WAR IN SSA: Toward Comprehension, Mastery, Transcendence
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Those who will not understand history
are doomed to repeat it.
> - George Santayana

It is a given that complex problems spanning
decades will not lend themselves to easy
solutions.
> - Nelson Mandela

Time past and time future are both, perhaps,
contained in time present.
> - T.S. Eliott

The time has come for Africa to take full
responsibility for her woes, to use the immense
collective wisdom [she] possesses to make a
reality of the ideal of the African renaissance
whose time has come.
> - Nelson Mandela

I.

INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW

Africa is plagued by violence. To be brutally specific wars,[1] and situations so tension ridden
and deteriorating as to be likely to erupt into war - as Rwanda did in 1994 and Congo (ex-
Zaire) in 1995 - are common. Looking back to 1960 or to 1980, the past decade and a half
have seen more wars and infinitely more deaths and economic destruction than the 1970's, the
1960's or the late colonial era. Except as to self respect belief wars can be ended, not merely
damped down or suspended, to reel off the lengthy list of current wars in Europe, Asia and
Latin America is little comfort. To note that a majority of them too or are also consequences

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[1]   War is defined in this paper as sustained violence involving a substantial portion of a country's population
    and territory.

of imperial break-up, ancient conquests and half forgotten prior wars is relevant to showing SSA is not unusual and to pointing to the complexity of seeking to comprehend and master.

But not all of Africa is or likely to be at war. To suggest civil war was probable in - say - Botswana or Tanzania or Ghana or Madagascar or Mauritius would be to invite incredulous laughter. And one type of war - conquest of neighbours or massive forced boundary changes - has not been common, indeed has been virtually unknown, in post colonial Africa. In that sense the OAU has done its work well. Nor - contrary prognostications - have African states tended to explode in secessionist travail. The exceptions - Eritrea/Ethiopia, Somaliland/Somalia and Guinea (Bissau)/Cape Verde, Mali/Senegal were all recent (and in the first two cases unconstitutional and violent) failed mergers. In Biafra the initially secessionist movement turned to seeking a coterie of similar secessionist (or confederal?) states and then to attempted conquest of the centre of power. African civil wars have almost always been about participating fully in or dominating central governance, not existing the state. In these respects 1960-1997 Africa has performed much better than 1810-1837 (or 1907) Latin America or post British Indian and Soviet imperial zone states during their early years of independence.

Further cause for tentative optimism can be found in Zimbabwe, Namibia, South Africa, Eritrea, Ethiopia and probably Mozambique and Uganda. Wars can be ended (whether by negotiated or military means) and notably better governance, participation and economic results likely to enable escape from a history of war to be achieved.

Africa's woes in respect to war do indeed largely flow from pre-colonial, colonial and post colonial intervention - "the forces historically responsible for her woes as Nelson Mandela put it. **But** even if many causes were non African, they did not exist in a vacuum. For example "divide and rule" only succeeds if the targets help make themselves victims by providing divisions to be used to play them off against each other. Non-violent external intervention - via controlled financial flows, intellectual consciousness altering and imposed technical assistance and NGOism - only has totally disintegrative impact in contexts of disastrous economic and governance performance. Otherwise - and sometimes even then - the "power to say 'No'" is more real than usually supposed. Whatever the causes, there is good reason to suppose the mastery must be largely, and the transcendence almost wholly, African. At the most favourable evaluation, strategic funding has only worked well for Africans when it cut

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with the grain of existing African state strategy dynamics (a conclusion the World Bank shares if not quite in that perspective) and the two success stories of global 'peacekeeping' (more accurately facilitating) Mozambique and Namibia were in contexts in which broad public demands and major combatant group perspectives were committed to peace. In Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Africa, Uganda and in the sweeping away of Mobutu (at least the precondition for mastering conflict and disintegration in the Congo), the international role has ranged from - on balance - moderately useful but secondary in Eritrea and problematic (it did undermine Mengistu) in Ethiopia to negligible (the Eritrea/Ethiopia 'velvet divorce') or negative (Zaire to Congo).

The cost of war in SSA are obscenely high in both human and economic terms:

1. Over 1980-92 in Southern, 1990-97 in Rwanda-Burundi-Congo, 1980-97 in Horn/Sudan over 3,500,000 and probably up to 5,000,000 persons have died as a direct or indirect result of conflict. Of these 90 to 95% have been non combatants and over half under five. Famine from disruption of production and of food relief distribution, disintegration of basic health services and stresses of displacement have been the main killers except in Rwanda, Burundi and the two Congos where massacre and genocide have snuffed out of the order of 1,000,000 lives since 1990;

2. Over the same periods in the same countries lost output has totalled at least $100,000 million (substantially greater than current annual output and many times external resource transfer for these countries over these periods);

3. at least 200,000,000 Africans live in countries afflicted by present or recent civil wars (excluding South Africa). 100,000,000 are in countries threatened by spillover effects of present civil wars. On pessimistic scenarios another 150,000,000-200,000,000 are in states whose internal tensions suggest a real possibility of civil war within a decade.

To argue that the anarchy of collapsed states and wars is inexorably spreading is highly problematic. 1990 was indeed worse than 1980, 1970, 1960 or for that matter 1930, 1940 or 1950. But in Ethiopia, Uganda, potentially Rwanda and Congo (ex Zaire), Mali, Ghana, South Africa, Mozambique, and potentially Angola post 1990 changes and dynamics have

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been toward ending war and at least partial rehabilitation of state legitimacy and capacity to deliver services as well as of economic performance. There is no cause for naive optimism but virtually equally little for naive Afro-pessimism which is often a casual use of African examples (or supposed examples) to warn of North American dangers (e.g. Freetown as a precursor of implosion in New York) or a sublimation and export of racism no longer intellectually acceptable nor politically prudent in naked, home based form.

II.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

War in African states and in SSA (or continentally) on a comparative level urgently needs to be **comprehended, mastered, transcended.** To do so is a precondition for emergence out of war to sustainable peace. It is also relevant to pre-empting and defusing tensions likely to lead to war.

At present war avoidance and peace restoration rest on very limited data and dangerously short term visions (whether backward to causes or forward to consequences). Comprehension needs to be deeper as to factors and historic foundations. Analysis of ways to stable mastery and sustainable transcendence requires more in depth articulation and policy orientation. The very uneven and often disappointing and even disastrous results of attempted mediation and "peacekeeping"is in large part related to limited linking of causal analysis to conflict suspension and peacebuilding..

That record suggests several weaknesses:

1. overdependence on expatriates (including foreign Africans) who have little in depth knowledge of how the war came to be and has evolved and often lack overriding commitment to lasting success more likely among those who will have to live with the results;

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2. very limited serious, comprehensive research on causes or articulated applications of causal studies to ways to master and subsequently to transcend both the current war and the factors likely to cause renewed conflagration;

3. a distinct aversion to applying significant political, financial and personnel resources to war avoidance or post war reconstruction and reconciliation. Even though common sense and back of envelope calculations suggest these would be more cost effective for the international community and very much so for afflicted (or war escaped) Africans they do not have the urgency of crisis dimensions that trigger massive intervention force spending;

4. short term, tunnel vision, often fails even to halt wars (e.g. Somalia) and even more often leads to truces rather than to durable peace (e.g. Angola in the early 1970's and 1990's and indeed to date in the late 1980's);

5. inadequate involvement of all African actors crucial to keeping peace alive and to securing perception changes adequate to that purpose rather than negotiated artefacts which are agreed because of antagonistically incompatible perceptions as to their consequences (e.g. Angola), to mislead external actors (e.g. Somalia) or to trick an opponent.

The initial entry point for the African intellectual communities and for Northern knowledge creation funders should be research. Comprehending is logically the precursor of mastering even if in crisis conditions one cannot suspend action on war reduction while the data base is improved. Further research is a relatively low cost exercise - at most a few millions of dollars a year continentally rather than the few million a day for major UN single country peacekeeping efforts or post war reconstruction.

To describe knowledge creation as early warning and to argue wars erupt without visible precursor signs is fatuous. The Central African Interlake wars date back to about 1500 and the waTutsi conquest. The first round of FNLA-MPLA-UNITA wars was during the movements not so common liberation struggle against the Portuguese in the early 1960's. Late 1980's analysis for UNICEF projected the implosion of civil governance in Somalia by 1990. The fatal destruction of Barre's crack troops in seeking to hold down the Northwest consequence of the fault line flowing from the unlawful (according to the United Republic of

Somalia's own High Court) seizure of Somaliland contrary to the Act of Union and the Somaliland referendum's "No" vote a third of a century earlier. The course to blood and fragmentation in Liberia has been projectible from within weeks of the Doughboy's (Sergeant Samuel Doe) 1980's rising against and bloody suppression of both the Americo Liberian elite and the structures of civil governance.

What is needed is not merely ability to spot where trouble is likely or how imminent it is. The former exists; the latter is necessarily uncertain because exogenous catalytic events are important. G6 the interaction of Interahamwe genocide in Rwanda - France's Operation Turquoise to facilitate their withdrawal to Zaire - Mobutu's suicidal use of them to seek to enhance control in Kivu, leverage on Rwanda and status with global donors - and their present involvement in Burundi, Congo (Brazzaville) and the Central African Republic determined the timing and course of wars in Rwanda, Burundi, Congo (ex Zaire) and Congo (Brazzaville) but did not cause the wars. More important is a serious set of information and analysis of causal factors with their dynamics and interactions and, consequentially, a perspective of what actions might avert or halt war and allow foundation laying toward transcendence of armed conflict through reconciliation of actors and erosion of causes of conflict. Such research is a field for intellectuals - primarily Africans from afflicted countries but with expatriate Africans and concerned scholars from elsewhere as well as non-academics in supporting roles, rather than of those directly involved in war or peacekeeping operations:

1. crisis management precludes most politicians and administrators from devoting much time to seeking to map the way forward to the medium term future much less backward to historical inheritance;

2. academicians and other intellectuals are less in bondage to political positions and the need to please core constituencies and more used to robust, but non confrontational, discourse aimed at resolving, or at least mutually comprehending, divergent analyses than are most politicians or public servants.

