



International Peace Academy



Economic Community of West African States

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# Toward a *Pax West Africana*: Building Peace in a Troubled Sub-region

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and Augustine Toure



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

International Peace Academy's Africa Program gratefully acknowledges the support of the governments of Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development.

## ABOUT IPA'S AFRICA PROGRAM

*Toward a Pax West Africana: Building Peace in a Troubled Sub-Region*, a seminar which featured about 70 military, diplomatic, civil society and academic participants mostly from West Africa, took place in Abuja, Nigeria, between 27 and 29 September 2001. The seminar was organized in partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and held in part at the ECOWAS Secretariat in Abuja. This seminar was the second in a series of three meetings organized as part of the current phase of the IPA Africa Program's project on Developing Regional and Sub-Regional Security Mechanisms in Africa. This work follows seven years of collaboration between IPA and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) between 1992 and 1998. The seventeen papers commissioned for the Abuja seminar will be published as an edited volume. In a bid to enhance African efforts at developing regional and sub-regional security mechanisms, IPA is working with partner institutions in Africa to:

- assess major challenges faced by sub-regional organizations in Africa in their efforts to prevent and manage conflicts and to operationalize their security mechanisms;
- provide a forum for civil society actors to contribute to efforts at developing security mechanisms in their sub-regions;
- provide training for the staff and accredited officials to sub-regional secretariats;
- raise awareness of, and increase international support for, sub-regional security mechanisms in Africa;
- enhance networking and sharing of information among a variety of African actors;
- publish and disseminate policy-relevant research that will be useful to decision-makers, academics, and the NGO community.

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## Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

ECOWAS is a sub-regional grouping of West African states established on 28 May 1975. Its fifteen current members are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Togo, Senegal, and Sierra Leone.



## Executive summary

- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)<sup>1</sup> has made various attempts to tackle the recurrence and emergence of new conflicts in its sub-region. With the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group's (ECOMOG) unprecedented interventions in the 1990s in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau, the international community witnessed a major evolution in inter-African affairs. The ECOMOG interventions marked an important turning point in the practice of peacekeeping by regional and sub-regional organizations in Africa.
- In recognition of the need to consolidate its decade-long peacekeeping experience, ECOWAS is in the process of establishing a security mechanism. However, while ECOWAS has been praised for its numerous military and diplomatic efforts to stem the tide of conflicts in West Africa, supporters and opponents alike have concluded that ECOWAS still has a long way to go if it is to fulfil the objectives it set for itself under its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security which it established in December 1999.

Some of the observations that emerged from the IPA/ECOWAS seminar held in Abuja, Nigeria, on 27-29 September 2001, included the following:

- A major obstacle to peace and stability in West Africa is the lack of viable systems of governance and democratization at all levels of society. In fact, the link between security, democratization and governance is made more explicit by the increasing demand by ordinary people for a more people-centered approach to security rather than the traditional focus on regime survival. Hence, human security, with specific attention focused on the right of the individual to live in peace and to satisfy his/her basic needs, should at least share equal status with traditional concerns with the security of the state.
- In West Africa, security forces (police, military, paramilitary and intelligence) still remain a source of great insecurity. These forces often mete out indiscriminate violence against civilians and undermine efforts to achieve good governance and development. A key challenge is how to ensure democratic control of security forces and of those responsible for their management and oversight (particularly the executive, finance ministries and relevant parliamentary committees).
- The role of ECOWAS in promoting good governance and democratization is paramount to building peace in West Africa. Of critical importance in this regard will be how the organization integrates the need for accountable government and the rights of citizens to be protected from autocratic regimes with the sanctity of state sovereignty. Directly related to this issue, is the increasing concern, particularly expressed by civil society actors, that ECOWAS has become complicit with a 'culture of impunity' by overlooking issues of justice in peace agreements signed to end conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone. These accords granted amnesty to faction fighters for war crimes and atrocities in exchange for cooperation in implementing peace agreements. The consequence of such accords is that some of these former warlords have become presidents, while others have become ministers, affording them an opportunity to continue exploiting their countries' wealth and spreading instability across their borders.
- Over the last decade, the role of civil society has become critical in shaping the discourse on resolving West Africa's security dilemmas. Civil society groups have played an important role in efforts to develop a security mechanism, especially the emphasis on creating a more coherent and strategic outlook in developing a co-ordinated response to conflicts in West Africa. Furthermore, various local civil society actors have contributed to democratization efforts throughout the sub-region in the 1990s. However, ECOWAS governments and civil society actors remain suspicious of each other. These suspicions can be dissipated through closer collaboration. ECOWAS should

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<sup>1</sup> ECOWAS' fifteen current members are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Togo, Senegal, and Sierra Leone.

focus on working with civil society groups that focus on governance and security issues, to provide early warning analysis and to assist in thinking through its response to conflicts.

- ECOWAS can only be effective if its member states have sufficient technical, human and financial resources to monitor and prevent conflicts in the sub-region. The signing of a protocol to create a security mechanism in 1999 was intended to improve the security environment in West Africa. But this has not yet happened. Rather, high levels of insecurity, lack of institutional consensus and limited financial and human resources have so far undermined the potential conflict management role of the ECOWAS security mechanism.
- Nigeria's role in shaping West Africa's security architecture is critical to its success. However, this aspiring sub-regional hegemon needs to take the views of other states into account in reaching decisions within ECOWAS' security bodies. Nigeria also needs to set an example of transparency and accountability, both internally in managing domestic affairs and externally in mediating conflicts. Nigeria could play a leadership role in security issues in West Africa as it has done in Liberia and Sierra Leone, but this must be done within the multilateral framework of ECOWAS in which other states participate actively in decision-making and contribute meaningfully to the implementation of such decisions.
- Sub-regional peacekeeping in Africa is largely a direct consequence of the post-Cold War disengagement by the major western powers from the continent. The changing French security role in West Africa, which now increasingly involves providing training and logistical support for African peacekeepers, has coincided with an increased, though limited, American and British security role in West Africa. Critical voices in Africa have, however, argued that these external security initiatives have neither been co-ordinated nor been consultative. While the role of Western governments like the US, France, and Britain is vital in helping ECOWAS to improve the effectiveness of its mechanism, specific assistance should focus on capacity building, mainly the provision of logistics and finance and not just on training.
- The UN needs to pay particular attention to Liberia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone, which share a similar history of instability, weak or repressive regimes, and an absence of the rule of law, poverty, and human rights abuses. Special attention will also need to be paid to political, ethnic and religious tensions in Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire, as well as the problems in Senegal's Casamance region. Many participants in Abuja viewed positively the decision by the UN to create a West Africa office in Dakar and to appoint a Special Representative of the Secretary-General to head this office. This initiative was also seen as recognition that a sub-regional approach is needed to tackle the nexus between governance and security in West Africa. ECOWAS should devise a strategic framework indicating areas of priority and steps needed to build effective cooperation between ECOWAS and the UN in the field of conflict management.
- Attention to human security requires intensified efforts to curb the scourge of small arms and light weapons in West Africa, and to alleviate the impact of armed conflicts on children in West Africa. In response to the alarming proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and its negative impact on long-term sustainable development, ECOWAS members signed a renewable three-year Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons in 1998. However, despite the 1998 Moratorium, West African societies remain awash with small arms and light weapons. Slow progress in establishing the implementing mechanisms of the Moratorium at the national level has been compounded by the lack of cooperation among states in harmonizing policies on a bilateral and regional basis.
- The role of children in armed conflicts represents both a national and regional problem. This includes the recruitment of children as child soldiers, the use of children as sex slaves, and the trafficking of children as slave labor. A sub-regional approach that integrates national policies with regional strategies is required to address these problems. The Accra Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by ECOWAS member states in April 2000 could offer a useful approach toward addressing the crisis of West Africa's youth.

## 1) The Roots of Pax West Africana

How to manage security, prevent conflicts, and strengthen the Economic Community of West African States' (ECOWAS) evolving security mechanism and learn lessons from ECOMOG's (the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group) military interventions in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau in the 1990s, were the central concerns of the seminar "*Toward a Pax West Africana: Building Peace in a Troubled Sub-region*". The seminar was organized by the New York-based International Peace Academy (IPA) in partnership with the ECOWAS secretariat in Abuja, Nigeria, on 27-29 September 2001, and brought together about 70 soldiers, diplomats, academics and civil society activists mostly from across the West African sub-region.

### Explaining Pax Africana

It is perhaps appropriate to start by explaining the title of the seminar. In 1967, Kenyan political scientist, Ali Mazrui, published his seminal work 'Toward a Pax Africana'.<sup>2</sup> This study was written at a time when the old colonial order was coming to an end and the newly independent states of Africa were searching for indigenous systems to manage Africa's international relations. Mazrui asked the question 'who will police Africa now that the imperial order is coming to an end?' The phrase 'African solutions for African problems' became a popular slogan in the 1960s to describe the aspirations of African leaders to achieve what Mazrui called 'continental jurisdiction'. This concept urged local African actors to manage their own conflicts, and inter-African interventions were considered more legitimate than extra-African interventions.

The OAU was a living embodiment of African aspirations for a *Pax Africana* to ensure that the continent had jurisdiction over its own affairs. But the OAU had barely come into existence in 1963 when many states became hostage to Cold War rivalries. Some African



Left to right, Professor Adebayo Adedeji, African Center for Development and Strategic Studies, General Theophilus Danjuma, Minister of Defense of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Ambassador John Hirsch, Vice President, International Peace Academy, at the opening session at the ECOWAS Secretariat.

leaders benefited from these interventions, launched most often by the superpowers, the US and the Soviet Union, and France. Many African regimes survived the first thirty years of independence largely because of military, financial and political assistance from external powers.

The end of the Cold War saw a collapse of this patron-client system. The slow decline of Western intervention in Africa crystallized after the debacle surrounding the death of 18 American soldiers during the US-led UN intervention into Somalia in 1993 and the failure of the UN Security Council to respond meaningfully to the April 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Following these horrendous events, Mazrui's question of who would police post-colonial Africa became pertinent once again. This question was particularly pressing due to the institutional weakness and lack of experience of Africa's regional and sub-regional organizations in managing conflicts. The tools and techniques of conflict management such as peacemaking, peacekeeping, peace enforcement and peacebuilding were in limited supply in Africa.<sup>3</sup>

Following their gradual disengagement from the continent after Somalia and Rwanda, Western govern-

<sup>2</sup> Ali Mazrui, *Toward A Pax Africana: A Study of Ideology and Ambition*, Chicago: University of Chicago, 1967.

<sup>3</sup> See the report by International Peace Academy (IPA)/Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), *War, Peace and Reconciliation in Africa*, November-December 1999.

ments elaborated various initiatives to address African conflicts. In place of sending their national troops to undertake peacekeeping missions, external powers offered to 'educate' African armies on UN peacekeeping practices and doctrines and the role of militaries in responding to humanitarian crises. Several programs were introduced in the mid-1990s including the US *African Crisis Response Initiative* (ACRI); the French *Renforcement des Capacités pour le Maintien de la paix en Afrique* (Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacity - RECAP); and the UK's *African Peacekeeping Training Support Programme*.<sup>4</sup> In a sense, Western powers were redefining their rules of engagement in Africa and the nature of military co-operation on the continent. No longer willing to intervene directly to prop up ailing governments or to risk casualties in conflicts of little strategic significance, the response was ironically to encourage 'African solutions for African problems.'

Prior to these initiatives and the two failed interventions in Somalia and Rwanda, some ECOWAS states had undertaken to respond to conflicts in West Africa. The creation of a peacekeeping force in August 1990 by five ECOWAS states (Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Gambia) to intervene in the Liberian civil war was a significant precedent for the African continent. With no expectation that the West would intervene in the Liberian conflict, the five West African states established ECOMOG in a bid to end the civil war. In many ways, ECOMOG was an embodiment of Pax Africana. Since 1990, ECOMOG has intervened in Liberia (1990-1997), Sierra Leone (1997-2000) and Guinea-Bissau (1999). The question is no longer who will police West Africa now that the Cold War's external actors have left. In the post-Cold War era, the question now is whether ECOWAS can consolidate the experience gained over the last decade by transforming ECOMOG into a viable security apparatus in West Africa. ECOMOG has been playing a limited policing

role more by accident than by design. Related to these questions are issues of governance and democracy, two factors that are increasingly fundamental to the security of any state. ECOWAS' capacity to tackle the nexus between good governance and security will be key to any attempt to build peace in West Africa.

