Les Cahiers de la

Revue Défense Nationale

The Conditions
for Lasting Stability
in Africa

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RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
MINISTÈRE
DES
AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES
ET EUROPÉENNES

Spring 2013

Fondée en 1939

The Conditions
for Lasting Stability
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Translation directed by
Mike Storey

Translated team
Barry Cox
John Halford
Mike Storey

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African Security Challenges in the Great Lakes, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel

Philippe Hugon

Professor emeritus at Paris-Ouest-Nanterre, and director of research at the *Institut de relations internationales et stratégiques* (*Iris*).

In 2012 Africa was home to six high-intensity conflicts, thirty-four of medium intensity and forty-five low intensity. The three principal regions of insecurity are the Great Lakes, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, where the main challenges arise from the links between control of resources (or of the circuits within which those resources are trafficked) and ideological factors, created either through exploitation of the clergy (as in the Sahel, Mali and Somalia) or of ethnic identity factors (as in Kivu). Domestic armed conflict within African countries is linked to regional and international networks and, contrary to what realist theory might lead one to believe, cannot be considered in terms of nation states pursuing power games. Asymmetric warfare is today won less by sheer force than by soft power, starting with the media, disinformation, exploitation of the players concerned, the role of lobbying and shapers of opinion. Cyberspace has become the principal field of recruitment for, and information to and from, terrorist movements. Before 11 September 2001, there were fifteen Islamic web sites on the internet: a stark contrast to the thousands that exist today. Al-Qaida has extended its influence in, and from, Somalia, and in the arc joining the Sahara and the Sahel: two zones greatly affected by the attraction of radical Islam, mass poverty, trafficking, territory beyond state control and an absence of demographic transition.

The Great Lakes conflicts: territorial and mining issues in Kivu

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) or Congo-Kinshasa, is home to more than 60 million inhabitants, spread over 2,345,000 square kilometres of territory. War has resulted in some 4 million deaths since 1996. The DRC had never had any form of democratic process before 2006, and a part of its territory remains under the influence of warlords and plunderers supported by neighbouring countries, several to the north. With its vast underground wealth, the DRC has become known as a geological scandal and yet the state has no control at all over a considerable area of

territory, and little over the wealth that stirs up such envy in other states, among the forces and militias of neighbouring countries and among those multi-national groups which take advantage of the lawless environment. As a result, the economy has become unofficial, shadowy and criminalised. The major crisis centre lies in the border region of Kivu, close to Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda: this region, rich in natural resources, has seen a proliferation of armaments and remains a socio-ethnic hot spot. The 1994 genocide in Rwanda aggravated the conflicts and led to a massive influx of Tutsi and, later, Hutu refugees and migrants. Northern Kivu lies within Rwanda's sphere of influence and is home to 1.3 million migrants and refugees. It is rich in arable land and mineral resources (principally coltan), which are controlled by a number of militia groups including Hutus, Tutsis belonging to the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP sic), M23 (a movement created by soldiers who had participated in Laurent Nkunda's rebellion), and Mai-Mai, and also by Kabila's forces. The UN stabilisation force MONUSCO, which maintains 6,000 men in North Kivu with a vague mandate, is virtually impotent in the face of a humanitarian drama involving half a million displaced persons.
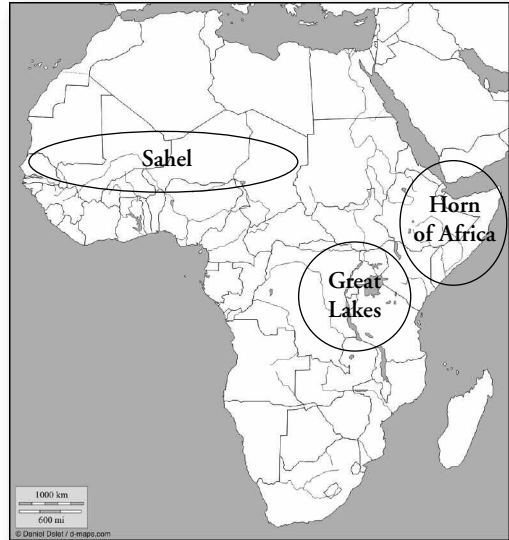
Conflict and terrorism in Somalia and the Horn of Africa

Somalia is divided into three states, Puntland, Somaliland and Mogadishu, and is a member of the Arab League. The country has more than 8 million inhabitants spread across 638,000 sq. km, and for twenty-five years has seen Balkan-style clan warfare and widespread chaos with a heavy toll of between 300,000 and 500,000 dead. Each clan has its own militia. Somalis all speak the same language (Somali), are Sunni Muslims, and are a single people of pastoral tradition. The conflicts are clannish. Between 1992 and 1994, international military interventions, and those of the United States have ended in failure, like that portrayed in the film *Black Hawk Down*. Islamic courts, supported in particular by Eritrea, used the Shura to seize power from the faction heads in the summer of 2006. They brought together many different groups, going as far as to include radical Islamists, and were accused of being an African version of the Afghan Taliban. At the end of 2006, the Transitional Federal Government, supported militarily by Ethiopia and the United States, and indirectly by Kenya, Uganda and Yemen, retook Mogadishu, yet without taking control of the warlords. An African Union force was put in place.

The Shebabs et Jihadists, supported by assets coming from Iran, Afghanistan and Eritrea, fought against the Transitional Federal Government, which controlled only part of the capital. The Somali coastline has become a refuge for piracy, with attacks on sailing vessels, bulk carriers and tankers: 4,000 acts of piracy were recorded between 1990 and 2010. It is of note that 20,000 ships and a third of the world's tankers pass through the strait of Bab-el-Mandeb [annually]. Somalia has also become a zone of war by proxy between Ethiopia and Eritrea. It is also a breeding ground for terrorism: we are reminded of the actions in Uganda, on 11 July and 24 August 2010 and on 24 October 2011, and of hostage-taking including that three years ago of a member of the DGSE (the French Directorate General for External Security) which led to the unsuccessful attempt at rescue by French forces in February 2013. And yet there is no all-embracing jihadism and, once separated from their Islamic courts, the elders could be included in political life.

Against this background, we see a relatively prosperous informal economy operating in a society in which the absence of a state means absence of taxes and customs duties. The economy lives largely on funds coming from the diaspora. There are links with Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in the Sahara-Sahel arc, though they are more ideological than operational.

The Sahara-Sahel arc and Mali

AQIM is a loose conglomeration which was given its name in 2007. It originates from the Algerian Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (*Groupe salafiste pour la prédication et le combat-GSPC*) under the authority of Abdelmalek Droukdel, whose zone of action was mainly in south Algeria. Faced with heavy strikes from the Algerian army, half of the troops were redeployed to northern Mali, north Niger and Mauritania under the leadership of Yahia Djouadi. AQIM has also spread to north Nigeria and Chad. It has a structure with little centralised control, composed of diverse splinter groups or katibas, each with just ten-or-so men. Some katibas identify with an anti-Western jihadism that would wish to set up a Caliphate stretching from Mauritania to Somalia, whereas others have more criminal and mafia-like objectives. Their considerable financial support comes mainly from cocaine, ransoms and other varied trafficking activities.

The growing recruitment to AQIM is facilitated by its presence in an uncontrolled zone, the rise in radical Islamism and idle youth. Fundamentalist Islamic sects in the Sahara-Sahel region provide a natural refuge when family and social structures break down and where a population explosion, vulnerability of ecosystems and rock-bottom wages for young people occur together: it is understandable that criminal activity can flourish within them. The movement's territorial base is a vast area of barely controlled land, some twenty times that of France, in which flourish numerous types of illegal business, especially in cocaine traffic (some 20 per cent of the traffic from America to Europe, where a kilo sells for

5,000 dollars), and ransom demands for hostages (an estimated 5 million dollars per hostage). For some ten years, this area has been under close surveillance by the United States (the Transaharan initiative), France and those countries of the Sahara-Sahel arc most concerned by AQIM (Algeria, Mali, Mauritania and Niger), under joint military cooperation working out of Tamanrasset, in Algeria.

Mali has been the weak link in the Sahara-Sahel arc. Mali's political and military collapse occurred very rapidly after the fall of Gaddafi and the return of heavily armed mercenaries. Behind the democratic façade, many cracks in the structure were created by a combination of vulnerabilities peculiar to Sahelian society and the development of different types of traffic, with drugs top of the list, as well as the arrival of Salafists who had been pushed out of Algeria. The March 2012 putsch punished political and military excesses and weakened political power and that of the army. The northern forces had complete freedom of movement. The National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad, made up of secular Tuaregs, initially played a central role but was later pushed aside by the Ansar Dine group led by Iyad Ag Ghali, a well-known Tuareg and supporter of Sharia law, and also by the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MOJWA) and by AQIM. The military intervention by French and Malian forces on 11 January 2013 (operation Serval), had been long prepared. It had become necessary after the failure of negotiations in Ouagadougou with representatives of Ansar Dine and the capture of Konna by the Jihadists who were also threatening the strategic Malian military base in Sévaré, a victory which opened up the possibility for them to advance to Mopti and Bamako. Timing was critical, since the climate would have prevented any intervention between March and September.

France had to intervene before the arrival of the African troops of the African-led International Support Mission to Mali (AFISMA), any reconstitution of the Malian army and establishment of legitimate power in Mali. The spirit, if not the letter, of UN Resolution 2085, was respected. This intervention was at the request of President Traoré and rendered legitimate by the UN Resolution. Algeria, China and Russia did not condemn it and it received the support of the great majority of Malians and Africans, even if Algerian opinion remained more reserved. France found itself in the front line, relatively isolated within Europe and among Western allies, despite logistic support from the United Kingdom and North America in particular. It would seem that short-term military success has been achieved through air attacks (destruction of arms and fuel dumps and troop convoys) and land operations (recapture of towns). Nevertheless, resistance of a different intensity persists across an area of territory that is half as big again as France. The highly determined Jihadists have the ability to disperse across the land, and are still well armed.

Inevitably, there are risks of getting bogged down in a war, or caught up in an asymmetric one in which the stance of African troops is likely to have limited effect, despite the deployment of solid Nigerian and Chadian forces. The extent of

logistic support, and support from Western countries remains unknown. Longer-term solutions to the many different aspects of the problem have to be both political and military, and in particular, the less radical groups have to be brought back into the political arena (as were the Tuaregs in Mali in the nineteen-nineties). The lasting solution will be to take immediate up- and downstream control of criminal networks (drugs and arms) and gradually to give the young people released from them a real opportunity to re-join society through education, employment and access to paid activities created by economic relaunch.

Factors of Conflict in West Africa

Massaër Diallo

Political analyst and president of the Institute for Political and Strategic Studies, coordinator of the West African Network for Security and Democratic Governance and a former principal administrator of the Sahel and West Africa Club of the OECD.

With the exception of Mauretania, the whole of West Africa lies within the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) area. This community unites the fifteen countries of a region which has remarkable historical and geopolitical coherence. For much of the twenty years since gaining their independence, these countries have lived through crises and conflicts, of which some, in Liberia and Sierra Leone in particular, have been particularly murderous and devastating. Whilst no society that seeks a place in future history can be exempt from conflict, the violent and organised forms of such conflict have a special place. They might, of course, be factors of historical and political change, but might equally constitute a major challenge for peace, security and development of African societies, states and nations. It is therefore important to identify the factors that are peculiar to such types of conflict in order to build both a policy for prevention, and strategies for management and reduction of, and change in violent, armed crises.

Our typical perception of factors in conflict stems from a regional approach which links domestic and local causes to more transnational, cross-border and regional issues. In this way we find factors that are domestic (structural vulnerability and conflict resources) [1] and regional (in particular the cross-border and transnational dynamics, which play a key role in spreading and aggravating crises and conflicts), and also those arising from external influence (such as the weight brought to bear by external powers and various criminal networks on the national, regional and local levels).

Some types of crime, [2] which in other circumstances might simply represent everyday challenges, in the context of fragility of the state become significant

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(1) The notion of conflict resources is relative, and is linked to a context of fragility which is pressurised further by covetousness from outside. Paradoxically, some rare, precious or strategic natural resources become factors of conflict, like the diamonds in Sierra Leone.

(2) The international drugs traffic, among others.

factors of crisis and conflict, and have strong potential for causing social, political and security harm.

Socio-cultural discord between groups or communities within a country can also act as catalysts, aggravating structural factors [3] that lead to conflict.

What, then, of conflict in the context of West Africa? What are the major structural, regional and external factors that shape it?

A context of persistent, violent and politically-inspired conflict

The history of conflict in West Africa, in both recent and distant past, has left its mark in the relationships between communities, and between those communities and the central political power. Current divisive tendencies have their roots in a long tradition of autonomy and resistance to hierarchical and centralised forms of power.

In some countries, militarisation and the sheer weight of the armed forces that is brought to bear in public life continues to increase the risks of crisis and conflict, as was the case in Guinea and Guinea-Bissau. For all that, West Africa several years ago began the process of extracting itself from crisis. The most destructive of armed conflicts, and the most bloody socio-political crises have been managed and resolved to a large extent in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and partially in Togo and Guinea.

