoppages by mining, industrial, transportation and public sector workers.11 On 4 January 1959, the Congolese working class staged a rebellion against the Belgians, resulting in the decision to grant independence to the Congo. In his New Year’s address in 1960, King Baudouin (the grandson of Léopold II’s nephew and successor, Albert I), announced that Belgium would give its colony the gift of independence without undue haste.12

From independence to 1997

The independence of the Congo on 30 June 1960 did not result in the transformation of the Congo into a peaceful one, as a country that subsequently lurched from one crisis to the next. Belgian colonisation had blocked political development, so when the Congo was suddenly pitched into independence, the African elite was tiny, inexperienced and angry, which was a recipe for chaos.13

On 5 July 1960, several units in the Congolese army, the Force Publique, mutinied and demanded promotions, pay rises and the removal of white officers.14 As rioting and unrest spread, Preme Minister M inster P atrice Lumumba attempted to control the rebellion by promoting a ‘African soldiers and a t o nce, removing some Belgian officers, and a ppointing a C ongolese, Joseph M obutu, a s t he q uasi-
political overseer over the military structure. The Belgians reacted by sending more troops, which intensified the violence. By September 1960, President Joseph Kasavubu announced the dismissal of Lumumba as prime minister, who in turn fired the president. This crisis precipitated a takeover by Mobutu Sese Seko on 14 September 1960.

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

Mobutu ruled the Congo – renamed Zaire in 1971 – under a system of government characterised by corruption, personal enrichment and ethnic favouritism. Just like Léopold many years before, he looted the wealth of the country with abandon. This prompted a French minister to describe him as ‘a Democratic Republic of Congo, with a new flag and national anthem. The war declared himself the new president of Zaire and renamed the country the kinds of trafficking in which he had engaged over a period of 30 years.

At the head of the AFDL was Laurent-Désiré Kabila, who was derided for various among others, captured Kinshasa, thus ending the Mobutu dictatorship in Zaire.

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Laurent Kabila to Joseph Kabila

On 17 May 1997, rebels of the Alliance des Forces Démocratique pour la Libération du Congo (Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo, AFDL) with the support of the neighbouring countries of Angola, Rwanda and Uganda, among others, captured Kinshasa, thus ending the Mobutu dictatorship in Zaire. At the head of the AFDL was Laurent-Désiré Kabila, who was derided for various kinds of trafficking in which he had engaged over a period of 30 years. He declared him self the new president of Zaire: a nd r enamed t he co untry w ith a b andon. Thi s p roduced a F rench minister t o des cribe hi m a s ‘ a walking b ank va ult in a le op ard s ki n c ap’. Whilst en dow ed w ith g reat n atural wealth in the form of, inter alia, copper, gold, diamonds, oil and silver, at the time of his death in September 1997, Mobutu left a n im poverished p opulation a nd country indebted to the level of 200 per cent of the gross domestic product.

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RPA a gain en tered t he D RC t o p ursue i n sur gent s a nd a t t he s ame t ime a iso dismantled the refuge camps.

The Rwandans recruited and trained Congolese Tutsis to help them fight the Hutu ext remists a nd t heir C ongolese b ackers. Kabila, w ho h ad fought a ga inst Mobutu and failed to make any headway, saw his chance to finally deal with his nemesis. According to the International Crisis Group, the AFDL was formed to help the Rwandan, Ugandan, Congolese and, later on, Angolan military forces that were fighting against Mobutu to support their efforts. The AFDL thus gave the whole campaign a revolutionary or civil war character.

Sharing Mobutu’s weakness for political control, patrimonialism and ethnic-centred politics, Kabila was able to restore the functioning of the state only to a modest level. He found himself in charge of a country whose national debt was US$9.6 billion, whose internal currency was worthless, and whose government was non-existent. Furthermore, Kabila did not live up to the expectations of Rwanda and Uganda, which had expected him to wipe out the Hutu Interahamwe and the Ugandan rebels (the Allied Democratic Forces) and the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (which was based in the eastern DRC at the time).

Because the Congolese Armed Forces (Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo, FARDC) were weak organisationally, Kabila appointed a Rwandan officer, General James Kabarebe, as chief of staff to reorganise them. Rwanda and Uganda had to find a new Congolese puppet. The opportunity presented itself when Kabila decided to send the Rwanda troops home at the end of July 1998. The rebellion against the Kabila government that began on 2 August 1998 was dep icted b y the C ongolese A rmed F orces (Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie, RCD) led by Professor Ernest Wamba dia Wamba from the

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University of Dar es Salaam. In mid-1999, the RCD disintegrated into factions and the war was stalemated when neither side was able to marshal enough power to impose a military victory over the other. With weak domestic economies, the countries involved and their Congolese rebel allies relied on the DRC’s natural wealth to fund their continued involvement in the conflict. It must be observed that this policy of exploiting the DRC’s natural resources to support the war effort had been initiated by the AFDL, for even before coming to power Kabila signed mining concessions with private investors from all over the world to finance the war against Mobutu. Prunier gives the example of the ‘one billion dollar contract’ Kabila signed with American Mineral Fields International on 16 April 1997, setting a precedent that was subsequently copied by numerous rebel and militia groups as well as the regional states of the DRC.28

With the war having ground to a stalemate, the exhausted parties went to Lusaka in Zambia, where a ceasefire agreement was negotiated and signed in July 1999. The agreement provided for, among others, a ceasefire, disarmament of all the non-government forces, the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the DRC territory and the holding of an Inter-Congolese Dialogue to find a new political dispensation for the country.

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

STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF THE DRC’S NATURAL RESOURCES

Since the late 1800s, the Congolese people have suffered at the hands of foreign and indigenous businessmen and political leaders intent on exploiting the DRC’s rubber, ivory, diamonds, gold, copper, cobalt, timber and other resources.29 Under Léopold’s rule, brute force was used to ensure local communities satisfied high rubber quotas set by local Force Publique commanders and their business associates.30 If a village refused to submit to the rubber regime, everyone in sight was shot so that other villagers would get the message,31 or the right hands of locals were cut off after they had been killed by local chiefs ‘to show the [colonial] state how many [had been] killed.’32

After a steep fall in rubber prices, Belgium set up companies such as Union Minière du Haut-Katanga and Compagnie du Katanga (later renamed the Comité Spécial du Katanga) to exploit mineral resources located by geological surveys conducted in the late 1890s.33 These were the companies that the new rulers of the Congo inherited at independence. In order to assert sovereignty over their natural resource exploitation, both the Lumumba and Mobutu governments began the process of dismantling the state’s control over the country’s resources. The attempted secession of Katanga right after independence was supported by Belgium, because this would have enabled it to continue exploiting Congolese minerals located in the area. According to Lemarchand, the mineral reserves of Katanga province are so easy to access that they could be called ‘a geological scandal.’34

Map 7–1: DRC’s natural resources

Sources: Jeune Afrique and United Nations.

Between 1964 and 1980, a number of rebellions were launched to dismantle the Congolese neo-colonial state. The Mulele rebellion began in 1964 but by 1968 had fizzled out after the assassination of Pierre Mulele.35 The Conseil Nationale de l’libération (National Liberation Council, CNL),36 which was established by Lumumba’s followers after his assassination to liberate the country, did not last long either. It was a stern founled by aders, such as O Lenga, Gb enye a nd Kanza, were lured out of the rebellion by Mobutu in 1965.37 Laurent Kabila was the
only party member who continued to wage a low-intensity struggle in the Fizi-Baraka area until the early 1980s, when he, too, retired to the world of business in the form of crossborder trading, particularly in gold and ivory. By the time of the formation of the AFDL, Kabila was living in Tanzania on the profits from mineral smuggling and extortion.

In a nef ort t o w rest c ontrol o f f min eral e x loi tati on f rom fo reign-owned mining companies, the Mobutu government enacted the Bakajika Law in 1966, in terms of which the state established its rightful claim to all land and mineral rights in the country. He also nationalised the giant company Union Minière du Haut-Katanga in 1967, transforming it into a state enterprise called the Générale des Carrières et des Mines. This was followed in 1973 by the ‘Zairenisation’ of all foreign-owned commercial, in industrial a nd a gricultural en terprises. Mobutu encouraged co-competition between rival entrepreneurs and military units by allowing them to guard their own territories and develop their own commercial interests evolving around diamonds, gold, coffee, timber, cobalt and arms. By the time of the Bakajika Law, it was estimated that the largest diamond company in the world, the Komatko Consolidated of South Africa, owned 90 per cent of the DRC’s diamond industry and its revenues were used to finance the military regime.

It can be argued that armed non-state groups first gained prominence in the DRC during the war that overthrew Mobutu and that neighbouring countries subsequently started using these groups to fight their proxy wars. While the majority of the rebel and militia groups had been established as a result of external forces, others (like the Lord’s Resistance Army, LRA) entered the country from outside because of the absence of a functioning state.

CURRENT STATUS OF THE CONFLICT

The Inter-Congolese Dialogue was concluded in 2002 and all the foreign forces withdrew from the DRC in 2003. A transitional government incorporating most of the former rebel groups was established at the end of 2003, with Joseph Kabila as president. In 2006, general elections were held and Kabila won the presidency and his party, the Alliance pour la Majorité P résidentielle (Alliance o f t he Presidential M ajority, AMP) received the majority in Parliament. However, the provinces of North and South Kivu, and Ituri continued to experience insecurity and instability. The main source of the insecurity may be attributed to the presence of numerous rebel groups that continue to plunder the region’s natural resources, while simultaneously committing a variety of mass human rights violations that range from pillaging and burning of homes and stores to torture, abduction of children and the displacement of populations and murder.

FARDC and General Laurent Nkunda’s Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (National Congress for the Defence of the People, CNDP), which he established in 2006 to fight a against t he r ebels g roup Forces D émocratiques d e L ibération d u Rwanda (Democratic F orces f or t he L iberation o f R wanda, FD LR), which is composed mainly of former Interahamwe and ex-FAR and whose aim is to topple the government of Paul Kagame in Rwanda.

After several rounds of talks in Nairobi and Goma, the CNDP and the FARDC and General Laurent Nkunda’s Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (National Congress for the Defence of the People, CNDP), which he established in 2006 to fight against the rebels group Forces D émocratiques d e L ibération d u Rwanda (Democratic F orces f or t he L iberation o f R wanda, FD LR), which is composed mainly of former Interahamwe and ex-FAR and whose aim is to topple the government of Paul Kagame in Rwanda.

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

THE ROLE OF MILITIAS AND REBEL MOVEMENTS IN THE DRC CONFLICTS

It can be argued that armed non-state groups first gained prominence in the DRC during the war that overthrew Mobutu and that neighbouring countries subsequently started using these groups to fight their proxy wars. While the majority of the rebel and militia groups had been established as a result of external forces, others (like the Lord’s Resistance Army, LRA) entered the country from outside because of the absence of a functioning state.

Structure, agenda and functioning of the various groups

Apart from the FDLR, which has its stronghold in the South Kivu and the South-Ubangi provinces, the other rebel movements are based in the eastern part of the DRC and are made up of ex-FORCAB and ex-FAR, and are supported by external forces. The RCD, led by Laurent Nkunda, was established in 1998 in Rwanda and is based in the Goma and the South-Ubangi provinces. The RCD is supported by Rwanda and is composed of former Interahamwe and ex-FAR and its aim is to topple the government of Paul Kagame in Rwanda.
active in North and South Kivu provinces, while the RCD-Kisangani (also called RCD-ML), supported by Uganda, was based at Kisangani and controlled parts of Ituri and Orientale provinces.

The disintegration of the RCD was occasioned by, inter alia, the leadership style of Wamba and different views on how to pursue the war against the Kabila government. Although a section of the RCD-Goma faction (which included members such as Emile Ilunga, Bizima Karaha, Moise Nyarugabo, Lunda Bululu and Alexis Tambe) favoured a tightening of Kinshasa to capture power, the RCD-Kisangani faction (which was led by Wamba) favoured a warlike approach. Between August 1999 and May 2000, Ugandan and Rwandan troops clashed on three occasions in the town of Kisangani for control of taxes or gratuities related to the amonds. Later on the RCD-Kisangani disintegrated into other factions, including RCD-Nationale led by Roger Lumula and based in the town of Bafwasende.

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

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

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

Mai-Mai groups tend to shift alliances to achieve their parochial interests. During the 1996–1997 war, for example, they fought with Kabila, but after the AFDL came to power, they deserted and returned to their bases in North Kivu, from where they have been able to sow terror among soft civilian targets. Different actors have aiso used them to exploit the region’s vast mineral and timber resources. The most active Mai-Mai groups today include Mai-Mai-Yakutumba and Mai-Mai-Zabuloni, named after the areas in the two Kivu provinces in which they are based.

The Parti pour l’Unité et la Sauvegarde de l’Intégrité du Congo (Party for Unity and Safeguarding of the Integrity of Congo, PUSIC) was founded in 2002 by Chief Kaahwa Mandro Kango, who broke away from the Union des Patriotes Congolais (Union of Congolese Patriots, UPC) of Thomas Lubanga, who had, in turn, broken away from RCD-ML. When Lubanga started collaborating with Rwanda, Kaahwa decided it was time to break ranks with him and allied with Uganda to fight the UPC. However, eventually, with the pacification of Ituri Province, a loose federation, called Mai-Mai-Yakutumba and Mai-Mai-Zabuloni, named after the areas in the two Kivu provinces in which they are based.

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

The Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) first entered the DRC in October 2005 in Orientale Province. In March 2002, the Uganda army launched ‘Operation Iron Fist’ to rout the LRA from its bases in Southern Sudan. This, inter alia, resulted in the rebels crossing the border from Sudan into Uganda. The LRA was present in the DRC as late as December 2008, when FARD, the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) and the Uganda
People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) launched Operation Lightning Thunder in 1999 against the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda. According to reports, the LRA attacks have resulted in a 32 per cent increase in the number of internally displaced persons in Orientale Province.

As can be seen from the above, many rebel and militia groups operating in the eastern DRC are connected either to each other or to the DRC government and the neighbouring countries. It should be noted that the impact of their activities on human security has been immensely negative. Of the more than 4 million deaths that have been recorded since the start of the conflict in 1996, the majority have occurred in the eastern DRC. In their broad struggle to seize economic, political and military power, the militias, rebel movements and government soldiers (both national and foreign) have been guilty of the most horrific human rights abuses, including widespread killings of unarmed civilians, rape, torture and looting, and recruitment of child soldiers to fight in their ranks, leading to the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of people.

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

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

The DRC in general, and the eastern part of the country in particular, is incredibly rich in terms of natural resources, but this has long been described as a curse.\(^5\) Throughout the past century, irrespective of the governing system or political personalities in power, the natural resources have been systematically exploited for the economic benefit of a few at the expense of the vast majority of the Congolese people.\(^6\) The conflict in the eastern DRC is mainly about access, control and trade in minerals such as coltan, gold, cassiterite, diamonds, copper and cobalt, as well as timber. The eastern DRC also has deposits of cadmium, silver, zinc, uranium, coal, lead, iron ore and manganese.\(^7\) Table 7–2, and maps 7–2 and 7–3 show the location of these minerals in the DRC.

### Table 7–2: Natural resources in the DRC

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


---

Source: compiled by the author from various sources. Note that some of these groups no longer exist.
During their occupation of large parts of the eastern DRC, Rwanda and Uganda created rebel and militia groups to help them exploit the natural resources in the areas under their control. The government of Rwanda reportedly created a special ‘Congolese Desk’ in the Ministry of Defence that coordinated the exploitation. In Uganda, high-ranking government and military officials created companies and proxy rebel groups to carry out exploitation on their behalf. The withdrawal of these countries from the DRC did not end the exploitation, as new groups emerged to take their place.

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

Collaboration between the DRC government and FDLR and PARECO

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

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

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

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

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

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

Other activities engaged in by the FDLR and its civilian associates include taxing markets in Kibua and Nyabondo in North Kivu and in North Kivu, Sange and Kilembwe in South Kivu, producing a wide range of agricultural goods (e.g. cannabis), exploiting timber in Pinga territory, poaching hippos and elephants for meat and ivory in areas under its control along Lake Albert in Lubero and trade in charcoal produced from wood cut in Virunga National Park. PARECO is allied to the FDLR and thus extension collaborates with FARDC. However, this group is less homogeneous and thus has a less well-defined political or economic agenda. It would seem to be involved in mining in a opportunistic way rather than as a well-organised strategy.

Rwanda and the CNDP

The CNDP was established on 30 December 2006 by Brigadier-General Laurent Nkunda, who had fought with the RPA to oust the Hutu government, which had
carried out the genocide. He then joined the RCD-Goma faction and by 1998 had become one of its major commanders. In 2009 he was in de facto control of North Kivu and South Kivu. The CNDP is an armed non-state group although Nkunda has tried to present it as a political tool to clean up Congolese politics. The group has a de facto control of North Kivu and to a lesser extent South Kivu. The above ‘taxation’ on commercial routes continues, despite a co mmuniqué issued on 31 March 2010 in which the lifting of all illegal barriers and taxes was announced.

Uganda–MLC collaboration

From the above it is clear that Uganda had a hand in the creation of the MLC and the mutual relationship was maintained throughout the war. The following two examples further illustrate the support Uganda gave to the MLC. First, when the Sun City I talks, as part of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue, ended inconclusively in April 2002, Uganda supported the MLC by offering its support to the MLC, resulting in a show of force by the RDF. Second, when the MLC attempted to challenge the MLC’s monopoly over the production and trade in commodities, including diamonds, gold and coffee, in its territory.

INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL RESPONSES TO THE CONFLICT

Because state and non-state actors have generally coerced civilians to help with the illegal exploitation of the DRC’s natural wealth, it has resulted in human rights violations. These are, in turn, violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law instruments. The court also found that ‘the actions of various parties to the conflict’ had contributed to the immense suffering faced by the Congolese population. The human rights violations have included

In January 2009, the CNDP split when General Bosco Ntaganda deposed Nkunda as leader and announced the transformation of the group into a political movement and integration of its fighters with FARDC. This close relationship between the group and Kigali was clear at a press conference at which Ntaganda appeared in the company of General Kabarebe and other high-ranking Rwandan officials. During the fighting in 2009, the RDF captured Nkunda and placed him under house arrest in Rwanda, where he has been ever since.

The fighting that erupted in North Kivu in late 2008 and continued into 2009 between the forces of FARDC and the CNDP has been presented as an attempt by FARDC to force the CNDP to demobilise and integrate into the national force. However, this fighting was actually an attempt by the K inshasa government to assert its authority over the eastern DRC. In fact, the CNDP had created a state within a state in the areas it controlled where it exploited natural resources and ‘exercised military, political and administrative influence’ in Masissi and some parts of Rutshuru. The arrest of Nkunda has not stopped the CNDP’s de facto control of North Kivu and to a lesser extent South Kivu. The above ‘taxation’ on commercial
deliberate killing of civilians, rape, looting and some acts of cannibalism.\textsuperscript{94} The violations in particular and the conflict in general have elicited regional and international responses, which are discussed next.

### Regional responses

In 2004, under the auspices of the United Nations and the African Union, the states of the region established the International Conference on the Great Lakes region (ICGLR)\textsuperscript{95} as a forum for resolving a range of conflicts, maintaining peace, security and stability, and laying the foundation for post-conflict reconstruction. In December 2006, in Nairobi, Kenya, the states concluded the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes region,\textsuperscript{96} which, \textit{inter alia}, provides for the conclusion of two protocols that are germane to this discussion, the Protocol on Non-aggression and Mutual Defence in the Great Lakes region and the Protocol on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes region,\textsuperscript{97} which, \textit{inter alia}, provides for the conclusion of two protocols that are germane to this discussion, the Protocol on Non-aggression and Mutual Defence in the Great Lakes region and the Protocol against Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources,\textsuperscript{98} which, \textit{inter alia}, provides for the conclusion of two protocols that are germane to this discussion, the Protocol on Non-aggression and Mutual Defence in the Great Lakes region and the Protocol against Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources.

The ICGLR has as its main objective the repatriation of armed groups and the forcible disarming of the negative forces, including a possible timeline and size and mandate of the envisaged African force to undertake the task. Alongside the AU, through its Peace and Security Council, the AU has committed itself to a forceful disarmament of the negative forces in the eastern DRC. At its Libreville meeting in January 2005, it expressed serious concerns over the security situation in the eastern DRC, especially the presence of armed negative forces and other armed groups. Between February and March 2005, it sent a preliminary evaluation team to make recommendations on how the disarmament would be carried out. This was followed in April 2005 by a meeting of the AU and military experts from Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda where consensus was reached regarding political and military support and sources of supplies to t o t hese negative forces. This meeting also discussed the modalities of implementing the Peace and Security Council of the AU. The AU, through its Peace and Security Council, has committed itself to a forceful disarmament of the negative forces in the eastern DRC. At its Libreville meeting in January 2005, it expressed serious concerns over the security situation in the eastern DRC, especially the presence of armed negative forces and other armed groups. Between February and March 2005, it sent a preliminary evaluation team to make recommendations on how the disarmament would be carried out. This was followed in April 2005 by a meeting of the AU and military experts from Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda where consensus was reached regarding political and military support and sources of supplies to t o t hese negative forces. This meeting also discussed the modalities of implementing the Peace and Security Council of the AU.

The Protocol on Non-aggression and Mutual Defence in the Great Lakes region (article 5),\textsuperscript{97} which, \textit{inter alia}, provides for the conclusion of two protocols that are germane to this discussion, the Protocol against Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources,\textsuperscript{98} which, \textit{inter alia}, provides for the conclusion of two protocols that are germane to this discussion, the Protocol on Non-aggression and Mutual Defence in the Great Lakes region and the Protocol against Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources.

The Protocol against Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources aims at preventing, curbing and eradicating the illegal exploitation of natural resources, and promoting policies and strengthening mechanisms to prepare or mount armed attacks and/or conduct subversive activities against other states; to apprehend and disarm members of armed groups who use or attempt to use their territories to prepare or mount armed attacks and/or conduct subversive activities against other states; to incept a fund for the disarmament of armed groups fleeing across their common borders, and to accord each other mutual assistance in prosecuting armed groups throughout the Great Lakes region (article 8).

The protocol declares that illegal exploitation of natural resources is a violation of the rights of member states to permanent sovereignty over their natural resources, and commits member states to end impunity for persons responsible for exploiting natural resources illegally. The protocol also calls upon every member state to ensure that all acts of illegal exploitation of natural resources are offences under its criminal law. Finally, the protocol calls on each member state to impose effective and deterrent sanctions commensurate with the offence of illegal exploitation of natural resources committed, including imprisonment for or in division of persons convicted of such offences.

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

The AU’s Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy and Decision recognises that natural resource governance lies at the nexus of peace, security, stability and sustainable development. In addition, the AU-New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) peace and security agenda, which was developed in 2003, identified the need for the maintenance of international peace and security, and the role of the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the world, with a Chapter VII mandate, it has not lived up to expectations for a number of reasons. First, both the Congolese government and general population view the force with suspicion as a result of the transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in particular and the DRC in general constitutes a threat to the maintenance of international peace and security priorities.101 As a result, apropos the DRC, the Policy and Decision, inter alia, called on the DRC government to regulate artisanal mining to improve labour conditions, prevent human rights violations and ensure that artisanal mining contributes to poverty reduction and sustainable development.102

International responses

United Nations Security Council, MONUC and sanctions

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has declared that the situation in the eastern DRC in particular and the DRC in general constitutes a threat to the maintenance of international peace and security, and that natural resource governance lies at the nexus of peace, security, stability and sustainable development. In addition, the AU-New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) peace and security agenda, which was developed in 2003, identified the need to improve labour conditions, prevent human rights violations and ensure that artisanal mining contributes to poverty reduction and sustainable development.102

The Council, in Resolution 1807 (2008), extended the asset freeze and travel ban to individuals engaged in trade in such resources and the proliferation of and trafficking in arms as factors fuelling and exacerbating conflicts in the Great Lakes region. Thus, in Resolution 1493 (2003), it imposed an arms embargo on all foreign and Congolese armed groups and militias operating in the territories of North and South Kivu and Ituri, and on groups of experts to monitor the implementation of the arms embargo in Resolution 1533 (2004).104 In Resolution 1596 (2005), the UNSC further imposed travel restrictions and a freeze on the assets of individuals and entities violating the arms embargo105 and, in Resolution 1649 (2005), it extended the applicability of the travel and financial restrictions to political and military leaders of foreign armed groups operating in the DRC and entities supporting the illegal armed groups in the eastern DRC through the illicit trade in natural resources.106 While extending the mandate of the Mission des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo (MONUC), the Group of Experts and the Sanctions Committee, the Council also renewed the sanctions listed in various resolutions.107

Sanctions in the form of travel bans and asset freezes have been imposed in, for example, Resolution 1857 (2008) have been imposed on, among others, four FDLR leaders, n amely Callixte Mbarushimana, Stanislas Nsanzimana, Pacifique Ntawunguka and Léopold Mujyambere. Although the FDLR military commander, Major-General Sylvestre Mudacumura, was placed on the sanctions list in 2005, this remains an essentially symbolic gesture because, like most of the sanctioned persons, he lives in Kivu province and has no bank account or any possibility of travel.108

Although Mission d es Nations U nies en R épublique D émocratique d u C ongo (MONUC) (n ow c alled Mission d e l ’Organisation d es N ations U nies p our l a Stabilisation en R épublique D émocratique du Congo [MONUSCO]) is the biggest UN peacekeeping mission in the world, with a Chapter VII mandate, it has not lived up to expectations or been successful in situations of armed conflict, including killing and maiming, sexual violence, abduction and forced displacement.109 In addition, it sanctioned individuals obstructing the access to or the distribution of humanitarian assistance in the eastern DRC, as well as the distribution of humanitarian assistance in the eastern DRC, as well as the proliferation of and trafficking in arms as factors fuelling and exacerbating conflicts in the Great Lakes region. Thus, in Resolution 1493 (2003), it imposed an arms embargo on all foreign and Congolese armed groups and militias operating in the territories of North and South Kivu and Ituri, and on groups of experts to monitor the implementation of the arms embargo in Resolution 1533 (2004).104 In Resolution 1596 (2005), the UNSC further imposed travel restrictions and a freeze on the assets of individuals and entities violating the arms embargo105 and, in Resolution 1649 (2005), it extended the applicability of the travel and financial restrictions to political and military leaders of foreign armed groups operating in the DRC and entities supporting the illegal armed groups in the eastern DRC through the illicit trade in natural resources.106 While extending the mandate of the Mission des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo (MONUC), the Group of Experts and the Sanctions Committee, the Council also renewed the sanctions listed in various resolutions.107

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MONUSCO is supposed to demobilise armed rebels and militias by 30 June 2010 from areas where the situation permits. Several of the world’s most critical conflict-affected regions are currently beyond the reach of MONUSCO’s mandate. In those areas, MONUSCO’s ability to implement its mandate is limited by the persistent threat of armed rebellion. The Kimberley Process was established to address the international problem of conflict diamonds. It requires states to take measures to prevent the illegal transport of conflict diamonds, including the smuggling of diamonds through the DRC.

The International Criminal Court

The International Criminal Court (ICC) was established by the Rome Statute in 1998 to prosecute individuals accused of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. The DRC signed the Rome Statute on 8 September 2000 and deposited its instrument of ratification on 11 April 2002. In July 2003, the Office of the Prosecutor started investigating crimes within the jurisdiction of the ICC. The ICC is mandated to prosecute those responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

The Kimberley Process

The Kimberley Process is a voluntary scheme for the certification of rough diamonds, which aims to prevent the trade in conflict diamonds. The process requires states to ensure that their diamond supply chains are free of conflict diamonds. The process has been effective in reducing the trade in conflict diamonds in the DRC.

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On 28 May 2008, Jean-Pierre Bemba was arrested in Belgium on four counts of war crimes and two of crimes against humanity.122 According to the warrant of arrest issued by the ICC, Bemba and his MLC had intervened in the conflict in the CAR in 2002–2003 and pursued a pan of terrorising and brutalising innocent civilians, in particular during Operation Amani Leo and Operation Mai-Mai.123 It is unfortunate that the ICC has indicted Bemba as a result of its investigations into events in the CAR and not on any crimes he may have committed during the long war in the DRC. Also, there are no charges relating to the plunder of Congolese natural resources, which were issued in 2005, while that issued against Joseph Kony and his top commanders, for whom warrants were issued in 2005, are still at large, while that issued against Sudanese President Omar el-Bashir is unlikely to be executed as long as he remains in power. This clearly shows that the ICC will face great difficulty in dealing with the numerous rebel and militia groups in the eastern DRC. It may indict rebel and militia leaders (for example Ntaganda), but it will be next-to-impossible to take the indicted persons into custody without the support of the relevant state.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conflict initially involved in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the AFDL as a useful cover for their strategic objective of creating a buffer economic and political security zone in the eastern Congo. However, Kabila did appoint a hem b y flailing t o s erve t heir interests. As a result, the two countries started a policy of creating and supporting rebel groups to unseat the Kinshasa government. The groups subsequently disintegrated in to splinter groups and во were n ot h elful a t all a s they started fighting among themselves and also gave raise to new movements that sprang up to challenge the foreign-created groups. This happened all over the eastern DRC. Although some of the rebel and militia groups, such as RCD-Goma, RCD-ML and RCD-Nationale, ceased to exist when they joined the transitional government,
promoting peace and security in the Great Lakes region and the elimination of the
negative rebel and militia group elements. The normalisation of relations among
the states of the region will eliminate suspicion(s) and promote cooperation and
joint action to eliminate these groups and promote peace. This is in deed what
happened in the case of the joint action taken by the DRC and Rwanda, which
resulted in the arrest of Nkunda and the integration of most of his force into
FARDC. Clearly, collaboration among the states of the region would be a powerful
weapon for eliminating once-and-for-all the various rebel and militia groups that
continue to sow unrest in the eastern DRC.

NOTES

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


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


6 Ibid.


8 Dunn, Imagining the Congo, 22.

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


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

12 Dunn, Imagining the Congo, 62.


14 Dunn, Imagining the Congo, 63.

15 Ibid.


17 French, A continent for the taking, 54; M M cNulty, Th e co llapse o f Z aïre: im plosion, The Congo from Léopold to Kabila, 627.


19 It was composed of four groups, namely the Parti de la Révolution Populaire (People’s Revolutionary Party, PRP), which was founded in 1968 by Laurent Kabila; Conseil National de Résistance pour la Démocratie (National Resistance Council for Democracy, CNRD), led by Andre Kisasu Ngandu with a Lumumbist association; Mouvement Révolutionnaire pour la Libération du Zaïre (Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Zaire, MRLZ), led by Masasu N’indanga; and Alliance Démocratique des Peuples (Democratic Peopes’ Alliance, ADP), led by D Congo. Gubia with Z Congolese Tutsi associates. Kabila was named the spokesperson of the group, Bugera secretary-general and Ngandu army commander. Ngandu was assassinated in January 1997.


22 Nzongola-Ntalaja, Th e Congo from Léopold to Kabila, 224.


25 Ibid.

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

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

28 G P runier, From gen ocide t o c ontinental w ar: t he ‘ Congolese’ c onflict a nd t he cr isis o f c ontemporary Africa, London: Hurst, 2009, 137.


32 Ibid, 164.

33 Global Witness, Same old story, 6.

34 R L emarchand, Poli tical a wakening i n t he ‘ Congolese’ c onflict a nd t he cr isis o f c ontemporary Africa, London: Hurst, 2009, 137.

35 For a full discussion see ibid, 121–135.
Nzongola-Ntalala, The Congo from Léopold to Kabila, 135.
Ibid, 147; Global Witness, Same old story, 8.
Global Witness, Same old story, 8.
Peace agreement between the government and the CNDP, Goma, 23 March 2009.
Ward, Rebels and militias in resource conflict.
K P Apuuli, The implications of the arrest of Jean-Pierre Bemba, 250.
With the establishment of the transitional government in 2003, any of the groups then operating in the eastern DRC became part of the government. I concentrate on the current groups as they are the main focus of this chapter.
ICG, Congo: a comprehensive strategy to disarm the FDLR, 1.
Ibid, 2.
ICG, Democratic Republic of Congo, 19.
See for example Prunier, From genocide to continental war, 206, who notes that in K indu, many of the 5 000-strong Congolese garrison was actually made up of Rwandese ex-FAR and Interahamwe, who were fiercely loyal b cause they could see n o hope for their situation unless Kabila won.
ICG, Congo: a comprehensive strategy to disarm the FDLR, 24.
Global Witness, Faced with a gun, what can you do?, 43.
A process through which previously hostile armed groups are re-integrated and trained to become part of a unified national army.
UN Group of Experts on the DRC re-established pursuant to Resolution 1857, Final report (S/2008/773), 2008, 36; Global Witness, Faced with a gun, what can you do?, 27.
Ibid, 27.
Ibid, 11.
Prunier, From genocide to continental war, 322.
Ibid, 323.
ICG, Congo: a comprehensive strategy to disarm the FDLR, 2.
Ibid, 49; UN Group of Experts on the DRC, Interim report, 7.
UN Group of Experts on the DRC, Interim report, 7.
ICG, Congo: a comprehensive strategy to disarm the FDLR, 4.
UN Group of Experts on the DRC, Interim report, 7.
Apuuli, The politics of conflict resolution in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 76.
Apuuli, The implications of the arrest of Jean-Pierre Bemba, 251.
Global Witness, Same old story, 13, 18.
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, G res 2200A (XXI), 21 UN GAOR Supp (No 16) a t 52, UN D oc A/6316 (1966); 99 UNT S 171; 6 ILM 368 (1967), ado pted on 16 December 1966 and entered into force on 23 M arch 1976, http://www.umn.edu/humanrts/insfree/b3ccpr.htm (accessed 20 J uly 2010). See especially article 6(1): E very human being has a right to life; Article 7: N o one shall be subjected to torture, or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment ...
entered in to f orce o n 21 O ctober 1986, h t t p://www.hrcc.org/docs/Banjul/afhrz.html, (acceded 19 July 2010). See especially article 4: Human beings are inviolable. Every human being shall be entitled to respect for his life and the integrity of his person. No one may be arbitrarily deprived of this life; article 5: Every individual shall have the right to the respect of the dignity inherent in a human being and to the recognition of his legal status. All forms of exploitation and degradation of man, particularly slavery, shall be prohibited; a rule 21 (1): A II people shall be free to dispose of their wealth and natural resources...


92 Ibid, paragraph 219.

93 Ibid, paragraph 221.

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

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


100 African Union, 23rd meeting of the Peace and Security Council, Libreville, 10 January 2005 (PSC/AHG/COMM [XXII]).

101 Priority 7 is stated: ‘Generating minimum standards for application in the exploitation and management of Africa’s resources (including non-renewable resources) in areas affected by conflict.’


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

110 Prunier, From genocide to continental war, 246.

111 Ibid, 298.

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


114 Ibid, 6.

115 Ibid.


117 Same old story, 28.

118 Ibid.

119 Ibid.

120 D riscos C errification S ceme f o r R ough D iamonds, ado pted a t t he m inisterial m eeting in I nterlaken on 5 N ovember 2002, h t t p://www.kimberleyprocess.com (acceded 19 July 2010).

121 Global Witness, Same old story, 28.

122 Ibid.


124 Ward, Rebels and militias in resource conflict.

125 Apuuli, The implications of the arrest of Jean-Pierre Bemba, 248.

126 Ibid.

127 Ward, Rebels and militias in resource conflict.

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

Ibaba Samuel Ibaba and Augustine Ikelegbe

INTRODUCTION

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

Fundamentally, grievances against development neglect, alienation from the nation’s oil wealth, and oil-based environmental degradation are at the root of this militancy, but greed and the resultant commercialisation of violence have led to what Ikelegbe calls ‘deviant in surgency’ (2011). Specifically, the emergence of diverse militia activities (underpinned by opportunism and crime which disconnect such activities from the insurgency) has resulted in the branding of militias as criminals. More confusing are interconnections among militia,
Militias, Pirates and Oil in the Niger Delta

Ibaba Samuel Ibaba and Augustine Ikelegbe

Piracies, cults, oil theft syndicates, syndicates that kidnap for ransom, armed gangs, thugs and bouncers. The interconnections denote a confused agenda and activities that tend towards self-destruction. In addition, there is an increasing presence of militias in politics and they are emerging as pseudo-governments in rural communities.

These matters, among others, raise pertinent questions:

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

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

The chapter begins with an introduction that raises questions to be addressed. It then reviews the literature on resources and conflict, particularly how the ‘greed and grievance’ thesis applies to the Niger Delta; maps the violence and crises in the region and the activities and engagements of the militias with the Nigerian state and the transnational oil companies, and examines the factors and developments that underpin the grievances in the Niger Delta.

Resources and conflict: the dilemma between greed and grievance

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

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

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

It is true that oil wealth has been transferred out of the Niger Delta for the benefit of the ethnic majorities that control the Nigerian state. But how much of this wealth has benefited the ordinary citizens of the majority ethnic groups? Is the scenario different in the Niger Delta where the leadership lives in affluence while the vast majority of the citizens live in abject and deepening poverty? It is evident therefore that the ethnic and regional politics of oil companies, ex clusion and plunder that underpin the grievances in the Niger Delta are a product of the greed of the ruling class.

In the Niger Delta, the political leaders who champion the ‘grievance’ thesis have also often embezzled development funds through misuse of public offices. Following the implementation of the 13 per cent derivation funds in 2000, huge revenues have flowed into the Niger Delta. In comparison, the region has received far more revenue than the other geopolitical zones, but this has had little impact on the citizens. F or ex ample, the six Niger Delta states were a llocated a bout 221...
Because of corruption and poor planning, only a small proportion of these funds trickled down to the masses. Thus there has been little improvement in the standard of living in the Niger Delta. It notes, for example, that one primary health facility serves 43 settlements, or a total of 9,805 people, in an area of 44 square kilometres. Similarly, only 20–24 per cent of the population have access to clean water. A awareness of theft and development funds by political leaders and public officials has become a source of grievance. The resulting disillusionment over corruption and failed access to development and resources have fuelled class, ethnic and social tensions that turn violent as each group lays claim to a fair share of the oil wealth.11

Explaining the conflicts from the perspectives of greed or grievance will be more meaningful when located in the context of the conflict system. For example, whereas the ‘grievance’ thesis may reasonably capture the essence of the agitations against the Nigerian state, it does not adequately explain intra- and inter-ethnic, community, militi/a/cult and related conflicts.

It is noteworthy that access to resources has been a source of grievance that underlies in- and intra-community and inter-ethnic conflicts in the Niger Delta. Further, youths have overthrown community leadership structures primarily as part of a struggle for access to community and transnational oil company resources. On the other hand, it is possible that in cases where the political leadership supports youth movements, it is to further their ambition to embezzle state funds. Therefore, the struggle for resources born from a genuine need for development and compensation for resources on the one hand and opportunistic desires and greed for accumulation on the other is at the centre of the conflicts.

Mursheed and Tadjoeeddin also draw attention to the fact that the greed and grievance variables are not sufficient to explain the outbreak of violence and point out that the weakening of the social contract underlies conflict:

… even if rents from capturable resources do constitute a sizeable prize, violent conflict is unlikely to hold if a country has a framework of widely agreed rules, both formal and informal, that safeguard the allocation of resources, including resource rents, and the peaceful settlement of grievances … Viable social contract can be sufficient to restrain, if not eliminate, opportunistic behavior such as large-scale theft of resource rents, and the violent expression of grievance.12

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

Violence and crisis in the Niger Delta

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

Mapping the Niger Delta conflict: from agitation to resistance

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

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

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


A number of issues are inextricably linked to the conflict:

- Deprivation, neglect, underdevelopment and associated alienation have been at the base of the agitations and conflict since the 1950s
- The insensitivity of the government and its institutions as well as in the oil companies. This resulted in the mobilisation of the people, particularly the youth and civil society, against the state and oil companies
- State repression and excessive use of force turned peaceful civil disturbances into violent engagements, a s y outh a nd militants adjoined a rmed confrontations both as a defence mechanism and as an effective instrument in the pursuit of their goals

Militias, pirates and cults in the Niger Delta

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

Civil society groups in the Niger Delta include the Ijaw National Congress, the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People, the Eghema National Congress and the Isoko Community Oil Producing Forum. Cult groups include the Greenlanders, Deegbam, Bush Boys, Black Braziers, Icelanders, Vikings, Vultures, Germans and Mafia Lords. Militia groups include the NDPVF, MEND, NDPSF, the Niger Delta Militant Force Squad (NDMFS), and the Egbesu Boys of Africa. Whereas the civil society and militia groups are pan-ethnic and are therefore found in all states of the Niger Delta, the cult groups are based in particular localities. For example, the Deegbam is based in Port Harcourt in Rivers State. It is noteworthy, however, that because some of them are members of cult groups and be engaged in piracy, radical ethnic, pan-ethnic and youth-based civil society organisations have been so militant that they have been erroneously listed as militias.

The first manifestation of the phenomenon in the Niger Delta was between February and March 1966, when a group of youths, the Niger Delta Volunteer Service (NDVS), comprising members engaged in oil theft, fought a battle with the Nigerian military. The present militia groups, comprising mostly Ijaw militans, first emerged in the Warri region, and were mainly active in the Niger Delta. There was a cessation of violent activities until 1997 when the current manifestation began. The present militia groups, comprising mostly Ijaw militans, first emerged in the Warri region, and were mainly active in the Niger Delta.
most prominent militia group, the *Federated Niger Delta Ijaw Communities* (FNDIC), supported mainly Ijaw causes and militant activities elsewhere (apart from violent clashes during the Warri crisis between 1997 and 2004).

Following the Kaima Declaration of December 1998—when all militia groups were merged to form the *Eastern Region Vigilant Council* (EVC), a joint militia command, the militias emerged as the *Niger Delta Vigilante, NDMFS* and the *Coalition for Militant Action* (COMA), and the *Martyrs’ Brigade*.

Youth militias in the Niger Delta are actually a loose confederation of militia groups, bands, cults, and freelance, volunteer and hired fighters. They are based in numerous camps in the remote corners of the swamps, estuaries and creeks. The diffuseness of the overall militia organisation is further complicated by sometimes multiple and overlapping memberships, shared participation in battles called by other groups, a network of camps across state borders and the eastern and western axis of the Delta. As Okonta notes, the constituent groups within MEND take their own decisions and plan their attacks separately, but are able to coordinate with other units in joint expeditions where necessary.

The militias are organised on the basis of military hierarchy and formations. MEND, for example, which is the most prominent group, has a central command and platoon structure in all states of the Niger Delta, each headed by a commander, with a central command in the Ijaw territory of Delta State. The intelligence unit undertake strategic studies and provides tactics that underlie its operations. The leadership have false names and identities, and to a large extent are unknown, particularly to the Nigerian security forces and operatives. Other groups that are based in particular locations are essentially organised in to a rea co mmands, t oo. I t i s noteworthy that these commands are largely separate and distinct, operating independently, with the militia groups along the eastern axis of the Delta interface with cult groups that usually serve as fertile grounds for recruitment.

The militias use essentially speedboats and guerrilla tactics when attacking oil and military installations. Although they have operated in the oil cities of Port Harcourt and Warri as well as other towns, their main targets are along the creeks, swamps, estuaries and waterways of the Delta. Their main strategy has been to disrupt oil production and compel government to negotiate with them on their demands. They have also targeted oil workers, looting oil installations and even shutting down oil production, kidnapping oil workers and even targeting oil installations.