### Trade and Security in ECOWAS

Before addressing governance and security issues, it is important to note that ECOWAS was established as an economic rather than a security organization. The Treaty establishing ECOWAS was signed in Lagos on 28 May 1975. The aims initially assigned to ECOWAS by its charter were centered on the promotion of "co-operation and development in all fields of economic activity". ECOWAS set out to achieve a common market in which goods, services and people would move freely across the sub-region, and in which members would derive benefits from increased trade and a common external tariff. But for the first two decades of its existence, ECOWAS' goals were hampered by the rivalry between Nigeria and France which led to the establishment of competing organizations in West Africa. ECOWAS states also lacked basic infrastructure and their economies remained dependent on primary commodities. Further frustrating efforts at political co-operation across the linguistic divide, France maintained military bases in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, and intervened militarily in various parts of Africa in support of local client regimes.

In the 1990s, ECOWAS' renewed focus on institution-building and sub-regional economic and monetary integration represented an important attempt to overcome a credibility deficit generated by programs that have had little impact on the living conditions of West African citizens. However, ECOWAS' efforts at market integration through trade liberalization have failed to yield the desired results. Intra-regional trade

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<sup>4</sup> On these programs, see Jendayi Frazer, "The Africa Crisis Response Initiative: Self-Interested Humanitarianism," *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Summer/Fall 1997, vol. 4 issue 2, pp. 103-118; Eboe Hutchful, "Peacekeeping Under Conditions of Resource Stringency," in Jakkie Cilliers and Greg Mills (eds.), *From Peacekeeping to Complex Emergencies: Peace Support Missions in Africa*, Johannesburg and Pretoria: The South African Institute of International Affairs and the Institute for Security Studies, 1999, pp.113-117; Paul Omach, "The African Crisis Response Initiative: Domestic Politics and Convergence of National Interests," *African Affairs*, vol.99 no. 394, January 2000, pp. 73-95; and Rocklyn Williams, "Beyond Old Borders: Challenges to Franco-South African Security Relations in the New Millennium," *African Security Review*, vol. 8 no. 4, 1999, pp.3-19.

still represents an insignificant portion of the total official exports of the sub-region, increasing only from 4 percent to about 11 per cent over the past two decades. The initial plan to create a single monetary zone by 1994 had registered little progress by 1993, when the Cotonou treaty postponed the deadline for a monetary union until 2009.

Complicating factors in monetary and trade integration in West Africa arose from the different and at times competing integration projects of francophone and anglophone West Africa. Ghana's president, Kwame Nkrumah's dismantling of the common British-created sub-regional institutions in the late 1950s had a negative impact on regional integration. French West Africa, however, recognized the need to minimize the restrictions and constraints that fragmentation had imposed on its development through vigorous and relentless promotion of cooperation and integration. Cooperation within the franc CFA currency zone led to the creation of the all-francophone Communauté Économique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (*CEAO*) in 1973<sup>5</sup>, which later became the Union Économique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA) in 1994.

Recognizing the need to stem instability in order to promote economic integration and development, ECOWAS undertook two sub-regional security initiatives: the ECOWAS Protocol on Non-Aggression in

1978 and the ECOWAS Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defense (MAD) in 1981. The first Protocol called on member states to resolve their conflicts peacefully through ECOWAS, while the second promised mutual assistance for externally instigated or supported aggression as well as the creation of an Allied Armed Forces of the Community (AAFC), consisting of stand-by forces from ECOWAS states. This force was never established.

Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Togo signed a Mutual Defense Pact, the *Accord de Non-Aggression et d'Assistance en matière de Défense* (ANAD) in 1977. Like the ECOWAS 1981 defense Protocol, members promised to settle disputes peacefully and to assist each other in the event of an armed attack. ANAD agreed, in October 1984, to set up a *Force de Paix* consisting of stand-by forces from member states to intervene in crisis situations. Like the AAFC, this force was never established. However, ANAD did have some success in defusing a border crisis between Burkina Faso and Mali in 1985. But, just as the CEAO and ECOWAS were rival organizations in the economic field, ANAD was a potential rival to ECOWAS in the security field. ECOWAS heads of state have recently taken a positive step in changing this perception by their decision to integrate ANAD into the new ECOWAS security mechanism of 1999.

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<sup>5</sup> On the rivalry between CEAO and ECOWAS, see S.K.B. Asante, "ECOWAS/CEAO: Conflict and Cooperation in West Africa," in Ralph Onwuka and Amadu Sesay (eds.), *The Future of Regionalism in Africa*, London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd, 1985, pp. 74-95; Daniel Bach, "The Politics of West African Economic Cooperation: CEAO and ECOWAS," *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 21, 4, 1983, pp.601-621; Olatunde Ojo, "Nigeria and the Formation of ECOWAS," *International Organisation*, 34 (4) Autumn 1980, pp.571-601; and Omotayo Olaniyan, "Nigeria and ECOWAS: A Role and Problem Analysis," in G.O. Olusanya and R.A. Akindele (eds.), *Nigeria's External Relations*, pp.126-140.

## 2) West Africa's Security Dilemma

Two important factors need to be addressed at the outset. First, not all of West Africa is in a perennial state of crisis. Liberia's unfinished conflict, Sierra Leone's uncertain path to peace, and Guinea's cross-border clashes with Liberia, are only part of the West African security landscape. There has been a parallel process of democratization, and efforts to achieve economic growth and development since West African states gained independence in the 1960s. The achievements of several countries (for example Benin, Ghana, Mali and Senegal), especially in sustaining constitutional democracy, are often overshadowed by the perpetual cycle of conflicts in a sub-region that can potentially serve as a vector for strong economic growth.

A second factor that needs to be addressed is that West Africa's security dilemma needs to be understood within a broader context of a globalized world. The conflicts in the sub-region and in other parts of the continent are not unique. The wars in West Africa in the past decade highlight the contemporary nature of conflicts. In many ways, West Africa is a microcosm of global (in)security. Major security concerns such as war economies, dilemmas of peacekeeping, small arms, the rise in non-state armed groups, militias and mercenaries, and the use of children in combat are not new to contemporary Africa; these furies have reared their ugly heads in spectacular fashion in today's other conflict-prone regions (Afghanistan, the Balkans, Cambodia, Chechnya, Colombia, and Sri Lanka), and in other periods.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, conflicts are hardly ever exclusively local incidents; they often have various interconnected dimensions ranging from national to regional to global linkages.

Nonetheless, an analysis of West Africa in the last decade offers depressing reading. The reality of the dilemmas confronting the sub-region was starkly described by Professor Adebayo Adedeji who, in his keynote address at the IPA/ECOWAS seminar in Abuja,

provided a grim entrée of complexities when he said that 'West Africa is moving backwards faster' because the sub-region still lacks the essential ingredients necessary for building peace: good governance, integration, economic progress and stability. The reasons for this state of affairs are numerous, but there remains no consensus or acceptable framework of analysis for explaining conflicts in West Africa. We will next focus attention on three factors that are crucial to understanding West Africa's security dilemma: greed, grievance and governance.

### Greed: Economic dimensions of civil war

In the last five years, a plethora of studies has emerged to explain why conflicts, instability, and poor governance are still rife in sub-Saharan Africa. A key and influential paradigm that has pervaded the general discourse on contemporary conflicts is the argument that economic motivations are critical factors in understanding why civil wars occur. In its most explicit and as some critics assert, misleading form, the work by Paul Collier, director of the World Bank Development Research Group, argues that 'greed' rather than 'grievance' remains pivotal to understanding conflicts.<sup>7</sup> In Africa, this analysis has benefited from the strong empirical data offered by rebel leaders such as Charles Taylor in Liberia, Foday Sankoh in Sierra Leone and Jonas Savimbi in Angola

West Africa is among the world's most unstable sub-regions: 37 out of 72 successful military coups d'état in Africa (about 50 percent), between 1960 and 1990, occurred in West Africa, a sub-region with less than a third of the OAU's membership. In the last decade, Liberia and Sierra Leone have been embroiled in protracted civil wars, Guinea-Bissau experienced a brief internecine conflict in the late 1990s, Casamance separatists have continued to battle the Senegalese government as they have done for two decades, the Tuareg problem has simmered in Mali and Niger, and Liberia and Guinea continue to accuse each other of launching cross-border raids against their territories in a conflict also involving Sierra Leonean rebels.

<sup>6</sup> Comfort Ero, "Africa's Global Impact," Special Issue on Structural Conflict in the New Global Disorder: Insecurity and Development, IDS Bulletin, Vol. 32, No. 2, April 2001, p. 90.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Collier, "Doing Well Out of War: An Economic Perspective," in Mats Berdal and David Malone, *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agenda in Civil Wars* London: Lynne Rienner, 2000, pp. 91-111.

who have exploited their country's resources through warfare.

The dynamics of 'greed' are certainly an additional layer of analysis that helps to explain further why fighting occurs and what motivates or drives individuals or groups to engage in warfare. It is evident that the spoils of war have left individual rebel leaders rich. But civil wars are never singularly about one issue. Collier's model cannot explain why conflicts occur in countries with minimal resources (for example, Guinea-Bissau) or why some resource-rich countries are not at war (for example, Botswana). Conflicts such as those confronting Liberia and Sierra Leone are characterized by a complex interconnection of 'greed' and 'grievance'. Moreover, 'greed' is not just about economic accumulation. Rather it should be broadened to focus on the political interests of those engaged in conflicts and draw attention to those who might see an advantage in using conflicts for their own ends.

Thus what we seem to be witnessing in contemporary African conflicts are traditional grievances based on political and economic exclusion, human rights violations, the lack of justice, increasing poverty, social crises, weak institutions and political manipulation of ethnic divisions. These factors interact with the new 'post-industrial society' conflicts supposedly driven by consummate businessmen and entrepreneurs of war and political elites who exploit grievances and use war as a means of seeking opportunities for predatory accumulation.<sup>8</sup> Such an analysis also suggests that the study of conflict must involve a deep and broad understanding of their history. Each conflict has its own dynamic and specificity, which are often overlooked in policy responses or donor assistance. Moreover, closer attention should be paid to the actors, various networks and groups in conflicts, including their linkages with governments and other groups in society. Rebel formations and the tactics they employ to coerce or mobilize groups in society to fight on their behalf need to be more closely analyzed.<sup>9</sup>

### Grievance: The absence of Good Governance and Security

The presence of the 'warlord' pillaging society of natural resources, coercing disaffected, unemployed youth into violent attacks, cannot hide the fact that key problems in many West African societies stem from poor governance and undemocratic regimes. In fact, the absence of effective governance and democratic control of the state and its key institutions is a constant threat to ordinary citizens. In many cases, the state is unable to fulfil its basic functions. The first sign of poor governance can often be seen in deficient law and order services. The inability of some states to govern, to provide basic services and to protect their citizens is key to understanding the security dilemma confronting many West African societies. Along with institutions tasked with providing security to citizens and maintaining law and order, several states have limited jurisdiction outside their capitals. The power of the state to control violence and to fulfil its social duties has often been eroded by leaders who have sought to turn state security forces into praetorian guards for regime survival rather than for the protection of ordinary citizens. The state, in several instances, is a major source of insecurity.

The state's security sectors, namely the police and the army, are often complicit in the violence, as well as in looting and extorting goods from citizens. In most of post-independence West Africa, governance and democratization failed to take root (for example in Nigeria, Gambia, Ghana and Sierra Leone) because of the role of the military. Coups and counter-coups were a permanent feature of the sub-region's politics. The coup in Côte d'Ivoire in

"The incidence of coups appears to be on the wane in West Africa but the conditions that give rise to such interventions persist and may yet obstruct or derail the sub-region's fragile democratic experiment."

Jimmy Kandeh

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<sup>8</sup> Comfort Ero, "Africa's Global Impact," *op. cit.*, p. 92.

<sup>9</sup> These issues were raised by Ibrahim Abdullah, Kwesi Aning, Eboe Hutchful and Ismail Rashid during their presentations on the panel "Rebels, Sobels and the Political Economy of Conflicts in West Africa," at the IPA/ECOWAS Seminar, Abuja, Nigeria, 27-29 September 2001.