War and conflict are not areas in which totally common analyses can usually be achieved nor in which expert knowledge combined with "man from Mars" lack of emotional commitment can be expected to be common or even - perhaps useful. Different vantage points do give rise to

different perceptions. These perceptions so long as believed and acted on are part of reality and need to be seen as such even if one appropriate set of actions is likely to relate to changing perceptions as well as the realities they partially and imperfectly reflect.

However, research - ideally by country teams reflecting different backgrounds and initial perceptions - does need to seek to reduce the divergence of perceptions to the extent they falsify reality (especially in ways contributory to outbreak, continuation or renewal of war). Normative judgements cannot be avoided even if polemic partisanship should be. For example the perception that genocide can be justified if on behalf of a majority and as a means to avert overthrow of a state arguably commanding majority support is certainly open to normative rejection (e.g. on the grounds of the African Charter of Rights and Responsibilities of Persons and Peoples). However, that perception is a living reality which must be understood (not accepted or forgiven) to comprehend the 1990-1995 war period in Rwanda and the continuing post 1990 one in Burundi.

III.

MISLEADING 'VERITIES', SIMPLISTIC GENERALISATIONS

War avoidance; armed conflict cessation and resolution and subsequent reconciliation - rehabilitation - transcendence have been ill served by a number of protean generalisations and supposed verities which on examination are so general as to be platitudinous, do not apply to a majority of cases and/or are at best somewhat misleading symbolic truth. Three examples are "ethnicity", "Balkanisation" and "religion".

Ethnicity (or pejoratively "tribalism") is a cause of tension and sometimes of civil war. But there is nothing uniquely African about it - vide Guatemala, Sri Lanka, Bosnia - nor is ethnicity in any meaningful sense of the term significant in all African war situations.

A more careful analysis is needed to identify:

1. post conquest situations in which the victors have established and maintained a neo-feudal caste system - e.g. the Interlake Zone, South Africa that was, Liberia under Americo Liberian hegemony;

2. ongoing conquest wars - some suspended during colonial rule e.g. Northern attempts to subjugate Southern Sudan - which are certainly territorial and affect peoples but do not necessarily involve the deep cultural animosities usually associated with the term "ethnicity";

3. the heritage of pre colonial state conflicts. Angolan wars among the Northern (Kongo), West Central (Prazeiro) and South central/Southeast (Plateau) Kingdoms date back up to 500 years and have continuously evolving strands from then until today. The ex-FNLA, MPLA and UNITA are in many respects very much the heirs of the old kingdoms;

4. differential access to resources on a geographic or zonal basis leading to what are perhaps more usefully perceived as regional/provincial than ethnic rivalries e.g. South, Central, North Zones in Mozambique whose political reality and tensions show up clearly in electoral returns but which do not have marked zonal ethnic or cultural characteristics (least of all in the Central zone dominated by RENAMO);

5. communal-cultural-linguistic group perceptions of discrimination because of ethnic or cultural factors (e.g. Amharaness and religion under the Tewedros through Mengistu New Empire in Ethiopia) which lead to tension and contribute to war without necessarily mobilising an ethnic separatist or take-over drive as such. The initial Tigrean position in Ethiopia was to force their way into the Christian highlander power core not to seceede nor to create a fully participatory state for all ethnic clusters;

6. core ethnic or sub-ethnic (klan, sub-klan, lineage group as in Somalia) self determination struggles.

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These elements do interact. Even in the regional/zonal cases there are likely to be divergent balances of peoples in zonal populations. Conflict can itself generate ethnic chauvinism as illustrated in Bosnia and Somalia. Ethnic/sub ethnic "cleansing" of long mixed group areas (rural as well as urban) - as in Somalia - demonstrates that pre-war relationships were by no means purely conflictual. Without analysis of the histories and root causes of tensions, "ethnicity" is usually either so general an explanation as to be vacuous or actively misleading.

"Balkanisation" (primarily an African explanatory term unlike "ethnicity"/"tribalism" which is predominately Northwestern) appears to have become a code word for "European caused". Certainly taken literally it is rarely useful and usually inaccurate to the point of being seriously misleading. Small countries resulting from particular historic events are not unique to Africa nor necessarily war prone e.g. Monaco, Luxembourg, Costa Rica, Nepal.

There are now **less states in Africa than before the colonial conquest**. The absence of homogenous cultural, pre colonial social or political make-up of present states is not unique to African nor particularly closely linked to levels of tension. Tanzania for example has literally scores of peoples many spreading across boundaries while Lesotho today - though not at its inception - only has one, albeit one which is transborder. Few present nation states anywhere in the world are totally homogenous today and none was at its inception. Attempts to achieve such homogeneity by border changes and movements of populations - e.g. in 1920's Europe - are not usually notably successful or conflict reducing. Substantial African wars are almost never about borders and rarely about secession or take-over. The most prominent "border war" - between Nigeria and Cameroon - is partly related to the German habit of naming land - not water - boundaries and the Cross River's habit of changing both overall deltaic channel location and which is the "main channel", but primarily relate to the probable major hydrocarbon reserves in the area which were unknown to German or British colonialists and are hardly linked to "Balkanisation's" ethnic connotations. The state break-ups (Central African Federation, Eritrea/Ethiopia, Somaliland/Somalia, Mali Federation, Cape Verde/Guinea Bissau) are all of recent creations in which territorial loyalty had no time to send down roots and ones in which relationships of the type characterised by the then CAF Prime Minister as "One horse, one rider" led to liberation struggles. The only long running 'irredentist' conflict - among Somalia and its four neighbours - is a direct heritage of the

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centuries older Somali conquest and its fluctuating geographic parameters as well as of the tendency of Somalis to unite against outsiders but to fragment against each other in the absence of an external threat.

In minority of African civil wars different state boundaries might have averted war. But these - e.g. a separate Mozambican state south of the Save River, separate Somalia and Somaliland Republics, three states as successors to 'Portuguese' Angola - would all involve more not less "Balkanisation" in the standard denotative sense of smallness.

That foreign intervention has been - historically and today - a basic causal factor in wars is valid. However, as President Mandela stressed in his May 1997 State Visit to Zimbabwe, that fact does not lessen Africa's/Africans' responsibility for ending the wars and transcending then by reconciliation and erosion of the causes of conflict. Similarly transborder locations of peoples can be a real (or manipulated) route to regionalisation of national tensions and/or of efforts to mediate and to resolve them - most notably in the Interlake Zone of Eastern and Central Africa. But such spillover and neighbour national or regional efforts to avert it by conflict resolution are not unique to African nor to small states. The break-up of Yugoslavia affected Western Europe despite the absence of substantial Serb, Croat, Slovenian or Bosnian Muslim populations in adjacent countries.

"Religion" as a basic cause of war (as opposed to much lower level tensions and of sporadic violence) is usually canvassed seriously by Africans in respect to the Sudan but less frequently elsewhere. Its Northwestern fashionability seems to be a zombie like remnant of the discredited "end of ideology" thesis transmuted into a 'need for enemies' and thus Christianity/Islam (or Crusade/Jihaad) to replace Capitalism/Communism (or Liberal Democracy/Totalitarianism) - a perspective with limited apparent African credibility.

The contention that religion (whether Islam, Christianity, earlier African religions, or African syncretic movements) is important to most Africans is valid. From that it follows that religion can be politically influential and play a part in conflict conflagration or pre-emption. But among the clear cases of such action neither the Christian Peace Movement in Mozambique nor the backing by Church leaders both for genocide by, and mirror image ruthless suppression of waHutu in, Rwanda/Burundi show religion as an independent partisan force nor as

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automatically a source of conflict or reconciliation. The Mozambican Christian Peace Movement was influential because it was partisan for peace, not parties, and was pan-zonal not "ethnic". Voting patterns show no close relation between faith (Catholic, Protestant/Anglican, Muslim) and party backing. In Rwanda/Burundi the two main faiths (Catholic and Anglican) were divided along waHutu/waTutsi lines very similar to those of society and polity and religious leaders acted on ethnic, not Catholic or Anglican, theology (and reflected the divergences between "chauvinists" and "moderates" in each people) in seeking to aggravate or mediate conflict and to justify (or even to advocate and participate in) genocide. Had the Churches managed to transcend their ethnic tensions and to be partisans of peace, then they would have become a separate political force in alliance with the moderates in both communities, but that is hardly what is usually meant by religious roots of conflict.

As with ethnicity and Balkanisation Africa is not unusual. Wars in which religious divisions were - or were manipulated to be - a source of conflict have been common in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. Indeed if anything the role of religion in war is apparently lower in African than globally.

In the Sudan a Northern drive for conquest of the South and religion are intermingled. But drives for conquest usually have power, territorial and economic reasons independent of religion and the Sudanese case is no exception. Nor is it easy to identify a Christian (or an "animist" - the plurality of South Sudanese are "animists") position beyond support of peace and of participation which is more a defensive pastoral concern of religious leaders for their flock than a political theology. In the North there is a political clash contributing to war (and directly to the present Southern armed struggle/Northern democratic parties alliance) which is linked to theology or at any rate religious structures. But that conflict is **within** Islam - main stream Mahdism (and the associated Umma Party) versus mediaevalist Islam of the Ikhwaan (Muslim Brothers).