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Ikelegbe succinctly describes the connection between militias and pirates:

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

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

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

Militias and military engagements

The region has been militarised since the early 1990s following the Ogoni protests and increased agitation on both sides. Extensive militia deploymen...
The genesis of militias and pirates

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

The militarisation of politics

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

The transition to democracy in 1999 exacerbated youth militancy as unscrupulous politicians used hired ‘thugs’ to carry out violence to ensure their victory at the polls. Prior to the 1999 and 2003 federal state and local elections, all parties, but most effectively the ruling People’s Democratic Party (PDP), recruited and armed members of youth groups to intimidate opposing politicians and their supporters. This has had two broad effects. First, because of social disorganisation induced by increasing anonymity, poor social relationships and increasing competition for resources, politicians used hired thugs to carry out violence to ensure their victory at the polls. Prior to the 1999 and 2003 federal state and local elections, all parties, but most effectively the ruling People’s Democratic Party (PDP), recruited and armed members of youth groups to intimidate opposing politicians and their supporters. This happened in Rivers State where the NDV and NDPVF were used in electoral violence.7 Cults, confraternities and armed bands have also been used in struggles and contestations for political power in the Niger Delta.

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In the Niger Delta, elections have been violent and flawed because of the high stakes. Political parties and leaders have used youth groups to engage in electoral violence, by using them to carry out violence to ensure their victory at the polls. This happened in Rivers State where the NDV and NDPVF were used in electoral violence.7 Cults, confraternities and armed bands have also been used in struggles and contestations for political power in the Niger Delta.

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Second, youth groups are often abandoned after the elections. There are three reasons for this:

- Politicians who use youth groups to win elections abandon them because their services are no longer useful or needed
Inter-ethnic struggles and antagonisms

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

In the Niger Delta, there have been several inter-ethnic conflicts, for example between the Ijaw and Itsekiri in Delta State; the Ogoni-Okrika and Ogoni against the Andoni in Rivers State; and between the Ilaje and Arogbo Ijaw in Ondo State. The violence between the Itsekiri and Ijaw appears to be the most prominent and between Odimodi/Ogulagha and Isama/Gbarigolo (Delta State).42 Between Odimodi/Ogulagha and Isama/Gbarigolo (Delta State), between Alesa/Eleme and Otokar (Rivers State) and between Odiondi/Ogulagha and Isama/Gbarigolo (Delta State).42

However, the crucial point here concerns the character of the violence. Ethnic identity was a vital point of mobilisation, a nd members were predominantly youths who were responsible for the violent conflicts. Small arms and dynamite and other explosives were used freely and the elite and the public ensured that the youths did not lack weapons. However, these arms were not surrendered when the hostilities ended, and neither were the fighters rehabilitated and reintegrated into their communities. This was also the case with other inter-community and ethnic conflicts in the region. This underlies the intensification of piracy, violent crimes and opportunism when these armed youths had to struggle for survival and relevance.

Inter- and intra-community struggles over oil resources

Inter- and intra-community conflicts in the Niger Delta over oil resources have provided a fertile ground for militia activities and piracy. It is not that there were no conflicts between communities prior to the regional conflict, but the number and intensity of conflicts have assumed alarming proportions due to militarisation, arms proliferation and the preponderance of armed groups or bands. Recent examples of territorial conflicts include the hostile takeover of the headquarters benefitted from the provision of social infrastructure and amenities. The struggle over the location of the headquarters was therefore a struggle over resources and development inputs.

Patrons of the youth groups fail to meet the needs and aspirations of the youths because of their unrealistic demands. This breaks their social contract and results in the withdrawal of support/allegiance on the part of the groups and abandonment by the principal. Losing politicians also abandon the youth groups almost immediately after the elections because they cannot maintain these groups.

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

As a result, factions and communities now generally use violent confrontations to deal with disagreements. The mobilisation, recruitment, training and arming of youths were common factors in all these conflicts. In Rivers State, cult groups were a result of the division of labor and distribution of loot. In this way, the cult groups became a means of survival for many youths.

Authority of traditional governance systems and the erosion of the roles of elders in the moderation of social and communal life. These factors have facilitated the tendencies towards the militarisation of inter- and intra-community feuds and the ready use of armed confrontations and violent conflicts to settle disputes.

Therefore, the crucial point here concerns the character of the violence. Ethnic identity was a vital point of mobilisation, and members were predominantly youths who were responsible for the violent conflicts. Small arms and dynamite and other explosives were used freely and the elite and the public ensured that the youths did not lack weapons. However, these arms were not surrendered when the hostilities ended, and neither were the fighters rehabilitated and reintegrated into their communities. This was also the case with other inter-community and ethnic conflicts in the region. This underlies the intensification of piracy, violent crimes and opportunism when these armed youths had to struggle for survival and relevance.

Inter- and intra-community struggles over oil resources

Inter- and intra-community conflicts in the Niger Delta over oil resources have provided a fertile ground for militia activities and piracy. It is not that there were no conflicts between communities prior to the regional conflict, but the number and intensity of conflicts have assumed alarming proportions due to militarisation, arms proliferation and the preponderance of armed groups or bands. Recent examples of territorial conflicts include the hostile takeover of the headquarters benefitted from the provision of social infrastructure and amenities. The struggle over the location of the headquarters was therefore a struggle over resources and development inputs.

Patrons of the youth groups fail to meet the needs and aspirations of the youths because of their unrealistic demands. This breaks their social contract and results in the withdrawal of support/allegiance on the part of the groups and abandonment by the principal. Losing politicians also abandon the youth groups almost immediately after the elections because they cannot maintain these groups.
Oil politics and the criminalisation of insurgency

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

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

The Niger Delta people attribute the situation to the politics of marginalisation of minority groups and Nigeria’s perverted federalism. The main source of friction is thus the reduction in the derivation share of revenue allocation, which is set out in table 8–2.
This awareness has radicalised political actions and agitations for greater access to the oil wealth, and has resulted in the formation and proliferation of civil society groups and militant youth movements. The ensuing militancy and insurgency were criminalised by the commercialisation of violence. A number of incentives led to this. First, the oil companies made it corporate practice to award surveillance contracts to youth groups to protect their facilities. The huge sums paid for such security contracts not only ensured greater access to arms and firepower, but also led to the formation of splinter groups and violent competition among youth groups.

Another factor is that chiefs, elites and politicians used youth groups to further their agendas of accumulation of wealth. This is linked to the sabotage of oil installations, oil theft and kidnapping of oil workers for ransom. On the other hand, state governments in the region pay huge sums of money to steer militants away from violence. For example, the leader of the NDPVF has noted that at one time the Rivers State government was paying militants 100 million naira per month to refrain from violence. These payoffs were intended to ensure that oil production continued and to secure the revenue allocations based on derivation.

The backlash, however, is that the youths who received these large sums of money were unwilling to tolerate a state of poverty. These youths formed youth councils and councils of oil workers to protect their facilities. The huge sums paid for such security contracts not only ensured greater access to arms and firepower, but also led to the formation of splinter groups and violent competition among youth groups.

A dominant engagement strategy of youths in the Niger Delta from 1997 was to convene summits and conferences to draw attention to the plight of the region and – more importantly – to declare their stance on these issues. Perhaps the most famous of such meetings was the All Ijaw Youths Summit in Kaiama, Bayelsa State, in December 1998. The Kaiama Declaration included the following:

- The Ijaws own all land and natural resources including mineral resources in their land
- All legislation (L and U se A ct, P etroleum D ecree et c) t hat dep rives a nd a lienates the people from their natural resources stand abrogated
- All s ecurity f orces o f oppression o n I jaw l and s hould b e w ithdrawn immediate

As we noted earlier, militias in the Niger Delta are made up largely of youths, a fact attributable to the central role of youths in the conflicts plaguing the region. A number of factors have been identified as the reasons for this:

- Youths are the most active segment of the population
- Youths (including women) are worst affected by the widespread poverty in the region
- A growing awareness of the region’s predicament and the radicalisation of unrest infected the youth, who began to see it as their role to champion the struggle
- The behaviour of the Nigerian federal government and oil companies, particularly their insensitivity towards the region’s protests against repression, angered the youth, who began to organise themselves into groups at the community and ethnic levels. A significant outcome of this was the emergence of numerous youth groups such as the Ijaw Youth Council and the National Youth Council of Ogoni People, which among others, demanded justice and that attention be given to development.

All oil companies exploiting oil in Ijawland should cease exploitation and withdraw immediately until the issues being contested have been resolved.

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

**Actors in the conflict**

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

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

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<tr>
<th>Type of conflict</th>
<th>Source of conflict</th>
<th>Actors in conflict</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intra-community conflict</strong></td>
<td>Struggles between groups, local governance organs/sub-structures and local elite for access to and distribution of oil-based resources</td>
<td><strong>Community factions:</strong> Urban elites versus local elites</td>
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<td><strong>Urban elites:</strong> Hijacking of community resources, disregard for local elites, local elites: Inciting youths and chiefs against the urban elites</td>
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<td><strong>Youths versus local elites:</strong> Youths: Destruction of property owned by the elites, harassment of their relatives, Elites: Fractionalisation of youth bodies through partisan support and patronage, attacks on rival groups</td>
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<th>Type of conflict</th>
<th>Source of conflict</th>
<th>Actors in conflict</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community versus transnational oil companies</strong></td>
<td>Community struggles for transnational oil company attention, community development projects, compensation for oil spills and memorandum of understanding with transnational oil companies</td>
<td><strong>Youths versus community:</strong> Youths: Overthrow of community leadership and usurpation of power</td>
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<td><strong>Community:</strong> Inequitable distribution of resources that short-changes the youths</td>
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<td><strong>Claims agents versus community:</strong> Claims agents: Short-changing of community members</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Community:</strong> Refusal to pay agreed fees, rejection of double dealings</td>
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<td><strong>Youths versus chiefs:</strong> Youths: Dethronement of chiefs, attacks on chiefs, Chiefs: Fractionalisation of youth bodies through partisan support and patronage, kidnapping, encroachment on land and fishing grounds, attack of community member(s)</td>
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<td><strong>Youths:</strong> Overthrow of community leadership and usurpation of power</td>
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<td><strong>Youths versus community:</strong> Youths: Overthrow of community leadership and usurpation of power</td>
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<td><strong>Community:</strong> Attacks on rival community members and property</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community versus state</strong></td>
<td>Struggles against repression, inequitable share of benefits from oil</td>
<td>Community youths and security operatives</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Community:</strong> Disruption of oil production, attack on security operatives, State: Militarisation/military occupation, attacks, arrests</td>
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A comparison of militias, rebels, and Islamist militants: human insecurity and state crises in Africa

Ibaba Samuel Ibaba and Augustine Ikelegbe

The federal and state governments in the Niger Delta. The first is the choice to act decisively in the common interest and end militia activities. The second option is to protect selfish and parochial interests, which in some instances are in tandem with the interests of the militant youth.

Militias in government

We noted earlier that the use by politicians of armed political thugs during elections partly laid the foundation for the formation of militia groups. It is also true that militia groups have provided support, or even sponsored candidates for elections. The involvement of militia groups in the electoral process has resulted in their leaders and members gaining political prominence. In Rivers State, for example, the ND PVF and the ND V were drawn into the electoral process by opposing politicians. Their leadership and members were thus favoured by the government with regard to political appointments, contracts awards and monetary payments.

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

Militias as pseudo-government

Universally, a government performs three basic functions, namely the maintenance of law and order, the facilitation of development and social progress and, somewhat more specifically, the promotion of social welfare and living conditions. However, the federal and state governments in the Niger Delta have continued to gain ground in numbers, camps, profile and activities, and the Nigerian state has found the suppression or defeat of the militias difficult. This section of the chapter examines the dilemma faced by the federal and state governments in the Niger Delta. The first is the choice to act decisively in the common interest and end militia activities. The second option is to protect selfish and parochial interests, which in some instances are in tandem with the interests of the militant youth.

Militias and interfaces with civil society, politics and governance

The analysis so far suggests that militia activities in the Niger Delta endanger the national economy, security and development aspirations of the Niger Delta people. But the militia groups have continued to gain ground in numbers, camps, profile and activities, and the Nigerian state has found the suppression or defeat of the militias difficult. This section of the chapter examines the dilemma faced by
Impact of militia activities and the conflicts

Militia attacks have led to the seizure, occupation, destruction, vandalisation and disruption of numerous oil flow stations, pipelines and terminals, as well as equipment, helicopters and ships since 1998. The activities of the militias have caused considerable disruption to oil production, destruction of oil production facilities and in security to oil company operations, equipment and staff. These activities have at various times led to a severe decline in oil production, with oil production along the eastern and western axis of the region being cut by 17 to 50 per cent.59 In the first quarter of 2009, the country’s daily oil production dropped to 1,6 million barrels from an earlier 2,029 million barrels per day, mainly because of disruptions in oil production caused by militia activities.60 Oil theft, which is aided by and fuels the conflict, has caused heavy losses to the oil industry, particularly in terms of oil revenues. Between January and September 2008 alone, the country lost about US$20,7 billion to oil theft.61

The local economy of the region has been devastated, too. Farming, fishing, trading, commerce, schooling and related activities have been abandoned in several communities due to hostilities and attacks. Pervasive insecurity and threats have exacerbated already precarious living conditions and livelihoods and raised living costs. Th e backlash is that it has strengthened the conditions of underdevelopment and poverty that contributed to the conflicts in the first place. The conflicts have also disarticulated the people from the social values, order and co bric t ha t h old co mmunities t ogether. Th e paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty provided the context for the emergence of militias. It is noteworthy that the youth movement that gave birth to ethnic and pan-ethnic youth associations emerged as part of a new social movement that started as a result of the agitation in the region, and that the youth groups were part of civil society. Some of these groups, such as the NDVF and the FNDIC, were militant and metamorphosed into the militia groups. These activities garner support for the militias, as they are seen by community members as not only benefactors but also an alternative to government.
Resource conflicts and the human security crisis in the Niger Delta

The protests, militia activities and military operations in the region have combined to enshrine a system of indiscriminate killings, rape, looting and destruction of property and homes. On the roads, along the waterways, in the communities and ethnic regions, the people have been extensively harassed, flogged, beaten, detained and abused. Numerous settlements have been sacked or destroyed in the fighting between militias and the military and between the militiamen, ethnic groups, communities and youth groups in the search for refuges in the communities by the military.

Mobile police and military operations against protesting communities have caused severe deaths and destruction of property and homes. On the roads, along the waterways, in their communities and clans, the people have been burnt or destroyed, as have schools, churches, stores, businesses and social faciilities. Local people, residents, bystanders and community members, particularly youths, the aged, women and children, have been killed in the fighting.

Another consequence of military operations and militia operations has been internal displacements. Tens of thousands have been spared in the Niger Delta, as have schools, churches, stores, businesses and social facilities. Local people, residents, bystanders and community members, particularly youths, the aged, women and children, have been killed in the fighting.

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Resource conflicts and regional and international interventions

In spite of the intensity of the conflict and regional and international ramifications for security and stability in the West African region, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has not significantly intervened. This is perhaps due to Nigeria’s prominence in the regional organisation. However, there has been considerable international interest in the region, as evidenced by the efforts of the United States and Britain to provide a secure and stable environment for sustained oil production and supplies. Second, countries whose citizens have been victims of kidnapping have provided equipment and training support and the US has donated refurbished coast guard ships to the Nigerian navy.

The central strategy of the Nigerian federal government has been to protect oil installations, pacify the region in terms of militarisation, repress conflict groups and create an enabling environment for continued oil production. This was evident in the suppression of the peaceful protests by the Ogoni and the entire region since the early 1990s. However, state repression turned the peaceful protests into violent confrontations as youth activists adopted armed confrontation as the mechanism for the pursuit of their goals.

Apart from the military and repressive response, the government has tried to build confidence through development engineering. Noteworthy efforts include the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Board in 1961, the Presidential Committee on the 1.5 per cent Oil Derivation Fund for the Oil Producing States in 1981, the Oil Minerals Producing Areas Development Commission in 1992, and the Niger Delta Development Commission in 2001. However, these extra-ministerial agencies failed to achieve much development of the region due to overt
centralisation, corruption, patron-client/predidential politics, a nd t he l ack o f political will. While these intervention efforts raised expectations, their failure and the continued absence of concrete development projects have raised concerns about the effectiveness of such efforts.

In 2009, due to a balance of power and terror between the military and militias, particularly after the failure of a major military operation in the western Delta region, which was met by extensive militia counterattacks on oil facilities that saw daily productive decline to its lowest level ever, the federal government reached out to militia leaders and proclaimed an amnesty programme. The programme was embraced by the main militia groups and an estimated 17,000 members surrendered their arms and entered rehabilitation camps. The main militia groups declared a unilateral ceasefire. However, there have been huge challenges of in adequate c amp s paces, p oor p lanning a nd i mplementation, in adequate funding, poor management of the camps and poor political will and commitment. As a result, there has been mounting disenchantment, which has manifested in the suspension of community development projects.

Oil company responses

Just like the government, oil companies have responded to the conflicts with interventions in the form of community development projects. For example, the Shell Petroleum Development Company spent US$32 million in 1997, US$42.6 million in 1998, US$60.23 million in 2000, and US$68 million in 2007. However, because of the absence of community participation and input in the community development process, these interventions have largely failed to achieve the desired goals of providing infrastructure and social services. Because company interventions were compelled by violent community protests, there have emerged cascades of conflicts that have led to a vicious circle of violence as more conflicts meant more development attention.

Significantly, oil companies have been buying peace with phoney contracts and payments to ensure uninterrupted oil production. But this has caused extensive division among community leaders as diverse community groups struggled for community leadership and position in the oil industry.

CONCLUSION: ENDING THE VIOLENCE

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

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

Clearly, violent suppression of conflict will not solve the problem. The experience of the Yugoslav war has shown that repression only swamps the causes of agitation and dissent under the carpet for a moment, but that they then flare up again, often with disastrous consequences. On the other hand, some participation in resource ownership and control, in creases in the derivation fund and abrogation of repressive oil laws will certainly return large development funds to the region and improve the situation, even though it may not immediately ensure development.
One neglected account is the failure of oil companies to manage development in the Niger Delta in which the absence of democratic input. The report predicated the success of its recommendations on the establishment of democratic institutions, which suggests that the many years of authoritarian rule in Nigeria may have aggravated the crisis in the region.

The adoption of democratic principles such as the rule of law, fundamental human rights, rule by consent and public interest-based political participation will enhance accountability and transparency, which hich are fundamental to peace building. Lack of political participation and building of compromises and agreements have been very poor. It should be noted that conflict resolution mechanisms, among others, are more effective in a democratic environment than violent confrontation. Thus, the democratisation of power and management processes would be critical for securing peace in the Niger Delta.

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

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

Finally, the idea of demobilising, rehiring and integrating militant youths through projects such as ‘arms surrender for cash payment’ in Rivers State in 2004–2005 and amnesty for militias that repudiate violence and surrender arms by the federal government in 2009–2010, has had some weaknesses. To have maximal conflict resolution effects, these projects should be carried out within a framework of peace agreements based on inclusive dialogue and a comprehensive, planned, funded and effective programme that provides sufficient incentives for voluntary mass demobilisation, pro ductive economic development and government from vessels and oil theft syndicates. Apart from efforts aimed at a militia amnesty, development and political reform goals would be futile without a fundamental and comprehensive resolution of the region’s development and political problems. It is clear that these challenges are further predicated on the willingness of the political leadership to commit ‘symbolic suicide’, for democracy will be achieved only when the political leadership abandons its pursuit of parochial interests.

NOTES

1 U Ukiwo, From ‘pirates’ to ‘militants’: a historical perspective on a nati-state and nati-oil company mobilisation in the Niger Delta in which the ordinary citizens, now reduced to penurious citizens, can exercise their civil and political rights in the legitimate pursuit of material and social wellbeing. Behind the mask of the MEND militant is a political subject forced to pick up an AK-47 to restore his rights as a citizen.76


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13 Murshed and Tadjoeedin, Revisiting the greed and grievance explanations, 104.


18 Owugah, Local resistance and the state, 5–8.

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74 Watts, Petro-insurgency or criminal syndicate?, 65.
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185 Watts, Petro-insurgency or criminal syndicate?, 65.
INTRODUCTION

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

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

THE NATURE OF CONFLICT AND SECURITY IN SUDAN

Sudan is a country subject to ethnic fusion over millennia. Its early history has revolved largely around expansion of Egyptian influences southwards through trade and conquests. Ancient kingdoms in the Nile valley, such as Meroe, Alwa, Makuria and Soba, were infiltrated by the Arabs over centuries. The present Sudan is the product of the Turko-Egyptian military campaigns in search of gold and slaves led by Mohamed Ali from Egypt in 1821. The expansion of the slave trade during the Turko-Egyptian period and the Mahdist regime at the end of the 19th century left its mark on ethnic relationships in Sudan. Historical grievances

Historical grievances

The conflict in Sudan can be said to be partly a product of history and the colonial legacy.

The slave trade during the Turko-Egyptian period and the Mahdist regime at the end of the 19th century left its mark on ethnic relationships in Sudan. The slave trade during the Turko-Egyptian period and the Mahdist regime at the end of the 19th century left its mark on ethnic relationships in Sudan.
The quest for cultural and ideological domination

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

Economic and social exclusion

Historically, the colonial government was not interested in balanced economic growth. It focused on export-oriented development programmes such as the production of cotton and gum Arabic. Agricultural schemes and transport infrastructure were planned and developed to respond to British demand for these products. For this reason, railway lines and agroindustry sprang up in central Sudan, while infrastructure in the outlying regions of southern and western Sudan was neglected. The colonial development programmes led to the emergence of the Anyanya movement in 1963.

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

Power and political rivalry

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

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

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Nzara agroindustrial complex. The death of civilians at the hands of northern troops during the riots accelerated the Torit mutiny (which started on 18 August 1955) and marked the beginning of rebellions in Sudan before independence was attained.

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conflict economics demonstrate that there is a potential for violence when glaring economic disparities characterise an economic system and armed conflicts have economic costs related to waging civil wars or preventing them. This was the situation in Sudan when Abboud’s military regime launched the first ten-year national development plan in 1960 and the subsequent five-year plans during Nimeiri’s military regime in the 1970s.

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

**Oil exploration and exploitation**

A new factor that contributed to the existing problems was oil. Oil is also considered an immediate cause of the civil war that started in 1983. The discovery of oil in 1978 and how it was exploited was a major factor in triggering the conflict between the government of Nimeiri and the regional government of Southern Sudan in 1983. Oil exploitation in Southern Sudan adds to the region’s strategic importance and attracted transnational companies (TNCs) such as the American Chevron, the French Total, and the Canadian Arakis Energy Corporation. These companies were involved in oil exploration and exploitation in the region in the period 1978–1998. Patey refers to Chevron, Total and Arakis as first movers and to Talisman, OVM-Austria and Lundin Petroleum – which entered the race for oil in 1998–2003 – as Western juniors. But pressure from human rights groups forced out the first two in 2002 and 2003 respectively, leaving only Lundin Petroleum of Sweden still in operation in Sudan.
Asian TN Cs, such as the Chinese National Petroleum Corporation, the Malaysian Petronas and the Indian ONGC, filled the vacuum left by the departed Western oil investors. These TN Cs continued to operate in Sudanese oilfields despite criticism by human rights organisations. The desire to control the oilfields became a decisive factor in the creation and use of tribal militia forces to ensure the security of TNCs in the oil areas. The relations between TN Cs and militia groups were not well received by the local population and the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA). Oilfield security arrangements between the government, the TN Cs and the local militia targeted local communities that were uprooted and replaced by new settlers. Paul Wani Gore\(^1\) explains the demographic impact of oil exploration in the northern Upper Nile as follows:

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

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

**REBEL GROUPS IN SUDAN**

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

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

### Table 9–1: Main rebel groups in Sudan

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

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

 mutineers co ngregated a t B ilpam in E thiopia un der t he co mmand o f G ordon led t o t he des ertion f rom t he a rmy b y f ormer garrisons and Juba Airport soldiers mutinied during the period 1975–1976, which with t he implementation of t he a greement c ame t o lig ht w hen t he A kobo Wau southerners were calling for before the independence of Sudan. Disenchantment agreement granted t he g roup a f orm of autonomy simi lar to t he federal system Ababa Agreement w ith t he mi litary government of Jaafar Nimeiri in 1972. Th e colonial Sudan was the Sudanese rebel groups is in creasing. The first recognised rebel group in post-

Historical facts about political conflict in Sudan show how t hat the n umber of Sudanese r ebel g roups is in creasing. The first recognised rebel group in post-colonial Sudan was the Anyanya movement. This rebel group concluded the Addis A baba A greement with the military government of Jaafar Nimeiri in 1972. Th e agreement granted the group a f orm of autonomy similar to the federal system southerners were calling for before the independence of Sudan. Disenchantment with the implementation of the agreement came to light when the A kobo Wau garrisons and Juba Airport soldiers mutinied during the period 1975–1976, which led t o t he des ertion f rom t he a rmy b y f ormer Anyanya soldiers. Th e A kobo mutineers co ngregated a t B ilpam in E thiopia un der t he co mmand o f G ordon Koang Chol. However, the Marxist-Leninist regime of Ethiopia did not lend its support t o t he Anyanya II movement, which called for separation of S outhern Sudan. (Th is chapter will treat t he SPLA a nd Sudan Liberation Army [SLA] as t ypical Sudanese xamples o f t he p roliferation o f r ebel g roups t hat w ere established because of marginalisation and which strived to achieve justice in a united Sudan.)

**THE SUDAN PEOPLE’S LIBERATION ARMY**

The SPLA emerged as a result of accumulated grievances of Southern Sudanese against the central government in Khartoum, such as poor implementation of the Addis A baba A greement. Th e a brogation of t he A ddis A greement a nd p romulgation of September Laws in 1983 were merely the final nails in the coffin of the decade-long fragile peace.

The SPLA originated in the Bor mutiny on 13 May 1983 under the command of Karbino Kuanyin. It was the result of an underground resistance movement led by John Garang. The Ethiopian government requested the Southern Sudanese to submit concept notes outlining their goals and objectives to prove theirs was a liberation movement worth supporting. The first paper presented by the Anyanya II leadership tressed s ecession of S outhern S udan f rom t he rest of S udan. However, the Ethiopian government rejected the idea of secession and accordingly refused to support a cause that would play into the hands of Eritrean secessionist armed movements. John Garang then prepared a second concept paper, stressing unity of the Sudan on a new basis that would create New Sudan, which won the acceptance of t he E thiopian g overnment. Th e p apers t ated t hat t he S udanese unit y) continued to haunt the rebel group in its development as a liberation movement.

The launching of the SPLA on a divided platform of Sudan (secession versus unity) continued to be a struggle between his group and the Anyanya II supporters, the majority of whom hailed from the Nuer Nilotic group. The disagreement degenerated into a Din ka versus Nuer confrontation and political leaders of Anyanya II such as Samuel Gai Tut and Akouot Atem were killed.


### Sudan Liberation Army

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Size Range</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>8,000 to 9,000</td>
<td>Abdel Wahid el-Nur (2003 to date)</td>
<td>Operates in the three states of Darfur with a concentration around Jebel Marra Mountain. The SLA Abdel Wahid faction continues to wage an armed struggle to liberate Darfur.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>Khalil Ibrahim</td>
<td>Operates in Darfur, but attacked Omdurman in May 2008. Signed a framework peace agreement with the government in Qatar in February 2010.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Size Range</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

* Excluding joint integration units, police, prisons and wildlife services.
The SPLA ideology was s s pelled o ut in t he r efined do cument J ohn Ga rang presented to the Ethiopian government. The SPLM Manifesto issued in July 1983 embraced Marxism-Leninism as its official ideology. Tenets of the manifesto rotate around issues such as creation of a new united Sudan that would provide equality and justice to o m marginalised a reas; adoption o f a socialist system o f r ule; restructuring of power of the central government to end the monopoly of power by groups of individuals such as cliques in Khartoum, and against racism that minority groups have institutionalised and instrumentalised to repress people of the marginalised areas of Sudan.

Having successfully overcome the Anyanya II, the SPLA institutionalised the military co mmand s tructure and s uccessful mi litarily in i ts e arly d ays. Thi s wa s reinforced by intensive propaganda campaigns from a radio t ransmitter in E thiopia. The rebel group was able to build a credible army that managed to overthrow control main towns in Southern Sudan. With the exception of Malakal, the SPLA captured all towns e aste of t he W hite N ile b y y 1989. M ilitary s uccesses o f t h e S PLA w ere accompanied by diplomacy. The rebel group left channels of communication open with groups s uch as t he N ational A lliance o f w orkers a nd p olitical p arties that culminated in the Fashoda Peace Agreement.

The collapse of the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia led to internal dissent in the SPLA. Two senior SPLA officers, Riek Machar and Lam Akol, staged a premature military coup t o u st t he m ovement’s le ader, J ohn Ga rang. Th e c ivil wa r r elapsed o f t he SPLA. Kerubino K wanyin Bol a nd W illiam N yuon B any w ere b oth p romoted t o t he g rade o f l ieutenant-colonel a nd w ere m ade de p uty c hairman a nd de p uty co m mander-in-chief a nd co m mander o f t h e S PLA. K wac M akuei a nd Th on W illiam N yuon B any w ere b oth p romoted t o t he g rade o f lieuten t-colonel a nd w ere m ade de p uty c hairman a nd de p uty co m mander-in-chief a nd co m mander o f t h e S PLA.

The SPLA received moral and military support from Kenya and Uganda after losing its rear bases in Ethiopia. With this support, it was able to reorganise to halt government offensives in a n arrow strip o f land along the border of Sudan with Uganda. This led to the Nasir group being isolated from neighbouring countries, especially Ethiopia, which compelled the group to open communications with the NIF regime in Khartoum. The Nasir faction collaborated with the National Islamic Front (NIF) regime, with the support of the new Tigrean-dominated regime in A ddis Ababa under Meles Zenawi, to overrun almost all the towns east of the White Nile previously controlled by the SPLA.

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These developments weakened the SPLA in the 1990s until the period leading to the CPA signing in Kenya. The government of Sudan exploited the situation to incorporate the disparate forces of the Nasir faction into the ranks of the SPLA. Two senior SPLA officers, Riek Machar and Lam Akol, staged a premature military coup t o u st t he m ovement’s le ader, J ohn Ga rang.

The SPLA Bor group led by Th on Arok
The SPLA independent group led by Kwac M akuei
The Equatoria Defence Force led by Theophilus Ochang
The Union of African Parties under the leadership of Samuel Aru Bol
The SPLM-United led by Lam Akol (this group signed a separate agreement in 1997 called the Fashoda Peace Agreement).

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its militia groups. However, leaders of the Nasir group soon discovered that the government was not interested in implementing the KPA, and this led to their defection between 2002 and 2004.

In the meantime, the SPLA-Torit faction began to regain strength and overran towns such as Kurmuk, Yei, Rumbek, Tonj, Thiet Gogrial and Kapoeta. The SPLA increased its pressure on the government by besieging major cities of Southern Sudan such as Juba and Wau. A stalemate on the front provided belligerent opportunities for negotiated settlement of the Sudanese armed conflict. The SPLA Nairobi Declaration of January 2002 called for change and the establishment of a system of accountability to ensure unity in the IGAD peace process. This was followed by a number of seminars on the process of institution building.

**Map 9–2: Rebel-controlled areas in south Sudan, 2001**

The message was appealing to the disillusioned leaders of the Nasir faction in the Khartoum government, who entered into negotiations with the SPLA in Nairobi and defected to the SPLA. These included senior leaders such as Riek Machar, Taban Deng Gai and Lam Akol. They were reintegrated into the rebel military structure and organisation. In a gesture of unity before the signing of the CPA, the SPLA reshuffled its command structure to include Riek Machar, by persuading Wani Igga to turn his portfolio of third-in-command over to Machar. The top four commanders of the SPLA were John Garang, Salva Kiir, Riek Machar and Wani Igga. This streamlining of command and the integration of former defectors into the ranks of the SPLA enabled the rebel group to conduct negotiations in Kenya as a united movement.

Although the political wing of the SPLA was not developed to the standard of the military wing, the rebel group was pragmatic in dealing with the international actors. John Garang's support of Operation Lifeline Sudan enabled the SPLA to penetrate the Western world. The organisation shifted much of its resources to SPLA-controlled areas in the 1990s because of government intransigence towards the Western world. The SPLA also established the Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Agency as an umbrella organisation for local Southern Sudanese non-governmental organisations (NGOs) based in Nairobi. This organisation, in turn, served as the gatekeeper of both local and international NGOs operating in Southern Sudan. However, the SPLA learned from the mistakes made during negotiations of the Addis Ababa Agreement under Joseph Lagu in 1972. The first weakness of this agreement had been the vagueness and lack of guarantees to ensure its implementation. That the SPLA feared a repetition was demonstrated in the length of negotiations of the CPA and details of the agreement. Then John Garang made sure that there were many witnesses to the agreement. Another lesson learned by the SPLA from the Addis Ababa Agreement was in the area of security arrangements. The Anyanya forces (some 6,000 men) had been absorbed into the Sudan armed forces, while a further 6,000 had been absorbed into the police, prisons and wildlife forces. Their most senior officers, including Joseph Lagu, were transferred to the north, which left members of the SPLA without senior leadership. The SPLA avoided a similar arrangement. However, its presence in the joint integrated units (JIUs) has not fostered integration in the proper sense of the word. The SPLA coexisted in designated units in the loyalties of the political parties rather than in the CPA.
Consequently, it remained as an army with its own command during the interim period.

The Sudan Liberation Movement/Army

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

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

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

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

The SLAs’s connection to the south’s SPLA is not just alphabetic or ideological. Since 1991, when the US started to support it, John Garang sought to open up Darfur to his war against Khartoum. The International Crisis Group (ICG) reports that the SPLA gave military training to 1 500 Darfurians in March 2002. These then went on to become the core fighters of the SLM/A. Indeed the initial manifesto of the SLM/A was edited by the SPLA.21

Government forces and security agents began to harass members of the Fur tribes in Zalingei, Tour and Nyarteti on the western slopes of Jebel Marra in 2002. The lack of security along the Nyala-Kas-Zalingei road was blamed on gangs of bandits associated with the Fur people. Indeed, armed resistance had started earlier than the date of the SLA political declaration. The SLA was first known as the Darfur Liberation Front when it launched a military attack on Golou in West Darfur on 26 February 2003. After making its political declaration, the SLA attacked El Fashir Airport in North Darfur on 25 April 2003, killing 75 soldiers and destroying seven aircraft.22 The SLA enjoyed the backing of the Fur, the largest African Muslim ethnic group in Darfur, as well as the backing of the Zaghawa and Masalit under the leadership of Abdul Wahid al-Nur.

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

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

270
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**MIILITIAS, REBELS AND ISLAMIST MILITANTS: HUMAN INSECURITY AND STATE CRISIS IN AFRICA**

Samson S Wassara

**INSTITUTE FOR SECURITY STUDIES**

**REBELS, MILITIAS AND GOVERNANCE IN SUDAN**

**RESPONSES OF THE GOVERNMENT: ESTABLISHMENT OF MILITIA GROUPS**

Militia groups in Sudan were often hired and organised by the government as auxiliaries of the national army to fight rebel groups. They are heterogeneous in...
composition and operate under different names, often according to their geographic locations. The militia groups in Sudan are described in this study as ethnic and tribal. Other civilian paramilitary groups are recruited, trained, and armed by the government for the purpose of waging proxy wars against rebels and communities supporting rebel movements. The formation of tribal militia groups started under Nimeiri in 1983 as a counterinsurgency strategy.

The military regime of Omar el-Bashir institutionalised all militia groups supported by the government after promulgation of the Popular Defence Act in October 1989. This act legitimised militia groups as auxiliaries of the national army. Scholars such as Salmon and Young examined the origins, composition and development of the Popular Defence Force (PDF). There were 12 militia groups in Sudan, but the number increased depending on political developments. The PDF was headed by Brigadier Babiker Abdel Mahmoud Hassan, who was directly responsible to the president of Sudan. After 1990, all militia groups were organised into military formations modelled on the structure of the PDF, and deployed alongside regular army units against various rebel groups. So the disparate militia groups were united under the PDF in northern Sudan and the Southern Sudan Defence Force (SSDF) in southern Sudan. Several tribal militia groups were formed in 1989. They were controlled by the military intelligence until the government and the Nasir faction of the SPLA concluded the Khartoum Peace Agreement.

The SSDF was created in 1997 as a Southern Sudan component of the PDF and as part of the Khartoum Peace Agreement to bring all the tribal militia groups under a unified command of Paulino Matip, who was appointed the chief of staff of the SSDF. The Fertit Friendly Forces was under El Tom El Nour in Bahr el Ghazal, the Mundari militia under Clement Wani in Equatoria, and the Peace and Reconstruction Brigade under Sultan Abdel Bagi Ayii in northern Bahr el-Ghazal, and so forth. Tribal warlords were given military titles and were authorised to control the areas where they resided permanently. This structure was composed of a number of militia groups distributed in all the main regions of Southern Sudan. Young observed that in the context of the second civil war, the territorial boundaries of Southern Sudanese armed groups were demarcated and the loyalties of individual members to their groups were typically temporal and transient. The turnover of both territory and group affiliation — including 'side switching' — between the government of Sudan and the SPLA — was high among militia groups. Young summarised the problem as follows:

There is no doubt that the SSDF comprised a significant number of fighting forces at its peak of activity. During the last stage of the second civil war, the territorial boundaries of Southern Sudanese armed groups were demarcated and the loyalties of individual members to their groups were typically temporal and transient. The turnover of both territory and group affiliation — including 'side switching' — between the government of Sudan and the SPLA — was high among militia groups. Young summarised the problem as follows:

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

The establishment of militia groups in the context of political developments is closely related to the geographical distribution of forces and organisational structures. The government responded to operations of rebel groups by creating the PDF in 1989. It is an umbrella organisation for all paramilitary groups that existed before the NIF came to power on 30 June of the same year. There are about 10,000 active members of the PDF, with 85,000 reserves. These forces were deployed alongside regular forces to maintain order and counter the military intelligence until the government and the Nasir faction of the SPLA concluded the Khartoum Peace Agreement.
But arriving at an accurate count of SSDF members remains highly problematic. First, the numbers change constantly as recruitment within some groups is ongoing. Secondly, the SSDF is largely made up of non-regular forces – and the dividing line between civilians and combatants is extremely grey. Thirdly, some individuals may identify themselves as affiliated at one moment but then reject the label once a particular objective has been achieved or given up.  

The CPA progressively changed the relations between the militia groups and the SPLA. In the beginning they were angered because of their exclusion from the negotiation process in Kenya. Militia groups were not accommodated in the SPLA as was stipulated in the CPA when John Garang was alive. The ascendance of Salva Kiir to power after the death of Garang was marked by reconciliation between the SPLA and main militia groups in the SSDF. The process of reconciliation was sealed by the Juba Declaration of 8 January 2006. This arrangement paved the way for absorption of about 18 militia groups under a number of warlords, while others joined the SAF as stipulated in the CPA when John Garang was alive. The in crease in numbers is attributed to disagreements between militia groups over integrating into the government army or the SPLA. Most of the militia groups were divided into two groups under new leaders who joined the government. For example, when Paulino Matip joined the SPLA under the terms of the Juba Declaration, his senior lieutenants, Gordon Konyi and Gabriel Tangyan, established their own groups and allied with the Sudan government army. The huge number of militia groups complicated the implementation of the CPA in Southern Sudan because they created insecurity and continuously switched sides between the Sudan government forces and the SPLA depending on the benefits one of the two may offer. The militia groups that were dissatisfied with the CPA partners melted into communities and engaged in banditry and cattle rustling.

The Janjaweed in Darfur

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

The Janjaweed is a militia group organised by the government to wage war against rebel groups in Darfur. It is composed of members of the Sudanese army within the framework of the PDF and the military structure in Darfur known as the Border Intelligence and are recruited from two categories of ‘Arab’ tribesmen, namely camel owners in the desert areas of North Darfur and cattle owners in South Darfur. The former comprise the Mahariya, Iraygat, Mahamid and Beni Hussein who are camel owners in the desert areas of North Darfur and cattle owners in South Darfur. The former comprise the Mahariya, Iraygat, Mahamid and Beni Hussein who are camel owners in the desert areas of North Darfur and cattle owners in South Darfur.

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

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


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

Janjaweed militia groups have a well structured leadership at the political and military levels. The known political organisers in Darfur were Ahmed Haroun and Ali Kushayb, who both hailed from South Darfur. The latter is the commander of South Darfur and a no overall commander of the Janjaweed armed units in the three Darfur states. The other two Darfur states were commanded by Abdullah Mustafa Abu Shineibat (West Darfur), and both Mohamed Ali Hamiditi and Musa Hilal (North Darfur). Musa Hilal was the most notorious field commander in North Darfur. The government of Sudan directed operations of the Janjaweed against the SLM and the JEM, which draw support mostly from the ‘African’ tribes of the Fur, Zaghawa, Masalit, Dajo, Maidoub, Berti and T jur. The Janjaweed strategy was to destroy villages and, according to Brosché, 1,595 villages were destroyed in the period 2003–2007.37

It should be noted that many Janjaweed attacks against civilian populations had both economic and racial motives. The government used to sedate the Janjaweed as counterinsurgency forces, with ex-cellent knowledge of the terrain, to a void spreading the army thinly in a vast region. The size of the Janjaweed’s field commanders in Sudanese authorities took advantage of the readiness of the Janjaweed to do the fighting because they were able to build up and fight efficiently around the region. Here there are huge investments and oil business installations.

 Actors in the Sudanese conflict, including former active military units, joined the SLA-Abdul Wahid and the JEM. This human insecurity is widespread across many states in the region. In some cases, disagreements between the SPLA and former militia groups erupt in violent confrontations in which hundreds of civilians lose their properties are looted.

The popularity of the rebel groups at the beginning of active rebellion in 2003 cannot be overestimated. The call of the rebel groups for an end to government neglect of Darfur was popular, also among the ‘Arabs’. Communities supported the rebels with food supplies and cash, and many youths joined the rebels. However, the DPA changed the degree of support to the government among African and Arab tribes. While the support for signatories of the DPA declined, the popularity of the non-signatories (SLA-Abdul Wahid and the JEM) was remarkable. Although ethnicity was a factor in the fragmentation of the rebel groups, the majority of Arabs remained neutral in the conflict. Tanner and Tubiana observed that Mujib ar-Rahman az-Zubeir of the SLA-Abdul Wahid initiated contact with the Baggar and Abbala (Mahariyya and Mahamids) tribes at Wadi Toro and Sabanga in the northwest and in the area of Jebel Marra.38 Agreements between the parties led to the opening of Arab-Fur markets in the rebel-held area of Jebel Marra.

IMPACT OF THE REBEL GROUPS AND MILITIA ON SOCIETY

Small arms trade threatens lives of civilians in the aftermath of each agreement. The situation of Southern Sudan demonstrates that violent insecurity is pervasive (with robbery and intercommunity fights most commonly reported) because residents are heavily armed. This human insecurity is widespread across many states in the region. In some cases, disagreements between the SPLA and former militia forces erupt in violent confrontations in which hundreds of civilians lose their properties are looted.

