The *Review of African Political Economy (ROAPE)* is published quarterly by Carfax Publishing Company for the ROAPE international collective. Now 24 years old, *ROAPE* is a fully refereed journal covering all aspects of African political economy. *ROAPE* has always involved the readership in shaping the journal's coverage, welcoming contributions from grass roots organisations, women's organisations, trade unions and political groups. The journal is unique in the comprehensiveness of its bibliographic referencing, information monitoring, statistical documentation and coverage of work-in-progress.

Editorial correspondence, including manuscripts for submission, should be sent to Jan Burgess, *ROAPE* Publications Ltd, P.O. Box 678, Sheffield S1 1BF, UK. Tel: 44 +(0)1226 74.16.60; Fax 44 +(0)1226 74.16.61; editor@roape.org.

Business correspondence, including orders and remittances relating to subscriptions, back numbers and offprints, should be addressed to the publisher: Carfax Publishing, Taylor & Francis Ltd, Customer Services Department, Rankine Road, Basingstoke, Hants RG24 8PR, UK.

Advertising enquiries should be addressed to Claire Buckminster, Carfax Publishing, Taylor & Francis Ltd, PO Box 25, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 3UE, UK.

Permission to reprint or translate material from *Review of African Political Economy* should be sought from ROAPE Publications Ltd. Consent to copy for general distribution, for promotion, for creating new work, or for resale must be specifically obtained in writing from ROAPE Publications Ltd.

ISSN 0305-6244

©1999 ROAPE Publications Ltd
Africa & the Drugs Trade

Chris Allen

Sourcing the Study of ‘Africa & the Drugs Trade’

This issue focuses on African involvement in the production, sale and consumption of (illegal) drugs. Production and use of such ‘mass’ drugs as cannabis and khat (or qat) is ubiquitous in Africa, and the continent is becoming ever more drawn into the international trade in (largely) manufactured drugs, a trade estimated by the UN in its 1998 World Drug Report to have been worth $400bn in 1995, some 8 per cent of world exports; only the arms trade was larger, at $800bn. Despite this, as our three contributors’ references make clear, the literature on drugs is astonishingly sparse (and often concerned with medical or technical aspects). A mere handful of books and articles appeared on the topic in the 1990s, very few, especially compared with that on most of the phenomena or trends that are associated with the rise of the drug trade in Africa, and which together make up the political economy of the drug industry and trade on the continent (see below).

Primary sources for the topic amount to police reports, which are often neither reliable for accessible; press coverage, which is neither complete nor representative; and material from a variety of international agencies: Interpol, the US Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, the International Narcotics Control Board, the UN Drug Control programme, and the non-official Observatoire Géopolitique des Drogues (OGD). In addition, one can use interview material from those involved in the trade, but this is not only hard to obtain, but harder still to check for accuracy and reliability. Two of the three contributions in this issue draw on work done for a major UNDCP study of the economic and social implications of drug consumption and trade in eight African states, representing the most substantial, coherent and scholarly attempt to analyse the issue to date. They have had to overcome the problem of limited sources to produce a picture less of Africa’s role in international trafficking than of a set of issues arising from the continued domestic growing of cannabis and khat, and of the impact on this both of changes in Africa’s political economy in the last two decades, and of the advent of a significant presence of imported drugs: cocaine, heroin, mandrax and others. Much of this latter trade is entrepôt trade: the drugs are in transit, sometimes to elsewhere in Africa but more commonly to Europe and the US.

It is this last feature that makes Africa of interest to the international agencies concerned with drugs, and with ‘enforcement’ aspects – the control, detection and punishment of those who produce, trade and consume drugs. Their perspective is thus one that tends to subsume all drug production and use under one narrow ‘trafficking’ model; that has low standards of evidence; that is far more concerned with the interests of final consumer countries that those of Africans or African governments; and whose conception of enforcement is akin to that of the American ‘War on Drugs’. These perspectives interact with a picture of the nature of African
societies, economies and political systems that is best crude or naïve, reminiscent of the worst international reporting of African crises and disasters. The OGD is well aware of the narrow vision of the official, international agencies, and tries itself to ‘grasp the components of the drug phenomenon and assess how they interact at all levels’ (OGD, 1997, quoting its 1992 report), yet while it does try to adopt a political economy approach, it is still the international flow of drugs to Western consumers that is central to its analysis, and its reports on individual African states contain such sad anachronisms as references to ‘juju men’, and rely on a model of African politics in which all such states are necessarily incompetent and corrupt. This thoughtless denigration, when combined with the anonymity and gossipy nature of OGD’s ‘sources’ (1) makes it difficult to trust their reports, which are the fullest and most independent of those readily available.

