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**MILITARY INTERVENTION IN AFRICA**

**External Military Interventions and Security Prospects in Africa**

**Kio Laurence BOB-MANUEL**

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ABSTRACT

Kio Laurence Bob-Manuel

**External Military Interventions and Security Prospects in Africa**

Intervention, Africa, Military, Sovereignty, Destabilisation, Mercenary, Conflict

The research was an investigation into the phenomenon of external military interventions in Africa. The broad interpretation often given to intervention compelled both an African view on the subject and an operational definition. External military intervention was defined as the execution of any military plans by a state or its citizens in another state, in a manner that radically alters the existing socio-political, economic and military conditions in the target state, with or without its consent.

The role and effects of external powers in six conflict cases in Africa were examined. A taxonomy on intervention identified the phenomenon in its internal and external manifestations. Apart from the more publicised military role of extra-African powers in the region, the increasing role of African States as intra-continental interventionists was also considered.

The research concluded that aspects of the problems perceived as endemically African may have their roots in events influenced by external actions. However, some African states were seen as contributing to this situation as well. The view was expressed that restraints by states in their exercise of power and perceived wisdom may reduce the level of conflicts in the contemporary world.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page	i
Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgement	v
General Introduction	1

PART I: THE CONTEXT

Chapter I:	Definition of Intervention	7
Chapter II:	Roots of Intervention in Africa	42
Chapter III:	Security in Africa	78

PART II: CASE STUDIES

Chapter IV:	Chad	101
Chapter V:	Angola	155
Chapter VI:	Horn of Africa	197
Chapter VII:	Western Sahara	227
Chapter VIII:	Shaba I; Shaba II	251
Chapter IX:	Nigerian Civil War	295

PART III: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Chapter X:	The Position of International Law on Intervention	363
Chapter XI:	The Effects of Intervention in Africa	386
Chapter XII:	Conclusion and Recommendations	404

Appendices:	I - OAU Charter	425
	II - African view on intervention by Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo	432
	III - Table of Interventions in Africa	435

DEDICATION

Dedicated to the Head of the Manuel (Owukori) Group of Houses and King of Abonnema, His Royal Highness, Lawrence Opubenibo Bob-Manuel VI, and his wife, Abelba Aiysha Bob-Manuel, in whose great family tradition a part of the coastal in-lets to the Rivers State, Nigeria, has always been protected from both internal and external aggressors: Today, perhaps symbolically so. Opubenibo is the Grandson of the War-Lord and Paramount Chief of Abonnema, Owukoriye-Ekine, 1901. Their parenthood has been very inspiring. May the Lord continue to bless Opu's reign with peace.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, and foremost, I will like to thank my Creator for making it possible for me to learn more about myself, my beloved people - the Africans, and those from distant lands with whom they have had centuries of contact - whatever the nature. That the work was completed, was only through grace and faith.

The moral and spiritual support of my parents throughout my research years was crucial and is very much appreciated. Thoughts of them kept the dim light in my heart burning until full brightness. Indeed, my research years saw me through the highest form of discipline in my life. In waiting, I learnt to wait. It was an experience that I so yearned for.

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I will like to thank Dr Malcolm Dandou for his early advise on how best I could go through my research years. I will also like to thank the following for their periodic enquiries about the position of my research: Owen Green, Dr

Peter Van Den Dungen, Dr Carol Ranks and Dr Andrew Rigby. The latter two are also personal friends. I hasten to say here that the entire staff in the Peace Studies Department were quite supportive. My gratitude also goes to Mr John Horton of the University library who was very helpful in many aspects of my work.

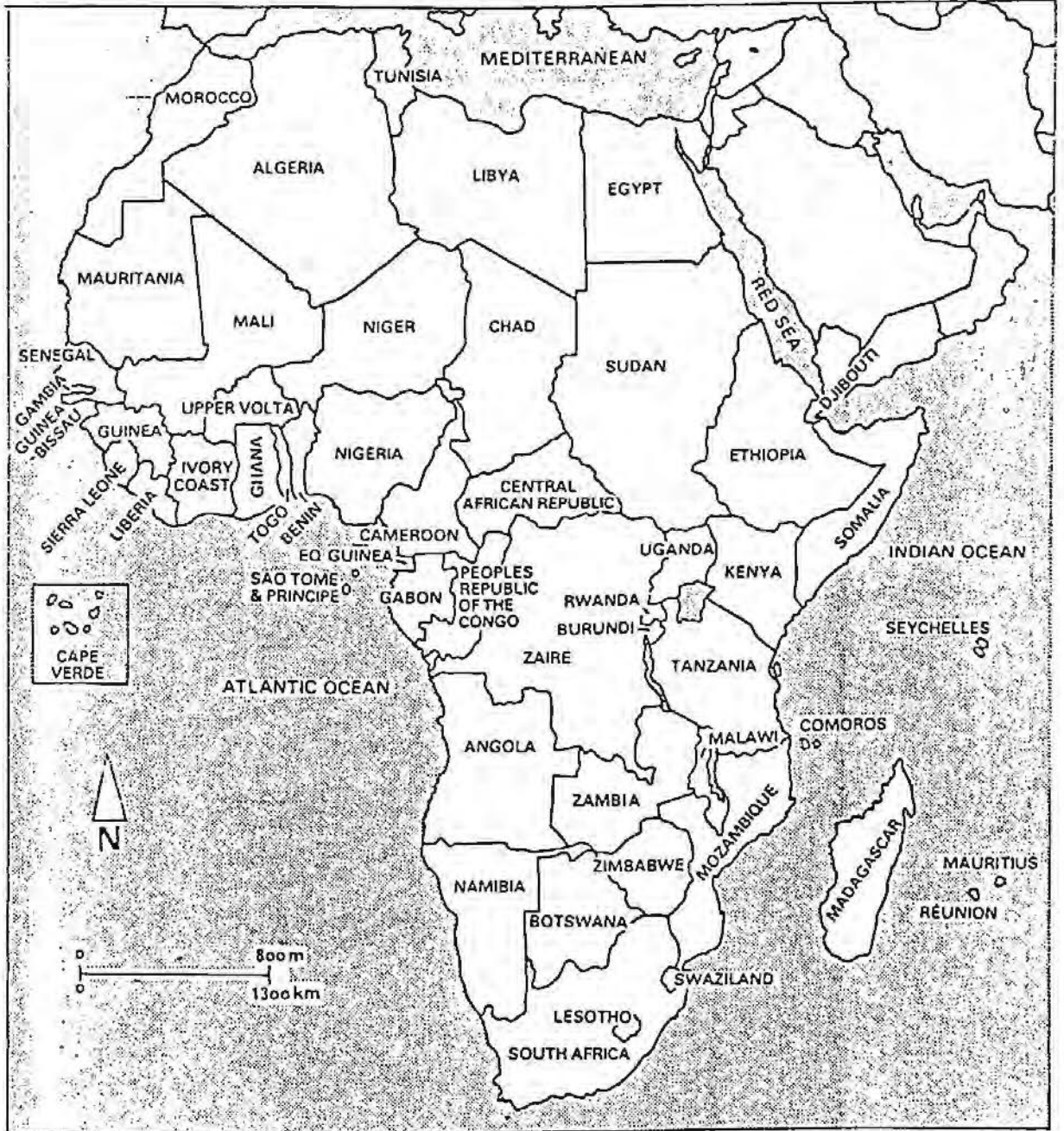
Added to his role as one of my supervisors, the fatherly figure of the Professor and Head of Department of Peace Studies, Dr James O'Connell, was very reassuring. His presence had partly fueled me with the strength I needed to carry on in the onerous task.

Easily the most contacted about my work in the Department was my personal supervisor - Dr Paul Rogers to whom I feel so indebted. His many corrections and advise will remain as invaluable contributions to both my academic and professional life.

Without the sponsorship from the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, this research would not have been possible. It is with profound joy that I, therefore, thank that establishment and the British Council, which administered the Scholarship. To have been one of three recipients out of twenty-three short-listed candidates in 1985 is sufficient reason to give thanks.

And lastly, but by no means the least, my gratitude goes to Louise Rhodes, who kindly accepted to do the typing for me. Her cheerful nature, coupled with her sense of duty made it quite interesting to work with her.

# AFRICA



Source: Maps On File, Facts on File, Martin Greenwald Associates, Inc, New York, 1983.



## INTRODUCTION

'AFRICA was the earliest habitat and yet is the last to become truly habitable. AFRICANS are certainly not the most brutalised of peoples and yet are the most humiliated in modern history. AFRICAN societies are not the closest culturally to the Western world and yet they are undergoing the most rapid Westernization. AFRICA is by no means the smallest continent and yet it is almost certainly the most fragmented politically. Africa is not the poorest of the regions of the world but it is technically the most retarded. And the basic paradox is that, though AFRICA is the most centrally located continent, it is the most peripheral in political terms.'

- Ali Mazrui<sup>1</sup>

This thesis is an investigation into the phenomenon of intervention in Africa. Three main questions, therefore, appear salient: (1) Why intervention? (2) What has been its effects on the continent?, and (3) What can be done about it?

To answer these questions, the work has accordingly been divided into three sections. In part I, we will try to find out why external military intervention has become a common feature of the African society. Thus, we will be looking into the methodological components of our subject of investigation. To be discussed are the Definitions of Intervention in Chapter I; Roots of Intervention in Africa in Chapter II; and Africa's Security in Chapter III.

The second part, which is mainly an exposition on contemporary African conflicts, examines the main trends of intervention in these conflicts, with illustrations from the main regions of the continent. Six conflicts in Africa in which both intra- as well as extra-continental actors intervened, have been chosen. They are Chad - as discussed in Chapter IV; Angola - in Chapter V; The Horn of Africa - covered in Chapter VI; Western Sahara - In Chapter VII; Shabas I and II - in Chapter VIII; and Nigeria - discussed in Chapter IX.

The third part will be concerned with evaluation. This is because having identified what intervention is in the first part and with some cases of intervention in Africa examined in the second, we are compelled to make some prescriptions in the third on how the phenomenon could be checked. Chapter X, therefore, looks at the position of International Law (seen by many as mankind's last hope and States' ultimate reference) on intervention. An attempt will be made to measure the effects of intervention in Africa in Chapter XI, while Chapter XII will see to some recommendations and a conclusion on the work.

Although the cases examined in this study are all contemporary, an effort has been made to link the present with the past in the belief that both are inextricably linked. This view point has equally been stressed by Olusanya, who believes that

'our past should be an important reference point for the present which in itself should provide a guide for the future'.<sup>2</sup>

It follows therefore that while the 1960 period (by which time most African states had become independent) to the present has been the main time-frame of reference in this study, it was inevitable that occasional references to the pre-independence era (imperial/colonial period) were also made. This is because some of Africa's problems are seen by some African scholars<sup>3</sup> as the legacies of imperialism and colonialism. This is evidenced in the ethnic/tribal factor common in all the six conflict cases examined in this work. They were either situations where certain ethnic groups who find their values and identity to be different from those with whom they have been compulsorily grouped to form a state would want to secede, or conflicts bordering on territorial claims. Lord Curzon once described boundaries as

'the razor's edge on which hang suspended the modern issues of war or peace, of life or death to nations, adding that just as the protection of the home is the most vital care of the private

citizen, so the integrity of her borders is the condition of existence of the state'.<sup>4</sup>

Most of Africa's territorial wars and border disputes have been blamed on the Berlin Conference of 1884/1885 in which European powers partitioned Africa. Olusanya has described the meeting thus:

'... With the aid of map, rulers and compasses to guide them and consumed by their own national interests, they divided Africa amongst themselves'.<sup>5</sup>

He said the partition did not take into consideration the realities of the African situation nor was this of any importance to those gathered there - hence the drawing of boundaries which have neither the force of history or reality to support them and which therefore cut across ethnic and cultural groups, thereby creating the present intractable boundary problems in the continent. He was of the view that,

'The problems have so far provided fertile grounds for conflict amongst African nations as well as opportunity for unlimited interference in the affairs of the continent. And such an opportunity is used to manipulate African countries to serve the economic, political and strategic interests of the developed world and to dictate in what direction Africa is to move - direction which is antithetical to African interests'.<sup>6</sup>

In another forcefully presented case, Adekunle Ajala asserted that,

'... all present day African boundaries, without any exception, are products of the colonial era'.<sup>7</sup>

But William Roger Louis holds a contrary view,<sup>8</sup> although he conceded that

'the Berlin Act did have a relevance to the course of the partition' of Africa.<sup>9</sup>

This work, however, sets out to identify other factors beyond the border/ethnic element which precipitate external interventions carried out by African and extra-African powers.

Remarkably, intra-continental military intervention is itself only a very recent phenomenon, originating mainly in the mid- to late-1970s.

'Prior to that time, major powers had intervened in the region, but African leaders had been very reluctant to violate a norm of non-intervention established in the early 1960s to safeguard hard-won sovereignty. Even in the 1980s, the non-intervention norm persists, although in an evidently weakened form. Changes in African political and economic subsystems across the two decades may account for this pattern of slowly increasing intervention'.<sup>10</sup>

At the extra-continental level, however, Wingen and Tillema reveal that the United Kingdom

'used force more extensively than any other major country despite her reduced status in the post-war era',<sup>11</sup>

resulting in 34 foreign military interventions in more than 20 countries between 1949 and 1970, and of which 12 occurred in 9 African territories. Overt French military interventions in Black Africa between 1959 and 1984 numbered seventeen. This figure does not include subtle French military support such as sudden increases of military aid or local troop reinforcement.<sup>12</sup>

However, with the present Soviet policy of 'glasnost' (openness) which has greatly reduced previously existing levels of tension between the superpowers, we may also be experiencing changes in the posture of foreign powers in Africa. But the permanence of this can only be verified in retrospect.

FOOTNOTES

1. Mazrui, A. 'The African Condition' (A Political Diagnosis), Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, London, (Back cover). The book was a compilation of Mazrui's 1980 BBC Reith Lectures in London.
2. Olusanya, G.O. 'Reflections on the Berlin Treaty of 1885 and the Partition of Africa', published in Nigerian Forum, a monthly bulletin of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos; ISSN 0189-0816, March/April, 1985, p59. (Professor Olusanya is Director-General of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs).
3. Prominent amongst several others are Drs. Kwame Nkrumah and Walter Rodney, Professors Ali Mazrui of the University of Michigan and G.O. Olusanya of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs.
4. Curzon. Frontiers. The Romanes Lectures, Oxford 1907, p7 (cited in Ajala, A., 'The Nature of African Boundaries', Africa Spectrum 83/2, 18. Jahrgang, W. Germany, p177.
5. Olusanya, G.O., op. cit., p60.
6. Ibid., p60.
7. Ajala, A., ibid., (as in Note 4 above), p182.
8. See Louis, W.R. The Berlin Congo Conference in France and Britain in Africa. In: Gifford, Prosser, Louis, W.R. (Eds): Imperial Rivalry and Colonial Rule, New Haven, London 1971, pp167-220 (Cited in Ajala, A., op. cit.).
9. Ibid., p218.
10. Pearson, F.S. and Baumann, R.A., in a paper on 'International Military Intervention in Sub-Saharan Africa Subsystems', presented at the 1985 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, The New Orleans Hilton, August 29-September 1, p4.
11. Van Wingen, J and Tilemma, H.K., 'British Military Intervention after World War II: Militance in a Second Power', Journal of Peace Research, No. 4, Vol. XVII, 1980, p291, and table of illustration on p294.
12. Table as found in Chipman, J., 'French Military Policy and African Security', Adelphi Papers, No. 101, 1985, p50.

CHAPTER I  
DEFINITION OF INTERVENTION

"If anything, definitions are legion, creating a confusing bramble of terminological disputation. What we need, instead, is a set of generalizations which belong to what Merton (1957) has called "theories of the middle range, logically interconnected conceptions ... limited and modest in scope, 'which have the virtue of quality, utility, and logical soundness, rather than grandness or the all embracing structure of a major synthesis."

- Wesley C. Clark<sup>1</sup>

WHAT DO WE UNDERSTAND BY 'INTERVENTION'?

The problem of definition abounds in Political Science as in most of the social sciences. According to Robertson:

'Political Science as such has no collective corpus of knowledge, or even commonly agreed methodology, but is somewhat of a 'holding company' for a series of sub-disciplines, the workers in which do not necessarily accept others as really sharing a common discipline except in terms of subject matter. Thus 'Political Theory', 'Comparative Politics', 'Political Sociology', 'International Relations', and perhaps 'Political History' are rather separated sub-disciplines (and indeed contain further often incompatible subdivisions within themselves).<sup>3</sup>

Our subject of investigation ("intervention") falls under international relations, which as a descriptive term for the various kinds and processes of interaction that takes place among States, was first applied by A.J. Grant in 1916. The term "international" was coined by Jeremy Bentham in 1770. International Relations is itself riddled with semantics and definitional problems. It will, however, be self-defeatist if because of the inherent difficulties of arriving at a clear and concise definition, we abandon the definitional question. But this may not be acceptable to some international relations practitioners, who because of their perceived difficulty of arriving at a universal definition of the

subject matter, may choose not to make any efforts at a definition in their writings.

Thomas, for instance, pointed out that 'a basic observation which has to be faced head-on at the outset is that there can be no universally acceptable definition of intervention if we try, as Rosenau suggests, to "operationalise" the concept'.<sup>4</sup> Her main argument was that 'whereas the European State system was able to function with a definition of intervention that was similarly understood (if not adhered to), by most actors, the present ideological cleavages in the world in terms of the East/West and North/South confrontations make such an aspiration impossible of achievement'.<sup>5</sup> While the above submission may remain valid, if only partially, the real task for international relations practitioners should be to find out the common, factor(s) between the East/West and North/South interventionary experiences. In the meantime, however, each ideological/political bloc has defined intervention in accordance with its politico-cultural and economic aspirations. While there are still many issues to resolve in our search for a general definition of intervention from the plethora of national/ideological-biased definitions currently available, we could see that they, at least, provide the basis for a working definition. But even so, the hegemonic influence of the longer established States is still manifest in the south as what constitutes intervention in this region appears to be either the eastern or the western representation of the phenomenon. Consequently, there has not been an African definition of intervention (i.e. the meaning given to intervention by OAU Africa), even if Africa is one of the most prone regions to external military intervention.

An African definition of the concept will, therefore, be worthwhile since most of the existing definitions on intervention (fraught with ambiguity, grey-areas and ethnocentric-biases) have come from intervenor-States. That is not

to say that an African definition will enjoy the much sought precision which all the rest lack. It will nevertheless project the African thinking on intervention, and perhaps even help provide the missing middle-way concept between Eastern and Western thoughts on the phenomenon. But first, let us take a look at some major western views on the subject.

At the general level, K.J. Holsti notes that 'one reason so little research has been done on the processes leading to intervention is that scholars do not agree on definitions'.<sup>6</sup> On the nature of intervention, however, two popular observations have frequently been made. According to Richard Little, 'The first is that intervention is a ubiquitous and endemic feature of the international arena'.<sup>7</sup> One of such proponents was Guelke who argues that intervention is 'inherent in the nature of international society',<sup>8</sup> and more recently, Bull conveys the view-point of a group of authors on the nature of intervention, as a 'built-in feature of our present international arrangements'.<sup>9</sup> The view was expressed that apart from Big-Power intervention, small States also conducted activities that bordered on interference in the territories of their neighbours.

The second observation about intervention almost dismisses the relevance of the first, which states that 'intervention has always been and remains an imprecise and extremely ambiguous concept'.<sup>10</sup> According to Quitter, 'the concept of intervention has become as misunderstood now as the "balance of power" or "splendid isolation" were decades ago'.<sup>11</sup> Some analysts even consider non-intervention as a metaphysical and political concept that is synonymous with intervention. Wight cites Dulles as saying: 'The slogan of non-intervention can plausibly be invoked and twisted to give immunity to what is in reality flagrant intervention'.<sup>12</sup>

Put together, these observations about intervention, clearly demonstrate its wider connotation. And perhaps, that explains the observation of Schwarz



that 'some analysts are inclined to term any foreign policy behaviour as interventionary when a power tries to change the behaviour of another power'.<sup>13</sup> Also, commenting on 'The Problem of Intervention', Stanley Hoffman remarks: 'The subject is practically the same as that of international politics in general from the beginning of time to the present'.<sup>14</sup>

In his review of existing literature on intervention, Richard Little identifies two general headings: 'behaviouralist' and 'traditionalist',<sup>15</sup> but is quick to point out the absence of an agreed definition for the terms. According to his report: 'At one extreme, the labels are used to distinguish statistical from non-statistical analysis; at the other extreme, the distinction is used to divide those who believe that facts and values can be separated from those who do not'.<sup>16</sup> His own distinction separates those who wish to adopt an empirical approach from those who wish to conduct their analysis from a normative and legalistic perspective. James Rosenau belongs to the former school.

According to Little, what Rosenau sought to achieve was 'to establish a concept of intervention which was sufficiently precise to exclude all the marginal or peripheral meanings often attached to the concept and yet also distil the essential elements normally associated with it'.<sup>17</sup> Nearly twenty years ago, Rosenau had frowned at his colleagues over what he had described as their 'licence for undisciplined thought'<sup>18</sup> in their discussion of intervention.

Rosenau sees intervention as having two attributes which distinguish it from other forms of State action. 'It must, first, provide a sharp break with the established pattern of behaviour between the intervening and target States; and, second, it must be consciously designed to change or preserve the structure of political authority in the target State'.<sup>19</sup> Although Rosenau's definition has been widely relied upon by other writers, its somewhat restricted scope has made urgent recent challenges and modifications to the original definition.

On the essentially military aspect of intervention, behaviouralists, in turn, fall into two camps. In the first are those like J. Van Wingen and H.K. Tillema who discuss intervention in terms of 'blatant use of military force in another country',<sup>20</sup> where the resistance is not such as to result in war. From this perspective, the hallmark of intervention is that it risks war. Tillema and Van Wingen, looking at intervention within this context, reveals that the four major intervening States - Britain, the United States, the Soviet Union, and France - have intervened more than 70 times between 1946-80. Britain, it transpires, has made over half of these interventions.<sup>21</sup>

Frederic Pearson who fits well into the second group, is of the opinion that 'it is important to distinguish between interventions into domestic disputes within a target State and interventions which are designed to affect the policy of a target State'.<sup>22</sup> There are others in this camp, but with a slightly different focus.

Small and Singer, for instance, identify civil wars as a distinctive feature of military intervention; but first, had to define a civil war. They 'identify a civil war when three conditions are satisfied, (1) there are at least, 1,000 deaths per year; (2) the national government is a central actor in the conflict; and (3) there is effective resistance to the government'.<sup>23</sup> With this formulation, they then identify intervention 'when either, 1,000 troops are committed by another State or 100 deaths are sustained. On the basis of this formulation, Small and Singer are able to observe 21 cases of serious intervention into the 106 civil wars which are identified as occurring between 1816-1980'.<sup>24</sup>

Behavioural literature, as noted by F.S. Pearson, tends to approach the definitional question with the emphasis that the researcher should 'observe some form of overt relatively easily detected behaviour, and identify the action as an intervention'.<sup>25</sup> According to Little, 'He, like the other

researchers, concludes that the least ambiguous indicator of intervention is the movement of troops by one independent country across the border of another independent country'. This desire for an unambiguous indicator has, however, been seen as producing a limited, even a distorted conception of intervention. B. Duner has argued that the use of troops only represents one segment of a spectrum of military responses which can be used to influence events within a target State and there is no a priori reason to suppose that the use of troops necessarily represents the most effective response'.<sup>26</sup> Duner then defines intervention 'in terms of five levels which range from the direct involvement of troops at one extreme, to the provision of support facilities, such as transport and information, at the other. There is, here, therefore, an obvious attempt to unpack the concept of intervention'.<sup>27</sup>

On the whole, behaviouralists tend to ignore Rosenau's analytical definition of intervention, since it could equally represent activities in the economic realm. They find his definition rather broad, as they would want to contend only with the military aspect. Ironically, however, Rosenau's definition is also seen by other behaviouralists as being too restrictive in the sense that he identifies a case of intervention when the authority structure in a target State is affected.

Summing up the empiricist approach to answering what we mean by intervention, Little notes:

'behaviouralists have, in practice, preferred to deal with the apparent imprecision associated with the way practitioners use the concept by thinking about it in differential terms. First, the target is differentiated: a distinction is drawn between integrated and fragmented States. Second, the intervener's objective is differentiated: a distinction is drawn between the desire to change the policy and the authority structure of the target State. Third, the instruments of the intervener are differentiated. By employing a differentiated conception of intervention, behaviouralists have managed to retain much of the complexity traditionally associated with the concept of intervention. The full complexity of intervention, however, has still not yet been encompassed by the behaviouralists and this is unsurprising given the ad hoc fashion in which the differentiated view of intervention has emerged'.<sup>28</sup>

Traditionalists, like their behavioural counterparts, have yet to disentangle what is practical from what is absurd in their quest for definition. To begin with, they lack unanimity. There is the group amongst traditionalists that tend to depend heavily on the international lawyer's definition of intervention, whilst yet another group, because of their belief in intervention as an evolving process, tend to be more cautious in their search for a definition, and at times, even make allowances for the anticipated development of the phenomena when they make attempts at definitions. Bull, Luttwak, Moisi and Windsor, depend on the classical definition of intervention which borders on the 'dictatorial or coercive interference by an outside party in the internal affairs of other States'.<sup>29</sup> Falk and Akehurst made their recent contributions to the subject without defining intervention.<sup>30</sup> However, Hoffman holds the view that 'every act of State constitutes intervention',<sup>31</sup> while Luard's definition of intervention is limited to his main theme of 'collective intervention'. He defines collective intervention as 'intervention that has been authorized by some international community'. But since this definition is yet to give meaning to 'intervention', Luard supplies a broader interpretation by citing rather hypothetically, the UN as an example:

'If the UN discusses the affairs of a particular State - say in a colony, on the system of apartheid in South Africa - this would not, on most interpretations, constitute intervention. Even if it were to pass a resolution on the subject, it is scarcely intervening in any meaningful sense. But if it passes a long succession of resolutions, if it brings pressure to bear by every available means, if it sets up a committee with the express purpose of mobilizing such pressures, then it can reasonably be said that a form of intervention takes place'.<sup>32</sup>

Bull himself is constrained by the need for clarity in his definition. He starts his essay on 'Intervention in The Third World' rather cautiously, with the proposition that:

'if intervention is dictatorial interference by outside powers in the sphere of jurisdiction of a State or independent political

community, and this is inherently something that is done by the strong to the weak, then it does indeed make sense to seek the chief illustrations of it in our times in relations between the advanced industrial States of Western Europe, North America, the Soviet Union, and Japan, and the States of the so-called Third World'.<sup>33</sup>

We can only accept the above definition at the risk of not including (in the case of Africa) intra-continental military intervention where one small power intervenes in the affairs of another small power as was the case between Tanzania and Uganda, or proxy conflicts involving intra- and extra-African actors. The "if" element in his definition further demonstrates its lack of conclusiveness.

Interestingly, even from an international legal perspective, the definitional question is yet to be fully answered. For instance, to the question, 'Is there an acceptable definition of intervention in the context of international law?', Rosalyn Higgins argues that 'one perceives very rapidly that not only is it not profitable to seek such a definition, but that really one is dealing with a spectrum. This spectrum ranges from the notion of any interference at all in the State's affairs at the one end, to the concept of military intervention at the other. And if one is choosing to deal with all of these as intervention, that choice is immediately complicated by the fact that not every maximalist intervention is unlawful and not every minimalist intrusion is lawful. One cannot simply indicate a particular point along the spectrum and assert that everything from there onwards is an unlawful intervention and everything prior to that point is a tolerable interference, and one of the things we put up with in an interdependent world. It is not that simple'.<sup>34</sup>

Perhaps the difficulty in arriving at a universally acceptable definition of intervention does not only lie in the international legal arena, but also in the differences between the two main groups of researchers on the subject:

the behaviouralists and the traditionalists. It is, however, worth mentioning here that, 'despite the methodological and epistemological differences between behaviouralists and traditionalists, they tend, by rather different routes, to have agreed upon a definition of intervention which is remarkably similar. Both relate intervention to military activity. The traditionalists, however, go further than the behaviouralists because of their interest in intervention as an evolving political idea'.<sup>35a</sup>

### INTERVENTION: SOME DEFINITIONS

Before attempting my own definition of intervention, it will be worthwhile examining other existing definitions on the subject matter. Here are a few:

1. Interference in the domestic or external affairs of another State which violates the State's independence. A State may justify an act of intervention where it has a treaty right to interfere in the external affairs of one of its citizens; where it invades in self-defence; where it joins with other members of the United Nations to restrain a State which disturbs world peace by resorting to war; and in certain other cases. Unless there is some such justification any intervention is a breach of international law.

- Florence Elliot, 'A Dictionary of Politics', Penguin Reference Books.

2. Informal access or informal penetration... are means by which the agents or instruments of one country gain access to the population (or parts of it) or process of another country.

- Andrew M. Scott, *The Revolution in Statecraft: Informal Penetration*. New York: Random House, 1965, p.4, cited in Ivo D. Duchacek, 'Nations and Men', Dryden Press, USA, 1975, p.415.

3. Intervention occurs when a State's sovereignty is violated because another State forces it to act against its will by threatening severe damages to its vital interests, or engages in direct, unsolicited interference in matters which are traditionally left to the jurisdiction of individual States.

- Doris A. Graber, 'Crisis Diplomacy: A History of U.S. Intervention Policies and Practices'. Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1959, cited in I. Duchacek, *Ibid.*

4. Intervention is any action ... that significantly affects the public internal realm of another sovereign State and which stops short of aggressive crossing of international frontiers.

- Manfred Halpern, "Morality and Politics of Intervention", in James N. Rosenau (ed.), *International Aspects of Civil Strife*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964, p.252, cited in I. Duchacek, *Ibid.*

5. The behaviour of one international actor toward another [is] interventionary whenever the form of the behaviour constitutes a sharp break with then-existing forms and whenever it is directed at changing or preserving the structure of political authority in the target society.

- James N. Rosenau, "The Concept of Intervention", *Journal of International Affairs*, 22:2 (1968), 167, cited in I. Duchacek, *Ibid.*

6. Intervention refers to organized and systematic activities across recognized boundaries aimed at affecting the political authority structures of the target ... activities ... designed either to replace existing structures or to shore up structures of thought to be in danger of collapse.

- Oran R. Young, "Intervention and International Systems", *Journal of International Affairs*, 22:2 (1968), 178, cited in I. Duchacek, *Ibid.*

7. Any military action either within or outside the boundaries of a State with a high level of civil strife, which is calculated to affect favourably the situation of one or the other faction in that strife. [Military action includes the provision of arms, bases, financial aid or credits for arms purchase, instructors, volunteers or regular army units. The definition implies that "intervention" can normally be undertaken only by the political authorities of a State, as only they have the ability to mobilise such action. "Intervention" must therefore be contrasted with "involvement", which can concern both political authorities and socio-economic groupings ...]

- C.R. Mitchell, 'Civil Strife and the Involvement of External Parties', *International Studies Quarterly*, 14:2, June 1970, p169 (footnote).

8. All conflict between States is intervention. You cannot fire bullets or rockets across a border without intervening, dramatically and damagingly, in the domestic affairs of that State. When we speak of intervening in a conflict we are speaking of intervening in an existing intervention.

- T.B. Millar, 'Conflict And Intervention', in *Conflict and Intervention in the Third World*, Mohammed Ayoob (Ed.), Croom Helm, London, 1980, p.1.

9. ... Intervention refers to coercive military involvement in civil and regional conflict, involvement which is intended to, or does, affect internal political outcomes. This includes intrusions not only by actors from outside the region, but also by States and other agents within it. It may be ... unilateral, ... multilateral, ... or collective. It may involve the regular forces of the intervening power or irregulars dependent upon and acting at the behest of the intervener ...

- S.N. MacFarlane, 'Intervention and Security in Africa', *International Affairs*, Vol. 60, No. 1, Winter 1984, p.53.



While the points of emphasis in the nine definitions that are supplied vary from one author to another, one common feature in all is the crossing of international boundaries by external forces in a manner that either helps preserve or erode but certainly alters the sovereignty of the target State. Below are some analysis of the definitions.

If by 'interference' we understand 'break in upon (other persons' affairs) without right or invitation', then Elliot's definition fails to include invitational intervention such as the Cubans in Angola. She further states: 'A State may justify an act of intervention where it has a treaty right to interfere in the external affairs of one of its citizens ...'. Here, there appears to be a conflict in the basic premise forwarded by Elliot in the sense that, with a treaty right, no involvement in, or penetration of a foreign territory by another State can any longer be described as "interference".

Scott's definition of intervention seems to represent transnationalism more so than intervention itself.

Graber, like Elliot, also fails to consider invitational intervention in her definition. A key feature of Halpern's definition is the 'aggressive crossing of international frontiers', whereas intervention could take place by actions that fall short of the crossing of international frontiers. Young also falls into the same category as Halpern.

Apart from failing to recognise that interventions may take place outside of civil strife in a country (i.e. at relatively peaceful times), Mitchell's definition tends to ignore the role of mercenaries as autonomous international actors.

Millar's definition narrows down the concept of intervention to only conflict situations. His definition also focused on the border factor, whereas intervention could take place without necessarily having to cross States' borders.

Like Millar, MacFarlane defined intervention in the context of civil and regional conflict, whereas the phenomenon could be witnessed even at peace times.

Rosenau's definition is almost all-embracing, and may serve as a useful point of reference.

### INTERVENTION CONSIDERED WITHIN AN AFRICAN CONTEXT

The subject of intervention is of broad comprehensiveness ranging from economic activities to aspects of the political realm. But as broad, varied and paradoxically distinct in meaning as the respective forms of intervention may seem to be, it must still be made clear that, in their diverse forms, these seemingly independent aspects of intervention are still related, if not interdependent, in their operational mode. Clearly, the point that is being established here is that there is an inter-play of related elements in the politico-economic, military and other aspects of intervention, but even so, a clear line of distinction could still be drawn in all three or more aspects, if and when the analytical and or theoretical need(s) arise(s). For instance, a pressing economic need in say State A, might serve as the igniting force for a military intervention in State B. Such interventions are often over zones containing rich mineral resources. The Libyan presence in Chad over the Ouzou strip is an example. Or seen from another perspective, an economic intervention, might of necessity, be further instituted in a target State, via illegal military presence, in the event of a hostile response to the presence of the intervenor in the target State. The 1973 over-throw of President Allende of Chile with the apparent support of the US-based ITT is a case in point. Sometimes, external forces employ the services of internal agents as their instruments of penetration. In order to steer a clear path in the jungle of

competing terminologies, we are compelled to carve out as our special area of interest, the military aspect (which is not without its definitional problem) as carried out by either government approved agencies or autonomous international actors from other parts of the world in Africa. There are also cases of inter-state intervention on the continent.

Mercenary activities which could easily be cited under military interventions, are not as rampant, heavily invested in, or massive as government-sponsored interventions, and will, therefore, only be treated in any great length in the relevant Nigeria case study, all the more so because "soldiers of fortune" (also referred to in some quarters as "dogs of war") are relatively independent international actors, in the absence of whose identity and evidence of state of origin (i.e., after a clean operation and upon return to headquarters) no official protestations could be lodged before the United Nations General Assembly and reparations or indemnification sought by the target state from the 'conceived' intervenor. But be that as it may, we still need to mention here that national governments could carry out clandestine operations through second-party mercenary groups to undermine the political integrity of target states. Mercenaries employed in this manner do not often divulge their identity or give away their "death barons" when caught. In fact, some undertake suicide missions. However, in the Nigerian Civil War, (which is one of the case studies to be examined) most of the mercenaries involved were non-government agents, and as such, readily revealed their identity. Although their countries of origin were known, some conducted their business under pseudonyms.

In cases where governments have had to be exposed by their mercenary agents, it is common for the state to deny involvement. Libya, for instance, has been accused several times of violating the sovereignty of states through second-party agents, either in her bid to islamise her neighbours or carry out

the assassination of opposition group members all over the world. But Tripoli has constantly denied any knowledge of such reported incidents. A case in point was the call by the United States of America for international sanctions against Libya after the December 1985 Rome and Vienna explosions aimed at Israeli targets outside Israel. West European countries were reluctant to join their U.S. ally in its sanctions-call due to the lack of concrete evidence that the perpetrators were Libyan agents. The case, however, would have been different, if Libyan forces fighting in Libyan colours and under the Libyan flag were caught operating illegally in a foreign territory. The issue could then have been raised at the United Nations, or even involved a direct military action against Libya. It is known, however, that on 13 April 1987, the US carried out pre-emptive air strikes on Tripoli without any evidence to incriminate Libya as the actual perpetrator of the US-alleged atrocities. The raid was a breach of International Law. This explains our choice of open government-sponsored intervention as our area of investigation in the place of either government, group or individual sponsored second-party intervention, due to the former's overt and easily identifiable nature. But first, we need to supply an operational definition that will also be relevant to the six cases of intervention in Africa that will be examined in this study. What then is 'intervention'?

'When people have taken arms against you, there will not be lacking foreigners to assist them.'

- Machiavelli

I have defined intervention as:

the application of extra-constitutional power and influence by either a State, its subjects, non-State intergovernmental organizations or non territorial transnational organizations in a foreign territory in a manner that radically affects either the socio-political, military, cultural and economic balance or imbalance of the latter. This may be in the form of lethal or nonlethal support for or against the target State; an inside-border,

cross-border or outside-border operation, with or without the consent of the incumbent government.

Hypothetically considered, we can say that we have a case of intervention when in say State A, a person or group of persons or the State itself exercises extra-ordinary influence in say B through either the economic, political, cultural or military instruments of power, to secure ends in the respective areas. Intervention must not be equated with diplomacy, or simply understood as the day to day interaction between states. It is much more complex than that.