The Sudan case illustrates a general problem. Because religion is important political leaders will seek to mobilise it in their service (as the non-Christian Emperor Constantine did when on the battlefield he pointed to a cross shaped cloud and declared "In that sign we shall win!"). As with ethnicity, such mobilisation when successful creates a perception of religions in conflict which has power to influence people and events. However, the understanding of such

quasi (or pseudo) religious elements in war ideology is presumably a precondition for demobilising them (as in the opposite direction was the Sudanese Ikhwaan's success in skilfully demobilising its present supporters from their previous allegiance to the late Sudanese Communist Party).

IV.

ECONOMIC AND ECOLOGICAL STRANDS AND LIMITATIONS

Economics as a set of analytical and operational tools and **political economy** as a set of strategies and frames for government political and economic projects (as well as set of tools for analysing and evaluating them) are important. They may not be quite so important as economists are tempted to suppose and perhaps are least central during war and its immediate aftermath.

Wealth, livelihood and survival are - probably in the reverse order - among the dominant motivations of most human beings, households/families and larger groups. Power is in large measure about controlling scarce resource allocations whether access to good land or to education, opportunities for good jobs or contracts. Therefore, it would be surprising if economic conflicts of interest did not contribute to the tensions leading to, the objectives of, the factors leading to continuation or abandonment of war and were not also key potential means to master and reduce future conflictual tensions to achieve reconciliation and transcendence of violence through reconciliation and causes of conflict erosion

Among the interacting themes in potentially divisive and conflict exacerbating structures and dynamics are:

1. levels, distribution and trends of poverty and erosion of achieved livelihoods opposite trends of poverty reduction and livelihood enhancement reducing the likelihood of war/enhancing opportunities for reconciliation. However, the divergences and trends need

to affect mobilisable groups to be likely to lead to armed conflict - e.g. a gender based civil war is not likely even if equal disparities among regions or ethnic groups might well contribute to one;

2. differential access (whether zonal, urban/rural, elite/broad public, political, ethnic, nepotistic or kleptocratic) to basic services, land, livelihoods, political influence, public service and political posts influences the background level of tensions. Extreme and extremely inequitable differences - especially in an (almost) all boats float lower era of economic decay - can erode state legitimacy so seriously as to make civil war highly likely even if the immediate flash point is likely to be a pattern of violent repression;

3. economic trends matter (especially in reconciliation and transcendence but also in high tension contexts in which a common will to avert violent conflict exists, e.g. Mali) because resources are limited. Even more redistribution out of increases can redress imbalances which are potentially violence inducing without absolute sacrifices by core government support groups whereas no such (relatively) easy option exists if total resource availability is stagnant or declining;

4. glittering economic prizes inherently linked to central government control of participation - e.g. mineral and/or hydrocarbon fiscal flows as in Angola - can contribute both to government ability (and determination) to fight on and to insurgent leaders' unwillingness to compromise once war has started. They can equally be used to reduce tensions (e.g. Botswana) and to achieve rehabilitation and access projects conducive to rehabilitation and transcendence once war is mastered (the hope for Angola and both Congos);

5. capacity - or rather incapacity - to provide basic public services, e.g., health, education, water, famine relief, sometimes sanitation and agricultural extension, ability to pursue life and livelihood in peace (law and order) does affect the perceived legitimacy of states and governments. The priority RENAMO gave to crippling or destroying health, education, water and grain collection/storage/distribution facilities and their personnel like the counter priority of the Government of Mozambique to defending, repairing, rebuilding, reposting turn on their common perception that this capacity was basic to the popularity and legitimacy of the State - a perception subsequent voting patterns tend to endorse. This

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proposition does not imply that total implosion of civil governance capacity - as in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Zaire - will by itself cause war by itself. It does suggest it will so erode perceived legitimacy that even apparently second order incidents can trigger wars which the already decapacitated state cannot master even when a reasonably free and fair election and an outline agreement with insurgents have seemed to mastered conflict - e.g. Sierra Leone late 1996 to May 1997.

Few if any wars lack important economic, or more usually political economic, causes and goals albeit equally few are - or are presented as - solely about those factors. **Colonial conquest** usually was embarked upon to further or to protect the interests of certain sub-elite groups in the metropolis and - less uniformly vaguely perceived national economic interests. On the other hand glory, countering other colonial powers for reasons of prestige as well as economics, and metropolitan redistribution channelled via colonies (most notable in the case of France), also played major roles. Only the Congo (as Free State and Belgian colony) was coherently perceived and run - not always efficiently in the earlier phases - as a profit making enterprise. **Liberation wars** (including those against domestic caste based ruling groups e.g. South Africa, Zimbabwe, Liberia, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Eritrea arguably Somaliland and Western Sahara, Southern Sudan albeit to the Somalilanders, Saharan's and Southern Sudanese Mogadishu, Rabat and Khartoum are external colonial capitals) are about self determination, self respect and self governance as well as about reallocation of resources. The - usually well founded - belief external or domestic caste rulers look after their own interests in ways inconsistent with the welfare of those beyond their pale and under their rule provides the linkage.

Class wars in SSA have been rare, partly because in the case of liberation wars caste and class are very highly co-correlated even though liberation struggle leaders are usually among the better educated, less poor and - therefore - more cognisant of the limits of the possible without liberation. In the case of SSA independence was usually by negotiation only moderately influenced by actual violence not by war. The most plausible class war example is the 1959 overthrow of the waTutsi Kingdom of Rwanda which arguably was a jacquerie (mass rising of the poor and oppressed). While bloody and violent, it did distinguish between good, not so good and bad waTutsi (10% killed, 40% fled into exile, 50% remaining and often vouched for by waHutu neighbours) in a way the ethno political genocide of all accessible waTutsi and

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"moderate" (i.e. one nation oriented) waHutu of 1994 did not. The Northern Minorities mob massacre of Ibos manipulated by Northern elites but in a sense a "wretched of the earth" striking out against the intermediate level exploiters or perceived exploiters closest to them is an arguable second case and the overthrow of Americo-Liberian elite rule a third. Beyond those labour or peasant revolts in SSA have been rare and limited in scale and duration.

The argument that wars are lengthened because substantial gainers emerge is not entirely convincing as a generalisation. Fear of loss (whether economic or, especially, life) is arguably a more common motivation. Lower level military personnel are rarely well rewarded in SSA nor are they apparently able to resist if their leaders conclude peace deals. Even in the case of military leaderships, the prospects of alternative economic options with peace are often as attractive as (or more so than) those of continued war - a principle which appears to underlie the current Angola peace proto agreement and negotiations to a not inconsiderable extent. However, there can be identifiable groups of leaders who would lose from peace. e.g. in Somalia war lords are - as in the Roman Republic - war period autarchs chosen to lead in battle but who return to ranks below those of senior elders and merchants when peace is restored. Thus General Aideed needed permanent war to maintain his position - and became very adept at achieving it. *Per contra* his sometime ally and financier Osman Ali Otto initially used war to build a business empire (quite possibly with a $50 to $100 million annual turnover) but because of that achievement has become an advocate of stability and peace with the ironic consequence of raising his own militia and mobile firepower brigade ("technicals").

Another perspective is that continuing present loss (economic as well as human) and the perspective of its indefinite continuation lead to war weariness by governments, insurgents, partisans and populace which creates a climate in which catalytic initiatives for peace backed by attempts to use a process of discourse to change mutual perceptions, as much as to reached detailed agreements for their own sake, can both master war and create contexts reasonably favourable to sowing seeds of reconciliation and transcendence. This can be true even if the resources for rapid, radical rehabilitation are manifestly not, and not about to be, available. A clear example is Mozambique.

Economic policy can affect the likelihood of tensions erupting into war - as discussed in the chapter on Burundian macro economic policy. This is most likely to be the case when tensions

turn on a disadvantaged region, on resentments of poor people as such (not a primary cause of most civil wars including those in Africa) or on communal inequality of access to basic services (very marked in respect to Northern Malian pastoralists). However to be relevant to mastery by prevention or by post war transcendence it is necessary for analysis to examine not only who would gain from alternative policies but who would lose in the sense of paying for them. From that it can be identified which public service professionals and political leaders in a position to alter policy had or perceived themselves to have an interest in such changes.

In Burundi, other than during the first Buyoyo government and under the first waHutu presidency it is exceedingly difficult to identify any effective catalyst for a shift to conflict mediating economic policies. Senior civil service professionals and Ministers with real power are and have been predominately waTutsi and, even if well disposed toward waHutu (by no means universally the case), are committed to preserving their own privileged status. Further power has - except briefly - been concentrated in the hands of senior waTutsi army officers who - with a few exceptions - are intensely chauvinist (as perceived by many of the present Rwandais leadership who can hardly be seen as anti-Tutsi). To create a basis for reconciliatory economic policy would require a total change in imperatives, attitudes and - at least substantially - also of senior civil service and civil political personnel and a dismantling of chauvinist army power.

In Rwanda the Minister for Health perceives restoration and achievement of universal access to primary health care (delivered by a cross communal staff) as crucial to reducing tensions and building cross communal perceptions of legitimacy for the Government. He - and his colleagues - therefore oppose external conditionalities barring or limiting full restoration of staffing and services and view interim foreign finance for primary health care as a precondition for achieving good governance. This is diametrically opposed to donor processural views which (rather impracticably) demand good governance in terms of rights reconciliation and basic service delivery first with financial support to the State to follow.

The Minister responsible for relief, resettlement and rehabilitation also sees restoration of services and livelihoods as vital to reconciliation. With hundreds of thousands of displaced (including waTutsi as well as waHutu returnees) he perceives non-communal approaches to resettlement, livelihood rehabilitation and interim relief (food and infrastructure restoration

based employment) via the State as crucial to reconciliation. The donor preference for foreign NGO parallel government operations in these areas is from that optic economically and humanitarianly misguided because it prevents rebuilding government legitimacy in a cross communal (staff and other beneficiaries) exercise aimed at the common strategic needs of the two communities and/or by parallel domestic social sector (civil society) bodies. It is not conducive either to restoration of good governance nor the strengthening of domestic civil society - quite the reverse.