The massacre in Guinea on 28 September 2009, the instability in Guinea-Bissau and the resurgence of Tuareg conflicts in Mali and Niger all showed that violent conflict persists on a regional level. It is surely a result of the impact that factors and players continue to have on the peace, security and stability of many countries.

Most of the fifteen ECOWAS members have lived through armed conflict of greater or lesser intensity since the beginning of the nineteen-eighties.[4] Among them, Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria are the economic and demographic heavyweights in the region, while Mali and Niger are the largest countries.

Notwithstanding ECOWAS's commitment to strengthen crisis prevention by an early warning arrangement, which is a mechanism for prevention and management, the fact that conflict persists highlights and gives a measure of the challenges involved, and brings us back to the complex interaction between a wide

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(3) Liberia is an enlightening example, with what the ECOWAS key document on conflict presentation strategy referred to as 'deliberate and systematic marginalisation' of native speakers by Americano-Liberians, which widened structural weaknesses and ended up in violence.

(4) Especially in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal. Other countries have not been exempt from political crises accompanied by armed violence, including Togo and Gambia—the latter witnessed an intervention by the Senegalese army in 1981 to face a coup d'état led by Kukoi Samba Sagna.

variety of factors which need to be understood and dealt with in an overall and coherent manner.

Structural vulnerabilities

Domestic vulnerability is shaped by variables with strong potential for national determination, such as a history of pre-colonial, colonial and post-independence conflict; strong population growth in a context of poverty and inadequate economic performance; fragility of the state; socio-political instability and politically-exploited ethnic diversity.

Regional history marked by conflict

The history of the region has been marked by armed violence linked to conquests, domination and resistance. Wars of political or religious expansion (in imitation of the jihad of Usman Dan Fodio), and resistance thereto, were part and parcel of the great empires and kingdoms of the pre-colonial era, such as Ghana, Mandinka, Bambara and Fula. Violence and resistance marked the long period during which slavery was developed, and it was the same during the colonial conquest, with armed reaction through rebellion and movements for national liberation. These successive episodes in political history determined both culture and behaviour regarding domination and resistance: they shaped relationships with the power base and the armed forces—the Balanta people in Guinea-Bissau are one example of this.

Post-colonial conflict has mainly been internal to states, yet often has a sub-regional reach, such as the conflict that started in Liberia, which ultimately affected all the countries of the Mano river region. New conflicts of civil or military origin have affected the region, too: the principal stakes being overthrow of state power and access to resources (as in Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone); the search for political autonomy, national identity or some other sharing of natural resources between the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and the Tuareg movements in Mali and Niger; or the search for separation (such as Biafra in 1967) or to obtain independent, separatist governance of territory (as in the Casamance region of Senegal in 1982).

Despite the notable improvements in the post-conflict situation, especially in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Mali, residual conflict connected to these different crises remains active and is reignited from time to time (as in the Tuareg rebellions), with occasional peaks of violence (Casamance, for example), or is seen in chronic instability accompanied by political violence, as in Guinea-Bissau.

Such persistence, despite advances made in stabilisation and in construction of peace and democracy in many countries, brings us back to the strong

resonance of many other profound and structural causes, among which the demographic element has an important place as a factor of vulnerability, whatever promise for the future it might carry.

The demographic factor

The demographic constraints of West Africa affect conflict at the social, economic and political levels. The region is seeing rapid population growth: it has gone from 40 million inhabitants in 1930 to 85 million in 1960, and to more than 298 million as of 2007. According to some predictions, the figure will rise to 430 million between 2020 and 2025, representing some 43 per cent of the population of sub-Saharan Africa,[5] and nearly 60 per cent of that of the European Union.

West Africa has one of the youngest populations in the world, with 45 per cent under the age of fifteen, 56 per cent under twenty and 66 per cent under twenty-five.

The demographic growth rate remains very high, at 2.5 per cent [per annum], in an economic environment in which the growth in GDP remains around 5.5 per cent and is unable to reach the 7 per cent [per annum] needed to achieve the millennium development goals.[6]

Socio-political instability and fragility of the state

A history of conflict can also be a factor in social transformation, but the political situation in countries in this region has remained very fragile: 10 of the 15 member states of ECOWAS are considered 'fragile' according to the defining principles of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD. Weakness in the capabilities of a state to provide basic services and the necessary responses to societal and security challenges raises the risks of conflict in an environment of known vulnerabilities and persistent threats.

In the last 50 years, only two of sixteen West African countries have escaped any form of successful military coup d'état.[7] The democracy that is being built is, in some countries, threatened by militarisation of political life or by civil authoritarianism whilst at the same time being undermined by blatant vote-catching, which reduces it to a tool of seizure or retention of power. Elections themselves thus become the initiators and catalysts of crisis. In Togo in 2005, they led to a wave of repression that ended in hundreds of deaths, according to the report of the UN Human Rights Committee.

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(5) The figures come from Vol. 1 of the ECOWAS strategic plan; Abuja, 2007.

(6) Notably for a calculated reduction in extreme poverty of 50 per cent by 2015.

(7) Cape Verde and Senegal.

In many countries the constitution is amended at will and with little planning in order to serve the interests of the power in place, which is determined to hinder political, hence governmental, change. In Niger, such action turned into a civil coup d'état, which in turn led to a military coup d'état in February 2010. The fragility of democracy and the hurdles it faces are aggravated by an increasing trend for coups d'état—in Mauritania, Guinea, Niger and, to some extent, in Guinea-Bissau.

A glance at the demography shows that in many countries half of the population is not yet of voting age. Whilst waiting for their majority, it is easy for this huge age group to feed the growing scourge of children exposed to recruitment to armed conflict, to begging in rapidly-expanding towns and to international traffic of all kinds which destabilise societies in crisis.[8]

Moreover, it is among the 3 per cent of the population who are over 59 years old that we find most of those holding positions of political and institutional power. In these figures we see the rocky foundations of a generational crisis.

Insufficient economic growth and the major challenge of poverty

Twelve countries in the region are members of the group of least advanced countries. Per capita GDP is low, at around US$ 350 per annum, and their average growth rate is 5.5 per cent per annum, albeit with wide variations between countries. Sixty per cent of the population lives on less than one dollar per day.[9]

According to forecasts, accelerating urbanisation means that 60 per cent of the population will be living in towns by 2025.[10] This, together with endemic youth unemployment, slightly increases the risks of conflict and violence.

Security of food supply, which now depends on monetary income, is very sensitive to global and local fluctuations in the cost of basic foodstuffs, whose escalating cost is the trigger for hunger riots.

The importance of ethnic origin

Some countries in West Africa have been affected by 'ethno-geopolitical' divisions, for the most part in a north-south direction. Since colonial times they have been induced, maintained or amplified by unequal or discriminated access to education, among other services, and to the chance of social promotion. It is not ethnic diversity which determines the outset of a given conflict: it depends on the

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(8) See: Massaer Diallo, *Le rôle des partis politiques dans la construction de la paix et la démocratie en Afrique de l'Ouest*, (The Role of Political Parties in Constructing Peace and Democracy in West Africa); SWAC/OECD, Paris, 2005.

(9) Figures from the ECOWAS strategic plan, op. cit.

(10) Nearly 50 per cent do so already.

historical and political relationships of the groups concerned, between themselves and with the power base, in particular with regard to ways of life and personal development. These relationships can turn to conflicts, especially in a competitive environment or where questions of commitment and solidarity in the face of some historical adversity are concerned.

At the same time, certain structural and cultural differences between the groups can become factors of conflict. The coexistence of egalitarian, though minority societies alongside much larger, hierarchical ones creates an environment which, under some historical conditions, is likely to lead to rebellion.[11]

Conflict resources and grey areas

Among its vast natural wealth, Africa has rare or strategic resources such as diamonds, oil, uranium and gold. These are known as conflict resources because they provoke competition, rivalry and armed confrontation to gain control of them, by a variety of players – state or private, local or foreign, unofficial or criminal. Desire for these resources leads to the development of threats which can end up as violent conflicts like those which flared up in the Mano River countries. Grey areas do not necessarily have the same boundaries as the areas containing conflict resources, but the promoters of violence and insecurity nevertheless continue to try to take all control of areas in which they invest heavily (militarily and for economic exploitation) from legal national or international players. This occurs mainly by multiple forms of trafficking of the resources that happen to be in the grey areas, as well as of people, drugs and other illicit products.

The emergence of grey areas besieged by rebel forces, terrorists or various types of criminal are important indicators of developing fragility of a state, already worsened by conflict, and they reflect the serious difficulty that state has in exercising its sovereignty and ensuring the security of the population and the national territory. Nigeria (the Niger Delta), Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Côte d'Ivoire are all cases in point, illustrative of such issues.

Regional and external factors of conflict

Changing and developing systems of conflict

The cross-border and trans-national dynamics that characterise West Africa, and which are linked to the history of its populations, form a permanent background for the factors and actors in conflict. While the latter are centred

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(11) Makhetar Diouf brings this up in his 1998 work on ethnicity and the nation. He mentions the strong similarities between the postures and history of identity-inspired conflict between the Bété people of Côte d'Ivoire and the Diolas in Senegal, two minority communities with strong cultures of autonomy.

locally or nationally, they spread across a region, proliferating and encouraging chronic armed violence, which in turn sets in place the insecurity and instability that contribute to weakness of the state.

A system of conflict brings together a diversity of players and factors of violence in loosely formed organisations[12] whose existence continues even after the main core has been eliminated. The most obvious system is that of the countries of the Mano river region, but there is also a Sahel-Saharan system, which covers the north of Mali, Mauritania and Niger, whose players are of a rather different nature: terrorists, various drug and illegal product trafficking networks, and sections of Tuareg rebels which are hardly distinguishable from Al-Qaida.

Two other conflict systems affect and keep the flames of conflict alight: that of the Gulf of Guinea is based on the Niger Delta and affects the security of countries like Togo and Benin; that based on Senegal and Gambia started with the Casamance rebellion and developed to support the civil war in Guinea-Bissau in 1999, during which the Casamance rebels joined with, and gave enormous help to, the troops of Brigadier General Mané in Bissau.

Regional trade in arms and warmongers

There are more than eight million light and small-calibre weapons in circulation in West Africa, of which half are in the hands of illegal forces.[13] Added to this are the unimpeded mobility of those who inflame conflicts and the number of countries in crisis which are likely to respond to the former's invitation to violence.

Geopolitical pressure

The situation in the north of Mali and in Niger is proof of the expansion of the actions of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), but the territorial ubiquity of the Tuareg population between the Maghreb and West Africa contributes to the de facto pressure put by the North on the South of this area. The southward descent of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC sic) and its mutation into AQIM, now spread across two geopolitical areas, has contributed to turning what was essentially an Algerian internal enemy into a regional and international enemy. Serious risk of conflict is now developing as a result of internationalisation of action on the northern boundary of the ECOWAS zone.

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(12) These loose organisations give rise to or accentuate war economies which contribute to fanning the flames of conflicts through ensuring (as an alternative source, at least) the supply of weapons and men. There are many examples: militias, highway bandits; armed gangs, satellite rebel forces, fragments of defeated conventional military units living off plundered goods; groups of combatants who refuse disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration; and community support or self-defence groups.

(13) See Florquin and Bermann, *Armés mais désœuvrés* (Armed but Idle), Brussels 2006; Groupe de recherche et d'information sur la paix (Grip) and Small arms survey.

Decompartmentalisation and hybridisation of threats

The decompartmentalisation and hybridisation of threats, notably regarding criminal activity (traffic of drugs, humans and goods), terrorism and armed rebellion, represent a new risk factor for conflict. Better knowledge of it is essential in order to build appropriate responses. Peace and security strategies need to give greater scope for coordination, complementarity and coherence of policies and action. AQIM's exploitation of the Tuareg world's traditions of abduction is clouding the landscape and leading us to think that new alliances are being formed, and yet such interlinking that exists between terrorist, traditional or rebel groups may simply be games of self-interest, which falls well short of abolishing borders and differences.

The new forms of conflict and risk of conflict that are appearing could lead to new break-ups and reformations of rebel movements with possibly increased criminalisation of sectors hitherto wrapped up in political and identity issues.

The spectacular rise of AQIM in the Sahel-Sahara strip could also constitute a factor of break-up and reformation (to its benefit) on the fringes of a Tuareg rebellion, whose foundation would nevertheless retain its own impetus. Contretemps between rebels and terrorists could in this way become ever more bitter through the fight for control of territory which is difficult to share peacefully. Similarly, AQIM terrorism is a new factor in the construction of violence that is both organised and uncontrolled within the very heart of the Sahel-Saharan conflict system.

African Insecurities

Cyril Robinet

Head of Mission to the Director of security and defence
cooperation of the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Preliminary note: The following presentation was given at the joint *IHEDN – MEDEF – CIAN – CNCCEF* Seminar
L'Afrique en movement (Africa on the Move), on 11 October 2012.