Diplomats and spokesmen, respectively representing intervenor states and other agents of intervention, all tend to avoid the word - 'intervention'. They would rather substitute 'presence', as an alternative choice of word, even where their ideological commitments favour their action. The difficulties encountered in explaining their actions, either to their people or to the rest of the world, explains the unconstitutional nature of their action. It may be within their constitutional rights to "assist", and perhaps "transact", but certainly not to "intervene". According to Luard, 'No country announces that it is "intervening" in the affairs of another country: only that it is providing "assistance" to that country, "restoring democracy", or "preventing intervention by another power". To the United States the Soviet Union "Intervened" in Afghanistan; in the eyes of the Soviet Union it assisted the present government of Afghanistan by countering rebellion and intervention from outside. To the Soviet Union, the United States is "intervening" in El Salvador; in the eyes of the United States it is providing assistance to the government of that country in maintaining its authority and preventing intervention from elsewhere. In other words, intervention is what other people do, not what we do ourselves. This use of language clearly demonstrates that intervention by a single State is an activity that is not socially approved within

the modern international community'.<sup>36</sup> Governments, mercenaries and other agents of intervention would want to justify their actions only if the act would not be termed interventionary because of the negative connotation of intervention. Therefore, when States, their subjects and other agents intervene, they do so outside the limits of their constitution, since there are no known constitutions that clearly spell out the right of States, their subjects and other entities to intervene in other States.

It is worth pointing out that apart from the military aspect of intervention in which the act is executed by both internal as well as external agents against the State, the rest of interventionary forms are carried out by mainly external agents against the target State. It must be added though that on occasions, certain internal agents do aid and abet external interventionary forces, but they alone (i.e. the former group) do not intervene and take full control of power as would the military after a successful coup d'etat in a country. The complex linkages between internal and external forces, and the inter-dependent nature of all the interventionary forms have been partially touched upon at the beginning of this sub-section. The broadness of the subject, therefore, makes it necessary for us to be specific in our discussions. The focus of this study is on the military aspect. External military intervention is, therefore, the application of extra-constitutional powers by either a state or its subjects in a foreign territory in a manner that radically affects the socio-political and military balance or imbalance in the target state. This may be in the form of lethal or non lethal support for or against the target state; an inside-border, cross-border or outside-border operation with or without the consent of the incumbent government.

Interestingly, most behavioural definitions of intervention relate the phenomenon to civil wars, as did Bertil Duner<sup>37</sup> and a host of others, as if it is only in such situations that the armies or paid agents of one country violate

the territorial sovereignty and integrity of another. Yet there are numerous examples of peace-time violation of the 'peaceful existence of States' by other States, especially on the African continent. In one interview, a Guinean (Conakry) diplomat revealed:

'All they said our crime was, was to ask for our independence in 1958. And no sooner had we attained it than the French began to undermine our efforts at nation-building through sabotages. Just after handing over power, they ensured that they left with virtually all they brought in, leaving nothing for us to start with. They also blocked-out Guinea economically. There were no loans, either. It was a most horrid experience. And one of the last attempts to wreck our young nation came on 22 November 1970, when a bunch of white mercenaries from Portugal crossed our borders in an attempt to oust the government. They moved in with some Guinean dissidents against the government. Needless saying ... their bid proved abortive, as we were united inside, and gave a fierce resistance that finally drove them back to whence they came'.<sup>38</sup>

Then in September 1979, French forces moved into the Central African Republic without the attraction of a civil war. Their aim was to re-instate Emperor Bokassa as Head of State. The small West African country of Benin was also invaded by mercenaries in October 1977 without any signs of a civil war in the country. Popular views held on the incursion by African observers was that it was calculated to destabilize the country. Nor did the Benin episode mark the end of such external adventurism on the continent. On the contrary, again in the late 1970s, the Comoro Islands witnessed a foreign mercenary take-over in the absence of a civil war. The incessant and arbitrary violations by military means, of the borders of the Southern Africa 'Front Line' States by South African forces, are all too familiar of the type of "unprovoked" peace-time intrusion under discussion. These are but some of the reasons we wouldn't be doing justice to the subject matter if military intervention was discussed only in relation to civil wars.

## TAXONOMY ON INTERVENTION

A taxonomy on military intervention, with particular reference to Africa, will help lead us to a better understanding of the subject matter. Let "M.I." represent military intervention.

### TYPES OF MILITARY INTERVENTION IN AFRICA

#### EXTRA-CONTINENTAL M.I.

FOREIGN GOVERNMENT  
FORCES/AGENTS

FOREIGN MERCENARIES/  
INDIVIDUALS

#### INTRA-CONTINENTAL M.I.

INTER-STATE M.I.  
(E.G. TANZANIA VS. UGANDA)

INTERNAL M.I.  
(COUP d'ETAT)

We can see from the above classification that there are two main types of military intervention: Extra-Continental M.I. and Intra-Continental M.I. The first, Extra-Continental M.I., is itself, of two types: Foreign Government Forces/Agents-executed intervention and, (b) Foreign mercenaries/individuals-executed intervention.

What has been identified here as Foreign Government Forces/Agents-executed intervention (FGF/A), is the type of organised military intervention by either an extra-African power or its agents (including proxies), in both the domestic and external affairs of independent African States, as part of the former's foreign policy objective. Under FGF/A-executed intervention, one



could mention amongst several others, French incursions into Chad between 1968 and 1975 in its war against FROLINAT; and the 1977 and 1978 intrusion into Zaire in a bid to suppress the Shaba rebellions. The above examples are but some of the interventions of a more overt nature executed by French Forces in Africa. A complete list of overt French military interventions in Africa, together with her subtle military support (i.e. sudden increases of military aid or local troop reinforcements) for elements on the continent, would be extensive, hence our citing of only two relevant cases. There is another type of extra-continental military intervention short of direct involvement in the target state. It involves the intervenor soliciting the friendly assistance of another state (usually a smaller one in executing the war) against the target state. Different terms are used in different quarters to describe the assisting state; these include 'puppet', 'tool', 'client', 'satellite', and the most popular of all the expressions - 'proxy'.

Through proxy intervention, the big powers, especially the USA and the USSR, are able to achieve their foreign policy goals in the troubled regions of the South and in a less conspicuous manner. This form of 'low-keyed' appearance, absorbs, to a great extent, what otherwise would have been the intimidating influence of their immense size and power in those regions, as well as in the entire world community. A direct condemnation, therefore, becomes difficult to achieve in a situation like that.

Bertil Duner identifies proxy relationship at various levels: 'A certain country may intervene in a civil war by recruiting and sending in 'volunteers', as was the case, for example, during the Spanish Civil War. It may also support groups of exiles, as happened in the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961'.<sup>38b</sup> Duner also identifies subversion as carried out by the intelligence services of certain countries as part of proxy connection. He mentions the KGB and the CIA.

However, as regards second-party State intervention and Africa's experience, US proxy projections tend to be of a more covert nature. Soviet 'proxy connection', in say Angola, is open to broad interpretation. For instance, in the eyes of Millar (1980),<sup>38c</sup> the Cubans in Angola were little more than mercenaries in thin disguise, who represented the Soviet Union and acted in its expense, with its weapons and equipment and in its interest. But Connell-Smith (1979),<sup>38d</sup> has a different view. He maintains that it is not entirely fair to describe the Cuban soldiers as satellite troops of Moscow. Cuba's role in Africa has not merely been one of carrying out Soviet policy; the two States have had common objectives. He contends that Cuba has had a long history of 'afinity' with the Third World, and that during the last 20 years, Castro has not been a Soviet puppet (as former Cuban leaders were clients of the USA); on several occasions, Cuba has given proof of its ability to take independent political decisions.

The second type of extra-continental military intervention is what we may call Foreign Mercenaries/Individuals-executed intervention (FM/I). When we talk of FM/I intervention, what is meant is the execution of subversive military policies by foreign groups and individuals paid to carry out those policies against independent African States. When it comes to FM/I-executed intervention in civil wars, however, the point of reference changes; "subversion" would then be applied by the side relying on its own forces against the opposing party with mercenary assistance. The term "subversion", is mostly applied by incumbent governments against insurgents with mercenary assistance. However, where it is a case of the incumbent employing mercenary services against the rebels, the latter may equally apply the term against the established government it is seeking to overthrow on the usual grounds of irredentism, reactionarism, bribery and corruption, tribalism, sectionalism, favouritism, sycophancy, authoritarianism, etc.

OAU Africa, however, remains generally opposed to FMI/I-executed interventions. Perhaps, the continent's collective resentment at FM/I-executed intervention was best put across in the speech by Nigeria's former leader (then, Lt. General, now General) Olusegun Obasanjo, in his 27 July 1978 unequivocal declaration that 'we condemn all such interventions without reservation'. (See Appendix for full text of Gen. Obasanjo's speech.)

Mercenary groups and individual paid fighters had featured prominently on both sides of the Nigerian civil war. The difference, however, in the deployment of foreign agents in the war was that on the Federal side, mercenaries only served as pilots and technical advisers, while on the Biafran side, they served in combat roles in the air, on land and at sea. The Federal Government of Nigeria was also the 'de jure' government, fighting at the time to preserve the unity of the country which has since the end of hostilities in January 1970, enjoyed nineteen years of relative peace. General Obasanjo's condemnation of the act was specifically directed at the unprovoked and arbitrary violation of Africa's boundaries by foreign mercenaries.

The second main type of intervention is Intra-Continental M.I., which like the first, also consists of two types, namely, (a) Inter-State M.I. and, (b) Internal M.I.

While Extra-Continental M.I. is purely intrusion by external forces, the distinctive aspect of Intra-Continental M.I. is its all-African character. This perhaps explains why it is sometimes condoned and hardly condemned by the OAU. On the OAU attitude, Thomas observes that they condemn 'atrocities only when they were committed by white regimes'.<sup>39</sup> Although seemingly true, this observation has a racist implication for the OAU, whose problems in the real sense, are far removed from the issue of "black" and "white". The sensitivity of African leaders to externally directed military interventions on the continent could be explained from the point of view of the continent's

historical experience, which reveals a legion of unprovoked external invasions and subjugations in the form of colonialism, and after it (apart from in Namibia and South Africa where the practice may be said to continue), neo-colonialism.

The restraint of African leaders with regards to intra-continental military interventions could, therefore, be seen in the light of their understanding that, after centuries of foreign rule, plunders and exploitation executed by extra-continental forces - a period climaxed by the gathering of European powers in Berlin in 1884/85 to hastily decide the demarcation and future of Africa, the time has now come for "internal sorting" of the structural damages caused by foreign rule. In setting about this, they recognise the inevitable consequences which colonialism has brought to the continent, such as inter-state disputes over land borders, imposed on them and which they must cope with. This largely explains their tolerance toward inter-state disputes more so than externally directed actions inimical to their interest. However, some individual African States welcome certain external interventions where the intervenors moved in on the invitation of the affected African States.

Commenting on a similar type of resentment exhibited by 'Third World' people to externally directed activities within their national borders, Mohammed Ayoob submits:

'As all perceptive students of the field realise, in international relations, perceptions, whether they do or do not coincide with reality, are infinitely more important than reality itself. What binds the Third World together - in an emotional and psychological sense - is the perception of having been at the 'receiving end' for the last 300 to 400 years, i.e. at the 'receiving end' economically, militarily, politically and (possibly above all) technologically'.<sup>40</sup>

He further argues that:

'... if one adds to current great power activity the role played by the European metropolitan powers during the heyday of colonialism

and their contribution to the creation of conflict-prone situations around the Third World, one would come to the conclusion that external agents (whether in the form of the former imperial powers or the present-day dominant powers) have been responsible in substantial measure for the existence of regional conflicts, in the Third World today and quite often possibly more than the regional actors themselves'.<sup>41</sup>

When the white minority government in South Africa is considered, the argument tends to run in favour of Thomas' submission, but perhaps, not exactly. It is true that South Africa is an African state, but unlike other intra-continental intervenors, stands to be widely condemned by both the OAU and most individual African states for its incessant incursions into neighbouring states. The reason is not far fetched: South Africa has strong historical and economic links with the former colonial powers in Africa; and since colonialism has naturally been overtaken by societal forces and the African peoples' quest for change, South Africa, as its last bastion, may be providing one last hope of perpetuating its ideals, and which some of the former colonial powers may agree with and actively encourage. This, in effect, explains why South Africa's "life blood" lies in the West, and vice versa. The mutuality between the two is not a recent phenomenon. It is rooted in history. So, the submission could be effectively made that as opposed to the "black" and "white" meaning read into the type of response given to intervention by African governments, it is the long suffering of a people, historically tested and proved, and whose main burden has come from outside, that explains their sensitivity to and dislike for the external powers of any such state, even on the continent, reminding them of both their past and present predicaments. South Africa, apart from fulfilling the colonial nostalgia for Western powers, also serves as their important trading partner, hence, the latter's slipshod approach to ending the unequal existence of races in that country. That South Africa is "public enemy number one" on the

continent, is not to say that other inter-state intervenors go without condemnation. But such condemnations often lack the fury of expression, and come in isolated form due to the very mixed-up nature of politics on the continent. It may be argued that this is itself a colonial manifestation of having been ruled by various colonial powers, hence the slightly different approaches to issues affecting the continent.

Commenting on the issue of Western connection with South Africa, Mohammed Ayoob observes:

'The support extended to the white settler regimes, particularly of South Africa, by the great powers of the West, and particularly by the US until Washington's reassessment of its interests in southern Africa following the Portuguese revolution of 1974 and the subsequent decolonisation of Mozambique and Angola, has resulted in the exacerbation of the conflict by hardening white attitudes and by giving the settler regimes a false sense of security. These policies have also provided the Soviet Union with the opportunity (which is bound to increase as South African intransigence increases in the 1980s) to fish in the troubled African waters at minimum cost and risk to itself'.<sup>42</sup>

Since Ayoob's remark, the Liberation of former Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, has taken place, to add to the already emancipated territories of Mozambique and Angola in Southern Africa.

Suffice it to say that while the United States remains a major destabilising power in Africa, it may be argued that the United Kingdom is even more significant in her indirect destabilisation of the region. For instance, the British government has refused to impose 'full and comprehensive economic sanctions' against the apartheid regime in South Africa. Also, out of 34 British interventions all over the world between 1949 and 1970, 12 had occurred in 8 African States (Wingen & Tillema, 1980).<sup>43</sup> It is equally noteworthy that Britain turned to force more often than any other major nation, including either the United States or the USSR in the quarter century following World War II (Wingen & Tillema, 1980).<sup>44</sup>

Until the recent softening of attitude between the East and the West, and the consequent rapprochement between warring-factions in Southern Africa, the United States had achieved aspects of her covert programme (in the sub-region) - also known as "low intensity conflict" (LIC), or "low intensity war" (LIW) - through collaboration with South Africa on the one hand, and direct economic sanctions, on the other. Thus, it has been argued:

'Instead of placing any great emphasis on developing what might be termed a counter-hegemony, they seek, through induced economic hardship and the undermining of the people's sense of security, to wear down the population. By these means, too, they seek to render the target government vulnerable, if not necessarily to total collapse, at least to extortionate demands from outside and to a possible compromising of first principles'.<sup>45</sup>

John Saul had also remarked: 'No more unprecedented is the attempt, mounted on various fronts and at different levels, to undermine and destabilize established regimes that challenge global capitalist hegemony ...'<sup>46</sup> [For a more detailed discussion on the role of the US in Africa's conflicts, see Case Study on Angola: 'American Intervention'.].

Another important consideration in the OAU's lukewarm attitude towards interstate interventions (as opposed to extra-continental ones) is the 'external enemy syndrome', which is seen as a strong unifying force in a characteristically 'mixed-up' organisation. The 'external enemy mentality' provides a sense of oneness amongst members.

Lastly, the organisation tends to focus more on the external enemy rather than the internal offender because of the lack of discipline to condemn its members, least one party be offended and the other, pleased. This general apathy is reflective in most of the organisation's other transactions, to the point that the regional body is now referred to in some quarters as the 'toothless bull dog' and a 'paper tiger'. But like all other regional organisations with their peculiar problems, the OAU still manages to survive.

We will now consider the two aspects of intracontinental intervention, beginning with inter-state intervention.

Inter-State Military Intervention occurs on the continent when one African country meddles, militarily, in the affairs of another African state. An instance of this type of intervention was the entry made by Tanzania into Uganda's territory, finally leading to the overthrow of the Amin regime. The controversial dispute between both countries began with reports of Amin's troops invading Tanzania and announcing the annexation of the Kagera Salient on 30 October 1978, followed by a combined assault mounted by 20,000 Tanzanian soldiers, supported by Ugandan exiles on 21 February, 1979.

Article 3:2 of the principles of the OAU charter demands from members: 'non-interference in the internal affairs of states'; while Article 3:3 calls for: 'respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each state and for its inalienable right to independent existence'. The fourth clause under Article 3 urges: 'peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration'. (See Appendix for full charter stipulations). Remarkably, none of the above charter-demands were met by Tanzania, and as usual, the OAU failed to condemn in appropriate measure, Tanzania's violation of Uganda's sovereignty. Amin's earlier aggression against Tanzania (30 October 1978) was not condemned either by the organisation under the chairmanship of Numeiry of Sudan. Replying to Obasanjo's (the Nigerian leader) statement at the thirty-third session of the OAU Council of Ministers which met in Monrovia from 9 to 16 July 1979, the new Ugandan leader, Godfrey Binaisa urged: 'We must depart from the diplomatic habit of closing our eyes because the crime is committed by a fellow-African leader'.<sup>47</sup>

The consensus of opinion, summed up in President Tolbert's closing speech, was that, in future, the OAU would condemn 'both aggression and counter-aggression'.<sup>48</sup> President Tolbert further explained the OAU decision in an interview with 'New African' (September 1979) when he said,



'By "counter-aggression" is meant (when) one member-State - in retaliation for an act or acts of aggression against it by another member-State - violates its sovereignty and territorial integrity without calling the attention of the OAU to the aggression directed at it. Such an aggrieved State ought to seek mediation in whatever dispute exists. The OAU is authorized to mediate in cases involving disputes between member-States and to reconcile differences. The violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a member-State, for whatever reason, violates the charter of the OAU'.<sup>49</sup>

Let us now take a look at the second aspect of intra-continental military intervention, which is Internal M.I. It must be made clear that IMI is somewhat distinct from the rest of interventions in the sense that the main actors are essentially insiders. However, its contextual relevance lies in the fact that some IMI are known to have been planned and supported by outside powers who find the policies of the target State inimical to their national interest.<sup>50</sup>

Internal Military Intervention in Africa is when the military of one African State intervenes in the civilian politics of the same State, by either installing a new leader or taking over power themselves. Sometimes referred to as Coup d'etat, this type of intervention is quite common in Africa. For instance, in Nigeria alone, there have been five successful military take-overs since independence in 1960, its role and position as a leading African democracy notwithstanding.

As maintained in the early parts of the work, the two main aspects of intervention, and their sub-groups, are inextricably linked. For example, a significant number of coups in Africa have been alleged (and in some cases with proof) to have had external connections, in particular, with the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The Soviets, although more calculating, are also known to have assisted regimes in coming to power. Observes Sean MacBride:

'The CIA (in some instances in collaboration with the FBI) has acted in a manner that far exceeds its mandate as an intelligence-gathering agency. It has acted as a secret mafia engaged in assassinations, levying war in other countries, and organizing mercenary forces in order to overthrow lawfully established governments and to destabilize societies, governments, and organizations that did not meet with its approval. In most cases, the covert actions sponsored by the CIA had been intended to assist in setting up, or perpetuating the existence of, ruthless, corrupt, and antidemocratic dictatorships: Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Greece, Chile, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Brazil and the Argentine are examples. In many cases, covert actions that received the tacit or active support of the United States government were based on or influenced by erroneous or misleading assessments by the CIA. In devious ways, either through the 40 Committee or through manipulation of the organizations of government of the United States, the CIA led the United States into the adoption of indefensible foreign-policy pursuits'.<sup>51</sup>

Still on the method of US intervention, Philip Agee is of the view:

'There is no pretense of trying to "balance" this ... by describing similar, or different, activities of socialist nations. Although they may well employ clandestine operations, the frequency and depth of such activities have been modest in comparison with secret intervention by Western powers. Normally, socialist governments do not choose secrecy or pretexts for supporting a movement or government of their choice. Their assistance tends to be public, well-known, and without the stigma attached to political support, overt or covert, from the US and the former colonial powers'.<sup>52</sup>

As regards subversive activities in Africa, the CIA is not alone. There are others too, like the French (SDECE), British Secret Intelligence Service, Israel's (MOSSAD), and South Africa's (National Intelligence Service). According to Agee, '... their goals and methods differ little from those of the CIA ...'.

We could further create (as we have just done, connecting coup d'etat in Africa to the external machinations of the CIA and other similarly constituted bodies) a wide net-work of linkages in all four sub-groups as listed in the classification table. The above was, nevertheless, to serve as an example.

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, one could say that, 'intervention', while meriting a general definition because of its multi-faceted nature, more than urgently requires conciseness in our definition. Military intervention is only one of the several aspects of intervention, and is itself divided into at least, four parts. While we can say that in identifying our area of interest as military intervention, we are narrowing down what otherwise would have proved a much broader topic to discuss, we cannot at the expense of conciseness ignore the component parts of our main focus. Military intervention in Africa has, therefore, been classified under extra- and intra-continental incursions. Remarkably, coup d'etat is identified as an aspect of military intervention under the second main branch of intra-continental intervention. But if the operational definitions supplied by some practitioners, with emphasis on the crossing of national frontiers are to be accepted, then the inclusion of coup d'etat under our subject of investigation becomes discomforting. This is unfortunately so. But fortunately, intervention has been defined here not solely as an external happening, but internal as well. Interestingly, the internal-external correlation as far as the subject of intervention is concerned, is hard to dichotomise due to the inter-play of elements in both aspects. According to one official report:

'After some coups or attempted coups it has been suggested that the intervention of foreign or regional powers played a role. This intervention can take various forms: for example, the active presence of foreign soldiers in the country, economic pressure or infiltration of African armies by agents of the mother countries. Thus France would have played a role in the fall of President Hamani Diori in Niger and President Tombalbaye in Chad. Economic pressure by Western countries would have contributed to the overthrow of Nkrumah and of Modibo Keita. The case of Congo-Kinshasa, with the intervention against Lumumba, the secession of Katanga and the internationalization of the Katanga problem, is one of the rare cases in which there can be no doubt about the interference by foreign powers. In Idi Admin's coup we

find encouragement by Israel which was uneasy about the rapprochement between Uganda and Sudan sought by Milton Obote ... In other cases we cannot exclude foreign interference a priori, even if it is difficult to prove'.<sup>53</sup>

The dossier, published by the Pro Mundi Vita, (a Brussels-based Catholic organisation) further reveals: 'The major powers, particularly France, the USSR and the USA, dominate the African armies through a complex network of relationships. Principally these concern defence agreements, financial aid, technical military assistance, formation and training of military personnel, infiltration by agents of the mother country and the presence of troops and/or adviser'.<sup>54</sup>

France is even one step ahead of other Western bloc interventionists, given her military posture in non-civil war situations in Africa. For example, she is the only

'country that has maintained troops - some 10,000 - in Africa in bases in Gabon, Senegal, the Central African Republic and Djibouti; (this does not include its forces in the Departements d'Outre-mer and Territoires d'Outre-mer - DOM-TOM). France has signed (... over) half-a-dozen defence agreements (between 1960 and 1977) and 25 military cooperation agreements (between 1960 and 1979). About one thousand military advisers and technicians work in Africa, while more than 2,000 African military personnel have been trained in French military academies. [These are 1984 figures.] France's presence is located in the former French colonies, in Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi'.<sup>55</sup>

It could be argued here that coup d'etat in Africa, could among other internal motivating factors, be naturally influenced (i.e. planned, encouraged and supported) by the external powers having strong military presence and defence ties on the continent against African governments with policies perceived as hostile towards them. So while recognising the need for conciseness in our definition, we also feel compelled to identify the inter-dependent nature of elements in our subject of investigation, without over-burdening the former. Also, while recognising the crossing of national

frontiers as an important part of the definition, it does not, in itself, constitute a perimeter for measuring or deciding all interventionary acts. For as, earlier indicated, a State or other agents of intervention, could defy the territorial sovereignty and integrity of target States without necessarily carrying out a physical incursion. This, again, reduces the degree of validity for the absolute submission made on the "frontier argument".

Finally, while it is an established fact that African governments are highly resentful of and sensitive to external military interventions, especially those of subversive nature, they tend to show some understanding in certain kinds of intervention where the intervenor was invited in by the African State affected. (For details, see Appendix on Obasanjo's speech on 'External Intervention in Africa: The View from Africa'.)

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CHAPTER II  
ROOTS OF INTERVENTION IN AFRICA

'Time present and time past are both perhaps present in time future; And time future contained in Time past. If all time were eternally present, All time is unredeemable; What might have been is an abstraction remaining a perpetual Possibility in a world of speculations; what Might have been and what has been point to One end, which is always the present.'

- T.S. Elliot (The Fourth Quartet)

INTRODUCTION

The origins and causes of events have always been of central concern to political science practitioners. Not least within their focus is the subject of intervention.

In the classical sense, the origin of intervention in Africa dates back to the earliest penetration of the continent by the outside world. In the light of present day realities, however, intervention in Africa can best be examined from the 1950s, by which period a few African states had become independent. The cut-off period under consideration allows for legal claims to sovereignty by prospective target states in Africa, under the Law of Nations. The origin of intervention on the continent is not difficult to arrive at. However, more difficult to analyse are questions of causation. An examination of the causes of intervention in Africa will, therefore, be worthwhile.

ROOT CAUSES OF INTERVENTION IN AFRICA

The six cases of intervention examined in this study were all carried out against the back-drop of existing conflicts in the target states. To find out

the roots of intervention in Africa, therefore, we will have to search for the roots of conflict on the continent, since most interventions (but certainly not all) that have occurred on the continent were in periods of crisis or conflict. Outside of these periods, some interventions also occur in peace time, but for analytical purposes, we will limit ourselves to the former for brevity and conciseness. What then are the roots of major conflicts/crisis in modern Africa?

Conflict has been defined as 'a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals'.<sup>1</sup> Ivo Duchacek's rather philosophical elaboration on the above definition holds that, 'the inevitability of conflicts of interest and concepts among individuals and groups can perhaps be simply traced to the basic fact that humans are humans and therefore have necessarily different and conflicting views, emotions, preferences, and needs with regard to those values they deem, rightly or wrongly, to be in short supply'.<sup>2</sup> Along similar lines, Thomas Hobbes long ago remarked that 'man is wolf to man'. According to J. Thackrah:

'A crisis is one stage of the conflict, its distinguishing features include a sudden eruption of unexpected events caused by previous conflict. The characteristics of crisis are unanticipated surprise actions by the opponent; perception of great threat; perception of limited time to make a decision or response and perception of disastrous consequences from inaction. None of these events or perceptions is likely to occur unless there has been a preceding conflict'.<sup>3</sup>

Given the definition of conflict, one could say that it is an inevitable aspect of the contemporary society, of which Africa too has its share. African conflicts are of internal and external manifestation, which themselves, are inextricably interwoven. In other words, the internal factors that explain the spate of intervention on the continent, are themselves the by-products of some external consequences - sometimes erroneously ignored. If, therefore, we

were to conduct a systematic investigation into the root causes of intervention on the continent - most of which may seem endemically African - our investigation will tend to lead us to the earliest period of European and Arab arrivals on the continent, and the societal contradictions consequent on those visits.

Let us, first, consider the internal causes of intervention on the continent in their political, economic and social ramifications.

### POLITICAL CONDITIONS AND INTERVENTION

Politically, it could be said of the continent that the weak nature of governments greatly encourages intervention. Most African countries achieved independence between the mid-1950s and the late 1960s, and could therefore be said to be still undergoing a transitional period - especially, if compared with the longer established nation-states. For example, electioneering malpractices and the anti-democratic policies of some governments have on occasions led to mass protestations and general unrest by the people, <sup>often followed by a</sup> call for an end to the regimes. Such demands from the electorate are <sup>Some times</sup> resisted by desperate African leaders with threatened positions. They may then solicit external support to ensure continuity in office, irrespective of the mood of the generality. The intervening power may justify its position on the grounds that it was invited by the target state.

However, intervention in times of political instability is by no means limited to invitational entries as was the case when Libya intervened in Uganda on Amin's behalf to attempt to halt the Tanzanian advance, or when Senegal intervened in the Gambia in 1981 in support of President Jawara during an attempted coup d'etat to oust the president, but could also be witnessed between rival contiguous states when one side seizes the perceived

vulnerability of the other to attack. Tanzanian intervention in Uganda in 1979 partly as a result of the growing internal disorder in the latter, illustrates this point.

Weak African governments faced with pressing, and some times intractable, domestic problems, also carry out diversionary tactics from real issues through the effective projection of the "external enemy" image.

According to S. MacFarlane:

'Those suffering from internal instability are not only potential targets. They are also potential interveners, in that regimes often attempt to compensate for their incapacity to cope with pressing internal problems and for their illegitimacy in the eyes of their own publics by success in foreign policy. The Moroccan involvement in the Western Sahara is a case in point. One could also cite here the impact of Somalia's irredentist foreign policy in diverting the public's attention from successive regimes' failure to stimulate sustained development, the irrational and wasteful character of much of the country's economic planning, and the obvious inequities in allocation of public goods and distribution of rewards'.<sup>4</sup>

Nor do weak states' strategies end in diversionary intervention. Politically unstable states in Africa sometimes contain their fears and sense of insecurity by pre-empting on their long-standing rivals and other potential intervenors. The Ethiopian entry into Somalia as well as its support of Ansari dissidents in Sudan could be cited here. A country like South Africa, described by one author as a state 'on the fringe of the system'<sup>5</sup> because of its non-recognition by the OAU, ensures its relative safety from its unfriendly neighbours through counter-revolutionary activities aimed at destabilizing and discouraging target states from contemplating any actions that might prove inimical to the Pretoria government (John Saul, 1987). There have thus been many interventions by South Africa against Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Angola.

It is also worth mentioning that the spate of interventions on the continent may have been somewhat regularized because of the perceived low-

level risk arising from the absence of nuclear weapons (except, perhaps South Africa which is suspected of being a nuclear power) which has made the price of an attack less frightening. Intervenor states are therefore more confident in their 'Cost-Gain' calculations - either expecting an easy victory, or at the worst, a protracted but not terminal conflict.

While the low level of defence, and by implication, the absence of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons may help in explaining the incessant interventions on the continent, the phenomenon could also be explained from the point of view of some new regional powers that now display a willingness to employ their military power in furtherance of their perceived interests. Von Clausewitz succinctly put this as 'War is a continuation of politics by other means'. Similarly MacFarlane observes that the past decade has witnessed the emergence of a number of regional powers whose military (and in some cases economic) capacities far outstrip those of most States in the region. He cites Libya, Ethiopia, Algeria, Morocco, and Nigeria as examples of the military dimension of this imbalance. He argues that this differentiation in military capabilities renders it increasingly possible for these States to contemplate intervention in affairs of neighbouring States. For example, Libya has displayed a pronounced tendency to employ its new military power and the financial resources lying beneath it to acquire a position in regional affairs commensurate with its inflated self-image. Morocco has used its military capabilities to absorb the economically important sections of the Western Sahara and to take on the role of regional policeman in the Shaban crises. Algeria, meanwhile, has financed and provided sanctuary, training, and material to POLISARIO, which it uses as a proxy in resisting what it perceives to be Moroccan expansionism. Ethiopia has recently used force against Somalia in order to destabilize the Siad Barre regime, attempting to remove its principal subregional rival. Nigeria, finally,

recently deployed its forces in Chad, not only as a contribution to regional conflict resolution, but in order to influence the course of the Chadian conflict in a manner consistent with its national interest.<sup>6</sup>

Lastly, the frequency of intervention on the continent could be explained from the point of view of ideological bankruptcy. In the absence of a defined ideology, Africa seem to lack direction as reflected in the domestic and external politics of individual States. African states tend to shuttle between Western democratic concepts and Eastern socialist values: wanting to have the best of both worlds, and at the same time faced with the dilemma of wanting to excogitate and formulate national policies that could be described as authentically African. The totality of Africa's political experience may thus be described as tragic, given the contradictions inherent within the system and the response such contradictions receive from the masses. Apart from Tanzania, whose brand of socialism reflects aspects of Africa's cultural values as found relevant to its people, some professed socialist States in Africa, while not exhibiting traits of western democratic values in their systems, have strong economic links with the West that appear crucial for their survival. Angola is a case in point.

With respect to Libya, her brand of socialism is known for its strong religious influence and is therefore unique, compared with what obtains in both China and the Soviet Union. Islamic socialism as practised in Libya is a recent phenomenon. The picture is not quite clear, either, in the case of African adherents to Western-style democracy. In Nigeria for instance, parliamentary democracy, tailored after the British system, was tried out in the First Republic (1960-1966), while American-style federal democracy became the main feature of the Nigerian political system in the Second Republic (1979-1982). Both systems failed in the country. In fact, it was the failure of the political system tried in the First Republic that led to the fractricidal conflict

in 1967. The abortive experimentation with the federal democratic system was evidenced in what one Nigerian commentator had described as 'Lootocracy' (the syphoning of huge sums from Government treasury into private accounts both within and outside the country). The period was also characterised by a widening gap between the 'haves' and the 'have nots', bribery and corruption, sycophancy, nepotism and despotism, almost a state of anarchy before the military administration of Mohammadu Buhari came to power.

Faced with the bureaucratic inefficiencies, tribalism and general lawlessness that characterised the First Republic, and the gross misuse of power in the Second Republic, the Nigerian armed forces arrogated constitutional powers unto themselves, and ruled by decree between the two Republics. Today, the military are still in power in that country. But there have been coups and counter-coups under the military administration itself - thus suggesting that the best political system is yet to arrive in the country. The Nigerian conflict of 1967-1970 had attracted both intra- and extra-continental forces. [See the case study on Nigeria for a full discussion on external interventions in the Nigerian conflict.] Lately, nevertheless, there have been suggestions to the effect that a military-civilian diarchy be tried out. One of such proponents is the first Nigerian Governor-General and later, President, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe. Clearly, the degree of ideological bankruptcy and confusion manifested in Nigeria is reflective of several other African countries - Sierra-Leone, Liberia, Kenya, Uganda, Cameroons, etc. which like Nigeria, may be said to be undergoing an evolutionary period in their political culture. Also, in theory, African states are non-aligned, but in practice the reverse is the case. This situation may be said to leave Africa vulnerable to both the capitalist West and the communist East. It therefore becomes clear why interventions may easily occur on the continent. Unable to stand on their

own due to the absence of a clear ideological base and economic wealth and stability, most African States in search of economic, political and social well-being, drift between the East and the West, ending up not quite comprehending, and therefore embracing the tenets of both ideologies. The result at home is often chaos, and sometimes expressions of frustration through violent means by the population as a whole. The high-point of some such upheavals -especially where they affect desperate African leaders, is external military intervention. Ethiopia's flirtation, first with the United States, and later with the Soviet Union, is a case in point. That country, apart from facing an Eritrean secession bid, has a significant number of dissidents abroad who are opposed to the Derg leadership. Meanwhile, through Soviet assistance, the Derg leadership is able to pursue its territorial ambitions and effectively keep the insurgents at a safe distance. (As at February 1988, only the northern town of Nacfa was under the control of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front).

### ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND INTERVENTION

So far discussed are the internal causes of intervention from a political perspective. A look at the economic causes will be worthwhile.

Africa, though blessed with a favourable agricultural climate and rich in energy and mineral resources, has not much to show for these natural endowments, considering the average living standard on the continent.

According to one report:

'The continent's hydro-electric potential represents c. 40% of the world's total. Africa, which is the world's major source of diamonds, supplying in 1977 some 72% of the world's total product, is also the highest producer of gold, accounting for 54% of the total world output in 1977. African production of iron-ore is currently estimated at 8% of the world's total'.<sup>7</sup> The report further pointed out that: 'In 1978, Africa supplied 18% of the



world's copper and some 40% of its chrome-ore production. More than 50% of the world's known deposits of phosphate-bearing rocks are in Africa, and c. 35% of the world's assured reserves of uranium outside the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are located in Africa. Currently, Africa accounts for 15% of the world's oil production and total ultimate reserves, including undiscovered potential reserves, are estimated at some 170 bn barrels'.<sup>8</sup>

The report concluded that:

'The above catalogue of Africa's enormous wealth in natural resources contrasts sharply with the fact that today she is virtually the poorest continent in terms of development. Currently, Africa's GNP accounts for only 2.7% of the world's total. At \$365, Africa has the lowest average annual per capita income in the world. Due largely to an urban-orientated development policy, underemployment and unemployment have reached alarming figures and now affect some 45% of the active population'.<sup>9</sup>

Almost along a similar line, MacFarlane observes that, at present, almost two-thirds of the States falling into the World Bank's "Low income" (per capita income less than \$370 a year) category are African. GNP growth per capita for Sub-Saharan Africa (including rapidly growing countries such as Nigeria, Ivory Coast, and Kenya, but excluding South Africa) was .8 percent per year in the 1970s, down from 1.3 percent in the previous decade.<sup>10</sup>

Sub-Saharan African countries (excluding South Africa) witnessed a fall in the volumes of exports between 1970 and 1980 at an annual rate of 1.6 percent. Added to this was the negative shift of approximately 8 percent for African oil importers in 1978-1980. Despite some good years for mineral exporters, their terms of trade dropped between 1970 and 1979 by an average of 7.1 percent annually. The oil glut of the early '80s had also left a softening effect on African oil exporters such as Gabon, Angola and Nigeria. The overall financial consequences of these trends are not encouraging. According to MacFarlane: 'current account deficits in the region climbed from \$1.5 billion in 1970 to \$8 billion in 1980. External indebtedness went from \$6 billion to \$32 billion between 1970 and 1979. The situation has, if anything, deteriorated further since 1979'.<sup>11</sup>

Donald Spark's recent report updates the economic situation on the continent. According to the report, most sub-Saharan economies declined during the 1970s and early 1980s. Per capita income declined by more than 12%, in real terms, between 1970 and 1985. In some of the continent's least developed countries, such as Chad and Niger, the decline was perhaps 30% or more. The poorer countries of Africa are even poorer in 1987 than they were at their independence in the 1960s. Africa lost the ability to feed itself during the 1980s: in 1974 it imported 2.56m metric tons of cereals, but by 1984 the annual total had risen to 5.19m metric tons, more than double the 1974 amount. Food aid also increased during that period, from 0.79m metric tons to 2.08m metric tons of cereals.<sup>12</sup>

Sparks further revealed that by 1984, sub-Saharan Africa's external debt had approached \$80,000m, compared with about \$44,000m in 1980 and a mere \$6,000m in 1970. The 1984 total represents almost 50% of the region's combined gross national product (GNP) for that year. Africa's ability to service these debts has been hampered by severe falls in foreign exchange earnings. Additionally, after nearly two decades of annual increases in net foreign financial flows (including concessionary economic assistance), these flows had levelled off by 1987, and had actually begun to decline. The decreases have resulted from fewer and smaller private-sector foreign direct investments and commercial bank lending, together with decreased levels of aid (in real terms) from traditional Western and multilateral donors. For example, Sub-Saharan Africa received \$5,280m in official development assistance in 1980, and \$5,500m in 1984 (in current US dollars). The 1984 amount would be some 16% less in real US dollar terms. According to the World Bank, total net public flows to Africa declined from a 'high' of \$8,150m in 1982 to \$2,730m in 1984.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, Africa's poor economic position in the periods mentioned up to mid-1989 has been as a result of the severe falls in

foreign exchange earnings and the attempts by some governments to service their external debt well beyond practical limits. A decrease in Western aid has added to the continent's ailing economic situation.