In general it is **doubtful that economic policy alone can play a leading role** in averting, halting or reconciling from war. It can usually do so **only as part of a political economic project** (or strategy) in which the political instruments set the frame for the economic. An example is Ethiopia under its new government. The erosion of legitimacy in the centralised, Amharacentric, authoritarian state was perceived by the new government to require radical strategic changes. These included access to broader participation in governance, a dynamic process toward universal access to basic services and creation of a nation of federated peoples to replace a centralised empire dominated by one people.

That project led to decentralisation providing greater participation by peoples and by local user communities at the cost of severe transitional problems in respect to policies, procedures, personnel and finance (as set out in the Ethiopian Chapter in this volume). It did include an economic strategy focused on education, health, drought relief safety nets tied to public works, infrastructure and agricultural research and extension. It also focused on civil service pay, professionalism and productivity enhancement - a point often overlooked in concentration on issues of central-regional transfers and *de facto* affirmative action for "lowland" and Muslim professionals.

Many of the means are economic and indeed orthodox economic. A large peace dividend from military cutbacks has gone to fiscal rebalancing, paying near living wages to public servants and bolstering primary health and education. But the potential conflict transcendence dynamic (with the Tigrean, the Oromo and the Somali peoples, who together constitute a majority of Ethiopians, now largely in the core support and governance group not - as previously - the forefront of civil unrest and armed conflict) arises from the overall political

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economic project, not the conservative fiscal but also access oriented sectoral economic instruments as such.

Ecology is a newly fashionable explanation of the causes of war - especially in SSA. In its simplest form the proposition is that increasing resource scarcity increases tensions over distribution. This is a corollary to the previous ones on output and public service capacity trends. In that form the contention is valid.

What has not been seriously researched is where, how and how important this element is on a case by case basis. The two so called headline cases - Rwanda and Sudan - have been so inadequately and misleadingly 'researched' as to endanger acceptance of the valid basic contention.

Both land shortages (and consequential high absolute poverty - estimated at up to 70% in Burundi in contrast to 40% in Tanzania) and the conflict between pastoral and cropping use (largely mirroring ethnic fault lines) do exacerbate tensions in Rwanda and Burundi. But these are not new factors - both territories have been perceived as overpopulated for a century - and there is no evidence of sudden structural changes or - at least on the face of it - tipping points. The claim that Rwandais official crop output data show a 30% 1990-93 fall and that this led to genocide exemplify the contention that a little learning is a dangerous thing. Over 1990-93 a third of Rwanda was captured by RPF insurgents and vanished from official statistics. If output fell (as it probably did because of dislocation even if not by 30%) that was a result, not a cause, of war. In any event a clear history of continuous (if often low level) violent conflict runs back to 1959 and the underlying post conquest roots of war reach down to about 1500.

The Sudanese case is similar. The asserted causal factor - mechanised, land mining, short lifespan sorghum cultivation by military and associated elites - is virtually irrelevant to the North-South war of conquest and resistance which in any event goes back well over a century not to the mid 1980's. The relevant areas were in the West (not the South) and the losers were Western small scale farmers and pastoralists. Their dispossession is relevant to Khartoum Regime - West conflict and to the regimes' hostility to the Umma Party to whom most Westerners adhere. Therefore arguably it contributed to the decade later Umma alliance with the Southern SPLA. So far as domestic food availability is at issue, the impact may have

been quite low. In good rainfall years the harvest was largely exported and in drought years it did not exist. A limited number of dispossessed were pushed into food insecurity, but neither the national nor the Southern balance were much affected. The clear failure to achieve emergency food security in the West turns much more on Khartoum's deliberate holding back relief supplies to punish a hostile zone than on marginal losses of small farmer output. This is a case of the political economy of food, not of ecology.

The implication of identification of a correct but unquantified causal factor and exuberant nonsense about a few cases is that more serious research is a priority. Two specific topics are pastoralist/cropper conflicts arising from the expansion of the latter group into the farmer drought year reserve pastures of the former and national/transnational water right allocation.

One key cause of Northern Malian conflict is loss of reserve pasture areas to croppers intensifying drought year herd losses and setting in train cumulative pauperisation. Another is probably payment of substantial taxes for no effective provision of any services because of the mobility of the pastoral - Touareg - population.) If this is the case, the present settlement (and the hiring of some Touareg ex-combatants into the national army) does not address those causes and the water point policy of the savannah drought and livelihood authority actually exacerbates it.

Water rights in - e.g. - Somalia/Somaliland are much more crucial than land rights because water is much scarcer. They have regularly given rise to episodic micro conflicts but not to sustained war. Whether that past can be projected may need exploration. In Southern Africa (excluding Malawi, Tanzania, Angola and Mauritius) water allocation from interstate rivers will be a cause of interstate conflicts of interests, probably episodic tensions and - unless well managed bilaterally and regionally - has the potential for causing interstate wars. In 1991-2 the Limpopo River's Mozambique segment largely ran dry for the first time in at least a century. This was not because the upstream rainfall was uniquely low (bad as it was) but because with rising population, cultivation and urbanisation Botswanan, Zimbabwean and - especially - South African extraction was much higher than even a decade earlier. The Southern African Development Community has identified agreement in principle and case by case negotiated pacts on water allocation as crucial to security (both food and military aspects). A guideline convention and a network of river basin agreements are under

negotiation. While recognition of the potential danger does not guarantee successful mastery, it is at least a necessary first step. Interestingly the earlier impetus toward the sector and convention came from concern by politicians, national civil servants and one or two SADCC advisors not from professional ecologists nor practising academicians. This is an instance of conflict avoidance/security strengthening requiring regional action, a topic which will be addressed in a subsequent section.

<div align="center">V.</div>

GOVERNANCE: POLITICAL STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

A series of issues arise as to who are key actors, the nature of their base and influence, their evolution and possible post conflict role. Actors can usefully be seen as including civil society since the distinction between political processes and issues and even non-partisan civil society institutions (e.g. most church and mosque groups - much less political parties) is inherently flawed.

The identification of domestic armed actors in war is usually relatively straightforward. However, in Liberia the repetitive fragmentation of militias does - up to a point - change the killing fields or at any rate increase their number while in Sierra Leone the non-communicative nature of the RUF and, especially, of its least unknown leader Foday Sankoh raise real questions whether there is a coherent insurgency or a series of very loosely linked local warlords; questions hardly answered by the May 1997 army mutiny. The military unreliability and political banditry of the army have given rise to a pro-peace, loosely linked set of local militias - the kamojars - potentially loyal to any government showing signs of prioritising and being able to deliver basic services and indeed now largely supporting the legitimate president in exile.

The objectives of political actors (whether parties or military juntas) - beyond conquest of power or a share of it - are often harder to delineate. Manifestos may or may not be substantive for purposes beyond mobilisation. And indeed they may or may not be consistent over time or at any one time. For example Jonas Savimbi has put UNITA's name to almost every position from ultra Maoism (and Kim Il Sungspeak) to neo liberal capitalism and from

narrow racial and ethnic chauvinism through participatory democracy to entrenched settler privileges, not necessarily at different times so much as to different audiences.

All serious parties (military or civil) seek to win power or to influence its use. Those which aim merely to secure benefits for their leaders rarely last long or have much impact, unless this is a deformation emerging after the capture of power e.g. Siaka Stevens, Joseph Desiree Mobutu. Even in these cases their kleptocracies were based on retaining state power. The most evident case of a party seeking to influence - not to hold - power is South Africa's Democratic Party which has, and accepts it has, no realistic chance of exercising power even in a potential coalition government. The number of such parties might rise were zonal or national proportional representation commoner in Africa and were there less of a political sociology of winner takes all (including very often the playing field for the next election as encapsulated in the sardonic anti-slogan "One man! One vote!! One time!!!").

However to understand parties particularly in the context of comprehending and mastering conflict requires digging deeper. What is the social or sub-class or ethnic base of a party? Is it national or primarily zonal? What historic roots lie behind it? e.g. the roots of UNITA stretch back 500 years to pre-Portuguese Plateau Kingdoms and include a distinct assimilado/creole elite of the Portuguese era. In contrast RENAMO was created out of a melange of very different discontents by Rhodesian Intelligence, revivified by the South African Special Forces, acquired a support base by being able to fight for nearly two decades and by controlling some territory and cobbled up a political programme only in the process of preparing for elections.

The issue of single versus multi party may be of decreasing significance simply because one party - and especially internally competitive one party-electoral - systems are in decline. The reasons are complex not uniquely related to the collapse of the Soviet System and Northwestern pressure as sometimes supposed. Other factors included belief that a system adapted for an interim purpose had completed its task, the need to incorporate more than one political strand in negotiated resolution of civil wars or avoidance of potential civil wars, overthrow of one party regimes by successors choosing a different pattern, the tendencies to loss of momentum and enhanced tolerance of corruption typical of long unchallenged

governments, the immobilisme which is always a risk for broad front, democratic, competitive one party states with genuinely wide view point representation and a commitment to broad decision taker consensus (e.g. Tanzania).

In respect to war there is not a clear linkage between one partyism and the outbreak of war. This is not surprising because single parties have ranged from fig leaves for dictators through coalitions of elites and mobilising forces for particular interest groups to internally and electorally competitive umbrellas. There is a clear linkage between ending civil wars and multipartyism, sometimes with transitional devices at government level (e.g. "Sunset Coalition" of "National Unity" in RSA or a somewhat artificial or symbolic multiplicity of parties as in Ethiopia and Rwanda). The reason is clear - resolution of war requires institutional structures acceptable to previous combating groups and multipartyism is one route to such acceptance.