Changing Patterns of Production & Trade

Twenty years ago the drugs most readily available in Africa, including South Africa, were those grown locally: cannabis, in most of Africa, and khat, largely grown and consumed in The Horn (see Green in this issue). ‘Hard’ drugs, and the abusive use of pharmaceuticals, were almost entirely confined to expatriates and tourists. Only mandrax (methaqualone), a drug produced in India and increasingly popular in Southern Africa from the later 1970s, had begun to disturb this pattern by the early 1980s. Since then there have been dramatic changes, involving the integration of Africa into international networks of trafficking, consumption and control. The most obvious feature has been the development of transit routes through African ports and airports for bulk consignments of heroin and cocaine, intended mainly for high-income consumer countries, including some Arab states. While Lagos and Nairobi have probably been the key hubs in this trade, a large number of West, East and North African states are now involved, including Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, the Congo, Zambia, Sudan, and Egypt. One result has been the arrival in (or the return to) Africa of expatriates involved in the trade – Indians and Pakistanis, Dutch, Italians and other Europeans, and Malaysians are often mentioned in the various international reports. Less predictable has been the development of African traffickers. Initially African couriers, often women, were used to transport drugs, but there now exist entire networks, often run by Nigerians (2) or Ghanaians, which import, repackage and distribute heroin and cocaine from Asia, Brazil and other areas. Distribution is through European and American counterparts, or through networks of African expatriates in consumer countries. Nigerian traffickers are now competing with Colombian and Russian distributors, and have begun to shift from reliance on other Nigerians or West Africans (who tend to be targeted by Customs) to more multinational teams.

Another effect has been the rapid growth, or even entire development, of markets for hard drugs within Africa, and the associated local processing of varieties of crack, or production of adulterated forms of heroin. This market was initially confined to the resident or transient rich, including African businessmen, politicians and civil servants and their children, but also tourists, agency employees and other short-term expatriate residents. In the last decade and especially the last five years, it has both expanded into lower-income urban groups, and triggered the development of associated markets, notably that for medical drugs open to abusive use, such as valium or amphetamines. These are either directly imported or stolen from pharmacies, hospitals and government stores. While the extent of hard drug use is
difficult to estimate, and it remains modest by comparison with 'traditional' drugs, it is now a significant part of the market, and especially so in South Africa (Venter, 1998; OGD, 1999:51-57).

Production patterns for the 'traditional' drugs have also changed. There is still considerable growing on small plots, often intercropped with foodstuffs, and intended for local markets, supplied by petty traders. Customers here are individual consumers, and usually poor, for whom the use of cannabis or khatt forms part of daily life: not recreational so much as utilitarian (but see Green). Production has expanded, however, in every sense: larger fields, a significant output in many more areas, and supplying both increased domestic demand, and foreign markets. Thus this older, domestic pattern of production and use is beginning to overlap with the newer patterns of trafficking, in South Africa, Morocco, Madagascar, Nigeria, Ghana and the Ivory Coast.

**An Outline Political Economy**

In part, the incorporation of Africa (and Africans) into the trade in drugs arises from aspects of globalisation, such as the changes in communications and their accessibility, or the ease and speed with which capital can be moved. More significant, however, have been three changes in Africa's political economy since the mid-1980s: changes in the nature of the state and the political dynamic; changes in the economy and its management; and changes in the relationship between African states and international actors. These have combined to encourage drug production and trade, to make Africa open and vulnerable to trafficking (and less able to control it), and to create some of the mechanisms and activities that complement or support the trade.

The combination of economic decline and its management through structural adjustment programmes, mainly externally-designed and imposed on reluctant African governments, has had three main relevant effects:

- the state's capacity to enforce and regulate has been diminished;
- informal, and often covert, forms of economic activity have expanded and,
- agricultural production in some areas, or based on some crops, has suffered from declining prices and support.