Other factors affecting economic decline on the continent include rapid population growth and urbanization, natural disasters (such as droughts or floods), and the absence of satisfactory human and physical infrastructure. Inappropriate public economic policies, combined with mismanagement, official corruption and the neglect of the agricultural sector may also explain the poor economic trends on the continent.

Although there have been improvement in the area of health services and education in the past 30 years, their levels remain the lowest in the world.

As a result of their countries' generally poor economic performances, African governments have been coming under increasing pressure to 'liberalize' their public economic policies. The most direct pressure came from the IMF in the form of 'conditionality' for its support during the 1970s and early 1980s.

Newer and perhaps stronger pressures are now coming from the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the World Bank. The result is: more people have become increasingly dissatisfied with their declining standard of living and the poor economic performance in their own countries. Most African polities could therefore be said to be rife with instability, as present economic conditions there may force general unrest, which in turn may compel the leaders to seek external support.

### SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND INTERVENTION

Interventions on the continent are also rooted in some social factors. These may be identified as ethnic rivalries, religious tensions and differences

in educational achievements. According to MacFarlane, the profound causes of communal conflict in Africa lie to some extent in ethnic and religious differences which predate the colonial period. Using Chad as an example, he pointed out that before the French arrived, Chadian Arabs had for centuries raided black Sara villages in the south for slaves, while the Toubous of northern Chad habitually raided Arab trans-Saharan caravans. He said the arbitrary character of the colonial frontiers established in the late 19th century in many cases exacerbated these tensions or created new ones, by lumping together rival groups in single polities and by splitting ethnic groups between jurisdictions leaving innumerable potential irredenta. He cited the inclusion of large Arab and black populations in the Sudan, and the combination of Hausa and Ibo in Nigeria. Also, the Kikongo desire to reestablish the precolonial kingdom of Bakongo out of portions of South Western Zaire and northern Angola or the Somali designs on Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibuti were mentioned as examples of irredentist revisionism stemming from the splitting of single ethnic groups.<sup>14</sup>

The above submission on the raids on black Sara villages by Chadian Arabs in the pre-colonial era has, however, failed to recognise the fact that the raids were carried out by Chadian Arabs, which once again establishes the external linkage to the nature of Africa's conflicts. MacFarlane, nevertheless, established in his 1984 compilation on military interventions in Africa that, of the eleven venues of intervention between 1974 and the date of his publication,<sup>15</sup> nine of the eleven cases were linked to ethnic rivalries. But a 1985 dossier by Pro Mundi Vita<sup>16</sup> is critical about the inferences made from ethnicity in the study of African States. According to the report, several observers regard Africa as a human mosaic in which races and sub-races, languages and religions exist side by side or are mixed or superimposed. It contends that the present frontiers, inherited from the colonial era, bear no

relation to the geographical distribution of ethnicity or of tribes. The submission was further made that colonization has exacerbated pre-existing divisions by favouring one tribe or one ethnic group over the others. Because peaceful cohabitation has thus been undermined, we are confronted with conflicts that may lead to opposition between groups within a country, to civil wars and to inter-state conflicts.<sup>17</sup>

The report further claims that approaching the study of African societies in this manner yields to the facileness of the systematic, uncritical repetition of colonial ethnology and overlooks the deep social change which has taken place.<sup>18</sup>

While not denying the ethnic factors, the report stresses that it should be placed within a wider explanatory context and its complexity and fluidity should be taken into account as opposed to presenting African societies as "fixed", "a-historical" realities. Furthermore, the present "so-called" ethnic conflicts were described as a false archaism which hides the very concrete social reality of competing interests and prestige which divide the ruling urban class.<sup>19</sup>

Concluding, the report states that:

'ethnicity serves as a filter through which class struggle passes. Ethnicity is not an explanation in itself: it is a variable on which other factors depend. Ethnic affirmations are the sign of other revindications which are essentially more modern; they blend with economic, social or political aims which, in origin, have nothing to do with the ethnic factor itself. The ethnic "reference", however, has repercussions and confers exceptional power on such aims (Nicolas)'.<sup>20</sup>

A 'cover story' in the African Concord shares the same view in its comments on Nigeria:

'So far as some Nigerians are concerned, the issue of domination is of class rather than ethnic character. The elite class fans the ember of disunity whenever its selfish interests are endangered. Thus, it should not have surprised anyone to hear Alhaji Shehu Shagari appealing to his Fulani peoples in 1983 not to vote for any

Southern 'infidel' who, if elected, would impose Christianity on them. Nor should anyone have been dismayed by Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe's attempt to whip up Igbo solidarity for himself when he had a tax problem with the Federal Electoral Commission (FEDECO) in 1979'.<sup>21</sup>

African politics is as broad and diverse as the peoples that make up the continent. It will therefore be misleading to pick out a single idea as explaining its complex political processes. It is true that bourgeois ranks exist in Africa, but to talk about an elitist understanding that transcends ethnicity or tribal lines does ignore certain fundamental realities in the socio-political structure of the continent. It was therefore not a surprise when the Ivorian president situated the multi-million dollar 'ghost city' in his home village in a manner of no immediate and practical economic benefit to the people of the Ivory Coast. Nor has it come as a surprise that oil pipe-lines have had to be lain from the Southern oil termini in the Bendel and Rivers states of Nigeria to the Northern city of Kaduna against the logic of economics; cost and location-wise. Petroleum refineries are best located in the region the oil is found for economic expediency. So, the ethnic factor, perhaps while not explaining it all, remains a strong factor in some unrests witnessed on the continent.

Thus Anthony Akinola observes: 'The twin issues of ethnicity and religion are dominant in Nigerian politics. While ethnicity has always remained potent, it is religion which represents a new danger to the stability of the nation. Nigeria is a multi-religious State, in which Christianity and Islam are predominant'.<sup>22</sup>

The tacit compliance of the colonial administration to northern demands had brought about religious polarisation, which in turn resulted in an unequal educational development in the country. In Nigeria, during the second republic of 1979-1983, a Modus Vivendi was sought between the two religions by an act

of ticket-balancing among the presidential and vice-presidential candidates of the political parties. It became a practice that if a political party chose a Christian as its presidential candidate, the vice-presidential candidacy went to a Muslim'.<sup>23</sup> But this delicate religio-political balance soon had its first dent, with the Maitatsine insurrections of the 1980s.

The Maitatsine sect is a group of Islamic fundamentalists opposed mainly to corruption and therefore seeks a return to what they consider to be a purer form of the religion. Illegal immigrants from neighbouring countries have added to the strength of the group.

The sect went on their first campaign in Nigeria in December 1980, resulting in the death of hundreds of people in Kano after clashes with the police and army. Sect members and ordinary Nigerians who had either resisted conversion or shown apathy fell victim to the pogrom led by the jihadists. 'In spite of the ruthless response to the sect's wanton destruction, further outbreaks of violence took place in Maiduguri, Yola and Gombe between 1982 and 1985'.<sup>24</sup> But the Maitatsine insurrection was not strictly directed against Christians. Nigerians of all faith were affected. However, it was the March 1987 disturbances in the northern States, mainly in Kaduna, that have posed the greatest threat to the existing unity and stability of the country.

'The contentious nature of religion vis-a-vis the country's north-south divide has been exemplified on two recent occasions. President Shagari received hostile opposition from Christians when, in 1983, he was about to establish a Department of Islamic Affairs in his presidency. Similarly, the Babangida administration was taken to task over its decision to take Nigeria to the organisation of Islamic Conference in January 1986'.<sup>25</sup>

Although erroneously interpreted, the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970) was described in some quarters, outside of the continent, as a religious strife. Yet while the country has not yet engaged in a civil strife having its roots in religion, Nigeria has been at the periphery of one, but for the timely intervention of the Babangida Administration in March 1987.

The case of Nigeria was especially cited to avoid an otherwise extensive appraisal on all African states where religious tensions have paved the way for external interventions. MacFarlane is of the view that 'Cross-frontier ethnic or religious affinities provide both opportunity and justification (however spurious) for military intrusions by contiguous States'.<sup>26</sup> '... The militant Pan-Islamic policy of Colonel Qaddafi - the behavioural manifestations of which are the repeated invasions of Chad, the sponsorship of subversion in Tunisia, Senegal and Nigeria, and the defense of Idi Amin ...'<sup>27</sup> speak for themselves. The ongoing war in Sudan also has some religious undertone (no matter how peripheral) as the Christian South engages the Muslim North in a liberation struggle.

#### THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE MAJOR EXTERNAL POWERS IN AFRICA

We have so far tried to trace the internal causes of intervention in Africa. We will now identify the external factors that explain intervention on the continent.

Outside of their national borders, States pursue their interests in line with their foreign policy objectives. In post-independence Africa, the countries that have made the most impact with regard to external military intervention are France, the USA and the USSR. Their interests in the region have been influenced by geo-political, economic and social considerations. We will take a brief look at their respective foreign policies, and subsequently identify the factors that have made them pursue such policies.

The traditional French conception of a dynamic foreign policy for a medium power is built on the country's ability to project itself in exclusive regions of influence beyond the reach of the superpowers. That 'the maintenance of influence in the francophone African states has been directly



linked to the French need for "rayonnement" (or 'glory'),<sup>28</sup> is therefore not surprising.

France is connected to her former African colonies by what some writers<sup>29</sup> have identified as instrumental, strategic and affective linkages. The instrumental linkage concerns the exchange of goods and services. In other words, it is a type of relationship that dwells exclusively in the economic realm. The strategic linkage involves the opening up and running of military bases in the former territories. In times of crisis, France can easily mobilize and deploy her African forces to troubled spots before the arrival of her national interventionary forces. France's affective linkage with her former territories is about co-existence through a common culture. This form of linkage is further eviden<sup>ced</sup><sub>A</sub> in the type of colonial policy France maintained in her ex-territories which was based on assimilation. For the French, it was important that their former African subjects shared the same cultural values as themselves.

Based on the above considerations, France has repeatedly intervened in her former African territories - almost seeing it as her inherent right to do so. The official French explanation for her incessant interventions on the continent is based on three arguments, viz: the 'demonstration', 'domino', and 'power vacuum' arguments.

According to the demonstration argument, France needs to demonstrate to her ex-colonies her full commitment to them militarily and otherwise. She needs to establish credibility and confidence in these States. The domino argument states that if France fails to act, insurgents in troubled spots may win, and this could further encourage other insurgents. According to the power vacuum argument, should France fail to clearly mark out her sphere of influence, other powers might move in and take control. Soviet and Arab manoeuvres are particularly feared in respect of the Francophone countries.

Unlike France, the United States has no clear African policy. It was not until the mid-1970s that the US looked towards Africa in a bid to put right its image before the international community, as well as establish credibility amongst its people at home, following its Vietnam debacle. Even so, a clearly articulated and consistent American policy on Africa is not yet apparent, there being a number of elements involved.

Chester Crocker describes the US position on Africa thus:

'apart from its brief venture into African grand strategy in conjunction with the British during World War II, the United States has never considered itself an African power in military or strategic terms. Throughout the period of African strategic decolonization, Washington has been at pains to point out that the region was of primary interest (and responsibility) to the European ex-metropoles; its sole direct military involvement during the 1960s occurred within the framework of the international effort to support the territorial integrity of Congo-Kinshasa (Zaire). Principal exceptions to this pattern have been the US military facilities maintained in the Mediterranean States of Morocco and Libya (until the overthrow of King Idris), and in Ethiopia, (before the incumbent military regime of Col. Mengistu Hail Mariam) where major communications and intelligence related facilities have been based. In Liberia, air staging and communications are available to the United States under agreements dating back to the 1940s'.<sup>30</sup>

Also, the conclusion of a major review on American policy toward Southern Africa (NSSM<sub>39</sub>) ordered by the Nixon Administration in 1969 was that African liberation movements in the former Portuguese territories were not 'realistic or supportable' alternatives to continued colonial rule. A black victory at any stage in these territories was ruled out.

But with the Angolan independence on 11 November 1975, and the subsequent invitation of Cuban forces to the newly independent country, American concern for the region developed rapidly. The Cubans were seen as Soviet proxies, and their presence in Angola was considered to be as threatening as in the other regions, like the Horn of Africa, where the Soviets have also manifested their presence. As a 'save-face' move after their

Vietnam experience, the United States sided with one of Angola's warring factions - the FNLA. And once again, faced with increased FNLA losses, the US then allied with South Africa against Angola (notwithstanding the international implications of their action) in the name of stemming the spread of communism. (For a detailed discussion, see the Case Study on Angola under sub-heading: American Intervention.)

Today, what may be called the US African policy is considerably bent towards the containment of communism, and is expected to be achieved through geo-political and economic strategies.

Concerned about the possible proliferation of Marxist governments in Africa, the United States adopted, in the 1970s, a carefully worked out destabilization programme against some African states like Angola and Mozambique to undermine any such effort or contemplation. Morocco, Kenya, Zaire and Sudan are among the few African allies of the United States. (John Saul's paper on US destabilizing role in the Third World touched extensively on her clandestine policies in Africa.<sup>31</sup> American destabilization of African States was also briefly discussed in this work in the section under: 'Intervention Considered Within an African Context'.)

External relations between the United States and African countries is by no means limited only to geo-politics. There are aspects that concern the socio-economic and cultural realms between the two continents. Aspects of this relationship are achieved through the African-American Institute that arranges for US sponsored educational and cultural exchanges between the two continents. The Institute's programme includes scholarship schemes to qualified Africans to pursue further studies in the US. There are also arrangements with some African states for US teaching assistance in secondary schools. The US also grants aid packages and technical assistance to certain African countries.

Although national interest is paramount in all foreign policy pursuits by nations, Soviet foreign policy drive in Africa appears to be less complicated, more open, and therefore easily definable than the United States'.

According to one account, the Soviet Union considers the poverty of the Third World as the outcome of past Western exploitation and the responsibility for improving depressed economic conditions therefore rests with the West. Soviet aid to Third World nations has been minimal, amounting to an annual average of 0.05 percent of its GNP as compared to 0.33 percent for the Western donor countries. Putting the blame for the state of the Third World on the West, the Soviet Union sees its responsibility rather as one of restraining "imperialism".<sup>32</sup> The Soviets achieve their anti-imperialist stance in Africa through solidarity with liberation groups. As a Soviet principle and significant part of its foreign policy in developing States, anti-imperialism dates back to the early days of the Bolshevik rule.

With particular reference to the South, Alex Schmid has divided Soviet policy in the postwar period into the Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev periods:

'In the first period interest in the Third World was small and so was actual involvement. In the second period, interest was big but the logistics of military power projection were insufficient to make a real impact and words outran deeds under Khrushchev. In the third period the Soviet Union acquired the necessary air- and seallift capacity to intervene decisively in local Third World conflicts and it also had the political will to show its muscle, taking advantage of the American foreign policy paralysis in the wake of Vietnam and Watergate'.<sup>33</sup>

Post World War II reconstruction efforts in the Soviet Union and the consolidation of its influence in the occupied territories of Southern and Central Europe left Stalin too occupied to think of Soviet involvement in both the colonial territories and newly emergent States. A partial link was, however, made with independence movements in some Southern states in 1947 with the founding of the Cominform and the adoption, under Stalin, of the

"two-camp theory": an internationalist, democratic socialist camp versus capitalist, imperialist, nationalist camp. Without Soviet assistance, this device which sought to raise an opposition from the newly formed communist movements against the national bourgeoisie with whom they had struggled for independence, failed.

Against its official position of anti-Semitism, the Soviets supported the creation of the State of Israel in 1947/48 and provided the Haganah clandestinely with Czech weapons. According to Schmid, 'the Israeli arms deal of 1948 marked the opening of a channel of influence which was to play a major role in the years to come. Providing arms to those who were denied arms from the West became an important hallmark of Soviet foreign policy in the Third World'.<sup>34</sup>

In Africa, this trend began with the abortive Egyptian effort to secure US arms and their subsequent resort to the East where a \$250 million arms agreement was reached in February 1955. In return for 100 MiG 15 and MiG 17 jet fighters, 45 Ilyushin-28 bombers, two destroyers, submarines, torpedo boats, tanks, artillery and ammunition, Egypt traded in cotton and rice.

With Stalin's "two camps" doctrine already seen as a failure, and decolonization struggles on the increase in Stalin's era, a new Soviet strategy for the South was worked out under Khrushchev. 'The new Soviet leader developed a "two zones" doctrine. The "zone of peace" included the peaceloving communist countries and the nonaligned Third World nations, while the "war zone" was reserved for the Western imperialists'.<sup>35</sup>

The main Soviet military policy towards 'small states' under Khrushchev (1955-1965) evolved around weapons supply. To avoid Western opposition or countermeasures, the Soviet leader pursued this policy clandestinely and through third parties. Reportedly, various intermediaries were involved in the

Remarkably, 'under Khrushchev, the Soviet Union sent no Soviet troops abroad into a Third World nation for combat, though he had threatened with "volunteers" during the Suez crisis. Only in the case of Cuba a relatively large number of troops was sent for defensive purposes. Intervention requests like those of Nasser in 1956 or Lumumba in 1960 were declined ...'.<sup>40</sup>

The most decisive phase in Soviet African policy was perhaps witnessed in the Brezhnev era (1965-1980s). According to Schmid, the first ten years of the Brezhnev period witnessed a continuation of the pattern established under his predecessors. There were two differences, however. First, arms supplies were no longer linked to ideological affinities. The new recipients of Soviet weapons in the Brezhnev period included nations as diverse as Pakistan, Iran, South Yemen, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Cyprus, Uganda, Mauretania and Congo-Brazzaville. Second, since the mid-1970s Soviet military initiatives became markedly bolder - notably in Africa.<sup>41</sup>

In respect of her involvement in the South, the Soviet Union has never instigated a government in Africa to alter the political map of the continent through redrawing border lines. It has consistently respected the policy of the Organization of African States which regards the borders drawn by the colonial powers as permanent. In accordance, it has generally supported the central governments where secessionist movements have been active, such as in Biafra or in Eritrea.<sup>42</sup> According to one report:

'In addition, the Soviet Union has given support (to) liberation movements who were opposing established Western powers and their African clients. Until the collapse of the Portuguese colonial empire in 1974 and the overthrow of the pro-Western emperor Haile Selassie in Ethiopia - events wherein the Soviet Union had no part - Soviet support for African liberation movements has been modest. Support went to the movements aiming at the elimination of white supremacy in Namibia (SWAPO) and Rhodesia (ZANU, ZAPU), to the rebels in Angola (MPLA), Mozambique (Frelimo) and Guinea-Bissau (PAIGC) and to a few others (ANC in South Africa, Frolinat in Chad, Polisario in the former Spanish Sahara). Support also went to governments in power opposing Western influence. These governments were also recipients of East German and Cuban military advisers and training personnel'.<sup>43</sup>

The total strength of Soviet military personnel in Africa in the early 1980s was 7,830 - constituting a little above one third its total 21,800 personnel abroad, excluding 95,000\* Soviet troops in Afghanistan and the 584,000 stationed in Eastern Europe.<sup>44</sup>

We have so far examined the foreign policies of France, the United States, and Soviet Union in relation to Africa. As earlier claimed, the foreign policies of these nations are influenced by geo-political, economic and social factors. The same reasons explain why they intervene in Africa.

The geo-political explanations for external military intervention in Africa lie in strategic arguments. First, is the contemporary role of military power in international politics. Since the big powers have various vested interests in Africa, it is equally of interest to them to protect these concerns. According to Holst, it has become more readily apparent than ever in the nuclear age that military forces exist not solely for the purpose of inflicting damage upon enemies; they may also be used as a threat to buttress bargaining in diplomacy or as a means of communicating one's intentions to potential adversaries. In 1938, Hitler invited the chief of the French air force, General Joseph Vuillemin, to inspect the Luftwaffe and to witness a demonstration of precision bombing by high-altitude dive bombers. The ploy was effective, as Vuillemin, terrified by the impressive display of German air power, became a leading exponent of appeasing German demands against Czechoslovakia.<sup>45</sup> Military "maneuvers" near frontiers, putting military units on "alert" status, and the deployment of forces - even small symbolic units - in a conspicuous manner have frequently been used to add credibility to one's diplomacy.<sup>46</sup>

A second reason why the Big Powers intervene militarily in African conflicts may be explained from the point of view of their broader security needs of acquiring military posts/bases around the globe. By helping one side to victory in an internal conflict, Big Power war-effects may be rewarded in kind via the provision of bases to meet their geo-strategic needs.

According to one report:

'The importance of the Third World to the superpowers is (...) underlined by the fact that it offers bases and installations which help to sustain the strategic competition. In a sense, the Third World provides much of the infra-structure for superpower navies, and thereby helps to perpetuate a naval rivalry which stems not only from the widespread deployment of ballistic missile submarines but also from the desire to "show the flag". Once the bases are established, maintaining access to them becomes almost an end in itself, and the superpowers are made even more sensitive to any shift of alignment by the host nation'.<sup>47</sup>

In the case of France, three large zones of strategic commitment in Africa were carved out in the 1960s. These were: The Indian Ocean (which included Madagascar and Djibouti); Central Africa (comprising the ex-West and Central African French colonies), and the Pacific area. Military commands were organized to take the strategic unity of each of these areas into account.<sup>48</sup> The Central African Zone was itself divided into three -Zones d'Outre-Mer (ZOM) - with headquarters at Dakar, Abidjan and Brazzaville. The Indian Ocean ZOM had its headquarters in Tananarive. Throughout Black Africa and in Madagascar the French maintained five categories of military facilities at the time of decolonization: principal bases at which elements of all three branches of the armed forces were stationed; intermediate bases which allowed the French to move comfortably around the continent; replacement bases which could be built up if a principal base were lost; security garrisons which were established on an ad hoc basis, and places where staging rights were automatically granted. The most important principal bases were at Djibouti, Dakar, Diego Suarez and Fort Lamy (now Ndjamena) but those at Port Bouet (Ivory Coast), Libreville (Gabon) and Bangui (CAR) were also significant. In 1960 there were over 100 French garrisons in Black Africa and Madagascar, ....<sup>49</sup> Today, French forces still stationed in Africa include the 23rd BIMA in Senegal, 43rd BIMA in the Ivory Coast and the 6th BIMA in Gabon. There are also French garrisons in the Central African Republic (in



Bangui and Bouar) and marine infantry troops in Djibouti where '3,250 French military personnel are staying (...) to train the (country's) small force structure'.<sup>50</sup> 'Its economy and defence (are) being underwritten in exchange for basing rights for France's Indian Ocean naval forces'.<sup>51</sup>

Like the ill-defined US overall African policy, American geo-strategic interest in Africa is of a somewhat obfuscated and transient nature.

The United States was the first of the two major powers to arrive on the African Scene and had by 1953 acquired the lease of the Kagnew base for 25 years. 'The utility of the Kagnew Communications Centre near Asmara, in Eritrea', was in strengthening American 'control of the Red Sea Coast considered to be vital to Israel's security ... particularly in the southern seaward approaches to Israel'.<sup>52</sup> The functions of this base were transferred to America's newly established facility in Diego Garcia in the mid-1970s - but before the 1978 expiration of the lease.

The conclusion of a major US Congressional Study of military installations in 1979 stated that, the United States has few essential security interests in Africa South of the Sahara, except the shipment of Persian Gulf oil through the Indian Ocean and access to strategic minerals in Southern Africa. And even in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean, it argued, ... the salient feature ... seems to be the relatively small direct utility of military bases and facilities to US objectives, but the large indirect significance of the broader military relationship, including bases and facilities, a naval presence and extensive foreign military sales, training and technical assistance, to US goals. The observation was made that for the immediate future, the symbolic aspects of the US presence seem more important than the actual military capabilities which the US possesses in the region. According to the report, the true locus of US power - which can if necessary be brought to bear in the region - lies at some distance, principally at Guam and Subic Bay.

It is known, however, that the US has military facilities in Sudan, Liberia, Kenya and Zaire to protect her interests both within the continent and in its peripheral regions. Indeed, the acquiring of these facilities by the US may be seen as part of the East/West rivalry aimed at protecting America's geo-strategic interests, no matter how little (and in the case of the Horn) vital Western trade routes in the Indian Ocean. In Zaire, the US's newly acquired base is said to be for counter-insurgency against groups opposed to Zaire and the mineral-rich republic of S. Africa. Counter-insurgency is one unambiguous aspect of US African policy.

It must be made clear that unlike the French and the 'Cuban-Soviet military presence in Africa, the United States has no stand-by interventionary forces there (she only arms groups opposed to some established African governments), but the presence alone of its military facilities on the continent is enough to meet its strategic calculations for the region. A US military presence on the continent in the form of regular combatant forces, would in any case have attracted attention and resentment from African governments. US apathy towards the decolonization process in Africa as well as her arming of ultra-right counter-revolutionary groups does not make the prospects bright enough for the stationing of US forces on African soil. Domestic opposition may also constrain any such moves.

Soviet internationalist drive is well entrenched in Ethiopia, Mozambique and Angola. In fact, Moscow's Africa policy has since the arrival of Admiral Sergei Gorshkov (the architect of modern Russian Navy) assumed a more radical, though still cautious posture: one which aims for naval facilities all around the coast of Africa. Colin Legum relates this development to the emergence of the Soviet Union as a world naval power for the first time in its history which in turn created new strategic interests for Moscow in obtaining naval facilities in all major oceans. According to Legum, Moscow has three

objectives: first, to be capable of effective defensive reaction to any new threat of strategic superiority by the Western alliance; second, to develop its ocean and air supply routes around, and across, the African oceans as well as to develop its communication lines through the Red Sea to the Indian subcontinent in order to contain what Moscow sees as a deadly threat from China; third, to enlarge the Soviet sphere of political and economic influence. He said it would require nothing short of a major reversal of Gorshkov's strategy for the Soviets to lose interest in any of these areas. But a full naval commitment, on the other hand, may prove too costly for Moscow both politically and economically. Nevertheless, the importance Moscow gives to this aspect of its policy is verified by the bold and imaginative gamble it took in the Horn of Africa in the 1960s and 1970s. In pursuit of Gorshkov's strategy, the Russians agreed in the early 1960s to train and equip the Somali Army in exchange for obtaining naval facilities at Berbera on the Red Sea.<sup>53</sup>

Another geo-political explanation for external military intervention in Africa, especially with particular reference to the superpowers, may lie in their attempts to avoid a direct confrontation. MacFarlane has stated that: 'In accounting for the increasing frequency of intervention in the region, a number of external factors are of great importance, most notably the transfer of superpower competition in the period of detente to the periphery of the international system ...'.<sup>54</sup> The same view point has been put across by Sisir Gupta as:

'The very stability of the global power balance and the determination of the Great Powers to avoid a confrontation [which] makes them prone to seek lower levels of conflict and less dangerous ways of conducting their rivalries, which, in effect, means a concerted attempt to confine their conflicts to problems that impinge on them less directly and to localize them in such areas as are far removed from the areas where their vital interests are involved. To fight out their battles in the Third World is one way of ensuring that their own worlds are not touched by their conflicts and that they retain a greater measure of option to escalate and de-escalate their conflicts according to the needs of their relationships'.<sup>55</sup>

Apart from the desire to locate the battlefield far from their home-land, Schmid holds the view that Big Power competition in distant lands enables the powers to try out some of the latest weapons in their arsenal.

'The Third World nations have become the testing ground of the weapons for the northern medium and great powers. The local instability and the fluid character of regional power constellations has invited great power interference and rivalry in the new nations. The East-West confrontation is, in a way, fought out in the Third World and a major goal of the superpowers appears to be to deny access to each others' client States'.<sup>56</sup>

Since the outcome of a direct confrontation of regular combatant troops from Moscow and Washington still remains unthinkable, the only possible outlet for their 'muscle flexing' is in arming opposing sides in wars fought in the South. This method is by no means exclusive to the superpowers. As Ali Mazrui has pointed out:

'There has certainly been a change from the old days of Pax Britannica. Whereas the old imperial motto was "Disarm the natives and facilitate control", the new imperial cunning has translated it into 'Arm the natives and consolidate dependency'. While the British and the French once regarded it as important to stop 'tribal warfare', they now regard it as profitable to modernize 'tribal warfare' - with lethal weapons'.<sup>57</sup>

Although inseparable from geo-political considerations, ideological advancement may be forwarded as a strong precipitating factor for superpower intervention in Africa. In the words of one observer of the international scene:

'Each superpower regards itself as the repository of all virtue and sees the adversary not only as the repository of evil but as the main obstacle to the spread of virtue. This contributes significantly to a conception of their relationship as a zero sum conflict in which geo-political gains for the other side are automatically translated into losses for oneself.<sup>58</sup> This is also underlined by the fact that "the war between Communism and democracy does not respect national boundaries. It finds enemies and allies in all countries, opposing the one and supporting the other regardless of the niceties of international law. Here is the dynamic force which has led to the two superpowers to intervene all over the globe, sometimes surreptitiously, sometimes openly,

sometimes with the accepted methods of diplomatic pressure and propaganda, sometimes with the frowned-upon instruments of covert subversion and open force'.<sup>59</sup>

Africa, as the richest supplier of the world's raw material needs, is of much importance to the Big powers, although 'the Western nations (...) have a much higher economic stake in the Third World than the Soviet Union and its allies'.<sup>60</sup> Therefore, when the Big Powers intervene in Africa, part of the reason why they do so is to protect their vital economic interests.

Soviet economic transactions with Africa lies mostly in the area of arms deal. There has also been a rise in the level of recent transactions. For instance, Soviet arms sales to sub-Saharan Africa increased significantly in the 1970s, amounting to four times as much for the whole decade as American arms sales. From a level of \$90 million in 1974 military deliveries rose to a value of \$1.2 billion in 1978. Eighteen countries in black Africa were recipients of Soviet arms, among them Angola, Benin, Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Somalia, Upper Volta, and Uganda. Sometimes these arms were traded rather than sold: in the case of Mali and Congo-Brazzaville the arms served as payment for aircraft landing rights and in the case of Somalia and Guinea-Bissau they were given in exchange for naval facilities.<sup>61</sup>

In the case of France, the type of 'instrumental linkage' established between Paris and Francophone Africa explains the mutuality of commercial interest between the two blocs. According to reports: 'Though the numbers involved are not high, it is noteworthy that the francophone States still import between 40-60% of their goods and services from the ex-metropole, and that Africa as a whole is the only major geographical region where France is consistently able to show a trade balance surplus. Africa also provides France with a substantial amount of her raw materials. Nearly all France's uranium

comes from Africa (Southern Africa, Niger and Gabon); a third of her copper comes from Zambia and Zaire, a third of her phosphates come from Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal, Togo and Algeria; and a fifth of her iron ore is supplied by Mauritania and Liberia.<sup>62</sup> France also imports almost 18 million tons of crude oil annually from various parts of Africa, which represents almost one-third of France's total oil imports.<sup>63</sup> Clearly a great deal of French aid to Africa is sent with a view to ensuring continued supply of these important materials'.<sup>64</sup>

The existence of an exclusive economic club for francophone Africa - *Communaute Economique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest* (CEAO), formed in 1973 (with strong French support and influence), hinders the 'community spirit' within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) open to membership of both anglo- and francophone Africa. As one of the founding members of the ECOWAS and the largest contributor to its funds (in terms of "burden sharing"), Nigeria is held in suspicion by most of the former French West African States, as wanting to further its own regional ambitions.

On the whole, that Africa is a vital source of raw materials and a useful base for other economic transactions for the big powers, especially the Western nations, has already been established. If raw materials were to be consistently denied the West, their economies would suffer significantly, hence Western fear that 'the Soviet Union (might) disrupt or interdict the raw material supplies that are essential to the functioning of (their) economies'.<sup>65</sup> There is therefore concern, and some times counter Western moves against suspected Soviet intentions and moves in Africa. Such a response is some times witnessed in the form of military intervention. The Soviets, too, try to counter suspected Western moves that are inimical to Moscow's interest in Africa, but most often, outside of the economic domain.

Apart from geo-strategic and economic reasons, some social factors also explain interventions in Africa. These include humanitarian reasons where

states intervene to rescue their nationals taken hostage, or fly relief items to distressed people in troubled spots. Also, states may want to intervene in Africa if the type of colonial affinity that existed between the colonized and the Colonizer was deep-rooted, as in the case of the French and their former colonies. This type of relationship thrives on a demonstration of commitment level militarily, economically and otherwise. The military aspect may either see to the installation or ousting, or even support of an African leader. Here, the prestige of the mother country comes into play. Finally, one may explain the causes of intervention in Africa from the point of view of the nature of the international system in which the strong devour the weak. In the absence of a World Organization which could try, penalise and punish offending States, the nature of man, which Thomas Hobbes had compared to a wolf's, will always manifest itself in the day to day interaction of States.

FOOTNOTES

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CHAPTER III  
SECURITY IN AFRICA

INTRODUCTION

No study on intervention in Africa will be complete without an examination of the security arrangements in the region. This leads us to asking some important questions: can we really talk of a common security policy for Africa, and how successful has the region been in either deterring or completely rebuffing external aggression against it? These questions will be answered within the text, but to begin with, the point must be made that the term, 'regional security', is rather imprecise and contentious.

MacFarlane is of the view that 'those who use (the term) tend to employ (it) in such a way as to further their own interests and policy preferences'. He says: 'when European and American policy makers and writers in Western strategic literature talk of African security, one suspects that what they have in mind is the security of Western interests in Africa or the importance of Africa to Western security.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, if Soviet writers were to use the term African security, it is probable that they would define it in terms of the expulsion of Western interests and the maintenance and expansion of positions of Soviet influence and 'Socialist orientation'.<sup>2</sup> There does exist, however, in OAU member states, implicitly if not explicitly, an African conception of African security'.<sup>3</sup> (This collective position was articulated in a speech delivered by Lt. General Obasanjo, titled: 'External Intervention in Africa: The View From Africa'. See Appendix for full text of speech).

While several differences (especially ideological and cultural) divide Africa, there is still a conscious and sustained effort amongst OAU members to forge ahead in unity on major issues. According to Ahiko: 'Although Africa

is far from having a "common foreign policy", the African states have over the years been slowly but steadily evolving what Kwame Nkrumah once described as an "African personality in international affairs".<sup>4</sup>

Towards this end, an African Group Office has long been established at the UN Headquarters in New York. The Group has been specifically assigned to coordinate Africa's position on major international issues. Efforts are also made to coordinate the region's position at Non-Aligned Conferences. It was also remarkable that for the Lome Convention I and II, African states accepted Nigeria's leadership in putting across the overall African position in their dealings with the EEC between 1973 and 1975. So clearly, attempts are being made by African states to give an African definition to Africa's problems and achieve unanimity on major issues that affect the continent.

Amongst several other issues, the problems posed by security greatly undermine the sovereignty of African states. In fact, one may argue that to salvage Africa's socio-political and economic problems, a relatively stable atmosphere is needed for a successful re-ordering. The situation in Mozambique best illustrates this point. Thirteen years after independence from the Portuguese, Mozambique is still entrenched in an artificially created factional strife - a situation which has left the economy in ruins. Officially explained by Western media as a case of famine (which in every sense is known to be a natural phenomenon), the true situation in Mozambique is one of an artificially created famine, whereby externally funded (S. African supported) counter-revolutionary groups discourage farmers from their daily business through threats, harassment and indiscriminate killings. Their ultimate goal is to dislocate the nation's economy, and then rise to power from the likely confusion such wreckage might create. Mozambique is but one of several African countries experiencing this form of destabilization engineered from outside. Without these external machinations, Mozambique's economy would

have proved viable. It is thus clear that the security needs of Africa are not just enormous but urgent. Having said that, the question may now be raised: can we really talk of 'African Security', and if so, what are the needs of this arrangement?

According to Walter Lippman, a state is 'secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values if it wishes to avoid war and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such a war'.<sup>5</sup> African security can thus be defined 'in terms of the ability of states within the region to pursue their core values without internal or external hindrance'.<sup>6</sup> 'It is inevitable that the enumeration of the core values of a group of states as large and diverse as OAU Africa should be somewhat arbitrary. Moreover, in specific instances it is probable that the core values of specific regional actors will be inconsistent with those of its neighbours'.<sup>7</sup> Albeit, two areas of core values may be identified. The first being self-determination and the consolidation of external sovereignty, internal political stability and national unity, and economic development. The second area of core interests includes the dismantling of the last vestiges of imperialism and colonialism in Southern Africa, and greater consequent efforts at African unity.