The very title of this presentation ensures that it will be rather sombre. Despite that, it is not the intention to call into question the generally positive themes that have been heard throughout the day. Yes, Africa is on the move, and the movement is broadly positive but, as Lionel Zinsou said this morning, '*Africa has been growing for thirty years, to the nearest war or so*'. Insecurities are well and truly with us, even though we have left the horrors of the 1990s behind us. My colleagues will discuss solutions, but I shall attempt to outline the trends—positive or negative—of each form of insecurity.

Violations of security are both a brake on development (since they have a negative effect on your investments and commercial activity), and a consequence of bad development. It is this vicious circle that we need to discuss in this forum, since institutions and private-sector players are equally concerned by these insecurities—for you, it is economic activity; for us, national security—and because we are all players in the field of development.

A semantic point is worth making here: insecurity is as much feeling as reality. This changes nothing for you, since you act on this feeling, which lies at the heart of a country's risk analysis.

Insecurities cover a vast field and we must avoid the pitfall of making some inventory of random, quite possibly unrelated, issues. Such would not allow us to understand the underlying reasons of each insecurity hence we would not be able to deal with each. We are therefore going to attempt to classify insecurities by type, linking them to the different forms of attack on the stability of a country. This classification may be determined by the origins of the insecurities in the following manner:

- Insecurity resulting from political practices.

- Insecurity resulting from weakness of the state.

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- Insecurity arising from external influences.

Obviously, these factors to explain insecurity are not mutually exclusive: on the contrary, most of the time they are intermixed. That said, it is always possible to identify a principal driver.

Insecurity resulting from political practices

Here, we are talking of insecurity in its traditional sense, that which has been seen regularly in African countries since their independence. Political violence is inseparable from the development of democratic processes, each phase of democratisation bringing with it its own form of insecurity.

The three decades that followed the main wave of African independencies were politically characterised by the establishment of authoritarian power-bases which refused any form of governmental change through electoral rotation. In such an environment, violence was the only possible way of accession to power, whether by rebellion or coup d'état. The aims of those who lead a rebellion or putsch have nothing to do with democracy (the people have no say in such events), but everything to do with access to public resources. Proof of this lies in the long and stable life of those authoritarian regimes that have managed to share public resources fairly, such as those of Houphouët and Bongo. In contrast, when the aim of the winner of a rebellion is to seize all resources for his own ends—a sort of 'winner takes all' logic—he opens himself to challenge, as in the cases of Chad and the Central African Republic (CAR).

At the beginning of the nineteen-nineties, to borrow Omar Bongo's words, *a wind from the east* [was] *shaking the coconut palms*, and hope for democratising the continent was real. It was known that this democratisation would pass through episodes of violence but that was accepted from the start in the hope that the end state would be peace in the political arena. That is what in practice happened in Mali, when Moussa Traoré was unseated during a popular uprising, and also in Chad, with the fall of Hissène Habré as a result of Idriss Déby's rebellion. The regimes in many countries, whether they fall or not, have to accept the introduction of *Conférences nationales souveraines* (approximately: Sovereign National Councils, whose aim is to bring together all parties) to put the transition to democracy into effect.

Twenty years later, what are the results of these democratisation processes, and of the violence that has accompanied them?

● There have been some real successes: Ghana, Mauritius, the Seychelles, South Africa and Botswana, for example. In francophone Africa, we could include Benin and Senegal, despite the anxiety created by the April 2012 elections.

• At the same time, other countries have seen complete failure, leading to situations in which the democratic process has been interrupted to a greater or lesser extent and has yielded to the restoration of authoritarian regimes. Some of the latter have been openly bloodthirsty (Congo and Zimbabwe, for example); others have been achieved more progressively through elections rigged by vote-catching and fraud. The list of countries that have suffered from the latter is long, and sadly it is all too easy for any among us to cite examples.

The unexpected arrival of the Arab Spring in this complex landscape added a major unknown quantity. At the start of 2011 we thought that this North African explosion could immediately spread to some countries south of the Sahara. We were wrong, of course, but the Arab Spring will leave traces that could affect the long-term political development of a great number of countries, since their peoples will now be aware that overturning an authoritarian regime is within their grasp. Their young are more educated, are linked by communication networks and aware of global trends, and yet still frustrated economically, socially and politically. In a number of countries this situation is blowing apart the expectation of succession to power that leaders have enjoyed for several decades. Once again, such countries are easy to identify and the death of the head of state in any one of them could well be the signal for a considerable explosion of violence.

In between these major success stories and the sad tales of woe, there are the types of violence that are directly related to the operation of democracies in a number of countries that are in a intermediary state of transition. In those countries, organised democracies are in place, tested regularly by closely assessed elections. That said, the mere holding of elections does not mean that the people, their leaders, the administrative structure or the security forces have yet developed a truly democratic culture. Electoral cycles can still degenerate into violence when one fringe group contests the result, thereby starting (with the help of the security forces) a cycle of challenge and repression. Such challenges are more or less spontaneous, but are sometimes fuelled by political figures calling for mobilisation.

This context brings up the question of ethnicity which, especially in the Western press, is often presented as the most frequent interpretation of civil conflict in Africa. This perception feeds the traditional mantra that there can never be any democracy in Africa because of tribalism: because ancient tribal disputes encourage the citizens of a country to fight for power, if not by the ballot box then by wielding machetes. The perception sits well with the media but does not match reality – or, at least, no longer does so. Yes, ethnic differences exist and can come into confrontation, but never spontaneously. Far from being 'ancient disputes', such confrontations are driven by economics, when different social groups fight over some resource or another. They become political when some personality stirs up the grievances and covetousness within his community to gain electoral support, or even, as a last resort, to take or hold on to power by force. Examples of such situations are legion, but we should not accept any excuse that they are

'traditional conflicts'. It is true that, in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), politico-military groups are formed on ethnic lines, but we have to ask whether behind that hides exploitation by foreign powers and certain economic interests. Again, it is true that Kenya was victim of tribal violence in 2007 and risks the same again in 2013, but is that a reason to forget that the politicians who stirred up the different factions all belong to the same social caste? And finally, was the dubious question of what constitutes nationality of Côte d'Ivoire anything other than a rhetorical tool for use by demagogic politicians?

Whilst we must no longer commit the intellectual error of condemning Africa to tribalism, we have to remain realistic and not go to the other extreme. Ethnic identities do exist and, as a means of political mobilisation, elections in Africa remain periods of high risk. There are several remedies for that:

- First, **education of the people** should give them the ability to avoid the more obvious pitfalls of ethnic manipulation.

- Then, **training of the upper classes** is needed to instil in them the ethic required to give up such practices. Above all, the international community must impress upon the same elite groups that they will from now on pay a high price for their irresponsible and criminal practices through the International Criminal Court.

- Working on the principle that those who have something material to lose do not engage in warfare, then shared **economic growth** will create the middle classes and, in turn shrink the pool of potential militia troops.

To conclude this chapter on political insecurity, whilst we have to recognise that many situations are reversible (the Mali example), the general trend towards improvement cannot be challenged.

Insecurity resulting from weakness of the state

This section could just as easily, if less directly, be entitled *insecurity resulting from bad development*. Bad development does, of course, contribute to explaining the background to some of the political instabilities described above, since widespread poverty allows loyalties to be bought and youth unemployment is fertile recruiting ground for the militia. Crime needs a mention here, as it, too, has its roots in poverty. In this context, crime should be considered as one of the two key factors which, when put together, create a dramatic vicious circle. The other factor is the weakness of the state and of its public institutions. The weakness of the state eases the growth of crime, which in turn undermines the foundations of the state even further. Since these two aspects are inseparable, they need to be treated together.

One of a long list of errors in the historical understanding of African affairs by the international community is the long-held assumption that a state was strong because the man at the top was strong. The collapse of Somalia after Siad Barre was deposed in 1991, and the long agony in Côte d'Ivoire after the death of Houphouët in 1993, to name just two, showed just how wrong was this supposition. Indeed, Africa does not need strong men, but strong institutions, as President Obama said in Accra in 2009. Up to the 1980s, political analysts refused to question more deeply the peculiarities of 'the state' in Africa. It was clear to everyone that the post-colonial states and administrations that had been set up at the time of independence functioned in a somewhat exotic manner. The difference in functioning between the North and the South was explained by the degree of political maturity of the leaders and civil servants concerned. Not until the start of the nineteen-eighties did a new generation of political analyst begin to consider the concept of the state in Africa as an original object, a hybrid produced from an imported Western model and African cultures (among them were Jean-François Bayart, Christian Coulon and Bertrand Badie). It had to be recognised that, for a large part of the population, the idea of a state meant nothing or, at least, not what it meant to Westerners. Of course, distinctions had to be made (and still do) between the many African cultures: societies in the Sahel and West Africa were based on great kingdoms, more or less structured as states, in contrast to the bush society of Central Africa. Elsewhere, the long colonial period allowed deeper establishment of state culture, in southern Africa, for example. Despite all that, as a rule entire sections of populations did not take up the idea of the state, subordinating it to other, more flexible political structures and thereby preventing it from establishing its domination.

There were many consequences of this, and they have to be considered at the level of the leaders as well as at that of the population in general. For the latter, there were no territorial borders, and security and defence forces were seen as foreign forces. Laws were unknown to them, taxes even less so. For the leaders, the state made no greater sense and was therefore seen as an expression of general interest and collective will: at best, it was simply a resource capable of satisfying the personal interests of those who held the keys—who took, rather than gave. These perceptions of the state formed the foundations of what we call bad governance and corruption—what you might call legal insecurity—in short, the weak state. In the Africa of the last 50 years, corruption has therefore not been some superficial perversion of a well-organised system but the very raison d'être, the backbone, even, of a fundamentally tainted one.

With poverty as the fertiliser, and weakness of the state providing the opportunity for action, crime was able to prosper, with trafficking of drugs, arms, humans, minerals, cattle, protected species, medication…the list goes on. Given the resources this traffic brings, and sometimes with the complicity of certain authorities, entire sections of populations and/or territories gradually move out of

state control. Worse still, in this way the criminals become local figures and acquire the resources which allow them to be seen more or less openly as dominant players in their own right. This emergence from the shade of local players, however reprehensible or legitimate and respectful of the population within their dominance they may be, can even go as far as turning themselves into warlords in a position to legitimise themselves completely, sometimes under the cover of some political movement. Clearly, the more these players emancipate themselves, the more the state weakens, even at the centralised level.

The list of countries affected by this is long. There was an explosion of these phenomena in the nineteen-nineties with the fall of a number of strong powers which had previously been supported in the climate of the Cold War. Among them were Somalia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, CAR and DRC. Today's list is shorter and contains Casamance, parts of Nigeria, southern Sudan, and still Somalia, CAR and DRC. The most flagrant example of this process is the disintegration of Mali, which became evident in 2012 but which had bubbled under the surface for many years. Nigeria is also a source of worry, and is living proof that these processes of collapse do not always occur through open conflict. Yet the absence of such open conflict must not distract our attention from these problems: the possibility that a failed state can lead to the establishment of lawless areas is for us a matter of national security. For you, it is another territory closed to trade.

However, events in the Sahel and the renewed fall of DRC and the CAR should not be allowed to cast a shadow over the successful reconstruction of a number of other states, among which, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Angola, Mozambique, Chad and Côte d'Ivoire. More generally, with the passage of time ideas of 'state' and 'nation' have entered the heads of ever more educated populations. You only have to look at the public fervour that goes with the Africa Cup of Nations to realise it.

Insecurity arising from external influences.

Guinea-Bissau could quite well fall into the previous section, since local potentates have emerged from a bed of criminal resources with the active or passive complicity of the authorities (military ones, in particular) to turn the country into a failed state. And yet, more than any others, Guinea-Bissau is characterised by the high degree of internationalisation of the traffic that has weakened it—Latin American cartels having played a decisive role in the collapse of the country. This example allows us to touch on a third factor of insecurity, linked in broad terms to globalisation. Externally imposed threats come in extremely diverse forms, but nevertheless have the common factor of hitting hardest those states which have no, or few, ways to stand up to them.

The prime trans-continental threat is international crime, which has already been mentioned in the case of Guinea-Bissau. The connection between African crime and trans-national mafia networks is a clear aggravating factor. Quite apart from Guinea-Bissau, connections between foreign mafia organisations and local criminals are already evident, and centre on drugs, illegal migration and counterfeit money, in the Sahel, the Gulf of Guinea and along the coasts of eastern Africa.

Natural disasters are worthy of mention here, such as the floods against which the national civil protection services are impotent. In view of climate change (for which Africa is not responsible) such catastrophes are going to increase in number. The multiplication and seriousness of droughts is another consequence of climate change which will have far more dramatic effects in the long term. The eventual complete desertification of some territory will be the future source of huge movements of population but, while waiting for that to occur, droughts are already leading to localised conflicts between nomadic herdsmen and static farmers who fight over access to water sources and pasture. Such conflicts have occurred since time immemorial, especially in the Sahelian strip from Dakar to Mogadishu, but they are becoming more and more frequent. More and more serious, too, as in Kenya, for example: disputes end up in battles against populations which are now armed with Kalashnikovs.