Destruction of basic services is evident in the Sudanese armed conflicts. The army, rebels and paramilitary groups are responsible for these processes. They deliberately destroy homes, infrastructure for education, health, markets and transport services. Vandalised schools, health centres and bridges are common features and continue to be so in war zones of Southern Sudan, the Nuba Mountains and the Blue Nile, and recently in Darfur region. The activities of these groups have resulted in food insecurity and market disruptions. The situation...
MIILITIAS, REBELS AND ISLAMIST MILITANTS: HUMAN INSECURITY AND STATE CRISSES IN AFRICA

Samson S. Wassara

Approaches and responses to the complex armed conflicts in Sudan could be explained in terms of the interests, positions and roles of the main protagonists. The complexity of Sudanese conflicts, with the increasing number of rebel groups, is a challenge for gauging political and community reactions, sentiments and sympathies.

Responses of local communities

Conflict-affected communities in Sudan have limited options in the face of the military, rebel and militia offensives in war zones and in destinations of flight from violence. In the experience of Sudan, the first response of communities is to avoid being trapped in war zones. Many people flee armed conflict and become internally displaced persons (IDPs) around garrison towns or refugees in neighbouring countries. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre there are about 2.7 million IDPs within Darfur and nearly 250,000 refugees from Darfur in eastern Chad.40

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

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

Responses of actors and stakeholders

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

Responses of actors and stakeholders

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reconsider militarism as an approach to resolving the conflict with the SPLA in Southern Sudan and the three areas of Abyei, Blue Nile and the Nuba Mountains. Despite the CPA, there have been sporadic military operations in Abyei and South Kordofan, too. The Abyei Administrative Area experienced clashes between the government and SPLA forces in 2008. The government denied involvement and blamed the Janjaweed commander, in April 2007. The refusal of the government to cooperate with the Court escalated the conflict to the extent that the president of Sudan was indicted for crimes against humanity in Darfur. This was released in a press statement of the judges on 4 March 2009. The AU has equally taken a position against the US approach but has also considered the decision inappropriate with regard to an African president still in power.

CONCLUSION

Sudan experienced numerous conflicts in nearly all its regions except the extreme north. Sudan emerged as an independent country amid mutiny and rebellion. The length of conflict in Darfur and Abyei has contributed to the formation of rebel groups and the Janjaweed militia. The complex nature of the conflicts in Sudan has invited both bilateral and multilateral responses. Bilateral responses to armed conflict have largely been ineffective, as evidenced by the inability of the US to mediate the conflict with the SPLA in Darfur. The AMIS force, deployed in 2007, has been unable to effectively address the ongoing violence.

The roles of the IGAD Partners Forum (IPF), the US and the UN in supporting mediation efforts of Kenya yielded positive results, as was demonstrated by the arrest of the Janjaweed commander, Ali Kushayb, in April 2007. The refusal of the government to cooperate with the Court escalated the conflict to the extent that the president of Sudan was indicted for crimes against humanity in Darfur. This was released in a press statement of the judges on 4 March 2009. The AU considered the decision inappropriate with regard to an African president still in power.

This US approach is not only applied in bilateral relations, but also at the multilateral level with regard to international organisations and the European partners. Th e I GAD process was a combination of a regional approach backed by multilateral support. The AMIS was deployed in Darfur and was later transformed into UNAMID. This hybrid force lacked the logistical and financial support that would make it effective in its operations. Western powers such as the US and France are reluctant to commit critically needed equipment to the force. The UN Security Council made resolutions that remain blueprints, because both Russia and China frustrated the possibility of strong action in the Darfur conflict. The AMIS was deployed in Darfur and was later transformed into UNAMID. This hybrid force lacked the logistical and financial support that would make it effective in its operations. Western powers such as the US and France are reluctant to commit critically needed equipment to the force. The UN Security Council made resolutions that remain blueprints, because both Russia and China frustrated the possibility of strong action in the Darfur conflict. Accordingly, the positive contribution of the UN to the Darfur conflict is restricted to the provision of humanitarian assistance to IDPs within Darfur and Sudanese refugees in Eastern Chad.

The strongest response of the UN to the armed conflict in Darfur could be seen in the handling of atrocities committed by the Janjaweed against unarmed civilians. Th e UN Security Council referred the case of atrocities committed by the Janjaweed to the International Criminal Court in March 2005. The Court issued a warrant for the arrest of the Janjaweed commander, Ali Kushayb, in April 2007. The refusal of the government to cooperate with the Court escalated the conflict to the extent that the president of Sudan was indicted for crimes against humanity in Darfur. This was released in a press statement of the judges on 4 March 2009. Th e AU considered the decision inappropriate with regard to an African president still in power.

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independence. This is an indicator that the underlying causes of conflict have yet to be addressed by the parties to Sudanese conflict. Human security is threatened in zones of armed conflict, which extends to peaceful areas inside and outside the country. This happens in terms of war-related migrants who try to escape the excesses of the central government in Khartoum. The demands revolve around the national questions of power sharing. The grievances expressed by the marginalised peoples could lead to identity and culture clashes, economic development, power sharing and wealth sharing. This is a source of serious conflict in resource-rich African countries: learning from country experiences, Bremen: Universitatis Bremen, 2008, 177.


4 Beshir, *The Southern S udan: b ackground t o c onflict*, 73; J oseph L agu, *S udan: o dyssey through a state from ruins to hope*, Khartoum: Mohamed Omer Beshir Centre for Sudanese Studies, Omdurman Ahlia University, 491–493.


6 Ibid, 148–150.


16 Ibid, 74.

17 Arop SUDAN'S pAINFUL ROAD TO PEACE, 333.


19 William Reno, *Complex o perations i n w eak a nd f ailing s tates: t he Sudan r elbperspective*, in P rimis 1(2), sd, 116–117.
INTRODUCTION

Since 1986, northern Uganda has been bedevilled by violent armed conflict between successive rebel groups and the National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/M) government led by Yoweri Museveni. The most resilient of these rebel groups has been the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), led by the enigmatic Joseph Kony. The armed conflict in northern Uganda is rooted in Uganda’s domestic politics and the problems of state-making and nation-building, including the lack of national integration and failure to build consensus on the role of the constituent groups in national politics. But the conflict has been regionalised. Louise Fawcett defined regionalisation as a situation in which inter- and intrastate conflicts spill over into neighbouring countries, link up with conflicts in those countries, and also attract the intervention of international actors.1

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

This chapter examines the regionalisation of the conflict in northern Uganda and the transformation of the LRA rebel movement into a regional actor in the security of East and Central Africa regions. It does so by examining the problems of state-making and nation-building and conflicts in Uganda; the regional security environment and relations between states and within states within East and Central Africa; the LRA and the regional security environment; the state and the international system; security and foreign policy; and conflict and conflict resolution. The chapter argues that the LRA conflict in northern Uganda has regional implications and that US intervention to safeguard its geostrategic interests increased the complexity of the conflict. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of the LRA conflict for East and Central Africa and the international system.

**INTERNAL CONFLICTS AND REGIONAL CONFLICT COMPLEXES**

Recent attempts at understanding the problem of internal conflicts, which have become the dominant threat to peace and security, have focused on the nature of the state and on domestic politics. A review of the debates on internal conflicts in Africa by Richard Jackson offers useful insights in this regard. Internal conflicts are those that result from state-making and nation-building in the 19th and 20th centuries when the earliest sovereign states emerged. This was a period of rebellion, and Africa has been likened to Western Europe between the 16th and 18th centuries when the idea and institutions of the state became the dominant threat to peace and security.

Africa has been compared with the European experience, which took centuries and generated collective violence from arrangements that were not viable were either reformed or disappeared. But in Africa, external interference created and preserved several unviable states, added to the security predicament, and made conflict a characteristic of the continent. The preservation and strengthening of the state becomes the priority of security and foreign policy. The export of security and foreign policy to support conflicting factions.

Recent studies have highlighted the regional and global dynamics of international conflicts. These dynamics and linkages have been labelled regional security complexes, regional conflict formations, and regional conflict complexes. These studies build on the old analysis of regions, which is defined as the existence of distinct and significant subsystem of networks or relations among a set of states located in geographical proximity to each other. A region mediates the interplay of the state and the international system. Buzan observed that the ‘reality of security interdependence is an unavoidable, especially with neighbours, because threats and friendship are most intensely felt at close range.’

Interaction between states results in a set of power relations. This chapter examines the transformation of the LRA from a rag-tag rebel outfit to a formidable guerrilla force whose activities span state boundaries and have serious consequences for foreign policies of states and for regional security. The chapter argues that the LRA conflict in northern Uganda has regional implications and that US intervention to safeguard its geostrategic interests increased the complexity of the conflict. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of the LRA conflict for East and Central Africa and the international system.
Conflict linkages are composed of numerous transnational networks, ranging from military, economic and social to political networks. Military networks increase activities like the cross-border flow of arms and combatants, overt and covert military inervention and dealing in looted goods and natural resources as a source of revenue. Social networks, such as the exiliate networks of the diaspora, facilitate illicit trade and arms transfers and promote the regional interconnectedness of conflicts.

The linkage between the conflicts involves various networks by criminal gangs and the state all rely on cross-border networks of the ‘shadow trade’ in looted goods and natural resources as a source of revenue. Social networks, such as the exiliates networks of the diaspora, facilitate illicit trade and arms transfers and promote the regional interconnectedness of conflicts.

STATE-MAKING AND INTERNAL CONFLICTS IN UGANDA

To understand the roots of conflict in northern Uganda and why it has been so intractable, it is important to examine the problems of state-making and nation-building. In Uganda, the social contract of independence dissipated fairly rapidly. Since then, violent internal conflicts have been endemic. This may be explained by the structure and processes of a weak state. Therefore, a weak state is one in which conflict formations are composed of innumerable networks, ranging from military, economic and social to political networks. Military networks increase activities like the cross-border flow of arms and combatants, overt and covert military intervention and dealing in looted goods and natural resources as a source of revenue. Social networks, such as the exiliates networks of the diaspora, facilitate illicit trade and arms transfers and promote the regional interconnectedness of conflicts.

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in Tanzania) was not able to fill. The major political actors of the time, most of whom were political returnees whose claim to a role in national politics rested on their ‘roles’ in the overthrow of Amin, were deeply divided along regional, ethnic, military, political and ideological lines. Intrigues and manoeuvres were rife, as different groups positioned themselves for political control, but the euphoria and hopes of a progres sive and national reconciliation that followed the end of Amin’s brutal rule dissipated. The first post-Amin choice for the presidency, Yusuf Lule, held power for over three months, while he succeeded, Uganda was deposed from office after nine months.

After the overthrow, a ‘caretaker’ military council organised multiparty democratic elections in December 1980. Our political parties contested the elections: the Uganda People’s Congress (UPC), the Democratic Party (DP), the Uganda National People’s Party (UNPP), the Conservative Party (CP) and the Uganda Patriotic Movement (UPM). The elections were held in a tense atmosphere of considerable controversy, mistrust, political violence and threats of civil war. Allegations of irregularities in favour of the UPC, which obtained the most parliamentary seats, created problems of legitimacy for the new government and triggered more armed conflict. Museveni, who had threatened to ‘go to the bush’ and wage war if the elections were rigged, formed a rebel group and launched a guerrilla war against the UPC government of Obote. The conflict creased the militarisation of politics, with the military bungling of the electoral process by the NRA. The immediate challenge to the NRA government emerged from elements within the army that believed that Museveni had not addressed the crucial question of the post-war order, including issues related to political control and the roles of the various actors in national politics. The NRA adopted the language of inclusion and exclusion, and that deterred the role of the different actors in national politics. It excluded those Museveni labelled ‘criminal elements’ from participation in politics. The immediate challenge to the NRA government emerged from elements associated with the parties the NRA defeated. A number of rebel groups of varying political significance took up arms against the NRA government. They included the Uganda People’s Democratic Army (UPDA), Uganda People’s Army, the Mithi Octorber Movement, the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (HSMF) and the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU).

THE REGIONAL CONTEXT OF THE CONFLICT IN NORTHERN UGANDA

From the outset, there was an overlap of the conflict in northern Uganda with conflicts in neighbouring countries. The overlay was created by, among others, a massive inflow of refugees from the UPC government of Obote. After a military takeover, President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya intervened in the conflict in northern Uganda simultaneously with the capture of power by the NRA. The capture of power by the NRA had not addressed the crucial issue of the post-war order, including issues related to political control and the roles of the various actors in national politics. The NRA adopted the language of inclusion and exclusion, and that deterred the role of the different actors in national politics. It excluded those Museveni labelled ‘criminal elements’ from participation in politics. The immediate challenge to the NRA government emerged from elements associated with the parties the NRA defeated. A number of rebel groups of varying political significance took up arms against the NRA government. They included the Uganda People’s Democratic Army (UPDA), Uganda People’s Army, the Mithi Octorber Movement, the Holy Spirit Mobile Forces (HSMF) and the National Army for the Liberation of Uganda (NALU).
Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) rebels. The SPLA feared that the Sudanese government would enlist the help of Ugandan refugees to fight against it. The NRA government, which was sympathetic to the SPLA, on the other hand feared that the Sudanese government wanted to use northern Uganda as a rear flank against the SPLA.26 Sudan's leaders denied that they were supporting the SPLA and of trying to export its revolution. President Museveni denied the accusation, and tried to calm his neighbour's fear:

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

The two neighbours held several bilateral meetings between 1987 and 1993, during which they pledged not to support ‘each other's criminals, and to cooperate on border security. In 1990 Uganda and Sudan reached an agreement in terms of which Sudan deployed a military team to monitor whether Uganda was supplying the SPLA. Th ese bilateral agreements were limited to confidence building measures such as a change of its military missions. They did not address the underlying issues in the conflict or face up to the reality that the 'criminals' were not only proxies; they had their own interests and strategies. Meanwhile, distrust and recriminations continued. A mid occasional air raids by Sudan on Ugandan territory, and cross-border skirmishes involving armies of the two countries and rebel groups.

The conflict in northern Uganda aIso overlapped with internal conflicts in Kenya. In 1987 the Kenyan leader would support dissident groups seeking to overthrow the regime of President Moi. Since the abortive coup in 1982, Moi's regime had been under growing threat from dissident groups. There were fears that Museveni's a scent to power through a armed struggle would have severe 'contagious' effects.29 Moi also felt personally insulted when Museveni marched to Kampala and took power by force after signing a peace agreement that he had facilitated, for Moi had staked his reputation on brokering the peace agreement between Museveni's NRA rebels and the Okello government.30 Faced with internal threats, the Kenyan leader, in 1987 accused Uganda of supporting Kenyan dissidents and of training Kenyan youth and helping others to travel to Libya for military training.31 On its part, Uganda accused Kenya of allowing in insurgents to use Kenya as a rear position and transit route. Suspicion was heightened by the capture in November 1987 of Brigadier Smith Onop Acak and Major John Olwo, two former officers of the defunct UNLA, in eastern Uganda, a fter they had entered Uganda from Kenya.32 The media in the two countries heightened tension with hostile propaganda, and the two countries heightened tension with hostile propaganda, and the two countries heightened tension with hostile propaganda.

The NRA government used a combination of military and diplomatic initiatives in its response to the conflict in northern Uganda. In an address to the nation on the anniversary of Uganda's independence, President Museveni declared that 'fighting and annihilating these types of elements is a justified cause'.33 He embarked on a diplomatic offensive to criminalise rebel groups, a mong others referring to them as 'the elements that have caused untold suffering to the people of Uganda, violated human rights, murdered people, destroyed the economy and violated the sovereignty of the people of Uganda.'34 Criminalisation of rebels was aimed at rationalising the government's militarist policy and mobilising international support. The government sought to delegitimise opposition of the Ugandan diaspora, which was critical of the NRM government and sympathetic to the rebels. Internationalisation added to the complexity of the conflict.

After more than a year of military stalemate, the NRA government agreed to grant amnesty to those who renounced rebellion. It also agreed to negotiate with the UPDA, the main rebel group operating in northern Uganda. At the time the UPDA was under pressure from the Holy Spirit Movement, a splinter group led by Joseph Kony, which was emerging as a formidable and contending rebel group. Negotiations between NRA and UPDA commanders began in earnest in March 1988, culminating in a peace agreement on 3 June 1988. However, the agreement occurred within the ranks of the UPDA: the larger faction under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Angelo Okello Okeno surrendered and was integrated into the NRA, while a smaller faction under Brigadier Oding Lakerdi was not. The agreement was signed on 3 June 1988, and the rebellion ceased.

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Paul Omach
terms of the settlement. The peace initiative failed to acknowledge the complexity of the conflict. It did not include strategic actors like members of the Ugandan diaspora or other national and regional actors. As Wallensteen and Sollenberg argued, it is vital for any peace initiative to acknowledge regional conflict complexes where they exist and develop processes that involve them all.

The faction of the UPDA rebel group, which disassociated itself from the peace agreement, allied with Kony’s Holy Spirit Movement to form the Uganda Christian Democratic Army. In 1992, the group was renamed the Lord’s Resistance Army. By then, Kony had purged the group of other leaders and consolidated his control over the group. The LRA is an arcane rebel movement, of which little is known, due to the failure by its leadership to present a coherent programme to the public, apart from the obvious objectives of overthrowing the government of Museveni.

The organisation comprises former soldiers and child soldiers who have been forcibly recruited and disposed of by the group. The LRA contacted the Ugandan government of Betty Bigombe, and requested negotiations to end the conflict. Peace talks between LRA government and the Uganda National Democratic Alliance and the SPLA, as well as Ethiopia, Eritrea and Sudan, and other regional state sponsors of terrorism. By 1995, the US was actively providing military assistance. Others blame political rivalry between local politicians, while yet others blamed NRA military officers for sabotaging the negotiations.

**THE ROLE OF THE LORD’S RESISTANCE ARMY IN THE REGIONAL CONFLICT COMPLEX**

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

In October 1994, Uganda cancelled the agreement it had reached with Sudan in 1990 allowing Sudan to station a military monitoring team in Uganda, accusing the team of engaging in activities incompatible with its mandate. Uganda broke off diplomatic relations with Sudan in April of the following year on the grounds that it had been supporting the dissidents. During this period, the Ugandan government government restructured the LRA as a political movement in the absence of international support. It intensified its military operations as ‘vigilantes’. By 1993, the loss of civilian support began to impact on the group, which also lost a number of its fighters when they surrendered to the government. The group’s logistic operations started to collapse, and the LRA was no longer able to sustain itself.

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By now, Uganda’s policy towards Sudan had converged with those of Western states. Sudan had been in a precarious situation since the First Gulf War, due to its economic crisis and perceived radical Islamic ideology and support for the Islamist regime in Sudan. In 1990, Sudan was again targeted by the anti-terrorism campaign in the Gulf states, which had been active in supporting the dissidents. In 1990, the Gulf states provided economic assistance to the Sudanese government, which had been supporting the dissidents. In 1991, the European Community halted non-humanitarian assistance to Sudan. In the same year, the US added Sudan to its list of states sponsoring terrorism. By 1995, the US had imposed sanctions on Sudan to force it to hand over suspects implicated in the assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. A new agreement was reached on a ceasefire and free passage for LRA rebels, but collapsed in February 1994 when Museveni gave an ultimatum to the LRA to surrender within seven days or face military action. Museveni accused the LRA of dishonesty and lack of good faith, and argued that the LRA was using the negotiations to rebuild its capacity through recruitment and that it was negotiating with the government of Sudan for economic assistance to Sudan. In the same year, the United Nations imposed sanctions on Sudan to force it to hand over suspects implicated in the assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. A new agreement was reached on a ceasefire and free passage for LRA rebels, but collapsed in February 1994 when Museveni gave an ultimatum to the LRA to surrender within seven days or face military action. Museveni accused the LRA of dishonesty and lack of good faith, and argued that the LRA was using the negotiations to rebuild its capacity through recruitment and that it was negotiating with the government of Sudan for
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Subcommittees on Africa and on Operations and Human Rights, US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Susan Rice, acknowledged that the US had delivered ‘non-lethal, defensive military assistance’ to Uganda ‘to help improve the effectiveness of its military to defend itself against Sudanese sponsored aggression, in particular that of the LRA’.

The US provided US$3.85 million in financial years 1997 and 1998 in addition to a US$400,000 in international military education and training programme to improve professionalism of the Ugandan army.

I have also pointed out elsewhere that the US used the conflict in northern Uganda as a proxy to supply the SPLA, with which the UPDF shared military facilities. US policy was infuenced by perception of Museveni as a reliable partner and as a non-interlocutor in the region. In the process, the conflict in northern Uganda and the LRA were linked to a complex web constituting the Great Lakes conflict.

This increased the cycle of violence and counter-violence.

Between 1995 and 1998 Uganda fought proxy wars with Sudan that drew in Ethiopia and Eritrea, both members of the Fronts operating from Sudan. Sudanese funded the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF) and Uganda National Rescue Front II (UNRF), and also in support of the SPLA. The WNBF and UNRF II rebels operated from bases in Sudan and of its soldiers, while others surrendered to Ugandan government troops.

Regional and International Interventions

Concerns about the inter-linkage of conflicts in Uganda and Sudan in the regional conflict complex and the increased threats to regional stability led to numerous interventions in the form of mediation, among others, by Libya, Iran and Malawi, without much success. The complexity of the conflict, multiplicity of issues and lack of a sense of urgency played a role. Nonetheless, widespread abduction of children by the LRA and their use as child soldiers and sex slaves, together with other gross violations of human rights and abuses, led to widespread international pressure on Sudan and Uganda to seek a peaceful end to the conflict.

Former US President Jimmy Carter, acting through the Carter Center, brokered an agreement between Uganda and Sudan that established diplomatic relations by the end of February 2000. Although a lack of trust, exchange of prisoners and the return of war captives, and restoration of diplomatic ties by the end of February 2000, and although the lack of trust stalled the process of reintegration, the accord provided the basis for future relations.

In the course of 2000, intense diplomatic activities by the Carter Center and UNICEF, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the Canadian government, Libya and Egypt resulted in the signing of a new agreement.

In 1996, Uganda, together with Rwanda and Angola, which felt their security was threatened by Mobutu, intervened in Zaire in support of dissidents fighting to overthrow his regime. WNBF camps in northeastern Zaire were overrun by Ugandan government troops, and the security of the border areas was handed over to the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo rebels, who were fighting against Mobutu’s government.

In March of the same year, the SPLA destroyed WNBF bases in Sudan and captured a number of its soldiers, while others surrendered to Ugandan government troops.
REGIONAL CONFLICT COMPLEX: DYNAMICS AND TRANSFORMATION

The improvement in the relations between Sudan and Uganda reflected the interplay of domestic, regional, and international developments. Since the mid-1990s, the Khartoum government had been under growing international pressure to prove its anti-terrorist credentials. Sudan had been internationally isolated since 1991 and subject to UN sanctions since 1996. Sanctions were beginning to have an impact on the regime in Khartoum. The costs of armed conflict and pressure from various dissident groups were a lso a ffe cting the government. A s a r e sult, the Khartoum regime ended the alliance with the radical National Islamic Front Party of Al Hassan Turabi and also ratified the 1997 Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism.

The improvement in the relations between Sudan and Uganda reflected the regional and global entanglement of the conflict. Sudan and Uganda were also under international pressure to peacefully resolve its conflicts with the Khartoum government, and a nd en d t he k illings a nd abduction of civilians by the LRA. The military solution to the conflict had proved ineffective and the new front line alliance had floundered with the Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict. Although the LRA was still operating in the Acholi sub-region, the Ugandan government had been internationally isolated since 1996. Sanctions were beginning to have an impact on the regime in Khartoum.

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the DRC. The SPLA and the government of Sudan had just signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and the autonomous government of Southern Sudan had been established. As the organisation leading the government of Southern Sudan, the SPLA was trying to enlist support and cooperation of the various armed groups in the south, including former allies of the LRA. Engaging the LRA militarily would create a split and jeopardise efforts aimed at uniting the various factions in the south, and unlease serious reprisal against civilians. A military campaign against the LRA would be burdensome for MONUC in the northeastern DRC and UNIMIS and African Union forces in Sudan who were too thin on the ground and overstretched. The UN and AU were therefore reluctant to take on another conflict.

The government of Uganda contributed further to internationalisation of the conflict by referring the LRA to the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC opened investigations against the LRA in July 2004 and in October 2005, issued arrest warrants against five top LRA commanders for committing war crimes and crimes against humanity. Adam Branch correctly argued that the government of Uganda was using the ICC as a political instrument to advance its militarisation of the conflict and was criminalising the LRA as a means of delegitimising its political and military opposition. The government expected to benefit from internationalisation of the conflict and hoped that the ICC indictment would put pressure on the government of Sudan to stop supporting the LRA, which would accelerate the demise of the rebel group. However, the ICC indictment made the conflict more complex and entangled in the politics of international criminal prosecution and has proved to be an obstacle to peaceful settlement of the conflict rather than a help.

When conflicts are entangled in a regional complex, the dynamics of one of the conflicts has an effect on neighbouring conflicts. Improvement in relations between Uganda and Sudan, and the signing of the CPA between the government of Sudan and the SPLA, affected the conflict in northern Uganda and the LRA. The establishment of the autonomous government in Southern Sudan, in line with provisions of the CPA, deprived the LRA of the freedom to operate from bases in Southern Sudan and of direct support from the government of Sudan. It prompted the LRA to shift its base from Southern Sudan to Garamba National Park in the northeastern part of the DRC. Ugandan security officials suspected that the relocation was done with the help of the government of Sudan and full knowledge of officials in the DRC. There were also fears by Ugandan security officials that the LRA might have established bases in the Central African Republic (CAR), and linked up with rebel groups in Chad and the CAR. Chad has consistently accused Sudan of supporting Chadian rebel groups. A visit to Uganda in late 2007 by the president of the CAR to Uganda might have been related to these fears.

Relocation by the LRA to the northeastern part of the DRC resulted in LRA attacks spreading to a wider area. The LRA has been accused of attacking civilians...
and humanitarian workers in Southern Sudan, a nd im pending repatriation of Sudanesese refugees from the DRC, the CAR and Uganda. A high-profile LRA attack in the DRC took place on 23 January 2006 when the rebel group attacked a detachment of MONUC forces and killed eight Guatemalan peacekeepers and severely wounded four others. This led to discussions between the UN and the Ugandan government over the sponsorship of the UK for a resolution for military action against the LRA.

Transformation in the regional conflict complex also acted as a spur for the historic Juba peace talks between the LRA and the government of Uganda. An improvement in the relations between Uganda and Sudan deprived the LRA of direct support, while Operation Iron Fist disrupted the military formation and organisation of the LRA. In May 2006, Kony, the LRA leader, released a video in which he cajoled for peace negotiations with the government of Uganda. The message was delivered to President Museveni by President Salva Kiir of Southern Sudan, who offered to mediate. He made this offer because the government of Southern Sudan knew that if the conflict in northern Uganda did not end, it would complicate the implementation of the CPA and lead to a fresh outbreak of conflict in Southern Sudan. Therefore, the government of Southern Sudan was intent on getting rid of the LRA factor and strengthening its position in dealing with the government of Sudan.

Initially, Ugandan president Museveni insisted on an unconditional surrender by the LRA, but he later agreed to take part in the peace talks with the LRA. In an address to the nation, the president acknowledged that there was tremendous pressure on the government to negotiate with the LRA rebels. At the time Uganda was preparing to host the prestigious Commonwealth heads of states and government meeting. Since the disastrous intervention in the DRC and the US, launched military strikes against LRA rebel jungle hideouts in the Garamba National Park.

The offensive, which lasted three months, was a dismal failure. It did not achieve its intended objective of decimating the leadership of the LRA and instead killed eight Guatemalan peacekeepers and eight Ugandan soldiers and pockmarked the LRA deployment area. The offensive also disrupted the military formation and organisation of the LRA. In May 2006, Kony, the LRA leader, released a video in which he cajoled for peace negotiations with the government of Uganda. The message was delivered to President Museveni by President Salva Kiir of Southern Sudan, who offered to mediate. He made this offer because the government of Southern Sudan knew that if the conflict in northern Uganda did not end, it would complicate the implementation of the CPA and lead to a fresh outbreak of conflict in Southern Sudan. Therefore, the government of Southern Sudan was intent on getting rid of the LRA factor and strengthening its position in dealing with the government of Sudan.

The peace talks were facilitated and witnessed by a number of friendly countries, such as Norway, Canada and Denmark. The UN appointed a special envoy, which raised the profile of the negotiations. Other African countries like Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa sent observers, while NGOs such as Caritas, Saint Egidio and Pax Christi also acted as observers and peace advocates. Despite initial challenges, in an unprecedented development, the LRA and government of Uganda signed a landmark cessation of hostilities agreement in August 2006. The agreement was later reached on the other items on the agenda.

However, the failure of Kony to show up in Riekwangba for the signing of the final agreement raised doubts about the future of the peace talks. Demands by the LRA to stop the military action against its leaders and to assist the SPLA. This has resulted in the cessation of hostilities agreement finally collapsed when, on 14 December 2008, the Ugandan army, with the consent and backing of the DRC and the US, launched military strikes against LRA rebel jungle hideouts in the Garamba National Park. The offensive, which lasted three months, was a dismal failure. It did not achieve its intended objectives of decimating the leadership of the LRA and instead killed eight Guatemalan peacekeepers and eight Ugandan soldiers and pockmarked the LRA deployment area.

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The preceding discussion shows that the conflict in northern Uganda has been very dynamic. It evolved from a local and national level conflict that was rooted in the problems of weak state, to a regional level conflict with global dimensions. Weak in national governance, fuelled by the presence of rebels operating in the region, the conflict has been moving across porous borders in pursuit of rebels operating in the region.

Weak in national governance, fuelled by the presence of rebels operating in the region, the conflict has been moving across porous borders in pursuit of rebels operating in the region. The UPDF has made periodic incursions into Southern Sudan and the DRC in pursuit of the LRA, and has also assisted the SPLA. This has resulted in an interlinking of the conflicts across the region, regionalisation of rebel activities and the development of the Great Lakes regional conflict formation. The conflict in northern Uganda has been a regional conflict formation. The boundaries of the regional conflict complex are fluid and dynamic. The conflict is
also linked by networks of illicit trade in natural resources, such as timber and minerals, which has sustained the conflict.

Against the background of regionalisation, the LRA rebel group has changed over time from an organisation made up of former soldiers of the defeated UNLA who were fighting to recapture state power, to an army of predominantly children abducted from northern Uganda. It has operated as a proxy in the war between Uganda and the US on the one hand, and the Islamist government in Sudan, which the US accused of sponsoring fundamentalism and terrorism, on the other. Since 2007, the LRA has been abducting civilians from the DRC and Southern Sudan and conscripting them into its ranks. Inevitably, the composition and interests of the LRA have varied and changed with time.

The conflict also attracted other actors: the US added the LRA to its list of ‘terrorist organisations’, and human rights agencies and the ICC also intervened in the conflict. This has made the conflict more complex, and has had an impact on the search for a negotiated settlement. In addition, the interaction between the LRA and other states with which it is located has evolved, and it is conceivable that with time, the character of the LRA might change as its interaction with other actors continues to change. Any analysis and intervention to resolve the conflict must take note of the dynamic nature of the conflict.

Regionalisation of rebel activities and links between conflicts in neighbouring countries mean that changes and dynamics in one conflict have effects on other conflicts within the region. The signing of the CPA in Sudan in January 2005 and the DRC in 2006 had an impact on both the LRA and the conflict in northern Uganda. It lessened the value of the LRA to Sudan, so that Southern Sudan was not willing to continue hosting the UPDF on its territory, while in the DRC efforts were made to integrate various rebel forces into the national army. Efforts to resolve the conflict through peaceful means provided a solution to the problem of the meddling by the UPDF in the conflict. Apart from directly intervening in the DRC, the UPDF had also been providing support for rebel groups in the DRC. These developments influenced the strategic options and choices of both the LRA and the government of Southern Sudan (GosS) and provided an impetus for the Juba peace talks.

The implication is that conflicts that are interlinked need to be addressed within a regional framework. Attempts must be made to involve all strategic actors, at the local, national, regional and global levels. Conflicts that are entangled in a regional web cannot be meaningfully addressed in isolation of other conflicts that impact on it.

**CONCLUSION**

Since the 1990s, most violent conflicts have had an intrastate nature. An explanation for these conflicts can be found in internal discord, leading to a process of state-making and nation-building. These conflicts involve the state as well as non-state actors such as rebel movements and militias that contest the political authority and legitimacy of governments. But contemporary conflicts are not only in the DRC, they are also regional. They spill over borders, link up with conflicts in neighbouring countries and draw in neighbouring states, and develop into regional conflict complexes. In the process, they attract the intervention of international actors. The LRA is a case in point.

The increased role of rebel movements in regional and international security has presented problems on whether to engage with them and how to do so. Most of the rebel groups have the dubious reputation of engaging in criminal violence and perpetrating widespread human rights abuses. The LRA rebel group in Uganda has such a reputation too, which has made it unattractive to engage using peaceful means. The dilemma has become more acute since September 2001, when rebel groups began to be viewed as terrorist organisations, although opinion is divided on this classification. Thus, countries like the US and Uganda added the LRA to the list of terrorist states, but other countries still feel that Uganda should engage with the LRA and seek a peaceful solution to the conflict. There is a need to develop a coherent policy on how to engage rebel groups. To label them as a terrorist and preclude any engagement with them is not a useful option. The voices of rebel movements must be heard. However, engaging rebel groups should not be misconstrued for condoning their criminal activities.

Emphasis should also be placed on understanding the domestic contexts that lead to conflicts and the emergence of rebel groups, and on trying to address them. The battle for a reas w here rebel groups operate is fought on territories which are important from a strategic perspective. Establishing a new effective state authority and meaningful administration over frontier territories is crucial to addressing the regionalisation of conflicts.
It is a los vital t o examine existing regional security frameworks and their suitability for helping the grievances of the rebel groups to be heard, for these are often left out of national negotiations. Conflict management needs to have a regional awareness and take into account various dimensions of regional interlinkages. It should not be restricted to individual states or conflicts, because the resolution of conflict in one country may require resolution of other conflicts within the region.

NOTES

7 Ayoob, State-making, state-breaking and state failure, 42.
11 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
28 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 231–255.
29 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
30 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
31 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
32 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
33 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
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38 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
39 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
40 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
41 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
42 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
43 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
44 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
45 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
46 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
47 Khadiagala, Uganda’s domestic and regional security since the 1970s, 243–245.
43. Ibid.
52. Omach, *The state, insurgency and international relations*.
54. Omach *The state, insurgency and international relations*.
55. Ibid.
59. UNSC, SC/8057 AFR/900.
61. UNSC, S/2006/29; SC/8695.

67. UNSC, S/PV 5331.
68. UNSC, S/PV 5359.
Chapter 11

Militant Islamist groups in northern Nigeria

Muhammed Kabir Isa

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the activities of militant Islamic groups in northern Nigeria and recounts how in recent times they have capitalised on the opportunity provided by the current democratic dispensation to increase their activities as non-state actors. The objective is to interrogate the increasing challenges and threats posed to state power and its territorial integrity by the growth and spread of militant Islamic groups in northern Nigeria, particularly since the 1980s. A major aim is to provide an explanation of the resurgence and re-emergence of these groups in northern Nigeria. The chapter also assesses the trends and dynamics that have accounted for the emergence of groups such as the Maitastine sect, the Zakzaky Shiite movement, and the Nigerian Taliban in Yobe State and its subsequent transformation into Boko Haram.

Pertinent questions that the chapter seeks to answer are:

- How has the emergence of militant Islamic groups/movements in northern Nigeria posed a challenge and threat to the power of the secular state and its sovereignty?
- What are the historical trends and dynamics associated with the emergence of the militant Islamic groups in northern Nigeria?
What roles do religious doctrine, sociopolitical realities or ideology play?

The analysis is based on the assumption that the emergence, growth and spread of militant Islamist groups in northern Nigeria pose a challenge to the legitimacy of the state and are symptomatic of the weak nature and character of the state. The causes and consequences of the resurgence of militant Islamist movements and their challenge to the political status quo are discussed in the context of existing political realities.

The Nigerian state has, over time, been characterised by unmitigated despotism, apuristic government policies, fiscal crises, debt-ridden economy, inequalities and in justices, large-scale corruption, fractionalisation of the ruling class, weak political and economic institutions, and a sense of insecurity and property in the Muslim community. This current economic crisis of the state also challenges the legitimacy of the state among the people. The seeming complacency in which the state manages the emerging issue of militant Islamic groups points to one fact – the inability of the ruling class to properly manage the state affairs.

**ISLAMISM AND MILITANT ISLAMISM – CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS**

Studies on Islamism, jihad, fundamentalism and militant Islamism as a dangerous threat to the political stability of the world. He views Islamism as a political movement that pursues Islamic principles of justice, fairness and equality, and which seeks to establish a just society.

The strength of the movement lies in its capacity to mobilise its followers, who are often motivated by religious beliefs and political ideologies. The movement is also able to utilise modern communication technologies to spread its message and mobilise its supporters.

On the other side of the debate is John Esposito, who argues that Islamism or Islamic fundamentalism does not pose a major threat to world political stability.

He posits that there is a need to appreciate each case of fundamentalism and understand that Islamism independently in the country where it is found and constitutes a political force, and to consider its developments in that particular cultural context. Esposito further maintains that Islamism is a political ideology that is as dangerous as communism and one that should be confronted head-on, just as America and the West confronted it in the cold war.

In the perception of Mahmood, and scholars such as Marty and Appleby, the analysis of Islamism and religion in general is consistent with the assumptions of the theories of modernisation that perceive religion as antithetical to the development of democratic societies. Hence, Islamism is considered to be opposed to modernity, while opportunism is its achievements for developing its own tenets.

Islamism is not a political programme, but a political system comparable to socialism or capitalism, which holds that modern Muslims must return to the roots of their religion and unite politically by the formation of Islamic political movements in the Middle East and North Africa. Other variants of Islam that have gained prominence are Shiism and Sunnis. The former is a minority variant of Islam that is largely confined to a few countries, while the latter is a majority variant that is widely accepted in many parts of the world.

Islamic movements, such as the Saudi Wahhabism, al-Qaeda, and the Taleban in Afghanistan and Pakistan, have emerged from the roots of Islamism. Simply lumping together these varied and distinct streams of Islamist groups, for example by implying that the Wahhabism of the Taleban and the Salafism of al-Qaeda constitute a homogeneous brand of Islam, is likely to add to the confusion.

Islamism does have its roots in both the Salafiyya movement and the radical Islamist organisations. Currently, political power is shared among the main political parties in the Middle East and similarly can be said to have its roots in the nation-states of the Middle East. The former is a minority variant of Islam that acquired prominence in the wake of the 1979 Iranian revolution. The minority status of Shiites compared to the Sunni Muslims, the Shiite communal activism,
and also the leading political role played by Shia scholars (ulama) and religious authorities of the Shi'ite tradition in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf region. These movements are the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria, whose aim is to promote Muslim identity. Examples of Islamist political ideology that encompasses a social element of protest, engagement in a counterattack against the symbols and institutions of state power, and the abandonment of European/Western cultural influences and the establishment of a worldwide Islamic state based on Shariah law. Their emphasis is on the state, which is seen as the main instrument for actualising the Islamic religion that will guarantee the revival of and a total return to the Qur'an and the Hadith. Militant Islamists therefore seek to capture the state through legal and democratic means or through a violent revolution, coup d'etat or secession.17

Militant Islamists radically reinterpret traditional Islamic concepts, particularly its views of battles or jihads, when mobilising the faithful by warning them against ‘enemies of Islam’ and urging them to defend the faith. The faithful are encouraged to train, organise and actively participate in the actualisation of their goals by employing tactics such as temporary withdrawal from society.18 The faithful can also be urged to target state institutions and symbols that are regarded as secular or state tate in structures, or a gencies that are perceived to be tools of oppression and domination.

There are three main variants of militant Islamism: the internal militancy that is associated with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria, the Justice and Development Party in Turkey and Morocco, and the Society of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Algeria, Jordan, Kuwait, Sudan and Syria.19

The militant Islamist movement is a modern phenomenon that constitutes a part of a wider resurgence of religious identity and the reassertion of the Muslim world. Militant Islamism – as well as radical Islamism – is rooted in the recurring cycles of revivals characteristic of Muslim history. It is also a reaction, more often than not very violent, to the severe crisis of modernity converging with the rise of charismatic prophetic leaders. Militant Islamism is a religious movement and a political ideology that encompasses a social element of protest, engagement in a counterattack against the symbols and institutions of state power, and the abandonment of European/Western cultural influences and the establishment of a worldwide Islamic state based on Shariah law. Their emphasis is on the state, which is seen as the main instrument for actualising the Islamic religion that will guarantee the revival of and a total return to the Qur'an and the

MILITANT ISLAMIST GROUPS IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

Contemporary militant Islamist movements in northern Nigeria can be identified by the manner in which they pursue the principles of Islam. They seek to achieve their goals by violently confronting the symbols and institutions of state power, authority and legitimacy with the ultimate aim of taking over state power. Further, they seek to target state institutions and symbols that are regarded as secular or state tate in structures, or a gencies that are perceived to be tools of oppression and domination.

The logic of Islamism and political Islam is a distinct and unifying idea that characterises a wide range of movements in the Arabian Peninsula and the Gulf region. The Islamic doctrine of death and afterlife is based in the belief in the Mahdismo. The Islamic doctrine of death and afterlife is based in the belief in the Mahdi, the great Mahdi, the Mahdi, who will eventually come back to purify the Islamic ‘faith’ by struggling with and conquering the enemies of the Islamic order. The conquering Mahdi would eventually establish justice and equality in the global order and freedom from tyranny and oppression.20

MILITANT, REBELS AND ISLAMIST MILITANTS: HUMAN INSECURITY AND STATE CRISIS IN AFRICA
This belief in the resurgence of the Mahdi is widely accepted by Sunni and Shiite Muslims in northern Nigeria (a swelling global Islamic community/order), even though the Shiites (Shia) see the Mahdi as the hidden Imam. Therefore, Muslims have come to define and justify most and any attempts at reviving religion through justice and oppression as part of their religious obligations. Ultimately, the belief is that a charismatic Islamic leader would emerge to oust an existing order of injustice and inequality and establish in its place one that is equal and just, as enshrined by the Qu’ran and the Sunnah or practices of the Prophet Muhammad. It is therefore not uncommon for the followers of organised Islamic movements to identify their leaders as the Mahdi and to also refer to him as a mujaddid (reviver or reformer).

One of the major trends that have characterised northern Nigeria from the early 19th century to the present is the emergence and/ or resurgence of revivalists, reformists, radicals, fundamentalists and revolutionary Islamist movements. Most of these movements thrive, a vast majority of the time, in opposition and in some cases totally rejected established institutions and existing Islamic scholarship. More often than not, the militant and extremist variants of these movements have become very critical of the character of the state, character and constituent power of the state in Nigeria.

A cursory examination of the recorded history of the resurgence of Islamism and militant movements in northern Nigeria reveals that they are recurring phenomenon that is similar to the 19th-century jihad of Uthman dan Fodio. The key to understanding contemporary militant Islamism in northern Nigeria is to comprehend the role and place of the Sokoto caliphate, order that was established to resist colonialism and to establish a regional network. Islamist movements in northern Nigeria have capitalised on this network to create transnational connections with global Islamic society.