The roles, nature and strength of civil society - here defined as groups intermediate between persons and states which have active social and economic concerns and often operational activities - vary widely in SSA. The Northwestern conception of Africa as monolithic, not pluralist, and of civil society as nearly universally weak and usually a recent, exotic implant flows from rather particularistic perceptions of civil society and of pluralism.

There are certainly authoritarian strands in African - as in other - political and social history and conceptualisation. There are attempts at totalitarian rule - e.g. Zulu Empire and, perhaps, Abomey Kingdom at some stages - but these are relatively uncommon. There have been historically as now few pure democracies - hardly unusual globally, especially if inconvenient facts like under 15% citizens in the population of Periclean Athens (and over 50% slaves) are taken into account.

What were and are common were **religious groups, age groups, women's groups, community (location) based groups,** a structure **of chiefly plus group representative as well as advisory counsellors** to senior leaders and sometimes particular vested governmental powers in religious or judicial structures separate from head of state/government. In a majority of governance systems there was and, perhaps less frequently, still is a popular element in selection and means of at least potentially non-violent popular removal of leaders

especially at lower and middle levels. In those senses Africa has been characterised by civil society groups and by representative elements in governance.

These participatory patterns remain: religious groups (especially Christian and Muslim but also other 'traditional' religions), women's groups, trade unions, peasants' unions, cooperatives, location groups (both residential and "home location") are usually much more significant than North-western style domestic NGO's which - outside South Africa - tend to be urban, elite and weakly interactive with more basic civil society groups. The strength and influence on governance of such groups varies widely. To date most (excluding political parties) have not been evidently significant in mobilisation for conflict - South Africa is a clear exception as is Interahamwe in Rwanda and the self styled Burundian Committee for the Defence of Democracy (the proponents, propagandists and perpetrators of genocide. Somewhat more often they have mobilised for peace e.g. in Mozambique. The pressure for peace has in the case of liberation struggles been less non-partisan (certainly from the colonial powers' perspective), but the only straightforward liberation war now in train is that of the Western Sahara people so this is a less relevant present or future characteristic. On the face of it civil society groups and processes - especially in respect to relations with the state - have not yet fully recovered from the damage to most of the colonial era nor adapted to the usually much larger political entities of today than before the European conquest.

In post war (as in post colonial) mobilisation to influence governments and governance civil society groups have historically not been particularly effective. Whether - as would seem likely - this is also a weakness in mastering and transcending conflict and why it happens requires further study.

A clear problem for civil society is the **imposition of Northwestern NGO's by donors as parallels to and substitutes both for domestic governments and for domestic civil societies.** This tends to impede attempts either to create more domestic capacity or to coordinate its government and civil society wings. Further they create confusion as to what Civil Society and popular participation are since clearly external NGO's are not plausible models for African Civil Society as to broad popular bases or as to accountability to those with whom they work and potentially risk creating a backlash against domestic Popular

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Organisation Support groups of professionals who can advise, represent or manage for popular base civil society bodies (a commoner model in Asia than in SSA).

Answers to questions as to the role and impact of **initial elections** are by no means clear-cut and appear to be contextual. Such elections are unlikely to be either early or fully internationally monitored if a civil war ends in military victory by one side (e.g. Ethiopia) but are virtually necessarily a part of a negotiated settlement, albeit the degree of international involvement in the organisation and monitoring depends on the earlier degree of international involvement in negotiating an end to hostilities (e.g. Namibia and Mozambique in contrast to South Africa). In cases of coup or semi coup initiated changes of structures (not just leaders) of governance the difference appears to be between those (e.g. the second landing of Flight Lieutenant Rawlings in Ghana) which had a serious political economic project of their own and those (e.g. the first Rawlings government, the 1990s Mali coup) whose platform in deed as well as word was to hold free and fair elections and retire to barracks after "throwing the rascals out".

The virtues of early elections are not - as might be too casually assumed - self evident. They can be a symbol and institutionalisation of a peace, of a tentative renewal of trust and of war weariness in which case they are useful and possibly crucial e.g. Mozambique or a ratification of a victory and a defeat e.g. Namibia, Zimbabwe, South Africa by non-violent means which is also useful.

In the context of a collapsed state with no organised political processes or national parties and with limited communication their value is less certain. That in Sierra Leone in 1996 probably did give some legitimacy to the (elected) government it would not otherwise have had, but may have posed obstacles to negotiations with the RUF as much as give a mandate to do so. No similar case for immediate elections would appear exist in Congo (ex Zaire). An interim broad based government to allow resumption of normal life, economic actively and governance and to rebuild national political processes and groupings over at least two (but not more than five) years could allow a more meaningful and reconciliatory election. The Sudan liberation front has agreed on a Federal/Confederal process, early parliamentary elections, an initial coalition government and only after five years for voter observation of the process or constitutional (or separational) referendum. However, as illustrated by Uganda and arguably

Ethiopia, the delayed election route can lead either to a no party process effectively controlled by the Head of State or to a feat of prestidigitation in which the core governing group regionalises itself and - in urban and mixed population areas - constitutes its own opposition.

The most contentious cases are those in which an election is likely to lead not to peace but to renewed wars or in which very substantial support would go to parties/movements whose tenets are in totally antagonistic contradiction with the African Charter on the Rights and Responsibilities of Persons and Peoples. If an early election would probably lead to renewed war or to victory for partisans of genocide - as in Rwanda and Burundi - the case for delay and/or for pre electoral altering of the playing field is convincing.

The most likely cause of elections ushering in renewed war is miscalculation by one or more parties as to results linked to a perception that the process is a "winner takes all" one. The 1980's assumption that electoral results were irreversible so that inducing all major actors to agree to an election they expected to win left the loser "trapped into peace" was largely based on one atypical case - Zimbabwe. There the Smith-Muzorewa alliance (and its South African backers) expected at least a plurality. Massive defeat sapped the already eroding will of their supporters. South Africa could not have afforded to weaken its already tenuous international position by open armed intervention. The UK as election sponsors, managers, arbiters might well have fought to enforce the result if the Rhodesian regime had sought to overturn it by force. Thus the Rhodesian regime was trapped. Angola's position in the early 1990's was dissimilar. UNITA's (or at least its maximum leader's) will to fight was undimmed and (despite genuinely expecting to win) UNITA had held its best troops out of demobilisation and planned a lightning post electoral offensive should it lose. No one supposed that the UN (which had agreed to overlook UNITA's total failure to comply with effective access of other parties to areas controlled by it or to demobilise) would seek to enforce the electoral results.

Rwanda and Burundi illustrate the "voting for monsters" problem or to put it starkly "Can an electoral mandate justify genocide?" In imperfect but not totally manipulated 1990's election the late President of Rwanda (who built the physical and emotional infrastructure for genocide) and his associates (who implemented it after his assassination - apparently by waHutu extremists who perceived him as a moderate "handsupper") won an electoral majority over moderate waHutu/waTutsi backed parties. If the present RPF government were to hold

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a fully open election now it is not unreasonable to project that advocates of genocide would win 30% to 50% of the vote, of moderation and reunification a comparable range and of pre-emptive (waTutsi) suppression comparable to that meted out by the Burundi army 10% to 15%. Even if 'moderates' had 60%, substantial pro-genocide and pro-pre-emptive repression votes and parliamentary seats would hinder, not hasten, reconciliation.

Election deferral is most justified if it is backed by a project to create a context in which future elections will be safe for peace. That requires changing perceptions. **Roles for losers** - e.g. minorities in parliament and perhaps in national coalition executives and a belief there will actually be a "next election" they could win - are a key to this. Mozambique's National Assembly is - with minor exceptions - not a policy initiating or even a legislative proposal revising body and - if it were - would probably split on rigid party lines. That comment could of course be made with only slightly less force about the British Parliament or French Assembly under most circumstances. What the Mozambican Assembly does do is to provide a two way channel of discourse between the Executive and the Constituents which does in practice influence governmental actions and people's responses and does so in a setting of less rigid party line formulations and of relatively civil discourse not violence. It also allows - even if marginally - for cross party initiatives on issues which are not inherently partisan e.g. formal recognition and proclamation of two Muslim religious holydays as national holidays.

In the Rwanda case what can be done is much less clear. Universal access to basic services, rehabilitation of infrastructure and livelihoods, resettlement support, food security safety nets and a cross between full trials (impracticable with 500,000 or more potential defendants) and South African style Truth presentation (inadequate by itself as a response to overt, systematic, mass genocide) are the building blocks the RPF is seeking to fit together. In the interim, until this process facilitates trans ethnic cleavage parties (or moderate ethnic ones committed to coalitions) which could be expected to win 90% of votes cast, the RPF sustains a multi party Assembly in which it is in a minority. This represents a symbolic endorsement of multi party, accountable governance even though, except perhaps as a forum for discourse, it is hardly an operational arm of governance. How soon, and indeed whether, this strategy will create conditions conducive to a genuine electoral contest is unclear.

An evident problem in political analysis focusing on parties and elections is that a substantial number of African states lack one or both. Further the range of non-elected or pseudo elected governments is very wide, quite aside from arguments as to which cases fall into the pseudo election category.

Military/non-military is a tempting division. However, even in the same country different military governments exhibit divergent characteristics. The Gowan, Murtala Mohammed and Obasanjo governments in Nigeria did seek tension reduction, civilianisation of civil governance and a road back to genuine elections. It would be hard to characterise the present Nigerian military regime as adhering to any of those. Any war does lead to military influence and any military conclusion of a war implies a conquest at arms. But not all successor governments are usefully classified as military e.g. the Second Rawlings Government in Ghana, the present Ethiopian government, the Somaliland government, the RPF in Rwanda and the Kabila regime in Congo are not military governments. In fact military regimes (even when civilian washed by pseudo elections as in Gambia and Niger over 1991-97) are by no means as common or as widely distributed as is usually assumed. They are common in West Africa and - in a more complex way - parts of North Africa and the Horn, but not Eastern or Southern.