The weakening of the state, and pressure on it to reduce and reconfigure public spending, can in turn weaken the army and police, together with associated agencies such as customs and border guards (though other factors may influence their performance much more). Detection and control of cross-border and entrepôt trades becomes more difficult. Deregulation of banking, foreign exchange and investment controls, all make it easier to transfer and launder income from trafficking, as well as to secure short-term investment opportunities, which both launder and enhance profits (Keh, 1996). Thus the most recent OGD report (OGD, 1999:42-43) argues of the Indian Ocean area, that

*Investments in the region combine naked political intervention, rigged or non-existent tenders, and unaccounted-for funds coming not only from 'investor' countries in the region (Mauritius, South Africa and the Persian Gulf countries), but also from Europe (Russia and particularly Italy). These investments are aimed at privatized companies, currency exchanges, casinos, tourist infrastructure, and certain heavy infrastructure.*
It also claims that in Kenya the absence of money-laundering laws, the proliferation of private banks, and the openings for investment in the tourist industry make it 'an ideal place to invest for money-launderers' (156).

The growth of the informal sector, including informal credit systems, makes the sale and transit of drugs easier, especially the internal and cross-border trade in cannabis and *khatt*. The marked expansion in the production of these drugs, however, seems more to be related to growth of markets, especially in towns, and to the decline in viability of alternative crops. Thus declining incomes from cocoa in the Ivory Coast after 1989, or from coffee and cocoa in Togo in the late 1980s, or from groundnuts in the Gambia or Senegal, all appear to be related to the subsequent development of new cannabis crops, or the expansion of older ones. Other factors are of course important too, including the impact of Ghanaian or Nigerian drug traders in initiating production, but the key seems to lie in the relative returns with cannabis (or *khatt*) compared to other crops. Both are quite labour and water-intensive; but a small plot can be combined with food cultivation, and will yield a far higher income than do rival crops. OGD reports suggest ratios of 50:1 in favour of cannabis production against groundnuts in Senegal (but only 10:1 for the Gambia), and 300:1 against cocoa in the Ivory Coast. While these figures are but rough estimates (and should be compared with those for Ghana collected by Bernstein in this issue), they do suggest strong reasons why peasants may be turning to cannabis and *khatt*, either of their own accord, or triggered by offers of guaranteed prices by buyers (who may also supply seed). In a related fashion, involvement in drug trading, and especially petty trading or acting as a courier, can be seen as providing a replacement income in a period when public and private sector employment and real incomes have declined severely.

Political change in the same period has been dominated by two distinct processes, occurring in different groups of states; the struggle over democratic reform, and the deepening of the crisis engendered by prolonged spoils politics, inducing processes of state collapse. The former process, which is still in its early stages, is often marked by sustained resistance by incumbent regimes, at the cost of increasing internal violence, political and electoral manipulation, and loss of control over political corruption. The extent varies – compare Kenya with the Ivory Coast – but the associated weakening in state capacity and of respect for law and authority, makes control over drug production and use more problematic and less effective. Corruption, and the involvement of senior politicians, army officers and civil servants in drug trafficking or in providing protection for traffickers and money-launderers, is still more supportive of the trade, though it is all too easy to assume that for each example of trade there must be a supporting cast of corrupt notables.

Prolonged spoils, state collapse, war and warlordism have more substantial impact. At the heart of spoils politics is competition for and exploitation of political office primarily or solely for personal enrichment. Not only does this make protection of traffickers far more likely than their prosecution, but direct involvement in the trade represents a safe and lucrative form of spoils, one often attributed to Nigerians. War, whether associated with terminal spoils or not, destroys controls, while promoting a linked collection of covert and/or criminal activities that either complement drug trafficking, or create logistic support for it. The creation of networks and mechanisms for supplying weapons, or trading in diamonds, tropical hardwoods or endangered species, can readily be combined with or adapted to trading in drugs. Illicit means of payment, associated with these forms of trade, or with embargo-breaking, fit readily with money-laundering. It is thus no suprise when
a recent UN report on illegal arms flows in the Great Lakes region should conclude
that they are in part financed by drug trafficking by leading members of the former
army and militia (Interahamwe) of the pre-1994 government of Rwanda, based in
Mombasa and Dar es Salaam (IRIN, 1998). Similar claims have made concerning
UNITA in Angola, though its main source of funding has been diamonds. Drug use,
notably of a mixture of hard and medical drugs, has also frequently been reported as
a key element in the recruitment and use of soldiers (especially child soldiers) in
Liberia, Sierra Leone, Mozambique and Angola.