December 1999 was a reminder that, while many states in West Africa are formal democracies conducting free and fair elections at regular intervals, democracy throughout the sub-region continues to face tensions that could easily reverse the gains of the past decade. The history of political and economic mismanagement, including the misuse of the state's security sector, has meant that security forces are often the proponents of undemocratic and corrupt practices. In some instances, conventional state security structures have either been in decay for several years or have been unable to respond to outbreaks of violence. In addition, the lack of training, adequate pay and effective management has undermined the capacity of security forces to respond to violent disorder in their societies.

The role of the police has often been overlooked in spreading instability, partly because West Africa's police forces are usually not involved in staging coups. Yet the role of police forces, notably in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria has been to add to the general sense of insecurity and undemocratic practice by the security sector.<sup>10</sup> In several societies, the police have inflicted violence rather than protected civilians from criminality and violence. Civilians constantly find themselves to be victims of armed robbery, harassment, theft, thuggery, rape and other unspeakable offences committed by members of security forces. Ordinary citizens in West Africa also suffer disproportionately from the indiscriminate use of force. On the West African coastline, the Niger Delta (Nigeria), Liberia and Sierra Leone, societies have witnessed the indiscriminate use of force against citizens who simply yearn for basic human security needs to be met by their governments. In response to the failure of the security sector to protect its citizens, several local communities have created vigilante groups like the *Kamajor* in Sierra Leone. In eastern Nigeria, a state government has tried to use the Bakassi Boys as a crime-fighting police force, due to the ineffectiveness of the federally-controlled, resource-starved police. However, this state government has been unable to establish a proper system of

oversight, leading to the use of excessive violence by the members of the Bakassi Boys against innocent civilians.

The case for security sector reform and democratic control of security forces is of the utmost concern primarily because it strikes at the heart of the governance-security nexus. A critical focus on all the constituent parts of the security sector, including those who manage and oversee its functioning, is

based on the assumption that the intervention in internal political crises by ill-disciplined and unprofessional security forces is a source of instability, tension and ultimately conflict. Security-sector reform has become a prerequisite for preventing conflicts and post-conflict peacebuilding in states like Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. The aim is to integrate a good governance agenda with the goals of security sector reform and to ensure democratic control of the security-sector. Given the past history of mistrust between civil society groups and the military, it is important to have a proactive program of confidence-building between security forces, the military and civil society, and to improve civil society's knowledge and understanding of security issues.

#### Governance: Democratization, the CSSDCA, and Civil Society

The tensions arising from what are seen as the rudimentary requirements of human security, namely justice, personal safety, accountable executives, and

"The West African community (as well as other African communities) should take heed that the post-Cold War, post-apartheid wave of Pan-Africanism seeks to grapple with a fundamental question: how do Africans establish norms and institutions to protect and guarantee the security of their citizens without undermining security and engendering conflicts amongst states? How should Africans go about balancing state-rights with peoples'-rights?"

Chris Landsberg

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Abiodun Alao, *Security Sector Reform in Democratic Nigeria*, Working Paper no.2, Center For Defense Studies, London, February 2000; and Comfort Ero, *Sierra Leone's Security Complex*, Working Paper no. 3, Center For Defense Studies, London, June 2000.

democratic practices, clearly underscore the link between good governance, democracy and security in most West African states. The absence of these factors continue to undermine the principle objective of ECOWAS, namely economic integration and political co-operation among member states.

Amos Sawyer and Chris Landsberg argue that the solutions to the crisis of governance and consequently security were clearly set out in the 1991 *Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Co-operation in Africa (CSSDCA)*.<sup>11</sup> Among the key factors necessary for meeting the security needs of individuals and for improving the conditions for development, stability and governance, the CSSDCA asserts the need for constitutionalism and principles of law, respect for human rights, political pluralism, accountable and transparent government, proper management of public finances to reduce the imbalance favoring military expenditure, and better co-operation among governments, civil society groups and intergovernmental organizations.

The proposals set out by the CSSDCA sought to shift the balance from respect for the sovereign rights of states to respect for the human rights of citizens. The newly-created African Union (AU) will take over the work and assets of the OAU, and will pursue similar goals. The new African Union aims to limit the absolute terms of sovereignty of states by recognizing the right of the regional body to intervene in three instances: when constitutionalism is undermined by the illegitimate overthrow of a government; acts of genocide; and in cases in which internal strife in a state threatens regional stability. These criteria are almost identical to those included in the ECOWAS Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security agreed in Lomé in December 1999.<sup>12</sup> But there are doubts as to whether African leaders will pursue such robust intervention to defend any of these areas. While the CSSDCA and the African Union both

espouse noble intentions, a key question is whether they can function effectively. As several participants wondered during the IPA/ECOWAS seminar: 'who will intervene in Nigeria if ever there was a need to strengthen constitutionalism in that country?'

The CSSDCA proposals, which have been promoted through ministerial meetings on the subject since 1999 led by Nigeria and South Africa, as well as the creation of the African Union, could signify a major shift in the thinking and outlook of African leaders. Both initiatives are seen as the future paradigm in defining and understanding African security in the new millennium. Both challenge Africans to address critical questions about the accountability of their leaders. According to Chris Landsberg, two important questions that need to be asked in twenty-first century Africa are: 'how should we hold each other accountable? And, how should Africa be governed?' The efficacy of efforts by Africans to hold themselves accountable will be determined, *inter alia*, by the willingness of their leaders to ensure that justice is not sacrificed for the sake of ensuring that warring factions endorse peace agreements for expedient short-term goals without proper accountability for their war crimes.

The implications of the blanket amnesty in Liberia in 1995 and Sierra Leone in 1999 and the divisions evident among West African leaders as the UN Security Council debated whether to impose economic and travel sanctions on Charles Taylor's regime in Liberia in early 2001, have led many civil society actors in West Africa to conclude that ECOWAS leaders are complicit in the 'culture of impunity'.<sup>13</sup> There is widespread skepticism among civil society groups in West Africa about whether ECOWAS can deliver justice for ordinary civilians who have suffered greatly at the hands of repressive leaders.

In the area of conflict management, the CSSDCA's final report of 1991 proposed *inter alia* the develop-

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<sup>11</sup> See Olusegun Obasanjo and Felix Moshia (eds.), *Africa: Rise to Challenge*, New York: Africa Leadership Forum, 1993.

<sup>12</sup> See the ECOWAS Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, Lomé, 10 December 1999.

<sup>13</sup> Economic and travel sanctions were imposed on Liberia by the Security Council in May 2001.

ment of a continental peacekeeping machinery, promotion of conflict prevention and military self-reliance in Africa; the establishment of an African Council of Elders to mediate conflicts; and the drastic reduction in military expenditures in Africa. Some of these ideas have been incorporated into the ECOWAS security mechanism.

It is important to highlight the important role of civil society groups, who were actively represented at the IPA/ECOWAS seminar, in managing conflicts in West Africa. Civil society actors include religious organizations, women's organizations, human rights activists, the media, and traditional leaders. Several African governments continue to regard civil society organizations with grave suspicion. In extreme cases, some governments have dismissed such groups as foreign agents and unpatriotic enemies of the state. Several ECOWAS states, such as Mali and Sierra Leone, however, have embraced the role of civil society actors in preventing and managing local conflicts and in reintegrating former combatants into local communities. Civil society actors have also been useful human rights monitors and promoted democratization in their countries. The ECOWAS security mechanism recognizes the role of civil society actors in two important areas: first, in gathering information for the local bureaus in ECOWAS' evolving early warning

system; and second, in undertaking mediation efforts through the Council of Elders.

In the early 1990s, civil society actors in Benin, Mali, and Niger played an instrumental role in democratic transitions. In Liberia, the Inter-Faith Mediation Committee (IFMC) crafted the ECOWAS Peace plan of 1990, while the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission monitored human rights issues during the Liberian civil war. In Sierra Leone, a cross-section of women's organizations pressured the military government to hold democratic elections in February 1996, while the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone (IRC SL) played a crucial role during the negotiation of the Lomé peace agreement of 1999. Several traditional leaders and women's organizations have been involved in efforts at resolving the Tuareg problem in northern Mali. But, in some cases, coalitions of civil society groups in West Africa have been unable to operate in a cohesive and effective manner. The lack of institutional capacity has sometimes led to strong personalities dominating these groups, some of which have also been accused of elitism and a lack of transparency and democratic accountability. Many participants in Abuja, however, recognized the potential of civil society groups to contribute to the management of conflicts in West Africa.

### 3) Policing West Africa: An Assessment of the ECOWAS Response

A key challenge for ECOWAS remains how to devise effective methods and institutions to respond to West Africa's conflicts. ECOWAS has had to adapt its institutions to play a conflict management role in an atmosphere of political instability and bad governance which has plagued many of its member states. The weakness of national economies, the low-level of economic and technological development, and the resultant failure to build a common market have also impeded ECOWAS' progress. Due to these constraints, some commentators question ECOWAS' capacity to play a peace and security role.

Twenty-six years after it was created, ECOWAS has yet to achieve many of its stated objectives. Its common market has not yet been built, and monetary union is still to come. Despite a protocol on the free movement of persons, freedom of movement remains difficult across much of West Africa. Added to this, economic policies within the sub-region remain to be harmonized. The continuing existence of about 40 intergovernmental organizations, many pursuing similar goals, is a further obstacle to unity. The linguistic and cultural divide between anglophone and francophone states continues to be an additional barrier to economic and political progress. In many ways, regionalism and the quest for integration in West Africa have become a mirage.<sup>14</sup>

#### From Monrovia to Bissau via Freetown

West Africa is a troubled sub-region, but is also a sub-region which launched three unprecedented military interventions in a bid to end conflicts through collective sub-regional efforts. More than any other sub-regional organization in Africa, ECOWAS has set in motion a process that can be adapted for managing conflicts in Africa and elsewhere. That an organiza-

tion created for the purpose of enhancing economic and political co-operation could transform itself into a sub-regional security apparatus should certainly be hailed as an innovative and significant evolution in the practice of inter-African security. Several West African states, led by Nigeria in two of the three cases, embarked on a journey that would eventually lead them to intervene in the

internal affairs of three member states. ECOMOG has been at the helm of sub-regional security for more than a decade in West Africa since it first intervened in Liberia in 1990. The ECOMOG intervention in Liberia represented a watershed in Africa's collective security. Since entering Liberia, ECOWAS has tried to transform and expand its mandate from political and economic matters to managing, resolving and preventing conflicts.

There is as yet no consensus, as reflected in the various exchanges between practitioners, in particular several West African generals and diplomats, and civil society activists and academics, as to whether ECOWAS has been effective in its security role. An inventory or evaluation of ECOWAS' role in conflict management offers a mixed track record and raises doubts about the organization's capacity or ability to build peace in its sub-region. Participants stressed that the strengths and weaknesses of ECOWAS and ECOMOG are that these bodies are ultimately a reflection of the internal governance dilemmas and instability of their constituent states.

At each stage of its interventions in Liberia, Sierra

"All three unprecedented military missions of ECOMOG in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau ...saw sub-regional armies sailing to Monrovia, Freetown and Bissau on a modern *mission civilizatrice*. Like the European explorers centuries earlier, these seamen of renaissance Africa were attempting to bring reason and enlightenment to truculent "tribes" and warlords engaged in senseless warfare."

Adekeye Adebajo

<sup>14</sup> The problems of regionalization and integration at a political and economic level were raised by Daniel Bach in his presentation on "ECOWAS: Trade, Security and Regionalization in West Africa, Supranationalism, Hegemony and Multilateralism," at the IPA/ECOWAS Seminar, Abuja, Nigeria, 27-29 September 2001.

Leone and Guinea-Bissau, ECOMOG found its ability to function effectively constrained by several factors: division among member states who, having failed to find a common approach, backed various rival factions; warlords who plundered their countries' resources and politicians who negotiated in bad faith; the ambitions of an aspiring hegemonic, Nigeria, and the aggressive interventionist tendencies or clandestine behavior of several sub-regional states<sup>15</sup> (see Table 1). ECOMOG's use of force in Liberia and Sierra Leone, without consensual sub-regional approval and UN Security Council approval, led some critics to question its legitimacy and to regard it as an instrument of Nigeria's hegemonic ambitions.