The problems associated with the core values in the first area have already been dealt with in detail in the chapter looking into the 'Roots of Intervention'. While admitting that these values constitute core areas of interest, some of the inherent problems are not without their external manifestation. While apathy and a general lack of resolve on the part of African governments may explain the existence and continuation of some core elements now creating concern on the continent, the neo-colonial policies of external powers also explains their existence. For instance, in talking about the poor economic trends in Africa, while partially blaming the neglect of the agricultural sector by Africans for the massive urban drift (and other such

neglects and misadventure) mention must be made of the role of a power like the United States that covertly creates artificial scarcity through its 'destabilization strategy', which includes pressure on financial houses not to give loans to 'radical' states in Africa, or if such loans were ever to be given, the exertion of harsh 'conditionalities'; and finally, the role of Western conglomerates which have been described in some quarters as 'States within States'.<sup>8</sup>

It is the second area of core values that actually exposes Africa's weaknesses and the inherent contradictions within the society. For example, while subscribing to the tenets of pan-Africanism, some Africa countries move on to betray the ideals of the philosophy once they sense that their national interests are about to be jeopardised. In a country like Nigeria - described in some quarters as the 'hope of Africa' - this took the form of the expulsion of illegal aliens despite a standing ECOWAS treaty which allows for free movement of citizens of member-states from one member-country to another. The Nigerian government had however, evoked certain clauses within the treaty to justify their action. Also, on the question of the complete emancipation of the southern quarter of Africa, while some African states vehemently and unequivocally condemn the apartheid regime for its hideous policies, the same states clandestinely trade with the regime they publicly denounce. These are clear contradictions in their stand. However, in both areas of core values, African states need adequate security to protect and execute their interest.

MacFarlane has identified three ways in which states pursue their security: 'the creation of military forces sufficient to deter external threats or to beat them off should deterrence fail; adherence to alliances which supplement national capabilities; and the definition of norms of interstate behaviour which diminish or remove external threats'.<sup>9</sup>

According to his report:

'The first two have been common in African politics. With respect to the first, for example, Ethiopia responded to the threats of Somali irredentism and Eritrean secessionism in the 1960s by building - with American assistance - one of the largest, best-trained, and best-equipped military forces in sub-Saharan Africa. The reliance of some French and British ex-colonies on military ties with the metropolitan powers is an illustration of the second. But Africa is usually considered to be exceptional in its development of the third basis of security, the definition of norms of behaviour reducing external threats from both within and outside the region'.<sup>10</sup>

From a long list of norms mentioned by William Zartman, in a 1967 article on the African State system,<sup>11</sup> three appear most relevant to our discussion. These are that:

'intra-system solutions (were) preferable over extra-system solutions. With this went adherence to the principles of non-alignment. In a situation where no African state could hope to compete militarily with the great powers, general acceptance of this norm enhanced regional security by reducing the likelihood that these external actors would involve themselves in African conflicts; ... Wars of conquest were not acceptable policy alternatives. The territorial legacy of the colonial period was not to be called into question; ... (and finally,) the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states (be observed by African governments)'.<sup>11</sup>

While it is true that all three norms have not been strictly adhered to by African governments, the OAU has in some measure been successful on security matters on the continent. The fact that rapprochement during the Nigerian civil war ultimately rested on an African solution, and finally ended in a degree of reconciliation substantiates this claim. There are other minor as well as isolated success cases in the area of security for the OAU.

#### MILITARY CAPABILITY OF AFRICAN STATES

In terms of quality, the armies of the various African countries are not all of the same standard. In the continent as a whole only seven countries -



South Africa, Egypt, Libya, Ethiopia, Algeria, Morocco and Nigeria - "have an all-round conventional military capability comparable to states outside the region (air forces, blue-water navies, available missile weapons)". These countries accounted for 84% of the continent's major weapons imports in the period 1980-1983. A second group of nine countries (Somalia, Angola, Kenya, Tunisia, Sudan, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Zaire) have a sub-regional capability. This means that these countries are capable of "fighting a conventional military campaign outside their own boundaries but (lack) the all-round fire power of the first group". A third group of twelve countries possess "varying degrees of adequacy for defence against conventional attacks". The remaining countries have armed forces to provide the regimes in power with some protection from riots and threats to their internal security.<sup>13</sup>

#### AFRICA'S ARMIES

According to experts it is not the number of soldiers which is important but rather the increase in that number. In 1964 there were only some 100,000 soldiers in the whole region; by 1979 the estimated number was 800,000. This increase, however, varies greatly from one country to another. It varies from a very slight increase (15% in Ghana; 23% in the Ivory Coast) to an extraordinary one (1,200% in Togo; 2,371% in Nigeria; 2,535% in Tanzania). There has been a major increase in Mali (43%), Sierra Leone (62%), Liberia (75%), Niger (79%), and Guinea (80%). Numbers have more than doubled in Gabon (116%), Benin (120%), Senegal (262%), Burkina Faso (307%), the Central African Republic (340%), and Kenya (396%), while there has been a very large increase in Rwanda (425%), Burundi (525%), Zambia (550%), Malawi (566%), the Congo (600%), and Ethiopia (798%). In some cases these increases are justified, e.g. in Nigeria because of the 1967-1970 civil war and in Tanzania

because of the war with Uganda. They are less justified in other cases such as Togo, or not at all (Rwanda, Burundi, the Congo).<sup>14</sup>

### DEFENCE SPENDING

Since the 1960s military expenditure has increased rapidly. Between 1965 and 1970 it increased by 74% in real terms; between 1970 and 1975 by 15% and between 1975 and 1980 by 22% (these are the most recent reliable figures). According to experts, the decrease in 1978 was a temporary one due to the recession in the African economy. The increase in defence budgets (in fixed dollar rates) was slightly higher than the annual rate of population growth and of GNP. In 1980 the average was 2.5% of GNP...<sup>15</sup>

Military expenditure, as a percentage of central government spending, represents, on average, 10.6%. This figure varies according to the region: in 1977-1978 the Horn of Africa and Southern Africa spent 44% of their budget on the purchase of arms; West and Central Africa lowered military spending due to a reduction in the military budgets of Nigeria, Ghana and Zaire. There are also major differences between countries: from percentages of around zero to Ethiopia which spends more than 40% of its budget on defence. More than half of the countries have a percentage of between 6 and 16% of total expenditure. The general trend is for countries with high economic growth to spend a major part of their income on national defence, while the opposite is true of countries with low economic growth.<sup>16</sup>

Like all other security establishments in the world, Africa's armed forces exist for a multiplicity of reasons, the least controversial of which are the furtherance of the sovereignty of African states (a move partially motivated by the search for prestige so as to be like "the Jones"); the need to maintain internal order, especially in dealing with secessionist groups; and the defence

of national boundaries and territorial interests against external attacks, some times carried out by neighbouring states.

While it is true that Africa's armed forces now have more to show in terms of men and material (both quantitatively and qualitatively when compared with their pre-independence standing) none of these forces has a particularly attractive record of repelling attacks by extra-regional interventionary powers. There is therefore the belief in some quarters that Africa builds its armies only to fight amongst themselves. As paradoxical as this may seem, it is not completely true. For instance, a different picture may be seen when looked at from the point of view of neo-colonial manoeuvres on the continent in which extra-African powers sometimes execute their destabilization programmes through dissident groups and the Republic of South Africa - itself a central actor in the region. The security burden <sup>this brings to bear</sup> on some African States, therefore, <sup>become</sup> enormous and could not simply be dismissed as purely fratricidal and internal.

#### SECURITY ARRANGEMENT WITHIN THE OAU

The idea of a collective security system in Africa predates the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The notion of an African High Command as a defence club to safeguard Africa's interests was first mooted by the late President of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah in 1960. However, it was not until 1963 when the OAU came into being that the issue was given a formal consideration. Article XX of the OAU Charter which establishes a Defence Commission as one of the five Specialized Commissions of the organization had its first deliberation on the collective security arrangement in October 1963. According to O. Iyanda and J. Stremiau, the proposal involved 'a Supreme Command headquarters responsible for the defence of the continent,

regional headquarters, joint services reserve command and joint intelligence organization'.<sup>17</sup>

Despite unanimity within the Commission on the need for defence cooperation to arrest neo-imperialist designs for the continent, there was little enthusiasm from members when it came to discussing how best such counter-measures could be realised.

The resentment from most OAU member states centred around the expected cost of the scheme and the possible deployment of such a force to undermine the sovereignty of African States.

Consequently, an alternative and seemingly, less grandiose scheme was arrived at, which favoured the formation of an African defence cooperation. The Nigeria delegation to one of the OAU meetings in 1963 was said to have criticised the proposed African High Command as 'unrealistic, too expensive and involved substantial loss of sovereignty by member states'.<sup>18</sup> In a somewhat ironic twist, the Nigerian Government was further quoted to have proposed

'a Central Planning System involving a Permanent Military Secretariat, a Central Military Council of Chiefs of Defence Staff of Member States and four Regional Planning Committees in Eastern, Western, Northern and Southern Africa. Troops would be mobilized from assigned certain national contingents but the use of any national contingent would be subject to approval by the State'.<sup>19</sup>

The idea was to preserve the sovereignty of individual states in the use of their armed forces.

In one of its recommendations, the OAU Defence Commission came out with alternative plans which favoured in place of 'any unified High Command, the creation of regional defence units which could be placed at the disposal of the OAU for use whenever the need arose'.<sup>20</sup> Like the previous recommendations, this one too suffered from unqualified acceptance,

especially within the Assembly of Heads of State and Government. The issue of establishing an African High Command has since the early 1960s, when the idea was first conceived of, featured regularly on the OAU agenda without any sign of seriousness or unanimity on the part of members in achieving the ideal. African academics, military and mass media now only intellectualise on the concept without any meaningful steps to actualising the dream.

As the debate on the practicability of an African High Command continues, two distinct camps of opinion have emerged. The first group may be called the pessimists and the second, the optimists. While the pessimists, for a multiplicity of reasons, view an immediate venture into the scheme as being futile, the optimists believe that with some strong resolve on the part of African leaders, a continental deterrent force could come into existence even now - the odds notwithstanding. Clearly, while sharp differences <sup>may</sup> exist between the two groups, they both agree on one thing, which is that Africa is faced with external threats for economic and geo-political reasons and should therefore find ways of countering such threats. The problem lies in how best to set about this counter-strategy.

In his address to participants at a Seminar on African High Command in 1978, the former Nigerian Chief of Army Staff, Lt. General Theophilus Danjuma<sup>21</sup> reportedly described the formation of an African High Command "at this moment" as an "impossible" task for a plethora of reasons, most important of which was the absence of an African superstate.

In response to the pessimistic, though cautious assertion by the General, a Nigerian observer of the international scene, A.B. Ahmed noted that: 'Such conclusions, we can be sure, stem from a lifetime of professional soldiering in a colonial and neo-colonial setting and reflect that brand of "realism" with which (our) attempts at unity have been consistently stymied over time. They are the same age-old arguments, the same eternal queries which have made

the formation of an African High Command impossible to date. Thus, we are firmly treated to the circular viciousness of an argument which seeks to prove that Africa cannot form a continental army because it lacks the economic and technological base upon which such an army can be established.<sup>22</sup>

While accepting that there were obstacles hindering a regional military cooperation like the narrow interests of Arab Africa, which rested in Middle East politics, and therefore prevented a concerted African action, and the fear by conservative African countries in allowing their forces to mix with others from coup-prone countries, Ahmed's optimistic approach favoured the immediate establishment of an African force. In his view:

'Africa's interests would seem to lie in the deliberate use of world superpower ideological, military and economic rivalry to protect our own interests. We should exploit the tripolarity of present day geopolitics to set up a military alliance which will be based on and derive its armament and equipment from any or all of the super-rivals.'<sup>23</sup>

He believes:

'the world arms trade and international military aid are so big and amoral now that an African army cannot be starved of armament, whether by purchase or donation. There are also non-aligned and progressive Third World Sources of obtaining arms and equipment. If we are ready to face facts therefore, it is not lack of military or economic resources which prevent the establishment of a joint African force but a confusion and a lack of will among African States'.<sup>24</sup>

Air Vice Marshal Shekarri has expressed a similar view more recently in his attempt to identify the obstacles confronting the OAU in setting up a joint defence organization. Alongside the problems of language barrier, logistics (standardization of weapons, tactics and training programmes), he also mentioned 'suspicion and distrust which were probably fanned by imperialist agents (as constituting) serious negative considerations towards the proposal'.<sup>25</sup>

Imobighe's list on the problems facing the setting up of an African High Command include 'language barriers, ideological differences, diversity in military traditions, including variations in training, mode of deployment as well as in the types and sources of equipment used by the various armies'.<sup>26</sup>

While the debate on the feasibility of an African High Command now receives greater attention in non-governmental sectors than at the OAU headquarters, talks about an African army, howbeit, still surfaces in Addis Ababa. For instance, at the Defence Commission meeting in Addis Ababa in 1979, 'the Ethiopian Minister of Defence, Gen. Taye Tilahun, who opened the meeting on 21 April, called for the creation of a Pan-African Defence Force capable of responding to the primary concerns of the continent, mainly the liberation of Southern Africa and the defence of the Front-Line States'.<sup>27</sup> But it took only seven years for Ethiopia to change her position. According to one report in mid-1986: 'African foreign ministers meeting in Addis Ababa (...) postponed a decision on setting up a Pan-African defence force after Ethiopia, Nigeria and Kenya opposed the idea'.<sup>28</sup>

'Ethiopian Foreign Minister Goshu Wolde said the proposal, a perennial issue at OAU meetings, was premature and would be prohibitively expensive. Mr Wolde cited the case of the Pan-African Peace-Keeping Force sent to Chad in 1981, made up of Nigerian, Zairean and Senegalese troops, which withdrew without carrying out its mission and with the participants complaining of the high costs. "Such a force could even backfire and destabilise the very purpose for which it was established," Mr Wolde added'.<sup>29</sup>

What this means in effect is that to date, the OAU is without a military wing that could guarantee Africa's security interests where the diplomatic channels of achieving such fail. Article XIX of the Organization's Charter establishes a Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration with the main task of settling disputes among member-states.

Records of successful mediation, conciliation and arbitration are few. The perennial problems of border disputes, the Ethiopian irredentist

revisionism towards Eritrea, the conflict in the Maghreb, the Kikongo desire to reestablish the precolonial Kingdom of Bakonog from parts of Southwestern Zaire and Northern Angola and the Somali designs on Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibuti are yet to be resolved and this does not include cases of internal dissent within many States.

It is important here to note two limitations of the Commission. First, is that the Commission's jurisdiction is limited only to disputes between OAU member-States as spelt out under Article XII, in part II of the General Provisions. An outside dispute involving either an OAU member-country or, the entire continent, automatically falls beyond the jurisdiction of the Commission. For instance, the geographical and historical claims by the Democratic Republic of Madagascar to the Glorious, Juan de Nova, Bassas da India and Europa Islands, following an official decree published in February 1978 by the former colonial power (France) to preserve a so-called economic zone in the area, was deliberated upon by the OAU council of ministers, after which the organization's Secretary-General was requested 'to make a study of the problem and submit a detailed report to the next session of the Council of Ministers':<sup>30</sup> [CM/Res 642 (xxxii)].

Secondly, the Commission has no coercive arm to either enforce laws or deal with defaulting or recalcitrant states. So, both within the contexts of peace and security, the role of the Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration Commission leaves much to be desired, and may not even deserve a mention in discussions bordering on peace and security in Africa.

Clearly, the two institutions specifically assigned by the OAU to deal with questions on peace and security in Africa are the Defence Commission on the one hand, and the Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration Commission on the other. Both have little to show success-wise, though the successful termination of the Nigerian Civil War and the rapprochement that followed



immediately between the parties to the dispute (together with a few cases of successfully terminated disputes/conflicts) have been credited to the efforts of the OAU, despite its many set-backs. But given that conflicts and disputes in Africa exist in their legion, and that the Defence Commission could only meet four times between 1963 and 1980 to deliberate on issues explains the ineffectual nature of the institution. The Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration Commission may even be by-passed as less functional. It is worth noting, however, that the poor functioning of these institutions notwithstanding, Africa in its diversity and complexity without a regional organization like the OAU would have been a 'free for all' show-case of twentieth century brinkmanship and uninterrupted inter-state preemptive strikes.

The overall picture, nevertheless, shows that Africa has proved helpless before external aggression directed against OAU member-States. [The reasons which include its military weakness, ethnic and ideological differences - the latter, itself a manifestation of the different colonising experience, poor economic performance, controversial colonial boundaries, etc., have been extensively discussed in the previous chapter on 'Roots of Intervention'.] So, to the questions: Can we really talk of a common security policy for Africa, and how successful has the region been in either deterring or completely rebuffing an external aggression against the continent, as raised in the opening paragraph of this chapter, it could be said that Africa is yet to endorse a common security policy, although efforts are being made to forge ahead on those lines. As regards its defence, Africa has not proved capable of either rebuffing or deterring an external aggression from the existing structure of security in the continent. It is needless here to cite the seemingly endless catalogue of interventions on the continent. But today, what may be described as the African predicament notwithstanding, there still appears to be some

hope in meeting with the continent's security needs through the pooling of resources. Some analysts now believe that a successful economic integration will ultimately and inevitably lead to the much sought African High Command. Consequently, sub-regional economic groupings are now being encouraged. There have also been suggestions, which, though falling short of the idea of economic integration, favour the establishment of joint command at sub-regional level, seen by its proponents as ultimately leading to a joint continental force.

One such move where economic cooperation at sub-regional level has served as the take-off point for a defence cooperation at the same level was in the creation in 1975 of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Presently, the establishment of an ECOWAS Joint Command for the West African sub-region is receiving urgent attention within the Community, especially since the Protocol on Non-Aggression negotiated and eventually adopted by the Authority of Heads of State and Government on 22 April, 1978 in Lagos. It is not clear in what manner the ECOWAS defence programme is related to the OAU dream of a continental force.

However, in a paper presented at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, I.A. Shekarri outlined the tenets of the Protocol and the trends that have since followed:

'In the Protocol each member State undertook to refrain from committing, encouraging or condoning acts of subversion, hostility or aggression against the territorial integrity or the political independence of other Member states. The member states also pledged to resort to all peaceful means in the settlement of disputes arising among themselves.'<sup>31</sup>

'The ECOWAS went further in its military cooperation arrangements by adopting the Protocol relating to Mutual Assistance on Defence on 29th May 1981. This was after protracted negotiations on different drafts submitted by Togo and Senegal about 1978. The long negotiation was necessitated by the various objections and misgivings which had to be explained away or accommodated - a process which is normal in such important

protocols. However, at the time of signing the Protocol in 1981, three member States - Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau and Mali - could not join others in endorsing the Protocol'.<sup>32</sup>

'Apart from the normal Authority of Heads of State and Government, the Protocol provides for the establishment of a Defence Council consisting of Ministers of Defence and Foreign Affairs of Member States and a Defence Commission. In the main provisions of the Protocol, Member states 'inter alia' agreed to place at the disposal of the Community earmarked units from the existing National Armed Forces in case of any armed intervention. These units shall be referred to as the Allied Armed Forces of the Community (AAFC) under the Command of the Forces Commander. Member states may organise joint military exercises from time to time among two or more earmarked units of the AAFC'.<sup>33</sup>

With a strict adherence to, and implementation of, the Protocol by Member States, an ECOWAS Joint Command could come into being. Although the Protocol was signed in May 1981, it is still undergoing ratification by Member States. Such a careful approach before endorsement is only natural because of the intricate commitments involved. In terms of constraints, the hurdles to overcome are not different from those faced by OAU member-States in their search for a continental deterrent force.

Interestingly, suggestions on Africa's security have been made that even go beyond the OAU consideration of an African High Command and the ECOWAS efforts at a sub-regional Joint Command - still at its formative stages. One such ambitious, but perhaps frank suggestion came from Ali Mazrui, who in his 1979 Reith Lectures on BBC Radio urged that Africa should go nuclear. Said he: 'Those African countries which signed the non-proliferation treaty (NPT) should review their positions, and consider setting up a strategy of developing a small military nuclear capability, first in Nigeria and later in Zaire and black-ruled South Africa'.<sup>34</sup>

He advised that '... for the 1980s and 1990s Nigeria should move towards making itself a nuclear power, unless the world as a whole calls a halt to

nuclear weapons'.<sup>35</sup> He said, 'it might seem odd to be recommending that Nigeria should go nuclear, when oil is its major mineral resource. But the development of a nuclear capacity by Africa's largest country is probably a necessary first step towards ending Africa's peripheral status in international diplomacy'.<sup>36</sup>

Mazrui was careful in stating that his suggestions had 'nothing to do with making Nigeria militarily safer. Only when the West and the Soviet bloc discover that they cannot make the rest of the world refrain from the nuclear dream unless they themselves give up the weapons will the world at last address itself to the fundamentals of human survival'.<sup>37</sup>

By acquiring nuclear capability, Mazrui believes that Africa's bargaining position and international respectability would be better enhanced, hence his concern about the continent's 'peripheral status in international diplomacy'. The totality of Mazrui's 'peripheral status' may also explain the disregard for Africa's sovereignty, sometimes witnessed in the form of external military interventions, especially of the type led by mercenaries who violate States' borders in Africa with impunity. Perhaps the same reason explains why OAU Africa experiences external military intervention, but not South Africa because of that country's powerful economy, military strength and suspected nuclear capability. Remarkably, despite South Africa's refusal to endorse the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NTP), she still has strong links with Western nations, even in the area of nuclear technology.

Ashok Kapur once argued that 'the new Third World orientation is to create third party interference in superpower planning and to create the intellectual and resource foundation to strengthen the capacity to interfere. Resource diplomacy, conventional arms proliferation and use, and nuclear option-building are different instruments but they are products of this new orientation in regional life'.<sup>38</sup> This view point falls in line with Ahmed's

thesis<sup>39</sup> on how Nigeria could best exploit the ideological rift between the superpowers to its own advantage.

Foreign policy formulation in Nigeria is not without strong considerations of the military threat posed by South Africa in the continent. Official government utterances have on several occasions indicated the country's willingness to go nuclear.<sup>40</sup> The big question, however, is how ready is Nigeria?

To meet the needs of technical expertise, Nigeria sent some of its graduate students abroad in the mid-1970s under an exchange agreement with McMaster University, Canada. Despite local and overseas efforts being made by the Federal Government of Nigeria, its manpower needs in the area of nuclear technology is still far from being adequate.

In terms of mineral resources, Nigeria has huge uranium ore deposits in the Gombe area of Banchi State. There are also uranium deposits in Cross River, Sokoto, Benue, Bauchi and Niger States. Nigeria also has a 16 per cent participation share in the exploration of Uranium in Niger (Nigeria's northern neighbour), whereas Niger itself has retained a 45 per cent share. The deposits in the Republic of Niger are currently estimated to constitute approximately 10 per cent of the world's known commercially explorable uranium deposits.<sup>41</sup>

As regards nuclear energy, Nigeria is yet to acquire operational nuclear energy facilities. The essentials considered, it may well be said that the country is not yet ready to join the nuclear club. Robert Henderson has identified two constraints on the Nigerian nuclear dream:

'One is that Nigeria, whichever reactor option it decides to pursue (Natural Uranium-heavy water type, such as the Canadian Candu; enriched-uranium, light-water reactor of the PWR or BWR types favoured in the United States, France, and West Germany; and the fast-breeder reactor types still under development) would be heavily dependent, especially in the earlier stages of the programme, not only on foreign nuclear experts but also on foreign nuclear suppliers'.<sup>42</sup>

Secondly, Nigeria as a NPT signatory would be obliged to honour the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards agreement.

'In addition, any foreign supplier of reactors, fuel elements, heavy water, or enriched services would almost certainly insist not only on the application of IAEA safeguards but also on its own right to ensure the peaceful use of the materials or equipment concerned, possibly including its right to take back spent fuel elements containing plutonium and probably including a right of "prior consent" to the disposition of such spent fuel'.<sup>43</sup>

Henderson's conclusion was 'Nigeria is unlikely to purchase a nuclear power reactor in the foreseeable future. In any case, given the lead time for building and commissioning such a plant, the country could not have a power reactor in operation before the 1990s'.<sup>44</sup>

In conclusion, Africa could only be seen as divided against itself in the area of collective security. The socio-political division have been extensively treated in the previous chapter on 'Roots of Intervention'. While most of francophone Africa sees it as perfectly acceptable to station foreign troops on their soil over what they regard as their own security, vis-a-vis a special understanding with France, the rest of Africa (but excluding Zaire, Kenya, Morocco and Liberia) show resentment of such designs for their territories.

As regards intervention,

'the present definition of aggression - which (incidentally) the UN Law Commission has tried in vain to define for the past 30 years - is linked, particularly in Africa, with the problem of the military presence of foreign powers. The presence of Soviet bloc and Cuban military elements is seen as 'peaceful' by the Ethiopian military regime though not by its opposition or by some of its neighbours. It is unthinkable, for example, that the army of 'socialist' Ethiopia, equipped and supervised by Soviet and Cuban officers, should go to the defence of Mobutu's regime in Zaire against a future invasion of its Shaba province. African lives are lost daily in Eritrea, Western Sahara and Chad; but are there any circumstances under which the OAU could agree to licence a Pan-African Defence Force to intervene in those situations? ...'<sup>45</sup>

We may also question the future of an ECOWAS Joint Command if Nigeria, one of the Community's chief architects, would expell nearly 2 million fellow

West Africans (mostly Ghanaians) described as 'illegal aliens' in the early 1980s in the name of redressing the economic imbalance in that country. Concern was also expressed over Nigeria's security with the flooding of aliens.

But be that as it may, Africa's problems are not mere recent occurrences. They were mostly formed with the advent of European and Arab influence on the continent, only to mature with colonialism and blossom as post-independence 'puzzles' for modern Africa to solve. The political confusion on the continent is balanced by an almost equal amount of resolve to open a new chapter in its long history of foreign domination.

### FOOTNOTES

1. In this context, the NSSM 39 objective as 'Stabilizing Southern Africa' has been referred to as no more than a euphemism for 'continued US presence' (Isaacman, A. and Davis, J. 'US policy toward Mozambique, 1946-1976 in Lemarchand, American policy in Southern Africa, p35). See also Makinda, S. 'Conflict and the superpowers in the Horn of Africa', Third World Quarterly, Vol. 4, (1), p93; Bender, G. 'Kissinger in Angola', passim, and Liebenow, J.G. 'American Policy in Africa: the Reagan Years', Current History, Vol. 82, (482), pp97, 98, 134, 136. The latter two comment at some length on the 'globalist' focus of recent American policy-makers.
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12. Main points by Zartman, I.W. ibid: Paraphrased by MacFarlane, S.N. op. cit., p55. With respect to the last norm, see Zartman, op. cit., p560.



13. Pro Mundi Vita: Dossiers. The Militarization of Sub-Saharan Africa. 3-4/1985, Africa Dossier (34-35), Belgium, p36. (Pro Mundi Vita is a Catholic quarterly published in Brussels).
14. ibid., p31.
15. ibid., p34.
16. ibid., p.35.
17. Iyanda, O. and Stremiau, J. The Dilemma of an African High Command. Nigerian Bulletin of African Affairs, Vol. 1, 1971/72, pp8-13: In: a paper by Air Vice Marshal I.A. Shekarri. Africa High Command or ECOWAS Joint Command: Which is Feasible or Which Should Nigeria Pursue? Nigeria Air Force Seminar, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos, April 24-26, 1985, p.2.
18. As reported in Fasehun's article on 'Nigeria and the issue of an African High Command: Toward a Regional and/or Continental System', Africa Spectrum, Vol. 15, 1980, pp309-316. In: paper by Shekarri, ibid., p3.
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22. Ahmed, A.B. (as in note 21).
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35. ibid., pp78&79.
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37. Mazrui, A. loc. cit.
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41. West Africa, January 21, 1980, p102; New Nigerian, March 24, 1980. In: Henderson, R.D'A. op. cit., p413.
42. Henderson, R.D'A. op. cit., pp414-415.
43. ibid., p415.
44. Henderson, R.D'A. op. cit., p415: According to the IAEA, the time needed for a first nuclear plant to become operational is eleven years (including six years for construction). See Steps to Nuclear Power (Vienna: International Atomic Energy Agency 1974).
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CHAPTER IVCHADINTRODUCTION

The case-study on Chad will be partly a historical narration to help us understand the ongoing crisis in the region. This takes us back to the early days of French settlement in that country right through to the period of independence in 1960 and until 1965, when the Mangalme riots broke out. Thus, the first part of this chapter will look at the early history of Chad. Subsequent sections will discuss the political developments in that country which eventually led to the civil war that has persisted.

Initially, the crisis was about high taxation and the exclusion of northern and eastern elements from the broad politics of Chad. As the internal situation in the country escalated, the French were requested to move in by President Tombalbaye in 1969. Had Tombalbaye not requested for help from France, Paris might probably have intervened on her own initiative. This is because of the type of close relationship that exists between France and her former territories.

The politics inside Chad after the French withdrawal in 1971 was mainly the politics of rival Chadian leaders, prominent amongst whom were Goukhouni Weddeye and Hissene Habre - two surviving actors of the crisis, with strongly opposing views.

Libya - a country long interested in the Aozou Strip which Ghadafi claims by virtue of a treaty signed between Vichy France and Italy in 1943, moved its forces into the 114,000 sq km region in the extreme north of Chad beyond the Tibesti mountains in 1973. Aozou Strip is believed to be rich in uranium and manganese. Libya has since been one of the principal intra-



KEY

- National boundaries —————
- Prefecture boundaries - - - - -
- Parallels and disputed territory — • —
- Main roads —————

Source: The Minority Rights Group, Report No. 80 (CHAD) by Kaye Whiteman, September 1988, p.3.

continental actors in the region, encouraged by the November 1972 renewal of relations initiated by Chad and the subsequent signing of a friendship pact with Fort Lamy. On 15 June 1980, a treaty of friendship and cooperation was again signed in Tripoli between Libya and a representative of President Goukouni, but without the prior consent of the Gouvernement d'Union Nationale de Transition (GUNT). Article 7 of the treaty permitted Libya to intervene should the internal security of Chad be threatened. The Forces Armees du Nord (FAN) offensive of 7 October led to the direct intervention of Libya in the early stages of the attack. In November the entire Borkou, Ennedi and Tibesti (BET) region was recaptured from the FAN. Libyan military presence in the region ~~became almost~~ permanent since then. However, in March 1983, negotiations took place between Hissene Habre and the Libyan Leadership, which demanded a recognition of Chad's Islamic character, the annexation of the Aozou Strip and the signing of a treaty of alliance. Habre refused. Heavily armed with Libyan-supplied equipment, Goukouni's troops occupied the entire BET region and reached Abeche on 8 July. After a long deliberation, Mitterand finally decided on 9 August 1983 to send French troops to Chad. It was the third intervention named 'Operation Manta' (sting-ray) - the largest of the French interventions involving the sending of 3000 troops with air support from jaguar fighter-bombers. The first post independence French intervention in Chad was in 1968, followed by another in 1969. Goukouni, resident in Algiers since February 1987, appealed for universal recognition of Habre as Chad's de jure head of state in April 1987, but Chad's protracted war has continued.

## GEOGRAPHY AND ETHNICITY

Chad is the fifth largest country in Africa, with over 4000 km of land frontiers with six countries. It is also the largest landlocked country in the world without rail access to the sea. Apart from cattle and cotton, there is little in the way of natural resources there.

It has a certain geological unity as part of the Chad Basin, around the lake which gives the country its name, but ecologically it moves from the desert over much of the north through Sahelian conditions in the centre to the Savannah in the south.<sup>1</sup> The capital city of Fort Lamy became known as Ndjamena on 30 August, 1973 after President Tombalbaye's transformation of the Parti du Peuple Tchadien (PPT), into the Mouvement National pour la Revolution Culturelle et Sociale (MNRCS).

The last reliable population census was in 1964, and stood at 3.3 million. Today, the projection stands at about 5 million. The population is unevenly distributed. The northern provinces of Borkou, Ennedi and Tibesti (the BET) hold only about 6% of the population, and well over one third of the total territory, while the five prefectures of the far south, about one tenth of the area of Chad, contain about 46% of the total population. This region, sometimes known as Le Tchad utile (useful Chad) also contains much of the fertile agricultural land.<sup>2</sup>

The other significant statistics to do with the population, according to Kaye Whiteman,<sup>3</sup> are of religious affiliations, with just over 50% Muslims, and the rest divided between Christians (the majority of whom are Catholics) and animists, in equal proportions. Again, all but 0.6% of the Christians and all but 3.5% of the animists are in the far south, mainly from the Sara ethnic group. For most of the first twenty years of independence, until the 1979 watershed, politics, the civil service and the armed forces (although not

business) were dominated by people from the five prefectures, often referred to collectively if inaccurately as Sara because of the prevalence of Sara language and culture. This domination was based above all on the advantage given by the ascendancy in that area of Western-style education.

There were 81.4% illiterates in the north in 1975 against 72.5% in the southern prefectures, with 0.9% of northerners reading and writing French compared to 26.8% in the south and 17.7% reading and writing Arabic in the north as against 0.7% in the south.<sup>4</sup>

#### THE CHADIAN CRISIS IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The French reached Chad almost 90 years ago. On arrival, they met a heterogeneous population whose economy was conditioned by the generally poor terrain, hot and dry climate, and lack of intercommunication.

The first task the French were faced with was that of establishing order in a generally insecure country whose many chiefs asserted their authority in no other way than by force, or of prospering except by raiding the manpower and possessions of their weaker neighbours.

Thompson and Adloff<sup>5</sup> reveal that

"to pacify Chad took 15 years, and another five were required to set up an administrative network. Between 1900 and 1920, France never worked out any coherent policy in her dealings with the local chiefs. Nevertheless, the trend was unmistakably toward cutting down their power whenever and wherever conditions of security permitted".

It was not until two years after the end of World War I that Chad began showing traits of a distinct territorial entity, although it still lacked a functional administrative machinery. While the country possesses the main features of a state, the internal reality of Chadian politics reflects profound discord and animosity amongst its various ethnic groups. Observes one author:

"Confrontations derived from the internal divisions of a mass of people that can only loosely be called a nation."<sup>6</sup>

Another vivid but concise description of Chad runs thus:

"The country stretches from the heart of the Sahara desert to the Savana desert to the Savana fringes of the equatorial belt; it has always been, and still is, the crossroads of powerful competitive socio-cultural and religious influences, the meeting place of the Maghreb with Black Africa, and of the Oriental Sudan with Nigeria and West Africa. A huge mosaic of small and splinterized, unintegrated ethnicities, many with sharply different patterns of socio-cultural organization and evolution, lifestyles and religions. The country has always been more a complex patchwork of mutually-competitive microcosms than a political entity, no matter how fragile. Though the various ethnic groups within Chad may be divided into a small number of categories for purposes of generalization ... such compartmentalizations - except for the Sara Clans - belie the total ethnic fragmentation and the strong centrifugal drives throughout the country".<sup>7</sup>

But according to David Yost,

"such abstract euphemisms tend to conceal the genuine enmities that the wars and slave raids of the past promoted between blacks and Arabs, and between many smaller ethnic groups - some of which have never been brought under any central control, either French or Chadian. The result has been the (twenty six-year-long) civil war that persists".<sup>8</sup>

#### DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL CONFLICT IN CHAD

Chad may be divided into two socio-economic, political and cultural regions, each with its own ethnic groupings, languages, customs and religion. The country lies across the thirteenth parallel, the rough boundary which separates Muslim and African worlds.

Most of the northern part of the country lies in, or on, the verge of the Sahara, and is populated by nomadic or semi-nomadic muslim tribes, who retain pastoralism as a way of life, and who have still to overcome the instabilities derived from traditional tribal disputes and antagonisms. The southern part of Chad, which is largely Savannah, contains the bulk of the



population, and is inhabited by a mainly settled population of sedentary cultivations. Here the dominant tribe is the Sarakolis, or "Saras", which has effectively dominated the Chadian Government since independence in August, 1960. This southern area, formerly a source of slaves for dealers from the north, is wealthier and more populous than the northern and east-central areas. Its people practice three main religions: Christianity, Islam, and paganism. The Christians have tended to accept European education and make up the administrative elite of the country. By doing this, they have gained for themselves a marked advantage over the Muslim northerners, who for too long avoided European education and failed to adapt to European practices, and who are now paying a political price in a country that has been strongly influenced by French culture and which has adopted French as its official language. The recent political dominance of the south, to the detriment of the north and the exclusion of Muslim elements, has widened the traditional division between north and south.<sup>9</sup>

The administrative provinces of Borkou, Ennedi and Tibesti - otherwise known as the "BET", in northern Chad, were of sparse population and under military rule during the French period in occupation, and, even after independence, units of French army remained in Chad to control the north, and were only withdrawn in 1965.

The continued presence of the military in the north explains Chad's undiminishing reliance on French support and assistance, both military and economic, even after formal independence had been granted. Mainly because of the poverty and lack of development in the country, this dependence continues to exist .

Two themes have dominated Chad's domestic political development since independence. One has been the gradual exclusion of Muslim politicians from the north and east of the country both from political power and administrative

office. The other was the acquisition of an unchallenged position of political leadership by President Francois Tombalbaye, a Protestant ex-schoolteacher and member of the Sara tribe, who replaced his mentor, M. Gabrielle Lisette, as head of the ruling party shortly before independence, and who remained as President of the country from August 1966 to 13 April 1975 when he was ousted and killed in a coup d'etat. It could be said that the two processes complemented each other, for, although Tombalbaye did not hesitate to level charges against, and to imprison, his own colleagues from within the PPT, the full force of the President's "internal security measures" and "actions to prevent national subversion" tended to fall both on individual Muslim politicians and upon Muslim-backed political organisations. The initial step in turning Chad into a single party State occurred only a year and a half after the granting of political independence by the French Government.

The President dissolved all political organisations except the PPT, of which he remained Secretary-General, in January 1962. To do this successfully, he abolished such Muslim-supported parties as the *Partie National Africain*, the *Mouvement Socialiste Africain* led by Ahmed Koulamallah, a former Prime Minister, and the *Union de Defense des Interets Tchadiens*, whose leader was M. Jean Baptiste. A year later, in January 1963, the change to a single party system was confirmed at the PPT party congress, and a formal Bill to amend Article 4 of the Chadian Constitution was introduced into the National Assembly in June 1964, and passed the following November.