The most recent militancy has been spurred by both the economic crisis and governance deficiencies at all levels of the Nigerian government, as well as by opportunities provided by the opening up of the democratic space. But it is mainly based on the traditional protest agenda of challenging and undermining the post-colonial secular state. This has been accio mpanied by a Westernising sentiment fuelled by external influences that included Arab financial support for Wahhabi-style preaching, the regression of the Nigerian economy, and the Mideast conflicts. All through Nigeria’s chequered political development since the pre-colonial to the present times, there has existed in creating a appeal to an Islamic alternative, manifested by calling for the Islamisation or reIslamisation of society.

THE STATE AND RESURGENCE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN NIGERIA

In Nigeria, the burgeoning capitalist class comprises not only the comprador and indigenous businessespeople but also state employees from the civil service, the military and the police. The state itself over the years became the major source, facilitator and protector of their wealth, either through deliberate policies such as indigenisation, commercialisation and privatisation, or through corruption. It is fundamental given the critical role of the state in capital accumulation in the post-colonial era that political contestation would be based on capturing state power. Hence, the contest for state power is intense between the competing sections of the polity. This is especially true in view of the expanded revenue base the state has acquired from petroleum export earnings, which has risen dramatically from the 1970s.

The historical origin of the state in the lo nial era a nd its role in the development of capitalist production processes and relations, largely shaped and defined its role in the accumulation process in the post-colonial era. The existence of the ruling class revolves around the state from which it derives its origin and wealth by employing every available means to secure power and access. Thus, the competition and struggles for state power, particularly in the economic crisis period and the post-adjustment era, heightened identity politics in Nigeria.

The accentuation of identity politics is linked to the phenomenon of prolonged military rule and its institutionalisation of permanent transition, which led to increased repression of freedom as a source of popular opposition. The perception of denial of rights and domination by others creates the basis for identity conflicts, with identities becoming highly politicised over the issues of control of political and economic power.
The accentuation of religious identities and the phenomenal growth of religious revivalism exploded in the era of the post-adjustment economy. The rise of religious identity is linked to the phenomenon of increased economic hardship under the structural adjustment programme, which accounted for the sharp rise in religious activities and the mobilisation of religious identities in competitive politics. Ibrahim convincingly showed that ‘the dynamics of religious movements in a non-temporary Nigeria is very complex and cannot be reduced to a simple “revivalist movement” or a mechanical response to political and economic crisis.’ However, he observed that ‘the repression, imposition of an official ideology, and the excesses of the party machine forced people to retreat into ideological domains not controlled by the state and it would seem that religion is the major expression of this possibility.’

In the past decade, Nigeria has witnessed some mainly Muslim states in the north transform their legal systems to conform to Shariah, with penal laws that apply severe punishment for crimes. The judiciaries in these states were reorganised and in some instances created to administer purely Shariah law. In furtherance of Shariah law, state policies were aimed at cleansing society in order to establish social justice through organising Zakka collection and distribution to the needy, banning begging, rehabilitating the destitute and prostitutes, improving education, and creating a state-controlled and-funded security machinery called the Hisbah to function alongside the Nigerian police force.

Several reasons have been advanced to explain the advocacy of Shariah implementation in Nigeria. One explanation is that the Nigerian federation is becoming more decentralised and part of the decentralisation is taking the form of cultural self-determination. In Yorubaland, this cultural self-determination assumed the form of Yoruba nationalism, in Igboland it manifested in demands for confederation, while in the Muslim north it took the shape of Shariah advocacy. A second explanation for the ascendancy of Shariah was its use as a bargaining chip by the north, which was losing political influence and relevancy in the Nigerian federation. In order to reassert the region’s influence, its dominant class employed Shariah as a negotiating chip for a new national pact among contending national forces.

One of the triggers of Shariah advocacy in some northern Nigerian states was the resentment of being at the periphery of Nigerian politics and its power configuration. There were times when the northern political leaders held powerful political positions in Nigeria and others when the northerners accepted their economically marginal position. However, with the federal elections of 1999, the balance of political power shifted to the south without a marked transformation in the economic marginality of the north. Hence, the politics of Shariah advocacy was part of a protest against regional economic inequalities in Nigeria.
Another facet that played a crucial role in the implementation of Shariah in some northern Nigerian states was the desire of Muslims to embrace Islamic law to govern their lives, coupled with the failure of Western-trained elites to deliver services through Western secular state functions. Their inability to provide progress, which their elites were incapable of providing. These Muslims - who are largely peasants, unemployed or landless proletariat - aspired to have their society liberalized from injustice, in equality, corruption, crime, in efficiency, backwardness, social dislocation and neglect through Uthman Dan Fodio's jihad.

The rising popularity of militant Islamist movements in northern Nigeria can be attributed to a combination of factors, including increased inequality, injustices, poverty, failed social services, insecurity, and legitimacy crises of the weak authoritarian Nigeria state, as well as failed structural adjustment programmes.

Ironically, Islamist militant movements regard themselves as pragmatic and a modern adaptation of Western-styled organisations that are better suited to deliver the services demanded by large educated cohorts of Muslim youths in northern Nigerian cities. These movements are the product of the failure of Western-trained elites to deliver services through Western secularism, democracy and Western-oriented perceptions of rights in the views of Western observers and scholars such as Huntington, Pipes, Marty, Appleby and Fuller, as well as to connect to other global Islamic movements.

The contemporary militant Islamist movements and organisations in northern Nigeria have remained the driving force behind the spread of Islamism in the country. In fact, some of these organisations have come to represent the embodiment of a new Islamic alternative and, if you like, a threat to Western societies and their associates of ungodly practices leading to 'polytheism' and 'syncretism'. This laid the basis for Ibn Fodio's Sokoto jihad, which challenged unjust and corrupt rulers, particularly their distortions of the Islamic system.

According to Uthman Ibn Fodio's manifesto, Jihad was aimed at teaching and spreading pristine or true Islam and the establishment of a system of government based on the Shariah. With support from Hausa and Fulani peasants, Uthman Ibn Fodio succeeded in establishing an Islamic political order governed by the Amir-ul-Muminin (commander of the faithful), who later transformed himself into the Sarkin Musulmi (ruler of Muslims). This movement challenged a number of questions about religious and political power in northern Nigeria and succeeded in replacing the Hausa aristocratic group with an intellectual and scholarly elite that led the emirates across the region. The administrative structures put in place after the jihad represented the nền mibolic impact on the state, which led to the establishment of a new caliphate today.

The jihad of Uthman Ibn Fodio continues to exert a great cultural influence in northern Nigeria. Although its inception, the caliphate state emerged as the new political order, which has persisted to the present day.
removal of unfair taxes, and an Islamic education for the Hausa communities. The *jihad* was also a challenge to the ‘polytheism’ and ‘syncretism’ that was prevalent in the Hausa states at the time.43 To date, the *jihad* has represented one of the major landmarks in the political history of events of Islam in northern Nigeria and West Africa as a whole. It was a turning point that shaped the history of West Africa in the 19th century.44

Under colonialism, the greatest challenge to the state and colonial authority came from the rise of the *Mahdist* militant Islamist movement (*Mahdiyya*), with *Mahdism* as its guiding philosophy and principle. The *Mahdist* movement evolved as a trans-Saharan anti-colonial Islamic fundamentalist movement. Its origins can be traced to a messianic doctrine that proffered that at the turn of each century, a *Mahdi* would emerge with powers to strengthen Islam and make justice triumph. The doctrine holds that when the Prophet Mohammad’s flight from Mecca to Medina in 621 AD (the *Hijrah*), after the sultanate fell to British imperial and colonial rule in the 1900s.44 In 1907, the *Mahdist* movement emerged, with a large followership of Muslims in his quest to establish justice and Islamism in society. Most Muslims looked towards the arrival of the Mahdi for de leverance from inequalities, unjust leadership and bad governance.

The *Mahdist* militant Islamist movement considered British colonial rule and the amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates as satanic and evil. The movement was inspired by the resistance of Sultan Attahiru and his rejection of British to recognise and allow the caliphate state. It radicalised Muslim politics in northern Nigeria, as exemplified in the intensification of the demand for the inclusion of Shariah laws in the Nigerian constitution during the constitutional conference of the 1970s. Th e I ranian r evolution o ccurred a t a time w hen most s cholarly endeavours w ere dir ected a t de bating t he accep tance o f c apitalism o r r socialism. Islamism served a s a third option, but the perception was that it was dominated and suppressed by the other two. I slamism wa s a lso lin ked to t he Muslim Students’ Society of Nigeria (MSS) in the 1970s.45

Recent militant Islamist movement in northern Nigeria: the *Maitastine* and *Shiite* movements

It should be stated clearly that the reason for classifying the *Maitastine* movement with the *Shiite* is not because they share common doctrinal beliefs, approaches or principles, but rather because of their emergence and change in the 1970s. The *Shiite* movement took a lesson from the state handling of the *Maitastine* movement through a *jihad* or I ranian-styled r evolution t hat w ould u nit ate replace the corrupt, Western-styled secular state with an Islamic state. Apart from these similarities, there was no distinctive link between the two movements in terms of Islamic doctrines and principles. As a matter of fact, the *Shiite* movement took a lesson from the state handling of the *Maitastine* movement to rejig their strategy and desire to change the secular state through a *jihad* or I ranian-style r evolution t hat w ould u nit ate replace the corrupt, Western-styled secular state with an Islamic state.

The *Maitastine* radical militant Islamist movement became very popular in the early 1980s in the city of Kano and other areas of northern Nigeria. It came to the limelight as a result of its prolonged unrest and violent confrontations with the security and military agencies, hence the reference to the 1980 *Maitastine* civil disturbance in Kano. Thi s v iolent c onfrontation l ater s pread to o ther ci ties o f northern Nigeria.

The *Maitastine* was a n a nti-status q u o movement d r iven b y I slamic fundamentalism. Its members a re a nti-establishment sy ncretists w ho c hallenge
both the do minant religious and political authorities, and in deed the larger Muslim ummah (community). Their movement was founded by A lhaji M arwa Maitastine, who was killed in a confrontation with the political authorities in the 1980 disturbances in which more than 4 177 people died. The movement has been classified as radical and militant with a millenarian belief largely because of its expressed perceptions that the dominant Muslim population is derailing from the tenets of the Qu’ran and getting richer and more Westernised to the detriment of the lowly, poor and non-Westernised segment of society.

The Maitastine movement represents a radical al s hift f rom o ther f orms of f Islamists because it operated at variance with established or accepted beliefs. It operates at variance with the Iraqi Shi’ite insurgents in the sense that it considers Allah as the Lord of the nation. To the Muslim Brothers, no Muslim can be a Muslim and a secularist at the same time; in fact, secularism is disbelief.

The Muslim Brothers attracted members from mainly the youthful segment of society, particularly from universities and other tertiary institutions and from northern Nigeria in the 1980s. It was believed that the group had been completely suppressed by the state in 1980, but it resurfaced in 2005 in the Jigawa and Kano states of northern Nigeria. This is not the Maitastine movement, but it is a more realistic because they operate around ‘radical only’, a tendency towards an obsession with the Qu’ran and a rejection of the Hadith and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad and other related sources of Islamic law.

Members of the movement live in secluded quarters isolated from other members of society while ejecting everything that is European or Western, especially education, schools and anything Western. They reject other Muslims for having gone astray while maintaining that their beliefs are correct. They reject other Muslims for having gone astray while maintaining that their beliefs are correct. The movement represents a radical shift from other forms of Islamists because it operates at variance with established or accepted beliefs. It operates at variance with the Iraqi Shi’ite insurgents in the sense that it considers Allah as the Lord of the nation. To the Muslim Brothers, no Muslim can be a Muslim and a secularist at the same time; in fact, secularism is disbelief.

The Muslim Brothers offered the anxious youths seeking change, a brighter future. The Muslim Brothers’ rejection of the Islamic practices, dissatisfaction with governance by Muslim leaders, and the lack of access to political expression, particularly participatory politics, under an authoritarian regime. The situation in Nigeria – particularly under military rule – was exacerbated by serious economic and social crises that resulted in the vast majority of people suffering poverty, unemployment and hunger. The Muslim Brothers offered the anxious youths seeking change, a brighter future.

When it was initially established, the Muslim Brothers was a purely Sunni group. However, the close association of the movement with the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN). The group was led by el-Zakzaky’s former loyal supporter Aminu Aliyu Gusau (in Zamfara) and Hallam Ahmed Shuaibu (in Kano). The Shiite splinter group was led by the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN). The group was led by el-Zakzaky’s former loyal supporter Aminu Aliyu Gusau (in Zamfara) and Hallam Ahmed Shuaibu (in Kano). The Shiite splinter group was led by the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN). The group was led by el-Zakzaky’s former loyal supporter Aminu Aliyu Gusau (in Zamfara) and Hallam Ahmed Shuaibu (in Kano).
In the past, the disregard for state authority of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) was exhibited in a number of confrontations with the state. Its leader, el-Zakzaky, spent in total about nine years in nine different prisons from 1981 to 1998, under different administrations and regimes. The Shiites denounced the state and government, disrespected party politics and elections, was contemptuous of Nigeria’s constitution, refused to recognize its laws, refused to respect the national anthem and national pledge, and disregarded the Nigerian flag. In other words, the Shiites rejected every symbol of Nigerian statehood. The Shiites faction had open confrontations and running battles with security agents of the state for several years that often resulted in the loss of lives and property. Bloody confrontations and clashes have characterized its relationship with the state and the mode of state responses until 1999, the beginning of the era of democratic enterprise in Nigeria.

Over time, the IMN has re-strategized and changed tactics. It is no longer the confrontational and terrorist movement it was in the past. The group has retained its militant garb. However, it retains its ideals and goals of an Islamic state. This was aptly captured in its condemnation of the introduction of Islamic Shariah laws and penal code, especially with regard to punishment in what it regards as an Islamic state. In this view, the politicians who started the reform do not have a history of Islamic activism and are seen as opportunists. In recent times, the leaders of the movement have been coopted by dominant state elements such that they are espousing and using the same symbols of power that they had denounced in the past. In fact, between 1999 and 2007 the leader of the movement was a senior special adviser to the governor of Kaduna State, which guaranteed him direct access to the corridors of power rather than the corridors of prisons.

The Sunni splinter group that entered the scene is the Wahhabi movement of Jama'atu al-Izlalatul Bid'ah Wa Ikamatus Sunnah (JIWIS) in northern Nigeria.

The emergence of neo-militant Islamist movements in northern Nigeria: the Nigerian Taliban or Boko Haram phenomenon, 2001–2009

The emergence of a nebulous neo-militant Islamist movement in the eastern part of northern Nigeria in 2001 should not be equated to or classified with established Sufi Sunni movements such as the following:

- The Tijaniyya and Quadriyya, which have spiritual and commercial links with other Sufi orders in West and North Africa
- The Wahhabi Izala movement, which runs a charity and first aid organisation and has links with the Saudis
- The Salafiyya movement, which claims to be a separate organisation and has links with Hezbollah (with which it is linked and which operates like a state within the state in Lebanon)

The emergence and subsequent transformation of this movement are linked with the dissatisfaction associated with the weak economic base of the contemporary Nigerian economy, which is characterised by poverty, deteriorating social services and infrastructure, educational backwardness, rising numbers of unemployed graduates, massive numbers of unemployed youths, and dwindling fortunes in agriculture, inadequate and near lack of support for agriculture, and the weak and dwindling productive base of the northern economy. According to this movement, the current democratic enterprise has produced a set of political leaders who lead by deception and culminate in the Muslim Brotherhood, which has links with the Saudis and has spiritual and commercial links with the Wahhabis.

The neo-militant Islamist movement was aimed primarily at overthrowing the present ‘Western’ and ‘secular’ state order in Nigeria and replacing it with a holistic Islamic order. The group allied with Hezbollah and Mujaahidin (the IslamicMovement in Mecca: the kingdom of Saudi Arabia). The Mujaahidin, in
its early formative stage in 2001 strove for self-exclusion of its members from the mainstream corrupt society by living in areas outside or far away from society in order to intellectualise and radicalise a rather evolutionary process that was ultimately led to a violent takeover of the state. It also advocated for strict application of Islamic laws and establishment of a caliphate in the state. A milieu formed by a university dropout and directed and controlled cell networks with cell commanders in all parts of the state, which was as seen evil and unjust. The movement also sought to eliminate external influences and innovations in the practice of Islam. However, it did not reject or refuse to use technological elements such as motorcycles, cars, cellular phones and AK-47 guns, and other benefits that modernity confers on society and which are derived from Western civilisation.

The Muhajirun, Hijrah or Ahl al-Sunna Wal Jama’ah – as it was known before its metamorphosis into Boko Haram – aptly fits the description of a neo-militant Islamist movement. Although its Islamist doctrine was inspired by the Afghan Taleban of the late 1990s, it has no established link with the Afghan group. The members of what is sometimes referred to as the ‘Nigerian Taleban’ are from unemployed youth and are based on a cell network to ensure adequate training and skills in the use of weapons as well as ideological orientation. In 2003, the then governor of Yobe State intervened by requesting the Nigerian army to deal with the militants when it became clear that the Nigerian police could not contain them. At least 18 people were killed in a fortnight of clashes between the group and a combined force of the army and the police. A letter he sent to the police chief stated that he was the security agencies in December 2003, attacking Geidam police station. This resulted in the arrest of about 200 members and loss of 18 lives. Since then there have been sporadic violent confrontations between fragmented members of Ahl al-Sunna Wal Jama’ah and the security agencies, the latest being in July 2009.

Boko Haram is a transmutation of the Muhajirun, Hijrah or Ahl al-Sunnah Wal Jama’ah group once referred to as the Nigerian Taleban. It is the same movement that was dissolved from the Kanamma region of Yobe State in December 2003 and was then led by Aminu Tashen-Ilimi, a university dropout. It is also the movement that reincarnated and reinvented itself as Boko Haram in Maiduguri, from where it was established, directed and controlled cell networks with cell commanders in all the major cities of northern Nigeria (Maiduguri, Bauchi, Potiskum, Wudil, Kano, Zaria, Katsina, Jos, Jalingo, Danja etc) between January 2004 and July 2009. The Islamist Movement, after its reinvention as Boko Haram, was led by a new leader, Muhammad Yusuf. With some of his former allies and compatriots from the state, Boko Haram set up its headquarters at the Ibn Taimiyya Mosque in the ancient city of Maiduguri, in the eastern part of northern Nigeria. The mosque doubled as the residence of Muhammad Yusuf and as its ideological, orientation headquarters and training camp. Boko Haram did not really change its doctrine from its earlier one of opposition to all forms of Western education and civilisation (while still using its technological tools).
The idea of boko is not just about rejecting Western education per se; it is a judgement of its failure to provide opportunities for better lives and thus became a symbol for the Boko Haram movement to capitalise on the shortcomings of yan boko. Subsequently it was coupled with haram (forbidden). The movement used the term to mobilise unemployed, unskilled and poverty-stricken youths to join its cause, to slodge the secular system. boko-controlled state in Nigeria, and in produce the strict application of Shariah law and the creation of an Islamic state. This partly explains why Boko Haram’s primary targets of a attack were symbolic of the state such as security agencies, which had become widely despised.

Boko Haram considers itself to be the law enforcement agent a gent a gainst those opposed to its doctrine. In its violent confrontation with the Nigerian security forces (a combined team of the army, police and other agencies) from 25 to 31 July 2009, i ts leader, M ushammad Y usu f, wa s k illed in M aiduguri. Confrontations between the group and the police in several cities in northeastern Nigeria revealed that Boko Haram had grown in size a nd membership and had learned from its experiences since relocating from K anama. It had changed its ideology and strategy of advocating for a strict compliance with Islamic laws and principles of Shariah to also condemning Western education and secularism. It also targeted northern elites and Islamic clerics who had adapted to and followed Western-style democracy and secular ideology. The July 2009 en counter left about 700 people dead in Maiduguri alone and displaced about 5,000 in just five days. It was reported that, in B auchi, about 50 m embers of its sect had been killed and hundreds arrested. Between 2003 and 2009, the group had grown to such an extent that it was able to mobilise thousands of members from Katsina, Damaturu and Potiskum to rally behind their leader, Muhammad Yusuf. The security forces had to use intensive fire power to dislodge the group and its leaders from their hideout. The arrests of several Hadians led to speculation that had a role in networks of Chadian and Nigerian rebels.

A chilling revelation is that some of the captured graduates belonging to the movement are children of the affluent in society. The fact that most investigations initiated by the government in the past few years were never concluded lends some to conclude that the current investigations would suffer the same fate as previous ones. For example, six years after the 2003 in cident nothing has been heard of the report or government white paper about the outcome of the investigation on the neo-militant Islamist movement’s activities, or about its source of funds, support
Global and regional response to militant Islamic groups in Nigeria and Africa

The significance of this study also lies in the 11 September 2001 attacks on American soil. In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, US foreign policy dramatically changed from the Cold War and immediate post-Cold War era to a heavy focus on defining, conceptualising, preventing and combating global terrorist threats against American interests and allies. The aftermath of 9/11 included a change in US foreign policy towards countries with predominantly or substantially Muslim populations. Muslims in Nigeria, North Africa and elsewhere were perceived to espouse radical views or the ideology of Islam that promotes violence against Western interests. Islam was intrinsically and incorrectly linked to terrorism and regarded as a menace to the nation's security. This, in turn, created misconceptions of Muslims, by the development of events post 9/11, as terrorist suspects and Islam as an anti-Western ideology.

Americans and their Western allies evolved a number of misconceptions and prescriptions about Islam, Islamism and militant Islamist movements in Africa.

First, they view Muslims in Africa as generally attracted to a radical ideology that is promoting violence against Western interests. Second, they see this form of terrorism as a threat to African in interests themselves. In other words, Islam in Nigeria is seen as a menace to the nation's security. This was to be realised through 'active security missions' that address the underdevelopment and poverty that are making Africa a fertile breeding ground for terrorists. In essence, AFRICOM is a reincarnation of the US 'manifest destiny' policy that seeks to save Africans from their inability to rule themselves and to transform the conditions under which they can be turned into terrorists.

Although Nigeria is one of the countries AFRICOM has targeted to benefit from its programme, the Nigerian government has beenslow to implement policies that are designed to counter terror threats. However, AFRICOM has gone ahead and included northern Nigeria in the Pan-Saharan region that is considered to be at risk of terrorism. This has been met with resistance from the Nigerian government, which has been cautious about allowing American forces into the country.

The resurgence and spread of this and similar groups confirm that the state in Nigeria is weak and incapable of managing militant Islamist or rebel groups such as those in the Niger Delta because of the weak character, inaptitude and corruption nature of the leadership and its ruling class. The state seems to lack a common approach of dealing with armed non-state groups. Although the state responded with massive and unprecedented force to the Boko Haram uprising and the Niger Delta insurgency, it has so far extended amnesty only to the Niger Delta militants. It is obvious that the presence of natural resources such as oil has influenced the different approaches taken by the government to address militant uprisings in different regions of the country.
accepting American assistance to deal with Islamic militancy in the northern and the insurgency in the Niger Delta regions. Such acceptance would imply acknowledgement of the state’s capacity to deal with national security threats and also inflame anti-government and anti-Western passions.

CONCLUSIONS

It is fast becoming obvious to social observers and scholars alike that in the years ahead religion as a social phenomenon – more than any other social variable such as ethnicity – will take centre stage in the discourse on Nigeria’s political landscape. It will play a major role in shaping the future direction of the country. Many factors account for this development and it is crucial to appreciate the challenges they pose to the Nigerian project at this early stage of the debate.

Globally, the insecure state and its inability to provide for its citizens, and the need for civil society as well as non-state actors to increase their powers and activities. Militant religious and social movements of varying persuasions, some of which pursue extreme ideals, are more willing than ever to capitalise on the weakening power and legitimacy of the state in order to assert their doctrines and philosophy. In some instances, avowed militants use extremist movements to create quasi-states within the Nigerian state, thereby further weakening its legitimacy. The failure of the government in Nigeria to provide social and economic benefits to the citizens has severely undermined its support from the populace.

However, the government’s failure to make significant progress in the fight against Islamic militancy in the northern and Niger Delta regions of the country at present.

It is ironic that the expansion of democratic spaces in Nigeria has created opportunities for civil society as well as non-state actors to increase their powers and activities. Militant religious and social movements of varying persuasions, some of which pursue extreme ideals, are more willing than ever to capitalise on the weakening power and legitimacy of the state in order to assert their doctrines and philosophy. In some instances, avowed militants use extremist movements to create quasi-states within the Nigerian state, thereby further weakening its legitimacy. The failure of the government in Nigeria to provide social and economic benefits to the citizens has severely undermined its support from the populace.

However, the government’s failure to make significant progress in the fight against Islamic militancy in the northern and Niger Delta regions of the country at present.

Militant, extremism, radicalism and fundamentalism means or ideologies are used to fill alternative spaces that the state has either failed to provide or closed; or they are a reaction against alienation from modern institutions of government that fail to deliver social services and other benefits to the people. The search and quest to re-assert identities, institutions, values and norms that make meaningful sense to the average citizen in Nigeria cannot be wished away, particularly amid the decaying infrastructure and social services in the country. The search for alternative or new orders is particularly attractive to the vulnerable, disempowered and marginalised Nigerians who are susceptible to manipulation by elites wielding or seeking power.

NOTES

1 Politically, Nigeria is divided into 36 administrative divisions, referred to as states, and one federal capital territory, namely Abuja. Northern Nigeria is a large geographical area and contains 19 of the 36 states that make up the administrative units of Nigeria. The country is further constituted into six geopolitical zones, of which three are part of northern Nigeria. The northeast zone consists of Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe states. The northwest zone is made up of Kano, Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Birnin Kebbi and Sokoto, and the north-central zone of Niger, Kwara, Benue, Kogi, Nasarawa and Plateau states. See Nations Online: countries of the world, Federal Republic of Nigeria – country profile, http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/first.shtml (accessed 9 June 2009).
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40 Ibid.

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Chapter 12

Armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco

ERIC GEORGE AND ALEKSI YLÖNEN

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the most prominent and current major armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco. It discusses their common features and differences, including ideology, recruitment and particular features such as development and activities. Contemporary armed Islamist groups in these three countries have emerged as a violent manifestation of Islamist opposition against the state, which originated in Egypt in the 1960s, but also draws inspiration from earlier forms of Islamism. Their emergence is simultaneously a response to state policies, social crisis and international factors.

Since the 1970s, the appearance of the militant Islamic fundamentalist movements in Egypt and other countries has culminated in unprecedented internationalist character of the now “global” jihad. These networks have become increasingly influential since the recent development and goals of the Egyptian, Algerian and Moroccan armed Islamist groups as they have sought to overcome their local weaknesses through regional and international linkages. Their emergence is simultaneously a response to state policies, social crisis and international factors.
recruiting practices since the 1990s, resulting in a combination of both internal and external activities, while apparently lacking, however, any strategic cohesion.

The major groups discussed in this chapter are the al-Jihad/Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ) in Egypt, the Salafi Group for Preaching and Combat (Groupe Salafiste pour la Préfiguration et le Combat, GSPC) / al-Qaeda in the Land of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in Algeria, and the Moroccan Islamic Fighting Group (Groupe Islamique Combattant Marocain, GICM) in Morocco. The EIJ and AQIM insert themselves within a historical legacy of armed Islamist violence, which has now assumed a more international approach, while the GICM can be demoted more clearly a direct product of this recent internationalisation.

The chapter is organised in the following manner: the next section provides a general overview of the evolution of armed Islamist groups and their ideology within the broader context of Islamism, and examines the external factors that have influenced this evolution. It is followed by a third section that provides an outline of the internal factors that have impacted on the development, activities and recruitment practices of the groups as well as on their internationalisation. The fourth section examines the global war on terror (GWoT) and how initiatives and recruitment practices of the groups as well as on their internationalisation. The fourth section examines the global war on terror (GWoT) and how initiatives and recruitment practices of the groups as well as on their internationalisation.

### Ideology and External Factors in the Evolution of Armed Islamist Groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco

Violent forms of Islamism and their extreme manifestations exemplified in the actions of armed Islamist groups rekindle in the region but also, and perhaps more importantly, the regimes governing these three countries. The fifth section contains some concluding remarks.

**Islamism, political Islam and Salafi jihadism**

The armed Islamist groups active in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco are Sunni in orientation and claim some form of association with Salafi jihadism (al-Salafiyya al-Jihadiyya), the global jihad nominally led by al-Qaeda. Salafi jihadism is just one manifestation of Sunni Islamism, itself a direct product of this recent internationalisation.

Insofar as it offers guidelines for the organisation and governance of Muslim communities, I slam as a religion may be seen in a herently political. Nonetheless, the term ‘political’ is analytically useful in assigning a classification to those groups possessing certain characteristics within Islamism. Political Islam as an expression first gained currency after 1979 in the context of Iran’s Islamic revolution as the combination of Islam and politics. Nonetheless, it may be said to encompass three broad approaches.

The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt by Hassan al-Banna in 1928

The Muslim Brotherhood is emblematic of those groups and organisations that now recognise some degree of distinction between the political and the religious, and pursue societal reform ‘institutionally’ through a usually non-violent political process. Muslim Brotherhood organisations are present throughout the Middle East as well as in Algeria and Sudan, and comparable with political groupings in Turkey, Morocco and Indonesia. While these organisations have continued to seek guidance from Islam’s holy texts, they have favoured an interpretation of Islam that is compatible with elements of modernity, a lowering of temptations of religious orthodoxy, and an adherence to modern state structures and their institutions.

The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt by Hassan al-Banna in 1928 against the background of Ataturk’s abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate four years earlier, and it was the emergence of this new institution that established the lasting perception that the linking of Islam and politics was a radical deviation rather than a historical constant in Muslim societies. The Muslim Brotherhood is emblematic of those groups and organisations that now recognise some degree of distinction between the political and the religious, and pursue societal reform ‘institutionally’ through a usually non-violent political process. Muslim Brotherhood organisations are present throughout the Middle East as well as in Algeria and Sudan, and comparable with political groupings in Turkey, Morocco and Indonesia. While these organisations have continued to seek guidance from Islam’s holy texts, they have favoured an interpretation of Islam that is compatible with elements of modernity, a lowering of temptation to political orthodoxy, and an adherence to modern state structures and their institutions.

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Arab Islamic world and Arab nationalism, and Arab Muslim political action, has been characterized by a phenomenon known as "Islamic anti-colonialism." This term reflects the political engagement and renunciation of the violence inherent to Qutb's ideas by the Muslim Brotherhood and other organizations. Indeed, the majority of Muslim Brotherhood organizations have worked within what are called "Islamic anti-colonialism" frameworks, except where they were prevented from taking political action.

In 1954, the Muslim Brotherhood continued to be a major force within political Islam. Its political engagement and renunciation of the violence inherent to Qutb's ideas helped to lay the foundation for what Tariq ibn Saidi refers to as "institutional Islamism"—the political application of Islamic ideology in the context of its rivalry with Iran. The Muslim Brotherhood has looked to the teachings of the 'venerable ancestors'—the early Islamic community—to的基础 the modern form of political organisation and nation-states with its interpretation of Islamic doctrine. Contrary to the traditional Salafis, however, it advocates jihad as a religiously sanctioned armed struggle, rather than as a political struggle.

Second, the writings of al-Banna and, in particular, those of Qutb have provided key sources of inspiration and form part of the 'ideological' framework for the current Salafist jihadist movement.

A second manifestation of Islamism in cludes movements such as the Salafis, which have remained a political movement for the defence of the ummah, and the Muslim Brotherhood. It shares with the Salafis a strong conviction that Islamic values should be upheld at all costs, and that the modern concepts of political organisation and nation-states with its interpretation of Islamic doctrine. Contrary to the traditional Salafis, however, it advocates jihad as a religiously sanctioned armed struggle, rather than as a political struggle.

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interpretation, *jihad* may be conducted internally against Muslim rulers, globally against the West or be irredentist in character, as in the case of Palestine.11

The *Salafi jihad* adopts the thought of Qutb when it considers violent action against Muslim rulers de eumed *kufr* a r eligious duty. A s le ader o f t he M uslim Brotherhood in Egypt during the 1960s, Sayyid Qutb called for the overthrow of the 4 n ationalist N asser r egime, w hich h e co nsidered unI slamic f or p lacing t he so vereignty of the nation ahead of divine authority. As seen above, this occurred as t he US f omented a p ro-Western p an-Islamism w ith r eligiously co nservative regimes in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan as a bulwark against the rise and spread of Nasser's A rab n ationalism. Q utb u sed t he co ncept o f denunciation ( *takfir* ) to declare the Nasser regime *kufr* and believed that Muslim society was reverting to a s tate of pe-Islamic ig norance ( *jamaliya* ). B y ado pting these views, t he contemporary *Salafi jihadis* have depart ed signific an tly f rom t he t raditional *Salafi* r espect for Muslim authorities, provided these abide by Islamic principles. *Salafi jihadis* have objected to the strategic alignment of Muslim governments with the West in c ountries su ch as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Algeria. In line with this criticism, beginning in t he 1980s, t he f o cus of t he *Salafi jihad* expanded to i nclude Western interests in Africa, Europe, America and South Asia.

After ideology: external factors in the evolution of armed Islamist groups

The evolution of armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco has been marked b y our k ey e mi l estones: t he i niti a l re sponse t o Q utb's i dea as a nd t he accompanying radic alisation o f cer tain e lements w ithin a w ho ld on p ower a nd t o consolidate t heir h o and s e an a lignment w ith t he US. Sa udi *Salafi* r eligion h as been u sed a s a s ource o f leg itimacy f or t hese r egimes, b oth t o respect for Muslim authorities, provided these abide by Islamic principles. *Salafi jihadis* have objected to the strategic alignment of Muslim governments with the West in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Algeria. In line with this criticism, beginning in the 1980s, the focus of the *Salafi jihad* expanded to include Western interests in Africa, Europe, America and South Asia.

The evolution of armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco has been marked by the death of emir Qutb in 1966. A Salafi response to the death of Qutb was the creation of the *Salafist Muslim Brotherhood* in Egypt, which later became the *Salafist Movement*. This group promoted a strict interpretation of Islam and opposed secularism and Western influence in the region.

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politically active. The Afghan experience created opportune conditions for the reinforcement of Saudi- and US-financed international Islamist networks around Salafi jihadists and forged increased commonalities between armed Islamist opposition in Egypt and Algeria. It allowed, for instance, the EIJ to tap into private financing to fund its activities, permitted operations without an elaborate social constituency, and facilitated an eventual merger with al-Qaeda in 2001. EIJ was founded in Afghanistan during the 1980s before becoming active in Egypt, and exerted influence over Osama bin Laden, a son of an important Saudi family and a founding leader of al-Qaeda.

The radicalisation of the returnees was compounded by the difficult re-insertion of the veterans into civilian life, leading some Algerian mujahideen to influence the creation and strategies of both the FIS and the Groupes Islamiques Armés (GIA). Finally, following the Soviet defeat, the US turned its attention away from Afghanistan, leaving Saudi Arabia and Pakistan less subjected to American influence as they reconfigured their relationship with the armed groups. In the five years that elapsed between the first World Trade Centre attacks in New York in 1993 and the bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, the US paid little attention to the activities of armed Islamist groups.19 During the 1990s, however, a number of US foreign policy decisions shifted the attention of the jihadists from targeting the regimes of Islamic countries to a global jihad against external enemies.

Armed Islamist groups interpreted the 1991 US-led Gulf War in Iraq and the deployment of troops in Somalia in 1993 as evidence of US imperial designs on the Muslim world, and responded with their own February 1993 attacks in New York. While relations with the West and the issue of how to confront or co-opt violent forms of Islamism were already factors before 1991, the conflict accentuated a crisis in Muslim societies and movements that had already developed. The supranational Islamism of the Muslim Brotherhood. After the 1996 Taliban rise to power, the ‘Arab’ volunteers remaining in Afghanistan reorganised a round the networks supported by bin Laden, himself only recently arrived from Sudan. In Algeria, the GIA began targeting France as an ally of the regime, and networks of returning mujahideen promoted the internationisation of Salafi jihadism. Young ‘re-Islamised’ Algerians in France with little connection to the project of an Islamic state in their homeland, were drawn to the more radical GIA before later aligning themselves with the global jihad and surfacing in Afghanistan, the US and Yemen in defiance of a supranational ummah. A connection began to appear between ‘deterioralisation and radical Islamisation’.16

Compared with other manifestations of violent Islamism, this global jihad appears as the only one with no detectable strategy or clear objectives.17 Drawing on Qutb’s legacy, the five-pillar doctrine of ‘Sunni jihadism internationalism’ calls for a ‘violent world revolution’ against jahiliya (pre-Islamic barbarism) and al-kufur al-alami (international unbelief).18 It is thus markedly different from the ‘internal jihad’ against impious regimes or the ‘irredentist’ jihad in Palestine. The internal jihad in Egypt and Algeria largely failed to reach their objectives in the 1990s and groups such as the EIJ and the GPC reoriented their struggle to include international objectives and remote enemies such as the US and Israel, and Western allies. Groups of more recent creation such as Morocco’s GIICM have focused directly on international targets and, together with the EIJ and GSIC, claim membership with the al-Qaeda network.

While this international tendency continues to be prevalent, internal agendas persist as well, binding together the in ternal and external struggles against Qutb’s jahiliya. This is the case with the Algerian AQIM, which continues to target the state and its allies in Algeria. Salafi jihadism also continues to be oriented towards regime change, laces such as the GIICM, where the in surgents reject democracy and Shia rule and seek to establish an Islamic emirate,20 taking aim at ‘sheikist’ Salafis and more moderate Muslim Brotherhood known to seek political compromises with secularists.21 In Saudi Arabia, the close connections between Salafis and Wahhabis and a regime aligned with the US have combined to place the Kingdom in a delicate position in relation to the ‘politically radical wing of neo-fundamentalism’.22 As the next section will explore, the development and activities of armed Islamist groups continue to respond to the demands of an ideology constantly adapting to internal and external factors.

INTERNAL FACTORS IN THE RECRUITMENT AND ACTIVITIES OF THE MAIN EGYPTIAN, ALGERIAN AND MOROCCAN ARMED ISLAMIST GROUPS

A number of internal factors help one to understand the rise of armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco. This section identifies and examines these factors and their influence on the recruitment and activities of these groups, and concludes by looking at the recent trend towards internationalisation.
Internal factors and general recruitment trends

Since in dependence, post-colonial regimes in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco have engaged in a authoritarian and repressive policies, which lay emphasis on coercion and cooptation of state resources a t the di sposal of f the g overning e lite. Consequently, t he socioeconomic l andscape h as b ecome a refection o f s tate agendas in which political and economic power has been placed in the hands of a small n umber o f p rivileged in dividuals. T his h as r esulted in g rowing e conomic imbalances, a mplified b y t he l ate 1980s r ecession, a nd t he in ability o r u unwillingness o f t he s tates t o p rovide ' s ocial, e conomic, p olitical a nd p sy chic good s t o t heir exp an ding, in c reasingly y o uthful, urb anised a nd li terate p opulations in A rab countries no longer willing to see ' t heir d entity, t heir w orth a s re flective o f a social cr isis n ot d ressed b y s tate p olicies. It i s symptomatic o f t he g rowing, co nservative s ections o f t he p oor a nd e ducated i ncreasingly m odern s ociety t hat r emained in a s ccssful efforts to r efuse s tate s ervices w here t he g overnment fa il ed t o o ffer remedies t o t heir m arginalised s ectors. This d eepening d illusionment h as c ontributed to t he c onditions conducive to p olitical e xtremism m anifested in a n Islamic r esurgence a nd t he r eligious-political ac tor gained s trength, a nd t he m ujahideen m ovement in t he l atter 1970s. T h is le d t o a g r owing I slamisation o f s ociety a nd t he r eligious-political opposition's c hallenge to t he s tate a s a r eligious-political ac tor gained s trength, w hich in t urn provoked a r egime c rackdown o n t he I slamist m ovement in t he l atter 1970s. W hile t he M uslim brotherhood operated as the outlawed m ainstream r eligious op position, its a r m ed c ommun it y s urvived. In 1980, 'al-Jihad' t ook f or t he f ounding o f t he f ounding o f t he eIJ, Tahrir al-Islami and Hizb al- Tahrir al-Islami. W hile regime repression weakened the violent 'jihadist' e lements u nder K aml H abib in Alexandria, t he g roups o f M ohammad A bd al-Salam F arag in C airo a nd f ollowers o f K aram M ohammed Z uhd i in A ssuit survived. In 1980, al-Jihad took s hape w ith t he fusion o f F arag's g roup in C airo a nd Z uhd i's b ranch in A ssuit, w ith t he l atter in c orporating hi s al-Jama'a l-Islamiyya a l-Jihad i yya ( Jihadi I slamic
engaged in isolated attacks designed to paralyse the regime’s tourism industry, ending with the November 1997 massacre in Luxor. On 25 June 1995, it staged an assassination attempt on President Mubarak during an Organisation of African Unity (OAU) summit in Ethiopia in collaboration with the Sudanese intelligence, which included as protagonists individuals claiming affiliation with al-Qaeda. By this time, however, Egypt’s armed Islamists had already begun to shift their focus to international targets, as the EIJ moved closer to the networks orchestrated by Osama bin Laden.

The EIJ’s current base resides principally with an exiled leadership in Western countries and, to a lesser degree, in urban centres of northern Egypt. In 1998 the group announced that it had joined al-Qaeda, with which it merged in 2001. Bin Laden has provided financing to the group through the Faisal Islamic Bank and the Al-Shamal Islamic Bank in Sudan, where he was hosted by the country’s authorities. Osama bin Laden has reportedly recruited individual cells engaged in international recruitment tool. Al-Qaeda has reportedly recruited individual cells by facilitating operations within Egypt through information sharing, training and networking. On 23 February 2009, a bomb exploded in Cairo’s Khan al-Khalili market killing a French tourist. The attack was allegedly perpetrated by an isolated group possibly inspired by the internet, or a ‘jihadist’ ‘self-starter’, rather than a ‘commanded’ or ‘guided’ group.

Algeria

By the late 1980s, an Islamist movement consisting mostly of university professors and students had taken form in response to state repression in Algeria. This group recruited largely by reaching popular n’ Leighneboud’w here lo cal ulema enjoyed support. U nilke E gypt, w here t he r egime h ad w eakened t he Islami st opposition t hough t he a pplication o f a s t ate r eligious d irective cr to sne, t he A lgeri an authorities proved in capable of channeling religious sentiment in their favour. Algerian Islamists opted to seek power through the electoral process, but they were unable to overcome the dominant political parties. By the early 1990s, the state had imposed a strict ban on political activity, leading to a rise in the number of Muslim networks associated with the Jugah. In 1991, the Jugah was banned and its leaders were arrested, including the group’s spiritual leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri. This marked the beginning of the Jugah’s decline as a significant force in the Algerian political landscape.
of the democratic process. This culminated in the creation of the FIS in March 1989 as an Islamist alliance of various groups. 48

The early success of the FIS stemmed from its ability to unite the poor urban youth with the pious bourgeoisie and to win over the traditionally conservative élite. This resulted in Hassan Hattab breaking from the GI A to form the GSPC in September 1998, 49

By 1998, popular support for the GIA had eroded dramatically and the global jihadi movement offered a desperate alternative, particularly for the Salafi jihadi s from Afghanistan. This resulted in the founding of the GICM (Groupe Islamique de Combat Marocain) in 1999, serving as a logistical base for AQIM. 50

Integration into an international campaign grants an external legitimacy to AQIM's political goals, allowing it to claim the status of a legitimate political entity. This has been used to raise the profile of the international al-Qaeda network, particularly in Morocco, where AQIM has continued to target the security apparatus, as well as foreign interests, while undermining the legitimacy of the monarchy. 51

Morocco

The Groupe Islamique de Combat Marocain (GICM) was formed during the 1990s around a nucleus of Moroccan and foreign fighters, including many Afghan veterans of the Soviet-Afghan war. 52

The GICM represents the increasingly international approach adopted by the armed Islamist groups since the 1990s. This approach has been maintained in the form of contacts with violent Algerian Islamists in France and Belgium, and its activities have included propaganda, recruitment for international jihad and coordination of local cells through what is portrayed as the international Al-Qaeda network. The May 2003 Casablanca and March 2004 Madrid bombings are examples of AQIM's activities within the international al-Qaeda network, as well as accusations of serving as a logistical base for Al-Qaeda.
scrutiny. According to newspaper accounts, the GICM has received funds from al-Qaeda and its European financiers, and logistical support, training and religious education from the Taliban, the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, the Algerian GIA and GSPC, and several other violent extremist groups. As far as its internal jihad is concerned, however, the GICM has been unable to build a agenda that is capable of successfully challenging the religious legitimacy of the monarchy in the eyes of the general population.