Arguably four main **patterns of governance** cut across the military mixed civil and the elected/unelected or pseudo elected divides:

1. **Nation building** - seeking to involve all or almost all peoples and zones and - if not necessarily to reduce inequality - to provide some basic floors in access to basic services and safety nets (e.g. drought relief);

2. **Accommodationist** - seeking to build coalitions of key peoples (often via elites and patronage systems) which do in fact shove substantial groups and areas to the periphery;

3. **Suppressive** - ruling (for whatever reason) as the leadership disposes with allies (economic and force providing) to insure continuance in power;

4. **Kleptocratic** - using the state as a "funnel" to extract public resources for private gain - usually using a mix of suppression and accommodation (a sea of corrupted minnows to hide the sharks) to maintain power as the root of profit.

The last two patterns are almost certain to create conditions conducive to war - but not necessarily in the short run if initial state force levels and leadership prestige are high. The first is unlikely to do so even if economic and governance success is low so long as the one nation/one people symbolic goals remain credible and are - however weakly - pursued. The second is the most problematic - it can incite to war if excluded groups are numerous, relatively homogenous and able to organise a working coalition toward insurgency. Without outside intervention (e.g. Mozambique) that has rarely been the case to date. An arguable exception is Sierra Leone where Foday Sankoh's "No Foday Sankoh, no Sierra Leone" political credo and his groups of quarrelling local dissidents do look to have built a loose dissident youth, ethnic locality coalition which can destabilise and conceivable win militarily albeit hardly govern (a parallel to historic Renamo). But it is unlikely it could have achieved more than a band of bandit groups without the patronage of Charles Taylor's Liberian militia who wished to destabilise the then hostile Sierra Leone government to neutralise its support for ECOMOG/the West African military intervention free in Liberia).

VI.

FROM GOVERNANCE TO WAR: ILLEGITIMACY AND INCAPACITY

African - especially SSA - wars arise from three basic (often interlocking but separable) elements:

1. rule perceived as **colonial** and therefore a violation of self determination even if relatively benign and service delivery oriented (which has usually not been the case);

2. **gross abuse** of human and people's rights - including of the right to life by failure to prioritise famine prevention relief - especially when clearly based on inequitable inequality among zones, sub-classes or cultural/ethnic groups;

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3. **incapacity** to delivery basic services: ability to conduct daily life peacefully and unmolested by bandits, border raiders, coercive authorities or officials, corrupt police and magistrates or armed forces (i.e. law and order), basic health services, education and water supply, access to infrastructure and to markets.

A fourth element often cited is massive, systemic corruption. This has led to coups - not least both of President J.J. Rawlings' take-overs - and certainly was an underlying factor in the fall of Mobutu. However, in both cases the reason corruption became such a prominent *casus belli* was that it led both to incapacity (no basic service funding and virtual instructions to public 'servants', police and army to live by their own exactions) and to gross abuses - to sustain kleptocracy and lower level "chopping off the backside" revenue flows. Substantial corruption where not pervasive and when challengable via electoral and judicial processes - e.g. Tanzania after the 1992-94 Ikulu-Hazina alliance for pillage and its subsequent break-up by the ruling Party - do not by themselves lead to war.

On the face of it anti colonial (**national liberation wars**) may seem a matter almost solely of history. Only the Western Sahara remains as a colony. However, past or continuing conquest systems can lead to perceptions of internal colonialism and *de facto* national liberation struggles. Such elements are present in the Rwanda, Burundi and - at least until the SPLA/Northern democratic party coalition - have been dominant in the Sudan.

Gross abuse is perhaps rather like a giraffe - instantly recognisable in the field(especially to the victims) but less easy to define on paper. The degree and generality of abuse leading to violence and in extreme cases to civil war seems to vary widely. Why is less clear - part of the explanation lies in the effectiveness of repressive forces and the secret police, but only part. Similarly why some excluded and oppressed peoples opt for war and within that option for

war to secure inclusion (e.g. Tigreans and in recent years Touareg), to dominate (e.g. Northern Tchadians) or to escape from perceived imperial rule (e.g. Eritreans) has been little explored.

Incapacity to provide basic services - especially credible user friendly law and order - first erodes support and then corrodes legitimacy. This appears to be the case even if the decline in capacity is largely the result of insurgency and limiting it is a state priority and is greatest when the near cessation of user oriented civil governance is combined with oppression (e.g. Barre's Somalia, Zaire, Liberia). Capacity collapse with gross corruption but rather lower levels of oppression may open a door for insurgency but apparently with a longer time lag (e.g. Sierra Leone). This pattern/these patterns of interaction have received very limited contextual analysis albeit post war programmes in Rwanda, Ethiopia, Somaliland, Eritrea, Mozambique, Uganda and the new Congo clearly indicate that post civil war governments do see basic service capacity and delivery as crucial to consolidating legitimacy, consolidating support and transcending conflict on the basis of a semi intuitive, semi empirical feel for public opinion.

The interaction of **military rule and civil war** appears to be complex and, perhaps, conflict specific. While Mobutu, Mengistu and Barre were heavily (and increasingly) dependent on their repressive apparatuses, none ran an orthodox military regime. Mozambique has been a civilian regime throughout as has Uganda while the horror of waHutu resistance to impending waTutsi reconquest (as they perceived it) was turned to genocide primarily by Interahamwe (including the political police/local government controllers) not the army. Sierra Leone has certainly been coup prone. Liberia under Doe disintegrated into fractions whose military bands - however unprofessional - are their political core. Post Kingdom Burundi (except during the first Buyoya and first waHutu Presidencies) was marked by *de facto* and often *de jure* governance by an increasingly chauvinist waTutsi army whose conduct led to insurgencies, massacres and ultimately a Burundian Interahamwe (CDD).

Civil war does not automatically lead to military governance nor vica versa. Military government response to tensions threatening war can be abandoning office (Sierra Leone in 1996), negotiating a transition intended to preserve much of their power (Benin) or organising a genuine transition to civilian rule (e.g. Nigeria during the Obasanjo Presidency, more recently Mali) or ruthless repression (e.g Burundi repeatedly, earlier Mali, Togo, Niger) but

arguably civilian regimes have made similar choices. Military take-overs appear to be highly addictive drugs (e.g. Dahomey as it then was, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Sierra Leone, Togo) but the reasons for initial coups do not in some cases seem closely linked to absence of plausible governance let alone levels of tension likely to lead to civil war (e.g. Gambia). The nature of interactions and causations is of more than intellectual interest - avoiding reversion via coup to military governance (quite possibly with renewed or aggravated war) is a key element in consolidating mastery of conflict in countries with a history of coups and military governance.

VII.

HISTORY: INHERITANCE, INTERACTION, DYNAMIC

To argue that African states are not unique in having non homogeneities and stress or cleavage lines on independence and are no more likely to be plagued by civil war than many other states is important in reasserting Africa's and Africans' rights to respect and self respect and to refuting the proposition of Africa's being uniquely characterised by random mindless violence and political pathology. It is not however reassuring in any absolute sense. The number of present states which have not had a civil war during their first century of independent existence is very low even at first glance. On second glance it is even lower since apparent exceptions like Canada have had civil wars (indeed ethnic ones) - the meti (creole)/Native American/Francophone Riel Rebellions in which Lord Wolsey first came to prominence by damping the first war but in a way leading to the second (a pattern his subsequent African war 'leadership' in Ashanti, Zululand and South Africa repeated).

All states have tension, fault and cleavage lines which under stress can lead to civil war. In each state these vary both in their past heritage, their present problematics and the interactions and dynamics driving them toward the future. The heritage can up to a point be altered by altering perceptions (history suffers from forgotten and misbegotten memory syndromes which have real and all too often baleful objective impacts on present actions) and by removing or reducing causes of tension. The present can - assuming all key actors can agree on at least

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basic actions - be altered both for immediate tension or war mastery and for influencing dynamics toward the future. While it is often naively assumed that a modicum of goodwill and a sharing out among an incomplete set of elite actors based on a narrow and short term crisis review can master war, it is equally naive to assume that the heritage of the past, the complaints of the present and the dynamics toward the future are unalterable and immutable.

The basic - and usually overlooked or at least underplayed - discipline for understanding contexts and interactions over time in respect to any country is normally **history**. How many layers and how for back is - for purposes of armed conflict mastery and resolution - a pragmatic issue. For example 500 years is not unreasonable for Rwanda, Burundi and Angola but 120 years might be adequate for Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea and 50 for Mozambique, Somalia and Somaliland. The differences depend largely on what continuing weight pre colonial history and early colonial history have in present conflicts and in conquest conflict cases; and when the conquest took place (perhaps 1500 in Rwanda and Burundi; with the second phase of the New Empire under Menelik in the 1890's for Ethiopia and Hailie Selassie's annexation by suppression of confederalism in 1960 for Eritrea; probably the Khedival and Mahdist drives south in the last quarter of the 1800s in Sudan.

In Somalia the klan - sub klan - lineage interactions appear to have been relatively unchanging since the conquest and expulsion of the Mazrui Swahili and Arab Neo-Colonial statelets. The main changes therefore arguably come with the end of colonial rule in 1960 and the 1942-1959 run-up after the British conquered Italian East Africa. However, most of Somaliland had a pre-colonial existence as a state and British rule created stronger geographic loyalties than Italian so perhaps 200 years history is relevant to examine Somali group confederations and the impact of British rule on geographic nationalism. Certainly the 'uniting' by force (against the Acts of Union and an overwhelming rejection in the Somaliland referendum has played a key role but it does not explain the conflicts within Somalia.