Throughout ECOMOG's peacekeeping experiences, fundamental questions that confronted ECOWAS member states related to the absence of accountability and transparency in decisions on the use of force. One contentious area remains the *responsibility* of those states that use force in the name of humanitarian causes, regional security or self-defense. Several participants in Abuja also noted the need to scrutinize closely the role of external actors, both within and outside Africa. These include western and Asian commercial firms which collude with warlords to plunder resources and external powers who contribute to fueling conflicts through support to internal parties. The role of sub-regional actors in using armies across various borders to undermine rather than to promote sub-regional stability was highlighted. As several participants noted, a major factor undermining ECOWAS' various attempts at building peace was the independent actions of these states in using military force or providing military support to various armed groups in contravention of ECOWAS decisions.

Four important examples of military support to belligerents cited by participants included: first, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso's support for Charles Taylor's NPFL in Liberia; second, the support of several ECOMOG states like Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Guinea for anti-NPFL factions in Liberia; third, Liberia and Burkina Faso's support for the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone; and fourth, Senegal's (backed by Guinea) military support to president João Bernardo 'Nino' Vieira against General Ansumane Mané in Guinea-Bissau's conflict.

Another destructive conflict involves two of the three members of the Mano River Union – Liberia and Guinea. The warlord-turned-president of Liberia, Charles Taylor, has been at the heart of growing regional crises since his insurgent movement, the NPFL, invaded Liberia in 1989 and later joined RUF rebels in their attacks on Sierra Leone. The NPFL-RUF collaboration with Guinean dissidents launched attacks on that country from September 2000 following claims that Guinean leader, Lansana Conté, was supporting Liberian rebels against Taylor's regime. Ulimo-K leader, Alhaji Kromah, operated from Guinea during Liberia's civil war. Guinea-Liberian tensions are now a potential flashpoint for a sub-regional conflagration following Lansana Conté's reported support for dissident Liberian forces calling themselves Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) which currently occupy parts of northern Liberia. Events in the Mano River basin provide clear evidence that efforts at building peace in West Africa will remain frustrated as long as leaders continue to act in ways that destabilize the sub-region.

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<sup>15</sup> On the ECOMOG interventions, see Colonel Festus Aboagye, *ECOMOG: A Subregional Experience in Conflict Resolution, Management and Peacekeeping in Liberia*, Accra: Sedco Enterprise, 1999; Adekeye Adebajo, *Building Peace in West Africa: Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau*, Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002; Adekeye Adebajo, *Liberia's Civil War: Nigeria, ECOMOG and Regional Security in West Africa*, Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002, forthcoming; Eric G. Berman and Katie E. Sams, *Peacekeeping in Africa: Capabilities and Culpabilities*, Geneva and Pretoria: UN Institute for Disarmament Research and Institute for Security Studies, 2000; Karl Magyar and Earl Conteh-Morgan (eds.), *Peacekeeping in Africa: ECOMOG in Liberia*, Hampshire, London and New York: Macmillan and St. Martin's Press, 1998; Robert Mortimer, "From ECOMOG to ECOMOG II: Intervention in Sierra Leone," in John W. Harbeson and Donald Rothchild (eds.), *Africa in World Politics: The African State System in Flux*, Colorado and Oxford: Westview Press, Third Edition, 2000, pp.188-207; William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States*, Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998; Paul Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*, Oxford and New Hampshire: James Currey and Heinemann, 1998; and Margaret Vogt (ed.), *The Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG: A Bold Attempt at Regional Peacekeeping*, Lagos: Gabumo Press, 1993.

**Table 1: Charting the dilemmas confronting the ECOMOG missions**

	Liberia	Sierra Leone	Guinea Bissau
Conflict features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plundering of resources by rival warlords</li> <li>• Failure to implement 13 peace agreements due to the proliferation and manipulation of the conflict zone by armed groups</li> <li>• Spill-over of conflict into Sierra Leone</li> <li>• Continuation of conflict after the 1997 election to end the civil war</li> <li>• Dissident forces continue to launch conflict from bases in Guinea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coercion of ordinary citizens, particularly young children to fight</li> <li>• Diamond-plundering and undisciplined militia groups</li> <li>• Collaboration of soldiers and rebels in the diamond fields</li> <li>• Various armed groups seek and gain support from various external military sources</li> <li>• Clandestine behavior of rebel collaboration with Liberia leads to conflagration of sub-regional tensions into Guinea</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belligerents negotiate in bad faith.</li> <li>• Arms trafficking to Casamance separatists</li> <li>• Fractious political parties</li> <li>• Disloyal army</li> </ul>
Common political problems in the peacekeeping missions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep political division among ECOWAS member states</li> <li>• Member states support various warring factions</li> <li>• Parochial and self-interested goals of member states</li> <li>• Accusations of corrupt practice by ECOMOG forces</li> <li>• Indiscriminate use of force by ECOMOG</li> <li>• Little international financial and military support for the peacekeeping mission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ECOWAS member states support various rebel and militia groups, and successive governments in Freetown</li> <li>• Nigeria's dominance of the ECOMOG High command</li> <li>• Unsubstantiated allegations that some ECOMOG forces are complicit in illicit diamond-mining</li> <li>• International support too little too late</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ECOMOG force distrusted by General Mane as an instrument of French policy</li> <li>• France and Portugal play out "spheres of influence" politics in Guinea-Bissau</li> <li>• Lack of Nigerian presence denies francophone-dominated forces the manpower and military resources of ECOMOG missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone</li> </ul>
Operational Dilemmas confronting ECOMOG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unclear mandate</li> <li>• Peacekeepers sent to mediate in violent terrain where there was no peace to keep</li> <li>• Inadequate logistical or financial support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few lessons applied from previous experiences</li> <li>• Continuation of improvised peace mission</li> <li>• Lack of intelligence led to high casualties and fatalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequately-sized ECOMOG mission totally dependent on French logistical and financial assistance</li> <li>• Mission once again exposed ECOMOG's weakness in interoperability, intelligence-sharing, distant deployment and the difficulty of sustaining troops on the ground</li> <li>• Withdrawal of ECOMOG force after only four months</li> </ul>

### Taming the regional 'hegemon'

Concerns over the use of force are of particular significance when discussing the role of Nigeria as the potential hegemon in West Africa. The role and performance of Nigeria in ECOMOG led to numerous debates among seminar participants at the IPA/ECOWAS seminar. Supporters of Nigeria's role in ECOMOG were quick to state that its presence was pivotal in reducing violence in the sub-region, while its critics challenged its domineering role in ECOWAS. Supporters argued that Nigeria's vast contribution to ECOWAS and ECOMOG cannot be overlooked. Nigeria provided the bulk of the men and money for ECOMOG's efforts in Liberia and Sierra Leone. With 75 percent of West Africa's GNP, 50 percent of its population, and a 94,500-strong army that dwarfs the combined total of those of its neighbours, Nigeria remains a potential hegemon in West Africa.

Several participants questioned Nigeria's role in West Africa: is it enough to say that without Nigeria leading the ECOMOG force in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the situation in both countries would have been far worse?

Is it enough to say that without Nigeria there can be no ECOMOG? Is it enough to say that every alliance needs a hegemon to succeed? What about the role and responsibility of that hegemon? How do ECOWAS states go about managing the role of a regional hegemon? How can states/regimes be held accountable for their

exercise of force across borders? These are relevant questions which need to be addressed in order to develop an effective security mechanism in West Africa. Furthermore, these questions are particularly pertinent as some states appreciate Nigeria's sacrifices and leadership, but as Nigeria's Defense Minister, General Theophilus Danjuma, noted during his opening address to the seminar, some ECOWAS states still fear the strength of an aspiring Nigerian hegemon.

"West African states must face two realities: first the need to establish a security regime for the sub-region is inevitable if the sub-region and its component states are to develop. Secondly, a hegemon is required to propel the security regime and Nigeria fits into that description."  
Gen. Theophilus Danjuma  
Nigerian Defense Minister



Participants at IPA/ECOWAS Seminar, "Toward a Pax West Africana: Building Peace in A Troubled Sub-Region," Abuja, Nigeria, 27-29 September 2001.

As ECOWAS Deputy Executive Secretary, Cheick Diarra observed, Nigeria is both the problem and the solution in the move toward a Pax West Africana. ECOWAS needs Nigeria, but the specter of a bulldozing hegemon is still a source of concern for many states. Because Nigeria is expected to play a dominant role in West Africa, its actions must be responsible, accountable, and transparent. The introduction of other contingents from outside the sub-region into peacekeeping missions in West Africa could be a way of reducing Nigeria's dominance. Some participants urged that powerful regional forces should be placed within multinational UN peacekeeping missions as is currently the case with the UN mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). This would not only increase the legitimacy and access to external resources, but also be an effective way to enhance the UN's strength in regions where external powers are reluctant to intervene.

The democratic transition in Nigeria may provide an opening in which to temper the fears of a domineering Nigeria. Since President Olusegun Obasanjo came to power in May 1999, Nigeria has been more reluctant, due to the financial costs and lack of domestic support, to play the role of sub-regional policeman. It seems increasingly doubtful that Nigeria has both the capacity and the will to continue to intervene in sub-regional trouble spots. Thus, other ECOWAS states need to develop their capacity to intervene in managing regional conflicts in case Nigeria is unable to provide its resources to such missions. Nigerian casualties in Liberia and Sierra Leone were estimated to be over 1,000, while the costs of both missions officially ran into billions of dollars, though a large amount of these funds vanished through the corruption of Nigeria's military leaders. It is unlikely that the Nigerian civilian government will be able to sustain these casualties and costs without some loss of domestic political support. Internal political and financial constraints will also temper Nigeria's robust policies on peacekeeping missions in the future.<sup>16</sup>

Nigeria's refusal to contribute peacekeepers to Guinea-Bissau in 1998 and its reduction of troops from 12,000 to 4,000 in Sierra Leone by 2000 are clear signs of a

growing weariness at the costs of protracted peacekeeping in West Africa. Yet, the failure of ECOMOG in Guinea-Bissau provides a clear illustration that unless other ECOWAS states equip themselves to respond effectively to conflicts, then Nigeria will find it increasingly difficult to withdraw totally from its sub-regional peacekeeping commitments. The task for Nigeria, therefore, is to work closely with its sub-regional counterparts to ensure that member states share in the burden of managing conflicts.

### Institutionalizing conflict management in West Africa<sup>17</sup>

A major development within ECOWAS has been the attempt to develop various frameworks for enhancing the capacity of sub-regional states to mount a peacekeeping force. The first step came with the revision of the ECOWAS treaty and protocols in 1993, which made provision for maintaining peace and security. Since then, member states have agreed, in principle, to set up formal mechanisms that would allow ECOMOG to function as a security apparatus for the sub-region. Significantly, in October 1998, ECOWAS leaders endorsed the draft framework of West African Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defense and Internal Affairs, for an ECOWAS security mechanism with the objective of providing ECOWAS with the capacity to standardize its operations in managing conflicts in West Africa. The ECOWAS security mechanism, which was formally adopted at its summit in Lomé in December 1999, is a bid to institutionalize conflict management in West Africa.

#### Lessons identified, but not learned

1. Regional autocrats critical in triggering civil wars.
2. Repeated failure to establish clear mandates in peace missions.
3. Peacekeepers logistically ill-equipped to provide security.
4. Failure to develop effective strategies and sanctions to deal with sub-regional spoilers.
5. Failure of peacekeepers to maintain principles of neutrality.

<sup>16</sup> See Adekeye Adebajo, "Nigeria: Africa's New Gendarme?", *Security Dialogue*, vol.31 no.2, June 2000, pp.185-199.

<sup>17</sup> This section is based partly on the concept paper prepared for the IPA/ECOWAS seminar in Abuja.

The creation of the mechanism is also an attempt to consolidate the lessons learned from the ECOMOG interventions in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. ECOMOG, as Adekeye Adebajo noted, has gone through its experimental 'guinea-pig' phase. But while some lessons have been learned (for example, the need for the active involvement of francophone states from the outset in managing the peacemaking process in Sierra Leone in order to defuse political divisions between members as occurred in Liberia), others have yet to be identified or learned. The next stage under the ECOWAS security mechanism is to consolidate, implement and institutionalize ECOWAS' structures for peace support operations in West Africa. Moreover, lessons from the three ECOMOG interventions need to be embedded in the overall policy direction of the organization.