Financialisation and globalisation of the economy represent a final external threat to be taken into account. Once again, Africa suffers from it without any means to react, for it is in Chicago, centre of the world raw materials market, that the income of cotton growers in Chad, or cocoa farmers in Côte d'Ivoire is decided. The liberalisation imposed by the international financial institutions in the nineteen-nineties aggravated this vulnerability by compelling states to do away with public compensation mechanisms. Apart from its effect on the standard of living of the rural population, numerically in the majority yet of little political importance, the reduction in raw materials prices becomes a real problem when it impinges upon the redistribution capability of the regimes in place. Mastering the art of equitable redistribution of national resources to the different communities was key to the longevity of leaders like Omar Bongo and Félix Houphouët-Boigny. Problems arise when redistribution is unfair, or when there is less and less to redistribute, which was the case in Côte d'Ivoire in the nineteen-nineties. In the opposite sense, the international economic system also has an impact on the price of imported foods such as rice and wheat. Once the dumping practised by the world's great agri-business exporters had succeeded in strangling local production, African populations found themselves at the mercy of rising prices for basic foodstuffs, which were the origin of the 2008 'hunger riots' in several African countries, including Cameroun and Mozambique. African states are less than others able to control the excesses of the international economic system: yet another factor affecting their legitimacy.

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The particular nature of these creators of instability calls for a different type of analysis for each. And yet the overlap between them, which is evident in the greatest of current crises, as in the Sahel and the DRC, implies an overall approach to resolving the latter. Action on development and governance aimed at filling gaps in policy has to match security action (by both states themselves and by international cooperation) aimed at restoring national sovereignty. External responses to problems (by civil protection or improved world governance) will in the end make this link between security and development.

The new African century: towards another kind of security

Poussi Sawadogo

Doctor and research fellow at the Free University of Burkina, and a member of the African Federation of Strategic Studies.

An analysis of the defence forces of African countries leads to the conclusion that their armed forces and other security forces seem to limit themselves to a role of internal repression without much in the way of a capacity for reaction against an external threat. The following examples bear this out: Côte d'Ivoire, whose regular army did not resist an invasion by rebels styling themselves the republican forces of Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI), the Burkina Faso Army, which mutinied over food, and the powerful Libyan Army, crushed by NATO coalition forces.

Particularly in Africa, the idea of security for the people should guide the originators of defence and public order policy. Instead of buying arms which could be used against their own citizens, it would be better to invest in prosperity and peace to ensure security for all. The priorities for the political powers in Africa should be to provide for the needs of the population, educate the young and concentrate on creating wealth, build bridges between the various elements of their countries and promote governance respecting individual and collective rights. From now on they must involve themselves in a participative democracy in which the citizen is both an actor and a controller of the political process. It also means promoting equitable development which leaves no one in a situation of insecurity. The greatest insecurity which threatens the African continent is hunger, resulting from famine and poverty.

By engaging fundamentally in democratic reforms and accepting legitimate changes in power, African states can protect themselves against external attack and position themselves as respected partners in the negotiation of mutually profitable agreements. Clinging on to dictatorships exposes African countries to external military intervention in the name of democracy in the shadow of the strategic interests of great powers. The throng of foreign businessmen in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Conakry and Libya illustrate the circus which often accompanies support for democracy. But whose fault is that? The answer is the short-sightedness of the leaders of the states in question. By accepting honourable outcomes they could avoid pointless suffering on the part of their 'beloved' people and allow negotiation in a stable context of win-win partnership agreements.

Les Cahiers de la Revue Défense Nationale

But by believing in an exclusive political morality and ignoring the interests and power balances which prevail in the world, some leaders have paid with their positions and even their lives. This is a lack of vision, a deficiency of perspective, an absence of anticipation and a poor evaluation of the balance of power. How can a divided army, ill-fed and badly-equipped, confront a sophisticated attack? To do so is to ignore the evidence. The King of Morocco has provided a striking counter-example. He has been able to negotiate democratic reform, which has been accepted thus far. He has demonstrated the existence of another approach to security, challenging accepted thinking, and engaging in dialogue and the national consensus. An external military intervention is not on the cards in such a context of the collective management of public affairs. Security means dialogue, consensus, sharing and the respect of interests, the law, dignity and the expectations of the protagonists in national life.

The first cause of insecurity in Africa is poverty, which constitutes a serious threat to peace. To promote a different form of security means finding alternative ways to revolutionize African agriculture, which is too dependent on rain. With its vast rivers, a region such as West Africa should be able to produce enough cereals to meet its needs and avoid famine. It is surprising that the West African countries import nearly 50 per cent of their food, particularly rice. To bring such countries to their knees requires not pilotless drones but simply a food embargo. They would find themselves cut off from the world and the starving population would do the rest. True security is above all based on food and after 50 years of independence African countries are still struggling to feed their populations.

The causes of this situation lie in the inappropriate nature of the knowledge dispensed by schools. The teaching does not offer solutions adapted to the problems faced by African countries. It is based on a colonial heritage and has not been subject to bold reforms enabling students to conceive of beneficial changes. The products of these schools are bureaucrats, excelling only in politics or criticism. Change is necessary and even vital if a viable economy is to emerge offering security for all. Schools must cultivate more of a community spirit in a more structured regional setting.

Public security must remain the prerogative of those African states which are not capable of equipping themselves with powerful armed forces. But real security should be the province of regional communities for the protection of regional interests. A collective defence and security force would benefit from the contribution of each state and could be equipped with more sophisticated equipment for the defence of all the states of a region. A region could afford a centre for strategic studies with all the resources necessary to produce forward-looking analyses for the defence of the region's own interests. It would be up to each state to equip itself with its requirement for public security. It is important to remember that the best internal security results from good political, economic and cultural governance. The best security for fragile countries is prevention, in providing for

the needs of the population, by educating it accordingly and by encouraging national solidarity.

<p style="text-align:center">⁂</p>

In a country where all the actors share the same vision, acting together for change, there is no room for external interference. When a common vision gives way to confrontational divisions a country exposes itself to internal and external insecurity. Security is above all a state of mind, an internal awareness of concord and tranquillity which is expressed by the people. True security is not sealing one-self up in a bunker protected by tanks and guard dogs as Hitler, Gbagbo and Qaddafi tried to their cost. It is rather to protect oneself by taking care of the people, giving oneself, humility, questioning certainties, a correct appreciation of the forces involved, anticipation, the creation of prosperity and the separation of advantages and privileges from power.

Africa does not lack good examples: Alpha Omar Konaré, Jerry Rawlings and the immortal Nelson Mandela to name but a few. Let us hope that the years to come will add to this list of African beacons of security. This is the major challenge of the new African century and the rising African generation.

The African Peace
and Security Architecture (APSA)

Marc Conruyt

Colonel, Head of the Africa office of the International Relations Division at the Defence Staff Headquarters.

Under the aegis of a decision-taking Peace and Security Council (PSC), the APSA is organised around the African Standby Force (ASF), a Panel of the Wise, an African peace fund and an instrument for post-conflict reconstruction and development. The ASF draws on five regional brigades established and built up within each Regional Economic Community (REC):

- ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States;

- SADC: Southern African Development Community;

- ECCAS: Economic Community of Central African States;

- IGAD: Intergovernmental Authority on Development;

- AMU: Arab Maghreb Union.

The Declaration of the African Union (AU) Assembly on the situation in Mali stressed the need for the early operationalisation of the ASF rapid deployment capability within the framework of the APSA. In this respect, the Council requested the Commission to submit to it a report on progress made and challenges encountered, ahead of the 21st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, scheduled to take place in Addis Ababa in May 2013. An evaluation of African reserve forces was to be carried out quickly.

Background of the ASF

The ASF's role is to enable the PSC to assume its responsibilities in the context of peacekeeping missions and interventions. In this sphere, the PSC acts jointly with the President of the AU Commission to authorise the deployment of peacekeeping missions and to issue general guidelines for the conduct of missions. The AU now intends to stake out a position as the focal point for crisis resolution in Africa, through oversight of the RECs, and clearly asserts its right to intervene in certain emergency situations.

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The framework document adopted in May 2003 outlines six scenarios for ASF intervention.* Scenarios 1 to 4 call for deployment within 30 days of adoption of a mandate. Scenario 5 calls for deployment in 90 days, while only 14 days are deemed necessary for scenario 6.

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* Six scenarios for ASF intervention

1. Military advice to a political mission.
2. Regional observer mission co-deployed with UN mission.
3. Stand-alone observer mission.
4. Regional peacekeeping force for Chapter VI and preventive deployment missions.
5. Peacekeeping force for complex multidimensional missions with low-level spoilers.
6. Intervention, *e.g.* in genocide situations where the international community does not act promptly.

The idea of an African Standby Force was formally approved in Addis Ababa in July 2004. It is based on a continent-wide structure (a headquarters in Addis Ababa and a planned logistics base in Douala) and five regional structures (command centre, planning unit, troops, logistics base and one or more centres of excellence). The three components—civil, military and police—are represented. Build-up of the Force is based on national contributions, with an objective of 4,000 to 6,000 troops in each REC.

The Brigades

There are five brigades.

- The Western Brigade (ECOBRIG) of the Economic Community of West African States: ECOWAS has what is considered to be the most complete Standby Force, with a total of 6,500 troops. Since 2007, exercises (CPX) have provided an opportunity to evaluate the Western battalion under Senegalese command, the Eastern battalion under Nigerian command, the logistics battalion and the general staff. A CPX in Accra in November 2011 validated ECOWAS's capacity to plan all the dimensions of a peacekeeping operation.

- The Central Brigade (FOMAC) of the Economic Community of Central African States: FOMAC has a theoretical complement of 4,800 troops. The Kwanza 2010 certification exercise was held in Angola.

- The Southern Brigade (SADCBRIG): SADC has had a Standby Brigade, now the Southern African Standby Force (SASF), since 2007. Its capacities were certified in 2009 with the Glofinho FTX.

- The Eastern Brigade (EASF): the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD), initially given the task of coordinating build-up of the

brigade, spanned only some of the 13 States supposed to contribute to it. A new coordination mechanism, EASBRICOM, was created in 2007. It is now known as EASFCOM. An FTX was held in Djibouti in 2009 with the support of FFDj (French forces stationed in Djibouti).

- The Northern Brigade (NASBRIG): there have been no recent developments.

Operationalisation

The objective of operationalising the ASF, initially planned for 2010, has been postponed for five years. The timetable and main objectives of the next ASF exercise, Amani Africa II, planned for November 2014, could be adapted to meet the new requirements. The exercise would be an opportunity to declare that the ASF has full operational capacity. Its initial operational capacity was certified after the first cycle of Amani Africa in 2010. The European Commission is supporting the current cycle (2012-2015) through the Peace Facility (Amani Africa programme, €5.2 million) and a joint EU/AU planning team. A €12.5 million long-term programme to build C3I (command, control, communications and information systems) capacity, initially earmarked for the ASF, has been reallocated to AFISMA.

The AU still depends on external logistics support for strategic deployment of the Force and the supply of communication and information systems. The build-up of the ASF continues to be hampered by difficulties in manning planning and command structures, the lack of independent situation assessment resources, the lack of aeromobile and air support resources and the lack of armoured capability. The ASF's police and civilian elements also need to be enhanced. In addition, the ASF encounters structural difficulties, such as the number of different languages in use and interoperability. Coordination between Member States and regional structures needs to be improved in order to optimise the effectiveness of training and exercises.

Financial problems hinder the implementation of decisions taken by the authorities. The ASF's difficulties can be explained by lack of resources. The current ASF support programme has a budget of €14 million, whereas it would cost in the region of €100 million just to set up a base.

Despite these difficulties, African troops make a significant contribution to peacekeeping operations. That contribution has increased rapidly over the last 10 years: a total of 33,000 troops were involved in peacekeeping operations in 2011. Recent missions include operations in Somalia with AMISOM and in Mali with AFISMA.

In the light of feedback from operations in Africa, especially in Darfur and Somalia, and developments in the security situation, the concept of the ASF has been slightly altered to focus on the build-up of a rapid deployment capability (RDC), humanitarian action and natural disaster response, maritime security and the protection of civilians.

The Amani Africa II exercise should theoretically enable the different brigades to complete their build-up by 2015. It is therefore realistic to suppose that the ASF will be partially autonomous by that date, provided that RECs step up their efforts to build autonomous capacity and to adapt to the new threats facing the continent.

The partners

Military action by France to support the African Peace and Security Architecture takes two distinct but very complementary forms: operational cooperation, which is a matter for the armed forces, and structural cooperation, which depends on the Directorate for security and defence cooperation (DSCD) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Operational military cooperation in sub-Saharan Africa, conducted from pre-positioned French troops, has helped to train around 15,000 African troops and over 18,000 in 2012; to support four major peacekeeping missions in Africa (AFISMA, *Onuci*, MICOPAX and AMISOM); to equip and maintain three *Recamp* (Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities) bases; and to support the build-up of the ASF through regional exercises and bilateral instruction programmes. The DSCD contributes to operationalisation of the ASF in equal measure, through institutional support,* high-level advice and expertise, and training support, especially through the network of 17 national schools with a regional vocation (ENVR).