Pre colonial SSA history - like all political history - includes conflicts. Equally it is not a history of total continuous conflicts and on occasion is one of federal/confederal states as well as, more generally, of trade and cultural/religious relations even across often hostile borders.

Pre colonial and **colonial** history overlap because a period of **pre colonial neo-colonialism** usually preceded actual colonial **conquest**. From about 1500 Portuguese came to dominate the Kingdom of the Kongo. A little later prazeiro (knights of the sword to conquer and reign in the name of the crown but nearly autonomously) rule - in practice a Prazeiro Feudal Kingdom allied with some domestic chiefly lineages - was created behind Luanda. Trade and other links - largely by agents termed "carrier pigeons" - developed with the south central/south east Plateau Kingdom. It was apparently the creation of the Prazeiro Kingdom and the divide and rule competition to gain Portuguese favour that brought these three states (and their near lineal descendants FNLA-MPLA-UNITA) into contact and violent conflict.

Post conquest colonial history usually lays common foundations for a (violent and/or non violent) liberation struggle but also for conflicts and distrusts among regions and groups seen as more or less privileged/excluded. In Mozambique the interplay of chartered companies and of economic growth focused on labour, transport and vacation provision to the Transvaal and Rhodesia which resulted in the Centre (Beira-Chimoio-Quelimane) seeing itself as resource rich but discriminated against in favour of the South (Lorenco Marques, as it was, Inhambane range) which had a poorer natural resource endowment. In Angola the Portuguese use of Plateau people as virtual slave labour on/in Northern coffee plantations and diamond mines has led the Plateau peoples to see the plantations and mines as rightfully theirs ("built from our sweat") and the Northerners to perceive Plateau people as interlopers stealing their natural resources. That case illustrates the overlap between conquest - colonial - post colonial history. It all suggests that the clauses in the current Angola peace agreement vesting the diamond mines in UNITA (or personally in Jonas Savimbi) may "win agreement to peace" now at a high price in terms of future Northern discontent.

Liberation struggle history may also lead to or reinforce cleavages. In Mozambique the combination of largely Southern leadership in FRELIMO and access to Northern Mozambique for geographic reasons created a North-South alliance with distrust for and by the centre except in parts of the Manica/Tete border area with Zimbabwe. That pattern clearly influenced both the flow of the civil war and 1994 voting outturns.

The **economic and political as well as style and capacity of governance factors exist within history and are influenced by/influence it**. That is why history as a discipline and

history as a panoramic (or successive transparent overlay) pattern of organisation can be useful in comprehending and mastering conflict. Why history is rarely so used apparently relates to the discipline itself (which is not usually applied in orientation), to that of economics (which is remarkably ahistorical albeit some applied political economists are exceptions), to a low valuation on African history by expatriates which many Africans have (often unknowingly) internalised and by the time pressures inherent if war halting and 'agreement' brokerage after crises explode is the 'normal' approach to peacekeeping/negotiating rather than processes with more stress on pre-emption, confidence building, reconstruction, reconciliation and transcendence.

VIII.

REGIONALISM: SECURITY FOR PERSONS AND STATES

For over a quarter century until the late 1980's intellectual discourse on regionalism/sub-regionalism in Africa focused on economic aspects. Security was perceived as an OAU function and one in which its only probable tools were mediation on egregious domestic governance (and then only if it spilled over into neighbours) and interstate disputes plus the Liberation Committee (or more realistically the front line States/Nigeria working alliance) in respect to Southern African Liberation.

That focus which virtually excluded regionalism from the intrastate political security and peace promotion scene was radically at odds both with the Pan African tradition and with the nature of the forces leading to the EEC/EU. Pan Africanism has seen self determination, self respect and self reliance as basic and independence, decent governance and collective security within a general "African idea" as crucial to attaining them among and within countries. The famous Nkrumah-Nyerere debate was not about the concept but the means - immediate Pan Continentalism with a common army and near total merging of sovereignty vs. sub-regional building blocks, avoidance of territorial disputes (over borders and secession) and initial and medium term concentration on economic means toward sub-regional and then broader community building. The issue was not one of optimality but of feasibility. The use of

economic means at least in part with broader goals parallels (largely independently) that of the founders of the post war "European Idea" and Movement whose overriding goal was to end wars in Europe. They too focused on economic means - indeed originally on fairly narrow sectoral ones e.g. the Coal and Steel Community. Security was dealt with in loose parallelism in the Western European Union and NATO.

The **present regional discourse, especially in Southern and Eastern Africa, again comprehends security**. The change began - albeit then largely in official circles - at the end of the 1970's and has been carried forward by five strands:

1. the creation of SADCC (now SADC) as the economic wing of the Front Line States (but including all Southern African states) with a set of articulated sectoral goals focused (in slightly different terminology) on the three OAU precepts and also SADCC's significant success in defending the liberation struggle through coordinating economic with military action to keep key transport and communications links open;

2. the increased number of civil wars viewed with concern by regional neighbours in West Africa in the Horn and in Eastern/Central Africa combined with the lamentable performance of the OAU (lack of capacity) and the UN (lack of competence, conceptualisation and will) in respect to several of them;

3. the broadening of "security" to include household security (e.g. food and law and order) in part linked to the very effective regional response to the Great Southern African Drought of 1991-92 and Dearth of 1992-93 which (unexpectedly) prevented it from becoming the Great Death of 1993;

4. the increased prominence of civil society bodies concerned with good governance at national and regional levels willing and able to press governments to share their concerns in practice, as well as in affirmation, linked with their success in achieving (in support of the SADC states) rapid reversal of the military coup with an (illegitimate) royal facade in Lesotho;

5. the emergence of the new South Africa as a regional power with both the force and the moral and diplomatic authority to mediate/coordinate/sanction sub-regionally. (Nigeria began to play this role during the Gowan-Muhammed-Obasanjo period, but since then has had less resources, probably less priority concern and certainly less moral and regional mobilising authority.)

SADCC has led the transformations in sub-regional practice because all but the second of the five strands was particularly pronounced in Southern Africa and because post 1994 civil wars in the Great Lakes Region gravely threatened the security and overloaded the budgets of Tanzania, Angola and Zambia. In 1994-1996 SADC - technically the SADC Heads of State - created a related/parallel Security Commission. The makeup of the Commission proper (Foreign-Defence-Interior) is traditional security. However parallel institutional thinking and practice includes Food Security, Water (avoidance of conflict/agreed allocation of resources), Labour (humane treatment of migrants/avoidance of conditions leading to mass transborder movements), Corridor (e.g. Beira and Maputo) Programmes to - *inter alia* - strengthen domestic livelihood bases in traditional migrant/potential economic refugee zones. These are part of main line SADC sectoral structures.

The Inter Lake war's current phases beginning with the 1990 RPF invasion of Rwanda from Uganda through the 1994 genocide and collapse of the waHutu regime (with its leaders' and killers' safe exit to Zaire bases for crossborder attempts to return covered by Operation Turquoise); the aborted (partly because of the Rwandais events) attempted transition to a conflict transcending elected government in Burundi and the emergence first of a Kivu insurrection and then of an insurgent coalition sweeping away the Mobutu regime in less than a year, brought SADC - via South Africa as its spokesman - squarely into the regional and trans regional peace facilitating, war containing and mastering process.

It would be rash to make sweeping claims as to what has been achieved. The governance and dynamics of the new Democratic Republic of the Congo (ex Zaire) are neither transparent nor crystallised. However, certain gains have been made:

1. the risks of, and associated costs of security against, attacks from Zaire to Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Rwanda, Angola and Burundi have been ended and the refugee burden on Congolese and Tanzanians radically reduced;

2. the Interahamwe military forces have been shattered (finally disintegrating in Mobutu's last defence lines outside Kisangani) and the illegally non demobilised crack UNITA troops severely weakened (in the last counter attacks from Kinshasa) while the CDD (Burundian Interahamwe) have lost their Zaire bases and will not be allowed to set up replacements under the guise of refugee camps in Tanzania;

3. the fairly evident regional blessing to the overthrow of Mobutu (backed by limited provision of arms, senior officers and training of troops and copious advice/information from several neighbours) has facilitated the speed, the relatively non-sanguinary (except for those closely associated with Interahamwe) sweep forward and the early - if somewhat chaotic - attention to decent governance and to economic restoration;

4. advice on the way in which the new Congo government could gain regional credibility, diplomatic support, SADC membership and South African investment and personnel is likely to be taken seriously - more seriously than those of global actors who as late as early 1996 were still preaching "Mobutu or Chaos" without noticing that Mobutu **and** chaos was the existing reality from a Congolese (Zairois) or regional perspective.

Not definitive regional mastery of conflict - much less transcendence - and it could still go wrong. But a distinctly better start to clearing out Mobutu ("le Gide au Enfer") and beginning clear up of the wreckage his 30 years of misrule have wrought, than most analysts would have projected in 1995.

ECOWAS has also - at Nigerian initiative - moved into regional security and war suspension/termination work backed by mediation toward negotiated settlements in Liberia and Sierra Leone and IGAD (Horn/Kenya, originally drought and desert locust focused) into mediation in respect to the Horn. In the latter zone arguably Ethiopia and Eritrea have been more influential in exerting pressures for/laying foundations conducive to building peace in Somalia and - rather more - Somaliland, while they plus Uganda have been more integrally

involved in respect to the Sudan albeit on a premise analogous to SADC's in reference to Mobutu that "The whisky generals and the anti Mahdist apostates must be cleared out as a precondition to the legitimate parties to the regional conflicts making peace".

Results to date in West Africa and the Horn appear deeply disappointing albeit in the case of the Horn 1999 may be a better point for evaluation. The SPLA-Northern Democratic Parties Alliance in the Sudan and coordinated pressure by Kampala-Addis-Asmara on Khartoum only dates to 1995-96 and post 1994 Somalia and Somaliland dynamics are much more positive than under the UN occupation or the period immediately after its extrusion.