The ECOWAS security mechanism proposed the establishment of several organs to implement security decisions, namely the Mediation and Security Council, a Defense and Security Commission, and a Council of Elders. The ECOWAS mechanism also calls for improved co-operation in early warning, conflict prevention, peacekeeping operations, cross-border crime, and the trafficking in small arms and narcotics. In order to support ECOWAS' move to prevent conflicts, four zonal observation bureaus for gathering political, economic and social information for ECOWAS' early warning system are currently being established in Banjul (The Gambia), Cotonou (Benin), Monrovia (Liberia) and Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso). A Department for Political Affairs, Defense and Security (DPADS), under the current ECOWAS Deputy Executive Secretary, Cheick Diarra, will take on the responsibility for co-ordinating the work of these zonal observation bureaus.

The ECOWAS security mechanism is also attempting to implement the ECOWAS 1981 Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defense (MAD) by calling for the establishment of a stand-by force of brigade-size consisting of specially-trained and equipped units of national armies ready to be deployed at short notice. The main tasks of the proposed force will involve observation and monitoring, peacekeeping, humanitarian intervention, enforcement of sanctions and embargoes, preventive deployment, peacebuilding

operations, disarmament and demobilization, and policing activities, including anti-smuggling and anti-criminal activities. These were many of the tasks that ECOMOG performed in Liberia and Sierra Leone and attempted to perform in Guinea-Bissau. The new sub-regional force is expected to embark on periodic training exercises to enhance the cohesion of troops and the compatibility of their equipment. Four thousand troops from Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Niger, Togo, and Ghana have already taken part in joint military exercises in the Burkinabé town of Kompienga and northern Togo in May 1998, with Nigeria involved in the military planning of these exercises.

It is envisaged that the new ECOMOG force will be used in three cases: an internal armed conflict within a member state actively supported from outside the sub-region; conflict between two or more member states; and internal conflicts that threaten to trigger a humanitarian disaster, pose a serious threat to sub-regional peace and security, and/or which follow the overthrow or attempted overthrow of a democratically-elected government. While the first two scenarios for justifying military intervention were included in the ECOWAS 1981 Defense Protocol, the last scenario was a conscious effort to provide legal cover for future interventions, again based on the Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau experiences. In Liberia and Guinea-Bissau, ECOMOG intervened by arguing that the situation threatened a humanitarian disaster and posed a threat to sub-regional peace and security. In Sierra Leone, ECOMOG restored the democratically-elected government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah to power in March 1998 after dissident soldiers overthrew it on 25 May 1997.

Despite the clear sign that ECOMOG has given practical expression to the security mechanism, ECOWAS faced difficulties in intervening decisively to try to restore constitutional rule following the overthrow of the government of Henri Konan Bédié in Côte d'Ivoire in December 1999 through a military coup, though its members did condemn the coup. Nor was ECOMOG able to deploy its troops in the midst of cross-border conflicts between Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone between October 2000 and March 2001. ECOMOG sought to play a cross-border monitoring

role, but Guinean head of state, Lansana Conté wanted an enforcer. Guinean forces are currently attempting to play this role in the name of national self-defense.

### Confronting ECOMOG's Operational Challenges

The implementation of much of what is envisaged in the ECOWAS security mechanism will depend on how far member states can tackle many of the operational challenges that continue to undermine ECOMOG's military operations. All three ECOMOG interventions clearly exposed the logistical weaknesses of West African armies. During the Abuja seminar, participants pointed to the operational difficulties that are a feature of contemporary peace operations in open-ended conflicts, but are more apparent in a sub-region, such as West Africa, with limited resources. Such factors include the problems of command and control, doctrine, administration, and logistics. A call was made in Abuja for better co-ordination between headquarters and Force Commanders in the field. Participants also highlighted

the limited capability of ECOMOG to undertake the complete disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of troops in the peace implementation phase, which continues to affect stability in post-war Liberia.

The issue of financing remains a major stumbling bloc to efforts at turning ECOMOG into a credible force and to building a stand-by force. The ECOWAS security mechanism foresees troop-contributing countries bearing financial costs for the first three months of military operations before ECOWAS takes over the costs. Under the new ECOWAS security mechanism, a Special Peace Fund is to be established to raise revenue through a community levy, with funding also expected to be provided by the UN and its agencies, the OAU and the rest of the international community. For the foreseeable future, addressing many of these operational dilemmas, especially logistical support, will require external assistance until the sub-region develops its own capabilities and establishes a secure funding base.

## 4) ECOWAS in the Global Security Framework

Regionalism is part of the global trend of the post-Cold War era which is reflected in the increasing willingness of sub-regional organizations to play a peacekeeping role outside the UN framework. Other regional actors in organizations such as NATO have embarked on peacekeeping missions in the Balkans where the UN has been unable or unwilling to respond. The emphasis on regional peacekeeping in Africa is partly a direct consequence of the gradual disinterest of, and disengagement by, the major powers in the UN Security Council to intervene in long drawn-out and open-ended conflicts on the continent. This followed the botched US intervention in Somalia in 1993 and the controversial French intervention in Rwanda in 1994.

### ECOWAS and the West: Supporting Pax West Africana

Critical voices at the Abuja seminar argued that external security initiatives have not been coordinated, that Africans have not been adequately consulted on these initiatives, and that emphasis on training is misplaced since logistical and financial support are more essential for African peacekeepers. The changing French security role in West Africa, which now increasingly involves providing training and logistical support for African peacekeepers, and the growing Nigerian frustrations with sub-regional peacekeeping have coincided with an increased, though limited, American and British security role in West Africa. Britain currently has a small military contingent in Sierra Leone which is training a new national army and has placed military personnel in key strategic posts in the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to support the peacekeeping mission. Following on from its 1996 ACRI program to strengthen the military capabilities of African states for regional peacekeeping, the US government embarked on *Operation Focus Relief (OFR)* aimed at training and equipping seven West African battalions for the UN mission in Sierra Leone. Participants in the ten-week OFR included: Nigeria (five battalions), Senegal (one

battalion), and Ghana (one battalion). The whole program cost about \$90 million.

France has invited non-francophone states to participate in its *Renforcement des Capacités Africaines de maintien de la Paix* (RECAMP), launched in 1997 to strengthen African peacekeeping capacity. Logistical support for the ECOMOG mission in Guinea-Bissau was provided entirely by France. As France has adopted a less directly military interventionist stance following policy debacles in Zaire and Rwanda in the 1990s, the French military presence in Africa has been drastically reduced and two military bases were closed in the Central African Republic in April 1998. Paris, however, still maintains bases in four African countries, including in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal. France's decision not to intervene militarily after a military coup against the friendly regime of Henri Konan Bédié in its wealthiest former West African colony, Côte d'Ivoire, in December 1999, was seen by many as a historic watershed. The incident fueled much speculation about the prospect of France's apparent military disengagement from Africa drawing francophone states in West Africa into closer security co-operation with Nigeria and other ECOWAS states. In March 2000, the all-francophone *Conseil de l'Entente* invited Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo, to a meeting in Togo to discuss security issues: the first time the leader of a non-francophone state has attended such a meeting.

The post-Cold War shift in the Africa policies of Britain, France and the US has led to an increasing preference to promote economic liberalization and democratization processes, though not always consistently, and to de-emphasize the potential of direct military intervention. This has been particularly striking in the case of French policies in Africa. France actively supported the Hutu-power regime of Juvénal Habyarimana, which was actively opposed to the Rwandan expatriate "*anglophone*" rebels in neighboring Uganda. "Opération Turquoise" (1994) was France's last major military operation in Africa. Ostensibly humanitarian, the operation in fact provided cover for the flight of thousands of *génocidaires* from Rwanda in large part as a reaction to what France perceived to be "Anglo-Saxon" incursions into its *pré carré* (backyard).

Between 1997 and 2001, French troops in Africa have declined from 8,000 to 5,600. The secret defense protocols of 1961 (notably with Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon and Chad), which authorized French interventions in these countries in order to "restore law-and-order in case of domestic strife," have since been abandoned. In line with changing French policy, France has relocated military training from its own country to sub-regional training centers in Africa (Thiès in Senegal; Koulikoro in Mali; and Bouaké in Côte d'Ivoire). Finally, the provision of financial, material and logistical support to sub-regional and pan-African peacekeeping forces (in cooperation with Britain and the U.S.) has become France's preferred mode of pursuing military interventions in Africa as evidenced by its support for all-African interventions in the Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau in the late 1990s.<sup>18</sup> RECAMP provides training, while the *École de Maintien de la Paix de Zambakro* (EMPZ) is a pan-African, tri-lingual regional peacekeeping center designed to train African officers as observers or senior staff officers in peacekeeping operations. Since 1999, the EMPZ has trained 310 officers from 25 African countries.

RECAMP was designed to enable African countries, under the aegis of the UN and the OAU, to participate in peacekeeping operations in Africa by preparing African battalions for sub-regional peacekeeping operations. Acting under a joint UN-OAU mandate, RECAMP operations seek to stabilize conflicts through preventive deployment; to protect vulnerable populations; and to contribute to humanitarian relief efforts. France has used RECAMP to participate in the financing and training of around 1,500 African military officers and provided equipment necessary for a peacekeeping battalion in Senegal (1998). The first RECAMP 'test' was the multinational "Exercise Guidimakha" (1998) involving some 3,500 military personnel from France, Senegal, Mali, Mauritania, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Ghana, and Guinea Bissau, with one infantry platoon and one aircraft each contributed by the US and Britain,

and one aircraft provided by Belgium. This 'war game' required significant technical, logistical and financial support from France and cost \$6 million. Ironically, the evolving French security policy in West Africa may in fact increase the financial and military dependence of African armies on France. However, French military bases in Africa may well become the tactical support and training centers for African armies in the twenty-first century.

As earlier noted, US peacekeeping in Africa effectively came to an end following the death of 18 US soldiers in Somalia in October 1993. American peacekeeping policy was reformulated and encapsulated in President Bill Clinton's Presidential Decision Directive 25 (PDD-25), stipulating that the objectives of an operation must be in America's national interests, cannot be open-ended, must include a clear exit strategy, and must ensure American involvement over command and control arrangements.

The African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) was conceived in 1996 as a \$25 million a year American peacekeeping, capacity-building and training program which would initially focus on seven 'core' African countries: Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mali, Senegal, Tunisia, and Uganda. However, the US soon sought to expand participation in ACRI beyond the original participants. Thus, by July 1997, US Special Forces training was expanded to include officers from Cameroon, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Rwanda, South Africa and Zambia. American military training was also provided to enlisted ranks in 21 African countries.<sup>20</sup> This process led to the creation, in November 1999, of the Africa Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS). Managed by the Department of Defense, the ACSS is designed to offer senior African civilian and military leaders an academic and practical program and to create new and open lines of communication between American officers and the future leadership of participating countries.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> See Jean-Dominique Geslin, "Quels gendarmes pour l'Afrique?" *Jeune Afrique*, 15-21 June 1999, pp. 27-8, which notes that the Zambakro training center is financed by France to the tune of 15 million francs; and Guy Martin, "Francophone Africa and France: A Changing Relationship?", paper presented at the IPA/ECOWAS Seminar, Abuja, Nigeria, 27-29 September 2001.

<sup>19</sup> *École de Maintien de la Paix de Zambakro: Présentation Générale, Organisation, Bilan Actuel et Infrastructure*, Bouaké: EMPZ, 2000.

<sup>20</sup> Wayne Madsen, *Genocide and Covert Operation in Africa, 1993-1999*, Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1999, pp. 251-269.

<sup>21</sup> The Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Background Note, n.d.

Through the ACRI program, the US has sought to offer training and equipment to what it described as "democratizing and civilian-ruled" African states. ACRI trained battalions from Senegal, Uganda, Malawi (1997), Mali, Ghana (1998) and Benin (1999), though critics raised questions about the democratic credentials of some of these regimes. ACRI training also includes convoy escorts, logistics, negotiation techniques, command and control, and protection of refugees. Nigeria and South Africa initially rejected ACRI. Abuja, under a military regime at the time and excluded from participation, saw the initiative as a divisive effort to weaken African security initiatives. Pretoria argued that any such initiative should come through the UN. But several ECOWAS states like Benin, Ghana, Mali and Senegal participated in ACRI. Several participants in Abuja, however, criticized the program for focusing on training rather than on providing more substantive logistical support and for being grossly under-funded at an annual cost of \$25 million.