The European Union has provided financial support to the African Union since 2004 through the Peace Facility. 90% of subsidies to date have been earmarked for AU operations. As purchases of weapons and defence equipment and tactical training are excluded, what remains is funding for REC general staff activities.

For the ASF, the European Union has now assumed responsibility for the *Euro Recamp*/Amani Africa II continental and strategic planning cycle.

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* DSCD contributes to operationalisation of the ASF

A military adviser is on secondment to the AU in Addis Ababa and currently advises the AU High Representative for operationalisation of the ASF. Three political and military advisers are also on secondment to the ECOWAS Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, the Secretary General of ECCAS and the director of EASFCOM respectively.

The AFISMA model

Until recently, the deployment of African troops in multinational operations in Africa was mainly based on ad hoc coalitions of forces in the manner of AMISOM. AFISMA is probably the mission closest to the deployment processes sought for the ASF. It should be studied in detail in order to learn lessons and draw conclusions.

A Toolbox for Crisis Prevention and resolution

DCSD

Collaborative work of Directorate for security and defence cooperation of the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Over the past few years the DCSD has had to operate in delicate situations in countries which have been either recovering from profound crises, or trying (with difficulty) to achieve stability. The lessons learned from this experience have allowed it to develop an appropriate methodology of action.

Engage in a double dynamic

When recovering from a crisis the countries concerned invariably find themselves confronted by identical security problems: reconciliation, demobilisation and reconstruction. The immediate need to deal with all these interlinked problems at the same time and in a coordinated way piles further difficulty on to the complexity of the original situation to be resolved. Furthermore, because everything needs to be completely rebuilt, it is obvious that each of the reconciliation, demobilisation and reconstruction programmes needs a minimum amount of time for serious and complete analysis; but this necessary and minimum period of several months has to be seen in the light of the impatience of populations which have been sorely tried, and which become increasingly desperate by the day in the absence of the smallest concrete sign of improvement.

In this context, and to help the partner countries concerned to solve this complex problem, DCSD proposes a tailored methodology designed to meet the individual requirements of each situation. To achieve success each country needs to have not only a good understanding of the logic underlying the solution proposed, but also (and above all) the strong political resolve to apply it.

The method presupposes that two conditions are met. The authorities in place have to demonstrate their sincerity and a real resolve to recover from the crisis, while at the same time taking care to avoid precipitate action at a time when almost everything needs to be rebuilt. The method proposed consists of implementing, simultaneously, a double dynamic with separate timescales. The first step is to initiate deep restructuring, leaving sufficient time for reflection so as to be sure that the edifice to be built has firm foundations. Concretely, reconciliation

requires a Commission of the 'Truth, Justice and Reconciliation' type seen in post-Apartheid South Africa; for demobilization there exist the United Nations' DDR programmes; and finally, for reconstruction, the production of planning documents similar to the French '*Livre Blanc*' process.

The civil protection route

In parallel, impatience needs to be soothed; work needs to start on actions which, for the most part, are known to be inevitable, whatever decisions are taken after the planning phase. These are concrete actions of moderate size, which can be started immediately if they need few resources. Above all, they are visible, and their value will be obvious to everyone. They will help the population to feel very quickly that the country is on the move and that the crisis is past, so helping to calm an impatient population. This approach also has the advantage that concrete achievements are quickly apparent; precipitation is also avoided in the achievement of lasting solutions to the problems of reconciliation, demobilization and reconstruction.

For countries in the prevention phase, stabilisation must always be consolidated. In this respect, today, governments have to take into account several issues which cannot be postponed without threatening social peace. Protection of the civil population is a particularly sensitive sector, and yet it is gravely lacking in Sub-Saharan Africa. Even where it exists, there are serious shortcomings, such as the absence of national reaction to recurrent natural catastrophes. These shortcomings are no longer accepted by the populations concerned, who are increasingly calling their governments to account—often in an increasingly strident fashion.

In this context French experience is currently in great demand. *DCSD*'s response is a 'double dynamic' solution, in many ways similar to that employed in resolving crises. The problems met, many of them recurrent, demand action which is rapid, concrete, visible and useful; this demonstrates that the authorities are seen to be organising themselves in dealing with disasters. At the same time it is necessary for the tool of civil protection to be completely restructured, combining organization, training and equipment; it is accepted that this will take several years to do properly. A further plus is that this approach is eligible for international financing, and attracts major international aid programmes which should be integrated as soon as possible.

In the field

Some concrete examples of immediate actions which have been successful in their application to countries in the throes of crisis resolution, are set out below. They have also been applied to countries in the prevention phase, which are seeking to consolidate their stability.

- **Civil/military reconciliation.** Short term (one week) projects throughout the country to regenerate basic infrastructure such as dispensaries, schools, maternity clinics, wells and so on. These are carried out by small detachments of soldiers and former militiamen from the factions to be reconciled, who work in partnership with the local village populations. Each action is widely publicised to ensure its visibility to the population.

- **Demobilization and reinsertion of former combatants.** This implies rapid reinsertion of modest numbers of volunteer former combatants to civil life by orienting the beneficiaries towards a local economic project; this might include land clearance, a neighbourhood *boulangerie*, or a micro-project involving raising cattle or agricultural work. These sorts of project need little or no training, but they do involve some element of financing and provision of equipment, together with follow-up support over a period of time. Here it is the symbolic fact of the desire to get personally involved in the process which is the objective, more than just the number of reinsertions.

- **The creation of local civil protection units during the demobilization process.** Here combatants are transformed into volunteer actors in civil protection working in small units deployed in the main towns, which assume responsibility for the civil protection of the population. Thorough initial training courses are undertaken in order to produce a number of expert trainers, who themselves then drive a country-wide programme which progressively changes demobilized combatants into trained pioneers who provide a local civil protection service serving the population. Experience has shown that a skeleton service, together with the first interventions, can be in place in under six months.

The Economic Dimension
of Insecurity in the Sahel

Jean-Bernard Véron

Head of the Crisis and Conflicts Unit of the French Development Agency (*AFD*), Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Afrique contemporaine et développement* (Contemporary Africa and Development).

The rise of insecurity in the Sahel countries is an issue which today concerns not only the countries themselves, but also their foreign partners. Handling this insecurity is complicated by the fact that the phenomenon takes many forms with various causes. Some of these causes have economic roots in the broadest sense, such as the relationship between economics and demographics. For this reason, any strategy to build security in the region will be futile if it fails to address economic aspects, which will be no mean feat.

Multiple forms of insecurity

When we talk of insecurity in the Sahel, recent and dramatic events come to mind immediately.[1] Of course, we must not minimise these, but this first observation is worthy of greater examination in two respects: on the one hand, the phenomenon of insecurity is no novelty in the region, and on the other, it has many changing forms.

Recent events

Two recent events have attracted the attention of the media.

The first is the entry into the fray of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), whose reputation is doubly nefarious. The organisation is an avatar of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat, a group involved in the bloody civil war which blighted Algeria for a decade but which, under pressure from the country's armed forces, was partly pushed southwards, into the Sahel.

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(1) Here, Sahel should be considered to include all countries within the Sahel-Sudan zone of the African continent, namely Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad. North Sudan and Eritrea and even Ethiopia and Somalia are also part of the Sahel region.

Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes, direction des Archives (division géographique)   © November 2011
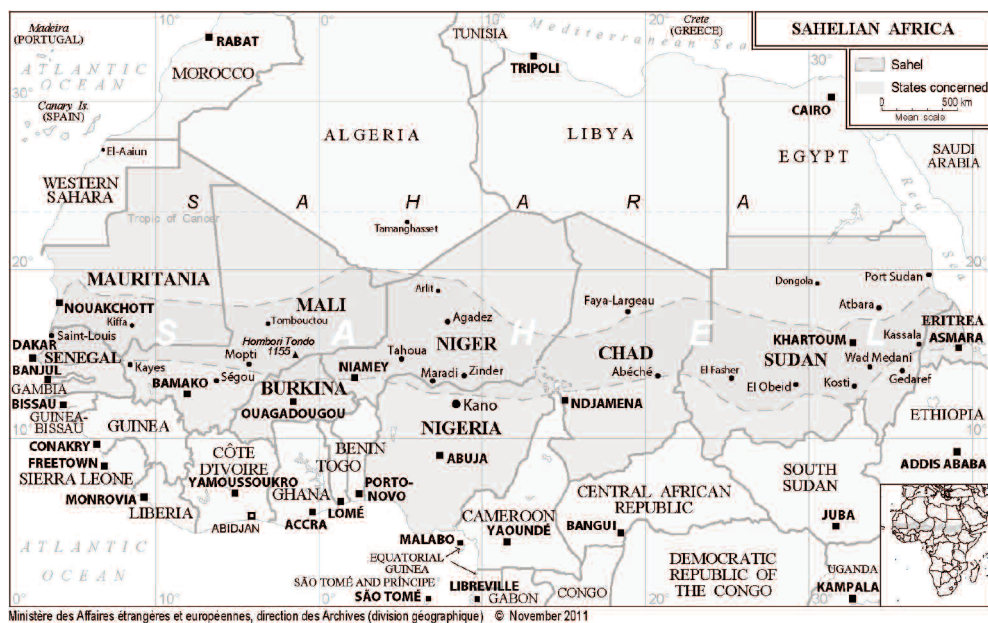
AQIM is now one of Al-Qaeda's cells, which is the basis, in its message, of the call for an international dimension to its fight against the West, with a particular focus on France.[2]

Tangibly, the rise of AQIM in the region is visible through clashes with national armed forces, abductions of European nationals in Mauritania, Mali and Niger, the beginnings of recruitment of combatants within local populations and through more or less circumstantial alliances with other actors of insecurity in the region.

The second event, recently brought to light by the 'Boeing 727 affair' in northern Mali,[3] is the observation that some of the cocaine of Latin American origin destined for Europe[4] is now transported via the Sahel countries.[5] Moreover, although this is still less well documented a significant proportion of Moroccan Rif cannabis production for the European and Middle Eastern markets is said to be transported via countries including Mauritania, Mali and Niger.

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(2) A focus based on France's status as a former regional colonial power, on the presence of French service members in Afghanistan, and on French policies which are construed as anti-Islamic (such as the veil issue).

(3) In November 2009, an aircraft, in all probability flying from Venezuela, landed on a makeshift landing strip in northern Mali. A cargo of cocaine was unloaded before the plane was destroyed because it could not take off again.

(4) Depending on the source, of the 200 to 250 tonnes of Latin American cocaine which find their way onto the European market, some 50 tonnes now take the southern route, via Africa.

(5) As well as via certain Sudan-area countries such as Guinea-Bissau, Guinea and Nigeria.

It is also important to mention factors outside the region but which can contribute to destabilising the ruling authorities, and therefore to fuelling insecurity. This is the case, for example, of the civil war in Libya, which has led to the return of mercenaries formally in the service of the Libyan army to the Sahel, particularly to Niger but also to Mali, as well as large numbers of weapons. Disarming these combatants and recovering their weapons before they fall into the hands of the region's violent actors has become a thorny issue. More generally, the return of large numbers[6] of African workers from Libya could bring to the surface a sensitive problem of economic integration, particularly in an urban environment already swollen by rural exodus.

It may also be the case—it cannot, in principle, be ruled out—that the Arab Spring could spread to countries with similar political and economic configurations to those which sparked this 'Spring'. These similarities are economic growth where rewards are very unequally shared, the existence of regimes which cling to power and which, to this end, are prepared to manipulate elections and even amend constitutions, as well as large-scale corruption phenomena to the profit of the political and economic class installed at the head of the state.

Deeper roots

Independently of the arrival of AQIM in the Sahel, drugs trafficking and the potential spread of the Arab Spring, effective or potential insecurity has deeper roots in the region, because the Sahel has always been, and remains, a place of circulation and dissidence. From this perspective, light should be shed on two phenomena.

On the one hand, the state's weak presence in the northern regions of the countries in question, particularly with respect to the sovereign roles of territorial control, the monopoly of armed forces, the protection of goods and people and the exercise of justice. In this context, many illegal, or even criminal, activities have been able to develop rather freely. This is the case, for example, of the contraband flows of consumer goods of all sorts,[7] which largely benefits from different subsidy and customs tariff regimes, particularly with Algeria. It is also the case of trafficking of illegal migrant workers to Europe or the Gulf states.

On the other hand, there is the irredentist tradition of the peoples of these regions, particularly that of the Tuareg, and their difficult relations with the states born of independences. Troubled relations which may, in fact, and rather paradoxically, take opposite forms: this may mean too much state, understood in its security component, as well as, until recently, in the absence of a real decentralisation policy;

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(6) They number several hundred thousand people.