INTERNATIONALISATION

The armed Islamic groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco have shown a growing international orientation since the late 1990s through their al-Qaeda affiliation. This should not distract from continuing ‘national’ or internal agendas and international orientation since the late 1990s through their agenda in Algeria, while recognising that the frustrated attempts at internal jihad in the 1980s and 1990s have led many followers to renounce violence and demoralisation. Moreover, the internet continues to attract followers to the al-Qaeda agenda in the transnational ummah with jihadist networks extending into Western countries. Recruiting activities are key, as reported in the global war on terror, however, also conceivably offers an opportunity to unsettle political scores and gain newfound international legitimacy. In exchange for support, demands for improvements in the areas of human rights and democracy may undermine the strategic weakness, dependent nature and possible legitimacy deficits of the states concerned.

The global war on terror and armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco

The global war on terror (GWoT) has had important repercussions in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco. These three countries have all collaborated with the US-led war on terror and one or more of the key states to determine the response has been the degree to which the actions and presence of violent actors have been perceived by the regimes not as a threat, but as beneficial to stability and security. While officially meant to offer new measures against the threat of armed Islamist groups in the region, initiatives such as the TSCIT have also created a framework by which regimes can gain access to new resources in exchange for a more muscular foreign presence to penetrate the region.

The global war on terror and regime response to armed Islamist groups

Egypt, Algeria and Morocco openly supported the US in 2001 and 2002, but found their domestic support compromised by the decision to invade Iraq, an event met with demonstrations of anger across North Africa. Morocco is considered by the US to be a key non-NATO partner and reports have suggested that terrorist suspects were questioned by Moroccan authorities on behalf of US in intelligence services. Egypt has also provided interrogation services, a although it has kept its support low profile in an effort to reconcile public opinion and demand for improvements in the areas of human rights and democracy. In exchange for support, demands for improvements in the areas of human rights and democracy may undermine ‘the strategic weakness, dependent nature and possible legitimacy deficits’ of the states concerned.

Joining the war on terror, however, also conceivably offers an opportunity to unsettle political scores and gain newfound international legitimacy. In exchange for support, demands for improvements in the areas of human rights and democracy may undermine the strategic weakness, dependent nature and possible legitimacy deficits of the states concerned.
Saddat’s assassination in 1981 and Algeria’s cancellation of elections of 1991. Algeria has supported the war on terror and, in exchange, received military equipment previously withheld due to human rights concerns. A apparent resurgence of armed Islamic groups in the region, evidenced in the reported 2003 kidnapping of 32 European tourists in southern Algeria for which AQIM claimed responsibility, strengthened the regime’s military capabilities, and by extension, the US presence in the area. A certain duality may be detected in the official Algerian response; on the one hand, its internal discourse has announced violent groups to be on the verge of disappearance, while the regime has simultaneously set the stage for the creation in 2007 of the first US command dedicated to Africa’s southern periphery. Thus, the globalisation of the terrorist threat has been magnified by the March 2004 Madrid train bombings, leading to the fear that extremism and inhibiting the spread of extremist ideology. The programme is headed by the US State Department and includes the US Agency for International Development, as well as the Department of Defense. Its anti-terror activities range from ‘diplomacy, development assistance, and military activities aimed at strengthening partner countries’ counterterrorism capabilities and inhibiting the spread of extremist ideology.

The rationale for the TSCTI is arguably based on what Keenan has referred to as the ‘banana theory of terrorism’. By extending its Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative to include cludes M auritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, Nigeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Senegal. The stated objective is to help secure the region from potential terrorist threats and underlies the fear that the Sahara may become, or may already be, a base for terrorist camps. It thus seeks to enhance the regime’s ability to provide public services, as a mediator or a facilitator of opportunities, and military activities aimed at strengthening partner countries’ counterterrorism capabilities and inhibiting the spread of extremist ideology.

Armed Islamist groups and the Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative

Armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco have both collaborated with the US on its Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative, a programme that also includes Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Chad, Nigeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Senegal. The stated objective is to help secure the region from potential terrorist threats and underlies the fear that the Sahara may become, or may already be, a base for terrorist camps. It thus seeks to enhance the regime’s ability to provide public services, as a mediator or a facilitator of opportunities, and military activities aimed at strengthening partner countries’ counterterrorism capabilities and inhibiting the spread of extremist ideology.

The rationale for the TSCTI is arguably based on what Keenan has referred to as the ‘banana theory of terrorism’, whereby terrorists coming out of Afghanistan move through Iraq and into the Horn of Africa and the Sahel to receive al-Qaeda training before making their way to North Africa, Europe and the US. This threat was magnified by the March 2004 Madrid train bombings, leading to the fear that armed Islamic groups would use the region as a base for their activities. The programme is headed by the US State Department and includes the US Agency for International Development, as well as the Department of Defense. Its anti-terror activities range from ‘diplomacy, development assistance, and military activities aimed at strengthening partner countries’ counterterrorism capabilities and inhibiting the spread of extremist ideology.

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While Egypt’s position as a major US partner in the region remains uncontested, Algeria has sought to challenge Morocco’s privileged role by emphasising its own experience with violent Islamism and portraying the country as a bastion of regional and international security. Algeria has received US army training and has accepted the presence of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Moreover, it is suspected that some sectors of the armed forces connected to the oil industry are receptive to the US securitisation of the Sahara, since it may in fact be beneficial to their interests. This situation reflects the Algerian leadership’s propensity to continue its exclusive governance, this time by using US military support to monopolise oil-generated revenue. For the US, it remains unclear how strongly democratisation, good governance or respect for human rights should be prioritised when strong-armed regimes may be considered more efficient and compliant allies.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco emerged in the generalised context of a crisis of the post-colonial state. As such, these groups initially sought to provide an alternative Islamic political order and violently challenged the respective regimes in order to acquire a degree of influence and power. While there is no denying that the global jihad has appealed to individuals across the world and at times produced spectacular and devastating results, the route chosen by political Islamists where regimes have allowed Islamic parties to enter the political arena appears to have yielded more results in terms of setting the groundwork towards the creation of an Islamic society, albeit one that incorporates some elements of modernity.

This political Islam, however, has been the subject of intense criticism not only from Salafi jihadists, but also from non-violent and apolitical Salafi movements. In countries such as Egypt, the tendency to withdraw completely and without any form of political participation appears to have yielded more results in terms of setting the groundwork towards the creation of an Islamic society, albeit one that incorporates some elements of modernity.

Conclusion: The rise of armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco reflects the generalised context of a crisis of the post-colonial state. As such, these groups initially sought to provide an alternative Islamic political order and violently challenged the respective regimes in order to acquire a degree of influence and power. While there is no denying that the global jihad has appealed to individuals across the world and at times produced spectacular and devastating results, the route chosen by political Islamists where regimes have allowed Islamic parties to enter the political arena appears to have yielded more results in terms of setting the groundwork towards the creation of an Islamic society, albeit one that incorporates some elements of modernity.

Conclusion: The rise of armed Islamist groups in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco reflects the generalised context of a crisis of the post-colonial state. As such, these groups initially sought to provide an alternative Islamic political order and violently challenged the respective regimes in order to acquire a degree of influence and power. While there is no denying that the global jihad has appealed to individuals across the world and at times produced spectacular and devastating results, the route chosen by political Islamists where regimes have allowed Islamic parties to enter the political arena appears to have yielded more results in terms of setting the groundwork towards the creation of an Islamic society, albeit one that incorporates some elements of modernity.
sectors of the population and within the ranks of a frustrated middle class. This frustration a nd di s enchantm ent h ave n ot va nished a nd s hould n ot b e underestimated, but for the most part they do not appear to be channelled towards violent jihad.

Moreover, although the perpetrators now come from across the Muslim world, the ranks of armed Islamic groups do not appear to have swelled proportionally to the level of dissatisfaction felt by the general population. Armed Islamist groups in Egypt A lgeria a nd M orocco, w eakened in ternally b y a c ombination o f low f o l pop ular support and regime crackdowns in the context of the war on terror, have embarked on a campaign to compensate for their internal failures by increasingly emphasising external agendas. Armed Islamist groups have thus been portrayed as real threats to the prevailing status quo by both their respective states and the international community, irrespective of their actual capacity. This explains why regional audiences have come to perceive them progressively pertinent, or in some cases, even a dominant part of their agendas and activities.

Despite lacking common strategic unity, these groups do continue to pose a threat. This threat, however, does not appear to lie in the capacity to destabilise regimes or t he wider international com munity. Above all, it is a m enace t o the security of the individiual citizen falling victim to an isolated manifestation of armed Islamist activity in Egypt, Algeria, Morocco and elsewhere.

NOTES

2 This a b road class ification u sefully p ut forward b y I nternational Cr isis G roup, Understanding Islamism, 3–5.
3 Ibid, 2.
5 Ibid, 41.
6 B assan T ibi, Political Islam, world politics and Europe, Abingdon: Routledge, 2008, 101, r efers to 'institutional Islam' a s a 'peaceful variety of political Islam' b ut h as c lear r eservations a bout its democratic credentials. See chapter 7, Political decline and democracy's decline to a voting procedure.
8 International Crisis Group, Understanding Islamism, 8–9.
9 Ibid, 12.

11 International Crisis Group, Understanding Islamism, 14.
12 Ibid.
13 K Dalacoura, Islamist movements as non-state actors and their relevance to international relations, in D Josselin and W Wallace (eds), Non-state actors in world politics, Houndmills: Palgrave, 2001, 235–248, 238–239.
14 In Afghanistan the externally recruited mujahedeen were often considered 'Arabs' and 'Afghans' upon return to their countries of origin.
15 Roy, Globalised Islam, 292–301.
16 Ibid, 69.
17 Ibid, 55.
18 According to M H afez, Suicide b ombers i n I raq: t he s trategy a nd i deology o f m artyrdom, Washington, D C: United States Institute for Peace, 2007, 66–70, t hese five concepts are a tawhid (unity of God) as a way of life, hakimiyyat Allah (God's sovereignty) over right and wrong, b ida (a strict jurisprudence) a nd j urisprudence a nd takfir (rejection of the imam of the umma) a s w a y s t o s eek t heir d eath eithe r t o r epen t of face execution, and jihad in terms of violent struggle.
20 Hafez, Suicide bombers in Iraq.
21 Kepel, La yihad.
22 Olivier Roy, Globalised Islam: the search for a new ummah, 233, suggests neo-fundamentalism is less historically ambiguous than 'salafi'.
24 Immigration a nd R efugee B oard o f C anada, E gypt: R ecruitment b y I slamist mi litant g roups, 2009).
25 Ibid.
26 Kepel, La yihad, 260.
29 Boubakeur, Salafism and radical politics in post-conflict Algeria, 13–17.
31 Peter R N eumann a nd B rooke R ogers, R ecruitment a nd m obilisation f or t he I slamist mi litant.
32 The government’s promotion of Islamism resulted in a proliferation of private mosques (ahli) away from the regime control. These became meeting places for militants and recruits, reinforcing the Muslim Brotherhood and more radical groups. Providing identity and community discourse along with services and welfare became paramount in the Islamist project, facilitating recruitment and training of radicals (J. L. Esposito, The Islamic threat: myth or reality?, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992, 138–139). These groups found fertile ground in Upper Egypt and Alexandria, as well as in the ‘main source’ of legislation was hypocritical because it coincided with a clampdown of Muslim Brothers and Islamist student organisations as an expansion of a policy of raaprochement with Israel.


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35 Immigration a nd R efugee B oard o f C anada, E gypt: R ecruitment b y I slamist mi litant g roups, 148.

Ib id, 148.

41 ‘In this context refers to a representative of an armed Islamist group in Egypt or Morocco who assumes the religious title in part to boost his legitimacy and facilitate recruitment.

42 Sageman, Understanding terror networks, 134.

Ib id, 148.

43 Immigration a nd R efugee B oard o f C anada, E gypt: R ecruitment b y I slamist mi litant g roups, including methods and incidence.

44 ‘Emir’ in this context refers to a representative of an armed Islamist group in Egypt or Morocco who assumes the religious title in part to boost his legitimacy and facilitate recruitment.

45 Immigration a nd R efugee B oard o f C anada, E gypt: R ecruitment b y I slamist mi litant g roups, including methods and incidence.

46 Immigration a nd R efugee B oard o f C anada, E gypt: R ecruitment b y I slamist mi litant g roups, including methods and incidence.


52 Boubekeur, Salafism and radical politics in post-conflict Algeria, 10.

53 Ibid.


58 International Crisis Group, Islamism, violence and reform in Algeria, 17.

59 Roy, Globalised Islam, 1, 2.


61 Neumann a nd R ogers, R ecruitment a nd m obilisation f or t he I slamist mi litant m ovement in Europe, 80.

62 Ibid, 64.

63 Boubekeur, Salafism and radical politics in post-conflict Algeria, 10.

64 Roy, Globalised Islam, 282, 302.

65 Neumann a nd R ogers, R ecruitment a nd m obilisation f or t he I slamist mi litant m ovement in Europe, 84, 87.

66 Johnston, Analysis-Egypt bomb unlikely to signal militancy resurgence.


71 El-Khawas, North Africa and the war on terror, 81–83, 88.

72 International Crisis Group, Islamism, violence and reform in Algeria, 23.

73 Nuñez Villaverde, Hageraats and Malgorzata, Terrorismismo Internacional en África, 127.

74 Chourou, Promoting human security, 64.

From rebellion to opposition: UNITA in Angola and RENAMO in Mozambique

JUSTIN PEARCE

INTRODUCTION

It is tempting to consider Angola and Mozambique as two countries with parallel histories. Both were colonised by Portugal and remained under colonial domination for more than a decade after the de-colonisation of most of the continent. Both became independent in 1975 with governments dominated by Portuguese-speaking urban elites that had nationalist aspirations but which were firmly rooted in particular regions and whose rhetoric inclined to the left. Both of these governments were seen as a threat by apartheid South Africa and by right-wing elements in the West. Both Angola and Mozambique experienced internal conflicts that were fuelled by South African backing for armed opposition movements: Resistência Nacional d e M ocambique (RENAMO) in Mozambique and União p ara a I ndependência T otal d e A ngola (UNITA) in Angola. The international détente of the late 1980s led to internationally supported peace processes, which envisaged the ruling parties and rebel movements competing at the ballot box.

From that point, the well-known stories diverge. Angola returned to war only months after the 1992 elections, and peace did not arrive definitively until after the...
I n Mozambique, by contrast, there has been no threat of a return to civil war since the first election in 1994, and further elections have been held regularly since that time. Moreover, to concentrate on the obvious historical parallels between Angola and Mozambique is to ignore some fundamental differences, most crucially in the respective origins of UNITA and RENAMO. UNITA, a long while after the Movimento Popular de Libertação d e Angola (MPLA) and Frente Nacional de Libertação d e Angola (FNLA), started out as a nationalist movement that was founded to oppose Portuguese colonialism in Angola, and only later acquired its foreign connections. In Mozambique, FRELIMO was the only movement that mobilised a against colonialism. RENAMO came into being only after the death of Jonas Savimbi, founder and leader of UNITA, in February 2002. In both movements, the parties have been hindered in establishing a role in the political space in Angola and Mozambique, as well as about the parties themselves. To what extent is this about the weakness of democratic institutions, and to what extent is it about the parties’ own shortcomings? To understand why the MPLA and UNITA have not become effective in doing so depended on how secure its military and civic function. Its success in doing so depended on the stability of the state that it established essentially of urban areas. The MPLA never gained control over the countryside, and the state that it established consisted essentially of urban areas. The following 12 years were crucial in shaping the character of UNITA as it established itself in rural Angola. The MPLA and FNLA had been active for several years before UNITA’s inception in 1966. Savimbi, formerly an official in the FNLA, broke away and founded UNITA on the grounds that the FNLA, based among the Bakongo et hnic g roup o f northern Angola, di scriminated against people on the margins of areas of control are many, but my concern here is with
the areas where UNITA was well established: here, bases became the home to soldiers, to political officials, and to professionals such as teachers and nurses, and were central to UNITA’s relationship with the farming population. UNITA would establish a relationship with the *soba* (village chief), persuading him of the need for the village to supply food to UNITA. A UNITA loyalist in the village would be recruited to coordinate the rendition of a quota of food production to the people at the base. Teachers and nurses would go into the villages to offer education and health care to the population. UNITA was a political organisation was indistinguishable from UNITA as a provider of services and from UNITA as a military movement. UNITA tried to convince people that it was the defender of their own best interests against a hostile MPLA. This type of relation between UNITA and the people reached its most sophisticated expression with the establishment of Jamba, UNITA’s bush capital in Cuando Cubango province, in the early 1980s. Jamba’s location, far from the Ovimbundu heartland, was determined by ease of access for the South African planes that supplied it. But to the people who spent time there, Jamba was ‘almost like a city’ or ‘a state within a state’. Its hospitals, its schools, its international air links and its visits from South African dignitaries were seen as evidence of UNITA’s potential as a government in waiting.

**A parallel state?**

As UNITA built its bases in the Jamba, the MPLA was establishing its state in the towns. Within these enclaves, the MPLA’s state-building efforts included the establishment of a system of state-run shops that ensured low-cost food for the urban population, which was issued with ration cards. People who lived in the city during this period would speak with approval of the MPLA’s efforts to keep a supply of food coming into a city, which, thanks to the war, was virtually cut off from its agricultural hinterland. They also spoke of the provision of education and services under the control of one or the other or both sides, exposed to the state-building efforts of either or both sides. The movement of people from the contested zones to resettlement areas alongside the main roads, or within the limits of cities that were under the control of the state, physically bringing people under the control of the state.

**Identity politics**

To each of the political movements, the people under its control were ‘our people’, and those under the control of the other side were ‘enemy people’. People came to identify themselves as ‘government people’ or ‘UNITA people’. Yet these identities were not a matter of political choice, they were a matter of necessity. To profess to be a ‘UNITA person’ in government territory was to risk death, and vice versa. Hence the paradox of political identities in wartime Angola: identities had to be maintained as a matter of life or death, yet the depth of the conviction that to each of the political movements, the people under its control were ‘our people’, and those under the control of the other side were ‘enemy people’.

Those people who lived close to the frontlines of military control would talk about both sides as predators. But those who spent extended periods under the control of one or other or both sides, exposed to the state-building efforts of either or both sides, were more likely to accept the legitimacy of the movement, or movements, as a matter of necessity. To profess to be a ‘UNITA person’ in government territory was to risk death, and vice versa. Hence the paradox of political identities in wartime Angola: identities had to be maintained as a matter of life or death, yet the depth of the conviction that to each of the political movements, the people under its control were ‘our people’, and those under the control of the other side were ‘enemy people’.

**The peace process and renewed war**

The Angolan peace process that culminated in the 1991 Bicesse Accord was largely a product of the détente in international politics of the period and the ‘end of history’ narratives that accompanied it. It took little account of Angola’s internal
politics. A s I ha ve outlined, t here wa s no space for political choice in wartime Angola. Politics was understood as compulsory identification with a movement that was in power in a particular region of the country by force of arms. Angola in 1992 remained divided militarily between the MPLA and UNITA; there was no reason why a notional ceasefire would change the way in which political control was understood. The 1992 election results largely reflected the pattern of military control as it was at that stage of the conflict. Voting was a matter of endorsing the authority of the party in charge, hence UNITA's strong showing in the Central Highlands.

The circumstances and actions that led to the return to war early in 1993 are beyond the scope of this chapter; suffice to say that they reflected the continuing aspirations to a absolute power by both parties to the conflict, neither of which complied with the spirit of the peace accord, hence UNITA's strong showing in the Central Highlands.

The elections of 2008, in which a clear MPLA victory in the provinces of the Central Highlands contrasted with UNITA's electoral success in the region in 1992, also had political consequences. Political identity was still equated with political control, and the state remained identified with the MPLA. People who may have spent decades under the control of UNITA may now have become 'government people'. Those who were in the bush at the beginning of the conflict may now have returned to civilian life. Simultaneously, those UNITA leaders who had been in the bush with Savimbi were relocated to Luanda, far from the movement's core constituency in the Central Highlands.

The MPLA began promoting its electoral message months before the official start of the campaign, and was helped by the bias towards the party in state media. Party campaigners presented tools and grains to rural communities, and reinforced by the MPLA's firm control of state resources throughout the national territory. In some cases, being employed in government service after the end of the war was contingent on joining the party.

Neither side completely lived up to the Lusaka Accord; the agreement collapsed, the government's endgame to the war comprised a counterinsurgency strategy aimed at forced displacement of rural people, and the return to war was inevitable. The elections were thus 'the last battle in the war', and the return to intense and various connections with other countries that each had woven in and out of the war was inevitable.5

### From military collapse to political defeat

The memorandum of understanding signed by the Angolan Armed Forces and UNITA after Savimbi's death in February 2002 laid out a process whereby people who may have been under UNITA control at that point would be reincorporated into civilian life. Simultaneously, those UNITA leaders who had been in the bush with Savimbi were relocated to Luanda, far from the movement's core constituency in the Central Highlands.

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campaign had supposedly begun. Nor could UNITA call upon its old foreign allies, since in international opinion had unchallenged. This shift in opinion was manifested, inter alia, in government’s support for UN sanctions against the diamond trade with UNITA, and later for the Kimberley Process that seeks to exclude f from international markets in order to find a job in a business run by a UNITA sympathiser. Many of these people felt that their continued adherence to UNITA prevented them from turning to the MPLA’s dominance of the political system.

Already constrained by a lack of resources, UNITA’s most skilled leaders would habitually approach their local party branches for help with money in an emergency, or to find a job in a business run by a UNITA sympathiser. Many of these people felt that their continued adherence to UNITA prevented them from seeking jobs in the state sector, and they saw UNITA as the body to which they should turn for welfare. UNITA, in the eyes of its followers, played a state-like role for those who felt no sense of citizenship in a state that remained strongly associated with the MPLA. UNITA, in the eyes of its followers, played a state-like role for those who felt no sense of citizenship in a state that remained strongly associated with the MPLA. UNITA, in the eyes of its followers, played a state-like role for those who felt no sense of citizenship in a state that remained strongly associated with the MPLA.

It was significant that in 2008 UNITA achieved its best result (31.37 per cent of the parliamentary vote) in Cabinda, a long way from its historic heartland. UNITA’s most skilled leaders would habitually approach their local party branches for help with money in an emergency, or to find a job in a business run by a UNITA sympathiser. Many of these people felt that their continued adherence to UNITA prevented them from seeking jobs in the state sector, and they saw UNITA as the body to which they should turn for welfare. UNITA, in the eyes of its followers, played a state-like role for those who felt no sense of citizenship in a state that remained strongly associated with the MPLA.

RENAMO’s origins were not propitious for its development into a popular movement. It was created by the intelligence services of white-ruled Rhodesia with the purpose of destabilising the FRELIMO government. RENAMO succeeded in some areas in establishing a political relationship with rural Mozambicans as opposed simply to subordinating them in a regime of fear. What is clear, however, is that RENAMO’s ways of operating differed from one part of Mozambique to another, depending on how receptive the local people were towards the guerrillas, and on RENAMO’s military success in penetrating areas of Mozambique. During the war, RENAMO was best able to establish a relationship with the rural population in those areas where FRELIMO’s rural development policies, particularly villagisation, created discontent among the farming population. Opposition to villagisation was most marked in the north, where peasants had no experience of living in large villages. Geffray goes so far as to suggest that peasant farmers in Nampula Province were in conflict with FRELIMO before RENAMO even arrived, and the rebel movement simply took advantage of existing grievances in mobilising the farming population. Yet even within the southern province of Gaza, Roesch found there were different attitudes towards FRELIMO in different parts of the province, and resentment of FRELIMO’s agricultural reform policies than was the case in the north. Yet even within the southern province of Gaza, Roesch found there were different attitudes towards FRELIMO in different parts of the province, and resentment of FRELIMO’s agricultural reform policies than was the case in the north.

**Political engagement in wartime**

Yet des pite f oreign o rigins a nd lack o f a co nsistent p olitical p rogramme, RENAMO succeeded in s ome a reas in es tablishing a p o litical r elationship w ith rural Mozambicans as opposed simply to subordinating them in a regime of fear. What is clear, however, is that RENAMO’s ways of operating differed from one part of Mozambique to another, depending on how receptive the local people were towards the guerrillas, and on RENAMO’s military success in penetrating areas of Mozambique. During the war, RENAMO was best able to establish a relationship with the rural population in those areas where FRELIMO’s rural development policies, particularly villagisation, created discontent among the farming population. Opposition to villagisation was most marked in the north, where peasants had no experience of living in large villages. Geffray goes so far as to suggest that peasant farmers in Nampula Province were in conflict with FRELIMO before RENAMO even arrived, and the rebel movement simply took advantage of existing grievances in mobilising the farming population.
Ethnicity was another tool that RENAMO used to gain adherence in certain areas. RENAMO made claims to ethnic solidarity with the Ndau (Shona-speaking) people of central Mozambique, an area quite distinct from Nampula, where RENAMO was able to make its strongest political claims. But even if RENAMO’s principal association was with the Ndau, RENAMO nevertheless managed to make identity claims in the north as well, capitalising on the historic marginalisation of the Makua people of the region.

An influential analysis by Gersony divides RENAMO’s areas of influence into zones of taxation, control and destruction. Tax areas were those with a dispersed population that was left alone in exchange for tribute. Control areas were those where RENAMO organised labour. Destruction areas were where RENAMO had no hope of establishing a political relationship, and relied on pure terror. According to Vines the major function of RENAMO’s control areas was:

… to provide food and services for the organisation … RENAMO obtains most of its labour forces from the other two zones, ‘tax’ and ‘destruction’ areas. Its workforce is therefore predominantly captive, detained against its will and forbidden to depart. RENAMO exploits those very areas from which its first constituency of support was drawn – rural peasant communities.”

Vines nevertheless observes that RENAMO’s relationship with the population in control areas was not only one of forced labour:

Despite the overall picture of RENAMO’s harsh treatment of the population, there is another side to its administrative practices. When RENAMO enters a district for the first time there is some attempt to win over peasant support. Already in the early 1980s RENAMO played in this way on local discontent with FRELIMO’s achievements, particularly about the lack of consumer goods and villagisation, to obtain sympathy …

Promise of power and land has also been one of the offers RENAMO has made in rural areas to obtain support … Further confirmation that RENAMO was attracting the disgruntled and the power-hungry came in 1982 through research conducted by FRELIMO. It showed that many of the rebels in Nhambe province were failed local election candidates from 1978, who saw RENAMO as an alternative method to take power.14

Roesch found that about half of people on the bases came to accept life under RENAMO as preferable to life elsewhere.19 RENAMO encouraged identification with the movement through ‘perfunctory’ political education, though ‘neo-traditional religious discourse’ seemed to be RENAMO’s favoured strategy for gaining the allegiance of people under its control.

The kind of positive incentives described here – the promise of patronage and influence in return for support – are significant in that they prefigure the methods used by RENAMO after the end of the war. Nevertheless, the failure of both FRELIMO and RENAMO to establish a peaceful and sustainable relationship with much of the rural population led to many people being alienated from both sides, even if they had no choice but to profess support for whichever side controlled the area in which they lived: ‘It appears they now support[ed] whichever side [would] protect them, in order to save their own skin’.20

Peace settlement

As with Angola’s Bicesse Accord, the peace settlement in Mozambique grew out of international political developments rather than as a result of any internal change in the country. Following the General Peace Accord of October 1992, RENAMO benefited from funding from foreign donors, who saw the former rebel movement as the logical counterpoise to FRELIMO in a multiparty Mozambique, and was encouraged by its former principal backer, South Africa, to take up this role. However, the modality of the peace plan was such that RENAMO was able to continue behaving not so much as a political party as a military movement with aspirations to statehood.21

RENAMO retained control of its armed forces during the electoral campaign period, and restricted the access of FRELIMO campaigners, and even some voter education trainers, to RENAMO-controlled zones. European parliamentary monitors observed that at one location in Nampula province, the polling station was located inside a RENAMO camp that remained essentially intact, patrolled by armed RENAMO soldiers, despite the supposed demobilisation process.22

The situation described suggests a simi lar ‘logic of war’ to that with which Messiant identified as underlying the failure of the Angolan peace process in the early 1990s.23 The fact that the militarised, territorial politics of wartime continued into the transition period in Mozambique suggests a power-ful begging chip for RENAMO’s leader, A. Fonse Dhlakama, a point that he unhesitatingly underscored in a letter to the President of Mozambique in which he announced that he was pulling out of the election; it took diplomatic intervention
Electoral gains

Some have suggested that RENAMO's threatening behaviour scared people into voting for RENAMO. What is more certain is that RENAMO managed to win votes above and beyond those of the people in the areas that it controlled. UN figures suggest that at the time of the peace accord, RENAMO managed to win votes above and beyond those of the people in the territory and 7 per cent of the population, but in the elections, the former rebel movement gained 37.78 per cent of the presidential votes, while Dhlakama, its presidential candidate, gained 33.73 per cent of the presidential votes. In other words, RENAMO's share of the vote was greater than the population that it controlled at the end of the war.

However, its support remained concentrated in those regions where it had been able to make its strongest political and ethnic claims during the war, namely the centre and centre-north of the country. Its worst results were in the south, where even the areas that RENAMO had controlled during the war voted for FRELIMO: this was a reaction to the brutality practised by RENAMO in the areas where it had never managed to consolidate its power by political means during the war. Calhoun suggests that for RENAMO, having a political programme was less important than providing a voice to a variety of social elements and communities: a sort of coalition of outsiders who had been recruited to the party with the promise of study bursaries, which never materialised. The result was an angry protest, in which RENAMO officials were taken hostage and Dhlakama was called upon to intervene; his response was to demand that the party would contact foreign sponsors with a view to resolving the situation. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) guaranteed the right to operate according to a patron-client logic with respect to its supporters, in a manner analogous to the way in which it had tried to win support in some areas during the war. In the early 1990s, the party faced a crisis over young people who had been recruited to the party with the promise of study bursaries, which never materialised. The result was an angry protest, in which RENAMO officials were taken hostage and Dhlakama was called upon to intervene; his response was to demand that the party would contact foreign sponsors with a view to resolving the situation.
From rebellion to opposition: UNITA in Angola and RENAMO in Mozambique

THE BURDENS OF OPPOSITION

This chapter has so far attempted to trace the continuities between RENAMO's and UNITA's history as rebel movements, and the difficulties they have faced in becoming effective opposition parties in peacetime. It is, nevertheless, evident that some of the most serious challenges that they face are the same difficulties that all opposition parties have in common. It would be short-sighted to look at UNITA's and RENAMO's problems without considering that the opposition parties that have emerged since 1990 in both countries have proved to be considerably less successful than the former rebel movements in consolidating electoral support. All opposition parties must contend with the fact that the ruling party enjoys advantages over the opposition and has the resources at its disposal to appeal to the wider public.

The lesson of Beira for RENAMO was that the party was able to capitalise on the urban RENAMO cadres and the old guard whose sense of entitlement was derived from three decades spent in the bush. When fears were raised that the party was being sidelined from the gains it had made in the previous ten years, the elections were characterised by a sharp drop in turnout compared with the previous national elections of 1999.33 Such voter apathy, much remarked upon by political commentators, was far more damaging to RENAMO than to FRELIMO: RENAMO received 1.6 million votes in 1999 but only 900,000 in 2004. For those who took a negative view of the status quo, FRELIMO had not delivered, but RENAMO had not delivered either, and manifestly had nothing to deliver. Moreover, the idea of democracy, which had been so prominent in the political discourse that surrounded the end of the war, had also failed to present the better life that was promised. In other words, those who were dissatisfied with the government's performance appeared to have become dissatisfied with the political system as a whole. Rather than voting for the opposition, they saw no reason to participate in the democratic process at all. In 2004, Dhlakama managed to gain only 31.7 per cent of the vote, just under half the 63.7 per cent received by FRELIMO's candidate, Armando Guebuza. This is in contrast to the 1999 presidential election, in which Dhlakama received 47.7 per cent of the vote, less than five percentage points behind incumbent president Joaquim Chissano, who gained 52.29 per cent.

Events surrounding the 2008 municipal elections in Beira provide a further illustration of RENAMO's problems. Intraparty tensions saw D'aviz Simango, the 'natural' RENAMO candidate for the city leadership, pushed aside by the party hierarchy in favour of Manuel Pereira.34 Simango, the 'natural' RENAMO candidate for the city leadership, pushed aside by the party hierarchy in favour of Manuel Pereira.35 In another example of patronage politics, RENAMO granted timber concessions to businessmen in areas that it controlled.

What is significant about these instances is that they reflect habits learnt from the time they spent in the bush. When fears were raised of defection from UNITA, the party leadership dismissed them in terms of her having appeared on a public platform with Simango, while reports suggested that Trinta and Namburete were also close to Simango.37

Thus RENAMO approached the 2004 elections without having consolidated the gains it had made in the previous ten years. The elections were characterised by a sharp drop in turnout compared with the previous national elections of 1999.33 Such voter apathy, much remarked upon by political commentators, was far more damaging to RENAMO than to FRELIMO: RENAMO received 1.6 million votes in 1999 but only 900,000 in 2004. For those who took a negative view of the status quo, FRELIMO had not delivered, but RENAMO had not delivered either, and manifestly had nothing to deliver. Moreover, the idea of democracy, which had been so prominent in the political discourse that surrounded the end of the war, had also failed to present the better life that was promised. In other words, those who were dissatisfied with the government's performance appeared to have become dissatisfied with the political system as a whole. Rather than voting for the opposition, they saw no reason to participate in the democratic process at all. In 2004, Dhlakama managed to gain only 31.7 per cent of the vote, just under half the 63.7 per cent received by FRELIMO's candidate, Armando Guebuza. This is in contrast to the 1999 presidential election, in which Dhlakama received 47.7 per cent of the vote, less than five percentage points behind incumbent president Joaquim Chissano, who gained 52.29 per cent.

Events surrounding the 2008 municipal elections in Beira provide a further illustration of the party hierarchy's priorities over those of the mass support base. Simango was expelled from RENAMO in September after it was decided that the party was not the right candidate for the leadership position in Beira. The reasons given for Simango's expulsion were his association with Simango, the 'natural' RENAMO candidate for the city leadership, pushed aside by the party hierarchy in favour of Manuel Pereira.34 Simango, the 'natural' RENAMO candidate for the city leadership, pushed aside by the party hierarchy in favour of Manuel Pereira.35 In another example of patronage politics, RENAMO granted timber concessions to businessmen in areas that it controlled.
number of defections from UNITA and other opposition parties to the MPLA in the months preceding the 2008 elections in Angola.

On the level of public discourse, all the opposition parties suffer from under-representation in the media: more so in Angola than in Mozambique. But here the former rebel movements have a particular problem over and above the difficulties faced by parties that do not have a military history. The MPLA and FRELIMO have virtually monopolised nationalistic discourse in their respective countries, each party portraying itself and itself alone as the guardian of the national interest. RENAMO’s own history makes it difficult to put forward credible nationalist claims of its own. UNITA, on the other hand, has so far proved unable or unwilling to reclaim its early history of an anti-colonial mobilisation. This appears to be the result of the MPLA both having cornered the political initiative and having the monopoly over the means of expression. Similarly, when the ruling party enjoys a disproportionate level of loyalty from the national media, it becomes easy to discredit the opposition by blaming it for the past conflict.39

TURNING ARMIES INTO PARTIES

Turning now to the internal difficulties that the former rebel movements face as a consequence of their history, it is clear that both UNITA and RENAMO have suffered as a result of a particular kind of authoritarian leadership, in the persons of Dhlakama and Savimbi. Authoritarianism is not exclusively a problem of former rebel movements, although such a leadership style flourishes in a military environment. But aside from the character of leaders, there is a more fundamental and more obvious point to be made: an armed rebel movement is not the same thing as a political party, and it is here that one could suggest that former rebel movements are at a particular disadvantage when compared with those parties whose origins are in civil society.40

In wartime, both UNITA and RENAMO engaged with populations in ways that ranged from terror and coercion to the cultivation of a consensual political relationship between the political movement and the people under its control. The latter case represents the more positive face of the rebel movements, and it is this version of events that tends to be evoked by the movements’ leadership in making their claims to political legitimacy: a legitimacy that would be denied by those who saw the rebel movements as a viole nt and predatory. Yet even if the examples of UNITA and RENAMO illustrate that this political relationship, forged in wartime, has nothing in common with the workings of a political party in a democracy. For the rebel movements in the bush power, achieved by force of arms, came first. The political relationship came later, and it was an exclusive one. The political relationship did not consist in people choosing a movement to lead them: it consisted of a political-military elite determining the terms of engagement between the movement and the population. At no stage was there a question of political choice from the people under control of the movement. In Angola, UNITA and the MPLA were perceived as ‘rival governments’. There is evidence to suggest that RENAMO, too, saw itself and presented itself as an organisation with the prerogatives and responsibilities of a state. But the movements claimed exclusive power, and the exclusive right to exercise the prerogative of violence, in the territory and over the people they controlled.

Once the two movements are understood in this way, it should become clear why their transition to working within a democratic polity has not been easy. The post-war transitions of the early 1990s appear to have been based on the assumption that the rival movements represented the interests of different groups within the population, whose differences could best be resolved at the ballot box. People would vote for the party of their choice, and in this way the election would become an expression of popular will within a single polity, this polity being associated with a non-partisan state and a common vision of nationhood. Such a vision had little in common with the nature and the modus operandi of UNITA and RENAMO. RENAMO – or in deed of the MPLA and FRELIMO – in the 1970s and 1980s, yet the elections were organised on a assumption that ig nored this fact. Indeed, in steady of a skating w hy former rebel movements have not done so will all opposition political parties, it might be more instructive to ask why it was ever assumed that rebel movements – and, for that matter, authoritarian party-states – were capable of transforming themselves into political parties worthy of the name.

The examples quoted earlier from Manning’s research illustrate how RENAMO continued after the 1992 peace accord to operate according to a logic learnt in wartime: a logic in which RENAMO controlled territory and had certain rights and responsibilities regarding that territory and the people who lived in it. UNITA has been operating in a peacetime environment only since 2002, a decade less than RENAMO, and its mode of engagement with the people it controlled in peacetime has yet to be established. There are, however, signs that UNITA, like RENAMO, continues to attempt to be a political party in a democracy.

JUSTIN PEARCE

INSTITUTE FOR SECURITY STUDIES

MILITARY MILITIAS AND ISLAMIST MILITANTS: HUMAN INSECURITY AND STATE CRISIS IN AFRICA
This strategy is sustained for neither side, given the superior resources enjoyed in each case by the government. While patronage politics is not unique to former rebel movements, the quasi-governmental character of RENAMO and of UNITA in the bush meant that both movements – and their constituents – entered the democratic era with entrenched ideas about the responsibilities of the political movement towards those under its control, and with no tradition of articulating popular demands within a democratic political system. UNITA has made a small start to break the mould by adopting a more socially engaged style of politics. While high-handed leadership reversed its successes. It is too soon to tell whether UNITA will ill the ears of its sons from its ignificant gains in Cabinda.

CONCLUSION

Given the youth of Angolan and Mozambican political systems, it was only be premature to make definitive judgements regarding their success and failure of opposition movements. First, it is difficult and perhaps meaningless to disentangle assessment of the parties themselves from the assessment of democratic systems as a whole. A restrictive constitutional system limits opposition parties’ possibilities for action, but at the same time a system that offers opportunities to opposition parties is of little value if the parties do not actively seek to define and defend the political space that is available to them. UNITA in this sense is at a particular disadvantage, given that the MPLA government used the smokescreen provided by the resumption of war in the 1990s to strengthen its grip on the institutions of state in a manner contrary to the democratic promises of the post-Bicesse constitution. Second, success and failure are relative; however, at the time of writing it is evident that neither UNITA nor RENAMO is a serious contender for government, nor is either party in a position to bring strong pressure to bear on legislation in parliament. In terms of these minimal definitions, neither party can be described as effective.

The reasons for this are complex, as the histories outlined in this chapter demonstrate, and the different trajectories followed by UNITA and RENAMO should serve as a warning against making blanket assumptions about the political efficacy of former rebel movements. Similarly, there are no obvious comparisons to be drawn between UNITA’s and RENAMO’s post-war trajectory and those of other African guerrilla movements.

First, the nature of the guerrilla movements’ successes and failures is hard to pin down. Christopher Clapham has presented an influential typology of guerrilla warfare; he identifies liberation insurgencies (which seek either independence from a colonial power), secessionist insurgencies (which seek profound changes in an existing state), and warlord insurgencies, ‘where the insurgency is directed towards a change in the political order: Ethiopia, Eritrea and Rwanda present cases of rebel movements that can be described as effective. Similarly, there are no obvious comparisons to be drawn between UNITA’s and RENAMO’s post-war trajectory and those of other African guerrilla movements.'

For forces pour la Défense de la Démocratie, a former rebel group associated with the ethnic Hutu majority, gained power in a free election in 2005 that resulted from a peace settlement. It took several more years, to 2009, before a smaller rebel group, the Forces Nationales de Libération, laid down its arms and transformed itself into a political party. Its effectiveness as an opposition party has yet to be demonstrated.
The cases most comparable to Angola and Mozambique are those of Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): these provide examples of former rebel movements attempting to operate as political parties, though making less impact than either RENAMO or UNITA. In Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF), with a strong ethnic character that could guarantee it votes purely on the basis of identity, and nor did either have separatist aspirations in the manner of the Sudan People's Liberation Army. Although there were many instances of violence and where the lack of any post-conflict justice mechanism left rebel leaders at liberty to campaign. In the DRC, members of the former rebel movement, the Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo (MLC), assumed seats in parliament after the 2006 post-war elections. No conclusive research has been done on the MLC’s effectiveness as a political actor, in a country where the reach of the state system remains limited.

If the Angolan and Mozambican cases allow few points of direct comparison with other African conflicts, what then do they have in common with each other? In both Angola and Mozambique, a government was opposed by a single rebel movement, and each of the rebel movements was highly centralised around a leader: this largely eliminated the possibility of rogue troops and splinter groups threatening the peace. However, in the Angolan case it also made it easy for Savimbi to keep rebels emobilised against the state through a round an iconic leader: this largely eliminated the possibility of rogue troops and splinter groups threatening the peace.