The third major western actor in Africa is Britain. The British intervention in Sierra Leone in May 2000, due to its unilateral approach, raised an interesting dimension about the future of the West's role in keeping the peace in sub-Saharan Africa. This intervention launched to support the UN mission in Sierra Leone where 500 peacekeepers had been kidnapped by RUF rebels was a potentially significant event for contemporary Africa after a period of reluctance by Western governments to intervene in African conflicts. Significantly, while much praise has been heaped on Britain's role in Sierra Leone, the UK refused to place its troops under UN command, preferring instead to offer senior military personnel at the headquarters in Freetown and a small contingent, based in the capital, supported the UN peacekeeping mission.

The fears of western policymakers of public disapproval of involvement in Africa appear in this case to have been unfounded. According to Kaye Whiteman and Douglas Yates, the Freetown mission is "the most significant British intervention in Africa in



Left to right, General Rufus Kupoleti, Former ECOMOG Commander in Liberia, and Ambassador James Jonah, Former UN Under-Secretary for Political Affairs

recent years, and certainly of its kind".<sup>22</sup> The mission has proved to be both positive and problematic. The UN has recovered from the RUF attacks in May 2000 and made progress in its disarmament tasks. However, the British contingent's relations with UNAMSIL remain complex as its troops remain separate from the UN command structure. The British contingent has also been involved in training a new Sierra Leonean army, while the UK has used its position as a permanent member of the UN Security Council to maintain support for UNAMSIL's 17,000 peacekeepers.

#### ECOWAS and the UN: Co-operation and Conflict

Co-operation between the UN and ECOMOG in Liberia between 1993 and 1997, though sometimes fraught with disagreements over strategy and mandates, represented the first time that the UN had deployed observers alongside an existing regional force. The UN currently has a peacebuilding office in Liberia and Guinea-Bissau as well as its largest peacekeeping mission in the world in Sierra Leone.

Several participants at the seminar expressed skepticism about the role of the UN in Africa. Many concluded that the UN Security Council is too remote,

<sup>22</sup> Kaye Whiteman and Douglas Yates, "American, British and French Military Cooperation in West Africa," paper presented at the IPA/ECOWAS Seminar, Abuja, Nigeria, 27-29 September 2001.

"Perhaps the greatest threat to the cordial cooperation between ECOWAS and the United Nations relates to [the] question of financial support. ECOWAS members do not understand the reluctance of the UN to fund their operation in Liberia and Sierra Leone. In particular they argue correctly that the Security Council recognizes the valuable role that ECOMOG has played in saving lives and property in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. They point out that in the absence of ECOWAS at crucial stages Sierra Leone in particular would have experienced greater disaster. They recall with pride that without the efforts of ECOMOG, costly in blood and finance, the entire sub-region would have gone up in flames. Why then, they ask, is the UN unwilling to play their part and provide the necessary funding. They tend to dismiss, as mere excuses, all explanations that in principle the UN cannot fund any operation not under its command and control."

Ambassador James Jonah  
Former Minister of Finance in Sierra Leone

slow and ponderous and incapable of protecting the security interests of small states and sub-regional states that do not fit into the national strategic interests of the major powers. These are some of the factors that necessitated the creation of a sub-regional security umbrella under ECOWAS. The diminished role of the UN in Africa has imposed security responsibilities on ECOWAS. But the increasing recognition of the deficiencies within ECOWAS, including the pursuit of parochial and contradictory agendas by sub-regional states, as well as ECOMOG's resource constraints, mean that further emphasis needs to be placed on a clearer sharing of responsibility between ECOWAS and the UN. It is evident that ECOWAS cannot both keep the peace and focus on peacemaking and peacebuilding; the organization has neither the financial and human capital, nor the technical skills required to assist war-torn societies by itself. Training for ECOMOG personnel is a necessary prerequisite, but equally important is

that the UN, able to draw on greater financial resources than ECOWAS, carries the burden of peacebuilding.<sup>24</sup> The emphasis, according to several participants in Abuja, should be on enhancing and solidifying the partnership between ECOWAS and other African sub-regional organizations, while the UN should not be absolved of its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security globally.

The ECOWAS/UN partnership requires logistical and financial support as well as specialized training and support for troops contributing to peace operations. This is especially appropriate in light of the recommendations of the *Brahimi Report* of August 2000 on the need for inter-operability and the deployment of larger units (brigade rather than battalion) in support of UN peace operations.<sup>24</sup> ECOWAS states will need additional training for stand-by peacekeeping units and better equipment to perform effectively in such operations. In fact, the *Brahimi Report* could have been written solely on the basis of analyzing ECOMOG's problems over the past decade. The report emphasizes the need for political cohesion and direction, better rules of engagement, resources, command and control, and equipment, all of which are reminiscent of the problems which plagued ECOMOG's three missions.

One cannot, however, overlook the important, though limited, burden-sharing experience between ECOWAS and the UN in peacekeeping efforts in West Africa. Participants in Abuja noted the need to assess the effectiveness of UN peacebuilding offices in Liberia and Guinea-Bissau. The UN office in Liberia has been slow in its delivery of peacebuilding assistance and its credibility among Liberian civil society actors was damaged by its reluctance to criticize the human rights record of the government of Charles Taylor. In contrast, the UN's small peacebuilding office in Guinea-Bissau was praised for working with civil society actors to pressure the government on human rights issues.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> See International Peace Academy/Center on International Cooperation, *Refashioning the Dialogue: Regional Perspectives on the Brahimi Report on UN Peace Operations*, Regional Meetings, February-March 2001, Johannesburg, Buenos Aires, Singapore and London.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. The "Brahimi Report" has become a short hand title for the UN review of peacekeeping operations published in August 2000 by a panel chaired by the former Algerian Foreign Minister and UN Undersecretary-General, Lakhdar Brahimi. See Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, UN General Assembly Document A/55/305, 17 August 2000.

<sup>25</sup> These points were raised by Adekeye Adebajo during his presentation "Seamen from Renaissance Africa: ECOMOG in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau," at the IPA/ECOWAS Seminar, Abuja, Nigeria, 27-29 September 2001.

The UN and western powers have often advocated a regional response to conflicts in West Africa. But aside from legitimizing ECOMOG operations, the UN's own missions in West Africa have often failed to coordinate their policies effectively with ECOWAS. It was not until the collapse of the Lomé Peace Agreement in 2000 that the UN Security Council sought to devise a regional response to Sierra Leone's conflict and even then, there were divisions and obstacles about the nature of this response. Since January 2001, the UN has, however, tried to develop a series of responses to counter the charge that it failed to fulfil a key objective in managing conflicts, namely conflict prevention. A UN

inter-agency mission led by Assistant Secretary-General, Ibrahima Fall, visited West Africa between 6 and 27 March 2001. Following its recommendations, Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, has decided to establish a UN office in Dakar and to appoint a Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for West Africa.<sup>26</sup> An important recommendation by the inter-agency mission is that any future UN office focus on harmonizing the UN's activities with those of ECOWAS. These recommendations need to be urgently implemented in light of the deteriorating security situation in the Mano River area and its potential to destabilize the entire West African sub-region.

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<sup>26</sup> Report of the Inter-Agency Mission to West Africa, "Towards a Comprehensive Approach to Durable and Sustainable Solutions to Priority Needs and Challenges in West Africa," UN Security Council document, 2 May 2001, S/2001/434.

## 5) From Military Security to Human Security

Two issues related to human security discussed at the Abuja seminar were: the scourge of small arms and light weapons in the sub-region, and the impact of armed conflicts on children in West Africa. Both civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone witnessed widespread human rights abuses and atrocities. Thousands of drug-induced child soldiers were often only nominally controlled by their leaders. The use of child soldiers to prosecute these wars and the exploitation of children as sex slaves has become a source of concern in West Africa. In recognition of these concerns, the UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) Director Carol Bellamy, are addressing the issue of children and armed conflicts. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons has escalated the intensity and impact of intra-state armed conflicts, with an estimated seven million weapons currently circulating in West Africa. The easy availability of these weapons increases the lethality and duration of hostilities and adversely affects post-conflict peacebuilding as current events in the Mano river basin so clearly demonstrate.

### Small Arms, Light Weapons

In response to the alarming proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and its negative impact on long-term sustainable development, a renewable three-year Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons was signed on 31 October 1998 in Abuja, by ECOWAS members. Heads of state also approved a Code of Conduct in Lomé, Togo, in December 1999, spelling out the concrete actions to be taken by member states in order to implement the Moratorium. The Moratorium is a voluntary commitment; in essence a confidence-building measure aimed at tackling widespread instability in the West African sub-region.<sup>27</sup>

Technical assistance to support the implementation of the ECOWAS Moratorium is being provided through the Program for the Co-ordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED) under the auspices of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Despite the 1998 Moratorium, West African societies remain awash with small arms and light weapons. A closer examination of states which are plagued by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons shows that they are invariably weak, vulnerable, and open to threats from various internal and external sources. These societies suffer from low levels of socio-economic development, unequal access to resources, high unemployment, and high levels of poverty. In several instances, governments in West Africa have lost control over large swaths of their territories.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, the task of providing security to citizens and of maintaining law and order where the state is weak or non-existent is daunting. Non-state actors (including criminalized and marginalized youth as well as established insurgent forces) with easy access to small arms and light weapons heighten insecurity. Such insecurity is also exacerbated by rogue militaries, presidential security forces and national police. The result is an arms race among police, rebel groups, criminal gangs, vigilantes, the military, warlords, presidential security forces, and criminal gangs.

A number of West African states conducted symbolic arms reduction ceremonies to coincide with the *UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects* held in New York from 9 to 20 July 2001. In Mali, at least 500 small arms were burned in a weapons-for-development program under the auspices of the Malian National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and PCASED. This program also involved the exchange of arms for agricultural tools.

The lack of political will in stemming the proliferation of small arms and light weapons is illustrated by the slow progress toward creating the individual National

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<sup>27</sup> See Comfort Ero and Angela Ndinga-Muvumba, "Small Arms and Light Weapons in West Africa: Constraints and Options," paper presented at the IPA/ECOWAS Seminar, Abuja, Nigeria, 27-29 September 2001.

<sup>28</sup> C. Smith and A. Vines, *Light Weapons Proliferation in Southern Africa*, London Defense Studies, No. 42, Center for Defense Studies, November 1997, pp. 4-5.

Commissions called for by the 1998 Moratorium. The commissions are seen as the concrete implementing mechanism for the Moratorium to succeed and to assist in co-ordinating between national ministries and stakeholders, particularly the security-sector and civil society actors. In essence, the commissions 'serve as focal points for implementation of activities at the national level.'<sup>29</sup> Only three National Commissions currently exist in Guinea, Mali and Niger, and these have not yet become fully operational.

The slow progress in establishing the National Commissions has been exacerbated by the lack of cooperation among states in harmonizing policies on a bilateral and sub-regional basis. In particular, progress to harmonize national legislation on the small arms issue in West Africa has been very slow, though as a preliminary step, documentation on these issues has started to be collected by the ECOWAS secretariat from some member states. Major obstacles to implementing the Moratorium also include the lack of training and equipment. A training curriculum has been developed in collaboration with the ECOWAS secretariat, but training programs on weapons management techniques for law enforcement officers have not yet been held. Also significant is the lack of capacity within the ECOWAS secretariat to play a stronger role in providing oversight for the implementation of the Moratorium. This problem is reflected in the limited number of personnel working on small arms issues within the organization. There is still a need to restructure the ECOWAS secretariat to meet the needs of the Moratorium and other sub-regional security concerns.

While the ECOWAS secretariat has so far been unable to make substantial progress in influencing its members to implement the Moratorium, its UNDP partner, PCASED, has also faced difficulties in enhancing any sub-regional institutional capacity for controlling the flow of small arms and light weapons in West Africa. ECOWAS and PCASED need to adopt a common plan of action in implementing key aspects of the 1998 Moratorium. ECOWAS could provide PCASED with concrete policy direction and guidance about its

role vis-à-vis the Moratorium. ECOWAS needs to take the lead in shaping and giving weight to the instruments necessary to curb the flow of arms in West Africa. PCASED should focus on ensuring significant progress within those countries that have established National Commissions. Further capacity, especially expert advice, should be developed in the National Commissions in order to enable them to collect and destroy surplus and illicit weapons. PCASED also needs to improve its communication strategy in the sub-region by promoting the objectives of the Moratorium to stakeholders, including sub-regional institutions, NGOs, local communities, policymakers, the private sector and security agencies.