(7) This is the case for wheat, sugar, livestock, petrol and cigarettes, as well as vehicles stolen in Europe.

but also too little state, in terms of economic and social development, compared to the southern regions of these countries. It is useful to note that these troubled and conflictual relations with the central state have, on several occasions, sparked armed insurgencies in Mali[8] and Niger.[9]

The economic causes of insecurity

It is clear that these varied forms of insecurity in the northern regions of the Sahel countries cannot be explained if we take into account only causes rooted solely in economics, but it would also be vain to ignore them. Similarly, an analysis limited to the regions concerned alone would only capture part of the reality. Some of these countries seem today to be confronted, all things being equal, ceteris paribus, with impasses or near-impasses in terms of development. This is behind the gradual accumulation of factors which may fuel new sources of tension and instability.

In northern regions

Two causes seem to play a significant role, if not in insecurity and rising tensions, at least in what fuels them. On the one hand, there is the poor economic and social development of these regions compared to more southern areas. This leads to a rather widespread sentiment of injustice on the part of the central authorities, accused of neglecting the northern populations who, in addition, are often ethnically different from those of the south, of which the elites in power are generally members.

In correlation, this relative stagnation of the economy in northern regions, made worse recently by the almost complete interruption of tourist activity because of the rise in insecurity, limits opportunities and job creation significantly.

This is combined—and this is a second cause—with the existence of alternative sources of income, through possible participation in trafficking through these regions or providing paid support to smugglers, and even terrorist movements such as AQIM.

The stunted development of the northern regions of these countries compared to the progress of southern regions[10]—despite the end of the conflicts

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(8) In 1962, 1990, 1994 and 2006 in Mali.

(9) In the 1980s, and then once more beginning in 2007 in Niger.

(10) It would be inexact to state that Sahel countries have seen no improvement in their economic and social situations. For example, remarkable results have been obtained through cotton growing in Burkina Faso and Mali – though admittedly in the southern regions of the two countries – and drastic reductions have been made in mortality rates through medical services which, whilst remaining insufficient, have made significant progress.

born of the Tuareg issue, which allowed a degree of economic levelling—may be described in four ways.

The first, and most obvious, is that these regions suffer from a natural environment generally unfavourable to economic activity, and this is primarily for climatic reasons or because of the difficulty of access. The arid nature of the areas is a serious constraint on agriculture and livestock farming—the region's dominant activities—limiting them to small, very limited subsistence oasis-type and flood-recession crop farming alongside the rare waterways, or to extensive and often nomadic livestock farming. In addition, the distances and low density of both population and economic activity are obstacles to creating an adequate network of roads and paths.

The second is that the other natural resources—mineral resources—are rather scarce[11] or that their exploitation did not begin until recently. And then, even in this last case, the benefits from the exploitation of these resources often go to the central state in the form of taxes and various charges. The populations of producer regions therefore consider, rightly or wrongly, that these activities are of precious little profit to them, either directly, in the form of royalties which they would be able to control, or indirectly, through development projects financed by the central state using the resources in question of which it takes control.

A third explanation no doubt relates to the relative indifference of the political classes in power with regard to the situation of the populations of these northern regions, or even their mistrust because of their real or supposed irredentist tendencies.[12] Similarly, it would seem that in Mali and Niger, promises made under the peace agreements which ended previous Tuareg rebellions were only partially kept, particularly in their economic and social development dimensions.

The relatively minimal or belated nature of interest in these regions—and this is a fourth explanation—was and is rather widely shared by the foreign partners whose development assistance supplements local resources. This is the result of an approach on the part of these partners, which has sometimes been too 'technical'. On the one hand, northern regions offer fewer opportunities for economic development than southern regions, where the agro-climatic conditions are far more conducive to agricultural activities. On the other hand, the low population density mechanically increases the unit cost (the cost per beneficiary) of the services or infrastructure provided. From the point of view of these foreign partners therefore, it is more 'viable' to grant financing to southern regions, which have both higher populations and are more densely populated. In other words,

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(11) Even if, in recent times, intensified prospection in the Sahel has uncovered interesting hydrocarbon, uranium ore mineral, gold and copper deposits.

(12) Not to mention the periods when the southern populations were a reservoir for the slave trade, which was partly controlled by northern groups.

a dollar or euro invested in the south of these countries provides a greater 'volume' of development in terms of the number of beneficiaries.

It is also striking that increased insecurity to a great extent explains the recent interest of these same partners in northern areas, which they had long ignored. This would suggest that previous 'technical' arguments might be redundant.

Development sticking points

But the threats to peace and stability in the Sahel countries are also rooted in deeper causes, related to demographic phenomena, or, more precisely, to the relationship between these phenomena and the region's economies. These causes can be split into two categories.

The first is the demographic explosion in the strict sense[13] and its consequences, namely the gap between the number of people and the natural resources needed for their activities. The rapidly increasing population in rural areas fuels growing tensions over access to these resources, specifically arable land, water and pasture. These tensions regularly lead to violent clashes between arable and livestock farmers, particularly in Chad and Niger.

It could even be said that the latter country is today confronted with an imbalance between the number of people and the capacity of its agriculture to provide the means to provide for their food needs at current productivity levels. From this point of view, the repeated food crises which have faced Niger in recent years are becoming structural and are not the simple product of droughts and floods, locusts or the downturn in neighbouring Nigeria's grain markets.

In these countries, food crises fuel a phenomenon of concentration of land and livestock, whereby small producers have to sell their goods to obtain food: goods which are often acquired by urban investors and, in particular, large traders. This concentration of capital thus increases inequalities in rural areas.

In addition—and here is another structural cause, aggravated by the concentration of land and livestock capital—the demographic explosion induces a significant flow of migrants from the countryside to the towns, far beyond the capacity of urban areas to provide these new residents with stable employment and revenue opportunities in step with their numbers. This is behind the formation, particularly in the region's largest agglomerations, of reserves of little-used, or unused manpower, people often barely surviving and without the economic, social or political capital needed for true integration into their new environment. This exclusion phenomenon and resulting sentiment of frustration, worsened by the visibly wide status and wealth gap between migrants and the richer segments of

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(13) For example, the Nigerien population, which totalled four million people at independence, now approaches sixteen million.

urban populations, are probably fertile ground for instability or even violent expression of grievances.[14]

Strategies to respond to insecurity

The best response to a situation of insecurity consists in deploying the means of coercion needed to pursue and neutralise the actors responsible for the situation. That said, and in the case of the Sahel countries in particular, this response could provoke tensions, whether these means of coercion are of local origin or provided by foreign partners.

This leads naturally to thought on accompanying this security-based response with actions benefiting populations, including in the form of economic and social development projects.[15] However, the specific nature of this accompaniment remains to be determined.

Moving beyond a purely security-based approach

A security-based response to these insecurity phenomena in the northern regions of these countries implies firstly that the states, which are essentially absent today, regain control and deploy the assets and men needed to exercise their sovereign roles, including territorial control, fighting illegal, criminal and terrorist activities, and, more generally, maintaining security. This requires, amongst other things, installing or reinstalling military garrisons or their equivalents.

But given past insurgencies in countries like Niger and Mali, with strong irredentist tendencies, and given the bad memories left by 'southern' service members in the north of the countries, a return of the states in their security component alone would no doubt fuel tensions between local populations and central authorities—tensions which could be exploited by the actors behind the insecurity.

Mutatis mutandis, this risk of fanning the flames also weighs on the support which foreign partners could provide in that same field of security, particularly if the support in question were too visible. This visibility of foreign military assets, especially personnel, would provide propaganda opportunities for movements like AQIM, which could use it by announcing 'the return of the colonisers' or an attack on the sovereignty of independent countries.

For these reasons, the return of the state to the northern regions of Sahel countries should also take the form of development projects, with a triple objective

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(14) Not to mention that these recent migrants to urban areas are, particularly the young generations, manpower which can be mobilised and manipulated by all sorts of 'political entrepreneurs' and criminal networks.

(15) But also through measures based both on population participation in regional politics, including through decentralisation, and in the governance of the authorities in power, be they authorities created by decentralisation or devolved authorities.

in mind: firstly, to ensure the state's image is not limited to that of a purely repressive tool; secondly, to show that the return of the authorities means improvement of the situation of populations, that is, to win them over to the strategy of returning security; thirdly, a somewhat less overt objective is to offer the populations in question opportunities for income and activities other than those which the illegal actors active in the regions can provide.

The difficulties of achieving this

These difficulties can be split into several categories. At a general level, they could result from the principle of combining the two components of a strategy against insecurity—on one hand, rebuilding the state apparatus in its coercive dimension and, on the other, 'reconquering' populations by providing economic and social development.

Without going so far as the extreme example of Afghanistan and, more precisely, the ISAF Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs),[16] the simultaneous on-the-ground presence of aid operators and service members, in a situation of tensions and armed clashes, can create a sentiment of confusion on the part of local populations regarding the role of the operators in question, particularly if they are foreign, and thus lead to mistrust or outright rejection.

As we have already seen, such mistrust could be exploited by movements like AQIM to recruit local combatants or benefit from the support—at least passive—of the population. It is therefore a real question which should not be underestimated when communicating with populations on the security issue.

In principle, potential development projects would fall into the classical categories of support for economic activities as well as the infrastructure and equipment which make that activity possible, for example energy and transport. They would also aim to improve basic public service provision to populations, including health, education and access to safe drinking water.

However, as we have seen—and this is a second difficulty—these actions would have to be conducted in an unfavourable context because of geographical isolation, poor agro-climatic conditions, and low population density in these regions. Objectively, these specificities are far from conducive to a massive and sustained injection of development. It should be kept in mind that the support provided by foreign partners must be part of a very proactive policy, ignoring to a certain extent the question of operational viability.

A third potential source of difficulties could be the unsuitability of the development projects vis-à-vis the populations concerned, for two reasons. The

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(16) Provincial Reconstruction Teams unite service members and aid players in a single unit under a single command.

first is that these projects would be chosen by the central states, which are often poorly informed of the needs of the regions concerned due to their lack of establishment there. The second results from the possible tendency of foreign partners to propose generic projects which are not necessarily adapted to the context or needs of the Sahel region.

A few ideas

The difficulties mentioned above should naturally mean great circumspection in choosing the development projects to accompany the state apparatus in these northern regions. Circumspection does not, however, mean hesitation or timorousness, but rather highlights the need for prior collection of information on the environment, as well as on needs and their order of priority, as expressed by local populations and their representatives. In addition, care should be taken in implementing 'one size fits all' solutions, which are supposed to be valid anytime and anywhere. The absolute prerequisite to any operational decision is therefore the performance of contextualised analysis.

With these reservations, certain points merit further prior exploration, at least as startingpoint hypotheses, which are inevitably very general.

The first is that priority should be given to job creation and provision of regular income, not only to provide alternatives to involvement in illegal or criminal activities but also, simply, to fight poverty, which is high in these regions. In addition, it would no doubt be desirable to target primarily the young generations, who suffer a cruel lack of prospects today.

The second, partly linked to the first, would be support for the development of economic activities as they are practiced locally. This means that it would be a good idea, no doubt, to focus attention primarily on agriculture and livestock farming, which are the activities of most people in these regions. This aims both to improve the productivity of the activities in question and to protect them from climate events, which implies in particular better management of water resources to irrigate crops and water livestock.

A third, also in the area of economic activities, would aim to enable processing and marketing of rural produce, increasing the proportion of added value received by primary producers.

In addition, and this time in the social field, it would be good to improve the provision of basic health and education services. On this latter issue, it would no doubt be desirable to emphasise vocational training, which is more likely to allow trainees to find employment or engage in an activity which provides income at the end of their education.

But it is vital not to lose sight of the fact that this vocational training would have to aim to satisfy the manpower needs of both the region itself and the major southern towns region, or even of the neighbouring countries with more buoyant economies, like Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, and perhaps Libya and Algeria once again. Indeed, it is most likely that the exodus of rural populations to more promising employment areas will continue, or even accelerate.

The Civic Service:
A Concrete Security-Development Link in Africa

Bruno Clément-Bollée

General, Security and Defence Cooperation Director, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Many African countries are currently facing a dual challenge. On one hand, they have to deal with massive job training difficulties for a rapidly growing population of legitimately demanding young people. On the other, they face huge development problems for both urban centres with a lack of qualified staff in traditional jobs, and in the vast agricultural areas that are increasingly abandoned. From a social standpoint, this dangerous situation has become increasingly worrisome. At the same time, the oft-overstaffed armed forces in these countries regularly take part in the resolution of social crises often without the appropriate training to manage them. Understandably, the peoples of Africa do not have the best image of them. Although this is not new, people, and especially the young, are so frustrated when faced with such despair that they are overcoming their fear of repression and expressing themselves openly and at times violently—thus threatening the stability of regimes.

In an attempt to solve this complex problem, a youth training and development assistance initiative was launched several years ago in Madagascar and adopted in other forms in countries including Djibouti, Tunisia and Mozambique. These wide-ranging experiences have all helped to develop the concept of a Civic service for development action (*Service civique d'action au développement* – SCAD). It aims to train young people and further the development of a country, while giving armed forces a chance to improve the public's image of them. In concrete terms, it offers young volunteers, both male and female, the chance to enter a national service programme consisting of an adaptation period to learn basic elements of citizenship again and a job training period in a specific field. Upon completion, they are required to perform the job for which they were trained to contribute to the development of the country before integrating the local economy.