It was not without some general uneasiness and public disapproval that the conversion of Chad into a one party State, and the concentration of power into President Tombalbaye's hands were carried out. Public dissent was understood by the President as confrontational, hence his adoption of a containment strategy to deal with the upheavals. In effect, in March 1963, an

order was issued by the President for the arrest of a number of prominent Muslim political leaders as well as several members of the President's own Party, including the President of the National Assembly, a former Minister of Justice and two junior Ministers. The official charges were that the detainees had earlier tried to topple the Chadian government by inciting the Muslim north against the South, though unofficial reports at the time of the arrests held that the Muslim leaders had opposed decisions taken at the PPT congress, held in January 1963, on the grounds that these plans (which included the establishment of local co-operatives and the modernisation of the legal system, as well as the provisions regarding a single party State) were too severe and likely to impinge on the feudal system that had for long been known to Chad's Moslem dominated areas. Two of the five PPT leaders were sentenced to death in July 1963, while the other five faced prison sentences. There was further trouble in September 1963, when riots broke out in Fort Lamy during the search for, and later arrest of, some leaders of the banned MSA and UDIT, as well as of M. Djibrine Kerallah, one time Foreign Minister and a top PPT member. A state of emergency was declared in the capital by the President after the disturbances had claimed twenty lives.

By early 1965, Tombalbaye had succeeded in eliminating the major Muslim dissidents from within his own party and equally ensured that there was no opposition to his southern-dominated government.

President Tombalbaye's final attempt to put an end to northern participation in the Government was marked by an announcement on November 19, 1965 in Fort Lamy that three Ministers (amongst whom was the Minister for Justice), and three deputies from the National Assembly, had been arrested on charges of plotting to oust the Government with the aim of putting into power a regime which would allow Sultans and tribal chiefs to exploit the public. The majority of those arrested in the November incident were Muslims.

### INTERNAL UNREST IN CHAD: PARTIES AND ISSUES

Most sources on the actual beginning of the civil strife in Chad trace the period to October 1965, when a violent riot took place at Mangalme, in Batha Province, 500 miles to the east of Fort Lamy. The riot, referred to by President Tombalbaye as '... a misunderstanding about taxes ...' claimed the lives of a deputy, an official in the local administration, and six policemen. Following this incident were a series of social disturbances which again were simply referred to in Fort Lamy as "banditry".

However, bearing in mind the nature of Chadian politics after independence, it is difficult to make such a clear-cut distinction between events before and after October 1965 purely on the grounds of the employment of extra-legal violence, and insights into the Chadian insurgency can be gained by viewing the violence after 1965 as merely a continuation of political trends begun during the period immediately following independence. In other words, the civil strife which developed in Chad after the end of 1965 was only the continuation of Chadian domestic politics by other means.<sup>10</sup> It will be unsafe, nevertheless to work on the theory that the Chadian crisis is simply an outcome of a North-South disputation. C.R. Mitchell's observation makes this more evident:

"... while there is some truth in the assertion that the conflict in Chad is both ethnic and religious, it is not merely a dispute between northern, Arabised Muslims and black, southern Christians. The ethnic composition of Chad is not a simple, north-south, Arab-African division, but is far more complex. This complexity is reflected both in the differing nature of the revolt against the Fort Lamy regime in different areas of Chad, and also in the difficulty experienced by insurgent leaders in attempting to create a unified movement out of diverse and widely separated dissident groups. In short, a careful analysis of the parties and the issues involved in the conflict within Chad is required".

To begin with, we need to know that the two earliest insurgent forces operating at the time had different protests against the Tombalbaye regime, despite claims by the Chad Liberation Front (Frolinat), that these insurgent centres represented co-ordinated northern and eastern wings of the same "army". The political uprising in the BET region which was carried out by the local Toubou and Touareg tribesmen in August 1968, was quite separate from the movement in the eastern parts of Chad, organised by Frolinat. By 1969, however, some amount of liaising and co-ordination had existed between the two insurgent forces, although their goals and aspirations were still largely separate.

However, consequent upon the dissatisfaction caused by the Government's response to the tax-riot of the Moubi tribe at Mangalme in 1965, an organised campaign began in Ouaddai-Province, near the Sudanese border, and spread slowly through the neighbouring provinces from 1966 to 1969. When the insurgency first began in 1966, following the Chadian army's reportedly brutal siege of the area, the exponents of the campaign were said to be those Muslim political leaders who had been exiled from Fort Lamy in a sequel to the alleged coup of 1963, and these leaders were said to enjoy the support of the traditional chiefs in the area. By 1967, it had been known that two formal organisations were behind the violence in eastern and central areas of Chad. The smaller of these was the Front de Liberation Tchadien (FLT), operating from inside Sudan under Ahmed Moussan's leadership. The larger, and more effective was Frolinat, which came to dominate the struggle from the insurgent side from 1967 onwards through the effective use of both political and public relations techniques as well as relentless military operations.

Statements issued in October 1967 by Frolinat's Secretary-General, Dr Abba Siddick, held that the front was first established in June 1966 by the

amalgamation of two groups in opposition to Tombalbaye, after a meeting of exiled politicians in Sudan. Its first leader, Ibrahim Abatcha, was reputed to have had "Marxist leanings" by Frolinat spokesmen that the first batch of fighters operating in eastern Chad had received training outside Chad. Abatcha was killed by Chadian security forces in February 1968 and was replaced as military chief by El Hadj Issaka, a Muslim from the Batha region.

Following the death of Abatcha, according to later Frolinat reports,

"... opportunists tried to take control of the movement before being ousted. A group led by Mohamed al Bakhallan wished to instal a Muslim dictatorship over the south, while a group led by Ali Arabi were indulging in banditry under the name of revolution ..."<sup>12</sup>

It was at this critical moment when Frolinat seemed to have been lost in purpose and direction that a new and influential figure, in the person of Dr Abba Siddick, emerged. Dr Siddick was a founder member of the PPT, a Minister for Public Education in the Lisette government before independence, and a long-standing friend of President Tombalbaye.

He publicly announced himself as Frolinat's Secretary-General in 1969, two years after his own political exile from Chad and his first association with the insurgent force. His arrival was not without a marked change in Frolinat's general structure as he influenced the creation of a political and public relations wing which attracted world press to the problems in Chad as well as won the attention and sympathy of the Arab world towards their course.

Side by side with the confusion that had existed over the identity and aims of the parties to Chad's domestic conflict were other ambiguities with regard to the issues over which violence occurred, and which we will now examine in three categories - carefully indentifying the basic issues in the conflict affecting each category, and the way in which these intermingled to produce the generally inchoate insurgent movement. The suggested categories

are (1) the new elite of Muslim political leaders who had been gradually excluded from power in Fort Lamy; (2) the traditional Chiefs, Sultans and local leaders in the Muslim areas; and (3) the ordinary Muslim pastoralists and villagers both from the north and east.

In the case of the politicians from the Muslim areas of Chad, it could be said that their grievances and motivation stemmed from their systematic exclusion from authority roles within the system, both political and administrative, and ultimately, in many cases, being faced with the hard choice of imprisonment or self-exile. Their political organisations were gradually destroyed, and even those who used their positions within the ruling PPT to express the views and demands of their Muslim supporters soon came to realise that heavy penalties awaited all persons who served as mouth-piece for northern opposition. In essence, participation in the political system which allocated rewards within Chadian society was denied to the political representatives of a large sector of the Chadian political community, so that, for this category of dissident, the issues involved in the conflict were clearly concerned with relieving the incumbents of political authority, and the restructuring of the Chadian political system in such a way as to permit them, if not to dominate the system, at least to have some regular and substantial voice in the national policy-making process.

Traditional Muslim leaders whom we identified as constituting the second category of dissidents, partook in the uprising for reasons different from what spurred the young Muslim political elites into violence. For this latter group, it was the gradual undermining of their traditional authority by administrators appointed in Fort Lamy, and the attempts to 'reform' local justice and administration, ordered by the central Government in spite of warnings and protests from some Muslim members of the ruling party that precipitated their revolt. The attempt to dismantle traditional centres of

Muslim authority by Sara administrators was a major, if excusable, mistake by a Government poised to unify and reform the administrative machinery of the country, as well as to bring about a uniform code of law and justice within all areas, north and south. However, that it was an error may be judged by the fact that, when French political and administrative advisers returned to the country in 1969, one of the changes they mostly emphasised - and one which received the greatest resistance from the Chadian government - was the return of political powers to local chiefs, particularly the rights of the three great traditional leaders of central Chad, the Sultans of Kanem, Ouaddai and Borkou, to administer justice and collect taxes.

The third group of dissidents identified were Muslim villagers and pastoralists who expressed much uneasiness at attempts by the Chadian Government to introduce social, economic and political change. Their grievances were not only that Fort Lamy officials ignored custom and customary justice, as well as undermined the authority of their traditional leadership, but also the fact that economic reforms were going to be effected by the central government. To introduce 'agrarian reform' into a Muslim area peopled by nomadic herdsman, and to attempt to make these pastoralists grow meal and millet, involved gross affronts to their dignity and traditional values. The resentment would be made worse by the fact that officials attempting to introduce such changes were southerners, who had traditionally been regarded as slaves, and as inferior to practising Muslims.

Among other abuses, government bureaucrats - having a free hand in the eastern part of the country after independence, and in the BET after 1965 - taxed local people at three or four times the rate decreed in Fort Lamy, and pocketed the difference. These and other malpractices of southern administrators were supported by the repressive measures of the Chadian armed forces on occasions when troops were moved into an area to "keep



order". Given such conditions, the issues concerning the bulk of Muslim insurgents, headed by those who took part in the initial "tax riot" at Mangalme, were simple: oppression, exploitation and bad government. The only contact northern Muslims had with their central government involved exploitative taxes and cruel, arbitrary punishment. For this, there was no visible return from the Government. No hospitals, no roads, no schools, no improvements in water supplies or veterinary facilities in the east and north in return for the taxes paid from these areas. It was the cumulative effect of these hard measures from the southern controlled centre that finally led to the north/east insurgency in Chad.

Frolinat (which controlled the publicity aspect of the insurgents' struggle, side by side with active fighting), had complained about administrative abuses and the need for some reform in Chad's political system. Frolinat also demonstrated a strong sense of anti-colonialism, and made frequent calls for the evacuation of French bases, and an end to the country's continued dependence upon French support. Finally, a commonly repeated theme was the need to establish "a democratic regime" in Chad as opposed to a single party system.

Indeed, the civil strife in Chad could be classified as a 'personnel' war rather than 'authority' war or as a 'structural' conflict.<sup>13</sup> Put in another way, the ultimate goal of the insurgents (depending on which faction is in power at a particular time) has always been the replacement of those in power by another set of decision-makers, rather than a complete restructuring of the Chadian socio-political system, or its division into two separate political systems, one of which would become an Islamic Republic. The choice on representational legitimacy thus becomes a difficult one; which should rule Chad - Tombalbaye's "dictatorship" or Frolinat's "democratic regime"?

### TOMBALBAYE'S APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE

With the original outbreak of violent dissidence spreading fast across the Muslim areas of the country and resulting in the loss of both administrative and military control over a large section of Chad by the central Government, President Tombalbaye was finally forced to request for external assistance in April 1969. By 1966 - a year after the Mangalme riot - organised insurgency had spread into the eastern province of Ouaddei, which borders upon Sudan. This resistance, allegedly organised by Frolinat and led by Abatcha, seems to have started as early as November 1965, but it was not until August 1966, that the Fort Lamy Government acknowledged the seriousness of the situation.

The disturbance in Ouaddai further worsened the relations between the Chadian and Sudanese Governments, for in this new insurgency it rapidly became obvious that the insurgents were using Sudanese territory as a refuge and as a base from which to launch attacks on Chad security forces. There had been frequent clash of interests between the two Governments, which in the previous year (June 1965), led President Tombalbaye to accuse the Sudanese of harbouring a Chad 'Government-in-exile' at Khartoum, which he claimed, had proposed to cede a part of Chad to the Sudan to exclude all Christians from the Government, and finally to convert the rest of the people to Islam. Allegations of this nature were denied by the Sudanese authorities. There were, however, still areas of disagreement between the two countries as evidenced in the dispute about the exact delineation of the Chad-Sudan frontier in the area between Sudanese Darfur and Ouaddai provinces. It had only been after the appointment of a joint frontier commission, the conclusion of an agreement for extradition between the two countries, the creation of an agreement regarding the recruitment of seasonal labour from Chad to the Sudan, and the reaffirmation of Sudan's policy of non-interference in the

internal affairs of Chad (and not allowing Sudanese territory to become a base for hostile actions against the Chadian Government), that the matter had been smoothed over in a suitably diplomatic way. Nevertheless, with the reported rebellion in Ouaddai in August 1966, the protracted and somewhat controversial issue of Chad-Sudanese relations surfaced once again as President Tombalbaye accused the Sudanese Government of failing, or being unwilling, to carry out the agreements reached only six months previously. The agreements were reached after the signing of an extradition treaty by both countries to the effect that all Chadian dissidents in Sudan would be proscribed and expelled by the Khartoum authorities. But the status of the treaty notwithstanding, the Chad Government complained that gangs continued to attack their frontiers and then slipped back into Sudanese territory where they were harboured and cared for. Consequent upon this development was the ultimatum issued by President Tombalbaye that all 'bandits' who roamed Chad's frontier and across the Sudan be handed over, within two weeks, to the Chadian authorities.

Rifts of this nature that border around territoriality and extra-territoriality are quite common in Africa, the more so where the formal boundary between two countries is hardly recognised by local inhabitants, where the people on both sides of the boundary are closely linked, and where the areas concerned are both remote from central government control. The Sudanese Government could, with some justice, have argued that it found its own control of Darfur very difficult (there had even been efforts at revolt against Sudanese Government authority in the extreme west of the area), and that it could hardly be blamed for its failure effectively to control clandestine operations in a remote part of the country targeted at a foreign government. However, the dispute between the two countries remained for some time, and relations only improved following the mediatory efforts of President Diiori

Hamani of Niger, the eventual establishment of a strengthened joint frontier commission, and a formal frontier agreement.

But the bi-lateral arrangement to encourage cooperation between Chad and Sudan notwithstanding, violent revolts by Chad's eastern elements still continued, and by February 1967, despite security efforts by government forces, disturbances had spread from Ouaddai to Salamat in the South, and two years later, in August 1969, the Government had virtually lost control of a large expanse of central Chad, stretching north-eastwards from the Chari River as far as Abeche near the Sudanese frontier. Apart from administrative centres and military posts, the authority of the Government had disappeared from the area. In fact, Fort Lamy was isolated from the country to the north and east in such a manner that the roads were only usable by vehicles in convoy; and the insurgents, although poorly armed, moved almost at will, except in the towns where government interests were protected.

Apart from the uprising in the east, administrative control of the BET in the northern-most part of Chad by a civilian bureaucracy from Fort Lamy also resulted, after three years, in discontent and dissension, which led to an open revolt at the beginning of 1968 when the local Toubou tribesmen started resisting official instructions from Fort Lamy. In March of the same year, an organised rebellion of Toubou members of the Chadian 'section nomade' took place at the northern border post of Aozou, and some in the garrison were killed before the post was abandoned. A military reinforcement from the south was later attacked in the post by northern insurgents (allegedly including mutineers), throughout July and early August, and it was this event that forced President Tombalbaye to request temporary military assistance from the French Government. A contingent of parachutists from the French Foreign Legion was sent briefly in response to the President's request but, according to a later statement by M. Debre, these took no direct part in the actual fighting,

but merely gave what was described as "logistic support" to Chadian troops operating in the Tibesti Mountains.<sup>14</sup> President Tombalbaye himself undertook a visit to the area, during which he met Toubou leaders, and it is possible that, for a while, the situation appeared normal, only to relapse again in the new year. The French interventionary force was withdrawn in September 1968, but returned again in greater strength the following April.

By the beginning of March 1969, while widespread insurgency was developing in the BET, administrative control had completely been lost in the east as well as in some previously considered "safe" Tombalbaye districts". Insurgent operations were reported as far west as Kanem and Chari-Beguirmi. However, by April 1969, the French had arrived in the eastern area. And by this time, the insurgents were preparing to take Mangalme, the administrative headquarters of Batha Province, had five other important towns surrounded, and were in a position to ensure the fall of Mongo, the capital of Guera Province, within a few weeks. The Chadian army itself was in a state of declining morale, if not outright mutiny, and its end appeared imminent.

These considerations, side by side with the renewed outbreak of violence in the northern-most part of Chad, must have been the final compelling factors that forced President Tombalbaye to appeal for aid to an external patron. The President later admitted that the decision had been his alone, and announced during an Independence Day broadcast in August 1969,<sup>15</sup> that it had been taken against the wishes of some members of his cabinet. There can, however, be little doubt about why such a decision was taken. Even allowing for exaggerated reports of insurgent success, it seems very likely that the Chadian leadership saw the situation as grave, and the danger of its losing the internal conflict as very serious, unless help was sent in from outside.

As regards the political cost in soliciting external help in cases such as that of Chad the Fort Lamy leadership could not claim ignorance of the 'pay-

back' policy that often accompanied such assistance. In other words, any external party agreeing to assist a client faction involved in a civil conflict will automatically demand some compensatory behaviour on the part of that faction, even if this only means taking over a predominant role in the direction of policies to be adopted in bringing the conflict to an end. Ultimate costs may even involve efforts to replace the particular set of leaders that issued the initial appeal for aid, should the intervening patron's leaders come to feel that their own purposes can best be served by the introduction of a new leadership group into the client faction.

#### TRANSNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

It is not a remote possibility that even without the appeal for external help from Fort Lamy, the French, might still have moved into Chad due to their historical connections with that country and the belief in their role as custodian of the fate of their former territories. On the other hand, through many transnational systems - both instrumental and effective - groups and individuals in Chad, particularly within the Southern controlled political and socio-economic systems, were linked with groups, organisations and individuals in France. The administrative and political systems in Chad were intimately tied to France, through French organisational methods, personnel training and education; the Chadian economy was even more closely linked to that of France; the Chadian military set-up was heavily dependent upon French administration, aid and training. Many aspects of Chad's economy and political life were so connected to parts of the French political and economic system that one may rightly regard Chad as being a continuing French dependency, even after formal political independence had been gained in 1960. Today, that dependency has grown rather than lessened, not only in Chad, but

in the majority of Francophone West Africa. It is therefore appropriate to spell out in more clear terms the type of relationship that exists between France and Chad.

According to C.R. Mitchell,<sup>16</sup> it is possible to classify transnational linkages into two basic types; those which involve the actual exchange of some tangible object or a flow of information in some form (instrumental linkages); and those which merely involve a shared consciousness of possessing common interests, a shared perception of belonging to some kind of collective grouping, and a shared sense of identity (affective linkages). The affective linkages between the Chadian and French incumbents are typical of those which continue to exist between France and many of the former French colonies, as a result of a common French education, and a feeling of sharing a common culture.

Similar attitudes tend to exist among elites in all ex-colonies and in their former metropole, but nowhere, it seems, to the same degree as in the Francophone countries of Africa. The existence of a sense of shared French culture and educational background among the educated elite in the south of Chad reinforced other, more concrete linkages that continued to exist after independence, and gave the Chadian Government a sense of identity with things French, a favourable view of French policies and demands, and a continuing image of France as guide, mentor and protector. The affective linkages between France and her former colonies could be said to have arisen as a result of the former's policy of 'Assimilation' in the colonial era, which sought to make Francophone Africa 'little France' through a calculated re-shaping of both the behavioural pattern of the people and the aesthetic features of the various societies. This may not exactly have been the case with all Francophone Africa, but on the whole, the effort made by the French to introduce their culture as well as effect amenable environmental changes in

their former territories, remain as the most visible legacies of French rule in Africa.

The situation, however, is different in the north and east of Chad where a basically Muslim culture exists, and where French influence has not penetrated to nearly the same degree as the south and in other French-speaking African countries. Thus, none of the same attachment to France and French values could be aroused. If the southern part of Chad is effectively orientated towards France and things French, in contrast, the north is orientated in beliefs, attitudes and self-images towards the Arab world and Islam. The Sera people of the south remain animist in their religion, while the few educated elite amongst them get converted to Christianity - mainly Catholicism - although President Tombalbaye himself, was a protestant. This has reinforced the polarity and even made more delicate the polemics in the north-south dichotomy. The situation has also led to a further tie between the southern, Francophone elite which dominated the political system by 1965, and its erstwhile colonial mentors. It will, however, be worthwhile to take a look at the instrumental connections Chad has with her former European coloniser.

The linkages in this respect are even more pronounced. Chad's economy, for example, remains almost fully dependent on France which supplies over one third of the country's imports (mainly manufactured goods and vehicles), and in 1969 took 80 per cent of Chad's exports. The acute deficit in Chad's balance of payments was, by 1968, being financed by drawing directly on the French Treasury. As far as aid for development is concerned, France has always been the principal supplier of funds - even if inadequate - although other sources, such as EDF, had also contributed immensely towards Chad's first Development Plan (1965-1970). The Second Plan (1971-1975) which concentrated upon developing exportable items such as sugar, cotton and livestock was projected upon an expenditure of 26,000 million francs (CFA) to which France committed about 6,000 million.



The endless stream of insurgency has also had its toll on Chad's economy, as a substantial amount of the national revenue is directed towards internal security. The huge budget deficit of 1969, further exacerbated by a poor return from national agricultural production, was therefore no surprise. Also, the fact that half the revenue on which Chad's national budget depends comes from France, has made the former even more reliant on her colonial mentor.

Regarding Chad's security ties with Paris, although French forces relinquished their military administrative responsibility of the BET region on January 1, 1965, the agreement for the maintenance of a French base and garrison at Fort Lamy still remained in force, so that about 1,000 French troops and airmen remained in the country after 1965. In addition to the French garrison at Fort Lamy, a residual treaty between the French Government and its former colony stipulated that the French Government would, if requested, come to the help of the Chadian Government in the event of any external threat or attack.

Today, Chad's security forces are completely dependent upon France for supplies, and almost completely dependent for tactical advice, training and leadership. Estimates of the number of French military "advisers" attached to the 6,500 strong Chadian Security Forces as at 1972 ranged from 300 to between 500 and 600, although by January 1985, this figure had dropped considerably to 125 advisers (see Table 1).

There can be little doubt that these military advisers play a crucial role in maintaining and strengthening links between the Chadian military organisation and the French military establishment - thus indicating in more clear terms the need for an ultimate, direct involvement of French troops in the struggle against the insurgents, if and when the need arises.

Chad received the greatest amount (30%) of all French military aid to black Africa from 1960 to 1973. In 1974, the country received three times as much French military assistance as any other black African State.<sup>17</sup> (For recent figure on French aid to Francophone countries see Table 2).

Table 1: French Military Advisers in Africa (January 1985)

Algeria	21
Benin	2
Burkina Fasso	15
Burundi	27
Cameroon	84
Chad	125
Comores	23
Congo	10
Ivory Coast	74
Djibouti	115
Gabon	122
Kenya	2
Libya	2
Madagascar	8
Malawi	1
Mali	5
Mauritius	2
Mauritania	52
Morocco	183
Niger	60
CAR	78
Rwanda	20
Senegal	34
Togo	75
Tunisia	28
Zaire	110
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,278</b>

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Original Source: Ministry of Co-operation in France. Used in illustration by John Chipman, 'French Military Policy and African Security', Adelphi Papers Number 201, pg. 24.

**Table 2: Military Co-operation Budgets**

	(Millions of FFr)			
	1982	1983	1984	1985 (Forecast)
Military Assistance	316	331,8	400	412.8
Direct Aid to National Armies	248,8	236,7	256	247.8
Training of Africans in France	95,3	108,6	145,3	145.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>660,1</b>	<b>677,1</b>	<b>801,3</b>	<b>805.9</b>

**Original Source:** Ministry of Co-operation in France. Used in illustration by John Chipman, 'French Military Policy and African Security', Adelphi Papers Number 201, pg. 51.

THE DECISION TO INTERVENE - 1969

The very factors that determined the French intervention in Chad (as a sequel to Tombalbaye's prompting) were equally decisive in the ultimate choice made by Chad to look up to France for her 'godfather' protectionism.

Although it is true that the incumbents in Chad conducted that country's external relations with its potential patron, a multiplicity of factors equally pointed towards the high probability that an appeal from Chad would <sup>have</sup> been answered positively by the French Government. Not least in these considerations was the fact that Chad had been the first of the French African Colonies to declare for de Gaulle and the Free French in the days of the Second World War, and it was from Chad that General LeClerc launched his attack northwards against Italian forces in North Africa. Mention had earlier been made about the level of interdependence between France and Chad. From the French point of view, so much effort, resources and time had been invested in establishing and maintaining social and politico-economic systems in Chad; relinquishing responsibility over Chad in the face of the insurgent threat, therefore, meant the potential waste of all these investments. The "cost/gain" calculation comes into play here where the situation appears to be one in which a little extra effort could improve the 'status quo', so that the marginal cost of retaining control of, and benefits from previous social and political investment appear both small and worthwhile. We could term this as the momentum argument. Thus, instrumental linkages created by trade and the exchange of resources and personnel are reinforced by the growth of affective linkages, which, in turn, help to maintain existing instrumental connections and create new ones. As regards mutual understanding and obligations between the 'ex'-coloniser and the 'ex'-colonised, there can be little doubt of the feelings in French government circles for France to continue to

have a responsibility towards its former colony (Chad) to ensure that it continued along the French style of development, introduced in the days of colonial administration.

According to C.R. Mitchell, 'A predisposition to help a particular regime does not, in itself, ensure that an external patron will undertake a military intervention in a civil war, even when this predisposition is reinforced by political, economic and military connections'.<sup>18</sup>

A number of other arguments have, however, been forwarded both by political analysts and French bureaucrats, rationalising the whole episode of the 1969 French intervention in Chad. The commonest and more general of these view points have been the strategic argument that France had military bases all over Africa, and that the strategic role of the base at Fort Lamy remained invaluable in the overall operational plan for the bases in Africa. Perhaps, it was inferred here that, if the insurgents emerged victorious over the de jure government in Chad, they would insist that the French forgo their military investments and interests in Fort Lamy.

Some reports describe Fort Lamy as the "hub" of the French sphere of influence in Africa, and Chad as the "keystone" of French defence on the continent, and postulate that the whole system could be ruined by the civil war in Chad. Whether this is, in fact, the case, is open to some argument, as is the claim that French policy involves holding on to its Chadian base because that country links two of France's main sources of uranium for the French nuclear power industry, Niger and the Central African Republic. It is true that the Fort Lamy base is conveniently situated, and can be used to fly French troops to any part of West Africa. It is also true that Fort Lamy is one of the main French telecommunications centres in Africa. All of these facts must have had some effect on the French decision to use military force in Chad.

It is, however, unlikely that the strategic argument was solely responsible for the French involvement in Chad, as various other factors - apart from the economic and strategic - have also been identified.

Three main arguments underlying French policy in Chad and, eventually, the decision to intervene militarily, may be distinguished: the demonstration argument, the domino argument and the vacuum argument.<sup>19</sup>

The demonstration argument involves consideration of national prestige, and of other commitments to allies and friends. It is held in some quarters that France would lose credibility before her ex-colonies if she failed to meet up with her defence agreements with a West African State. France, therefore, could only afford to ignore an appeal from Chad at the expense of losing the confidence of other Francophone countries that would most likely stand in anticipation of a similar shoddy, if not passive, response from France, if and when, defence-related issues compel them to look up to their mentor for salvation. And were this to be the case, French image in the region would be badly battered, with an accompanying loss of influence. French action over Chad, then, was designed to have both a practical and a symbolic effect, the latter re-affirming French resolve to honour her words before the governments and peoples of her former territories.

Of similar holding with this thesis is its converse, which appears to be a French variation of the "domino" theory that served as a reference point to assumptions underlying United States policy in Asia. The French-African version of the "domino" argument is that, unless France takes steps to prevent an insurgent movement taking over one of the French protected states, then not merely might that particular insurgent movement succeed, but others might be encouraged. Another argument is that positive action in support of a client faction will demonstrate French fidelity and determination not only to other governments, but also to other potential insurgent groups, should they be misled enough to plan internal disturbance or military coup.

Lastly, several theses have been put forward favouring intervention which appear to be a variation on the old concept of a "power vacuum", and on the likelihood that, with the existence of local disorder and a strong protector to mark out clearly a "sphere of influence", other potential patrons, exploiters and opportunists would be attracted into the trouble-spot. The French Government's likely attraction to the vacuum argument, therefore, may be arrived at from expressed worries from Paris over Soviet or Arab attempts to wield influence in an area traditionally regarded as a French sphere of influence. This concern may have been linked to French fears regarding the alleged growth of Soviet influence in the Mediterranean (especially the Soviet naval build-up after the 1967 June war) in the Arab world, where practical steps for the restoration of French influence by Paris were being pursued. Vis a vis this consideration has been the French fear of the extension of Arab influence into Sub-Sahara Africa where many newly emergent nations have a sizeable proportion (even if in the minority) of Muslim elements. This worry became more real with the advent of Islamic revolutionary statism that had left its mark on Libya and Sudan, as well as Algeria, which was already on the Islamic path. The likelihood that Chad might be Islamized in toto and join with other Arab Socialist States, should Frolinat emerge victorious over Tombalbaye, must have caused concern in Paris in the spring of 1969, and served as one of France's reasons for intervening in Chad.

Perhaps, a more worrying problem for the French Government was the possibility of other external parties being drawn into the conflict, if France failed to act promptly. Israeli and Soviet military advisers, and assistance to the rival factions in the Sudanese civil war had already been reported to be increasing in size. The French decision may have been taken partly with the view to avoiding similar controversies of the Chad kind.

In December 1969, M. Schumann - then President Pompidou's Foreign Minister, stated in clear terms that France's action in Chad was fundamentally aimed at preventing intervention of the kind that had taken place in both Biafra and Sudan. "... Chad is located in the heart of Africa", said the Foreign Minister. "Any interference with its integrity should concern its neighbours. Experience shows that the great powers are tempted to intervene in open conflicts ...". The aim of French action was therefore to avoid "... the occasion, or the pretext for foreign intervention, which would almost certainly be much less discreet and much less unselfish than that of our own country ...".<sup>20</sup>

#### THE DECISION TO WITHDRAW

While it is true that a multiplicity of factors must have influenced President de Gaulle and M. Foccart's decision to deploy the 'force d'intervention'<sup>21</sup> once again to Chad, not the least amongst such considerations, was the compulsion the French Government felt towards responding to President Tombalbaye's request. The months of March and April, 1969, witnessed the arrival of the first paratroopers of the Foreign Legion in Chad, faced with the immediate task of anti-guerrilla operations in central Chad. By April 1970, however, internal rumblings on the 'insignificance' of the French involvement in Chad had assumed a noteworthy proportion in France. Whatever the exact degree of French Military intervention into Chad, the fact that it existed immediately imposed a series of decisions on French bureaucrats. These decisions concerned the length of time French troops were to remain in the country, and the least satisfactory conditions in Chad that would compel French withdrawal.



Ironically, that decision was later taken by a group of French politicians different from those who had originally taken the decision to deploy troops to Chad in March 1969. That particular decision had been one of the last made by President de Gaulle before giving up the Presidency to go into retirement, and the increase in military strength - both in arms and men - continued during the interregnum before his successor, M. Pompidou formally took over the reins of power. Pompidou, thus, inherited Chad's problems. Any new developments at the time of Pompidou's entry would have established either continuity or deviation from the traditional Gaullist line. Care was, therefore, needed in his approach to the Chadian question. Another difficult question that faced the newly sworn-in President was the mounting French opposition to their involvement in Chad which came mainly from the left, championed by M. Mitterand.

While it would be too much to say that French public opinion was alarmed on a wide scale, and was disturbed by French casualties or by cries that Chad might become another Algeria, there can be little doubt that a feeling of uneasiness did exist and was unlikely to be quieted by such concessions as the withdrawal of all conscripts from French units engaged in operations in Chad.<sup>22</sup>

With the mounting domestic opposition to the French involvement in Chad and the reluctance on the part of the French Government to be involved in a protracted war, the Pompidou administration worked on a programme of gradual disengagement. By the beginning of 1970, it had become obvious that the French Government had taken the decision to pull out. The actual pulling out of French troops began on July 2, with the withdrawal of one company of "paras" from the Foreign Legion, and this aspect of the withdrawal ended in January 1971, when the last 400 men of the legion were flown out from Chad after spending a little over a year there. The

French decision to withdraw from Chad left President Tombalbaye in a precarious position.

After a successful military operation by the insurgents in October 1970 in the BET region, President Tombalbaye argued that his Government seemed to be faced with a rebellion in the north in which the rebel forces had "... grown from 20 to 2,000 equipped with modern arms, thanks to outside intervention ...". If the French stuck to their plans for withdrawal and "... abandoned us in the middle of the river ..." then the Chad Government would have to find other means for defending the north.<sup>23</sup> The battlefield score by the insurgents, shortly followed by Tombalbaye's implied threat to look for help elsewhere, other than France, did not appear to shake the latter as they continued to withdraw the 'force d'intervention' from Chad on the grounds that the east had been "pacified", even if some dissidence still existed in the north. Side by side with France's tactical withdrawal were efforts from Paris to bring about agreement between the Fort Lamy regime and Frolinat. On June 6, 1971, the final units of the force d'intervention, a company of the Third Marine Infantry Regiment, eventually left Chad after just over two years of military operations.

While the French saw the need for this tactical withdrawal, the Government still felt the moral obligation to settle the Chadian dispute. And so, although the insurgents lacked proper representation due to the multi-factional nature of their composition, and which in turn hindered successful discussions with the incumbents, the French still urged the latter to negotiate with the northern and eastern elements.

As a result of the French initiative at reconciliation between the warring factions, a newly chosen Muslim President of the Chad National Assembly, while on a mission to Libya at the end of 1970, met the exiled Derde for settlement talks, although it was denied in Fort Lamy that this was an

officially sponsored mission.<sup>24</sup> Speculation, however, grew that the Government was trying to persuade the seventy-four-year-old Toubou leader to return to Chad and co-operate with the Government. Another positive move towards reconciliation efforts was noticed in President Tombalbaye's New Year's message for 1971, which appealed for national reconciliation and assured that insurgents who returned to the "Chadian family" would be safe, and would be following the example of "... those who have already joined us ...".<sup>25</sup>

Reconciliatory moves by the incumbents seemed to pay off in January 1971, with a few positive signs of compromise (even if not quite representative) from segments of the many warring factions. In effect, on January 6, a peace agreement was signed in Fort Lamy with leaders of the Moubi tribe from Central Chad, who were the first to establish their protestation against the Chadian Government, and were the exponents of the 1965 Mangalme riots against unscrupulous southern tax collectors. Three weeks later, another group of insurgent leaders pledged to down arms and work with the Fort Lamy Government at an official gathering in Mangalme itself. The leaders then announced their decision to sever all contacts with Frolinat and Dr Siddick forthwith.

Frolinat's position at this stage appeared shaky after the decisive steps taken at reconciliation by its break-away elements. Fort Lamy's improved position at the time could be explained from the point of view of the successful French anti-insurgent operations in Chad, as well as the incumbents' new policy of accommodation. Added to Frolinat's already poor image was the announcement on January 18 that a peace accord had been signed at Archambault between the Chadian President and six Frolinat representatives, by which the Government pledged to unify the country through a just administration for all Chadians. The Government also promised to release all detainees, and meet with other dissident leaders.

This agreement, however, was denounced by the Frolinat headquarters in Algiers, and the fact that the fighting continued in various parts of the country indicated that those signing this agreement represented only one sub-faction within the insurgent movement if, indeed, they represented anyone but themselves.

The Frolinat official response to the new development emphasised the official "line of negotiation, namely that only two parties could be involved in such talks, Frolinat and "... the Foreign interventionists, including France, who blatantly violated the right of the people of Chad to settle their own affairs ...". Two days later another official statement issued reaffirmed the movement's determination to overthrow the Tombalbaye administration by force, and stated that it could never enter into dialogue with the incumbents. It was claimed that President Tombalbaye had been "fabricating leaders" in order to reach agreements with them.<sup>25</sup>

The politics inside Chad after the French withdrawal in 1971 was mainly the politics of rival Chadian leaders, prominent amongst whom were Goukhouni Weddeye and Hissene Habre - two surviving actors of the crisis, with strongly opposing views. Indeed, there is a deep-rooted personality clash between the 'brother-enemies', as the real issues behind the conflict in Chad appears to have even been forgotten by them. Almost all that is left of the debate has been lost in the empty rhetoric whereby Habre has become "the defender of Western interests" and Goukhouni the "oppressed slave of the colonialists".

When Hissene Habre, a law graduate from the University of Vincennes in Paris arrived in 1970, he joined the Chadian government and was later talked into joining the Frolinat. In recognition of Habre's arrival and eventual enlistment into Frolinat, Goukhouni, son of the Dedei (the spiritual leader of Chad) and already a field commander, stepped down from leadership of the

movement which his father had passed on to him for Habre - a more cultured and lettered man. Although literate in French, Goukhouni had only been exposed to Islamic education.

Hissene Habre led Frolinat until he fell out with Goukhouni over a number of issues. Habre did not feel that any alliance with Libya was patriotic since Libya had actually occupied Chad's Aouzou strip since 1973. Aouzou strip is reputedly rich in uranium and manganese, and Libya maintains no less than 3,000 troops in this area to back-up her claims. Libya is therefore a contestant in the Chadian war.<sup>27</sup> But according to Goukhouni, "It is not possible for use to fight against two enemies. So we have to make up our minds what are our priorities".<sup>28</sup>

Another issue over which the two rivals disagreed was the kidnapping of the French archaeologist, Madame Claustre which Goukhouni saw as not necessary. But for Habre, it was a ploy to secure international attention, which he actually got. Lastly, Habre was very much against what he considered as Libya's 'ideological interference'. Goukhouni, for a second time, was re-appointed leader of Frolinat, allegedly with Libyan assistance. Consequent upon this development, Habre left Frolinat and converted FAN (Force Armee du Nord) or Northern Armed Forces - once, an arm of Frolinat - into a military and political movement. Libya then became the mentor of Goukhouni, while Abba Siddique, former Health Minister under Tombalbaye and later Head of Frolinat was relieved of his functions.

Meanwhile, tension mounted in Chad as a whole, and in an attempt to calm the situation, Tombalbaye resorted to a diplomatic offensive against Frolinat. He tried to convince Libya to abandon her aid to Frolinat. At the same time, some southern military officers dissatisfied with his administration staged a coup d'etat in April 1975 in which he lost his life. Notable among the military officers who overthrew N'Garta Tombalbaye were Colonel Kamougue and General Oduigar, who made General Malloum the new Chadian leader.<sup>29</sup>

In an effort aimed at reconciliation, General Malloum formed a government with equal number of Christians and muslims, as well as equal number of civilian and military ministers. He even announced tax exemptions for the Northern people in order to help them cope with the burden of drought.<sup>30</sup> Malloum's efforts at peace were rebuffed by Frolinat.