A key area for progress on the moratorium remains at the community-based level. More emphasis should be placed on the role of civil society, local NGOs and community based organizations (CBOs) in working with PCASED, especially in mobilizing support to establish the functions of national commissions in all ECOWAS member states. Furthermore, these organizations, drawn from throughout the ECOWAS sub-region, are ideally situated, at the national as well as the grassroots level, to implement community-based initiatives and to broadcast and push forward the potential and promise of the 1998 Moratorium on small arms and light weapons.

### Children and Armed Conflicts

The issue of children in armed conflicts represents both a national and regional problem. Its impact is felt not just by states directly embroiled in war but also by countries not engaged in formal armed conflicts. The impact is felt in several ways: through the socio-economic burden created by the presence of huge refugee populations in neighboring countries, through the threat of insecurity posed by armed elements mingling with refugee communities, through the risk of the spread of HIV/AIDS by a population adversely exposed to an environment of unprotected sex, through rape (which is rife during conflicts), through the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons, and through the illicit trade in natural resources and the

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<sup>29</sup> Report of the Third Advisory Group Meeting, Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development, Bamako, Mali, 26-27 June 2000, p. 6.

trafficking of children as child laborers. Consequently, a sub-regional approach that seeks to integrate national policies with regional strategies is required to address these problems.

The Liberian civil war illustrated the sub-regional nature of the problem. A link can be made between the use of children during this war, where the phenomenon first appeared in the sub-region in the 1990s, and its spread to Sierra Leone where child soldiering also became a feature of the country's civil war. Significantly, two factors exacerbated the problem in Liberia: first, the failure of the international community to address the problem of impunity during that country's civil war, and second, the flawed and incomplete process of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration which took place between 1996 and 1997.<sup>30</sup>

So, what is to be done? The Accra Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by ECOWAS member states in April 2000 could offer a sound starting point and a good frame of reference. The Accra meeting set broad principles for the protection of war-affected children and proposed measures that ECOWAS states could take to prevent the use of children in armed conflicts. One widely recognized challenge is ensuring that these broad guiding principles are translated into policies that are harmonized throughout the sub-region. Additionally, experiences and specific policies at the country level need to be incorporated into strategies at the sub-regional level. The Accra Plan of Action calls for the establishment within the ECOWAS Secretariat of a desk or focal point dedicated to the protection of war-affected children in West Africa. This could be a useful tool for harmonizing sub-regional child protection policies. An ECOWAS Child Protection Unit (CPU), which is currently being established, will be responsible for monitoring the status of children in conflict settings, promoting preventive mechanisms, and supporting the rehabilitation and reintegration of these children in post-conflict peacebuilding settings. In addition, the CPU will deal with emergency assistance, humanitarian and human rights issues, including early warning capacity.

The UN Security Council's decision in 2000 to establish a Special Court in Sierra Leone to address the issue of justice – fundamental to the reconciliation process- as well as a National Commission for War Affected Children, was seen by participants in Abuja as positive steps. However, the UN Secretary-General in his report to the Security Council of 4 October 2000, proposed that the Special Court only try crimes committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996 - when the first peace agreement between the Government and the RUF was concluded in Abidjan - including mass killings, mutilations, amputations, extra-judicial executions, torture, rape and sexual slavery, intentional attacks on civilian populations, abduction, hostage-taking, forced recruitment of children under 15 into military or militia forces, and widespread arson. The primary targets of this proposal are the fighters most responsible for these crimes. This raises the issue of whether children or young people between the ages of 15 and 18 should be tried for crimes against humanity. As the time to establish the Special Court draws nearer, ECOWAS may soon be confronted with this issue, which touches on the difficulty of harmonizing traditional norms and values and international norms and conventions. Furthermore, ECOWAS needs to deliberate seriously on this issue in order to address the problem of impunity in West Africa, and to deal with the application of international standards in line with local realities.

On the issue of the crisis of youth in West Africa, several participants in Abuja contended that this was not a new phenomenon. The crisis of youth, which was attributed to years of neglect, particularly of rural youths, and failed national leaderships, is a feature that predates the ongoing conflicts in the sub-region. Several participants also pointed out the need to emphasize more preventive measures in addressing the problem of children in armed conflicts. Participants noted that vision, foresight and political will are required, on the part of ECOWAS leaders, to establish concrete programs that promote the wholesome development of children in West Africa and thereby prevent them from becoming easy prey for warlords during times of conflict.

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<sup>30</sup> See Funmi Oloisakin, "The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children in West Africa," paper presented at the IPA/ECOWAS Seminar, Abuja, Nigeria, 27-29 September 2001.

## 6) Toward a Pax West Africana: Some Practical Steps

In concluding this report, it is important to note that ECOWAS has made remarkable progress in transforming itself from a strictly economic organization into a sub-regional security umbrella. The efforts to turn ECOMOG into a standing peacekeeping body gives practical expression to the desire of Africans not only to keep their own peace, but also to define their responses to their own security dilemmas. The ECOWAS security mechanism is the first such sub-regional instrument on the African continent, one which other sub-regions and the newly created African Union can emulate as they strive to respond to issues of governance, conflict and security.

Yet, important instruments such as the ECOWAS security mechanism still remain an ideal, more effective in theory than in practice. ECOWAS still has a long way to go in managing and ultimately building peace in West Africa. The functioning of its new security mechanism could be negatively affected by the absence or weakness of democratic institutions in some member states. A key and fundamental concern of the Abuja seminar was how to make ECOWAS and its security mechanism more effective. What does ECOWAS need to do to turn the mechanism into a functioning reality? A number of critical interventions, which focused on operational factors, seem necessary to consolidate the efforts made by ECOWAS in the area of sub-regional peace and security. These relate to: streamlining ECOWAS' activities, addressing its resource, logistics and operational problems, and developing strategies for closer collaboration between ECOWAS and civil society actors in West Africa.

### Streamlining ECOWAS' activities

There is a strong case to be made for ECOWAS to streamline its current activities. ECOWAS has an overly ambitious agenda as well as structural and management problems that continually undermine its ability to deliver tangible results. At present, the organization finds itself trying to mediate sub-regional disputes and to devise a security apparatus when its institutions are



Major General Martin Agwai, UNAMSIL Deputy Force Commander

still under-developed when it is still vulnerable to external political pressure, and when most of its member states are among the poorest countries in the world. In recognition that a majority of the states in West Africa face economic crises and can not afford to continue to undertake expensive peace operations, several participants in Abuja suggested that a system of burden-sharing and partnerships be developed between ECOWAS, the UN, the AU, and civil society organizations in the fields of conflict prevention, conflict management, and peacebuilding.

### Addressing personnel capacity

Directly related to streamlining ECOWAS' activities is the need to ensure that the organization has the capacity to act effectively to implement the decisions of its leaders. ECOWAS' lack of capacity in developing its security mechanism is a major stumbling bloc to its successful implementation. A significant issue relates to staffing. The skills and experience required for the various tasks set out in the ECOWAS security mechanism are different from those traditionally available within ECOWAS. If ECOWAS is serious about mobilizing its capacity to contribute significantly to improving security and governance in West Africa, it needs to undergo a thorough job-specification and profiling exercise to ensure that the right people undertake the right jobs. A more transparent and rigorous selection process should be developed to ensure quality and competence at all levels within the ECOWAS secretariat.

In addition and equally importantly, ECOWAS needs to ensure that the adequate number of staff is allocated to its various tasks. For example, the creation of the ECOWAS security mechanism relied entirely on its three legal officers, and only recently have officials with security expertise been hired. But the secretariat still lacks sufficient staff to perform its security tasks. Finally, adequate training in the area of conflict prevention and a period of induction and development of operating procedures should be a prerequisite for all ECOWAS staff members working in the security area.

#### Logistics and operational factors – targeting donor response

At the heart of ECOWAS' difficulties in implementing the goals of its security mechanism are its logistical and operational weaknesses. The need for external assistance to strengthen ECOWAS' capacity in this area cannot be overemphasized. But money needs to be properly targeted and allocated in a transparent and accountable manner to ensure significant impact. A serious needs assessment exercise should be undertaken focusing on areas where assistance is already on offer. Greater attention should be placed on assessing progress and identifying gaps to be filled. The European Union (EU) has already allocated 2 million euros to the Department for Political Affairs, Defense and Security for setting up the four zonal observation bureaus of the security mechanism. The Government of Japan has contributed \$100,000 to the staffing of two zonal bureaus. The US Agency for International Development (USAID) has contributed \$250,000 toward capacity-building. Canada has contributed \$300,000 for the establishment of an ECOWAS Child Protection Unit. Germany is also contributing funds toward the ECOWAS security mechanism.

Donors need to engage more actively with ECOWAS' security mechanism. They need to evaluate effectively the progress made vis-à-vis areas to which they have contributed resources. It is not enough to allocate resources to ECOWAS. More important is to conduct missions aimed at tracking progress. Support for the funding and logistics of sub-regional peacekeeping, as well as for conflict prevention, is crucial to establishing

an effective security mechanism. At the same time, the ECOWAS Secretariat has to be more available to the donor and research communities.

#### ECOWAS: Developing a Common Vision and Common Values

ECOWAS leaders need to confront the charge, made particularly by West African civil society actors, that they have sometimes sided with impunity over justice in reaching peace agreements. The implementation of ECOWAS' sanctions regime challenging leaders who persistently undermine sub-regional security and manipulate the internal politics of neighboring states would go a long way in building confidence between ECOWAS' leaders and their citizens. In addition, ECOWAS needs to consider its role in tackling war crimes perpetuated by rebels and politicians. The atrocities inflicted on innocent Sierra Leonean civilians by RUF rebels, the Sierra Leone Army, the Civil Defense Forces, and even in some cases ECOMOG soldiers, must be properly addressed by ECOWAS if it is serious about devising a mechanism that tackles the basic security fears of ordinary people. An effective sanctions and justice regime goes to the heart of governance and conflict prevention efforts in the sub-region.

If ECOWAS is to build an effective peacekeeping mechanism, then all the countries in the sub-region should have a common goal on security priorities as well as a strategic and coherent vision on how they plan to tackle insecurity in the sub-region. This requires candid and open dialogue at the highest political level. ECOWAS needs to continue its progress in implementing its security mechanism. This mechanism is widely recognized as the best framework to end the history of *ad hoc* responses to insecurity in West Africa and represents a praise-worthy effort to institutionalize the experiences and lessons learned over the last decade.

While ECOWAS is establishing its political and institutional organs, it also needs to develop a well-funded, well-trained and well-organized military structure on the foundations of ECOMOG. Among the problems confronting ECOMOG noted at the Abuja seminar are: command and control issues, particularly between field

commanders and headquarters, language problems between contingents, logistical and financial deficiencies, and differences in training practices, military doctrines and communication equipment.

### ECOWAS and Civil Society

Many civil society actors in West Africa have little or no confidence in ECOWAS' ability to address conflicts and human rights abuses. Sub-regional leaders urgently need to improve ECOWAS relations with civil society actors in West Africa who complain that governments often feel threatened by them and have a profound distrust of their work. ECOWAS is often perceived by many of these actors to be a 'club of dictators' where regime survival is privileged over the rights of citizens. That said, ECOWAS is already working with sub-regional civil society organizations in developing its early warning system. Civil society groups are expected to submit reports to the ECOWAS secretariat for use in preventive diplomacy. Such collaboration should be encouraged in future.

The role of local civil society actors in various democratization efforts in the sub-region is further indication of the important role that such actors can play in developing a conflict prevention strategy within ECOWAS. The organization needs to develop a concrete plan of action to work in a more coherent and coordinated manner with civil society groups in West Africa. ECOWAS and civil society actors remain suspicious of each other. Civil society is often seen by sitting regimes as a front for political opposition groups to mount challenges against governments, while ECOWAS is often seen by civil society to be supporting the status quo and established regimes. Such suspicions can be dissipated through closer collaboration.

Though often seen as a nebulous conglomeration, civil society can be enormously useful to ECOWAS in addressing many of the security dilemmas confronting

the sub-region.<sup>31</sup> Over the past decade, the role of civil society has become critical in shaping the discourse on resolving West Africa's security dilemmas. Civil society was important in efforts to develop ECOWAS' security mechanism, especially the emphasis on creating a more coherent and strategic outlook in developing a coordinated response to conflicts in West Africa.

ECOWAS should also focus on using civil society groups, including local non-governmental organizations, expert research institutes that focus on governance and security issues, religious organizations, and community-based organizations, to provide early warning analysis, and to assist in thinking through its response to conflicts. The monitoring role of such groups and their links with local communities could prove indispensable to ECOWAS as it develops its own conflict prevention and peacebuilding strategies.