Three prerequisites must be met before a project can be launched. First, there must be political support for the SCAD at the highest government level. Second, there must be real capacity to integrate the young people trained into the

local economy. Third, large-scale financial support from sponsors must be provided prior to the launch of the project.

Rapid population growth, job crisis and underdevelopment: an explosive combination

The situation inside Africa

Africa's population is rapidly growing and young people, hardest hit by the instability of the continent, have to deal with more and more problems when it comes to job training and entering the workforce. Everyone is aware of the instability of the situation, which unfortunately has become widespread. Hardest hit by conflicts, idle young people with legitimate demands often become major stakeholders in a crisis. As a result, those who should be a source of wealth and opportunity for a country turn against its government because of its inability to provide for them. Too often they are victims of a vicious circle in which the job crisis and unemployment push them to revolt in some form or another, often simply to meet their needs. In post-crisis countries, this leads to the question of what options to provide young people engaged in militias that are no longer fighting. These issues need to be addressed in order to ensure security.

In addition, the massive rural exodus affecting most of the continent, particularly West Africa, is an additional factor exacerbating an already precarious situation. Many rural peoples, faced with recurrent natural disasters, reduced yields and falling agricultural commodity prices, emigrate to cities, abandon farms and therefore generate an alarming rural depopulation. In the meantime, poverty-stricken slums are growing around cities experiencing uncontrolled urbanisation. In this context, it is important to promote programmes aiming to balance out this situation by training young people to do agricultural jobs to regulate rural populations, but also to do urban jobs to meet the colossal needs of urban centres.

Security players: insecurity factors?

In Africa, security sectors sometimes fall victim to those who are in charge of running them. Indeed, African armed forces are often overstaffed because of badly managed human resource policies. In addition, there is still a sizeable surplus of armed forces in post-crisis countries, whose first concern should be, with the inevitable reconciliation, to work as swiftly as possible on disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) actions to find a place for the surplus of soldiers in civil society. In addition to this problem, members of the armed forces themselves are also idle in some cases. When instruction and training are lacking, troops are left on their own. Some soldiers engage in a parallel activity, while others do nothing at all. Even more serious, du ring the crisis exit phases, soldiers, who are

not controlled at all, may be tempted to adopt similar behaviours to those fighting in the militia. No need for details—it suffices to look at the number of personal accounts of violence of all kinds that have been reported in recent months across Africa. Such **excesses** contribute considerably to insecurity. No African armed forces are free from these threats in times of crisis and peace alike. As United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has said, the main problem is that 'security forces that are untrained, ill-equipped, mismanaged and irregularly paid are often part of the problem, and perpetrate serious violations of human rights'. In such conditions, nations should try to come up with strategic ideas for major reform of the armed forces. Some countries including Mali, South Africa and Liberia have already begun to make efforts to do so. However, it is common knowledge that professionalising, organising, structuring and equipping the defence structure is costly for the national economy.

The lack of development is making matters worse

Over the past twenty years, one out of every two conflicts has taken place on African soil. Today, many crises are ongoing, some of which started over ten years ago. It is likewise clear how extremely difficult it is to emerge from crisis, particularly when it comes to applying the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process. The lack of goodwill too often shared by warring parties—along with, more important, the lack of job prospects—do not always prompt soldiers, regardless of their home country, to reintegrate into civil society. Moreover, in crisis management, the international community focuses on immediate needs as a priority through the implementation of emergency measures, often to the detriment of substantive issues, particularly those related to development.

As a result, in this clearly difficult landscape, poverty and the lack of future prospects for unemployed young people are risk factors for violence, and thus national instability, which could spread regionally. In addition, there are often also governance issues to consider, while corruption problems remain difficult to address. Lastly, and without succumbing to the prevailing and unhealthy pessimism about Africa, it is likewise important to mention recurrent natural disasters—droughts in the east, flooding in the west and hurricanes in the southeast—whose serious impacts can considerably hinder development.

None of this is new—these observations have often been made. However, attitudes seem to be changing today, particularly those of young people. The habitual passiveness of the past is now being replaced by systematic protesting about what is wrong with the system. Young people are overcoming their fear and descending into the streets to call their leaders into account. This is what is new, and the Arab Spring is an example of it. In the face of this phenomenon, those in power are forced to undertake reforms and to put adapted public policies into place so as

to create jobs and opportunities for young people. If used as part of global reforms, the SCAD can contribute to this.

The Civic service for development action: rounding out traditional tools

Starting with a proven instrument: the Adapted military service

Created in 1961, at the instigation of Michel Debré, the Adapted military service (*Service militaire adapté* – SMA) is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary this year. Its central idea is to address the social challenge and help young people overseas with limited prospects for the future. To do so, special units were formed in French Overseas Departments and Communities offering young volunteers jobs training in a military environment. The SMA proposes training in some fifty different jobs. It then helps young graduates find work in the local economy. In addition, SMA units are available to participate in rescue missions as part of emergency aid efforts, as West Indian units did after the earthquake in Haiti in January 2010.

The training on offer aims to be as comprehensive as possible. Therefore, young people are awarded certificates for job training, but also for civic training and first aid skills in addition to a driving licence. This system has always been successful. For example, last year 75 per cent of the 3,000 young people trained found jobs. This has inspired the SMA 6000 project, which aims to double the number of people trained by 2014.

This success can be explained by the SMA philosophy that seeks to address the 'training-employment' social challenge of French Overseas Communities with a project that engages young people and teaches them about life in the community. It also aims to offer concrete prospects for future careers.

Addressing the development challenge as well

With this in mind and given the African context, the idea has emerged to adapt the SMA concept so that it can especially address the development challenge, in addition to the social challenge. Therefore a project is being put in place that provides civic education foundations followed by job training for young volunteers. The aim is for them to ultimately find work in the national local economy, but only after a skill application phase in which they perform their jobs to contribute to the development of their country. In the Civic Service for Development Action, the main focus is to assist in the development of a country, while the SMA primarily seeks to address the social challenge.

On the African continent, the lack of job training and development challenges are loaded with consequences, not only for Africa, but also for Europe, which suffers the knock-on effects. This can be seen in the current influx of illegal

immigrants that European countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea are having a hard time controlling. Under these circumstances, it is also in Europe's interest to make efforts to prevent this problem, and this is precisely what it is trying to do in Africa. Promoting security and stability is the main objective of the strategic partnership between the European Union and the African Union. At the same time, the Millennium Development Goals, which the international community has pledged to achieve by 2015, work towards the same end with a significant increase in official development assistance, an absolutely essential contribution for sustainable actions in Africa.

Fostering stability through job training and development, the SCAD takes a dual approach. In concrete terms, it offers young volunteers, both male and female, the chance to enter a national service programme consisting of recognised training to learn a chosen job in an urban or rural environment, then an application period during which the participants actually work to further the development of their country (on large-scale national projects and state-owned farms, for example). Above all, this contributes to a country's stability. Upon completion of the service programme, the participants are integrated into the local economy, thanks to the identification of business and rural needs beforehand. This also increases a country's stability.

Besides, it is possible to include SCAD-type projects in the DDR process, targeting young soldiers who are often recruited during a crisis and setting up sizeable support structures. This provides additional support and lightens the massive workload of the classic United Nations processes, which must generally have very large staffs in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes.

Keys to success

This ambitious project requires a number of essential conditions for its success. First, political support at the highest level of the beneficiary country is crucial. The success of the SCAD will above all depend on its ownership by local authorities. They are responsible for conducting the project, rallying support of the public opinion in Africa and essential for the obtention of the support of international financial instruments needed for its implementation. Very strong political will is likewise required to help carry out a project by making it a national priority. A country's authorities can help coordinate the actions of the various ministries and other structures concerned by the Civic Service for Development Action, as well as those of the international players involved.

The identification and consideration of a country's real integration capacity in the training possibilities offered also affect the outcome of the project. They define the civic services ambitions, the number of young people trained every year and the job sectors that are chosen. It would be illogical to provide a young person training in a sector without any job opportunities. That would simply make

matters worse. If there are no employment possibilities, there is no project. It is therefore necessary to ensure that first, there is real integration capacity in a beneficiary country and second, that training courses match the job opportunities identified beforehand by targeting high-potential sectors. This assessment should be made in the feasibility study phase of a project and in partnership with the private sector. Finally, every project should seek synergies with initiatives developed by national agencies and international cooperation bodies, in close collaboration with the development plans of beneficiary countries.

The two prior conditions highlight the need to consider every SCAD as a unique case. Every country has its own strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, the project needs to be adapted to local conditions and take account of the possibilities that the political, economic and social environment of the country offers.

Moreover, the SCAD must absolutely be supported over the long term so that the implementation problems it causes can be addressed. It needs to be somewhat flexible in its implementation and constantly adapted to the changing local economy and development initiatives of international cooperation bodies or agencies. Therefore, to ensure that it is sustainable, each project should be overseen by a team of experts, working in close collaboration with the team implementing the project in the beneficiary country. This oversight is likewise a way to keep sponsors informed and to help ensure transparent management of the allocated funds.

In addition, the SCAD concept must financially draw on international financial instruments such as the European Development Fund (EDF), as well as on those offered by international organisations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Labour Office (ILO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The annual operating costs are relatively high and this type of project requires long-term commitment. It is therefore paramount that competent international bodies are associated with the concept very early on so as to effectively help African partners in their requests for financial support.

Why a military setting for the SCAD?

The armed forces, central players in many African countries, are not necessarily meant to be associated with the official development assistance process in Africa. African people do not always have the best image of them since they may have be involved closely or from a distance in abuses that have been committed, particularly in recent conflicts. Yet if the consequences of the lack of development are considered to be a major threat, it is not inconsistent to assume that government players each in their own way could help provide a response. With this in mind, the SCAD could act as a defence structure's contribution to the development of a country by providing a small portion of its staff and equipment to this

task. Conducting the SCAD in a military setting considerably streamlines the implementation of the project, especially financially.

All of the training programmes are clearly civilian-run, based on existing job training centres, and are part of possible support in this area from international organisations such as NGOs. But, depending on the country, these training centres are at times ineffective or practically non-existent. That is why it is important to create training centres or inject new energy into existing centres, which is the responsibility of the civil sector.

Therefore, there should be no mistake about the role of the military in a project whose beneficiaries are above all civilians. Only the environment of the project and a portion of its staff are provided by the defence structure, mainly to facilitate coordination, support and logistics. In most partner countries, the defence structure is one of the only structures that, from the outset, has the means that are sufficiently organised to be used, even in a post-crisis context. Accordingly, SCAD activities are managed by a team of civilian and military members, which is supervised by an inter-ministerial steering committee involving all the ministries that benefit from the training courses (public works, health, agriculture, commerce, tourism). The civilian members of the joint management team are responsible for the entire job training component. Military members are responsible for ensuring the smooth operation of the overall structure and provide equipment, infrastructure, logistical support and staff to the project. If the SCAD project were conducted in a civilian setting, it would be necessary to recruit staff, to create infrastructures for housing and meals, but also to ensure specific logistical support such as transport and equipment.

Expected benefits

The first benefit expected from SCAD projects of course concerns development, but not exclusively. The positive contribution in terms of job training for young volunteers is likewise considerable. By providing young people with concrete employment possibilities after they make a contribution to the nation, the concept of a Civil Service for Development Action produces a benefit that is threefold: first for the young people who are trained, providing economic prospects for their future; next, for the country, benefiting from this labour; and lastly, for the nation providing civic training for young beneficiaries. It produces a virtuous circle in which the more individuals take part in the development of a country, the more economic opportunities they have.

In addition, the young people who are trained can then work to fulfil national goals, for example, professionalising the civil protection structures that are still too often inadequate - particularly providing emergency services. If it successfully helps reorganise and coordinate the services involved, bath civilian and military, and identifies and gathers the already existing but dispersed resources, the

SCAD will be able to reorganise specialised services to better protect populations in the event of natural or accidental disasters. The government thus becomes the recruiter.

SCAD projects can likewise address the special needs of situations on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, it would be a good idea to implement the SCAD in Guinea and the Côte d'Ivoire first, to retrain soldiers in the currently overstaffed national armed forces, before offering it to other young people.

Finally, in addition to the objectives regarding development and the integration of young people, the SCAD implemented by national armed forces gives these forces the chance to improve their image, as the general public can but appreciate the outstretched hand.

Lessons learned

Several experiences based on similar principles to those of the SCAD were conducted in several African countries and can serve as a guide for the implementation of the project. First in Madagascar, with the help of the French forces in La Réunion, a Military Service for Development Action project was conducted to help integrate young volunteers into rural and urban environments after a period of training and work to further the development of the country. Rural integration warrants special attention. Every young person was given five hectares of land along with the basic equipment needed to establish a farm in his or her home country. Moreover, the work phase was focused on the villages around the distributed parcels of land to restore basic infrastructures such as schools and health clinics, repair wells and water piping, and redo the roads connecting the villages. This is a way to tangibly tackle the rural exodus problem which is of particular concern in this country. This project has certainly made the most headway in this area and it proves that under certain conditions, it works well. The extreme interest shown in the same area by other partners shows that this path is promising (Mozambique, Comoros, Malawi, Botswana).