With Goukhouni as leader of the Frolinat once again, things began to change. Using modern arms from Libya, his Second Army captured Bardai, the last government post in the northern province of Tibesti, and held 400 Chad army prisoners.

In November 1977, the other two main arms of Frolinat - the 1,500-man Vulcan Force under Mohammed Idris and the 1,000-man First Army under Mohammed Abba, joined Goukhouni's 2,500 strong Second Army to establish the Frolinat Revolutionary Committee. The United Frolinat army then advanced and captured Fada and Faya Largeau, the administrative capital of the north, in February 1978. At Faya, 1,500 Chadian troops including 21 officers were held war prisoners, seriously depleting President Felix Malloum's forces.<sup>31</sup>

The French withdrawal in 1971 was not to mean an end to French intervention in Chad. Their operations there were of spasmodic nature. According to Yost: "in a confused and volatile situation, France backed whoever appeared most likely to bring about stability on terms compatible with French interests. Several Chadian leaders came to distrust the French, while the French wearied of the seemingly interminable and senseless struggle ... French troops stayed neutral in some clashes, served as advisors in others, and at times backed diverse factions in active combat".<sup>32</sup>

Between 1968 and 1971, France had had about 5,000 combat troops fighting with Chad's National Army to contain Frolinat's attacks. Under the same guise, it was France that helped to recruit French mercenaries through a

Paris based Maintenance International Service (MIS), to pilot Chadian military planes.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, French Intelligence Service, SDECE, played active role in Chad and at one time preferred Habre to Malloum. It was the SDECE that armed Habre when he captured Abeche and encouraged him to proceed to N'Djamena (previously Fort Lamy) after they had propped up his 300 armed force to more than 1,000 well armed men.<sup>34</sup> The French also extended their double-faced loyalty to Goukhouni. When he was approaching N'Djamena under Libyan support, the French support led to the move being halted. And when he fell out with Gaddafi, the French quickly turned around the corner to rally behind him.<sup>35</sup>

#### MALLOUM'S REQUEST FOR FRENCH SUPPORT

The French intervention in Chad in 1978 was on the request of President Malloum, then faced with the threat of sustained Frolinat advance towards Ndjamenana. Goukhouni's men had made 700 miles incursion across the desert before being stopped by French troops and aircraft in fiercely fought battles at Ati, only 200 miles from Ndjamenana, on May 18 and at Djeddah on May 25.

The French interventionist forces were made up of between 1,200 and 2,500 Legionnaires and several squadrons of fighter-bombers. FROLINAT's defeat wrecked the chances of a successful outcome to the conference on national unity that took place in Tripoli in July 1978 between the leaders Malloum and Goukhouni, with the involvement of Niger, Libya and Sudan. However, after a series of talks, agreement was reached between Habre and Malloum on 25 August, leading to the promulgation of the Charte fondamentale on 29 August.

Malloum remained president and Habre became prime minister. The former rebel leader formed a government in which Muslims held a slight

majority. Under the terms of the Charte fondamentale the Corseil Superieur Militaire (CSM) was abolished and in its place a council of defence and security was formed with 16 members, half nominated by Habre, half by Malloum. Legislative authority was vested in a national council of unity. Habre's army, the Forces armees du nord (FAN), was to be abolished and integrated into the Chad national army. Habre's opposition to Ghadafi had given him the reputation of a nationalist even in the south. Accepting Habre as the more moderate Muslim leader, the French supplied FAN with modern weapons.

Meanwhile, internal divisions within FROLINAT following the defeats of Ati and Djeddah were further exacerbated by the appointment of Habre as prime minister. The new government failed to gain the support of the rebels. Also, Malloum and Habre would not cooperate with each other. Habre refused to integrate FAN into the national army, and together with his close supporters, boycotted meetings of the council of defence and security in protest at Malloum's refusal to grant privileges to the Muslims in November 1978. Habre was establishing a position as champion of the Islamic north against the Christian south. The break came at the end of December, when Habre ordered the arrest of Mohammed Saleh, the president of the national council of unity.

The presence of both armies in the capital had been the cause of frequent clashes. On 12 February 1979, Habre attacked and captured the radio station. The Forces armees tchadiennes (FAT), which is the legal state army under the supreme authority of President Malloum was outclassed by FAN. The French troops did not intervene, but in spite of official denials, their 'neutrality' has consistently favoured FAN.



Several peace initiatives by concerned external parties took place, leading to the First Kano Conference on Chad held in Nigeria from 7-14 March, 1979, followed later by the Second Kano Conference. The Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU) also mandated Nigeria to organise a settlement conference resulting in the May 25-27, 1979 Lagos Conference. Unlike the other two conferences, the Lagos meeting attracted more African States. The role of the OAU in the Chadian imbroglio would be looked into in greater depth later within the text.

At one stage of the struggle, however, the contesting factions for control over Chad were: General Malloum, Goukhouni Weddeye (FAP/FROLINAT); Colonel Kamouge (FAT); Hissene Habre (FAN); Abubakar Abdurahman (MPLT); Musa Medela (FAO); Abba Said (First Army A); Ahmed Acyl (First Army B); Abdullahi Dana (Frolinat Fundamental); Dr. Abba Saddique (Frolinat Original) and Dr. Balam Pacho (National Democratic Union). All these groups were factions of Frolinat, except FAT and the National Democratic Union.

French forces fought against Frolinat in other major encounters between 1979 and 1980, only to reappear between 1983 and 1984 to carry out what Paris referred to as 'Operation Manta', in support of Habre. Otherwise known as 'operation Stingray' - the name of what may be France's largest foreign military adventure since the Algerian war, was launched to strengthen Habre's garrisons along a line running roughly from Salal in the centre-north to Abeche near the Sudanese borders (see map). Faya Largeau had already been taken by Goukhouni's men at this time. The French support to Habre proved overwhelming in preventing Goukhouni from making further military gains. Sporadic fighting continued into March-April 1985 between government and rebel forces. 'Operation Manta' had proved to be both costly to the French government and unpopular with the French public. Negotiations between

France and Libya, with Austria and Greece acting as intermediaries, resulted in the signing on 17 September 1984 of an agreement providing for the simultaneous withdrawal from Chad of French forces and Libyan 'support elements'. The French withdrawal was completed on 10 November, but Libyan troops remained, in contravention of the agreement. Following an unsuccessful meeting on 15 November with Col. Ghadafi at Elounda, Crete, President Mitterrand was forced to admit that the French government had been misled. He later declared that France would not use force to drive Libyans from northern Chad, but would intervene if Libyan forces advanced towards N'Djamena.

In what could be considered as a major offensive, the French again indicated in clear terms their propensity to intervene in Chad when their planes on March 17, 1986 bombed the 4,000-yard runway completed in 1985 by the Libyans at Ouadi Doum, in northern Chad. The bombings were said to serve as warning to Colonel Gaddafi of Libya who was said to be backing anti-government forces in Chad.

The French Defence Minister, Paul Quiles, said the mission was carried out on the orders of President Mitterrand, and described the whole operation as "complete success".

In the Chadian capital, N'djamena, President Hissene Habre said Chad had requested French Military aid on February 10, 1986. The official Libyan news agency said after the bombing that the attack came as a surprise to Libya. Tripoli appealed for an end to the conflict, so that efforts to find a solution through the Organisation of African Unity could be pursued.

In Paris, the representation of the Chadian rebels said that French intervention was unjustified, because no Libyans had been involved in recent operations.

The French offensive, according to reports in The Guardian, began when rebels with Libyan support were said to have crossed the 16th parallel, which was established as a dividing line after the last French intervention against the Libyans in 1983-4. The French Government said after the bombing that Chad government forces had repulsed the "intruders". The French used most of the Central African Republic force of 12 Jaguars for the attack.<sup>36</sup>

#### OTHER EXTERNAL PARTIES TO THE CHADIAN DISPUTE

Although the French are the main extra-continental actors in the Chadian conflict, there are other external parties to the crisis, such as the United States, Libya, and the OAU-mandated national forces for mediation/peace keeping from Nigeria, Benin, Senegal and Zaire. The defined goals of each group are different one from the other. Let us begin by looking at U.S. interests in Chad.

Washington's interests in Chad are somewhat obfuscated by the very nature of her undefined posture in that West African enclave. In terms of geopolitical consideration, Chad is no coastal state that would provide the U.S. with vital sea links and naval bases. Also, Communist infiltration or encroachment is not a feature of that traditionally acknowledged Anglo-French West Africa sub-region. What then must have been the U.S. prompting in the Chadian crisis, given the former's many years of negligence over an area she had hitherto seen no strategic, economic and politico-ideological need to be involved in. Indeed, the answers to this question are as unclear to the independent observer as they probably are to America's foreign policy formulators, except, of course, for the strongly anti-Libyan policy which evolved in the 1980s.

The first year of the Reagan Presidency, beginning in 1981, saw a rapid escalation of tension between Tripoli and Washington. The first concrete action was in May of that year when Reagan expelled Libyan diplomats from Washington. Then in the summer there was a clash over whether or not Libya had sovereign rights over the Gulf of Sirte. Libya claims the Gulf is within its territorial waters, the Americans claim that it is international waters. The conflict led to a dog fight in which two Libyan aircraft were shot down by U.S. fighter jets. When in October of the same year Anwar Sadat of Egypt was assassinated, Gaddafi was held responsible by the U.S. government. Then in December, 'intelligence' sources revealed that hit squads, one or two, depending on the source, were on their way to the U.S. to assassinate Reagan. The 'Washington Post' of December 7 reported that 'the report is understood to provide the name of each squad member and known aliases used by each in the past. In a television programme on January 3, 1982, presenter David Brinkley asked the director of the FBI, 'whatever happened to the Libyan murder squads who were sent to kill Reagan?' to which the director was quoted as having replied: 'Well I suppose I could ask the same question of the media. We all read and heard a great deal about the allegations ...'. Four days later the American media was beginning to say that the whole episode was one of the euphemistically termed 'dirty tricks' in which the CIA is known to engage from time to time. The obvious question is to what purpose was such a dangerous volatile story put out?<sup>37</sup>

The U.S. Congress had revealed without a challenge from the White House that the Central American Intelligence (CIA) backed Habre in 1982 to the extent of \$10m. This money was but the tip of increased U.S. involvement in Africa which was to lead, in 1983, to tension between the U.S. and France.<sup>38</sup>

According to reports, available evidence indicates that Colonel Gaddafi's logistic support for the GUNT did not escalate to the use of regular Libyan troops until Habre, with French help, re-took Faya Largeau in July 1983. After that operation against the northern Oasis town, the Libyan Air Force moved in. Confusion reigned for a few weeks as to who held Faya and the key towns of Abeche, Koro Toro and Salal.<sup>39</sup>

The run up to these battles witnessed the apparent U.S. pressure on Mitterand to fulfil his responsibilities in what the American psyche saw as the "French backyard". Reagan despatched AWACS spyplanes which conspicuously snooped on Gaddafi; U.S. aircraft carriers loomed in the Mediterranean; and there was even an "incident" between U.S. and Libyan jets over the Gulf of Syrte. Mitterand would reject the connection of events, for The Honour of France would be in question if it was thought that Reagan had pushed him into action. But the fact is that <sup>it was</sup> after this series of U.S. actions that he despatched his troops to support Hissen Habre.<sup>40</sup>

It was into this cauldron "of rare complexity and great danger" that Reagan had jumped, Mitterand said, implying strongly that fighting Gaddafi via Chad was a foolish strategy.<sup>41</sup> Perhaps, the U.S. action could be explained from the point of view of her frustrations and anger at Colonel Gaddafi, who, though from a small country that is also militarily inferior to America, is playing 'hard politics' with Western powers with a lot of zeal and confidence. In addition, oil wells being prospected - apparently successfully - by an American-led consortium in the Kanem region, may be another reason (even if marginally significant) for US interest in the crisis in Chad.

Oil, according to Andrew Lycett, is the only material reason for foreign industry to look towards developments in Chad. The Conoco consortium spent \$90 million on oil exploration in Chad between 1968 and 1978 and continues to invest, helping Chad establish a mini-refinery and pipeline to cover domestic

needs. And although it is loath to give very positive accounts of its exploration, Conoco does not deny the existence of moderate quantities of oil in Chad. Other possible areas of commercial interest are uranium mining and agricultural development. But prospecting for uranium, believed to exist in the Tibesti mountains, has been curtailed by the civil war and few positive traces have been discovered elsewhere.<sup>42</sup>

As for Libya, that country's proximity to Chad alone (in terms of geographical consideration) is enough to explain why Gaddafi will want to show interest in Chad.

Speculation centered on the possibility that Chad represented a step in Gaddafi's grand design for a Libyan Islamic empire encompassing all of the Sahara, with Chad as a springboard to the Sudan and other states - a sphere of Islamic fundamentalism and Libyan political influence, if not one of expanded Libyan legal sovereignty. This "Islamic" goal is meshed with the "Third Universal Theory" as promulgated by Gaddafi in his "green book" series. It is also compatible with a desire to be recognised as a major power in Africa. Less ambitious goals could be making Chad a client state, detaching the Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti prefecture to make it a client state, or promoting the Victory of Chadian government that would acknowledge Libyan sovereignty over the Aouzou strip - an area occupied by Libya since 1973 (see map) on the basis of an unratified treaty between France and Mussolini's Italy. Possible uranium deposits in the Aouzou strip and elsewhere may be subsidiary motives.<sup>43</sup>

#### THE OAU ROLE IN CHAD

The case of the OAU involvement in Chad was of a different nature from that of America and Libya. The Organisation's ultimate goal in Chad was

peace, although the mode and manner set about their reconciliation attempt have left much to be desired.

An OAU Peace-Keeping Force was sent to Chad, from December 1981 to June 1982. Prior to the posting, the OAU had met in Kenya where the Nairobi accord stipulated that contributing countries should be responsible for their troops in Chad and that they would be reimbursed for the expenditure when the OAU took over those expenses. Ironically, by the time the Ministers of contributing countries (Nigeria, Benin, Senegal and Zaire) met in Lagos in November, 1981, the OAU was able to raise only four hundred thousand U.S. dollars (\$400,000). This was really a non-starter.<sup>44</sup>

As an illustration, it had been argued that the Force Headquarters should be made up of contribution of companies by each participating country as follows (i) Benin - Signal Squadron; (ii) Zaire - Medical Company; (iii) Senegal - Air Detachment and; (iv) Nigeria - Logistics Company.<sup>45</sup>

But as soon as it was clear that these countries would support their contingents, Benin said she could provide the commanding officer of the Signal Squadron, but not the signallers or the equipments. Similarly, Senegal offered to provide personnel for the air detachment, but not aircraft; Zaire would only provide medical personnel, but no drugs, medical equipments nor a field hospital.<sup>46</sup>

In fact, Nigeria bore most of the brunt of the operation and was spending about five million dollars (\$5 million) a month for the up-keep of Nigerian troops which were three battalions initially. All fuelling of the OAU vehicles and aircrafts as well as those of other countries were born by Nigeria. Even at a point, Nigeria had to feed starving Senegalese troops for ten days until their resources arrived.<sup>47</sup>

While an OAU source was quoted as saying : "It is not a question of replacing the 10,000 African fighters ... our men are not going there to fight",

Goukhouni saw it differently. Goukhouni could not accept the OAU asking his mentor to leave without providing, essentially, the same services and assistance.

Furthermore, the definition of the role of the force was very ambiguous. What does it mean to say that the "Force will ensure the defence and security of the country whilst awaiting the integration of government forces", when OAU forces were asked not to fight. As Habre's forces made their advance into Chad in May 1982, the OAU forces watched. The OAU peacekeeping force left Chad at the end of June, although the Senegalese contingent left before the official departure date.

#### HISSENE HABRE'S ASCENDANCY

Advancing from his base in Abeche, Habre recaptured the whole of the BET, and key points along the road westwards to Ndjamena, from Oum Hadjer to Ati. Efforts by the Mitterand administration to supply the GUNT with military hardware failed because of the front's lack of unified command.

With support from Sudan, Egypt and the United States, Habre finally entered Ndjamena on 7 June 1982 and met with almost no resistance. The GUNT had virtually collapsed before the news of his advance, and Goukhouni fled, to reappear later in Algiers. By the end of the year, Habre's position in Ndjamena had been fully established.

Diplomatic moves to ease the tension between Ndjamena and Tripoli failed in March 1983 because of Libyan insistence on Chad's Islamic character, and on retaining the Aozou strip. As a result, further talks remained remote.

Goukhouni's response was almost predictable. Kaye Whiteman's<sup>48</sup> account has it that 'on 24 June, Goukhouni's troops, heavily equipped and supported by the Libyans, captured Faya Largeau, and advanced rapidly out of the BET to



take Abeche in the east on 8 July, thus giving the GUNT strategic control of much of northern and eastern Chad and presenting a serious threat to the N'djamena government. France and the U.S. responded with increased arms supply to the N'djamena government. Support also came from Egypt, Sudan and Zaire. With this backing, Habre's troops recaptured Abeche in July, as Goukouni had over-extended his supply-lines'.

Habre then moved immediately on Faya Largeau, recapturing it on 30 July and immediately suffered from a similar supply problem, which Goukouni and his Libyan backers exploited by moving back to the key zones, this time with Libyan air support. Paris and Washington were alarmed by this development, the existing differences between them over Chad notwithstanding. The United States gave an immediate response in announcing the sending of an extra \$15m dollars military aid (on top of the \$10m announced on 10 July), and the dispatch of two AWACS electronic surveillance planes to be based in Sudan. France was much more inclined to be cautious. For one thing Mitterand and the Socialist Party had been highly critical of earlier Gaullist and Giscardian interventionism in Africa.<sup>49</sup>

#### THE POSITION IN CHAD IN EARLY 1989

In a surprise move in May 1988, Libya announced her recognition of President Habre and his government, although the Aouzou strip was not mentioned. The two countries agreed to resume relations at ambassadorial level. There was no official response from Goukouni who has since April 1987 retired to the background of Chadian politics after his appeal for universal recognition of Habre as Head of State.

Paris also pledged the gradual withdrawal of French forces from Chad in January 1989. According to France's General Maurice Schmitt, some 200-300

French troops will be withdrawn from the radar base at Moussoro, 150 miles north-east of the capital and the base may even be close. Nevertheless, General Schmitt made it clear that "the deterrent efficiency of the Sparrowhawk operation and the possibility of it being reinforced" will remain.

Also in January, Chad freed 312 jailed supporters of rebel leader Achiekh Oumar, who signed a peace accord in November 1988 ending 23 years of civil war. The detainees included rebels and political prisoners.

Oumar, who returned from exile in November after signing a peace agreement in Baghdad with the government of President Habre, commanded the last significant group fighting Habre, the Revolutionary Democratic Council numbering several hundred activists based along Chad's eastern border in Sudan.

A coup attempt to unseat Habre was foiled on April 1, 1989. According to reports, the appointment of Acheikh Oumar as foreign minister in March was one of the reasons for the coup attempt. Other reasons may have been the domination of Habre's own people (pejoratively called Gorame in Arabic), and the rapprochement with Libya. The coup attempt was led by three of the closest colleagues of President Habre, Commanders Idris Deby, Hassan Djamous, and the Interior Minister, Ibrahim Mahamat Itno - all of whom were influential members of the FAN which led Habre to power in 1982.

Two heavily armed government columns pursued the rebels and, following a bloody confrontation in the Darfur region of Sudan, Djamous' forces were wiped out. Idriss Debby is known to have been killed in the fighting. It is thought that Djamous was badly injured and taken prisoner.

## CONCLUSION

The Chadian conflict has been of a spasmodic nature. Signs of peace had often been smeared with spontaneous outbreak of violence by one or more of the parties to the conflict against the N'Djamena government or amongst themselves. The tribal relationship in the civilian sector has not left much room for optimism either. For instance, there are the recounted incidents of arrogant Goranes not paying their bills or taxes, of squatting where they wish - the behaviour of a tribe whose leader runs the country. And yet, as many Chadians point out, the Goranes "are a very small tribe". Indeed, Chad has always been ruled by the same kind of political system: a man and his ethnic group around him. The informal and real hierarchy of power in N'Djamena (which runs into unexpected areas like the head of Air Chad, the telecommunications and the state pharmaceutical companies) has a distinctively northern look. There were clashes between the Goranes and the Hadjarais over the "settling of accounts" in January 1987. According to Lyse Doucet, "there are longstanding historical animosities among ethnic groups in Chad which will not be erased by reconciliation agreements or victories over Libyan troops".<sup>50</sup> Consequently, there are those who believe that Habre's victory over the south was largely a military victory and that he still has to win the peace. This may include the reconciliation between N'Djamena and all the warring factions and dissident groups within and outside Chad - a move to be followed with the appeasement of the various 'War Lords' through key appointments in the administration. There are, however, those who feel that Habre is trying harder to be a true head of state and that he has, on occasion, applied sanctions against his own tribe and given key posts to figures from outside his tribe.

As it is, Chad's survival may ultimately depend on the vision, pragmatism and diplomacy of whoever rules the country in identifying the divisive elements that explains much of its war-torn history and putting right these hindrances. More than anything else, its leader may have to rise above tribal loyalties in pursuit of peace and stability. The disengagement of foreign forces stationed in the country may also be the beginning of a new era for Chad.

The crisis, however, has thrown light on three main issues: The deep tribal animosity in the Chadian society; The weakness of the OAU in a peacekeeping role; The propensity of external powers - particularly France, to intervene in African conflicts whenever they wished. France was less interested in which faction was at the winning or losing end than who controlled N'Djamena and who would best pursue France's own interest.

FOOTNOTES

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14. Full report of Debre, M. statement can be found in 'West Africa', September 23, 1968, p.1391.
15. The Chadian leader announced that he had embarked on a unilateral action in requesting French assistance "... as Chad did not have the means to carry out pacification and administrative reform at the same time ...". Details in West Africa, August 23, 1969, p.1008.
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22. The withdrawal of conscript troops was announced in the first week of September, 1969, by Debre, M. the Minister of Defence, who stated that all conscripts would be withdrawn from Chad by October. Only about 130 soldiers were said to be involved. Details in West Africa, September 13, 1969, p.1077.
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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

1. Frolinat - Front de Liberation Nationale du Tchad.
2. GUNT - Gouvernement d'Union Nationale de Transition.
3. FAN - Forces Armee du Nord.
4. OAU - Organisation of Africa Unity.
5. CIA - Central Intelligence Agency.
6. BET - Borkou, Ennedi, Tibesti.
7. CAR - Central Africa Republic.
8. CCFAN - Conseil de Commande des Forces Armees du Nord.
9. CDR - Conseil Democratique Revolutionnaire.
10. CDS - Comite Defence et Securite.
11. CSM - Conseil Superieur Militaire.
12. FACP - Front d'Action Commun Provisoire.
13. FANT - Forces Armees du Nord.
14. FAO - Forces Armees Nationales du Tchad.
15. FAP - Forces Armees Populaires.
16. FAT - Forces Armees Tchadiennes.
17. FDT - Front Democratique du Tchad.
18. FLT - Front du Liberation Tchadienne.
19. MNLT - Mouvement National de Liberation du Tchad.
20. MNRCS - Mouvement National pour la Revolution Culturelle et Sociale.
21. MPLT - Mouvement Populaire pour la Liberation du Tchad.
22. MRA - Mission pour la Reforme Administrative.
23. MRP - Mouvement Revolutionnaire du Peuple.
24. MSA - Mouvement Socialiste Africain.
25. PPT - Parti du Peuple Tchadien.
26. UNIR - Union Nationale pour L'Independance et la Revolution.
27. UNT - Union Nationale Tchadienne.



CHAPTER VCASE STUDY II: ANGOLAI. INTRODUCTION

As in Chad, the involvement of external parties in the domestic affairs of Angola was not limited to extra-continental actors, but significantly showed the involvement of intra-continental actors for geo-political and economic reasons. A key issue was the emancipation effort by the Africans in Angola which resulted in the creation of at least three liberation movements with differing style and policies, but a common goal - the ousting and final elimination of the Portuguese Colonial administration. Over time, the involvement of Cuba, the United States and South Africa in the once localised conflict makes an interesting case study. It will, therefore, be worthwhile to examine the nature of the struggle vis-a-vis the mode of operation and objectives of the interventionary powers in that country. But first, let us take a look at the physical and social setting in Angola itself.

II PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY(i) Physical Features:

Angola is the largest Portuguese-speaking state in Africa with an area of 1,246,700 sq km (481,354 sq miles) and about 14 times the size of Portugal - the ex-colonial power. It has a tropical climate, with plateaus forming two-thirds of the country's land topography.



(ii) Population:

With a population of about 8.2 million (unreliable assessment due to security problems at a 1981 Census), Angola remains one of the world's underpopulated countries. Before 1960, some members of its African population (made up of both Bantu and non-Bantu stock) were legally not considered assimilated i.e. 'indigenas'. By 1960, however, some 37,873 Angolan-born black Africans had legally attained the same status as white and assimilated mesticos, and by September 1961, the distinction between assimilados and indigenas was legally abolished.

There have been six developments in respect of population since the 1974 coup in Lisbon. These are:

- (i) an unprecedented white emigration which began in the Summer of 1974 and rounded off with a massive airlift operation before independence on 11 November, 1975. It is estimated that over 300,000 people, mostly whites, were repatriated to Portugal. After the MPLA victory in that country, some Portuguese returned to Angola either to work under the new regime or to try to salvage whatever was left of their possessions;
- (ii) the regrouping of African populations, noteworthy amongst whom were the Ovimbundu migrants who drifted towards Central Angola to feel more secure from persistent UNITA massacres. The Konga refugees in Zaire also returned to Angola temporarily or permanently;
- (iii) the movement of people from urban centres to rural areas, and the death of over 150,000 Angolans - mostly victims of conflict, disease and famine in disputed areas between 1974 and 1976;

- (iv) a reconvergence of the Ovimbundu in the safer villages to evade attacks from UNITA guerrillas;
- (v) a return to normality in the domestic life of about one-third of the country in 1983 as interaction between formerly UNITA-held populations and government-held towns and villages mostly in the south-east, east and north-east of Angola became possible once again;
- (vi) the displacement of about 300,000 Angolans in the south in their bid to escape South African raids.

### III ECONOMY

#### (i) Agriculture:

Angola has only about 2 per cent of its total potential arable land cultivated by its two farming publics - the Africans and the Portuguese - both having contrasting farming outlooks that range from the former's subsistence farming to the latter's ownership of huge plantations.

By 1974, it had become the second largest African coffee producer with export earnings totalling 6,274m. escudos, and the world's main supplier of 'robusta' coffee, cultivated mainly in Cuanza Sul, Luanda, Uige and Cuanza Norte provinces. The United States was then its principal trading partner. Since independence, the main customers of Angolan coffee have been Portugal, Spain, Algeria, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic and the German Democratic Republic. Owing to civil strife and the neglect of plantations, Angola produced only 30-35% of its normal 3.5m. 60kg bags of coffee in 1976/77. Production fell from 225,000 tons in 1974/75 to 72,000 tons in 1976 and only 24,000 tons in 1981/82. Estimated production fell to 13,000

tons in 1981/82, well below the target of 35,000 tons, partly because of drought. Other obstacles hindering increased productivity at the coffee sector are excessive bureaucracy, insufficient transport and the unwillingness of Ovimbundu workers to migrate.

Apart from coffee, Angola flourishes in other crops in the agricultural sector. Sisal for instance, placed Angola at the number two position in the African production market in 1974. Although cotton is another promising product, the breakdown of activities in most European-owned plantations brought production from 104,000 tons in 1974 to 39,000 tons in 1976, and only 1,000 tons in 1978. For the first time in Angola's history, cotton was imported in 1983. After a three-company Portuguese monopoly over sugar in the pre-independence era, the Cubans took over management with the ousting of the colonial administration and output of sugar decreased from 84,000 tons in 1972 to 40,000 tons in 1982. Cassava is Angola's main crop in terms of volume produced, and remains the people's staple food. Banana production is on the increase and now ranks next to Sisal in agricultural exports. While the production of palm oil and tobacco have not risen to any significant level as the previously identified crops, groundnuts, rice, cocoa, sorghum, tropical and temperate fruit, millet and wheat verify the bright agricultural future of Angola.

(ii) Minerals:

The presence of three important minerals, namely, iron, diamonds and petroleum makes Angola one of the richest countries in Southern Africa. With independence, the monopoly of the Portuguese DIAMANG company came to an end in the diamond business as the Angolan Government acquired 77 per cent of the shares - leaving the rest for the Belgian Societe Generale. Normally, Angola is reported to export 5-8 per cent of world diamond

production but the figures for annual diamond production and export earnings are not reliable due to smuggling. It is known, for instance, that quantities of diamond have been mined and smuggled by UNITA, whose leader, Dr Jones Savimbi, admits that his movement partly sustains itself from such operations. Out of about 700 expatriates (including 120 British) who worked on the mines in 1983, 77 were kidnapped and held as hostages by UNITA from February to May 1984.

Petroleum was discovered in 1955 by a Belgian-owned company - Petrofina. Total Angolan production was 155,000 b/d in late 1982. By mid-1986, overall oil production had impressively risen to 300,000 b/d, though still short by 200,000 b/d of the 1985 target. Oil exports declined in value from about \$1,500m in 1980 to an estimated \$1,300m in 1983. Even so, oil production, refining and distribution constitute Angola's most important economic activity. The main oil companies are PETRANGOL, Elf Aquitaine, Gulf Oil and Texaco. In recognition of the value of oil in the Angolan economy - with foreign exchange earnings of over 80 per cent, the Government, in May 1976 set up a national oil company - SONANGOL, to administer all fuel production and distribution, and also to acquire 51 per cent of the shares of the Cabinda Gulf Oil Company. The USA imports most of Angola's crude, although Luanda refined 1,238,078 tons in 1981. Bunkering oils, heavy fuels and lubricating oil are also exported from Angola. Oil installations in the country are presently being protected by Cuban troops against possible UNITA strikes. Most of the rigging goes on at a point near Luanda and off-shore Cabinda.

Iron mining started in 1956 with output averaging about 700,500 tons in the 1960s from mines at Teixeira da Silva, Cuima and Andulo in the Huambo and Bie provinces. Japan and the Federal Republic of Germany have been the two main buyers of Angola's high-grade haematite. There have been

occasional South African harassment at the mines which has altered the rate of production. A 1983 annual production target of 1.1m tons had failed to materialise by early 1984. A state iron company, FERRANGOL, was created in 1981.

Other minerals yet to be fully exploited are copper in the Uige, Namibe, Huila and Moxico provinces. Manganese ore in the Malange province and phosphate rock in Zaire province also have good prospects and there are rich salt deposits along the coast.

(iii) Industry:

Angola's industrial sector, represented by only 3 per cent of GDP in 1980, is yet to make an impact in the overall economy of the nation. The food-processing industries were then the most developed. In 1973, for instance, total food production earned 3,820m. escudos, with tobacco and beverages manufactures fetching the most. That year, the output of tobacco reached a value of 783m. escudos, while the value of beverages manufactures was 1,572m. escudos. Cotton as the chief staple, attracted 1,731m. escudos in 1973, thus placing the textile industries second on Angola's industrial line-up.

Apart from the heavy industry where there have been recent improvement, present production rate in the rest industrial area is far below the 1973 level.

#### IV COLONISATION: A BRIEF HISTORY

The colonial share-out of the late 19th century eventually confirmed Portugal in possession of two large colonies in Southern Africa, Angola in the west and Mozambique in the east; of a small colony in West Africa, which is today called Guinea-Bissau after its capital city, in order to distinguish it from

the neighbouring Republic of Guinea; and of two groups of islands, those of Cape Verde and, in the South Atlantic, of Sao Tome and Principe. These territories were about 22 times the geographical size of Portugal.<sup>1</sup>

According to Stewart Easton's account, the former Portuguese colonies, officially known in 1951 as "overseas provinces", were for the most part "relics of the great Portuguese expansion of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries".<sup>2</sup> But a slightly different approach to understanding the early days of the Portuguese colonial presence in Africa is inferred in Basil Davidson's account.<sup>3</sup> His submission was that National mythology has given the Portuguese the conviction of a colonial presence in Africa since the 15th century. But,

"with the partial exception of some of the Atlantic islands, this conviction is false", he contested. "What is true", he pointed out, "is that the Portuguese maritime pioneers achieved a trading and raiding presence along the Guinea coast after the 1440's; in the Congo estuary and along the northern part of the coast of Angola after 1482; and at a few points on Africa's Indian Ocean seaboard in the wake of Vasco da Gama's great voyage of 1497-99. This faint early presence they were gradually able to transform into permanent emplacements and small trading settlements. In 1575, they founded Luanda on the Angolan coast. Early in the 16th century they built forts on Mozambique Island and at Sofala on the Mozambique coast, and later established small settlements at Sena, Tete and elsewhere in the area of the wide Zambezi valley".<sup>4</sup>

Although a few Portuguese soldiers and settlers were actively involved in African affairs before the grand Portuguese presence on the continent, it was not until the 19th century, or even, for regions far from their main bases, until the early 20th century, that Portugal wielded any real control over these territories.<sup>5</sup>

This weakness derived partly from the industrial and technological backwardness of Portugal itself, partly from the rivalry of other imperial powers, and partly from the strength of the African kingdoms and politics which faced and long resisted Portuguese invasion. In Western Angola, for example, there was almost continuous warfare for nearly 100 years after 1575.



There was no thought that the Africans in Angola would ever have self-government. But post World War II nationalist sentiment soon changed the unequal relationship between the colonisers and the colonised.

With rising consciousness amongst Angolans about their destiny, socio-political and economic dissatisfaction took expression in group protestations (led mainly by that country's one to five per cent literate population). But this growing class of nationalist agitators was quickly rooted out and destroyed in the 1950s by the government of Premier Antonio Salazar. And those who survived the massacres were subsequently faced with restrictive measures (like arbitrary arrests) introduced by the Portuguese Government to forstall future uprisings. The conditions that existed dwarfed the nationalists and made them trust only those that shared a common ethnic origin as them. In fact, so strong was this ethnic affinity that each of Angola's three major ethno-linguistic communities produced a major fighting front with different external patrons. A look at the origins and politics (internal and external) of the various liberation movements will be worthwhile.

MPLA: The Movimento Popular de Libertacao de Angola (MPLA), led by a Portuguese-educated Mbundu physician, Dr Agostinho Neto, was founded in December 1956. It had its origins in the Angolan Communist Party - an offshoot of the Portuguese Communist Party - and was at a time entangled in the characteristic ethno-linguistic bailiwick - commanding the bulk of its support from the city of Luanda and its hinterland of 1.3 million Mbundu (Kimbundu-speaking) people.

The MPLA for several years was denied operational bases in Zaire, as a result of which it had to be content with offensives from the more marginal contiguous states of Congo-Brazzaville and Zambia, against the oil-rich enclave of Cabinda - with occasional incursions into the vast grasslands of eastern Angola.

Although dominated by ethnic allegiance (as with other liberation groups), the MPLA is more representative in its composition. Its leadership, for instance, is more intellectual, socialist, urban and racially mixed than other existing movements, and its uneducated members include the inhabitants of urban ghettos - otherwise known as 'musseques' - as well as the Mbundu in the hinterland. The comparative edge scored by the MPLA over other liberation movements (by way of its composition) notwithstanding, its weakness is the absence of the Luchazis, Chokwes, Luenas and Bundas, in whose Eastern territory the MPLA had since 1966 carried out its national liberation campaign. Instead, easily conspicuous in the MPLA hierarchy are the Mbundu and mixed-descent or mestizo people.

In 1973, moreover, a key figure (of Chimbundu descent) in the Organization's eastern wing, Daniel Chipenda, broke ties with Neto and led thousands of nationalist fighters into dissidence, and later (in February 1975) joined forces with Holden Roberto - leader of another liberation movement in Angola.

Father Joachim Pinto de Andrade - former MPLA honorary president, also walked out on Neto in 1974, at the head of a group of largely mestizo intellectuals over alleged authoritarian, secretive 'presidentialism'. Neto's main sources of survival then became the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and after the coup in Portugal, the councils of Portugal's Armed Forces Movement and in communist and socialist circles. The acculturated, Lusophile nature and Portuguese linkages of the MPLA's leadership equally took expression in Dr Neto's marriage to a Portuguese woman and the reservation of top political appointments in the movement for mestizos. Incidentally, like Dr Neto, Holden Roberto also went into matrimony with a woman from one of his sources of support. He divorced his first wife, a Bakongo, and married President Mobutu Sese-Seko's sister-in-law. It was therefore not surprising

that Portugal's new government of the left rebuffed an agreement between Mobutu and provisional President, Antonio de Spínola, in September 1974, calculated at eliminating Dr Neto and his Luanda/Mbundu-based supporters from political rivalry by giving recognition to Daniel Chipenda's dissidents as the true and only MPLA.<sup>6</sup>

FNLA: The Frente Nacional de Libertacao de Angola (National Front for the Liberation of Angola) - FNLA has its origins in the Union of the Peoples of Northern Angola (UPNA) - an organization founded in July 1957 by Angolan exiles in Kinshasa, Zaire (then the Belgian Congo) with the aim of restoring the ancient kingdom of the Bakongo peoples, constituting about 13 per cent of Angola's population, in the northern districts of Zaire and Uige.

Portugal's harsh response to the March 1961 Bakongo uprising led to the flight of many Bakongo across the border into Zaire where they joined ethnic kin and whom by 1974 had constituted half a million refugees there. Attempts at structural changes in UPNA, which led to the dropping of the designation 'Northern' and left the organization's name simply as UPA, were in March 1962 followed by the taking up of its present name, to broaden the organization's national outlook. But these efforts notwithstanding, FNLA's traditional dependence on an almost completely Bakongo following has obfuscated possibilities of a credible pan-Angolan identity.

The comparatively more favourable socio-economic setting in the Belgian Congo had long attracted Angolan emigres northward. In fact, the FNLA leader, Holden Roberto, was himself a Bakongo emigre-politician who schooled and socialized in the Belgian Congo. Under him, the FNLA, with time, became an extension of Zairean politics. With little or no organizational and strategic planning, Roberto concentrated only on military actions, leaving his movement with reverses in the face of Portuguese counterinsurgency.