In thinking about the way forward and prospects for an enhanced security framework to tackle West Africa's security dilemmas, some of the other recommendations that emerged from the IPA/ECOWAS seminar of September 2001 focused on: ECOWAS' relationship with the UN and western donors as well as ECOWAS' future collaboration with IPA. Many of these recommendations were similar to those raised during IPA's seminar on security in Southern Africa held in Botswana in December 2000<sup>32</sup>. This signifies a need to ensure that Africa's sub-regional organizations and actors continue to share their experiences and lessons with each other.

### ECOWAS and the UN

The decision by the UN to create a West Africa office in Dakar and to appoint a Special Representative of the Secretary-General to head this office is a welcome initiative and recognition that a regionalized approach is needed to tackle the nexus between governance and security in West Africa.<sup>33</sup> However, the role of the UN

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<sup>31</sup> This point was raised by Yasmin Yusu-Sheriff in her presentation "The Role of West African Civil Society in Conflict Management and Peace Building," at the IPA/ECOWAS Seminar, Abuja, Nigeria, 27-29 September 2001.

<sup>32</sup> See the report by International Peace Academy, in partnership with the Africa Renaissance Institute, the Southern Africa Regional Institute for Policy Studies, and the University of Witwatersrand Department of International Relations, "Southern Africa's Evolving Security Architecture: Problems and Prospects," December 2000, Gaborone.

<sup>33</sup> See the report by International Peace Academy/Permanent Mission of Colombia to the UN, *Regional Approaches to Conflict Management in Africa*, 8 August 2001, New York.

Special Representative must be more than that of a roving ambassador. The envoy must be tasked to pursue a holistic agenda that takes into account the overlapping and interconnected nature of conflicts in the sub-region, cross-border concerns and the impact that poverty continues to have on development and security in West Africa. ECOWAS should work closely with the UN envoy to ensure that the needs of the sub-region are properly addressed. Specifically, ECOWAS should devise a strategic framework indicating areas of priority and steps needed to build effective cooperation between itself and the UN in the field of conflict management and monitoring of democratic accountability in the sub-region.

The UN needs to pay particular attention to Liberia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone, which share a similar history of instability, weak or repressive regimes, and an absence of the rule of law, poverty, and human rights abuses. Special attention will also need to be paid to political, ethnic and religious tensions in Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire, and to the problems in Senegal's Casamance region. Increasing instability and cross-border clashes as well as increased political tensions require the UN to deliver a more coherent and comprehensive response to these crises and conflicts.

#### ECOWAS and the West

The ECOWAS security mechanism remains largely a theoretical construct because member states have yet to devise a way in which to operationalize its key components. ECOWAS needs help in operationalizing its security mechanism and in making it more effective in managing conflicts. Specific assistance should focus on capacity-building, mainly the provision of logistics and finance and not just on training as is often the case. The role of Western governments like the US, France, and Britain is vital in helping ECOWAS to make its mechanism more effective and in contributing to post-conflict peacebuilding. However, donors need to engage more closely with ECOWAS and allow it to set its own priorities in identifying areas for assistance and gaps and weaknesses in current programs.

#### ECOWAS and IPA

Finally, IPA was involved in crafting the ECOWAS security mechanism through the former Director of its Africa Program, Margaret Vogt, who served as the chair of the group of experts that drafted the mechanism. IPA, through its current three-year project on *Developing Regional and Sub-regional Security Mechanisms in Africa* (2000-2003), has taken steps in assisting the strengthening of Africa's evolving security mechanisms. For IPA to assist in developing a crisis warning capacity that will benefit ECOWAS, the sub-regional organization needs to develop closer links with civil society and community-based organizations to monitor, analyze, and provide timely information to ECOWAS.

ECOWAS should draw on the lessons and experiences that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) had in establishing its Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution between 1993 and 2000. IPA's assessment of the OAU Mechanism explores why it has been so difficult to operationalize its mechanism. This seven-year partnership with the OAU could be helpful to ECOWAS. Between 1992 and 1999, IPA undertook research and held five seminars in Africa focusing on conceptualizing and operationalizing the OAU security mechanism. IPA, in an advisory capacity and in close cooperation with ECOWAS, could apply some of the lessons from its experience with the OAU to strengthen ECOWAS' security mechanism.<sup>34</sup>

IPA is in a position to play a role in bridging the divide and fostering cooperation between the UN and ECOWAS. In this context, IPA staff briefed the UN Inter-Agency Task Force working level group on the recommendations from its Abuja seminar in November 2001 and has been invited to attend some meetings of the UN task force. At the Abuja seminar, some participants noted that IPA needs to work toward bringing both ECOWAS and the UN together, not just for dialogue, but also for practical and more coordinated work. Some participants also suggested that IPA's future work in consolidating its assistance with

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<sup>34</sup> See Monde Muyangwa and Margaret A. Vogt, *An Assessment of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, 1993-2000*, New York: International Peace Academy, November 2000.

ECOWAS should aim at targeting groups in West Africa that can help ECOWAS improve its response to crises as they unfold and in ensuring that speedy and appropriate actions are taken to manage these conflicts.

It was also suggested at Abuja that future IPA work with ECOWAS should focus on consolidating its close working relationship with ECOWAS personnel, especially in providing training in the areas of conflict assessment. Specifically, it was proposed that IPA could establish a program to provide contract personnel to the ECOWAS Secretariat for periods of 3-

12 months in order to lend technical expertise to the work of ECOWAS' security mechanism. IPA has also suggested the convening of a small Task Force of 15-20 experts to advise the ECOWAS Secretariat on practical ways of strengthening its security mechanism. The IPA/ECOWAS seminar suggested that more emphasis be placed on training ECOWAS personnel to respond to conflicts, improve technical assistance, and ensure that the ECOWAS secretariat is equipped to design appropriate responses to events as they unfold. Only through such efforts can a genuine Pax West Africana be forged in one of Africa's most troubled sub-regions.



Participants at the IPA/ECOWAS Seminar, Abuja, Nigeria, 27-29 September 2001.

## ANNEX I Agenda

Thursday, 27 September 2001

The Changing Security Landscape in West Africa

9:00 - 10:15

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Ambassador John Hirsch, Vice-President, International Peace Academy

General Cheick Oumar Diarra, ECOWAS Deputy Executive Secretary for Political Affairs, Defense and Security, "ECOWAS and Regional Security in West Africa"

Opening Address

His Excellency, General Theophilus Danjuma, Minister of Defense of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, "Nigeria's Security Role in West Africa"

10:30 - 11:30

Keynote Address

Professor Adebayo Adedeji, African Center for Development and Strategic Studies, Nigeria, "ECOWAS at 26: A Retrospective Journey"

13:30 - 15:30

Session I: The Evolving Security Architecture in West Africa

Chair: Professor Adebayo Adedeji, African Center for Development and Strategic Studies, Nigeria

Panelists: Lt.-General Emmanuel A. Erskine, Former United Nations Force Commander, Lebanon, "The ECOWAS Security Mechanism"

Dr. Adekeye Adebajo, International Peace Academy, "Seamen from Renaissance Africa: ECOMOG in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau"

Dr. Daniel Bach, Association pour le Développement de l'Enseignement et des Recherches auprès des Universités, des Centres de Recherche et des Entreprises d'Aquitaine (ADERA), France "ECOWAS: Trade, Regionalization and Security in West Africa"

Discussants: General Rufus Kupolati, Former ECOMOG Commander in Liberia; and Mr. Roger Laloupo, Chief, Legal Affairs Division, ECOWAS

15:45 - 18:00

Session II: Governance, the Military and Civil Society in West Africa

Chair: Professor Joy Ogwu, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Nigeria

Panelists: Professor Amos Sawyer, Indiana University, United States,  
"Governance, Democratization and Security in West Africa"  
*paper presented by* Dr. Yusuf Bangura, United Nations Research  
Institute for Social Development, Switzerland

Professor Jimmy Kandeh, University of Richmond, United States,  
"Reforming the Military in West Africa"

Ms. Yasmin Jusu-Sheriff, University of London, United Kingdom,  
"The Conflict Management Role of Civil Society in West Africa"

Discussant: Colonel Globo Denis Guie, Directeur de la Défense, Ministère de la  
Défense, Côte d'Ivoire

20:00

Dinner Address

Chair: Senator Ike O.S. Nwachukwu, Chairman, Government Affairs,  
Nigerian National Assembly, Nigeria

Ambassador James Jonah, Former UN Under-Secretary-General for  
Political Affairs, "Security Co-operation between ECOWAS and the UN"

Discussant: Brigadier-General Henry Anyidoho, Former Deputy Force Commander  
of the United Nations Force in Rwanda

## Friday, 28 September 2001

9:30 - 12:30

Session III: Global West Africa

Chair: Dr. Domba Jean-Marc Palm, Former Foreign Minister and Secretary-  
General, Centre National de Recherche Scientifique et Technologique  
(CNRST), Burkina Faso

Professor Guy Martin, New York University, United States,  
"Francophone Africa and France: A Changing Relationship?"  
*paper presented by* Mr. Kaye Whiteman, Business Media, Nigeria

Mr. Kaye Whiteman, Business Media, Nigeria, and Dr. Douglas Yates,  
American University, France, "The American, British and French  
Security Roles in West Africa"

Dr. Chris Landsberg, Center for African International Relations (CAIR),  
University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa, "The Fifth Wave of  
Pan-Africanism: Implications for West Africa's Security Architecture"

Discussant: Professor Théodore Holo, Agrégé de Droit Publique et de Science Politique, Former Foreign Minister, Cotonou, Benin

14:00 - 16:00

Session IV: Child Soldiers, Light Weapons and Small Arms

Chair: Ms. Afiwa Kafui Kuwonu, President, Women in Law and Development in Africa, Togo

Panelists: Dr. Funmi Olonisakin, United Nations Office of Children and Armed Conflict, "A Crisis of Youth?: Children and Armed Conflicts in West Africa" *paper presented by Mr. Augustine Toure*, Ruth Young Forbes Civil Society Fellow, International Peace Academy

Dr. Comfort Ero, International Crisis Group, Sierra Leone and Ms. Angela Muvumba, International Peace Academy, "Halting the Flow of Light Weapons and Small Arms in West Africa"

Discussant: Dr. Martin Uhomoibhi, Deputy Ambassador of Nigeria to the OAU

16:15 - 18:15

Session V: Rebels, Sobels, and the Political Economy of Conflicts in West Africa

Chair: Hon. Nuwe Amanya-Mushega, Secretary-General, East African Community

Panelists: Professor Eboe Hutchful, Wayne State University, United States and Dr. Emmanuel Kwesi Aning, Institute of Economic Affairs, Ghana, "The Political Economy of Conflicts in West Africa"

Professor Ibrahim Abdullah, University of Western Cape, South Africa and Professor Ismail Rashid, Vassar College, United States "Rebel Movements in West Africa"

Discussants: Lt.-General Arnold Quainoo, Former ECOMOG Force Commander in Liberia and Chief Hinga Norman, Deputy Minister of Defense, Sierra Leone

20:00

Dinner Address

Chair: Ambassador James Jonah, Former UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs

Major-General Martin Agwai, UNAMSIL Deputy Force Commander, "The UN Peacekeeping Mission in Sierra Leone: Problems and Prospects"

Discussant: Ambassador Joe Blell, High Commissioner of Sierra Leone to Nigeria

## Saturday, 29 September 2001

9:00 - 12:00

### Session VI: The Way Forward

Chair: Ambassador John Hirsch, International Peace Academy

Rapporteur's Summary:

Rapporteurs:

Dr. Comfort Ero, International Crisis Group, Sierra Leone,

Dr. Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, International Peace Academy and

Mr. Augustine Toure, International Peace Academy

Follow-On Activities in West Africa and New York:

General Cheick Oumar Diarra, ECOWAS Deputy Executive Secretary for Political Affairs, Defense and Security and Dr. Adekeye Adebajo, International Peace Academy

## ANNEX II

### Participants

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**Dr. Adekeye Adebajo**  
International Peace Academy  
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United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone  
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Legon-Accra, Ghana

**Maitre S.A. Alao**  
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**Hon. Nuwe Amanya-Mushega**  
East African Community  
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Pan-African News  
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