The same programme is being conducted in Djibouti with the Adapted National Service. It intends to create job training hubs that can offer six to eight career paths. In Zambia as well, the Zambia National Service (ZNS), similar to the French SMA and supported by the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), seeks to provide an education and occupation to the poorest young people in a two-year training programme. Chad is home to a military farm education centre in Koundoul, which retrains military volunteers (roughly 120 a year) in the field of agriculture, by granting them a parcel of land in their home region. This ambitious project actively contributes to the economic development of the country in the area of farming and herding. Finally, other projects are being conducted all over the African continent: in Tunisia, with military job training centres in Beja and Gafsa; in Burundi, with the rehabilitation of a military

vocational school in Muzinda, which has since become a technical training centre in mechanics, electricity, plumbing, carpentry and masonry to retrain staff who are leaving the military; and in Benin and Mozambique with similar projects.

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Thus, the civic service for development action is an interesting structure, especially because of the momentum it creates in the areas of civic training, job training, development and more. Admittedly the target number of volunteers is low (between 1,000 and 2,000 young people a year)—the project has to consider the real integration capacity in the job sectors chosen and seeks to treat each young person as an individual—but the training aspect is solid. Moreover, since it is implemented within the defence structure, it improves the military's image. It could of course be implemented in the civil sector, but the military environment provides staff, infrastructural and logistical support from the outset. However, even in a military setting, the SCAD requires considerable funds. It is therefore crucial to rally the support of donors for this project.

Today, leaders have their backs to a wall and no longer really have any choice. With regard to training, jobs and better lives, young people are holding their leaders accountable and speaking out, at times violently. The new factor to consider is that people's frustration is stronger than their fear of being repressed. Regimes that are unable to anticipate this will have a high price to pay, and the Arab Spring is proof of this. The current context is thus ideal to the enactment of major reforms which could facilitate the implementation of tools such as the SCAD.

Its rigorous implementation and its reliable monitoring are the best guarantees for its success, which should involve the essential international financial partners. The potential benefits are huge and have more than met the development objectives the project set out at its inception, such as the involvement of ail government players in development, the armed forces offering assistance to the population and providing young people with civic training. The project, therefore, benefits from several major assets that could elicit enthusiasm from the various actors needed to make it a success.

The Value of a SCAD
in the Reconciliation Process

Charles Konan Banny

President of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Committee in Côte d'ivoire.

The need for a national civic service became all too clear to African states from the moment that their independence was declared. During the 1960s in Côte d'Ivoire, just such a service, the Civic service for development action (*Service civique d'action au développement* – SCAD), was established in the either the Defence or Youth Ministries, depending on the period.

In the new states very real risks existed. Disorder, organized protest, negligence, fraud, individualism, and rebellion against law and order constituted a real danger to society. Governments hoped to contain these threats by setting up quasi-military training for their young people. While traditional African societies were based on a keen sense of the common good, this virtue seemed to be singularly lacking in our modern cities. By setting up a national civic service the political authorities hoped to inculcate both the keenness to serve and the civic sense which they perceived were lacking. The inspiration came from Israel, where the African states greatly admired the pioneers who made the deserts bloom.

It was only much later, when the widespread economic crisis (and its political and military consequences) became obvious that the idea surfaced to propose a real alternative of preparation for employment to young people faced with the temptation to enrol in the various militias and combatant forces. In Côte d'Ivoire, for example, the national civic service was proposed by the Government as one way to extract the country from the politico-military crisis of the beginning of the 1980s. A Presidential Decree created the National civic service programme (*Programme du service civique national* : PSCN) for all the young people in the country.

This PSCN initiative had similarities to the idea of SCAD. It included civic and citizenship training, followed by technical and professional training leading to the acquisition of professional skills and the generation of job opportunities.

It is sad to have to admit that, for various reasons, none of the programmes linked to civic service came to fruition. This was not because their objectives were unrealistic, but quite simply that one or more of the conditions necessary for success were missing. These included political support, professional insertion for those

trained, and the guarantee of sustained financial backing for the programme. SCAD has learned from the lessons of the past, and maintains that it will take into account all those parameters which are essential to its success.

But is such a project certain to produce the end results desired? Can it at least serve the process of reconciliation needed after the profound crises which have hit several African states, including Côte d'Ivoire?

Training in civism: an essential preliminary

When African crises occur, emphasis is rarely given to the absence of civic spirit. Nevertheless wherever civil wars have broken out the fighting has always involved ethnic or religious factions, or (in other words) opposing factions. It is the primacy accorded to community concerns over civic spirit which brings with it both tensions and inter-communal conflict. We need to think about civic and citizenship training in our countries. It should be conducted in all schools from primary level onwards: the feeling of being a citizen will be a powerful antidote to the development of antisocial views, and the attractions of belonging to a separate community. Accepting the superiority of common citizenship over the membership of a distinctly separate community will constitute a major advance in the reinforcement of the State and the emergence of the Nation.

The citizenship training proposed by SCAD will have the advantage of countering the notable deficiency in current civic education, which often seems be confined to saluting the flag and using ideological propaganda. It is far from certain that a three-month training course can change the mentality of students, but at least one can hope for an awakening of consciences to the subjects being taught. A young person who is a convinced citizen will certainly be less receptive to speeches advocating sectarian community interests.

Qualification training

The training for professional qualifications offered to young people could solve one of the main problems posed by education programmes in Africa: matching training to employment. All African States proclaim their desire to match education to employment opportunities so as to reduce the number of qualified people out of work; it is a generalised wish without, unfortunately, much specific action being taken to achieve this worthy objective. The experiment proposed by SCAD has the advantage of producing trained people who are immediately operational, and certain to find employment on the job market.

The association of citizenship training with job-oriented training can only produce positive results. What is important is to be able to extend the project to a significant number of beneficiaries, and to integrate the approach into a system of

national education. Clearly, SCAD's objective of an output of just a few thousand per year is very small compared with the need. However, we should not wait to reach all the job seekers before launching programmes which are effective.

It is doubtless due to the limits imposed by the availability of resources that SCAD is initially aiming at well-defined targets. It also serves to solve the reinsertion problems of combatants who find themselves unemployed when the fighting stops. From this point of view, to be able to find any occupation post-crisis for those who have borne arms is an indispensable contribution to peace. However, if we imply that participation in armed conflict leads to an offer of employment in exchange for surrendering weapons, are we not getting into a vicious circle in which people enlist in the expectation of post-conflict employment?

Peace and reconciliation through employment

In any case, SCADs should be considered as pilot projects whose success could encourage states finally to transform good resolutions concerning job-oriented training into acts. It will need political courage to do this, as well as campaigns to raise awareness among their populations to get them to accept that manual work is just as desirable as any other employment. Furthermore, ex-combatants recycled in this way will not take steady civil employment if the activity brings in less money than they made bearing arms. It is not enough just to offer employment to bring peace; those concerned must not be left with the feeling that they have been cheated.

In any case, the causes of the conflicts which pushed young people into the arms of the recruiters must be dealt with at the same time as reinsertion. Short-term solutions lead to short-term respites. A reform in depth must be undertaken in accordance with the solution found for transitional justice. The current wounds must be healed, but follow-on treatment is also necessary to protect society against the eruptions of martial fever which would demand urgent and extraordinary responses.

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Finding alternative work for demobilized ex-combatants brings peace—for a time. Reorganising society fundamentally in order to treat the deeply engrained causes of conflicts is a much better solution. Reconciliation (which pre-supposes a conflict situation) is currently favoured because it defuses the danger represented by poverty-stricken ex-combatants. The methods used to find employment for them could be improved and extended to the education sector; here it would pay to accelerate civic instruction, together with the job-oriented training which leads rapidly to steady employment. Not only would this help to develop the national economy, but it would also put pressure on the source of recruitment of

unemployed citizens who are ready to make society pay for the miserable fate to which it has condemned them.

To conclude, SCAD is a laboratory experiment whose results could well prove a major factor both for peace and for the development of processes of reconciliation.

Conakry, 13 and 14 March 2013

Civil Defence,
a vital necessity

DCSD

Collaborative work, Directorate for security and defence cooperation of the Foreign Affairs Ministry.

Over recent years, and in a highly competitive international environment, France has developed a model of civil defence and acknowledged expertise which have aroused increasing interest on the part of our partners faced with recurrent natural disasters and inadequate national resources. From a political point of view, many leaders have appreciated the relevance of a sector which is very sensitive to public opinion and which operates in the full glare of media attention. The Security and defence cooperation directorate (*Direction de la coopération de sécurité et de défense* – DCSD), which has led in this area since the reforms of 2009, has the aim of promoting this tendency by responding to the need for training, and by assisting partners who wish to structure their civil defence resources as a pillar of the overall security of a state.

Managing emergencies

Improving the reaction to an emergency involves assisting the organisation of civil defence in order to be able to react quickly to major catastrophes, whether natural (for example, floods, hurricanes and droughts) or man-made (major pollution incidents and attacks). The first few hours after a disaster are when most deaths occur, whereas some of the most seriously injured could survive if help reached them in time. Too few southern countries are properly organized to react in this area, and French cooperation there is still in its infancy.

Each country affected should have a force available capable of providing a rapid initial response while waiting for the arrival of the vanguard of the international community, generally after 48 to 72 hours. This force can be based on existing military resources which are not, or at any rate not usually, employed at present for disaster management, such as engineers (access), medical facilities (first aid), transport (vehicles and helicopters), logisticians (coordinators) and signallers (communications equipment and networks). A decision to group these military resources in order to create a quick response capability would help to direct French cooperation on civil defence more clearly. External finance could be useful here

and, as in the case of development, the promotion of this area would greatly benefit the image of national forces.

This explains why the DCSD has decided to encourage progress towards the use of military resources in managing emergencies, by offering a two-pronged approach: firstly, in the short term, French cooperation provides advice to defence and security units to enable them to respond better to emergency situations, even if on an ad-hoc basis; in the longer term it offers partner countries the possibility of creating a true civil defence capability, based on organization, training and the acquisition of equipment.

Civil defence units in Guinea

Although Guinea is in the process of organising a proper civil defence force at national level in the long term, it is also preparing to set up a parallel force devoted to neighbourhood civil defence termed Civil protection units (*Unités de protection civile* – UPC). The Guinean authorities have sought French support for this project.

Why?

This concept is rooted in two factors: the existence of a surplus of military personnel and a need for civil defence. Guinea has an abundance of 'unofficial' troops, available but unappreciated by the population in a post-crisis situation. At the same time, there exists a great need for civil defence on the part of this same population, at risk of becoming victims of disasters with which the public services can hardly deal, because of a lack of organisation and resources.

What?

Through the DCSD, France has offered to help Guinea carry out the UPC project using these surplus military personnel. They are admittedly poorly trained to undertake public service missions but will be solidly buttressed by trainers who are experts in civil defence.

France has undertaken to train the expert trainers to lead the UPCs and to train the personnel of these units. The UPCs thus created will have the task of intervening rapidly on the ground in any civil defence incidents arising in the urban centres where they will be deployed. Initially, these ex-soldiers who have become 'civil defence soldiers' will be closely supervised by their expert trainers who themselves, in the fullness of time and with experience, will train their soldiers in rescue, fire fighting, engineer skills and so on.

UPCs will be deployed in the national capital and the capitals of the natural regions of Guinea: Kindia, Kankan, Nzérékoré, Labé and Conakry. They will

constitute a quick reaction force in an emergency. The Nzérékoré company should be the first to be inaugurated, on the occasion of the national day, 2 October 2013.

This substantial military contribution to security will meet a clear need for aid to the population and will contribute in parallel to restoring the image of the Guinean forces, which has suffered in recent years. In addition, setting up this project, which is eligible for funds from the major world financial institutions, will show rapid, concrete and visible results.

How?

In the training field France, at the request of the Guinean authorities, has seconded an adviser expert in civil defence who has a wide range of facilities available for training purposes:

• courses at the higher institute for civil defence studies at the regional level in Ouagadougou;

• sub-regional courses organised under the support for civil defence in Africa programme, funded by the priority solidarity funds programme, which includes Guinea;

• temporary aid missions from France as required.

In the equipment domain, France contributes to the provision of urgently-required equipment for the UPCs.

And other partner countries?

Similarities exist between Guinea and numerous other partner countries, especially in Africa: post-crisis situations, surplus troops to be demobilised, destitution of public services, especially in rural areas and so on. Even though a civil defence infrastructure may already exist, it often needs a fundamental overhaul.

The significance of a project such as the creation of UPCs is the speed with which it can be launched and thus the visibility of concrete results obtained in a minimum of time. With adaptation to local conditions it is easily transposable to other countries which want it in order to meet the legitimate expectations of the population in the area of civil defence.