In both Angola and Mozambique, the elections of the early 1990s allowed UNITA to retain some of its support base when it went back to war. Though both RENAMO and UNITA were associated with certain regions of the country, neither movement had a strong ethnic character that could guarantee it votes purely on the basis of identity, and nor did either have separatist aspirations in the manner of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army. Although there were many instances of violence and where the lack of any post-conflict justice mechanism left rebel leaders at liberty to campaign. In the DRC, members of the former rebel movement, the Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo (MLC), assumed seats in parliament after the 2006 post-war elections. No conclusive research has been done on the MLC’s effectiveness as a political actor, in a country where the reach of the state system remains limited.

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In brief, the fact that neither UNITA nor RENAMO won a war, and the fact that both had the chance to contest elections, stems from particular contingencies that were replicated in no other cases. To these we must, of course, also add the internationally dominant political ethos of the early 1990s: the idea of liberal peace that enjoyed a resurgence with the end of the Cold War. However, as argued earlier, in his dissertation a assumption that rebel movements co uld easi ly transform themselves into opposition parties appears misguided; in their relationship with society in peacetime, both parties have been constrained by the habits of the past.

Yet the military origins of UNITA and RENAMO tell only part of the story. The different choices by the two parties made after the elections of the early 1990s also affected their later fortunes, UNITA’s unwillingness to play an opposition role after 1992 contributed in the end to the greater consolidation of power by the MPLA, while RENAMO’s participation saw its support grow during the decade following the elections. In both countries, the superiority of the MPLA, while RENAMO’s participation saw its support grow during the decade following the elections. In brief, the fact that neither UNITA nor RENAMO won a war, and the fact that both had the chance to contest elections, stems from particular contingencies that were replicated in no other cases. To these we must, of course, also add the internationally dominant political ethos of the early 1990s: the idea of liberal peace that enjoyed a resurgence with the end of the Cold War. However, as argued earlier, in his dissertation a assumption that rebel movements co uld easi ly transform themselves into opposition parties appears misguided; in their relationship with society in peacetime, both parties have been constrained by the habits of the past.

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demonstrate that former rebel movements co me with a legacy of political arrogance and authoritarian methods. As a contributor to a new and participatory democratic system, a former rebel movement has no natural advantage over a newly established party.

NOTES


2 The observations made about UNITA's wartime strategies, unless otherwise attributed, are based on interviews conducted by the author in Angola in 2008 with people formerly attached to UNITA. The analysis of Mozambique relies more on existing literature on the country.

3 F Fukuyama, The end of history and the last man, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1992, provides the best-known exposition of his thinking, while a recent critique of its blanket attributes the association between RENAMO and the Ndau to the fact that the Ndau inhabit ‘very much a Ndau political project’. Vines, Renamo: terrorism in Mozambique, 469, describes RENAMO as ‘very much a Ndau political project’. Vines, Renamo: terrorism in Mozambique. 469, describes RENAMO as ‘very much a Ndau political project’. Vines, Renamo: terrorism in Mozambique, 469, describes RENAMO as ‘very much a Ndau political project’. Vines, Renamo: terrorism in Mozambique, 469, describes RENAMO as ‘very much a Ndau political project’. Vines, Renamo: terrorism in Mozambique, 469, describes RENAMO as ‘very much a Ndau political project’.


5 Ibid, 49.

6 In the 2008 elections, the MPLA gained 82 per cent of the vote in Huambo province and almost 75 per cent in Bié, in contrast to 1992, when UNITA achieved a majority in both provinces.


8 J Pearce, UNITA à la recherche de ‘son peuple’: carnet d’une noncampagne sur le planalto, Politique Africaine 110 (2008), 47–64.


15 Roesch, Renamo and the peasantry in southern Mozambique, 469, describes RENAMO as ‘very much a N dau p olitical p roject’. V ines, Renamo: t errorism i n Mozambique, 83, attributes the association between RENAMO and the Ndau to the fact that the Ndau inhabit the area closest to the Zimbabwe border from which the first RENAMO insurgents arrived, and the choice of Ndau as a ‘lingua franca’ in the RENAMO military.

16 Gersony, Summary of Mozambican refugee accounts.

17 Vines, Renamo: terrorism in Mozambique, 91.

18 Ibid, 93.

19 Roesch, Renamo and the peasantry in southern Mozambique, 472.

20 Vines, Renamo: terrorism in Mozambique, 94.


23 Messiant, MPLA et UNITA.

24 African-European Institute / AWEPa, Report of AWEPa’s observation.

25 Contrast this with the actions of the Angolan government in the months following the 1992 elections: see Messiant, MPLA et UNITA.

26 African-European Institute/AWEPa, Report of AWEPa’s observation.


28 Cahen, Check on socialism in Mozambique, 56.


32 Ibid, 185.

33 Ibid, 188.

34 Ibid, 188.
INTRODUCTION

African rebel movements emerging after the end of the Cold War have readily been dismissed as lacking any clear ideology or political agenda, let alone representing the voice of the people. Evidence for this can be found in the uneasy, if not oppressive, relationship these movements have with local communities and in the need to increase their ranks by force, rather than on a voluntary basis, or so it is argued.

Material presented in this chapter, collected from former RUF combatants and civilians who lived in RUF territory, gives reason to doubt these rather one-dimensional perceptions. Instead, the data hint at a much more complex picture. The conflicts in Sierra Leone and Uganda and their respective rebel movements, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), are repeatedly used as examples to underline this thesis.

The interviews conducted by the author in Angola in 2008 suggest that the MPLA used similar tactics against UNITA. For example, Zimbabwe’s Movement for Democratic Change, with its origins in the union movement, South Africa’s African National Congress, although it had an armed element, was able to benefit from the widespread popular mobilisation against apartheid that had taken place in the 1980s by its allies and sympathisers within South Africa.

Chapter 14

Local communities, militias and rebel movements: the case of the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone

KRIJN PETERS

INTRODUCTION

African rebel movements emerging after the end of the Cold War have readily been dismissed as lacking any clear ideology or political agenda, let alone representing the voice of the people. Evidence for this can be found in the uneasy, if not oppressive, relationship these movements have with local communities and in the need to increase their ranks by force, rather than on a voluntary basis, or so it is argued. On top of that, African conflicts are presented as having clear dividing lines between, on the one hand, civilians – often portrayed as passive victims – and, on the other, atrocious rebels. The conflicts in Sierra Leone and Uganda and their respective rebel movements, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) and the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), are repeatedly used as examples to underline this thesis.

Material presented in this chapter, collected from former RUF combatants and civilians who lived in RUF territory, gives reason to doubt these rather one-dimensional perceptions. Instead, the data hint at a much more complex
relationship, constantly changing over the course of the war. Accounts of ex-RUF combatants and civilians who lived in rebel-controlled areas suggest that a wide and diverse range of interactions were taking place, in which “hich b oth r goups expressed significant levels of agency,” necessary to navigate the dangerous war terrain to their benefit. To better understand how both civilians and combatants responded to new situations, these in turn offered new possibilities and terminated enemies and allies, and the kind of atrocities it committed. As the RUF created and organised his rebellion, he met with Charles Taylor – leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). The NPFL – with the support of Sankoh and a group of other major towns, interested in socialism, Gaddafi’s ‘Green Book’ and Pan-Africanism, organised themselves in the Mass Awareness and Participation (MAP) movement and became increasingly proactive in their protests against the regime. Forced into exile by the regime, MAP leader Alie Kabbah then approached the Sierra Leonean Pan-African Union (PANAFU) with the request to gather his revolutionary supporters in Libya, to receive military training. Among them was Foday Sankoh, a former corporal in the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force (RSLMF) and a candidate for revolutionary training in Libya, but PANAFU rejected the idea of an armed struggle. Nevertheless, in the late 1980s, a round 50 Sierre Leoneans travelled to Benghazi, Libya, to receive military training. Among them was Foday Sankoh, a former corporal in the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force (RSLMF) and future leader of the RUF. After Sankoh returned to Sierra Leone, he met with Charles Taylor – leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). The NPFL – with the support of Sankoh and a group of Sierra Leoneans – first launched its incursion into Sierra Leone in December 1989.

Four different phases in the conflict are as follows:

- Phase I (1991–1993): conventional warfare, from the RUF inursion to its near defeat
- Phase II (1994–1996): bush camps, from the establishment of isolated RUF jungle bases to their destruction
- Phase III (1997–1999): collaboration, from joining the military junta to the Lomé Peace Accord
- Phase IV (1999–2002): stalemate, from territorial occupation to demobilisation

Preamble: the making of the Revolutionary United Front

In 1978, Sierra Leone became a one-party regime under the authoritarian rule of President Siaka Stevens of the All Peoples’ Congress Party. Political opposition was either oppressed or bought off by Stevens. Radical students in Freetown and some other major towns, interested in socialism, Gaddafi’s ‘Green Book’ and Pan-Africanism, organised themselves in the Mass Awareness and Participation (MAP) movement and became increasingly proactive in their protests against the regime. Sankoh, a former corporal in the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force (RSLMF) and future leader of the RUF, formed the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and began an armed struggle against President Siaka Stevens of the All Peoples’ Congress Party. Political opposition was either oppressed or bought off by Stevens. Radical students in Freetown and some other major towns, interested in socialism, Gaddafi’s ‘Green Book’ and Pan-Africanism, organised themselves in the Mass Awareness and Participation (MAP) movement and became increasingly proactive in their protests against the regime. Forced into exile by the regime, MAP leader Alie Kabbah then approached the Sierra Leonean Pan-African Union (PANAFU) with the request to gather his revolutionary supporters in Libya, to receive military training. Among them was Foday Sankoh, a former corporal in the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force (RSLMF) and future leader of the RUF. After Sankoh returned to Sierra Leone, he met with Charles Taylor – leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). The NPFL – with the support of Sankoh and a group of Sierra Leoneans – first launched its incursion into Sierra Leone in December 1989.

Fifteen months later, the RUF used NPFL-controlled territory to start its incursion into Sierra Leone. Accounts of ex-RUF combatants and civilians who lived in rebel-controlled areas suggest that a wide and diverse range of interactions were taking place, in which “hich b oth r goups expressed significant levels of agency,” necessary to navigate the dangerous war terrain to their benefit. To better understand how both civilians and combatants responded to new situations, these in turn offered new possibilities and terminated enemies and allies, and the kind of atrocities it committed. As the RUF created and organised his rebellion, he met with Charles Taylor – leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). The NPFL – with the support of Sankoh and a group of Sierra Leoneans – first launched its incursion into Sierra Leone in December 1989.
Phase I (1991–1993): Conventional warfare; from the RUF incursion to its near defeat

In March 1991, a militia group fighting against the RUF (see below) massacred thousands of soldiers from the Langi and Acholi ethnic groups. Amin, who ousted Obote in a coup in 1971, was overthrown in 1979 and Obote came back in power as a result of a controversial election in 1980. Yoweri Museveni, who helped in the overthrow of Amin, took his forces to the bush and fought against Obote for the next five years. In 1986, Museveni seized power, ignoring negotiation attempts by Tito Okello, an Acholi who had overthrown O b ote t he p revious y ear. E thnic g roups f rom t he southwest a nd s outh dominated Museveni’s National Resistance Army, and this may explain to some extent the unscrupulous behaviour of a section of his soldiers when on a mission in Acholiland. It was in 1993 that the rebels captured my brother. Then the soldiers came to our village. They accused my father that he had given his son to the rebels. To punish him for that they killed him. That was the reason for me to join the rebels. At that time, if you only were giving water to the rebels, the soldiers would kill you.15

Part of the explanation for these particular brutal counterinsurgency practices and the opposite effect they had on ending the war or winning the support of the local population may be found in the ethnic manipulation of the military forces. For instance, a fter co ming t o p ower in 1980, P resident D oe t urned t he L iberian national army into an ethnic Krahn-dominated force that went on the rampage in Gio- and Mano-dominated areas. Stevens and Momoh made the Sierra Leonean army an almost completely ethnic Temne, Koranko and Yalunka (all ethnic groups from the northern part of the country) institution, which had less affiliation with civilians living in Mende-dominated areas. In Uganda, the first president, Milton Obote, himself a Langi from the northern part of the country, relied heavily on the army dominated by northerners. Idi Amin, who ousted Obote in a coup in 1971, massacred thousands of soldiers from the Langi and Acholi ethnic groups.16 Amin was o verthrown in 1979 a nd O b ote c o m e b ack i n p o wer a s a r e sult o f a c on troversial e lection i n 1980. Yoweri Museveni, who helped in the overthrow of Amin, took his forces to the bush and fought against Obote for the next five years. In 1986, Museveni seized power, ignoring negotiation attempts by Tito Okello, an Acholi who had overthrown O b ote t he p revious y ear. E thnic g roups f rom t he southwest a nd s outh dominated M useveni’s N ational R esistance A rmy, and this may explain to some extent the unscrupulous behaviour of a section of his soldiers when on a mission in Acholiland.

To copy the NPFL’s tactic of recruiting among oppressed ethnic groups – perhaps on the suggestion of the Liberian ‘special forces’ – the RUF tried to exploit the resentments of local people against the All People’s Congress (APC) regime. The APC – a party mainly representing the interests of the Temne ethnic group – was widely condemned by the Sierra Leone population. This resentment turned into open hatred in the eastern part of the country, which formed the political homeland of the banned Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP), an organisation that mainly represented the Mendes and the Mende dominated areas. Nevertheless, the reality on the ground was more complicated. Many civil servants and police officers of Mende ethnicity had little choice but to cooperate with the APC regime. Others, whose political or economic positions were endorsed by the regime, often in exchange for loyalty towards the APC, acted as brokers and patrons for the peasantry. Local political or economic positions were endorsed by the regime, often in exchange for loyalty towards the APC, acted as brokers and patrons for the peasantry.17

As was the case in President Doe’s counterinsurgency in neighbouring Liberia, the response by the Sierra Leonean army did not make things much better.13 In a number of cases it sealed the fate of the voluntary and forced rebel recruits and civilians, as is explained by an administrator within the Civil Defence Force, a militia group fighting against the RUF (see below):

The counterinsurgency of [among others] the Sierra Leonean army was quite ruthless, straight from the beginning. [A nd t his] m ade t hose R UF fighters a nd c ivilians f orcibly c onscripted a nd c o m m a rded w ho w er e lo oking o ut f or a n o pportunity t o e sc a pe t o h esitate a bout t heir e scape p lan s. I f s ummary e x ecution w a s wa iting a fter a successful desertion attempt, it was probably a better deal to stay in the movement and adapt to it as [well] as possible.14

This i s un derlined b y a f - e male e x -R UF c o m b at ant w ho r efers t o t he counterinsurgency tactics of the army as the main reason why she joined the RUF:

It was in 1993 t hat the rebels captured my brother. Then the soldiers came to our village. They accused my father that he had given his son to the rebels. To punish him for that they killed him. That was the reason for me to join the rebels. At that time, if you only were giving water to the rebels, the soldiers would kill you.15
populations at all levels were thus navigating the pre-war (but clearly not peaceful) terrain to the best of their abilities.

The indiscriminate killings by the rebels of those who were even vaguely associated with the APC regime did not evoke the widespread support among the population in the eastern districts the RUF had hoped for. The larger part of the population – although in favour of change and perhaps even endorsing an armed struggle – judged their own possibilities for surviving and moving through these insecure times to be highest if they did not join. But if here was some le vel of voluntary conscription, in particular among less of its socio-economic marginalised young people, often belonging to the weaker lineages in society. The labour of some of these youngsters had been exploited by landlords or families-in-law (as part of a bride price). Others were school dropouts.

By the end of the 1980s, the extent of support trickling down to the end of the patrimonial chain, where most of the rural youngsters were positioned, dried up completely – and they tried to survive by doing jobs (and sometimes committing petty crimes) in urbanised centres or in the country’s insecure times if they did not join. But there was some level of uncertainty.

In contrast, young people from stronger lineages or more firmly tied to a patrimonial network were much more likely to join the Civil Defence Force (CDF) militia. This is confirmed for instance by William Reno, who shows how the level of control over youth (more particularly, illicit diamond mining gangs) by chiefs determined whether these gangs joined the RUF or were turned into militia units to defend local communities. Similarly, support for the (chiefly aligned) CDF – a militia that was based on the hunter guilds called the Kamajoris in Mende – in the main villages in the eastern districts of Sierra Leone Army (SLA) control, then to the CDF. So that is evident from a comment made by a former RUF clerk:

The civilians played a double role. They were going to the RUF and from there to the SLA [Sierra Leone Army] and then to the CDF [Civil Defence Force]. So that is how they became suspicious. Many citizens were seduced by the promises of free education and medical care for the ‘masses’ must have sounded attractive and of particular relevance to their own situations.

It was important to have a good relationship with the commander, so whenever he asked you to do something, you did it quickly and did it right. Then he can protect you. If you give him a small present or so, he starts to like you. The majority of the civilians are under the protection of a specific commander or fighter. My own commander, M Rogers, was not too bad. At least he was much better than [the RUF commander in charge during the second RUF occupation]. Rogers talked for the civilians [pleaded on their behalf], for all civilians. His wife is from W [a nearby village].

On 29 April 1992, a successful coup was staged. The National Provisional Ruling Council, headed by the 27-year-old Valentine Strasser, took power and was much more favourably predisposed towards the Mendes. However, the regime made the tactical mistake of sending some of the APC loyalist and predominately Freetown-based army commanders to frontline positions to let them, too, taste the bitterness of war. These commanders had little interest in fighting for their new masters and sabotaged the struggle against the rebels by looting rather than protecting villages provided by villagers and/or new recruits from the area. In more than a few cases, the RUF and the other factions were used by civilians to settle local disputes, as is evident from the following comment of a civilian who remained in hi s village throughout the war (first under RUF control, then under Sierra Leone Army [SLA] control, and then again under RUF control):

The above comment suggests a more agentive – that is, expressing a agency – role by local communities/people. Rather than being passive victims, they were active survivors, in some cases using the armed factions to their own benefit. Clearly, civilians caught up in the war terrain tried to build up some relationship with the armed groups to increase their possibilities for survival. This is also illustrated by the following comment of a civilian who remained in his village throughout the war (first under RUF control, then under Sierra Leone Army [SLA] control, and then again under RUF control):
and towns. The ‘soldier by day, rebel by night’ or ‘sobel’ phenomenon was born. Nevertheless, as a result of campaigns by the combined forces of the RS LMF, Kamajors, Guinean soldiers (in Sierra Leone, part of a mutual defence agreement) and the United Liberian Movement for Democracy (a rebel movement created by Liberian exiles in Sierra Leone opposed to the NPFL and the RUF), the rebels found themselves nearly defeated by the end of 1993. Driven back to the far east of the country, they abandoned their heavy equipment and ‘disappeared’ in the Gola Forest, a long strip of primary rainforest along the Sierra Leone/Liberian border.

Phase II (1994–1996): Bush camps, from the establishment of isolated RUF jungle bases to their destruction

The RUF did not disappear for long, however. Early in 1994 it started to establish jungle camps in in accessible terrain all over the eastern and southern half of the country, including the so-called ‘Zogoda’ in the Kambui South Forest Reserve, where rebel leader Foday Sankoh stayed most of the time. From these camps the RUF launched hit-and-run campaigns or sent fighters on ambush missions. The movement had completely changed its strategy from a more or less conventional rebel force aiming to conquer towns and mining areas – and ultimately the capital Freetown – to a forest-based guerrilla movement with very little control over any territory. The isolated bush camps were under closed canopy and provided protection to the RUF, but at the same time created a considerable dilemma with regard to recruitment. During the first years, the RUF at least partly relied on voluntary recruitment. Sometimes volunteers stepped forward after the RUF explained its ideology in the villages and communities; sometimes those interested in joining the RUF actually went to the RUF territory to join up.24 If it had had control of villages and towns, it could have rounded up people and forced them to join or have used lightly more subtle coercive measures to safeguard new recruits. However, as a forest-based guerrilla movement these possibilities no longer existed.

During these years, few volunteered and even if potential conscripts had the intention of joining the RUF, it was not easy to find a camp and reach it unharmed; both the army and the rebels were highly suspicious of everyone moving around in the combat zones. To increase its ranks, the RUF during this period depended mainly on the abduction of people, as the following statement of a former RUF commander attests:

We got our manpower mainly via capturing people. It was not easy for civilians in the government territory to get accurate information about the RUF and its aims and objectives, so they were not likely to join out of free will. But once we captured them we started to sensitise them and people started to join the movement because of the ideology and because they were not harassed any more.25

The environment in which the LRA in Uganda – the other rebel movement infamous for its abductions of (predominately) under-age combatants26 – operates shows some similarities with the RUF in phase II. When the LRA moved its military bases to Southern Sudan, it increasingly became detached from the local population, which was forcefully resettled by the army to so-called ‘protected villages’.27 Moving in terrain sparsely populated by civilians, conscription by abduction seemed to be the only way open for a movement that could not rely on voluntary conscription to fill its ranks.

Abductees quickly found out that it was better to become a fighter than remain a RUF civilian in the camp (or for that matter, an LRA civilian) and be extremely vulnerable to ‘harassment’ (read: forced labour, physical punishments, rape etc). The RUF acknowledged that forced recruitment was not the preferred option because of the risk forcibly recruited present if they manage to escape,28 but it had several ways of preventing defection. A mixt ure of warning against desertion by publicly punishing those who attempted to do so, and rewarding those who showed willingness to fight for the RUF’s cause with higher ranks and privileges, turned out to be quite effective in limiting desertion. Added to this was the tight security around the camps – probably as much to prevent enemies from entering as to prevent RUF conscripts from escaping – and the hostile attitudes of the army towards everyone even suspected of being a rebel or coming from its territory. Even upon reaching their home area, escapees were far from safe – or so the RUF conscripts believed – as the following statement by another former RUF fighter confirms:

The reason for their loyalty was that when you are away from your brothers or family during the war for a long time, they will consider you as their enemy, especially if the people hear that you are rebel. No sooner you come to...
Moreover, communities within the RUF zone were under strict orders to return escapees. Similarly, Ugandan camp dwellers who had welcomed ‘home’-deserted LRA combatants were sometimes hacked to death by LRA fighters. This happened at, for instance, the Pagak camp in May 2004.

Because of its change in tactics, the RUF no longer had to limit its actions to the eastern part of Sierra Leone. Virtually all villages and communities were now within the reach of RUF units, which sometimes travelled for days along the country’s numerous bush paths to suddenly appear and launch their hit-and-run actions. Local communities served as little more than a source of manpower, food and other essentials to the RUF, obtained by intimidation or violence. The military, restrained by its heavy equipment to the more inhabited areas and passable roads, hardly represented a threat to the remote RUF camps or was in any position to protect local communities (if it was willing to do so in the first place).

It became clear that if local communities wanted protection against the RUF (and the ‘sobels’), they had to organise it themselves. Hence, the birth of the Kamajors (Kamajors in Mende kamajoi or kamosoi [singular], Kamajois in plural), were specialist (bush animal) hunters and had superior knowledge of the forest and its bush paths. Helping the army from the early days of the conflict as scouts, they were subsequently organised by local chiefs to protect villages and increasingly did go on the offensive. A similar development took place in Uganda where (state-sponsored) homeguard groups or local defence units (LDUs) were established in early 1990 in answer to the ambushes and hit-and-run actions of the LRA, against the backdrop of a military force with no capability (nor willingness) to protect local communities (if it was willing to do so in the first place). The Kamajors became in increasingly successful in their actions, and highly popular among the population. However, their close ties with local communities – many of the earlier Kamajors did the job on a part-time basis, being on guard for several months after which they returned to their farms for the harvesting season – probably triggered the RUF in a further paranoia against them: fighters perceived a threat to the RUF from the Kamajors and Executive Outcomes (with the endorsement of the government) in the months before the signing of the 1996 peace accord, provoked a desire for a deadly revenge: ‘In the attack on the Zogoda we lost so much manpower. You know, January 6 [1999] was our revenge.’

Phase III (1997–1999): Collaboration, from joining the military junta to the Lomé Peace Accord

Although a peace accord was signed, few soldiers, CDF fighters or rebels registered for the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programme. There were high levels of distrust between the different factions and a number of violent clashes were reported during the first post-Abidjan months. In February 1997, Sankoh was arrested in Nigeria on weapon charges and kept in custody at the request by the Sierra Leonean government. It increasingly became clear that the peace accord would not hold and that the war was not over yet.

Nevertheless, the successful military coup on 25 May 1997, although a surprise to all who did not have their ears to the ground. But those who had, had noticed that large segment of the army felt in increasingly side lined by the SLPP government, which put its confidence in the popular and widely Idi Amin, Kamajor. A nd a n en d t o t he w ar w ould a lso m ean a n e n d t o t he w ar
economy from which many soldiers and commanders profited. However, the next move of the renegade army was truly surprising. Within hours of the successful coup, the renegade soldiers – calling themselves the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, AFRC – invited their enemy, the RUF, to come out of the bush and join the army’s forces in the capital. For eight months, the RUF/AFRC junta was in control of the capital, most of the larger towns and the diamond mining areas. After more than three years in the bush, the RUF was among the civilians again.

But it soon found out how unpopular it was. By sheer intimidation, however, the RUF was able to recruit new forces, as the following statement of the paramount’s speaker (second in command, after the paramount chief) of a large village in central Sierra Leone makes clear:

The RUF just put an ultimatum: if the Kamajor would not surrender it would burn down the whole town. So the paramount chief asked the Kamajor to surrender. The Kamajor leader even became the second-in-command here in Makali under RUF control. 39

Still, civilians employed a range of tactics to deal with these threatening situations. According to the same villager: “To prevent harassment or forced conscription people hid in the jungle during the daytime; only in the night-time we came back to the town.” 40 And another villager explained how they prevented the RUF from confiscating their food:

One year before the [1999] ceasefire I started to work on the community farm of which the produce goes to the RUF. Normally you can keep the produce from your own private farm, but if you have a lot of produce the rebels can still take some of it. So what we did was to hide the produce in the 5 gallon containers in the ground. Sometimes the rebels used sticks to search the ground. 41

Nevertheless, despite the fact that the RUF and the AFRC had joined forces (to form the so-called People’s Army), their days were numbered right from the start. The international community widely condemned the coup and after several ultimatums, in early 1998 the Nigerian-dominated ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States Monitoring and Observation Group) troops, supported by loyal government forces and the civil defence forces, repelled the junta from the capital, the major towns and the mining areas. But it failed to crush the RUF/AFRC completely.

Again, there are some striking similarities with Uganda, where the army launched a major military campaign in 2002, the ‘Iron Fist Offensive’, to deal with the LRA once and for all. The campaign included some 10,000 army troops, the use of military gunships, US logistical support and the open support by the SPLA (post-September 11, the LRA was on the US terrorist list and pressure on President Omar el-Bashir’s government in Sudan was increasing). 42 However, the campaign failed and the LRA moved into new territories.

Similarly, the AFRC/RUF forces in Sierra Leone regrouped during the second half of 1998. Starting from their bases in the east (RUF) and north (AFRC), they recaptured town after town. On 6 January 1999, the combined forces attacked Freetown and entered the eastern part of the city. After several days of intense fighting the RUF/AFRC forces were beaten back by ECOWAS troops, but an estimated 6,000 people (civilians and fighters) died. Thirteen rebels and renegade soldiers raped, mutilated and burned alive hundreds, if not thousands, of civilians, taking random revenge on the capital’s inhabitants who they perceived as betraying the RUF/AFRC cause.

So again the rebels were driven back, but this time it was clear that no military victory would be possible for either side. The international community pushed for new peace negotiations and in July 1999, the Lomé Peace Accord was signed between the RUF and the SLPP government. The accord promised a blanket amnesty for all fighters and commanders and a government of national unity that included cabinet posts for the RUF and AFRC. 43

Phase IV (1999–2002): Stalemate, from territorial occupation to demobilisation

Again, disarmament and demobilisation of fighters did not really take off. At the time of the signing of the Lomé Accord, the RUF was in control of a large cigar-shaped area which the diademining gang ran from the eastern district of Kailahun all the way to the western district of Port Loko. It was reluctant to hand over territories or even allow access to government officials or UN military observers. For nearly two years – until DDR really started in May 2001 – the RUF was the de facto government in these areas and again the relationship between the RUF and the civilians changed significantly. For instance,
although the RUF had already created a so-called G5 branch to deal with civilian and civilian-military affairs early on in the conflict, this branch now quickly expanded to deal with issues such as land disputes, theft, accusations of adultery and local quarrels.44

With the RUF claiming to be the (de facto) ‘government’ in the areas under its control, local populations could expect at least some level of service provision by the new authorities. In fact, when the RUF launched its struggle in 1991 it propagated an ideology of free education and medical care for all.45 Some of the larger phase II jungle camps had primary schools, and medicines were provided to the fighters and their families free of charge.46 In phase IV the RUF made some attempts to institutionalise these services in its occupied territory, or so the accounts suggest. Perhaps this was not more than a kind of opportunistic and last minute attempt by the RUF to win the hearts and minds of the people, but equally it can be argued that only at this stage – when not all efforts and resources had to be directed towards fighting – was the RUF in a position to implement its ideology. In any case, the following comments by two civilians who lived in RUF territory suggest that there was indeed some level of free education and health care under the RUF ‘government’:

Here in Pendembu there were free medicines, but not too much. There was also free primary education.47

There were no medicines so we treated ourselves with the native ones [herbs]. But there was a school and it was free education. The teachers were not paid. Six of my grandchildren were in that school. There was no harassment taking place at all.48

Controlling the major diamond mining areas, but without the constant risk of being attacked or bombed by ECOMOG fighter jets, the RUF’s approach to mining did start to change somewhat. Previously, mining operations had been likely to be less constant or frequent, but very intensive and heavily dependent on forced labour. During phase IV, mining became more formalised and the RUF experimented with various mining schemes to regulate the mining of diamonds, as is evident from the following extract from an interview with a village chief:

It was from ‘98 that the RUF was in control of Tongo and Kono, right up to the end of the war. I came here in 2000. The arrangement in place at that time was one pile [of gravel] for the RUF and one pile for yourself, but you had to arrange days of work in order to have your pile untouched. They introduced these mining licences in 2000 and introduced two days of labour for the RUF and three days for yourself.49

In pre- and post-war Sierra Leone, mining was based on a two- or three-pile system.50 One pile of gravel (the gravel might contain the diamonds) is for the landowner, one is for the supporter (who pays for the fuel, equipment and food) and one is for the labourers. The rebels used a similar system, with the RUF ‘government’ taking the position (and the gravel belongs to the landowner and a number of days of work replacing the pile system with a number of days of labour. Evidence suggests that the RUF system became less exploitative after phase III.51 However, it is important to point out that, at the same time, an increasing number of RUF and AFRC commanders arranged their own mining operations, and some of them used a much more exploitative system of mining.

This ‘governmentalisation’ of the RUF can also be observed with regard to agriculture. Ex-RUF fighters (both rank and file and commanders) claimed that farming was a central part of the RUF’s ideology.52 In phase II, most RUF bases had their own rice farms in proximity to where fighters and civilians worked (the latter most likely as forced labourers). According to an ex-RUF fighter:

Every base got its own [rice] swamp. In a circle of about five miles around the base no civilians were living. Beyond that civilians were living in villages under the control of co-mbatants. There were villages where both the civilians and the combatants worked.53

During phase IV, accounts seem to suggest that the RUF enforced its ideas about food production in most of its territory, as is suggested by the following comments by a civilian in the Kailahun area:

In G [a village in eastern Sierra Leone] we laid down upland [rice] farms. All the landowners had rice now, so it was all common land now. We were farming for ourselves and there was a community [RUF] farm. For the community farm, the seed rice was provided by the RUF. There was a [RUF] government store, and the seed rice in...
there was given to the farmers for their own in individual farms, but they did not provide us with food for work when we worked on the community farm. We had to work one day a week on the community farm. The produce from our own farms was for us to keep. I you sell it the GUINEA border, you have to give some commission to the RUF.55

As with many of the landowners in the mining area, the (bigger) farm and plantations were often the first to flee (or to be killed). By confiscating this land for community farming activities, the RUF in effect implemented its own rough-and-ready land reform agenda. This must have been an attractive element to a rural underclass lacking secure land entitlements. However, the RUF replaced the ‘village farm or field’ by a ‘community farm’ on which civilians and fighters had to work. The harvest of these community farms went straight to the RUF and was used to feed the fighters or traded.

The number of days civilians in RUF territory had to work on these farms varied, but seemed to be lower in phase IV. The RUF also introduced ‘government stores’ that acted as seed banks. Various accounts suggested that these operated on a no- or low-interest basis, reflecting the RUF’s socialist ideas about agriculture. Overall, the accounts above do not seem to indicate an extremely high degree of civilian labour exploitation by the RUF during phase IV, but it is important to acknowledge that other informants in dicated high her levels of exploitation, in particular when civilians lived closer to the frontline or within the territory of a particularly unscrupulous commander.56

THE RESPONSES OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO MILITIA AND REBEL ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA

Above, the conflict in Sierra Leone was discussed, with a special focus on its main rebel movement. I showed how the RUF’s multiple changes in (military) strategies offered new opportunities for civilians and communities so that it does not become feasible to hide anymore. Key to surviving in these situations is to keep a low profile, be obedient and mind one’s own business, and not give any reason to be singled out or draw attention.

- **Stay in a danger or conflict zone, but try to limit risks by limiting contact and exposure to the fighting forces.** Large numbers of civilians in conflict zones decide not to run away but to stay in their villages and communities (at least to start off with). They try to survive the threats posed by the various fighting forces by em ploying various tactics. Temporarily (days or sometimes even weeks), hiding in the bush or in farming fields when there is an attack or the threat of it has enabled civilians to remain in their communities for extended periods. Clearly, information and early-warning mechanisms are crucial for this (civilians on the run from a civil war situation). In other cases, fighting forces have a constant or highly frequent presence in villages and communities so that it does not become feasible to hide anymore. Key to surviving in these situations is to keep a low profile, be obedient and mind one’s own business, and not give any reason to be singled out or draw attention.

- **Remain in one’s village in a danger zone and actively support a militia or rebel organisation.** One de liberately builds up a relationship with a fighting force, beyond and above a certain compliance that may take place under the previous response. Local community members can support the fighting faction financially, with manpower – for example a family member or child is enlisted for acts of retaliation. The levels of structural violence (resulting from war-induced trauma, for instance) and sexual harassment can be significant within the camps.

...
of fighters and commanders were often not adequate. As a result, few civilians took the risk to remain in their communities when there were rumours that an attack might take place (in return, this fearsome reputation was sometimes used by the RUF as a military tactic). In the conflict (1977–1992) in Mozambique, the Mozambican National Resistance Movement, RENamo, had a similar reputation for being extremely brutal, in particular in the southern areas, instilling fear among the people and causing mass displacement.\footnote{Is the fighting force roaming, which may make it possible for civilians to temporarily hide (and also hide their most precious possessions), or is it static and likely to stay for prolonged periods in one community/village? In the latter case, such a response is unlikely to be feasible. Communities under prolonged control of the RUF – such as in its stronghold in Kailahun District – had to find ways of surviving this occupation, and often built up some relationship with fighters and commanders. However, the phase characterised by the RUF hit-and-run attacks did not allow such a response and it was often difficult to take cover in time when there was yet another surprise attack. The conflict in Côte d’Ivoire between government forces and the Patriotic Movement of Côte d’Ivoire (later joined by two other factions forming a politico-military alliance called the New Forces), quickly resulted in a split of the country (including an internationally monitored buffer zone) with the New Forces controlling the northern half of Côte d’Ivoire.\footnote{At least in this case communities in the different parts of the country knew with which armed group they were dealing.}

\begin{itemize}
\item Is the fighting force predatory on the community for its survival? If so, communities can be exploited beyond their point of survival. Evidence suggests that in areas under RUF control, the civilian population by fighters of all factions. This is partly explained by the fact that commanders acculturated to the ruthless predation of the civilian population by fighters of all factions. This is partly explained by the fact that commanders acculturated to the ruthless predation of the civilian population by fighters of all factions.
\end{itemize}

\section*{Variables for the fighting force}

\begin{itemize}
\item Does the fighting force have a clear and meaningful ideology or political agenda that is likely to attract the support of civilians? Clearly, this was one of the weaker points of the RUF, which had little to offer beyond a superficial and populist critique of the political and economic state of the country. In contrast, the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front, which successfully fought against the Derg regime and overthrew Ethiopia’s dictator Mengistu, had a political agenda that included aban on early marriages, equal divorce rights, equal access to education and equal property rights. Many – including women and girls – joined voluntarily.\footnote{Is the fighting force predatory on the community for its survival? If so, communities can be exploited beyond their point of survival. Evidence suggests that in areas under RUF control, the civilian population by fighters of all factions. This is partly explained by the fact that commanders acculturated to the ruthless predation of the civilian population by fighters of all factions.}

\item Does the fighting force behave well and are there means to address misconduct and harassment of fighters towards civilians, which would allow civilians to stay in their communities without too much risk? The RUF quickly became known as a fierce rebel movement, and mechanisms to control the behaviour

\end{itemize}
Is the ethnic, religious, national or political composition of the fighting force similar to that of the community? If not, there is a greater risk that civilians will be harassed by the fighters. The atrocious behaviour of the Liberian ‘special forces’ within the RUF in the early days of the insurgency is explained by many ex-combatants and a result of the fact that these Liberians were fighting in a country different from their own. This would imply, on the other hand, that Liberian fighting forces in Liberia would have a cleaner record, or that Sierra Leonean RUF fighters behaved better in their own country, and both assumptions have proven to be wrong. However, the multiple insurgencies by Rwandan forces into the Democratic Republic of Congo and their atrocious behaviour to local civilians makes one wonder if there is after all some truth in this argument.

Is the location of the community within or close to a war zone, which increases the risk of the community being covered by multiple and hostile armed factions? Civilians in the RUF-controlled eastern part of Sierra Leone did find themselves locked in place at some point by an increasingly hostile army and civil defence forces to the west and United Liberian Movement for Democracy forces to the east. Here, the experience of thousands of young Southern Sudanese (nic knamed the ‘lost t boys’ of Sudan) who walked many hundreds of kilometres – first to Ethiopia and then to Kenya – to escape the violence during Sudan’s second civil war (1983–2005) between the government and the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army/Movement comes to mind.

What is the strategic importance of a community or village? Communities near bridges, a tcr ossroads, lose their population because fighting forces contest the conflict and are likely to experience more fighting. In Sierra Leone, communities within the diamond mining districts experienced high levels of violence due to the frequent attacks by the different fighting forces for control over the area, with a resultant massive displacement. Because of the resumption of fighting between the Angolan government and UNITA in 1992, nearly 400,000 people died, 1.5 million were displaced and 330,000 became refugees.

What is the nature of counterinsurgency? If it is indiscriminate and unrestrained, it can be discriminatory and affect civilians. Counterinsurgency that has alienated, uprooted and killed vast numbers of civilians is itself a result of the conflict and is likely to experience more fighting. In Sierra Leone, communities within the diamond mining districts experienced high levels of violence due to the frequent attacks by the different fighting forces for control over the area, with a resultant massive displacement. Because of the resumption of fighting between the Angolan government and UNITA in 1992, nearly 400,000 people died, 1.5 million were displaced and 330,000 became refugees.

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These are just a selection of the variables that influence the behaviour of factions and the responses of civilians/communities. Most, if not all, of these variables can change over the course of a conflict: a faction can become more exploitative and hostile to civilians (perhaps in reaction to a lack of military success) over time, or a particular community may experience less harassment by a faction (because a particular unscrupulous commander is stationed somewhere else and replaced by another) over time. Ethnicity may, in the initial stage of a conflict, be of no importance, but can later be used as a tool by warlords to engender support, forcing civilians with a different ethnic background than that of the fighting force to fear for their lives and thus flee.

In short, there are few, if any, general patterns that can be distinguished in the responses by communities to the threat posed by armed militias and rebel groups. Rather, the response is based on a complex equation with multiple variables – and I have not even brought ‘opportunity’ (in other words luck) or ‘psychological traits’ (such as resilience) of community members into the equation. Moreover, the responses are not even fixed over time. While it is important to guard against an over-rationalisation – amid an attack few would remain fully capable of making completely calculated decisions – by war-affected civilians, it would be wrong not to acknowledge the tactics and strategies these civilians employ to survive in a situation created by protracted armed conflict.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have described some of the responses of local communities to the demands of, and situations created by, a rebel environment. I have also shown that these environments are constantly changing. It is not always possible to discern a pattern in the way these communities react. It is clear, however, that the concept of human security – in its restricted sense as freedom from violence but even more so in its broader view, which includes protection of basic human rights, food security and adequate shelter – demands a better understanding of the full range of interactions rebel movements have with basic human rights, food security and adequate shelter. It gives rise to the RUF’s process of ‘governmentalisation’. This was made possible because the RUF’s survival was less challenging and simultaneously created opportunities for civilian peace-building initiatives. Starting from the observation that: ‘Belligerent groups are likely to tolerate civil re-colonisation of at least parts of the war-shattered zone, to ensure better supply of basic commodities,’ Richards gives the example of market women in government territory who have found ways to navigate the numerous checkpoints and trade palm oil from rebel-controlled plantations for items of interest to the combatants. This example of the ‘attack trade’ – first described with reference to the Biafra war, ‘may be one of the important processes through which the civil agrarian zones in war-torn Sierra Leone get back on their feet, and extend “peace from within”.’

Initiatives based on this idea of ‘peace from within’ also materialised in phase IV, giving rise to the RUF’s process of ‘governmentalisation’. This was made possible because the RUF’s survival was less challenging and simultaneously created opportunities for civilian peace-building initiatives.
The overall observation must be that rebel movements are (of course) not static entities and that their composition, agenda, targets and strategy can and are likely to change over time. This affects the relationship they have with local populations, but these changes are also the result of the responses of civilians to the actions and threats posed by the rebel organisations. Interventions, whether they are aimed at brokering a ceasefire or planning the best counterinsurgency strategy, should take these relationships and how they impact on each other into account.

NOTES


2 The material presented was collected during fieldwork undertaken in three periods, namely November/December 2001, N ovember 2002 t o O ctober 2003 and N ovember/December 2006. (See Krijn Peters, Expert report on the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, unpublished report, 2007.) The first two periods of fieldwork collection formed part of my PhD research. Th e e first f ieldwork p eriod, N ovember/December 2006, was part of the preparation of an expert witness report on the RUF, requested by the Sesay defence team of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. I applied to the n ormal r igid s cientific s tandards of objectivity, independency and triangulation to the data collection processes for this report. No m aterial p rovided b y the S esay def ence t eam h as b een u sed, a nd co nducted a ll the interviews, with help or support from the defence team. The defence team has not called upon me as a witness. Part of this interview material is used for Krijn Peters, War and the crisis of youth in Sierra Leone, New York: Cambridge University Press/International African Library Series (forthcoming in 2011).