However, regional efforts toward forestalling, mastering and transcending conflict are subject to a series of problematics:

a. **non-violent mediation and sanctioning may or may not achieve much** whether in the context of a rising conflict levels threatening the outbreak of violence against a formally (or formerly) legitimate government (e.g. Swaziland, Zambia); in forestalling worse violence and allowing a negotiated settlement in a semi suspended civil war (e.g. Rwanda) or in forcing reform in the context of a dubiously legitimate regime trapped between brutal extremist 'supporters' and insurgents and possessing little or no independent power base (e.g. Burundi);

b. **only global (UN) and to a degree continental (OAU) bodies are perceived as having a general right to intervene across borders** other than in direct self defence or in answer to appeals for collective self defence by a clearly legitimate government (e.g. Lesotho to SADC, Sierra Leone to ECOWAS). This set of legal fictions forces an appearance of mediation on the part of sub-regional and other associated states even in cases in which the removal of one of the parties nominally in negotiation is sought (e.g. an end to the Mobutu regime as pursued by the SADC states informally and South Africa, Angola, Zambia, Tanzania plus Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda more formally) and the actual mediation is in respect to the nature of the successor (in this case the Kabila government) and style of governance;

c. **regional intervention can be to prop up an illegitimate government and/or become a party to an ongoing civil war rather than a force for ending it** (ECOMOG at different stages in Liberia) or be trapped into an agonising or even untenable position by the internal overthrow of the interim or legitimate government it sought to protect (e.g. Sierra Leone and Liberia respectively);

d. **the will to exercise patience and peace rebuilding, but with clear willingness to fight if necessary is almost as hard for a regional as for a UN force to sustain and African forces without foreign refinance are likely to be short lived and/or too small to be effective either at overawing or enforcing;**

e. **regional actors, almost as much as international can be inadequately informed and grab for peace in ultimately counterproductive ways** (a very real risk for the 1997 Liberian electoral solution).

Given the alternatives of prolonged civil war, uncoordinated interventions by neighbouring states (often with very particular national interests), weak (in degree of effective force or other sanctions) and therefore less than credible OAU responses and even more problematic UN interventions, sub-regional action to forestall, limit, master and transcend war appears the least bad option on offer. However only SADC and perhaps ECOWAS has any credible capacity. Arguably Eritrea, Ethiopia and - in respect to the Sudan - Uganda are *de facto* acting regionally in respect to structural political change to allow ending war in the Sudan and Somalia and in something very close to *de facto* recognition of and cooperation with Somaliland. However, the *ad hoc* nature of their cooperation and intervention forces it to be less transparent and - probably - less effective than it would be within - say - COMESA were that body to have a security mechanism and - presumably - an ability to suspend a member whose governance had fallen into total illegitimacy.

IN CONCLUSION: LOOKING BACK AND DOWN TO GO FORWARD AND UP

Civil war is not an inevitable fact of life in Africa. If the root causes of civil wars can be comprehended more clearly in their historic contexts a substantial enhancement of capacity to forestall, to mediate, to end hostilities and to master causes in order to secure rehabilitation, reconciliation and transcendence would have been achieved. That exploration is a challenge primarily to African intellectuals and to African and external sources of academic institutional, independent foundation, non partisan agency or other finance whose only partisanship is for peace. **To know all need not be to accept all - some parties may be beyond being part of any solution including peace.**

Past wars have been almost equally divided between end of empire liberation struggles (including those perceived as seeking freedom from internal colonialism whether by white South Africans, Amharic exclusivist centralisers or the Libero American settler elite) and civil wars among national fractions, almost without exception seeking national power not national break-up. External backing of protagonists and external intervention (whether to enlist cold war side-show proxies or to make Southern Africa safe and profitable for apartheid) has exacerbated several wars and probably created one (Mozambique) which would not have resulted from domestic tensions and grievances alone. Border wars - with the special exception of the long standing issues of Somalia irredenta - and wars of external conquest across state boundaries have been respectively rare and low key or non existent respectively. "Secession" wars - except break-up of recently created federations with no roots (many of which in any event did not result in or arise out of wars) have also been highly uncommon. However, post imperial and past attempted conquest (e.g. Ethiopia and Sudan respectively) war mastery and reconciliation may call for federal solutions or independence for 'imperial outlands' (e.g. Eritrea, Somaliland).

Future wars are likely to be virtually all civil wars unless water access pressures result in wars over riparian rights - a real risk to which SADC has (in forestalling mode) addressed itself. Their causes are likely to be a combination of abusive governance and incapacity to delivery basic services linked to perceived zonal and/or ethnic inequitable inequalities and - via its debilitating effect on civil governance capacity - systemic corruption.

Foreign intervention - late; inadequate in force, finance and duration; in crisis management/fire brigade mode - **has a very poor overall record of lasting success**. In the three exceptions - Zimbabwe, Namibia and Mozambique - special contexts facilitated success. The Rhodesian white regime with a black mask had accepted its inability to fight on (for economic reasons and the increasing unwillingness of South Africa to give increased overt backing to an internationally illegal regime). South Africa had decided the military and economic costs of holding Namibia (especially after its military defeat in Angola) were too high. In Mozambique both parties to the war had long despaired of clear military victory, a strong civil society peace movement and severe drought eroded public support for war and RENAMO realised internal South African evolution was eroding its logistical and military support base.

The **OAU** - while successful in creating and monitoring a consensus against border wars, conquests and secessions - has had neither the force, the finance, the contextual comprehension nor the moral authority to be effective in the context of civil wars (a set of weaknesses compounded in cases of substantial external intervention). Because the OAU may be able to deploy more data and more mediation capacity, but not more finance nor force, in the foreseeable future its most promising roles are probably in **forestalling, mediating and monitoring in alliance with sub-regional and/or *ad hoc* neighbour state groups**. This is especially true because sub-regional groups - both in defence of the interests of their own members compromised by potential or actual cross border overflows of refugees and/or conflict and in the interests of good governance - can take less austere positions on the "non-intervention in internal affairs" doctrine than has been possible to date for the OAU.

Multi state and sub regional involvement in facilitating (including exerting pressure) **conflict resolution has an uneven record.** However, in the case of SADC and of the *ad hoc* Ethiopia-Eritrea-Uganda grouping in respect to the Sudan and (for the first two) Somalia and Somaliland, there does appear to be an evolving dynamic with some partial successes to its credit. ECOWAS' record remains problematic - Liberia and Sierra Leone are far from mastering and terminating war, let alone reconciling and rebuilding.

However, **external actions - African as well as UN or Northwestern - can at best facilitate conflict mastery, reconciliation and transcendence (as opposed to temporary suspension).** That depends primarily on the development of actors and attitudes which are willing to (or insist upon) "give peace a chance" - a context which has emerged and appears to be taking root in Namibia, South Africa, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Congo (Brazzaville and Somaliland but not or not yet in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Somalia and Burundi with Congo (ex Zaire), Rwanda and Angola cases in which there are both positive and negative dynamics.

Sustaining a dynamic toward peace requires **affirmative action** in respect to individuals from groups whose exclusion has been a *casus belli* and **also rapid rehabilitation of basic civil governance and service capacity** as well as **improving livelihood and food security** prospects. In the aftermath of war these require **mobilisation of public external resources** to speed up initial rehabilitation. Private investment is unlikely to come in quantity before peace is seen to be secure and is not oriented to financing law and order, basic health care or food security safety nets. To further, rather than weaken, reconciliation such external resources should be **channelled via national, zonal/provincial and local governments and via domestic civil society/social sector bodies** not primarily via Northwestern NGO parallel (and domestic capacity corrosive) channels as has marked most civil war and post civil war situations in Africa over the past decade.

These requirements are not easy ones - not even that of increasing comprehension. But the cost of not meeting them is stark as set out in the introductory overview.

In these circumstances the most appropriate conclusion on what is to be done is perhaps an East African Lake Zone proverb used by Mwalimu Nyerere in respect to another daunting challenge:

> Rabbit, rabbit where are you going?
> I am going out to kill the elephant.
> Rabbit, rabbit can you really do that?
> Well I'll try... and try again.

In the folk legend the rabbit does in fact succeed and the trampling of his family is ended.

ACRONYM LIST

COMESA   - Economic Community of Eastern and Southern Africa (Sudan to Zimbabwe, Mauritius to Zaire).

ECOMOG   - Economic Community of West African States' (ECOWAS) military group for joint action in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

FNLA   - A former northern Angolan political party and insurgency. Now in large part incorporated in MPLA.

IGAD   - Horn states plus Kenya group initially focused on drought and migrant pest control subsequently involved in attempted conflict mediation by negotiation.

OAU   - Organisation for African Unity

RENAMO   - Mozambican political party, formerly insurgency, originally (but not now) Rhodesian/South African founded and directed.

RPF   - Rwanda Patriotic Front - successful insurgency now dominant element in government.

RUF   - Sierra Leone Revolutionary United Front insurgency.

SADCC/SADC - Southern African Development Community (originally Coordination Conference) of 12 states from Tanzania and Angola through South Africa plus Mauritius.

SSA   - Sub Saharan Africa

UNITA   - Angolan political party and insurgency

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This chapter draws substantially on the other conflict focused chapters in this volume. In addition it is based on the author's personal work with SADCC over 1978-1986, SWAPO over 1975-1989, the Government of Mozambique over 1988-1995, UNICEF missions to Somalia/Somaliland in 1987,1993, 1995 and (for the Government of Tanzania) to Ngara in 1994 and participation in the African Centre for Development, Economic and Strategic Studies in its Conflict Comprehension and Mastery Project headed by Adebayo Adedeji including a 1997 field trip to Angola, Mozambique, Rwanda and Sierra Leone.

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