During these trying periods, his movement sought refuge in exile, sanctuary and isolated forest redoubts in Northern Angola. Politico-military reverses (in 1964 and 1970) resulted in mutinies and defections, especially among non-Bakongos, within the FNLA. To protect his position, Roberto became an autocrat and eliminated potential rivals - relying only on a coterie of mostly Bakongo aides to forge ahead under FNLA's fragile frames. The movement's external support came mostly from China and Zaire. Ignoring the political dimension of their campaign, the FNLA entered the 1975 power struggle for control of independent Angola from a position of military strength.

UNITA: The Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) UNITA was founded in March 1966 by the Swiss educated, former Foreign Affairs Spokesman and Secretary-General of the FNLA, Jonas Savimbi, following a split within the FNLA. The movement mainly represented a third ethno-linguistic group - the Ovimbundu, of the central Benguela plateau, who number over two million and constitute over 40 per cent of Angola's total population.

With only a little material support coming through Zambia, UNITA forces embarked on a strategy of "local servicing and replenishment" for their arms, quoting Mao to the effect that in any case, the enemy should be the "principal source" of arms for guerrilla fighters. The Chinese were of some help to UNITA in 1964, though this was marginal rather than of any significant proportion. The support had come in the form of training, finance and publicity and was probably a result of Sino-Soviet competition. Accordingly, UNITA condemned the "modern revisionism" of those (the Soviets) who armed its chief rival, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola. With MPLA's 4,500-strong army, compared to Savimbi's 800, in the early 1970s, UNITA may have survived by occasionally collaborating with the Portuguese.

The Portuguese themselves had refrained from any full-scale attacks against UNITA, considering that the organization formed a useful counter-balance to the MPLA. Although Savimbi was able to effect a more broadly based organization than the FNLA, UNITA derived its main support from the Ovimbundu who also formed the bulk of its leadership.

As the final collapse of the Portuguese colonial administration became imminent, UNITA appropriately dropped its Maoist rhetoric and assumed a conciliatory posture to fit in with the changing circumstances: Savimbi worked on gaining local European support - which served as a counter-weight to MPLA's and FNLA's external backing until mid-1975 when the Portuguese central authority collapsed - leading to the flight of Savimbi's new supporters.

Despite the many similarities between the Portuguese-speaking African territories, Angola was unique in that, almost from the outset and throughout the entire period of struggle for independence, no one nationalist group was able to achieve an unchallengeable position as the sole protagonist confronting the Portuguese.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, even after the Portuguese had left fratricidal conflict continued, and remains a problem in Angola - notwithstanding the multi-national peace initiative in December 1988, involving the Angolan Government, South Africa, Cuba and the United States.

#### FACTIONAL STRUGGLE

That internecine conflicts, involving the various nationalist organizations in Angola occurred, cannot be overemphasised. Also at the time was a general downward trend in the socio-economic condition in Portugal itself.

The cost of the protracted colonial war had by the early 1970s begun showing on other competing sectors in the Portuguese economy - leading to dissatisfaction amongst Portuguese nationals and the eventual ousting by Gen.

Antonio Spínola, of the Caetano dictatorship in April 1974. Spínola's brief entry in the political scene as his country's head represented currents of opinion that worked towards a continuing close relationship between Portugal and the African territories, involving, at the least, a protracted process of decolonization. And so, it was not until Gen. Spínola was ousted from office in September 1974 by the leftward political drift in Portugal itself, and replaced by Gen. Francisco da Costa Gomes, that Portugal had a government which sought to end the fight, effect a rapid decolonization process, and refuse concessions to the white right-wing in Angola and other former Portuguese African territories.

The various liberation movements in Angola were also by this time making efforts at reconciliation amongst themselves so as to meet the Portuguese authorities on a common front. After several abortive attempts at unification, the three movements finally in January 1975, pledged an end to all factional rivalry and sought ways of developing a common political programme, which, after negotiations with the Portuguese, later in January led to the Alvor agreement, by whose terms a date - 11 November 1975 - was set for full independence, and until which time Angola was to be governed by a transitional administration made up of representatives of the three movements and a Portuguese high commissioner to serve as an arbitrator. This arrangement broke down in a matter of days as the three movements resumed their protracted power-struggle.

Thomas Young<sup>B</sup> divides the most dramatic periods of the factional strife (January 1975 to February 1976) into three phases. The first runs from January to June, at which period heavy fighting was said to have broken out on several occasions between the FNLA and the MPLA forces, to a stage where, in June, it was seen to be escalating in its intensity and loss of life. This phase was brought to a temporary close by the Nakuru agreement, an arrangement

reached after a meeting in Kenya of the three liberation groups under the chairmanship of that country's President, Jomo Kenyatta. Once again, the three liberation movements agreed to form a joint military force and to proceed with constitutional change through elections to a constituent assembly, but again they failed to achieve a united front as arrangements broke down even before the signing.

Fighting of a more severe nature began on 9 July 1975, with the MPLA pushing the FNLA out of Luanda, forcing the latter to mobilise and committing its full military strength to a march on the capital. July also witnessed the beginning of an all-out UNITA involvement in the fighting. The main characteristic of this second phase was the full and undisputable internationalization of the civil strife in Angola, with the MPLA receiving its support from the Eastern bloc, while some Western and conservative African states served as the mentors for the FNLA/UNITA.

Backing for the FNLA/UNITA by the US Central Intelligence Agency has been estimated at US\$80m, and probably the value of Soviet assistance to the MPLA was of similar proportions. It is also reasonably clear that, on their own, the FNLA and UNITA were no match for the MPLA, which had been able to mobilise considerable political support in the cities. By October it was in control of 12 of the country's 16 provinces, or at least of their capitals. It was in these circumstances that both sides felt compelled to call for outside help, in the form of manpower as well as of money and materials.<sup>9</sup>

The third phase (October 1975 - February 1976) could thus be said to have begun with undisguised foreign intervention, with South African troops fighting on the side of the FNLA/UNITA forces, while Cuban troops lent their support to the MPLA, augmented on both sides by more financial and heavy military support from the two superpowers. None of the liberation groups wants to be identified as being the first to physically involve external parties

to the conflict. It is known, however, that the USSR and Cuba pledged support for Angolan independence if the MPLA was sworn in as the People's government, and when this happened, a massive shipment of aid was effected to resuscitate an already war-weary MPLA - and at which instance the South African invasion took place. Let us now take a look at intra-continental actors in the Angolan civil war.

### REGIONAL PARTIES TO THE CONFLICT

The myth of "Lusotropicalismo" was shattered after the April 25, 1975 Portuguese military coup that ousted the dictatorship that had dominated the Portuguese empire for nearly fifty years. Although some political observers had perceived of this development as a new beginning in Southern African race relations, less sanguine analysts realized that Portuguese civilization was not in a process of adjustment but of drastic transformation.

Nowhere in the former Portuguese empire was this radical change in the status quo more evident than in Angola and Cabinda, where the coup intensified pre-existing ethnic, racial and ideological animosity into what had by early 1976 become a fratricidal political struggle involving the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Portugal, the Republic of South Africa, Cuba, rival Angolan and Cabindan nationalist groups, many nations of Africa (but particularly Zaire, the People's Republic of the Congo and Zambia), the Organization of African Unity, and varied international financial interests.<sup>10</sup> Within the context of African regional involvement, while the FNLA received the bulk of its support from Zaire in the early days of the struggle, the MPLA, forged ahead at the same period through external support from Congo-Brazzaville.



### ZAIROIS EXTERNAL SUPPORT: THE FNLA

In a sequel to the successful Angolan insurgency against the Portuguese authorities in 1961, the FNLA forces fled the land for fear of reprisal from the Portuguese armed forces, and sought refuge among their Bakongo brethren in neighbouring Zaire.

Of immense help to the FNLA was Zaire under Cyrille Adoula (1961-1964) and Mobutu (1965-). The Pan-Bakongo Schemes of Joseph Kasavubu (1960-1961) had, however, often conflicted with the unified-Angola position of the FNLA. Kasavubu's policies which ran in conflict with the FNLA position were directed from his Kinshasa-based ABAKO Party. Likewise, under the Moise Tshombe regime (1964-1965), the FNLA failed to receive the type of support it needed for the successful execution of its programmes. This was as a result of Tshombe's pro-white settler sympathies - a situation that can be easily understood, considering his days as head of cessionsist Katanga.

Coupled with this were two other factors: (1) Tshombe's ethnically motivated dislikeness of the Bakongo, and (2) the nature of Zaire's foreign policy between 1964 and 1965 which prevented Tshombe from giving any meaningful support to groups attempting to overthrow the Portuguese regime in Angola that had once closely supported him.

By sustaining the FNLA, even if minimally, Tshombe not only reduced the threat of the Zairois revolution front (Comite National de Liberation - CNL) to Kinshasa, but also earned support - financial and otherwise, from the Portuguese authorities in Angola for cutting down the offensive strength of the MPLA. Indeed, the political calculation of the Kinshasa government was such that even when Mobutu came to power in his November 1965 coup, he continued in the manner of his predecessor to use the FNLA as an effective instrument of foreign policy in relation to (1) his growing ideological dispute

with the Brazzaville regimes of Massemba-Debat (1963-1968) and Colonel Marien Ngouabi from 1968 and (2) his desire for a series of options in dealing with either Angola or Cabinda.

The enclave of Cabinda, geographically located to the north of the Congo River's mouth, is bordered by Zaire and Congo-Brazzaville, with approximately 80,000 inhabitants, of whom Europeans number about 8,000.

Although the beginnings of its ethno-nationalism are somewhat shrouded in obscurity, the earliest known move was in 1956 when the *Associação dos Indígenas do Enclave de Cabinda* was founded. Citing the provisions of the 1885 Treaty of Simulambuco between the Portuguese government and the "Princes of Cabinda" (Angola was not mentioned), the Association sought to give legal justification to its dual objective of separating Cabinda from Angola and forming a Union with either the French or the Belgian Congo.

In 1959, however, progress was made with the coming into being of an emigre group in Congo-Brazzaville known as the *Association des Ressortissants de l'Enclave de Cabinda (AREC)*, led by Luis Ranque Franque. The Association was converted in 1960 from a mutual aid association into an overtly political movement, the *Mouvement de Liberation de l'Enclave de Cabinda (MLEC)*. Several other Cabindan ethno-associations existed before 1960. These were the *União Social dos Maimbes de Luali* (a local branch of Zaire's ABAKO Party), the *Alliance du Mayombe (Alliama* - an association largely hostile to Kasavubu's ethnic subgroup of the Mayombe), and the *Comunidade Cabindenes (Comcabo)*. The last three groups mentioned above lacked both the drive and organisational effectiveness to influence any meaningful change in the political scene of Cabinda. In a sense, their contributions were quite peripheral.

Until 1963, the political scene in Cabinda remained the exclusives of three major groups, namely: MLEC led by Luis Ranque Franque, with support

from Brazzaville; *Comite de Accao da Uniao Nacional de Cabinda (CAUNC)* - the 1961 splinter-faction from MLEC, led by Henrique Tiango Nzita, with alternating support from Kinshasa, Brazzaville and Gabon; and *Alliama*, led by Antonio Eduardo Sozinho, which alternated among calls for annexation into Zaire, an independent Cabinda free of external manipulations and domination, and lastly, an independent Angola-Cabinda.

A merger move for CAUNC, MLEC and Alhama, initiated by Abbe Youlou in Brazzaville in 1963 finally led to all three groups coming under one political organization - FLEC. The new organization then received the unreserved support of Youlou whose overall calculation was the eventual annexation of Cabinda onto Congo-Brazzaville.<sup>11</sup>

#### BRAZZAVILLE EXTERNAL SUPPORT AND THE MPLA

The conservative regimes in Brazzaville and Kinshasa had, between 1960 and 1963, denied the MPLA chances of effectively penetrating the Angolan frontier. This situation compelled the MPLA movement to embark on a diplomatic-political offensive to gain more international support, while forcing the FNLA to accept a common-front strategy, ostensibly aimed at a final MPLA incursion into and victory in Angola. The MPLA common-front policy was an abortive attempt. And with that failure, the radical ideologues grouped behind Viriato da Cruz, while Agostinho Neto enjoyed the followership of those who supported increased efforts at penetrating the fragmented Bakongo community. A third faction, led by Mario de Andrade, lacked ideological direction. The dispute was exacerbated by the growing Sino-Soviet ideological rift, with Neto backing the Soviets while da Cruz supported the Chinese.

The MPLA came to face one of the most difficult moments since it came into being during this period. Prime Minister Adoula closed the MPLA liaison

office in Kinshasa in November 1963, and in July the following year, the OAU recognized the FNLA as Angola's sole representatives. The successive misfortunes of the MPLA at the time would naturally have caused a severe psychological and operational damage to the movement, but for its timely transfer to Brazzaville in 1963 as the new headquarters.

By 1963, Brazzaville's support for MLEC in Cabinda had lessened as MLEC dropped its Brazzaville alliance and took up a programme for the independence of Cabinda. This, combined with Youlou's growing relations with the politically isolated government of Tshombe in Zaire's Katanga Province, made an alliance with the Adoula-supported FNLA in Cabinda an unattractive political option vis-a-vis the Cabindan separatists. Consequently, Youlou invited the MPLA to Brazzaville in exchange for a de facto agreement that the MPLA would not favour both Cabindan independence and the annexation of Cabinda by Zaire. Indeed, Youlou's political calculations were complex.<sup>12</sup>

The MPLA had ~~an undisturbed~~ stay in Brazzaville between 1964 and 1968, as Massemba-Debat, increasingly concerned about Sino-Soviet-backed forces in his state, employed as his personal bodyguard, a paramilitary corps - mostly made up of (from 1966) Cubans and MPLA recruits.

Although the MPLA began preparations in 1966 to open a new front in Western Zambia, it had also by that time become unpopular in Brazzaville as a result of its support of the Massemba-Debat government during the attempted June 1966 coup. As one of his first moves as president, Captain Ngouabi in 1968 curtailed the influence of all revolutionary groups, particularly the MPLA, in the domestic politics of Brazzaville. It was at this stage that the MPLA once again shifted headquarters, this time to Lusaka. Although Brazzaville still served as a base for the MPLA between 1968 and 1972, its domestic influence in the country was greatly reduced.

### ZAMBIA AND THE ANGOLAN CRISIS

Zambia was faced with a series of choices based on national interest concerning her involvement in the Angolan crisis.

Unofficially, Zambia served as UNITA's patron. The issues were: the important Benguela/Lobito railway line ran through territory under UNITA control in 1975, and if ever Angola was partitioned, Zambia would have to rely on UNITA's goodwill to survive economically. On the other hand, if the MPLA emerged victorious at the end of the struggle and besieged the towns along the railway (even without securing full control over their immediate environs), then Zambia may have to face a MPLA reprisal for her support for UNITA by being denied access to the port of Lobito. But these were not the only hard choices faced by Zambia; there were others. For instance, due to the fact that her outlets to Dar-es-Salaam and Mombasa via the Tanzan railway, and to Nacala via Malawi, were controlled by Tanzania and Mozambique - both fully committed to the MPLA cause, Zambia, once again, found herself under strong political pressure.<sup>13</sup>

Using the only alternative rail outlet would involve Zambia in the politically embarrassing course of greater dependence on former Rhodesia (now the independent state of Zimbabwe) and South Africa - a situation in which her already shaky position as South Africa's main detente partner in the attempt at negotiated settlements of the former Rhodesian and South-West African issues would lose most of the little credibility it had in Africa - South of the Sahara.<sup>14</sup>

Zambia's support for the UNITA/FNLA alliance could also be explained from the point of view of the MPLA's close links with the Soviet Union. Zambia was anxious about all foreign interventions in Angola, but appeared to be more concerned about the spread of Soviet influence in the region. This

was made evident in President Kaunda's state of emergency speech at the end of January 1975, in which he referred to the Soviet Union and Cuba as a "plundering tiger and its deadly cubs coming in through the back door". Citing the security situation on Zambia's frontiers and foreign (i.e. Soviet) interference in Zambian affairs as justification for his action, Kaunda declared a state of emergency and suspended constitutional guarantees. But according to Charles Ebinger, the decree was a "smoke screen to conceal his fear that the influx of hostile tribesmen into Zambia's north western and western provinces would enhance the political position of his domestic opposition".<sup>15</sup>

Throughout January, Kaunda publicly continued to support UNITA out of fear that an MPLA government could strangle Zambia economically, threaten its internal security by supporting dissident frontier populations, and ruin its expanding dialogue policy with the white south. But by February the withdrawal of the bulk of the South African forces from southern Angola, combined with the collapse of the UNITA/FNLA coalition, forced Kaunda to adopt a public posture more favourable to the MPLA. In tune with the policy shift, the 'Times of Zambia', on February 13, did a diplomatic about-face and praised the Cuban intervention against the forces of imperialism. The paper called on Cuba to extend the struggle southward to liberate Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Namibia.<sup>16</sup>

#### THE SOUTH AFRICAN INTERVENTION

It is clear that South African advisers began working with UNITA to defend Huambo towards the end of September 1975, but this was at a time when the USSR and Cuba were openly shipping stockpiled war materials to Angolan ports. The South African invasion (using a mixed force of South African regulars and FNLA soldiers, plus some Portuguese mercenaries) began

around 23 October, and by the beginning of November had rapidly overrun Mocamedes (now Namibe), Lobito and Benguela. On 5 November the Cuban government made the decision to dispatch substantial numbers of Cuban troops in support of the MPLA forces.<sup>17</sup>

Although the South African intervention was designed to protect the Cunene River hydroelectric complex in south western Angola, to wipe out SWAPO bases in southern Angola, and to improve the military position of the FNLA-UNITA forces on the eve of Angolan independence, it turned out to be a serious diplomatic and military miscalculation. With logistic and material supports from the United States, Zambia and Zaire, the intervention (1) severely damaged South Africa's detente policy, (2) exacerbated the Namibian political situation, owing to the large South African military build-up in the northern part of the territory, and (3) compromised the viability of US and Chinese support for the FNLA-UNITA coalition.<sup>18</sup>

Fearing that if allowed to continue, the spate of MPLA military successes might prove inimical to South Africa's politico-military interests, the government responded swiftly in its attempts to halt the MPLA advance. The South African authorities feared that the radical MPLA government, apart from wanting to support SWAPO, might put pressure on Kaunda to assume a more militant posture, in respect of the Benguela Railway, as against South Africa's detente policy.

South Africa, however, did not try to stop the MPLA threat all alone. She moved in with the overt assistance of the United States of America which did great damage to the latter's policy flexibility. Given the political situation in Angola, the overthrow of the Spínola administration in September 1974 left the United States with no policy. Consequently, US policy centred on the success of a negotiated compromise through the Alvor Agreement. With the break down of the agreement, Kissinger's immediate alternative was to back the FNLA, and later the FNLA-UNITA coalition.

The failure of the Kissinger policy, according to Charles Ebinger, "lies in the fact that his parochial view, focusing only on US-Soviet great-power rivalry, precluded the United States from seeing the larger regional and international context of the Angolan struggle. Likewise, it was not until early 1975 that State Department officials began to count Savimbi's forces as a serious factor in the Angolan political scene".<sup>19</sup>

Although Kissinger may have been restricted in his options by the congressional actions of December and January, which placed a ceiling on US financial support for FNLA-UNITA, he, nonetheless, failed to weigh correctly the following (1) the anti-Chinese component of the Soviet's Angolan policy, (2) the implications of the South African intervention on black African public opinion, (3) the effectiveness of the FNLA-UNITA coalition arising from the inveterate hatred of the Bakongo for the Ovimbundu, and (4) the significant divisions within the MPLA leadership on future relations with the West. These misperceptions constitute a classic myopic policy-failure.

Likewise, the South African intervention left Chinese foreign policy formulators in a dilemma. As soon as it became known that South Africa had intervened, China withdrew her military advisers to the FNLA. This was partly due to her faulty calculation that US-South African support for FNLA-UNITA would result in the defeat of the Soviet-MPLA-Cuban alliance, as well as her desire to preserve her revolutionary credentials. Covertly though, the PRC continued to send in aid through third party African states, thus leaving Peking's clandestinity advantageous.

#### EXTRA-CONTINENTAL INTERVENTIONISTS IN ANGOLA

The Angolan conflict was simply the natural outgrowth of the power vacuum created by Portugal's sudden withdrawal following the April 1974 Coup



d'etat in Lisbon. Competitive external intervention could only have been prevented by reciprocal superpower restraint or by unified African nationalist leadership, as in Mozambique. Since both factors were absent, the competition for power within Angola became internationalized and militarized before independence. The time had passed when European states, individually or collectively, could forestall this outcome.<sup>20</sup>

According to Crocker:

"The Angolan situation dramatises the extent of Africa's continuing dependence on, and vulnerability to, extracontinental and white South African military powers in the absence of effective buffers against the resort to force. In the past, such buffers have included an implicit mutual deterrence of direct intervention by the United States and the USSR, acceptance of a "natural" European role in African security problems, and the possibility of substantial gains for the intervening power flowing from successful support of its local ally. In addition, growing African resistance to external military roles - as reflected in the rhetoric and substance of African diplomacy - constituted a hinderance. With these buffers stripped away, the Angolan civil war was decisively affected by non-African power and interests. African nationalist forces and black-ruled states played strictly secondary military roles, serving as legitimisers, critics or champions of external force. Apart from the colonial wars of Britain, France and Portugal, joint military campaigns on the Angolan scale have not taken place on the African continent since World War II. After twenty five years of strategic fragmentation, Africa appears to have entered a new phase of external military clientage and polarization".<sup>21</sup>

#### THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Chinese diplomatic initiatives after the Cultural Revolution increasingly emphasized government-to-government relations, and support of liberation movements was confined to those groups opposing continued white rule. The Chinese apparently believed that this policy would allow the PRC to maintain its revolutionary ideology without jeopardizing its relations with African governments.<sup>22</sup>

But perhaps, of more urgent consideration for the Chinese leadership at the time of the Angolan crisis was their own score in the Sino-Soviet rift. And

so, when the Soviets manifested their presence in Angola (even if through a surrogate), the Chinese sought a counter-move through their support for the FNLA. China, nevertheless, had before her active support for the FNLA aided various Central and East African countries both militarily (through combat training) and technically (by the provision of infrastructure, like railways and dams).

After Youlou's overthrow in August 1963, the new radical regime of Massemba-Debat launched a major diplomatic offensive aimed at obtaining support from Cuba and the communist countries of Europe and East Asia. In 1964, both Peking and Moscow were recognised, and extensive commercial ties were established. By 1968 Peking had lent to Brazzaville more than twice what Moscow had provided by the Communist states, while giving a substantial boost to the stagnant Brazzaville economy, was not without political cost. Among China's first envoys to Brazzaville were Colonel Kam Mai, an expert in guerrilla warfare, and Colonel Kao Liang, head of the New China News Agency in Dar-es-Salaam, which served as conduit for Chinese subversive activities.<sup>23</sup>

China emerged as the main external political force within the new Ngouabi regime. The PRC, however, appeared disturbed at Ngouabi's curtailment of guerrilla strikes at Zaire, Angola and Cameroun. In fact, an abortive attempt by Ange Diawara to unseat the Ngouabi regime in February 1972 was suspected of Chinese conspiracy and clandestinity.

After years of mutual antagonism between China and Zaire, General Mobutu visited Peking in January 1973. President Kaunda of Zambia was known to have encouraged a settlement of the political rift between the two countries. At the same time, the Chinese were involved in financing the Zambia-to-Tanzania railway project which ran at \$400-million.

Mobutu's visit to Peking occurred against the backdrop of an attempt by Mobutu, Ngouabi, Julius Nyerere and Kaunda (in December 1972) to reconcile

the differences between the MPLA and FNLA. Although the resultant accord set up a theoretical union of the two movements under a Conseil Supreme de Liberation de L'Angola, this agreement was quickly shattered in May 1974, when the FNLA wiped out a large contingent of MPLA troops attempting to infiltrate Angola.<sup>24</sup> Remarkably, by June 1974, advance units of a 112-man contingent from China, led by a major-general, had arrived in Zaire to train FNLA guerrillas at the Kinkuzu military base - a figure which had risen to 250 by mid July 1975.

In sending their military instructors to the FNLA via Zaire, the Chinese sought to capitalise on the leadership crisis in the MPLA that again erupted, as Chipenda, the MPLA military commander in Zambia, contested Neto for leadership. Like Jonas Savimbi - an Ovimbundu - Chipenda queried (1) Neto's growing personality cult; (2) Mulatto domination of the MPLA top ranks (seven of the most senior ten were mulattos); (3) the assassination tactics in Zambia that had backfired to UNITA's advantage; (4) Neto's discussions with officials of Cabinda Gulf which contravened official MPLA stance; and (5) Neto's ideological fraternisation with the Soviet Union and the Socialist countries of Eastern and Western Europe at the expense of relations with China. The internal schism in the MPLA widened even farther by August. For China, it was a unique opportunity to score a major diplomatic triumph over the Soviet Union and to further establish its politico-military influence in central Africa, through Mobutu. Kaunda's discreet backing for the Chipenda faction followed later in the year as arms poured in from Peking.

Since 1972 the Chinese had scored many diplomatic successes at Soviet expense. For instance, (1) The PRC made steady headway in Zaire and exerted considerable control over the FNLA (2) after April 1974, Chinese influence had eclipsed that of the Soviets among the leaders of the new revolutionary government in Mozambique (despite years of active Soviet support), the

FRELIMO government in 1974-1975 declined to grant port facilities to the USSR (3) Chinese prestige with the Namibian and former Rhodesian nationalist movements was never higher (4) despite evidence of Chinese complicity in the 1972 Brazzaville coup attempt, China continued to have a significant presence there (5) the PRC established diplomatic relations with the conservative Khama regime in Botswana in January 1975 and finally, (6) China had run roughshod over the Soviets in the struggle for influence in the fledgling Angolan Communist Organization (OCA).<sup>25</sup>

Although all seemed well for China in her Africa policy, in reality, her intervention in Angola constituted an embarrassment for Peking. The FNLA/UNITA alliance with South Africa and the United States made China publicly announce her withdrawal of active support for the anti-MPLA factions, and all Chinese personnel had by November of 1975 left Zaire. China, nevertheless, seemed to retain some influence through North Korean FNLA instructors who stayed behind in Zaire, while she called for a coalition government in Angola.

#### SOVIET-CUBAN COLLUSION

The Soviet Union had consistently supported the MPLA since armed resistance to Portuguese rule began in 1961. This aid was briefly suspended in 1973 during the split in the movement's leadership, but by January 1975 full support had been given to the established leadership under Agostinho Neto. Until his replacement as Portuguese High Commissioner in Angola by Admiral Cardoso in January 1975, Admiral Rosa Coutinho had permitted limited quantities of military supplies from the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries to be off-loaded at Luanda for the MPLA.<sup>26</sup>

In August 1975, large contingents of Cuban and Soviet personnel began to arrive in Angola, increasing their numbers to 11,000 soldiers by February 1976; in October the last remaining Portuguese troops were withdrawn; and in mid-October the FNLA and UNITA launched a coordinated counter offensive on the MPLA, which by late October was joined by an armoured South African column composed of regular South African defence forces, black members of the pre-coup Portuguese Angolan army, white Angolans, right-wing followers of Spínola's Portuguese Liberation Army, and white mercenaries. This intervention seriously tipped the military balance against the MPLA.<sup>27</sup> With Angola formally attaining independence by November 11, 1975, came the MPLA announcement of the creation of a government in Luanda, and twenty-four hours after which a similar proclamation was made by the rival FNLA-UNITA coalition of a government in Huambo. Both appealed to the United Nations for recognition.

The MPLA administration received immediate recognition from Algeria, Guinea-Conakry, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome and Príncipe, Somalia, the Peoples' Republic of Congo, Mozambique, Somalia, the Soviet Union and other East European countries, Brazil and North Vietnam. Mozambique's recognition of the new administration was followed up with the immediate announcement that 250 veterans of her anti-Portuguese campaigns would be sent to assist the MPLA. Remarkably, no country recognized the rival administration based in Nova Lisboa (now Huambo), although African countries sympathetic to the FNLA-UNITA coalition favoured the official OAU position which stressed the formation of a coalition government composed of all three nationalist movements.

An attempted invasion of Cabinda by FLEC in late November was thwarted by the MPLA. But because of the considerable South African advance, the USSR airlifted heavy military hardware to the beleaguered

MPLA. Pockets of Cuban troops were also deployed in Luanda just about the same time. The combined Soviet-Cuban effort enabled the MPLA to stabilise the northern, southern and eastern battle fronts and then to mount the offensive - first against the FNLA in the north, then in the south. (For details on the Soviet-Cuban collusion, see Chapter I, section on Taxonomy of Intervention and in relation to their Foreign Policy, see Chapter II, section on the Foreign Policy of the major external powers.)

The fratricidal strife was characterised by an 'advance-retreat' pattern in most encounters, usually in the main urban centres and along the main lines of communication. The lines of advance shown (see map) only indicate quasi-control of the urban centres and lines of communication, as outlying rural areas payed allegiance and loyalty to the nationalist movement of their choice.

Intensive fighting continued among the various nationalist movements between December 1975 and January 1976. The most dramatic success for the MPLA during this period was recorded in the north, where FNLA forces retreated before their advance, alongside units of their Cuban allies. Following the capture of Caxito, Barra do Dande and several other small towns near Luanda by the combined forces of the MPLA and Cuban regulars, the FNLA was forced to begin evacuation of its main port and military base at Ambriz. The movement also lost both its most important airbase at Negage and political headquarters at Carmona.

A three-pronged FNLA-UNITA advance on Luanda via the vital Cambambe dam and power station near Dondo (with support from South African artillery and reconnaissance aircraft operating from the hills along the southern bank) were successfully repulsed by the combined MPLA-Cuban forces between 10-13 January 1976 - only hours away from the OAU emergency summit on Angola. One column was stopped south of Porto

Ambrim, a second near Gabela, and a third, south of Quibala. The scenes of action roughly followed the line of the Queve river. The FNLA-UNITA forces, however, controlled Santa Comba and Cela, both of which lie north to the river. Massango and Marimba were also their strong-hold at the time.

The MPLA had by the end of January established a decisive military advantage. While the FNLA forces were on the verge of retreat in the northern towns of Santo Antonio do Zaire, Sao Salvador and Maquela do Zombo and across the border into Zaire, the MPLA-Cuban forces were already in control of the strategic crossroads at alto Hama in the South. Moving westwards, Lobito was captured by a contingent from this force, while another unit advanced south from Novo Redondo. In February, the main army - led by Soviet tanks and with the support of the MPLA's maiden air wing, already tested at Novo Redondo and Mussende - then liberated Silva Porto and Huambo. Luso also fell after an advance from Henrique de Carvalho.

The Soviet Union's successful intervention in Angola, and the line of confrontation in Southern Africa which looked to be emerging in the wake of the Angolan civil war, posed some uncomfortable dilemmas for the United States and the Western states with interests in the area. On the one hand, recognition of the Soviet-backed and Cuban-installed MPLA regime would inevitably be regarded in some quarters as a severe setback to their political, economic and strategic interests. On the other, continuing to oppose the MPLA will almost certainly increase, rather than diminish, the Soviet Union's opportunities to extend her influence.<sup>28</sup>

#### UNITED STATES INTERVENTION

Testifying before a Senate subcommittee on African affairs on 29 January 1976, the former US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, explained

the Angolan crisis to millions of American television viewers thus: "The Soviet Union must not be given any opportunity to use military forces for aggressive purposes without running the risk of conflict with us".<sup>29</sup>

Angola was to be the post-Vietnam testing ground of American will and power in the face of the global expansion of a bullish rival whose recently realized military outreach was seen to be leading it toward dangerous adventures ... But why Angola? When Secretary Kissinger attacked Soviet and Cuban intervention on the ground that they had "never had any historic interests" there, many Americans probably wondered, conversely, what their own historic interests in Angola might be.<sup>30</sup>

This view was succinctly put across by Chester A. Crocker in his claim that

"apart from its brief venture into African grand strategy in conjunction with the British during World War II, the United States has never considered itself an African power in military or strategic terms. Throughout the period of African strategic decolonization, Washington has been at pains to point out that the region was of primary interest (and responsibility) to the European ex-metropoles; its sole direct military involvement during the 1960s occurred within the framework of the international effort to support the territorial integrity of Congo-Kinshasa (Zaire). Principal exceptions to this pattern have been the US military facilities maintained in the Mediterranean states of Morocco and Libya (until the overthrow of King Idriss), and in Ethiopia, (before the incumbent military regime of Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam) where major communications and intelligence related facilities have been based. In Liberia, air staging and communications are available to the United States under agreements dating back to the 1940s".<sup>31</sup>

Suffice it to say that for 14 years, the colonial wars of independence waged by Africans against various settler-European powers on the continent meant little or nothing to US policy formulators. This was more so with the entry of the Nixon Administration in 1969 which marked a major review of American policy toward Southern Africa (NSSM39). The review concluded that African insurgent movements were ineffectual, not "realistic or supportable"



alternatives to continued colonial rule. Consequently, United States' policy became even more Eurocentric.

"The authors of the interdepartmental policy review, commissioned by then White House adviser Henry Kissinger, questioned "The depth and permanence of black resolve" and ruled out a black victory at any stage". They did not question the depth and permanence of Portuguese resolve. It was a basic miscalculation stemming from faulty intelligence, in both senses of that word".<sup>32</sup>

By the early 1970s, however, the beginning of the end for Portugal as a Eurafrikan power had become imminent. Defections and demoralization among the spent Portuguese forces; national economic slump and general inflation; anti-regime sabotage and terrorism; and the massive influx of 1.5 million job-seekers clearly explained the Portuguese predicament. But the American government stood surprised and embarrassed when in April 1974, the Portuguese armed forces ousted the government of Salazar's successor, Marcello Caetano, whose dictatorship and "ancien regime" had had close ties with the US government since coming to power. "The debacle of America's subsequent involvement in Angola flows from the same propensity to view what is happening through the distorting lens of a larger strategic concern - this time a global shoving match with the Soviet Union".<sup>33</sup>

The three-way fratricidal bloodletting which began in late 1974 after Portugal's new military regime accorded exclusive political legitimacy to the competing insurgent movements, and continued in 1975 after the final collapse of Portuguese authority, has partly been blamed on America's role during the crisis. John Marcum argues that: "in its quest for "stability", it would have seemed logical for Washington to turn to preventive diplomacy to muster external support for the cause of a unified Angolan government reflecting all interests. Instead, it chose policies that exacerbated Angolan divisions".<sup>34</sup> Substantiating his claims, Marcum points out that a Sino-Soviet rift was in progress at the time.

At this point (early in 1975), he argues:

"the United States might have acted expeditiously to forestall competing with the Soviets, modestly improve its diplomatic position in Africa, and even to encourage conciliation in Angola. In particular, the United States might have encouraged the OAU on its arbitration role and thereby minimise large scale external intervention -which might even have made a Soviet entry very difficult. Instead, at the crucial stages of the Alvor Accord, the National Security Council's "40 Committee" authorized a covert American grant of \$300,000 to the FNLA - the movement with the largest army and most disposed to a military rather than political strategy".<sup>35</sup>

Remarkably, the "40 Committee" offered no assistance to UNITA, whose strategy was the most political of the three - with an impressive two million Ovimbundu backing and 325,000 European support. The movement depended solely on the prospect of electoral strength and therefore did not solicit for external military support at the time. "Apparently past connections, and an irresponsible habit of thinking in terms of "our team" and "theirs", enticed the US Administration into choosing one side".<sup>36</sup>

After the FNLA-UNITA coalition, official reports had it that Congress in July 1975 pumped over \$30 million which reached the joint force in the form of military hardware by the end of the year.<sup>37</sup>

The South African intervention created new problems for the United States. Its unclear goals and ideological blunders in Angola notwithstanding, the United States succeeded in further commanding the wrath of many African countries by colluding with South African forces against the MPLA. American foreign policy, this time under Kissinger, was once again brought into disrepute before the international community after her mid-1970s misadventure in Vietnam. Charles Ebinger identifies the factors responsible. "The failure of the Kissinger policy", according to Ebinger, "lies in the fact that his parochial view, focusing only on US-Soviet great-power rivalry, precluded the United States from seeing the larger regional and international

context of the Angolan struggle. Likewise, it was not until early 1975 that State Department officials began to count Savimbi's forces as a serious factor in the Angolan political scene". He, however, added that, "in fairness to Kissinger, it must be recognised that the congressional actions of December and January, which placed a ceiling on the level of US funding for FNLA-UNITA, severely restricted Kissinger's options". "Nonetheless", he submitted, "he failed to weigh accurately the following: (1) the anti-Chinese component of the Soviets' Angolan policy, (2) the implications of the South African intervention on black African public opinion, (3) the ineffectiveness of the FNLA-UNITA coalition arising from the inveterate hatred of the Bakongo for the Ovimbundu, and (4) the significant divisions within the MPLA leadership on future relations with the West". "Taken together, these misperceptions", according to Ebinger, "constitute a classic myopic policy failure".<sup>38</sup>

Perhaps, the most costly of Washington's strategic miscalculations was the decision in late October 1975, to co-sponsor with South Africa a military assault on Angola. Consequently, all hopes of a unified African stance in opposition to outside intervention disappeared, as states such as Nigeria and Tanzania, previously critical of Soviet intervention, rallied to the cause of the MPLA. In Nigeria - a major source of American oil imports - the press lashed out at alleged US-South African conspiracy, the government increased its financial commitment to the MPLA by \$20 million, and there were violent demonstrations in the capital city of Lagos which left the US Embassy there under attack by a stone throwing crowd. Anxious and divided over how to respond to the intrusion of white-ruled South Africa, African Heads of State converged in Addis Ababa on January 10-12, 1976, for an extraordinary OAU summit meeting, but not much was realised from the meeting, except that the regional body survived an imminent break-up.