3 Norman Long defines the concept of ‘agency’ as follows: ‘The notion of agency attributes to the individual actor the capacity to process social experiences and to devise ways of coping with life, even under the most extreme forms of coercion. Within the limits of information, uncertainty a nd t h e o ther co nstraints (f or exa mple p hysical, n ormative o r p olitical-economic) that exist, social actors are “knowledgeable” and “capable”. They attempt to solve problems, learn how to interfere in the flow of social events, round them a nd monitor continuously their own actions, observing how others react to their behaviour and taking note of the various contingent circumstances’. N L ong, F rom p aradigm los t t o p aradigm r ead: social a nd c ultural p hases i n p ost-colonial A frica, O xford: J ames C ourrey, 2005, 53–80; M U tas, Building a f uture? Th e r eintegration a nd r eintegration o f r ebel m ilitarys f or t he L ord’s R esistance A rmy, Athens, Ohio: O hio U niversity P ress/Oxford: J ames C ourrey, 2005; M U tas, A bject r eactions: marginalised youth, modernity and violent pathways of the Liberian civil war, in Jason Hart (ed), Years of conflict: adolescence, political violence and displacement, Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2008.

4 Vigh, Navigating t errains o f f ar: H enrik V igh, S ocial d eath a nd l if e c hances, in C atrine C hrristianse, M ats U tas a nd H enrik V igh (ed), Navigating y oath – g ener a tio n of a nch oor d a nd c hanges: s ocial b ecoming i n A frica, Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2006.


6 Ibid.


8 P Richards, Fighting f or t h e r ainforest: w ar, y oath a nd s ocial e vents i n S ierra L eone, Oxford: James C ourrey, 1996 (reprinted with additional material in 1998).

9 S E lis, The m ask o f a narchy, t he d estruction o f L iberia a nd t he r eligious d imension o f a n African c risis, London: Hurst, 1999.

10 D Keen, Conflict and collusion in Sierra Leone, Oxford: James C ourrey, 2005, 2.


12 Krijn Peters, War and the crisis of youth in Sierra Leone.


15 Krijn Peters, Armed conflict, youth and the rural crisis in Sierra Leone.


17 Peters, Footpaths to reintegration.


19 P Richards, K B ah a nd J V incent, Social c apital a nd s urvival: p rospects f or c ommunity-driven d evelopment i n a n African c risis, London: Hurst, 2004.

20 Krijn Peters, Armed conflict, youth and the rural crisis in Sierra Leone.

21 Th e LRA, having its main bases in neighbouring Sudan, also depends on local informants for its intelligence. Apart from obtaining some degree of protection, these informants and their families can, to some extent, manipulate LRA missions for their own ends.

22 Krijn Peters, Armed conflict, youth and the rural crisis in Sierra Leone.

23 Vigh, Navigating terrains of f ar.


Peters, Footpaths to reintegration, 63.


Allen, Trial justice, 77.

For example, on 24 January 1995 the town of Kambia in the far west of the country close to the Guinean border was attacked by the RUF.


Other hunter guilds involved in the war included the Tamaboros (Koranko ethnic group) and the Kapras (Tenne ethnic group).

Allen, Trial justice, 47.

Peters and Richards, Why we fight.


Peters, Footpaths to reintegration, 78.

Ibid, 54.

Interview conducted as part of the preparation of Peters, Expert report on the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone.

Ibid, 59.

Allen, Trial justice, 50–51.

Paying the price: the Sierra Leone peace process, Accord (9), 2000.

The author studied over a hundred RUF intelligence (G5, in ternal defence unit, intelligent officer branch, etc) documents dealing with these issues, gathered by the Issa Sesay defence team of which many were produced by RUF G5 branches. Originality of the documents has been confirmed by another external expert.

RUF/SL, Footpaths to democracy.

Peters, Footpaths to reintegration.

Peters, Expert report on the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, 58.

Ibid, 64.

Peters, War and the crisis of youth.


Peters, Expert report on the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone; Peters, Armed conflict, youth and the rural crisis in Sierra Leone.

Peters, Footpaths to reintegration.

Peters, Expert report on the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, 63.

Peters, War and the crisis of youth.


Outram, It’s terminal either way, 361.


Other variables for the community are: (1) There is a lack of livelihoods that the community members can engage in; (2) Some livelihood activities are seasonal (during the harvest period a farmer will be more reluctant to abandon his fields); (3) If the micro-political pre-war relations within the community give reason for some to fear that these can be exploited by fellow civilians/fighting factions; and (4) The ethnic, political or religious composition of the community and if these characteristics are among the root causes of the war and therefore something which can agitate factions.


Richards, Fighting for the rainforest, 155.

Ibid.

Ibid, 156.
INTRODUCTION

States are expected to maintain general harmony among the people, or generic peace, as well as to keep the peace, meaning law and order. Most states, however, tend to concentrate on keeping the peace at the expense of maintaining generic peace and result is often confrontations. This is particularly the case with fragile states, which, argues Eka Ikpe, lack the ‘capacity and resilience’ to protect themselves from various challenges. This means that they cannot protect citizens, absorb shocks and manage conflict without resorting to violence.

Fragility creates an environment for violence because of the perceived inability of security forces in a state to command trust. Such states become breeding grounds for illicit activities that compound their problems. If properly handled, the agitations can lead to reforms or semblances of reform as a way of keeping the peace, for it is the unheeded calls for reforms that lead to rebellions. When the point of rebellion has been reached, it means that the ruling elite would have lost legitimacy in the eyes of the ruled, who have transferred their loyalty to new groups or leaders. In the process, different types of militia and rebels emerge.
Militias and rebel groups tend to destabilise individual states and their regions and some have extensive ra-continental ramifications and are difficult to resolve. Both these groups challenge constituted authority, whether at the state, regional or international levels. Militias are organised and often armed groups that operate within a state and sometimes appear to be condoned. They generally do not challenge the legitimacy of the government. Rebel movements, however, do not consider the government to be legitimate and may aim at overthrowing it. Since rebels can transform a local conflict into a much wider issue that calls for solutions beyond the capacity of any single state, it calls for concerted effort within the region to resolve the conflict, on a regional or even continental basis.

Responses to militia and rebel movements include attempts at suppression or political accommodation through constitutional restructuring in the form of power-sharing. If unresolved, it could lead to state fragmentation and separation. Regional as well as continental players, worried about their complex interests, contribute to each of the responses.

**STATE RESPONSES**

State responses generally include suppression, creating counterinsurgency forces, constitutional restructuring and foreign intervention. In some cases of foreign intervention, the state tries to destroy militias and rebel movements by mobilising all types of security apparatus in a show of force. The use of force is justified as the proper response of the state to internal enemies. Suppression becomes a law and all types of security apparatus in a show of force. The use of force is justified as the proper response of the state to internal enemies. Suppression becomes a law and all types of security apparatus in a show of force.

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In Uganda the government encouraged and trained the Arrow Boys and Amuka Boys to protect citizens, while the soldiers were fighting Joseph Kony’s Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in the north. This was in the hope that the government would be able to disarm the militia once the LRA had been defeated. In Rwanda, the state helped to create the Interahamwe as a way of meeting assumed threats. In the challenge posed by the Tutsi, the state seemed to lose control of the group. The danger is that such counterforces could embarrass those who start or condone them when they become uncontrollable and take the law into their own hands.

Another type of response is to engage in constitutional restructuring, a socioeconomic and political redistribution mechanism to deal with two internal challenges. The first is the political differences among politicians and the second is the friction between the idea of state and the idea of nation. Accommodating political differences takes into account political interests of key players who have the proven ability to exercise influence on militias to disrupt or continue to disrupt the peace if they are not addressed. Of various options, all of them focusing on political control, power sharing has in creasingly become the accepted mode of constitutional restructuring. This is done by creating special positions to accommodate vocal leaders who influence militias, as happened in Kenya and Zimbabwe in 2008.

The second type of constitutional restructuring takes into consideration the existing friction between the idea of a nation and the idea of a state by recommending different ways of splitting the state. One way is to create mini-states, while others propose the creation of special units. In Sudan, the government initially encouraged Arab militias to counter the advances of the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA). In Uganda, the government encouraged and trained the Arrow Boys and Amuka Boys to protect citizens, while the soldiers were fighting Joseph Kony’s Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) in the north. This was in the hope that the government would be able to disarm the militia once the LRA had been defeated.

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Although Kenya did not intervene, Ethiopia and Uganda did in the name of the African Union.

**CLUSTERS OF CONFLICT AND REGIONAL RESPONSES**

The calls for intervention focus attention on the role of neighbours in a given region, particularly on the African continent. Political disputes among leaders that degenerate into disruption of the peace have garnered an assortment of regional responses. The presence of rival militias and rebel movements in a state or in the region makes inervention problematic, yet Africa, as a continent, has had to deal with regional responses. It also prohibited interference in the internal affairs of a sister state, which implied no support to those who challenged governmental legitimacy.

This position, however, did not stop member states from interfering in the internal affairs of others or encouraging dissidence, and no as a result there were numerous quasi-wars between states. Somalia had irredentist ambitions in Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti and supported rebels in those areas. Like Somalia, Sudan supported Eritrean secessionists against Ethiopia. Sudan and Libya supported rebellions in Chad with Libya's troops occupying the Aouzou Strip in northern Chad. Libya's Muammar Gaddafi did not consider artificial colonial boundaries an obstacle to his grand idea of unifying 'brothers and sisters' in Tunisia, Chad, Mali and Niger with Libya.

The OAU therefore eventually had to deal with the growth of militias and rebel movements that tended to destabilise regions, and generate refugees. Security was a major concern in many west African states. Security was a major concern in many western African states. It unified opposition to refugees, but the latter 'abstained from any subversive activities against any member state of the OAU'. In return, signatory states undertook to 'prohibit refugees residing in their respective territories from attacking any state member of the OAU, by any activity likely to cause tension between member states, and in particular by use of arms, through the press, or by radio.' Despite these undertakings, disputes in one country spread to neighbours and led to the development of some four geographical clusters of conflict, namely the Mano River cluster, the Southern Africa cluster, the Great Lakes cluster, and the Horn of Africa cluster. In each cluster, militia and rebel activities that started in one country tended to spread to neighbours and become regional problems.

**The Mano River cluster**

The conflicts in West Africa revolved mainly around the Mano River and attracted their fair share of regional intervention. Although the Mano River conflict affected mostly Sierra Leone and Liberia, it disrupted Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, too. Sierra Leone and Liberia are products of post-American revolution debates on the future of free blacks in North America. To start with, the English created Sierra Leone as a place to take blacks from Nova Scotia or slaves caught on the high seas rather than take them to Canada or Britain. The ‘returnees’ became the Krahs, who dominated the state in the colonies and populations. Liberia was a place for such people, and Liberia was forcibly acquired for that purpose. The blacks, who went to be free in West Africa, whether in Sierra Leone or Liberia, became members of the privileged class that tended to dominate the ‘natives,’ which in turn created simmering resentments. When Doe, a Krahn rather than an American-Liberian, took power in 1980, he gained popularity for executing 13 American-Liberian officials from the previous government and later became known as the ‘Liberian Beach Party.’

Conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone erupted in the 1990s, starting with the Taylor launched his attack in December 1989, after mysteriously escaping from a Massachusetts jail, before spreading to neighbouring Sierra Leone. Taylor had a road-based support in Liberia (including interviews with Black Press International's correspondents), and was supported by 'international' operators. After Taylor's coalition of forces became a fait accompli, Doe's forces had to seek refuge outside the capital.

The regional response was both diplomatic and military and had mixed results. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
tried to intervene di plomatically b ut fa iled. EC OW AS, le d by N igeria, t hen transformed itself into a military organ called ECOMOG to intervene and restore peace in Liberia.32 Not all member countries were willing to send troops and so ECOMOG seemed to become part of the problem as other countries questioned Nigeria’s role and activities.33 ECOMOG eventually helped to settle the Liberian civil war b y p romising T aylor imm unity f rom i nternational p rosecution a nd asylum in Nigeria. Nigeria’s foreign affairs minister, Oleyumi Adeniji, asserted that the asylum was a g iven ‘on h umanitarian g rounds in o rder t o s ave t he Liberian people from fighting, in o rder to save the peace process’ and vowed that Nigeria would ‘not be harassed by anybody’ to hand over Taylor because ‘that is not what a sovereign country would do’.34 Pointing out that if Nigeria reneged on the asylum, ‘nobody w ill r espect u s’ , N igerian P resident O lusegun Obasanjo in sisted t hat a sovereign country would do’ .35

The impression created was that since the level of conflict in the Mano River cluster declined, providing a safe haven to warlords might be a way for regions to end prolonged co nflicts in t heir c lusters. Thi s type o f r esponse, h owever, wa s eroded in 2006, w hen P resident O basanjo, un der p ressure f rom US P resident George W B ush, reneged on T aylor’s a sylum. By handing over Taylor, Obasanjo eroded the credibility of Nigeria, which then undermined Nigeria’s standing as a possible mediator in other conflicts.36

The Southern Africa cluster

The response to rebel movements in the Southern Africa cluster had two racially opposed aspects. The first responses came from ‘white’ political entities trying to survive in t he mi dst o f r eform s: they t ried to survive in t he mi dst o f r eform s: the s econd wa s engendered by the attitudes and activities of ‘liberated’ African states in support of ‘freedom fighters’ in the remaining colonial states, namely Rhodesia, South Africa, South West Africa, Mozambique and Angola. The OAU expected every member to contribute financially according to ability, to assist such freedom fighters.37

On their part, the racist regimes tried to put a united front against what they believed was an affront to the Western way of life. This was particularly the case in the 1960s, w hen o ther t han S outh A frica, o nly t he P ortuguese co lonies a nd Rhodesia r emained a s b asins o f white s upremacy, de fending w hat R hodesia’s prime mini ster, I an S mith, c alled ‘ W estern, C hristian ci vilisation’.38 When t he P ortuguese quit in the 1970s, Mozambique fell under the Frente de Libertação de Mozambique (FRELIMO) and Angola under the Movimento Popular da Libertação de Angola (MPLA). South Africa had also responded to the presence of the MPLA in Angola with an invasion, condoned by the US, a nd thereby made Angola an ideological and physical battleground in the Cold War.39

South Africa and Rhodesia adopted a strategy of destabilisation of anti-racist forces in the neighbouring states. Given that FRELIMO worked closely with the ZimbabweanPF Nam tional U nion (Z ANU), R hodesia s upported a r ebel movement c alled t he N ational R esistance M ovement (MRN o r R EN AMO) t o d estabilise Mozambique. W hen Z ANU w on a nd R hodesia b ecame Z imbabwe, South A frica in herited t he s porsorship o f R EN AMO a nd h elped t o m ake i t p olitically acceptable.40 South Africa also mounted raids on frontline states in its total a lignment s trategy o f des tabilisation.41 To t his end, S outh A frica f orced Mozambique to sign the Nkomati Accord, denying bases to the African National Congress (ANC).42 Destabilisation of frontline states, however, could not stop the metamorphosis of Rhodesia in to Z imbabwe in 1980 o r S outh W est A frica in to Namibia in 1990. A nd a lthough S outh A frica t ried t o un dermine t he p o litical p osition of t he ANC, it w as forced to abandon apartheid because it could no longer guarantee white rule in the midst of increasing pressure for change.43

The response from the African side o f the racial equation was twofold. One, victims of colonialism and apartheid mounted guerrilla warfare against the regime and appealed for international help, starting with neighbouring African countries. Two, just as S outh A frica p romised t o h ave t he t acit s upport o f t he West, black S outh A fricans f ighting a partheid h ad b oth o pen a nd t acit s upport o f a frican countries. T hese co untries, h owever, w ere in dividually vu lnerable a nd t ogether formed the frontline states to coordinate their responses to the threats posed by S outh A frica. T h e t reat w ere b oth m itary a nd e conomic, le ading, a mong o thers, t o t he f ormat ion o f t he S outhern A frican D evelopment C ommunity (SADC). T he purpose w as to lessen t he e conomic p osition of t he ‘frontline’ states on S outh A frica, b ut SADC also aimed at coordinating its support for anti-apartheid forces operating in t heir o wn countries. This objective changed when apartheid was defeated.

The Great Lakes cluster

Zimbabwean P resident, R ober t M ugabe, a long w ith UN S ecretary-General K off Annan a nd A UC ommision C hairman A lpha O umar K onare, a s w ell a s t he
presidents of South Africa, Gabon, Mozambique, Nigeria, Namibia and Malawi, were witnesses to the 2004 declaration by the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region (ICGLR), which was signed by ten African heads of state in Arusha, Tanzania, and succeeded in getting the two sides to sign a power-sharing deal. This deal did not last and instead, following the assassination of Habyarimana, there was a mass slaughter of the Tutsis. A government-sponsored militia, the Interahamwe, went on a rampage in 1994 and killed more than 800,000 people. The mass killings stopped when the RPF, operating from Uganda, took over control of the country and former government officials and soldiers fled to other countries. Interahamwe militias were accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity, but the RPF never faced justice for its actions.

By the late 1980s, Mobutu had become a regional embarrassment for other leaders in the Great Lakes cluster. Their response to the crisis in eastern Zaire was twofold, with countries united but then turning on each other. At first leaders—Paul Kagame of Rwanda, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, and José dos Santos of Angola—formed a temporary alliance to support a rebellion against Mobutu.

The second response led to the fragmentation of the alliance as allies turned on each other. Each appeared bent on exploiting the natural wealth in the Congo and some became big exporters of minerals not found in their own countries. The allies started accusing each other of all sorts of things, and Kabila kicked Kagame’s men out of Kinshasa and then Museveni and Kagame turned on each other in the eastern Congo. They have competing interests that encourage rebellions and even wars, some of them in the form of ‘proxy wars’ in which rebels are used against other states. The Horn of Africa cluster

Some countries in the Great Lakes cluster are linked to the Horn of Africa cluster, which is also complex in terms of the impact of, and responses to, rebel movements and militias. It is a cluster in which conflicts tend to be in multiples of seeming in compatibles and borders are drawn with diatribes, wars leading to wars. In competing for land, resources, the historical memory, faith and ideology, countries tend to support rebel movements in their perceived rival country. The regional organ through which issues were raised and handled was the Inter-governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), which started as a body concerned with the effects of drought, but then turned to security matters.

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They suffer, notes Ruth Iyob, from a ‘crisis of identity, stemming from the contest for hegemony by Christianity and Islam and African and Arab civilisations’. At one time, Pan-Ethiopianism appeared to be the dominating influence in the region in competition with the Arab Muslim influence, which was expanding southwards. Both Ethiopia and Sudan stressed historical claims that pre-dated European conquests. These were complicated by the Somali vision of occupying Djibouti, Ethiopia and parts of Kenya.

The regional response varied from mediations to taking part in peacekeeping operations, a nd e ven c r aft f ing g overnments o f t he a lternat ional uni ty, a nd w a s o ften specific to the particular country. The first were challenges from Somalia, in t he P a n-S omali dr eam, in t he f orm o f a f ederal t ransitional g overnment. T h e later t wo en tering in to a de f ence a greement a nd seeking OAU help. It also led Somalia into a quasi-war with Kenya, known as the Shifta, and a real war with Ethiopia, the Ogaden War.53 Instead of achieving its dream, Somalia eventually disintegrated after 1991, when President Mohammed Siad Barre was ousted by forces of the United Somali Congress.54

Somalia thereafter became a United Nations and OAU security problem, as it fragmented into warlord fiefdoms. The issue was handled in two ways. First, the US led a UN attempt to restore order by disarming Somali warlords. This was poorly executed and forced the UN to leave in an embarrassing manner.55 Second, the OAU provided more attention and encouraged IGAD to deal with Somalia and its seemingly adopted two-track strategy: on the one hand, the Somali traditional federal transitional government with elections held in Nairobi; and on the other, efforts to resuscitate failing states, such as Somaliland and Puntland.56 Transferring the Somali government from Nairobi to Mogadishu required security because the number of warlords was increasing, and some were comfortable in Nairobi.57 IGAD authorised the creation of a peacekeeping force, first known as the IGAD-P Projekt Mission in Somalia, which was partially realised in 2007.58

Apart from Somalia, IGAD also concerned itself with Sudan, where neither negative peace nor positive peace existed, particularly in the southern part. Rebellion in Southern Sudan started soon after independence and despite many attempts at peacemaking, has not been resolved yet. Instead, the neighbouring countries of Sudan and Uganda meditated acc usations that had escaped war-supporting rebels. Uganda supported the SPLA, while Sudan supported the LRA. IGAD facilitated the peace process in Sudan between the government and the SPLA that led to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.59 This had the effect of reducing the need for Sudan to continue using the LRA or Uganda using the SCA to support rebels. The region remains volatile despite war and peace processes in Somalia. With the support of the AU and the international community, IGAD has had some limited successes in establishing a government in Somalia, although it remains fragile, and in facilitating a settlement of the dispute between the SPLA and the government of Sudan.

EXTRA-CONTINENTAL RESPONSES

Extra-continental forces, termed the ‘international community’ in reference to powerful North American and Western European countries, affect developments in Africa and respond in roughly four overlapping ways. The first is a temporary promotion of anti-government leaders to oust regimes or to support leaders of regimes against the rebels. Such people, whether they are leaders of regimes or rebel movements, are discarded once they have outlived their usefulness. The second is to mount intervention, either unilaterally or through recognised international organs like the UN or the OAU/AU. The third is to accept a stalemate and pressure the parties to negotiate and accept a power-sharing deal. The fourth is to mobilise the International Criminal Court (ICC) to try specific persons.

There are times when all four appear to apply and they all find in each other’s support in the assertions of ‘experts’ on Africa. Given that the power to define is the power to destroy or create, the ‘experts’ tend to guide the responses with their commentaries portraying sovereignty in Africa as farce, phantasm or mirage. Jeffrey Herbst, other than recommending redrawing of African boundaries rather than try to resuscitate failing states, wanted the UN to decertify or deregister some countries from the roster of sovereign states. Christopher Clapham, believing that the existence of some states is itself a threat to security, thinks that sovereignty
of African states should be shared with an external entity. Advocates of coups and arming rebel groups, targe[f] to enable them to ‘liberate’ millions. Thus, James Kirchick of The New Republic begged outgoing US President George W Bush to enhance his legacy as a liberator by invading Zimbabwe in order to end its alleged human rights violations. And Paul Collier, claiming that military coups in Africa are ‘Progressive’, wanted the US president, Barack Obama, to use ‘moral authority’ derived from his ‘African identity’ to help mount coups.

Congo is a good example of international response of fomenting and then dumping leaders. Soon after Congo became independent in 1960, Patrice Lumumba anno[n]ed extrar[continental] forces with his nationalist policies on Congo. Immediately, interference from the US and Belgium, assisted by France, Britain and South Africa, plunged that country into chaos. They were supported by Congolese politicians who had little time for Lumumba’s political and economic nationalism. As a result, Joseph Mobutu became president of Congo but after he outlived his usefulness, he became expendable. The effort to distance themselves from some of their own creations was partly because these countries considered that relying on individual leaders in a symbiotic relationship was in itself unreliable. The US, among others, started to shift positions and to abandon what former Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, termed ‘the essence of post-war American foreign policy’.

The French have a record of giving the second type of international response, namely intervention. Considered a ‘traditional gendarme’ in Africa, the French response has tended to be one of intervention either to ensure survival of its men in power or to depose them after they had outlived their usefulness. There were times, therefore, when the French used mercenaries who had little time for Lumumba’s political and economic nationalism. As a result, Joseph Mobutu became president of Congo but after he outlived his usefulness, he became expendable. The effort to distance themselves from some of their own creations was partly because these countries considered that relying on individual leaders in a symbiotic relationship was in itself unreliable. The US, among others, started to shift positions and to abandon what former Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, termed ‘the essence of post-war American foreign policy’.

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The third response is to try a multilateral approach to negotiated settlement in a perceived stalemate between governments and rebels. The Germans, preferring to side with the US and France, opted for coordinated responses from the West in stemming threats to stability in Europe. They wanted to ‘conflict prevention’ measures to ensure ‘development’ at the grassroots level and to address ‘the root causes’ that give rise to rebels. Where there was no agreement possible, in the case of Zimbabwe, where the leader supposedly destroys the country, Germans consider the ‘exit option’ of quitting. The Germans, not alone in seeking root causes, often join others in imposing power-sharing in order to end a perceived stalemate.

The fourth type of extraregional response combines both a verbal threat and military intervention, directly and indirectly. Americans also engage in different types of intervention, directly and indirectly, and find it difficult to refrain from total involvement, particularly of a military nature. After the disaster in Somalia, however, they tend to look for different ways of responding to threats to their interests and find allies among rebel movements and militias. Former American Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, asserted in 2008 that the US was called to play a role in allying with ‘a new perspective on what constituted threats’ to ‘an international order that reflects our values’. This might depend, as the 2007 crisis of the French C C C (AFRICOM), in itself an indication of Africa becoming more important from a US security point of view. Through the ‘three Ds’ of diplomacy, development and defence, AFRICOM is supposed to solve security problems without extraregional intervention, while keeping American troops out of Africa for decades to come or ‘the next 50 years’.

African states, however, showed reluctance to host AFRICOM, in the light of the Bush ‘grand strategy’ of pre-emptive strikes based on suspicions of dictatorial inclinations or non-cooperation with, and possible questioning, of US hegemonic desires. AFRICOM is expected to outsource services to private security companies, which, according to Andrew Bearpark, Director-General of the British Association of Private Security Companies, ‘carry out activities previously performed by national militaries’. African states resist hosting the command for fear it might be used to stage quick attacks on neighbouring countries or even destabilise the host country.

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taken to trial at The Hague.\textsuperscript{42} Despite accusations of selective justice and targeting Africans, particularly when it picked on Sudan's President Omar el-Bashir, and of ignoring perpetrators of atrocities in big powerful countries,\textsuperscript{43} the threat of being referred to the ICC has acquired international political currency in Africa as a warning to both rebel movements and most governments.

From the above, it is clear that there is a great variety in ext ra-continental responses and that they are affected by perceived interests. There are times when they encourage rebel movements to destabilise leaders of target states without direct intervention. Sometimes they intervene directly and impose a person of their choice as the new ruler on a given state. They also put pressure on the parties in conflict to negotiate and reach power-sharing settlements. Most recently, they have used the ICC to give political warnings to leaders of both regimes and rebel movements.

**CONCLUSION**

The response to the presence of militias and rebel movements in any place and at any level is determined by the interests being advanced and protected. At the state level, the government response is an attempt to repress, accommodation to the wishes of some of the militias and rebel movements, or succumbing to pressure and getting out or agreeing to decapacitate the state. Some militia are sponsored by influential people in governments, others are co opted after being established and perhaps being hard to control, and they are generally used to co operate with rebel movements. There are rebel movements who have a spire to power irrespective of how it is achieved. If the state is weak, it surrenders power to the rebels or opts for a power-sharing deal. In most cases, the state tends to respond by suppressing the rebellion and trying to deny it legitimacy or eventually cutting a deal on an aspect of autonomy or even separation.

States in a region worry about growing instability in an area within the region. This is because they ac tivities of some of the militias and rebel movements, as well as the responses from governments, tend to generate refugees who flee to neighbouring states and also to create regional instability. The region then responds in several ways, depending on whether the rebel objective is to take over power or fragment the state. It tries to mediate and often suggest power-sharing deals. The region is likely to support the exis ting government if it co nsiders the rebel movements a threat to the problem, or may support the rebels if the government is considered to be the problem. On the issue of separation, however, regional neighbours tend to insist on the sanctity of the state as constituted.

On the regional front, there have been limited successes in terms of settlement but not of resolution of conflicts. In part, the seeming success in the Mano River cluster was due to the strong action taken by ECOMOG, led by Nigeria, as well as the support of extracational forces, arought through the co ntracted w ere extremely weak. In the Horn of Africa, IGAD produced settlements in Somalia, which quickly floundered, and in Sudan, which is still holding. In the Great Lakes cluster, the response was varied, including the crafting of a power-sharing deal in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), but this was undermined by competing country and international interests. In the Southern Africa cluster, the region intervened to settle an acrimonious political dispute in Zimbabwe that affected the area, by brokering a power-sharing deal.

Power sharing is often an external imposition either by regional neighbours or by extracational forces. The response from extracational forces, all driven by their own interests, is to support the tendency to support rebel movements plotting to oust target regimes or to strengthen leaders of such regimes against the rebels. Protection for such leaders is withdrawn once they outlive their value. At times, the support for rebel movements, or the unilateral intervention supposedly on humanitarian grounds. An alternative, when there is a perceived stalemate, is to pressure the parties concerned to settle through power-sharing arrangements. In recent times, the extra-continental powers respond by using the ICC as a wa rming to force leaders of regimes and rebel movements to behave irrespectively of how they are treated, extracational powers supporting c lient regimes or rebel movements when it suits their interests. In the process, they help to create instability by aiding rebel movements and even sponsoring coups against regimes they do not like or restore the peace by assisting in settling disputes in prolonged conflicts.

**NOTES**


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**State, regional and international responses to militia and rebel activities in Africa**

**Macharia Munene**

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**Institute for Security Studies**

**Militias, Rebels and Islamist Militants: Human insecurity and STATE CRISSES in Africa**
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Activities of armed non-state groups (ANSGs) have had devastating consequences for civilian populations as well as the infrastructure that supports their welfare. The African adage that ‘when two elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers’ is true of armed conflicts, for civilians are not only strategic targets but also bear the brunt of the consequences. African battle spaces are characterised by young boys carrying weapons taller than they, government forces and armed groups violating international humanitarian and human rights laws with impunity, terrified and massively displaced civilians, and carcasses of destroyed homes and infrastructure.

ANSGs are not uniquely or exclusively an African phenomenon, for they are common in many political systems, including advanced societies such as the United States (Michigan Militia Corps), Canada (Front de Libération du Québec, Quebec Liberation Front, FL Q), Italy (Brigate Rosse, Red Brigades, BR) and Spain/France (Basque nationalists). What is unique to African states is the alarmingly high level of loss of human life and destruction of property that militant and rebel groups cause, the longevity of some of these groups, the...
seeming inability of governments to handle them, and the penchant of African governments to create fertile grounds from which such groups emerge.

Although these groups have profound impact on African economies and social development, currently no dedicated research is being carried out to determine how many there are or to analyse the impact of their activities on the livelihoods of populations and capacities of states to function. Attempts made thus far have related to analyses of their histories, roots, objectives, motives and modi operandi, and the impact of their activities on socioeconomic systems. The difficulties of pinpointing the exact or even approximate number of groups and their membership, and the effects that they have on society, state, governance and human security, partly stem from the lack of data and the state security policy of denying that they exist or inflating their numbers for budgetary reasons or to cover up serious governance and security situations that could damage their reputations and scare away foreign investments.

Nevertheless, there is a need to monitor and document ANSGs' activities and to study how they function. One of the major contributions of this work is the use of multidisciplinary approaches and concepts as well as analytical frameworks and perspectives drawn mainly from the social sciences and humanities to shed light on how militias, Islamic militants and rebel groups in Africa are formed and affect human security and state capacity, on the one hand, and how they can be understood and dealt with at different levels, on the other hand.

This chapter highlights some of the key findings and conclusions of the work and captures the key policy recommendations that can be used to prevent ANSGs and violent conflicts in which they are engaged from undermining human security and state capacity to provide public services.

TOWARDS ADDRESSING THE ANSG PHENOMENON IN AFRICA

In trying to understand why the ANSG phenomenon has become prevalent in Africa, we can surmise from the various chapters that policymakers are palpably challenged when it comes to designing measures that can effectively prevent and confront these groups. This could be explained partly by policymakers' use of ne-dimensional approaches to understand the phenomenon, denying its existence, law enforcement policies that contribute to these groups' formation, and ill-conceived measures to confront them. While some of the governments' measures used to confront these groups have achieved limited results, most of them, such as use of brute violence, have been counter-productive, as they end up recruiting sympathisers and followers for these groups. These lack of appropriate approaches and resources to confront ANSGs has been accompanied by the use of excessive force that violates international human rights laws, and criminalising political opponents by branding them vandals and terrorists. In some cases, governments have denied the existence of militias and rebel groups to cover up serious governance and security situations that could damage their reputations and scare away foreign investments.

State governance

One of the key findings in this study is that weak and badly governed states in Africa have a tendency to generate ANSGs or to create fertile grounds for their development. A badly governed state marginalises, excludes, impoverishes and suppresses some segments of the population because of their identities and relationships with the centre of power. Some victims of misgovernance pick up arms to redress their grievances. In reaction, states have clamped down on them with an excessive use of so-called legitimate violence. By using excessive force to legiti\mize\ themselves, these states alienate themselves from the local populations, increasing both sympathy and support for the ANSGs.

The unconventional ANSG tactics, in turn, impair the state's ability to provide public goods and services, alienating it from the population, which perceives it to be too weak and ineffective to exercise its legitimate roles. The legitimacy of the state is further eroded when its responses are heavy handed, fail to protect civilians or treat local populations as accomplices or sympathisers of ANSGs. Some African states have achieved limited results, most of them, such as use of brute violence, have been counter-productive, as they end up recruiting sympathisers and followers for these groups that make it difficult to engage them in peace talks.

In order to highlight the importance of factors such as state governance, the role of elite and youth groups, and the management of border areas and natural resources in the formulation of policy and legal responses to prevent and combat the ANSG phenomenon in Africa.
from supporting them, they put all members of the population at risk, especially when government forces withdraw from an area after operations. While ANSGs extensively and commonly use terror as a tactic, some states have chosen to respond with similar tactics. There is a growing tendency in Africa for states to ‘delegate conflicts to rebels [and militias] rather than use their own forces.’ However, such a strategy can lead to international condemnation, as happened in the case of the Janjaweed in Darfur.

Although ANSGs are, to a large extent, a product of weak and failing African states, their activities have threatened human security and contributed to the crisis of the state, which manifests in the inability to provide public goods and services and use violence in the national interest only. Apart from contributing to the mushrooming of ANSGs in Africa, the crisis of the state has lent credibility to some of these ANSGs to challenge its legitimacy. Indeed, there is a high possibility for opportunistic rebel groups to emerge where governments lack the legitimacy, capacity and resources to govern and control their territories.

In his chapter on the crises of the state and governance (chapter 5), Ikelegbe argues that the rise and multiplication of ANSGs since the independence of African states are a reflection of the state’s inability to provide public goods and services and use violence in the national interest only. A part from contributing to the mushrooming of ANSGs in Africa, the crisis of the state has lent credibility to some of these ANSGs to challenge its legitimacy. Indeed, there is a high possibility for opportunistic rebel groups to emerge where governments lack the legitimacy, capacity and resources to govern and control their territories.

In a deeper understanding of the relationship between the state and society, the chapters by Engel, Ikelegbe, Ibaa, Kabir and Ololo show that the youth have been the dominant base of recruitment and participation in the ANSGs as a result of their high levels of unemployment, poor education and addiction to drugs. Ikelegbe points out that conditions in Africa that made the youth turn on society in anger, defiance, saviourism a nd r esistance have a lso e xisted a s a y outh culture w ith e lements o f n i hilism, f a talism, d efiance, s ubversion, p opulism, r esentment, i mpr uosity a nd v iolence. Accordingly, approaches for preventing and combating ANSG activities must aim at addressing societal inequalities, marginalisation and vulnerabilities that allow a violent youth culture and recruitment opportunities into the ANSG rank and file to emerge.

The youth can also be prevented from joining ANSGs through stilling a ‘peace software’, which contains values that respect life. Peace values should be instilled among youth before they fall prey to political opportunists and warlords who are out to exploit their material situation and lure them into political militia and rebel groups. African governments need to provide greater incentives for the youth to engage in productive activities rather than join violent groups that threaten the population to survive.

Political elite manipulation

In gaining a deeper understanding of the relationship between the state and society, the chapters by Engel, Ikelegbe, Ibaa, Kabir and Ololo show that the youth have been the dominant base of recruitment and participation in the ANSGs as a result of their high levels of unemployment, poor education and addiction to drugs. Ikelegbe points out that conditions in Africa that made the youth turn on society in anger, defiance, saviourism and resistance have also existed as a youth culture with elements of nihilism, fatalism, subversion and resistance that were also created among youth in a state of rage, defiance, subversion and resistance have also emerged.

Youth factor

Although the book does not have a chapter dedicated to the role of the youth in ANSGs, the chapters by Engel, Ikelegbe, Ibaa, Kabir and Ololo show that the youth have been the dominant base of recruitment and participation in the ANSGs as a result of their high levels of unemployment, poor education and addiction to drugs. Ikelegbe points out that conditions in Africa that made the youth turn on society in anger, defiance, saviourism and resistance have also existed as a youth culture with elements of nihilism, fatalism, subversion and resistance that were also created among youth. In a deeper understanding of the relationship between the state and society, the chapters by Engel, Ikelegbe, Ibaa, Kabir and Ololo show that the youth have been the dominant base of recruitment and participation in the ANSGs as a result of their high levels of unemployment, poor education and addiction to drugs. Ikelegbe points out that conditions in Africa that made the youth turn on society in anger, defiance, saviourism and resistance have also existed as a youth culture with elements of nihilism, fatalism, subversion and resistance that were also created among youth in a state of rage, defiance, subversion and resistance have also emerged.

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elections at all – with the latter increasing the chances of political instability and large-scale violence.  

Some of the hitherto abandoned elite-sponsored political violent gangs, as is the case in Niger Delta, later transformed themselves into militias and criminal gangs. A s t he ex-military o f t he Mungiki shows, t hese g roups exploit t he p ower vacuum cr eated b y w eak s tates t o o cr eate a n a lternative ‘government,’ w hich provides security and survives by extracting levies for this service. In order to stop this trend, keen attention should be paid to the mode of conducting elections in Africa, with the aim of immunising it against abuse by political elites who pursue political power at the expense of democracy. The manner in which political elites capture political power and use it is critical to understanding the source and nature of political violence and how it has been used to gain control of the state.

In Africa, t here i s a t endency f or n ational e lites t o u se a ny m eans a t t heir disposal t o c apture s tate p ower a nd m onopolise i t, t o e xclude a nd m arginalise o ther ci tizens f rom t he b enefits o f t he s tate, a nd t o u se v iolence t o c ontain o r t hreaten opponents. When these threats reach a certain level, the ruling elite forms state mi litias t hat i t u ses a gainst o pponents, t hus r emoving i tself f rom dir ect threat. W hen these threats reach a certain level, the ruling elite forms state mi litias t hat i t u ses a gainst o pponents, t hus r emoving i tself f rom dir ect threat. W hen these threats reach a certain level, the ruling elite forms state mi litias t hat i t u ses a gainst o pponents, t hus r emoving i tself f rom dir ect threat.

Governments’ hidden contribution to the formation and support of ANSGs is, nevertheless, discernable across the continent. For instance, in 2003 a leading Kenyan newspaper revealed that the Mungiki had received military vehicles and sophisticated communication equipment f rom t he g overnment t o p romote a cer tain c andidate’s p residential campaign in t he D e cember 2002 e lection. Although a location o f s uch government e quipment co uld h ave b een a uthorised o nly a t t he hig h est lev el o f government, h ow a m i litia g roup t hat h ad a r eputation f or c r m arrying o ut horrendous a ct s o f b rutalit y o n t he p opulation g ot t he hig hly s ophisticated m ilitary e quipment has never come to light.

O lloo (chapter 6) recommends that elites who use ANSGs be held accountable for their violation of domestic and international laws. Those who fund and arm the youth, organise them into militias and manipulate them to engage in violence, should be arrested, prosecuted and punished. N ational laws s hould b e strengthened t o p revent a n d c ontrol i tself f rom d isorganization a n d c ontrol o f ANSGs. H owever, t he s tate a nd t he p ower, t hrough ci vil s o ciety, s hould s hare t he r esponsibility for ending political violence, particularly during election periods, by monitoring and promoting a peaceful articulation of interests.

It is obvious that the persistence of militias in Africa reflects the penchant of elites for manipulation of the youth, and as O lloo notes, t he depth of t he ‘culture of impunity’ in most African societies. This culture allows these groups to develop parallel g overnance sy stems t hat w eaken t he leg itimacy o f t he s tate, a nd u se v iolence a nd in timidation t o o b jugate ci tizens. W ith t he s tate’s p ower l aw enforcement capabilities and failure to deliver public services, these groups offer such services for a fee. Apart from revenue losses that further deprive the state of resources it n eeds t o m eet i ts o bligations t o t he ci tizenry, ANSGs’ p resence in ungoverned spaces and provision of social services undermine state legitimacy.

### Controlling borders and border areas

Borders and border areas are favoured by rebel groups because these enable them to extend their influence regionally and internationally. These border areas are even more sought after if they contain natural resources. If a rebel group is able to control a border, this enables it to smuggle minerals out of the country and s o f inance its a ctivities. D arfurian r ebels, t he L ord’s R esistance A rmy (LRA) and Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in Uganda, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) and other groups frustrated government operations due to their ability to move easily across porous and poorly controlled borders and into other states’ territories. S tates c an a ttract ANSGs f rom n eighbouring states if their capacities to manage and control their border areas are weak, as these then s erve a s a haven f or t hese g roups. W hen a s tate i s t oo w eak t o c ontrol i ts f rontiers, t hese territories often become a ‘no-man’s land’ in which rebels reign and terrorise local populations. T he failure of the state to provide security to its citizens in m arginal t erritories e ndangers t heir lo yality t o t he s tate a nd g ives r ebels a n advantage when faced with responses such as military operations.

Borders and border areas can become theatres of confrontation if they separate antagonistic states. P oor i nterstate r elations between leaders of neighbouring states also p lay a r ole in p romoting ANSG ac tivities. F or e xample, t he s our relations between presidents Y oweri M useveni and t he L ord’s R esistance A rmy (LRA) and Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) in Uganda, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) and other groups frustrated government operations due to their ability to move easily across porous and poorly controlled borders and into other states’ territories. S tates c an a ttract ANSGs f rom n eighbouring states if their capacities to manage and control their border areas are weak, as these then s erve a s a haven f or t hese g roups. W hen a s tate i s t oo w eak t o c ontrol i ts f rontiers, t hese territories often become a ‘no-man’s land’ in which rebels reign and terrorise local populations. T he failure of the state to provide security to its citizens in m arginal t erritories e ndangers t heir lo yality t o t he s tate a nd g ives r ebels a n advantage when faced with responses such as military operations.

Foreign support given to rebels includes intelligence, training facilities, weapons and ammunition, logistical assistance, tactical advice, financial support and sanctuary. S uch support allows ANSGs to expand their are as of operations across borders and makes it harder to deal with them without a regional strategy. In a later section, we in fact show that countries in the Great Lakes region have now devised a regional strategy to deal with ANSGs.
Ideen Sa lehyan p oints o ut t hat sin ce ext rateritorial b ases a s e a ll ow r e bels t o prolong conflicts and contribute to r egional ostilites and in sta bility, there is a ‘necessity o f a b road r egional co operation in b ringing a bout a n en d t o transnational rebellions.’ In order to end armed conflicts, ‘rebel host states must provide credible promises of their own to demonstrate that foreign combatants on their territory are not welcome, now and in the future. They must also monitor and verify rebel disarmament.’ Even if a state has superior military capabilities to keep rebels outside its boundaries, ANSGs such as the FDLR and the LRA could still continue to threaten and undermine the livelihoods of the citizens of those countries where they are allowed to roam free. Saleyhan argues that conflict can be terminated by ‘removal of sanctuary and actions by host states’ as was the case in Rwanda.

Due to the artificial partitioning of Africa and the marginalisation of ethnic groups across borders, transnational rebel groups are easily exploited by ANSGs. This is why ANSGs that rely on ‘sociocultural and sociospatial settings … are not bound by territorial borders,’ especially those who are members of ethnic communities that straddle state boundaries. Transboundary rebel groups are difficult to manage due to the external resources, sanctuary and support that they receive, which lessens their dependence on the goodwill of the domestic populations.

**APPRAOCHES TO CONFRONTING THE ANSG PHENOMENON IN AFRICA**

**Local responses**

How an ANSG behaves determines, to a large extent, the support it receives from the local population and the level of success in meeting its objectives. ANSGs rely on local support to launch their campaigns against the state. Capitalising on local support are nd k nowledge o f t he lo cal t errain, ANSGs can initially frustrate government responses and draw out the conflict for a long period. A state’s control of a territory does not guarantee the support of the local population, particularly if it has been marginalised and excluded from the centre of power. Most military campaigns against rebel groups have been largely unsuccessful because they lacked intelligence and were not planned with a clear understanding of these groups’ areas of operations. ANSGs, in most cases, possess accurate intelligence, are privy to government plans and retreat before operations or dissolve in to civilian populations.

Local communities respond to ANSGs in varied ways. In most cases, they flee their homes and seek safety in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps or across borders. In other cases, locals protect themselves and their property by taking up arms and forming self-defence units. There are also cases where locals support rebels or join them to ensure their property and families are safe from attacks. However, in most situations, a state’s actions in perating o f t he LRA h ave been largely unsuccessful because they lacked a clear understanding o f t he c ra b groups’ and leverage in the conflict. While some of the former combatants are reluctant to come forward to be demobilised for fear of being held accountable for their actions during the conflict, others are disinclined to hand over their weapons or reveal their actual involvement in the conflict. While local communities are usually afraid to hand over their weapons or reveal their actual involvement in the conflict, they can be intransigent, as their anti-establishment message, cloaked in the form of grievances against the government, resonates with locals. However, the situation changes when, at a later stage, a rebel group alienates itself from the local population often through the brutal tactics it employs, so that it loses the ground advantage. In such a case, it is easier for the government to succeed in ending the conflict by exerting military and diplomatic pressure. However, military measures may not be adequate in some cases, as was the case in northern Uganda during three highly publicised operations against the LRA, which were widely criticised for failing to eliminate the Kony menace and left civilians vulnerable to his reprisals. In the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), locals have formed civil defence units to protect themselves, similar to the formation of the Kamajor in Sierra Leone. In the long run, these units could transform themselves into full-fledged rebel and militia groups filling the void left by the lack of a state presence.
Apart from its leadership and organisation, the en durance and success of a rebel group depend on how the local population support and an availability of funds to finance the logistics of a military campaign. Consequently, it has to tap into two sources: '[E]conomic endowments, which come from diverse sources, including natural resources, external patronage; and social endowments, in cluding shared beliefs, expectations and norms that may exist in certain ethnic, religious, cultural or ideological groups.' Therefore, a strategy for confronting ANSGs must aim at denying them such resources, because their availability, particularly at the beginning, determines the type of members and way in which they are recruited, and how they commit to the group’s objectives. The ability of ANSG leaders to gain access to and use these resources determines how its members behave vis-à-vis civilians and how long it lasts. Further, if they are few resources, members would probably engage in looting and other criminal activities to acquire funds. However, if they have access to natural resources, they could create a war economy in which they play different roles.

In countries where ANSGs are factors in the natural resource curse, a common state response to rebel activities is the use of brute force, aimed at eliminating the groups, in police and military operations and the activities of paramilitary and pro-government militia groups. In a statement given before the United Nations Human Rights Council, Professor Philip Alston, the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, pointed out that ‘hyper-active death squads’ bring ‘no relief’ to the ANSG violence. Instead, ‘they have only succeeded in undermining the rule of law, distracting the police force from their protection and investigative roles, fuelling the cycle of violence and tarnishing [the government’s] reputation.’ Alston advised governments to come up with ‘a detailed and convincing strategy for combating violence, extortion and other crimes by gangs’ and avoid making statements that the government will ‘crush’ or ‘smash’ such groups.

Governments in decisiveness and im proper responses have also emboldened impunity and emboldened these groups. Though state responses are a key factor in containing ANSG activities, if an operation is carried out in ways that alienate the local population, it ends up driving it into the arms of the rebels. Ibaba and Ikelegbe argue that ‘violent repression of conflicts will accentuate insecurity’ and ‘sweeps the causes of agitation and dissent under the carpet for a moment’ only for them to ‘flare up again, often with disastrous consequences.’

Addressing the ANSG phenomenon is not solely a law enforcement measure calling for the application of brute force, as this approach not only violates human rights through arbitrary executions and instilling fear in civilian populations, but also generates counterviolence and lawlessness, which these groups exploit. This is clearly illustrated by Oloo’s analysis in Chapter 6 of the factors that contribute to the armed groups in Kenya. The two main reasons why there is a ‘proliferation of armed militias’ are ‘the failure by the government to arrest, prosecute and punish members of these militias’ and public in terest-based participation [which] will enhance accountability and transparency’ and, by extension, popular participation in government.

**State responses**

In her chapter on the analysis of ANSGs through the comprehensive framework of their ‘relationship with the government and attitude towards state monopoly of violence’, Engels points out that national armies play a crucial role in the emergence of armed non-state groups. Ibaba and Ikelegbe, Oloo and Wassara also call for special attention to the role that state violence plays in germinating rebel activities. A common state response to rebel activities is the use of brute force, aimed at eliminating the groups, in police and military operations and the activities of paramilitary and pro-government militia groups. In a statement given before the United Nations Human Rights Council, Professor Philip Alston, the special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, pointed out that ‘hyper-active death squads’ bring ‘no relief’ to the ANSG violence. Instead, ‘they have only succeeded in undermining the rule of law, distracting the police force from their protection and investigative roles, fuelling the cycle of violence and tarnishing [the government’s] reputation.’ Alston advised governments to come up with ‘a detailed and convincing strategy for combating violence, extortion and other crimes by gangs’ and avoid making statements that the government will ‘crush’ or ‘smash’ such groups.

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generate conditions such as poverty that lead to the emergence of these groups. This means addressing this phenomenon requires a comprehensive approach that includes punishment, democratic governance, equitable distribution of national wealth and/or resources, and promotion of peace values.

The failure of brute force to repress the ANSG phenomenon and rebellion and the sinister motives that sometimes underlie such an approach are demonstrated by the following examples. When the Mengistu government was confronted by a rebel insurgency in the Ogaden in 1980, it adopted a policy of depopulating the region. Calling it ‘a final solution’ to the Somali in insurgencies, the government aimed at forcing an exodus of Somali-speaking Ethiopians ‘as a way of ending the 20-year-old guerrilla war in the Ogaden’. The policy entailed government soldiers ‘machine gunning herds of camels, robbing and burning fields, destroying settled farms and taking a way young men to fight in Eritrea’. Although Ethiopia had defeated the Somali army that invaded the region in March 1978, a rebel group, the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), continued to wage an irredentist war with the support of Egypt and Iraq. When the front ceased to exist in 1989, a splinter group formed the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF).

In northern Uganda, the government of Museveni established a system to protect the local population from the LRA rebels and also depopulate the rural areas in order to allow mopping up by the military. This encampment of local populations was also aimed at controlling the local populations and ensuring they neither supported the LRA nor dissented against the government. Nevertheless, argues Chris Dolan, the local population was subjected to social torture through enforced depedency on a protection system that threatened its social, economic, and psychological wellbeing. The ‘protected villages’ that were set up in northern Uganda (which turned out to be squalid internal displacement camps) were criticised by human rights groups for making the residents more vulnerable to various violations by the Uganda People’s Defence Force (UPDF) and the LRA. Dolan argues that ending the LRA insurgency has not been in the government’s interests, as that would have deprived it of its reason for controlling a population regardless of their identity.

Counterinsurgency against the LRA, apart from serving this purpose, has also been used to enhance economic interests of the military through dubious purchases of weapons and hiring of ‘ghost soldiers’. Fighting against militia groups such as the Hutaree in the United States has particularity been carried out with the overt 500 unorganised militia groups such as the Hutaree, which is part of the National Guard or the Naval Militia. Between 27 and 29 March 2010, a joint anti-terrorism taskforce comprising state and local police forces, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives carried out special operations that led to the arrest of over 500 individuals, who are members of a militia group known as the Hutaree. The group was allegedly planning to commit mass violence. Apart from monitoring the group’s use of media such as YouTube, Facebook, radio broadcasts, e-mail and voice communications, law enforcement agencies also infiltrated the group and gained knowledge on its plans, which made it possible to arrest the members.

Some governments use the presence of ANSGs to militarise the state by pointing out that their activities are inimical to state and human security. For that reason, governments proceed to increase military budgets, and adopt draconian laws and measures that in the short and long term severely undermine state legitimacy and the culture of human rights. In Kenya, there are severe penalties that the National Security Intelligence Service was responsible for setting up and sustaining a rebel group, the February 18 Revolutionary Army, in the early 1990s to boost and justify its high budget allocations to security apparatuses.

With regard to North Africa, George a nd Yローン s in chapter 12 that confronting Islamist militancy could be complicated by the fact that their link to the ‘global jihad’ is no longer clear. The approach of some states to allow Islamist political parties has yielded some positive results when combined with changes in government policies that have yielded some positive results when combined with changes in government policies that have made it possible to contain it. The government’s special operation Branch, an intelligence organisation that was later replaced by the National Security Intelligence Service, was responsible for setting up and sustaining a rebel group, the February 18 Revolutionary Army, in the early 1990s to boost and justify its high budget allocations to security apparatuses.

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Transforming ANSGs into civil actors: cases and challenges

How can ANSGs be transformed into parties that vie for and properly use political power? The answer to this question could be of interest to the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM), which recently won elections in south Sudan and is poised to run it as the newest state in Africa after a referendum next year. Many rebel groups find it difficult to transform into a political party or to function in a democratic political system. W ith a few exceptions, rebel groups such as the SPLA, RENAMO (the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, Mozambican National Resistance) and RUF have found the political terrain too rugged to navigate with a guerrilla mindset and modus operandi. These groups, as Justin Pearce put it in chapter 13, ‘have suffered as a result of a particular kind of authoritarian leadership’. As Pearce notes, the performances of these groups in post-conflict political environments prove that a political relationship, forged in wartime, has nothing in common with the workings of a political party in a democracy.

Although Uganda’s National Resistance Army (NRA) and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) stand out as good examples of rebel groups that successfully transformed themselves in to r espectable r uling p arties, t he S PLM h as b een accused of being dictatorial and embracing a guerrilla mentality while in power. During the 22 years it fought a bush war against the north, the SPLM was never run as a democratic outfit and is known to have dealt mercilessly with dissent on several occasions. In the past few years that the SPLM has been learning the ropes of governance and statecraft, it has faced serious questions about its commitment to democracy, governance and human rights. The fallout from the April 2010 elections seems to have generated splinter groups that want to use violence to gain acceptance in the new political dispensation.

An interesting transformation of an ANSG in to a political party is that of Kenya’s outlawed Mungiki sect, which transformed itself into the Kenya National Youth Alliance (KNYA). Despite proscription, jailing of its members and being targeted by special police squads for elimination, the Mungiki has become a force to reckon with on Kenya’s political landscape. Claiming millions of members, it has recently attempted to influence political developments in the country by either sponsoring politicians in elections or supporting politicians to promote causes such as adoption of a new constitution that seeks to address Kenya’s long-standing historical grievances and injustices.

However, Denis Tull and Andreas Mehler are opposing to providing rebels with a share of state power, as it creates an incentive for groups to seek power through insurgent violence. ‘Ian S pears i s a lso o pposed t o p ower s haring b etween governments and ANSGs because it ‘is a surprisingly unstable form of government that … p rovides o nly a s hort-term r efuge f rom v iolent co nflict’, i s v irtually unworkable beyond the transitional phase, as it is difficult to implement, and ‘does not resolve co nflict b ut in stead m ay o nly t emporarily di splace i t o r di sguise disputants’ more malevolent intentions.’ Among power-sharing agreements that failed were those formed to influence political developments in the country by either sponsoring politicians or having its own members run for office. Apart from converting to Christianity or joining establishment politicians to promote causes such as adoption of a new constitution that seeks to address Kenya’s long-standing historical grievances and injustices.

While groups such as the RPF captured power after the failure of the Arusha Peace Agreement because of a f g overnment h ardliners w ho w ere o pposed t o t he arrangement, others, such as the RPF and the Mwenye-ldi Alliance (NRA), seized power after abandoning the Nairobi Agreement with the Nk obra Agreement with the h ardeness of mili ty g overnment. Indeed, as Patricia Daley argues, approaches that seek to simply establish negative peace through ceasefires, transitional governments, demilitarisation and constitutional reform that end in democratic elections cannot be expected to guarantee long-term peace. Ending existing violent conflicts through agreements that establish positive peace is the best guarantee for preventing future conflicts.

Governments must develop coherent approaches for addressing ANSGs based on an understanding of their objectives and the reasons that gave rise to them, instead of f m aking k nee jers r esponses t hat cr iminalise a nd b rand t hem a s ‘terrorists’, and using brute force to eliminate them. Criminalising and labelling a group as ‘terrorists’ inevitably shuts out peaceful negotiation options and opens the

effectively prevented an uprising that the group had intended to trigger by killing police officers to provoke a heavy-handed government reaction.45

African governments have traditionally sought to subjugate insurgencies through military force, as most consider negotiating with opponents to be a sign of weakness. Consequently, most armed conflicts between government forces and ANSGs, such as that between the Government of Sudan and the SPLA, take long to end. Of ten, the in surgent g roups e ventually n egotiate t hemselves in to government, as was the case with the SPLA, RENAMO (the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, Mozambican National Resistance) and RUF.
Confronting the threats of armed non-state groups to human security and the state in Africa

Regional responses

Saleyhan argues that although ‘building domestic institutions and state capacity, fostering economic growth, reducing corruption and power-sharing among ethnic groups’ have been offered as strategies for confronting ANSGs, they should be undertaken within a regional framework. However, ‘regional strategy does not deny the im portance of local policing and service provision. Rather, it adds meaningful international cooperation among states in the region to the mix of solutions to a civil conflict’.52

Conflicts in which ANSGs are supported by other states are difficult to address unless these states take a co mprehensive approach to support the Ugandan government. The best example of the use of a regional framework for such a purpose is the International Conference on the Great Lakes region (ICGLR) of Africa. A r egional p act, s uch a s t hat o f t he I CGLR, i s a n appropriate measure of co nflict resolution, peace and stability. The best example of the use of a regional framework for such a purpose is the International Conference on the Great Lakes region (ICGLR) of Africa. A regional pact, such as that of the ICGLR, is an appropriate measure to contain conflict and integrate communities.

Since ANSGs s uch as t he LRA have regionalised themselves through their activities, networking and sponsorships, regional mechanisms are needed to deal with them. Such mechanisms should contain conflict breakers such as those called for in the ICGLR pact, p articularly t he es tablishment of a r egional projects on governance and economic growth that aim at eliminating conditions that give rise to and sustain ANSGs.53 The affected countries can also take joint regional measures that help to avoid them since they ‘go only so far in (temporarily) containing violence’. Instead, Sa leyhan r ecommends mediation, w hich i s m ore likely t o succeed in s oling ‘long-standing in surgencies’.54 And where ANSGs appear to be still active, attempts should be made to create an environment that allows peaceful negotiations to take place. This could be meaningful in international cooperation among states in the region to the mix of solutions to a civil conflict.55

Furthermore, continental initiatives such as that by the African Union to transform borders into bridges of cooperation and integration could eliminate conditions that allow border areas to be areas of conflict.56 Since ANSGs such as the LRA have regionalised themselves through their activities, networking and sponsorships, regional mechanisms are needed to deal with them.57 Such mechanisms should contain conflict breakers such as those called for in the ICGLR pact, particularly those that aim at establishing a regional framework to deal with ANSGs.58 The affected countries can also take joint regional measures that help to avoid them since they ‘go only so far in (temporarily) containing violence’. Instead, Saleyhan recommends mediation, which is more likely to succeed in solving ‘long-standing insurgencies’. And where ANSGs appear to still be active, attempts should be made to create an environment that allows peaceful negotiations to take place. This could be meaningful in international cooperation among states in the region to the mix of solutions to a civil conflict.59

Poor implementation of a peace agreement can have catastrophic consequences, as Gilbert K hadiagala confirms: ‘Rwanda’s genocide resulted in part from the failure of international actors. As Engels (chapter 2), Omach (chapter 10) and Munene (chapter 15) point out, there are rebel activities that transcend national borders and have regional dimensions. Addressing rebel activities in conflict clusters such as the Mano River and Great Lakes regions can be very complicated due to the skill with which these groups tactically and strategically use porous borders. In the Mano River conflict, there are rebel activities that transcend national borders and have regional dimensions. Addressing rebel activities in conflict clusters such as the Mano River and Great Lakes regions can be very complicated due to the skill with which these groups tactically and strategically use porous borders. In the Mano River conflict, there are rebel activities that transcend national borders and have regional dimensions. Addressing rebel activities in conflict clusters such as the Mano River and Great Lakes regions can be very complicated due to the skill with which these groups tactically and strategically use porous borders.
cluster, for example, rebel groups formed networks and worked closely together, which required a regional framework that included local, national, regional and international actors to address the rebel activities. Such a framework, according to Omach, should focus on border areas and aim to establish an effective state authority and meaningful administrative structures that would prevent the spread of terrorism. Saleyan proposes that the UN Security Council must treat deliberate support for another territory as an act of direct military aggression and violation of the UN Charter. He proposes that “the UN Security Council must treat deliberate support for another state’s rebel organisation as an act of war and adopt an equivalent response.”

International responses

International discourses on African human security have, since 11 September 2001, focused on the security-development nexus and securitisation of poverty-stricken Africa. Rita Abrahamson argues that by linking the source of its security threats in Africa to poverty and development levels, the West has justified its securitisation of its foreign policy to root out radical elements. It is further argued that the high poverty levels and poor governance in Africa are threats to Western security, a threat that can be exploited by rebel groups to further their political and economic agendas. The West has justified its securitisation of poverty in Africa by framing it as a threat to its security, which it then uses as a justification for military intervention.

Although each ANSG activity has elicited different international responses, the most common have been the establishment of international coalitions, the formation of multilateral organisations, and the implementation of international initiatives and measures. The most common one is the certification mechanism for the region’s natural resources, which seeks to address the threat posed by armed groups such as the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This mechanism aims to end state-sponsored rebel activities such as the LRA in Uganda by the end of 2009. The certification mechanism for the region’s natural resources is expected to address the threat posed by armed groups in the region.

The latest international attempt to stamp out rebel activities is the US Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) military command (AFRICOM), whose task is to break up a network of rebel groups that coexist and promote fundamentalism or radical ideology as a threat to Western security. The LRA is a threat to Western security, as it has been through the framework under which Rwandan and Ugandan forces have launched Operation Amani, Operation Kimia, and Operation Lightning Thunder to pursue rebel groups such as the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and the LRA into the DRC. This pact also aims to end state-sponsored rebel activities such as the LRA in Uganda by the end of 2009. The certification mechanism for the region’s natural resources is expected to address the threat posed by armed groups in the region.

This leaves the question: what actions can be taken to address ANSG threats to human and state security in Africa?

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those natural resources with the highest potential for illegal exploitation by rebel
groups and others financing armed conflicts. This certification mechanism has yet
to be developed and implemented due to a lack of political will and financial
commitment by the governments in the region and the international
community.

Other international responses have included deployment of AU and UN forces
and arraignment of rebel leaders such as Joseph Kony and Thomas Lubanga, and
President Omar el-Bashir, before the International Criminal Court (ICC) for
discharging, harming, raping and killing civilians. The successes of these measures
are mixed, as both AU and UN missions in Somalia and the DRC have yet to wipe
out a ny ANSG that threatens human security and un dermines the establishment of
state sovereignty. The effectiveness of international justice to deter ANSGs that target
and use violence against civilians is discussed in detail in the next section.

The AU has made a firm commitment to address the phenomenon of ANSGs through
the adoption of a charter on democracy that prohibits, rejects and condems unconstitutional change of government in a member state (article 2(4)). African countries are also encouraged to ‘cooperate with each other to
ensure that those attempting to remove an elected government through unconstitutional means are dealt with in accordance with the law’ (article 14[3]). This charter cites an armed rebellion against a democratically elected government as one of the ‘illegal means of accessing or maintaining power [that] constitute an unconstitutional change of government’ (article 23).

The AU does not recognize militias and armed religious groups as liberation
movements that are exempted under the terrorism definition by ‘the principles of
international law for liberation or self-determination, including a targeted struggle
to achieve political, philosophical, ideological, racial, religious or other motives’ (article 3[1]). The AU further prohibits the use of force in conflict (article 3[2]). In addition, the international community can employ a variety of instruments to confront ANSGs and limit their negative impact on civilians and the state:

- **Name, shame and target ANSGs for national, regional and international action.** In order to do this, ANSGs should be closely monitored by national and international organisations that ‘gather information on human rights violations, assess its validity, and write reports that are quickly made public and placed in the hands of key policymakers and the media’. However, Weinstein and Jeffrey Herbst question how naming and shaming in the media can influence the behaviour of a rebel group such as the LRA, which does not seem to care how it is viewed by Ugandans and the international community. Indeed, the LRA has been known to engage in atrocious acts to draw attention and generate publicity for itself. Naming and shaming will be effective only if they lead to serious consequences for ANSGs.

- **Impose sanctions on ANSGs that respect international humanitarian and human rights laws are too blunt, too ineffective, or wholly irrelevant**. To overcome this, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) is carrying out an innovative programme in the Central African Republic to ‘train those untruths’ of a med group in human rights and international law, Geneva Convention or any other international laws. Members of the main rebel group, L’Armée Populaire pour la Restauration de la République et la Démocratie (Popular Army for the Restoration of the Republic and Democracy, APRD), are trained not only in procedures to follow at a checkpoint but are respectful of rights, but also in international laws regarding civilian protection in armed conflicts. These rebels are given the incentive of recognition and legitimacy if they respect human rights and laws of conflict, as the rebels undergoing the training have shown a keen interest in learning about international humanitarian laws and applying them in the field.

In addition, the international community can employ a variety of instruments to confront ANSGs and limit their negative impact on civilians and the state:
commodities emerging from conflict areas. Such sanctions ‘are designed to criminalise specific suppliers within an otherwise licit industry.’ Sanctions against ANSGs can take two forms.

The first type aims at gaining ‘economic leverage over combatant factions by limiting their capacity to trade in particular commodities.’ These sanctions specifically target governments that support rebel groups and leaders of the groups. However, if these sanctions work, they must be monitored on the ground and states must cooperate to enforce them. Although the record of commodity sanctions has been mixed, the impact of the UN’s sanctions to weaken UNITA has been cited as a successful example.

The second type is certification of commodities from conflict areas, which aims ‘to prevent the trade in a specific commodity from particular producers’ from being sold on the world markets. Since certification can be used concurrently with other measures, for instance, the Ugandan government offered amnesty packages to LRA combatants under a law guaranteeing them a resettlement package that includes a lump sum of about US$150, a mattress, blanket, hoe, and some seeds. Although the Uganda Amnesty Commission claims to have demobilised 162,450 individuals and provided reintegration support to 14,604 others, the effectiveness of the programme has been widely questioned, as some of its beneficiaries were never fully integrated, have returned to rebel ranks or have taken up a life of crime to survive. The effectiveness of the Nigerian amnesty programme, which was launched in October 2009 to end militia activities in the Niger Delta region and is currently being implemented, is also being questioned. Apart from the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for Rough Diamonds, another example of eliminating trade in conflict natural resources is the Great Lakes region’s ‘mineral certification of origin scheme.’ If effectively carried out, sanctions and certification regimes …[that can] choke the lifeline that sustains a region’s on-state groups’ and ‘help to starve belligerents of the means of generating revenue, make the benefits of peace more attractive, or raise the costs of trade sufficiently to deter their leaders from adopting belligerent postures.’ The effectiveness of such sanctions ‘may be limited by the willingness of firms that purchase uncertified products. 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groups that are fighting for national liberation, and are effectively recognised by the Additional Protocol to the Geneva Convention, have been denied recognition by states that instead treat them as criminals or terrorists. This has conveniently allowed governments to apply national criminal laws to deal with these groups. Regardless of whether the state regards ANSGs as rebels, criminals or terrorists, they are obligated under international humanitarian laws to handle them in ways that do not violate their rights. On their part, ANSGs are also obligated to observe and respect international human rights and humanitarian laws.

Some rebels groups have made it easy for governments to brand them criminals due to their actions that are in violation of national laws that categorise them as criminals or terrorists, others have refused to ratify or apply international laws that would give them legal status. This further complicates peacemaking efforts, as governments take obdurate positions of not negotiating with ‘terrorist’ or ‘criminal’ groups.

Currently, the international community is inclined to hold leaders and members of ANSGs accountable for violations of international humanitarian and human rights laws. Apart from the application of the universal jurisdiction principle, there are various institutional forums such as ad hoc tribunals – for example the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and the ICC, that are being used to deter and punish human rights violations committed by armed non-state groups. The main aim of these trials and tribunals is to send a strong signal to perpetrators and would-be perpetrators that they will be held individually accountable for human rights violations they commit.

However, in order for these trials and tribunals to effectively influence the behaviour of ANSGs and their leaders, they must be seen to restore justice and punish perpetrators of violence. Drawn-out trials such as that of Charles Taylor and the perpetrators of the 1994 Rwanda genocide at the ICTR, as well as the seeming powerlessness of the ICC to arrest Joseph Kony and his commanders, have lowered the expectation in many of these instances of international justice to contribute to the promotion of peace and justice in Africa.

Julian Ku and Jide Nzelibe argue that if ANSGs are operating in weak states, they are more likely to be deterred by informal sanctions such as death, imprisonment and torture than by international criminal tribunals. Furthermore, it is unrealistic to assume that ‘international criminal impanelled tribunals can deter violence. A bigger challenge for enforcing international justice in Africa lies in African governments’ reluctance to support prosecution of African criminals in international courts. African governments argue that the International Criminal Court cannot address the type of violence committed by groups against other groups. Futhermore, they argue that they are simply unattainable. It is unrealistic to assume that international criminal impanelled tribunals can address the unattainable international justice process.

Legal measures would address the underpinning causes of violence only if they were undertaken in co-accordance with political and economic development. The main aim of these trials and tribunals is to send a strong signal to perpetrators and would-be perpetrators that they will be held individually accountable for human rights violations they commit.

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CONCLUSION

As stated above, this book is an exercise in bringing about a greater and deeper understanding about ANSGs in Africa by providing a comprehensive framework of analysis that categorises them and analyses each group’s motives, mobilisation and recruitment, as well as its relationship to the state as either an instrument or victim of its violence. Such a framework will assist with the conduct of in-depth studies of ANSGs and produce knowledge that informs efforts to confront their threats to human and state security. The utility of such a framework in policy formation lies in providing information on options for dealing with ANSGs that transcend a “one-size-fits-all” approach to prevent and combat ANSG activities, as it recognises that each group has unique characteristics that require tailor-made responses. The exercise of generating effective policy responses should start with a thorough mapping of a group’s background, raison d’être, organisational structure, leadership, modus operandi and sources of sustainability and support. This should be followed by analysis of the dynamics of ANSGs that enable it to live in just, democratic and fair societies. Citizen knowledge of these dynamics of ANSGs is critical for holding them accountable through local legal systems or international bodies such as the ICC. However, whatever combination of approaches is adopted at the local, national, regional and international levels, the burden of responsibility for combating and preventing ANSG activities lies with the states themselves. Ik elegbe clearly illustrated the correlations between the nature of states, how they are governed and the phenomenon of non-state institutions of violence. If a state is badly governed, constantly threatens the livelihoods of its population, excludes and marginalises segments of its population (particularly the youth) and uses violence to legitimise itself, then there is a high likelihood that its citizens could be lured into joining ANSGs, as the case studies in this book have shown. But citizens also have the responsibility of ensuring that good leaders run their states properly and according to their wishes, which means that the citizenry must possess the ‘software of peace’ that enables it to live in just, democratic and fair societies. Citizen knowledge of international humanitarian law and the consequences of violating these laws could help them to block politicians or warlords from forming militias and launching attacks against civilians. Monitoring and documenting activities of politicians and other political opportunists are critical for holding them accountable through local legal systems or international bodies such as the ICC.

Ultimately, the responsibility for ensuring that good leaders run their states properly and according to their wishes, which means that the citizenry must possess the ‘software of peace’ that enables it to live in just, democratic and fair societies. Citizen knowledge of international humanitarian law and the consequences of violating these laws could help them to block politicians or warlords from forming militias and launching attacks against civilians. Monitoring and documenting activities of politicians and other political opportunists are critical for holding them accountable through local legal systems or international bodies such as the ICC.

2. For a detailed analysis of the nexus between state, governance and rebel formation, see Denis Tull. *The reconfiguration of political order in Africa: a case study of North Kivu* (DR Congo), Hamburg: GIGA, 2005.


44 This question is a nuanced in det ail by J eroen de Ze euw, U nderstanding t he political transformation of rebel movements, in J eroen de Z eeuw (ed.), From soldiers to politicians: transforming rebel movements after civil war, Boulder, Colo: Ly nne Riener, 2008; M immi Söderberg Kowacs, When rebels change their stripes, in Anna K Jarstad and Timothy D Sisk (eds), From war to democracy: the dilemmas of peacekeeping, Cambridge, Mas s: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

45 Pearce, chapter 13, 380.


50 Omach, chapter 10, 307.

51 Saleyan, Rebels without borders, 172.

52 Ibid.

53 See A frican Union, D eclaration o n t he Af rican Union B order P rogramme a nd i ts implementation of peace agreements, in Steve n John Stedman, D onald S Ro tchild and E lizabeth M Cousens (eds), Ending ci vil w ars: t he dilemmas of peace agreements, Boulder, Colo: Ly nne Re nner, 2002, 463.

54 Omach, chapter 10, 307.

55 Saleyan, Rebels without borders, 173.


57 Gilbert Khadiagala, Implementing the Arusha Peace Agreement on Rwanda, in Stephen John Stedman, D onald R othchild and E lizabeth M Cousens (eds), Ending ci vil w ars: t he implementation of peace agreements, Boulder, Colo: Ly nne R iener, 2002, 463.

58 Omach, chapter 10, 307.

59 Saleyan, Rebels without borders, 173.


66 Saleyan, Rebels without borders, 162.

67 Weinstein, Inside rebellion, 343.


69 Weinstein, Inside rebellion, 344.


71 Ibid, 346.

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid.

76 Kimberley P rocess C ertification S cheme f or R ough Di amonds, ado pted a t a mini sterial meeting in I nterlaken on 5 N ovember 2002, h ttp://www.kimberleyprocess.com (accessed 5 April 2010).

77 Weinstein, Inside rebellion, 347.

78 Ibid.

79 Ibid, 348.


83 Bert V A R öling, Th e lega l s tatus o f r ebels a nd r ebellion, From war to democracy: the dilemmas of peacekeeping, Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

84 Weinstein, Inside rebellion, 343.

85 Ibid, 349.

On page 469 of the book, there is an Appendix listing militia and rebel groups in post-independent sub-Saharan Africa. The table below contains this information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Name of group</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Time period and further notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>Frente Nacional da Libertação de Angola</td>
<td>FNLA</td>
<td>Established 1954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola</td>
<td>MPLA</td>
<td>Established 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola</td>
<td>UNITA</td>
<td>Established 1966, supported by US during the Cold War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>Force pour la Défense de la Démocratie</td>
<td>FDD</td>
<td>Established 1994, Hutu-Guerrilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burundi</td>
<td>Parti pour la Libération du Peuple Hutu – Forces Nationales de Libération</td>
<td>PALIPEHUTU - FNL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>Union des Populations du Cameroun</td>
<td>UPC</td>
<td>Established in 1948, led by Ruben Um Nyobé; anti-colonial movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>Mouvement Patriotique pour la Restauration de la République Centrafricaine</td>
<td>MPRC</td>
<td>Established 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>Union des Forces Démocratiques pour le Rassemblement</td>
<td>UFDR</td>
<td>Established 2006, umbrella group (Groupe d’Action Patriotique pour la Libération de Centrafrique + Mouvement des Libérateurs Centrafricains pour la Justice + Front Démocratique Centrafricain)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggested reading:
- Ibid, 832.
- Ibid, 832.
- Ibid, 8.
- Rebel motives are also unpacked by Halvard Buhaug, Relative capability and rebel objective in civil war, *Journal of Peace Research* 43(6) (2006), 691–708.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Established</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Armée Populaire pour la Restauration de la République et la Démocratie</td>
<td>APRD</td>
<td>Established 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>Front Démocratique du Peuple Centrafricain</td>
<td>FDPC</td>
<td>Established 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>Union des Forces Républicaines</td>
<td>UFR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Armée Nationale de Résistance</td>
<td>ANR</td>
<td>Led by Mahamat Garfa (until 1994 commandant of the national armed forces); active in Eastern and Southern Chad, split off in 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Concorde Nationale Tchadienne</td>
<td>CNT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Comité de Sursaut National de la Paix et de la Démocratie</td>
<td>CSNP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Forces Armées du Nord</td>
<td>FAN</td>
<td>Led by Hissen Habré; first rebel movement in Africa since anti-colonial struggles to seize power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Forces Armées de la République Fédérale</td>
<td>FARF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Front de Libération Nationale du Tchad</td>
<td>Frolinat</td>
<td>Established 1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Front Uni pour le Changement Démocratique</td>
<td>FUC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Mouvement pour la Démocratie et la Justice au Tchad</td>
<td>MDJT</td>
<td>Established 1998, northern Chad, ceasefire 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Mouvement pour la Paix, la Réconstruction et le Développement</td>
<td>MPRD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Rassemblement des Forces pour le Changement</td>
<td>RFC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Société pour le Changement, l’Unité et la Démocratie</td>
<td>SCUD</td>
<td>Established 2005, eastern Chad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>Union des Forces pour la Démocratie et le Développement</td>
<td>UFDD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (RC)</td>
<td>Cobras</td>
<td></td>
<td>Second half of the 1990s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Alliance de Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo</td>
<td>AFDL</td>
<td>Established October 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple</td>
<td>CNDP</td>
<td>Established 2006, North Kivu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Conseil National de Libération / Armée Populaire de Libération</td>
<td>CNL/APL</td>
<td>1964–1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Confédération des Associations Tribales de Katanga</td>
<td>Conakat</td>
<td>1960–1963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Forces Démocratique pour la Libération du Rwanda</td>
<td>FDLR</td>
<td>Estimated 9 000 fighters; former Rwandan militaries and militias participating in the 1994 genocide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Front de Libération Nationale Congolais</td>
<td>FLNC</td>
<td>Established 1968 by former army officer Nathaniel Mbumba; military defeat 1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Front Nationalistes et Integrationistes</td>
<td>FNI</td>
<td>Agreed to disarm in August 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Forces de Résistance Patriotique d’Ituri</td>
<td>FRPI</td>
<td>Established November 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country (DRC)</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Mai-Mai militia</td>
<td>Collective term for local militia in the Kivus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Mouvement pour la Libération du Congo</td>
<td>MLC</td>
<td>Established shortly after the beginning of the war in 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Mouvement National Congolais/Lumumba</td>
<td>MNC/L</td>
<td>1960/61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Mouvement National Congolais/Kalondji</td>
<td>MNC/K</td>
<td>1960/61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Mouvement Révolutionnaire Congolais</td>
<td>MRC</td>
<td>Agreed to disarm in August 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie</td>
<td>RCD</td>
<td>Split after the war of 1996/97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>RCD – Mouvement de Libération</td>
<td>RCD-ML</td>
<td>Established 1999, North Kivu, supported by Uganda, split from the RCD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congo (DRC)</td>
<td>Union des Patriotes Congolais</td>
<td>UPC</td>
<td>Established 2002, led by Thomas Lubanga, Ituri region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Congrès des Jeunes Patriotes (Young Patriots’ including student militia)</td>
<td>Cojep</td>
<td>Supports President Laurent Gbagbo (but not government controlled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Forces Nouvelles de Côte d’Ivoire (alliance of Mouvement Patriotique de Côte d’Ivoire, Mouvement pour la Justice et la Paix and Mouvement Populaire pour le Grand Ouest)</td>
<td>FNIC (MPCI + MJP + MPIGO)</td>
<td>Alliance of the FNIC formed in 2003 during the war; political leader Guillaume Soro (now prime minister); supported by traditional Dozo hunters (especially in 2002/03), <a href="http://www.fninfo.ci">http://www.fninfo.ci</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Front de Libération du Grand Ouest</td>
<td>FLGO</td>
<td>Established 2002, ‘patriotic’ youth militia in the Western region (loyal to the president/government side, fought against MJP and MPIGO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Front pour la Sécurité du Centre-Ouest</td>
<td>FSCO</td>
<td>Established 2002, pro-government militia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Groupe Patriotique pour la Paix</td>
<td>GPP</td>
<td>Established 2002, umbrella group of pro-government militia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>Union des Patriotes pour la Libération Totale de la Côte d’Ivoire</td>
<td>UPLTCI</td>
<td>Established 2003, pro-government militia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>Front pour la Restauration de l’Unité et de la Démocratie</td>
<td>FRUD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia/Eritrea</td>
<td>Alliance of Eritrean National Forces</td>
<td>AENF</td>
<td>Established 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia/Eritrea</td>
<td>Eritrean Liberation Front</td>
<td>ELF</td>
<td>Established early 1960s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Ethiopian Democratic Union</td>
<td>EDU</td>
<td>Conservative/monarchist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia/Eritrea</td>
<td>Eritrean People’s Liberation Front</td>
<td>EPLF</td>
<td>Established 1970, split off to form the ELF; linked to the TPLF; EPRDF + EPLF overthrew the Ethiopian government in 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia/Eritrea</td>
<td>Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front</td>
<td>EPRDF</td>
<td>EPRDF + EPLF overthrew the Ethiopian government in 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Islamic Front for the Liberation of Oromiya</td>
<td>IFLO</td>
<td>OLF splinter group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Ogaden National Liberation Front/Army</td>
<td>ONLF/A</td>
<td>Established 1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Tigray Liberation Front</td>
<td>TLF</td>
<td>Established 1974 as a students’ organisation, dissolved 1976 by the TPLF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Tigray People’s Liberation Front</td>
<td>TPLF</td>
<td>Established 1975</td>
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<td>The Gambia</td>
<td>Green Boys</td>
<td>Pro-government, reported to be affiliated with the ruling APRC</td>
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<td>Guinea</td>
<td>Young Volunteers</td>
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<td>Guinea-Bissau</td>
<td>Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde / Frente da Tutta para la Independencia Nacional da Guiné</td>
<td>PAIGC/FLING</td>
<td>Seized power after independence in 1975; overthrown by a coup in 1980</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Rebellion</td>
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<td>Shifta</td>
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<td>Secessionist/separatist war 1963–67</td>
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<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Lofa Defence Force</td>
<td>LDF</td>
<td>Loma-dominated, allied to Charles Taylor</td>
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<td>Liberian Peace Council</td>
<td>LPC</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy</td>
<td>LURD</td>
<td>Established 1993, partly proxy of the armed forces of Liberia, fought against NPFL</td>
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<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia</td>
<td>INPFL</td>
<td>Split to form the NPFL in February 1990 because of personal rivalries between Prince Johnson (INPFL) and Charles Taylor (NFPL)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>National Patriotic Front of Liberia</td>
<td>NPFL</td>
<td>Established 1989, led by Charles Taylor; overthrew Doe's regime in September 1990</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
<td>Movement for Democracy in Liberia</td>
<td>MODEL</td>
<td>Established in early 1993</td>
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<td>JINA (secret organisation)</td>
<td>Established 1945, anti-colonial movement</td>
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<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>Mouvement de la Rénovation Malgache</td>
<td></td>
<td>Established 1945, anti-colonial movement, military defeated 1956</td>
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<td>Mauretania</td>
<td>Frente Popular de Liberación de Seguía el Hamra y El Río de Oro</td>
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<td>RENAMO</td>
<td>1975–1992, supported by US during the Cold War</td>
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<td>Sierra Leone West Side Boys (WSB) Led by Foday Kailay</td>
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<td>Fronasa</td>
<td>Established 1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Holy Spirit Mobile Forces</td>
<td>HSMF</td>
<td>Established by Alice Auma (Alice Lakwena) (later her father, Severino Lukoya) since August 1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
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<td>Established 1987 by Joseph Kony</td>
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<td>Led by Yoweri Museveni, seized power in 1986</td>
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<td>Established 1992, southern Somalia</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Somali National Alliance / United Somali Congress (SNA)</td>
<td>Established July 1992 as an alliance of parts of the USC and the Somali Patriotic Movement; led by Mohammed Farah Aidid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Somali National Front (SNF)</td>
<td>Established 1991</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM)</td>
<td>Established 1989</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Established 1978, declared autonomy of the Puntland region in 1998</td>
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Throughout Africa, armed militia, rebel and militant groups continue to threaten state sovereignty and to destabilise the security of some of even the strongest economies on the continent. The question is: How should African states respond to the challenge posed by such armed groups? The impressive range of case studies gathered here, ranging from the pirates of the Niger Delta and the rebels of the eastern DRC who prey upon rich natural resources, to the cultural and religious advocacy by Kenya’s Mungiki and the armed Islamists of Northern Africa, reveals the complexity of the problem. For all those who wish to understand the contribution these groups make to continuing insecurity in African states, this collection of well-researched case studies is essential reading.

David M Anderson
Professor of African Politics at the University of Oxford
and Fellow at St Cross College, Oxford

Militias, rebels and Islamist militants is a carefully researched study which shows that armed non-state actors have become major contributors to human insecurity on the continent. It analyses the causes of the phenomenon and its consequences on the populations and the capacity (or lack of it) of states to protect against it and deal with it. The book also provides practical suggestions on how to deal with this phenomenon. It is highly recommended reading for scholars, researchers, policy makers and anyone seeking a deeper understanding of militia, rebel and Islamist militant groups and the impact their actions have on human insecurity and the state crisis in Africa.

Major General Henry K Anyidoho
Deputy Joint Special Representative for the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operations in Darfur (UNAMID) and former Deputy Force Commander and Chief of Staff of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR)

Wafula Okumu and Augustine Ikelegbe have done a sterling job in assembling a wide cross-section of able Africanist scholars to analyse the challenging dynamics of violence perpetrated by armed non-state groups which continues to undermine the emergence and maturation of African states in the post-colonial and post-Cold War eras. Africa needs concrete proposals on how to address the human, national and regional insecurity posed by rebel militia and Islamist militant groups. This book is a must-read for both intellectuals and practitioners interested in promoting human security in Africa.

Martin R Rupiya
Executive Director
The African Public Policy & Research Institute (APPRI)

Understanding the genesis and evolution of violent armed groups in Africa is a critical enterprise as part of the effort to contain the phenomenon of weak, failed and failing states in Africa. This book contends that armed militia and insurgent groups with a variety of assorted grievances have proliferated in Africa because of the profound crisis that has bedevilled the project of post-independence nation building on the continent. Militias, rebels and Islamist militants discusses the worrying trend that has emerged from the progressive militarisation of societies and polities across Africa and the formidable challenges of restoring a healthy balance between civilian and military institutions. It reminds one that violent groups and movements are not simply going to fade away and that there is a need for vigorous efforts to check their proliferation.

Gilbert M Khadiagala
Jan Smuts Professor of International Relations
University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

Edited by Wafula Okumu and Augustine Ikelegbe

Militias, Rebels and Islamist Militants: Human Insecurity and State Crises in Africa

Oluwun and Ikelegbe