The point is not that Africans welcomed intervention from any quarter. Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda praised China for her prudent withdrawal from active involvement on the eve of Angola's independence. The point is rather that because of the powerful racial symbolism of South Africa, its intervention had had a convulsive effect among Africans, overriding anxieties related to Soviet and Cuban intervention.<sup>39</sup>

In addition to its alliance with South Africa, the United States overreacted to the harsh rhetoric and socialist advocacy of a Marxist-influenced liberation movement by identifying it as the "enemy". Responding to the MPLA as a Soviet pawn rather than a discrete, if blemished, African reality, Washington then wagered against it in a losing contest with the Soviets.<sup>40</sup>

It is alleged that much of Washington's faulty intelligence on which decisions were both made and executed in respect of the Angolan crisis came from the CIA's "close liaison with the South African Security Service", which itself would have a vested interest in a larger American involvement.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, what is clear to Africans is that South Africa acted very largely in response to its own agenda: an opportunity to mount search-and-destroy operations against insurgents of the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO), who had been raiding across the Namibian border; and a chance to work for the installation of a "moderate" government in Angola, thus furthering Pretoria's policy of "detente" or diplomatic accommodation with pragmatic black neighbours.<sup>42</sup>

Together, the South Africa<sup>n</sup> and the American Administrations appear to have viewed Soviet involvement in Angola as a threat to "moderate" governments in neighbouring states, and to the status quo in white-ruled Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe (before independence), as well as to what Secretary Kissinger terms "international equilibrium". The self perception of

South Africa's dominant Afrikaner elite as an outpost of white-Christian civilization standing against the rapacious forces of liberal/communist world conspiracy fits well with and presumably reinforces Kissinger's own pessimistic views. African nationalists, denied Western assistance, are then defined in terms of their foreign assistance - and identified as "the Soviet-backed" this, and "Chinese-backed" that.<sup>43</sup>

Marcum concludes his critique on the "Lessons of Angola" by pointing out that the United States must be responsible for the consequences of its own actions and inactions. It cannot control those of others. If the Angolan experience brings home to US administrators the need to base their African policy on African realities; if it alerts them to avoid the traps inherent in their policies, stimulating a greater willingness to relate to others, however "radical", on a basis of mutuality of interest - then, despite its agonies, it will yet have served Americans well. More difficult to rationalise will be the cost in human suffering, death, displacement and destruction -sustained by Angolans.<sup>44</sup>

#### THE OAU EMERGENCY SUMMIT

Since a general appraisal will be made on the position of the OAU on intervention, this sub-section will only recapitulate on the organization's handling of the Angolan crisis. That the OAU is fraught with internal schisms as a result of the ideological differences that exists amongst its members (an outcome of dissimilar colonial experience) cannot be over-emphasised.<sup>45</sup>

However, at the twelfth summit conference of the Organization in Kampala from 28 July to 1 August 1975, conference decided that a "Commission of Inquiry, Conciliation and Information on Angola", comprising representatives from ten OAU countries visit the territory to prepare a report

on the possibility of deploying an African peace-keeping force there. Meanwhile, the organization officially refused to take sides in the Angolan dispute, recognising as equally valid, the claims made by the three rival movements, and declared total opposition to any international involvement.

The South African intervention gave the MPLA a diplomatic score, since this compelled some influential African countries to drop their previously neutralist position and to recognize the MPLA administration shortly before the conference. That was, however, not to mean an easy mass backing for the MPLA at the conference. While Senegal and the Ivory Coast (the latter had even extended landing rights to South African Airways at the critical moments of the Angolan civil war) allegedly joined Zambia and Zaire in urging the South Africans not to pull out of Angola before the summit meeting, a walk-out threat from the organization was issued by Guinea-Conakry if the OAU failed to recognize the Luanda based government of the MPLA and condemn South African intervention.

Twenty-two OAU countries, nevertheless, recognized the MPLA as the sole representative of the Angolan people, and 22 others, with varying degrees of commitment, favoured a rival resolution calling for a cease-fire and negotiations leading to a "government of national unity". The outcome was deadlock. Soon after, howbeit, the OAU recognized the MPLA, but it was not until a majority of members had approved of the MPLA as the government for Angolans.

In late 1976, the Neto leadership began to move against him, and in May 1977, he and his closest supporter, Jose Van Dunem were removed from the MPLA central committee. An abortive coup attempt against Neto was carried out in the same year. However, by December, the first MPLA Congress was held at which the Neto leadership tried to project a new image and marked out for itself a rigorously orthodox Marxist-Leninist path. President Neto died on

10 September 1979 in a Moscow hospital, and the party transferred power to Jose Eduardo dos Santos, hitherto the minister of planning. The new president was committed to the policies laid down by his predecessor.

Attacks from South African troops against Angola since 1978 increased in scale from 1981. The most notable offensive was 'Operation Protea' in August in which several thousand South African troops advanced at least 120 km into Angola. Throughout 1982 and 1983 South Africa and UNITA together intensified their attacks on Angolan targets. In January 1984, South Africa abruptly changed its posture in the region and proposed to withdraw its troops if Angola would in turn deny facilities to SWAPO. The arrangements were not successful.

The UNITA leader, Jonas Savimbi visited the USA in January 1986 for military support. The US responded by supplying UNITA with portable anti-aircraft and anti-tank missiles. There were sporadic fightings between UNITA and the MPLA forces in the mid-1980s until 1988 - some with severe casualties on both sides.

#### THE SITUATION IN 1989

The current atmosphere in Angola tends to accommodate dialogue between the two main warring parties - the MPLA forces and UNITA rebels.

Antonio dos Santos Franca Ndal, Chief of Staff and Deputy Defence Minister, was quoted as saying, "There have been contacts with UNITA at various levels ... we are at the beginning of a dialogue".<sup>46</sup>

"The remarks", according to one report, "contradict official government policy and have not been reported in Luanda, which recently announced an amnesty for the rebels. UNITA has rejected the offer and the government will probably wait and see how many rebels are prepared to give themselves up before adopting a new policy".<sup>47</sup>

Presently, UNITA is believed to have some 40,000 trained guerrillas and perhaps 30,000 irregular fighters, and holds more grounds than the government, though this does not include towns. The MPLA government, on the other hand, has a force-strength of about 160 MiG fighter aircraft and Mi24 helicopter gunships as well as an army of 50,000 with 50,000 reservists.

The tripartite regional settlement of December 1988 - endorsed by Angola, South Africa and Cuba, is viewed as a possible sign for peace in the region.

Under the terms of the agreement, Cuban forces will be withdrawn from Angola - a move to be completed by 1991, while South Africa, on her part, is expected to grant independence to Namibia.

Observers, however, believe that outside forces will continue to undermine all efforts at peace in the region. They fear also that "Even if an agreement was achieved on paper, the fundamental personalities, politics and styles of the MPLA and UNITA, embittered by 13 years of vicious fighting, may be irreconcilable".<sup>48</sup>



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## CHAPTER VI

### CASE STUDY III: THE HORN OF AFRICA

The geographical location known today as the 'Horn of Africa', earned the name from its horn-like formation at the north eastern-most periphery of the African continent.

The territory is characterised by constant battles between and amongst groups. The protracted nature of the struggles on the one hand, and the refusal or inability of the various parties in the conflicts to compromise on issues, on the other, leaves the ongoing disputes in that region amongst some of Africa's longest.

This case study is less of an example of direct extra-continental intervention, although related very much to superpower and regional geopolitics. The only clear involvement of external military forces in the region was in the Ogaden where Cuban forces with their Ethiopian counterparts and Soviet military advisers were deployed to offset Somali military gains and eventually liberate the disputed territory.

Before examining the nature of the struggles and the role of the various interventionist powers in the Horn, a geo-physical and social appraisal - including the recent history of the area in turmoil, will be worthwhile.

#### PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY

The region popularly referred to as the Horn of Africa is technically the Somali Democratic Republic's long coastline in the Indian Ocean which stretches right through the Gulf of Aden. Generally, though, the Horn has come to represent the territories of the Democratic Republic of the Sudan, Ethiopia, Republic of Djibouti, the north-eastern tips of Kenya, and the Somali Democratic Republic.

Somalia is bounded to the north by the Red Sea, to the north-west by Djibouti, to the south by Kenya, and to the west by Ethiopia.

The country's name derives from its population - the Somali - a Muslim Cushitic-speaking people whose nomadic instincts took them well beyond their present frontier into their immediate neighbouring states. Before the recent arrival of refugees, 'about three-quarters of the Somalis lived, sparsely distributed and mainly as pastoral nomads, in the 637,657 sq km (246,201 sq. miles) of the republic itself'.<sup>1</sup>

The land is mostly dry savannah plains, with a high mountain escarpment in the north in the direction of the coast.

Apart from bananas which serve as the country's principal export crop, sorghum, citrus fruits and millets are grown.

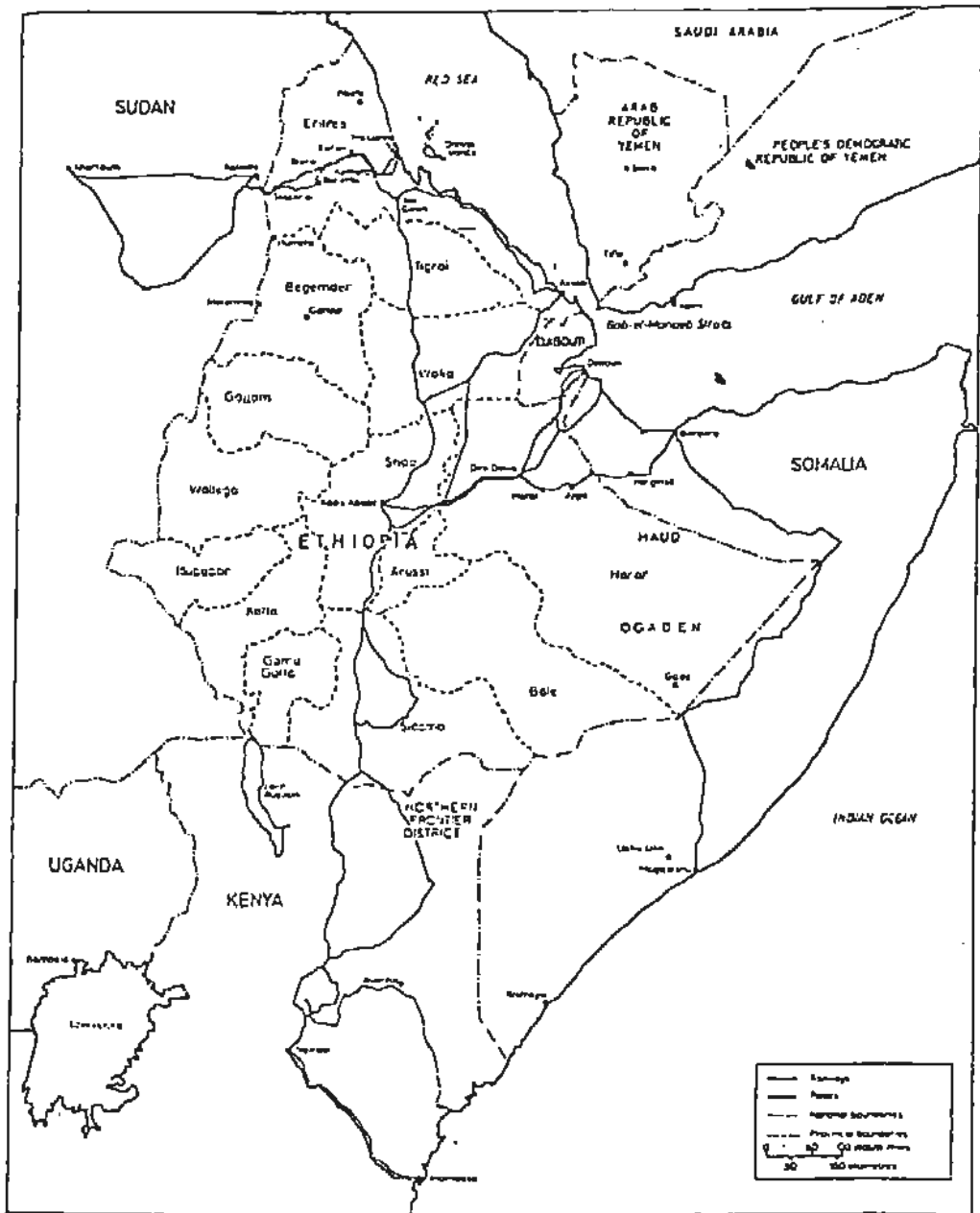
Between the Juba and Shebelle - the only two permanent rivers, and both of which water this arid land - is Somalia's richest agricultural settlement. The region is also the home of the Rahanwim and the Digil and some Bantu of partly ex-slave origin. The first two groups, apart from having a distinctive dialect, are also the least nomadic people on the land. Other Somali clans are Isaq, Darod, Dir and Hawiye.

According to Laitin:

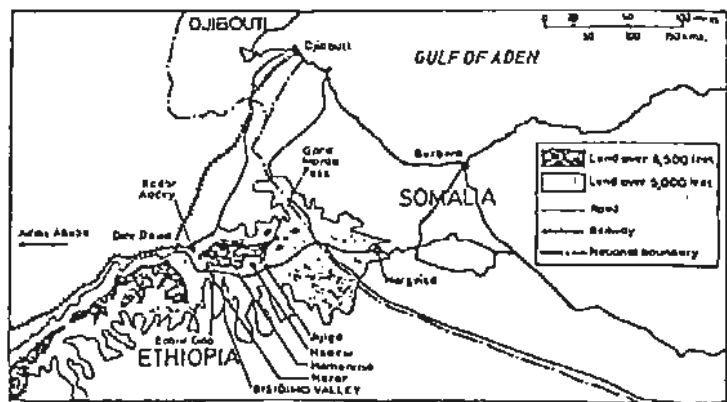
'Somalis share a common language, a common religion, a common culture, a common set of historical experiences, and an identification with the desert environment which forms the Horn of Africa.'<sup>2</sup>

His claims on the homogeneous nature of Somalia notwithstanding, Laitin points out that:

'What united the clans on the Horn was not their common objective traits so much as their common opposition to the expanding presence of European "infidels". It was only later on, amid the colonial experience, in which outsiders defined their territory as "Somalia" or "Somaliland" that indigenous political entrepreneurs in the Horn organized their opposition to colonial rule in terms of a "Somali" identity.'<sup>3</sup>



Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa



Source: Strategic Survey, 1977, p.23.

Laitin further argues:

'That the Rahanwiin people on the Shabelle River (whose language is very different from the official language of the Somali State) consider themselves as part of the same nation as the Dhulbahantes of the north; but that the Oromo people in North eastern Kenya (many of whom speak standard Somali) do not, suggest the social and political rather than the genetic construction of nationalist reality.'<sup>4</sup>

Mogadishu - with an estimated 1973 population of 350,000, serves as the Somali capital, and has since the 10th Century been established as an Islamic trading post. The other main centres are Kismayu and Berbera (the principal southern and northern ports respectively), and Hargeisa (capital of the northern regions).

A mid-1972 population estimate on Somalia was 2,941,000.<sup>5</sup>

#### RECENT HISTORY

- 1886 - Britain took control of northern Somalia. Italy also moved in and colonised the southern regions in the same period.
- 1936 - With Italian Somaliland and Eritrea as their strategic bases, Italy conquered Ethiopia, but only to lose control of both territories to the British, whose military was mandated to administer the regions following the Italian defeat in east Africa in the Second World War.
- 1943 - The most influential nationalist party - the Somalia Youth League (SYL) was founded as a youth club.
- 1950 - Italy was asked to return to Somalia as trusteeship authority for the United Nations as part of the organization's plans to prepare Somalia for independence by 1960.
- 1 July 1960 - Following earlier negotiations between northern and southern politicians, the two regions merged to become the Somali Republic.

- Late 1960s - Soviet interest in the Horn developed as a result of its newly acquired active role in the Indian Ocean and its desire to find facilities on the Indian Ocean littoral for its increased naval deployment. The United States, however, established links with Addis Ababa as its major external supporter and arms supplier in the early 1950s.
- 1969 - Soviet-Somali relationship became firmly established after the 21 October 1969 bloodless coup that brought Mohamed Siad Barre and his Supreme Revolutionary Council to power.
- Sept 1974 - The Dergue came to power in Ethiopia after the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie.
- 23 Apr 1977 - The United States finally pulled out of Ethiopia when the Dergue expelled the MAAG mission.
- Nov 1977 - Somalia cut all ties with the Soviet Union over the latter's support to Ethiopia in the Ogaden war. There was massive Soviet airlift of men and material, including 10,000 Cuban troops to support Ethiopia's war effort.
- March 1978 - Somalia completed the withdrawal of her forces from the Ogaden after a decisive defeat at Jigjiga where the campaign was directed by General Vasily Ivanovich Petrov, First Deputy Commander of the Soviet ground forces.
- Early 1979 - There were three main developments in the Horn within this  
 Early 1989. period. (1) Sporadic fighting between various insurgent groups and government forces (1979-1985); (2) moves at rapprochement at intergovernmental level (1986-1987); and (3) the merging of insurgent forces to carry out joint campaigns against government forces (early 1989).



### EXTERNAL MILITARY AND NON-MILITARY CONNEXIONS

Apart from trying to solve the problems of clan divisions and nepotism, the Siad Barre administration concerned itself with developmental issues, which it sought to tackle through 'Scientific Socialism'. This need, invariably, prompted a close tie between Somalia and the Soviet Union. But to survive as a State, the Somali Democratic Republic could not solely depend on the USSR. She needed others too.

According to I.M. Lewis,<sup>6</sup> 'the army's heavy dependence on Soviet equipment and training greatly increased Soviet influence in Somalia. The USSR acquired a variety of military facilities, notably at the Soviet-developed port of Berbera in the north'. But, 'the People's Republic of China was more important as a source of major civilian projects, including the all-weather arterial road linking the northern and southern regions of the State'.<sup>7</sup> 'North Korean influence', according to Lewis, 'blended with Chinese in public pageantry, in the regime's philosophy of self-reliance, and in the national cult developed to celebrate the heroic leader, Siad Barre, hailed as 'Father' of a people whose 'Mother' is the 'Glorious Revolution'.<sup>8</sup> He observes that, 'while this inevitably led to a marked decline in links with the USA and most Western countries, the Italian connection remained important, with Somalia enjoying associate EEC status through the Lome Conventions'.<sup>9</sup>

Siad Barre brought his country to international focus and prominence with the degree of independence he demonstrated in 1974 by joining the Arab League - his drive for 'Scientific Socialism' notwithstanding. The same year he served as Chairman of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

On the basis of his country's new image in the world scene, a confident Barre strived to put across to the international community Somalia's case for the self-determination of her kith and kin - under foreign rule in Ethiopia (the Ogaden), Kenya and the former French Territory of the Afars and the

Issas (now Djibouti). At first, the ousting of Emperor Haile Selassie's imperial regime in September 1974, by a socialist orientated military, offered some settlement hopes for Somalia, as Ethiopia's new administration (the Provisional Military Administrative Council, or Dergue) was of a similar ideological leaning as the Mogadishu leadership, but both Soviet and Cuban mediation efforts failed in their attempts to reconcile the differences of the two contestants. There have since been a series of disturbances by the two million or so Somali-speaking nomads against the various foreign authorities where they are settled. Coupled with this are non-Somali-connected rebellions, as in Eritrea. There have also been unrests in the provinces of Tigray, Begemder and Gojjam - all lying to the north of Ethiopia. The Eritrean struggle has been on for the past twenty six years.

Other disturbances which the Dergue have had to cope with in the past and are still managing to contain today are: in the south, the Oromos (Gallas), Ethiopia's largest ethnic group, now set for 'national liberation'; in the east, the Afars, whose uprising threatened Addis Ababa's links with the sea; and in the south-east, Somalis of the Ogaden and other parts of Harar province (see map). The theme of their campaign has been the right to either secede or regroup with their kith and kin in the Somali Democratic Republic. The Ogaden, where most of the Somali-speaking nomads are found, actually came under Ethiopian jurisdiction after the colonial frontier adjustments of the early twentieth century, which added the territory to the Ethiopian Empire. But, 'the 1960 independence constitution adopted by the Somali Democratic Republic (an amalgamation of the former British Somaliland and Italian Somalia) pledged it to "liberate" the Somali clans of the Ogaden as well as those of the French Territory of the Afars and Issas (now independent, as Djibouti) and the Northern Frontier District of Kenya, and to integrate them into a 'Greater Somalia'.<sup>10</sup> Clearly, then, the setting in the Horn is one in

which compromise among the various regional parties to the conflict will be hard to come by just now or even in the future. This is so because overriding all sane and practical considerations toward settlement are the respective historical claims and pursuits, tenaciously upheld and executed by each contestant. Nor are the external powers involved any nearer to giving up because of their own strategic and ideological interests. Indeed, the era of 'glasnost', seen by most observers as marking an end to the Cold War, is yet to be fully tested in the Horn.

#### COMPETING STRATEGIES FOR THE HORN

The irreconcilable position (at least for now) of both Ethiopia and Somalia over the Ogaden has led to the application of two strategies.

The first was the Soviet-Cuban strategy, 'first tested in March 1977 when Fidel Castro, during an African tour which included Libya, Ethiopia and Somalia, called the Ethiopian and Somali leaders to Aden for a summit meeting - in which Marxist South Yemen also participated - to discuss the formation of a 'progressive front' at the mouth of the Red Sea. Castro was hoping to help restore good relations between the Marxist neighbours in the Horn (he correctly saw both the Eritrean and Ogaden problems as vestiges of the colonial past). Castro was selling Soviet goods, since the Soviet Union was at the time seeking a way of simultaneously retaining her substantial investment in Somalia, nurturing her growing commitment to South Yemen and promoting her interests in Ethiopia'.<sup>11</sup> Fidel Castro's peace mission proved abortive at the end, as Somalia's President Barre reiterated his original position on the dispute - that of winning back what 'rightfully' belongs to his territory, as well as the need to thwart 'Abyssinian colonialism'.

The second strategy was the Arab-American plan first initiated at a meeting in May 1977 at Ta'iz in north Yemen. The chief planner behind the scheme was President Numeiry of Sudan, although he needed the cooperation of the leaders of North and South Yemen for its successful execution. Saudi Arabia was more of a distant observer. Numeiry, disliked by Libya and Ethiopia for his pro-Western posture, formed a strong political alliance with Saudi Arabia and Egypt - closest U.S. partners in that region, for his own reassurance. The theme of the Ta'iz meeting was 'Red Sea Security', already being promoted by Numeiry as a 'Zone of Peace' so as to discourage in the area the involvement of both Israel and the superpowers.

Of the Numeiry approach, it was said that it 'accentuated the convergence and divergence of local and extra-regional interests in the Red Sea. Israel, once a staunch ally of Haile Selassie, supported the Ethiopian military regime because she feared Arab control of the exit from the Red Sea more than she feared Soviet involvement in the area. Saudi Arabia and other moderate Arab oil producers supported and financed the Eritrean struggle against the Marxist Ethiopians, but were unwilling to see the Marxist faction among the Eritreans emerge as the ruler of Eritrea's 600-mile Red Sea coastline. South Yemen had long served as a conduit for Soviet and Chinese arms supplies to the Eritreans, yet in May 1977 she was cited by Ethiopia's leader Lieutenant-Colonel Mengistu Haile-Mariam as Ethiopia's only friend in the area. The United States, while prepared to go a long way towards protecting Israel from an Arab or Soviet blockade in the Red Sea and towards securing the safety of Israeli-bound shipping through the waterway, was opposed to Israel's commitment to the repressive Ethiopian junta. One did not have to look far for even more striking paradoxes: despite Ethiopia's shrill anti-Arab propaganda, Libya was one of her major supporters; by the end of 1977, Cuban pilots were flying Soviet planes on missions against Marxist

Eritrean guerrillas once trained in Cuba and still using Soviet arms; and Iraq, the recipient of the largest Soviet aid, was actively supporting Somalia and the Eritrean Liberation Movement'.<sup>12</sup>

### SHIFTING ALLIANCES

Even after the September 1974 military coup that ousted Emperor Haile Selassie, the Dergue continued to maintain links with the United States of America, consistent with the pattern of the previous administrations.

American economic aid received in Ethiopia between 1953 and 1977 totalled about £200 million, while military aid was in the region of \$400 million, including Military Assistance Programme grants and sales credits. Apart from some 25,000 Ethiopians who received military training in the U.S., and of whom the senior officers of the present Dergue constitute an appreciable proportion, Washington, had in addition sent a Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) mission to Ethiopia. The group numbered 300 men at its peak. From U.S. calculation, continued links with Ethiopia would help balance the Soviet presence in Somalia, as well as reassure other African countries of Washington's credible relations and protectionism. Washington also hoped to score a moderating influence on the military junta and identify with Ethiopia's developmental efforts.

By 1975, nevertheless, the degree of American military support for Ethiopia had doubled to \$22.3 million. Side by side with this development was the authorisation of the Sale of military hardware to Addis Ababa to the tune of \$53 million over a two-year period, and the transfer of a squadron of second-hand F-5A 'Freedom Fighters' formerly based in Iran. Delivery was also made of M-60s and F-5Es to Ethiopia between 1975 and 1976.<sup>13</sup>

At first, all seemed well between Washington and Addis Ababa, but soon things began falling apart between the two when the Dergue, in a sweeping action that included purges and indiscriminate arrests, provoked an American reaction. President Carter's response to this was the application of human-rights criteria in all dealings between Washington and Addis Ababa - a scheme already in motion in U.S. foreign policy even before the gross violation of human rights by the Dergue.

Perhaps in anticipation of a U.S. punitive action over their violation of the Rule of Law, the Dergue, in February 1977 indicated its plans to look towards the Socialist bloc for future military assistance, and two weeks after that announcement, the United States suspended military aid to Ethiopia over the latter's violation of human rights.

America's final pull-out of Ethiopia was effected on 23 April 1977, when the Dergue expelled the MAAG mission - then already reduced to only 46 advisers - and ordered the closure of Western consulates in Asmara. The American, Egyptian and British military attaches and some three remaining western journalists in Addis-Ababa were also expelled. The American Embassy was then asked to reduce its strength to half its original size.

The diplomatic assault by the Dergue against the United States was carefully contrived, and executed by the ruling obligarchy which, in anticipation of the possible hard times ahead, had visited Moscow in December 1976 to secure promises of about \$385 million in military aid. But Ethiopia's arch rivals - the Somali Republic's adoption of 'Scientific Socialism' in 1969 had greatly impressed the Politburo in Moscow. So by 1974, the 22,000-man Somali army (now about 60,000 men, with the navy and airforce having 550 and 2,000 personnel respectively) had had 300 BTR-40 and -152 armoured cars and 250 T-34, T-54 and T-55 tanks in its arsenals. The airforce had 66 combat aircraft, including MiG-15s, -17s and -21s. Caught in the dilemma of serving

two opposing states at the same time, and wanting to appease both for Moscow's own strategic end, the Soviets planned on retaining their long established relations with Somalia while opening new military ties with Ethiopia. And just at the start of the 1974 revolution in Ethiopia, the Soviet Union signed her first-ever treaty of friendship and cooperation with a sub-Saharan African State - Somalia. Soviet reward for this move was her right to a deep-water port at Berbera where repairs on ships of the Soviet Indian Ocean Fleet <sup>were</sup> carried out on floating docks. In addition to this, provision was made in Somalia for the accommodation of 1,500 Soviet personnel; about 15,000-foot surfaced runway; and communications facilities.

Meanwhile, Somali ties with Saudi Arabia further strengthened - embarrassing the Soviet Union, who at the time was beginning to review her links with Mogadishu. In July of 1977, Somali-backed forces pushed into the Ogaden, and by August, Soviet military assistance to the Somali Democratic Republic had ceased. The United States, as if in waiting, then announced at the end of August her preparedness to supply 'defensive' weapons to Somalia, but only to withdraw the offer when the intricacies surrounding the Ogaden war became clear. Mengistu succeeded in securing more arms for his beleaguered troops from the Soviet bloc in October - the very month in which the Soviet ambassador to Ethiopia confirmed that Moscow had 'officially and formally' halted arms supply to Somalia and only had commitments and responsibilities to Ethiopia.

According to reports from the U.S. State Department in January 1978, 2,000 Cuban and 1,000 Soviet military personnel were deployed to Ethiopia. Supplies of military hardware 'were said to include some 300 T-55 tanks, BTR-60 and -152 APC, MiG-21 (and possibly MiG23) jet fighters shipped in crates for assembly in Ethiopia, 155mm and 185mm guns and 'Stalin organ' multi-barrelled rocket launchers. Some of the supplies were coming in by sea to

Assab, close to the Ogaden front, and the United States estimated that 30-50 Soviet ships had passed through Suez between June and December'.<sup>14</sup>

The long expected cancellation of the 1974 treaty between Somalia and the Soviet Union, finally took place on 13 November 1977, as the former expelled some 5-6,000 Soviet technicians, military advisers and journalists, as well as deny them rights to all military facilities in Somalia. Added to this was the expulsion of Cubans in the country and the Severence of diplomatic relations with Cuba. Mogadishu then accused Moscow of interference in the Ogaden war, while charges bordering on Cuban-Ethiopian conspiracy to attack Somalia were levied against the Habana government. The Somali tilt was sequel to promises of large donations for military purchases by Saudi Arabia, conditional on rapture of links with the USSR and indications of US and Western support.

### THE MULTI-FACETED WAR

#### (i) The Ogaden

Regular forces of the Somali Democratic Republic, in coalition with the Western Somali Liberation Front (WSLF), launched a combined military attack on Ethiopia in July 1977. The WSLF's initial thrust was aimed at capturing Harar before the arrival of Soviet arms off-set their plans. The final and largest effort to besiege Harar was on 22 January, 1978.

After the successful defence of Harar, the Ethiopian forces' counter-offensive concentrated on the recapture of Jijiga. In mid-February they advanced east and south from Dire Dawa

'to cross the mountains between Jijiga and the Somali border, by-passing the Somali troops dug in at the Gara Marda pass. They broke through to threaten the Somali rear on 28 February after heavy fighting. Four days later the Somali troops were in full retreat ... Later, Ethiopian officers complained that Soviet



advisers had prevented them from pressing home their attacks, allowing the Somalis to withdraw. As the Somali regulars pulled out, the Ethiopians advanced rapidly through the Ogaden, and within a week all its main towns - Kebridar, Degabhur, Wader and Gode - had been recaptured'.<sup>15</sup>

The undeclared war ended almost as it started - rather unceremoniously - with the announcement by President Barre on 9 March 1978 that Somali troops had been withdrawn from Ethiopian territory.

According to reports,

'during July and August the battle claims of the two sides escalated even more sharply than the fighting itself. The WSLF seemed to have put dozens of localities, scattered over an area of some 500,000 square kilometres, under their green-and-red flag. The fighting spread far beyond the Somali-inhabited Ogaden and Haud regions themselves into most of the rest of Harar province (Ethiopia's largest province and virtually the entire eastern third of the country) and three surrounding provinces: Bale, Sidamo and Arussi. The last three are inhabited mostly by Oromos whom, with the Somalis, formed the 'Somali-Abo Liberation Front''.<sup>16</sup>

(ii) Eritrea

After containing the Somali thrust to a point of near-comfort in the Ogaden, the Dergue moved north to prepare for a counter-offensive in Eritrea. 'In 1977, after fifteen years of struggle for this vital coastal region of Ethiopia, the well-armed, well-trained, well-disciplined and highly motivated 'forces' of the three Eritrean secessionist movements took effective control of most of the province'.<sup>17</sup> According to one report, in 1977 the Eritrean insurgent organizations 'had overrun almost all the province except five towns: the capital Asmara, the ports of Assab and Massawa, and Barentu and Adi Caieh. All but Assab were under heavy attack'.<sup>18</sup>

In order to repel further Eritrean attacks, the Ethiopian army embarked on a massive build-up, mobilising and deploying about 60,000 men in the Begemder and Tigre provinces. However, units of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) moved into

Tigre to offset the build-up, and with the Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF), liberated a few towns.

'In large areas of the territory, particularly around Keren, the 'nationalist fighters' established an efficient administration to govern a mostly sympathetic population: hospitals and factories functioned underground, plantations and farms once owned by Italian expatriates and later nationalized by the government in Addis Ababa were taken over by 'Eritrean nationalist fighters' co-operatives. Rural bus services run by the rebels linked towns in the 'liberated areas'.<sup>19</sup>

An Ethiopian counter-offensive, nevertheless, proved very effective, and the Eritreans - later forced to dismantle main base facilities - resorted to hit-and-run tactics.

Asmara would probably have been liberated long before now, and independence declared, but for the fratricidal struggle amongst Eritrea's liberation groups. The problem was one of disunity among rival insurgent groups.

'The oldest-established group, Ahmed Mohammed Nasser's 22,000-strong Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) forged separate unification agreements during 1977 with its two rivals: the Marxist Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) of 12,000 men under Ramadan Mohammed Nour, and the maverick ELF - Popular Liberation Forces (ELF-PLF) of 2,000 men under Osman Saleh Sabbe, the Eritreans' most successful propagandist and fund-raiser. It was expected that the ELF-PLF would ultimately return to the fold of the EPLF (from which it had split in 1976), and there was hope that, under constant prodding from \*...their chief mentor...\* the two main groups would unite before final victory, rather than gain independence only to fight \*... a Chad/Angola-style civil war afterwards'.<sup>20</sup>

### (iii) Internal Strife in Ethiopia

In the multi-faceted military campaigns in the Horn, Ethiopia's degree of involvement and war-burden incurred even from her domestic battles alone, by far out-weighs what either the Eritreans or Somali have had to cope with in recent times. Coupled with Ethiopia's main battles in the region are two other insurrections the Dergue have had to face, and are likely to face again - given the hit-and-run ~~tactics~~ of the insurgents.

In north-western Ethiopia, for instance, forces of the Ethiopian Democratic Union (EDU), a centrist group gathered by tribal chieftains from the Haile Selassie era, former administrators, soldiers as well as defectors from the Dergue's own administration and armed forces, carried out attacks from across the Sudanese border against a number of front-line towns in the first six months of 1977. The main fighting force consisted of several thousand poorly armed men from Gojjam, Tigray and Begemder provinces. In the course of fighting, they managed to liberate the major market towns of Metemma and Humera, and later marched on to Gondar, the capital of Begemder province. Despite both overt and covert support for the group from Sudan and Saudi Arabia respectively, the group still lacked adequate arms to execute their campaign. Worse still, the characteristic in-fighting within nationalist groups was very much present in the EDU, thus causing great setbacks. The group finally fell apart in late 1977 after failing to recapture Humera, one of its former liberated zones later captured by Ethiopian forces. But the proliferation of insurgent groups was soon to be made evident.

'Allied with both the EDU and the WSLF was the Afar Liberation Front (ALF) in the eastern plains, along the rail and road routes linking Addis Ababa with Assab and Djibouti. The Afars, long disaffected from rule by Addis Ababa, harassed these vital arteries effectively, putting the railway to Djibouti out of action for most of the year and severing the road from Assab at the height of the Soviet arms shipments.'<sup>21</sup>

Other groups in Ethiopia that threatened the stability of the country were rival political parties to the Dergues who called for a return to civilian rule, dissident elements within the armed forces and the ruling council itself, and student leftists who considered the Dergue as 'fascists' responsible for the subversion of the founding tenets of the revolution.

The 'National Democratic Revolutionary Programme' decreed in April 1976 had spelt out the terms of the proposed civilian rule in a 'democratic

people's republic'. Remarkably, it was not implemented. A body was set up by the Dergue to compliment its programme. It was known as the 'People's Office for Mass Organizational Affairs' (POMOA), and charged with the responsibility of organising associations (Kebeles) of peasants and urban dwellers, educating revolutionary cadres and preparing the advent of a 'proletarian party of the masses'. The body was disbanded, and in its place, the 'All-Ethiopia Socialist Movement' (Me'ison) was established. But soon, Me'ison was seen by the Dergue as a threat to its own programme, consequent upon which a purge of its leaders and the killing of its supporters were carried out. Those purged included the Dergue's chief Ideologist - Haile Fida. Apart from Me'ison, two other Marxist organisations exist in Ethiopia. They are 'Seded', 'a largely military grouping, and 'Wasleague', which has both military and trade union support. In August 1978 a number of military cadres turned out to be members of both, apparently so as to ensure that they, and not the Dergue, would control any united front party that was established and also the political office set up in 1976 to organize political education. Some 200 of these cadres were arrested, the position of Wasleague was weakened, and the episode again set back the plans to announce the formation of a regime political party as soon as possible. However, it also demonstrated the Dergue's intention to retain control of the political process. Confidence in this control was shown as early as July 1976, when for the first time, Dergue members were given formal administrative posts - thus placing members of the council under the various ministries. Over half its 85-odd surviving members were shifted into provincial posts and ceased to play any part in Dergue affairs'.<sup>22</sup>

The main opposition to the Dergue, however, came from a clandestine Marxist group known as the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP). Part of its operational mode evolved around armed attacks against prominent members of the armed forces and police, trades union movement, civilian

government, civil service, the Kebeles and the Dergue itself. Twice in April and November 1977, EPRP members amongst whom were a sizeable proportion of students, were massacred in their hundreds while demonstrating against the Dergue and buried in mass graves. Following a 'search-and-destroy' operation against EPRP members, 400 party activists were rounded up only to be executed after a prison riot.

The Dergue itself is not without the problem of leadership. After executing its previous leader, General Teperi Bante, and six other top officers over alleged charges of plotting against him, Mengistu took over chairmanship of the Council in February. Mengistu's vice-chairman, Lieutenant Colonel Atnafu Abate was executed in November 1976 over charges of 'counter-revolutionary crimes' which included his expressed view that 'the interests of Ethiopia should be put before ideology'.

#### ALLIANCES IN THE REGION

Despite the Dergue's anti-Arab posture, especially over Colonel Gaddafi's support for the Eritrean insurgents, an alliance did take place between Ethiopia and Libya. The reason, however, is not far fetched: President Numeiry's regime in Sudan had increasingly become pro-Western - a move greatly resented by Libya and Ethiopia - both Socialist orientated in one form or the other. There was therefore the need for them to unite against Sudan.

Interestingly, while Sudan and Libya had antagonistic policies directed at each other, they both supported the Eritrean insurgents. There was, however, a near-outbreak of war between the two countries by the beginning of 1977 over Ethiopia's granting of refuge to Sadeq al-Mahdi Ansar's rebels and Sudan's overt support for the EDU and Eritrean nationalists. The situation was