When the state itself promotes covert forms of violence – as in South Africa in the
1980s and early 1990s – then similar consequences occur. Not only did the state recruit
from, or work with criminal and vigilante organisations, but it encouraged various
forms of illicit activity and trade on their part. These organisations, now no longer
part of the state but maintained by some of their former members, can be seen actively
involved in arms trading (and theft), car theft, and drug trafficking. A laboratory
under the charge of Dr Wouter Basson, responsible for the development of chemical
and bacteriological weapons under apartheid, was devoted to the production of
mandrax and ecstasy both before and after 1990.

Issues of Control

Economic decline and the end of the Cold War have marginalised Africa within the
international system, turning it from being an actor into being a ‘problem’. It has
suffered a decline in role, importance and influence; and has lost much of what
remained of its autonomy, as can be seen in the phenomenon of aid conditionality. At
the same time as this drain of influence and autonomy, African states have been
pressured to take on more responsibilities. Thus while in the early 1990s western
states accepted some degree of responsibility for peacekeeping (or peace enforce-
ment) and for humanitarian intervention, recent US argument see this as limited to
financial and logistic support, while field responsibility (and the related risks) can be
left to African troops.

Drug control measures raise related issues. African governments have become
exposed to concerted pressures from the US Drug Enforcement Agency and the
Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, together with
international agencies, to act effectively on the ‘drug problem. To fail to do so is to risk
a reduction in aid (though other geopolitical considerations also apply here, as during
the Cold War). Yet, as Klein argues in his contribution, the definition of the problem,
and thus of appropriate measures of control, is derived from western – and mainly
American – paradigms inapplicable in African settings. In such paradigms, the drug
problem is essentially that of the supply of hard drugs to high income consumer
countries; the production, sale and use of drugs is always criminal, and is associated
with violence; and all drugs should be treated as part of the same problem. From this
perspective, the drug trade is not the product of demand in the consumer countries,
and their failure to control domestic organised crime; nor does it does it arise from
decades of support for corrupt regimes, and movements deeply implicated in drug
trafficking. Instead it is a problem created by supplier countries and those areas
involved in the transit trade, who must be induced to contain or stop the trade, and
penalized if they do not. By contrast, Klein argues that much of drug consumption in
Nigeria (as in Ghana, see Bernstein) is not of hard or medical drugs, but of cannabis.
Its use is not primarily recreational or criminal, but is intended to permit the user to
work harder or longer, or to dull hunger, much as is the chewing of coca leaves in
Latin America. Green, while skeptical of the utility of chewing *khatt*, also sees its consumption as distinct from that of hard drugs, and as creating a quite different, though serious, set of problems.

To impress external drug control agencies it has been necessary for African states to (appear to) adopt a proactive and punitive control strategy: a local version of the ‘war on drugs’. The effect has been, however, much less to disrupt trafficking (which has if anything increased) than to target cannabis users and the smaller growers. Both Klein and Bernstein show that the vast bulk of arrests have been of petty cannabis users and growers, rather than of sellers, and still less of pushers, just as the great bulk of seizures has been of cannabis (though this too has become part of the international drug trade). Sentences for such trivial offences can very severe, while major traffickers bribe their way out of trouble. The consequence of this strategy, and of the accompanying portrayal of cannabis as both a major problem and as ‘gateway’ to harder drugs, is to create (or risk creating) a linked set of economic, social and political problems.

Arrest and seizure strategies, particularly when combined with crop eradication campaigns (again targeting cannabis or *khatt*, as there is very little opium cultivation) take little account of the economic reasons for cannabis cultivation discussed above, and thus may exacerbate both rural and urban poverty. An example is given in the recent OGD report (1999:175), of such a campaign in the Gambia, in March 1998.

> Police destroyed all the plantations and seized the islanders’ stocks of marijuana. Djinack is home to 3,500 people, (and) all the families who live there, without exception are financially dependent on cannabis cultivation, which accounts for at least 75% of their income. The recent police operation (which was not combined with measures to help farmers grow other crops) left many homes utterly destitute; ... the inhabitants are experiencing food and health problems, with children particularly hard hit.

They also discourage the authorities from examining the social, medical and educational issues arising from cannabis and *khatt* consumption, in favour of ‘criminal’ issues alone. Finally, they promote a strengthening of authoritarian institutions and repressive state capacity, raising civil liberties issues. The last issue goes beyond questions of harassment, arrest and incarceration, to the use of ostensible drug control measures as a political or military weapon. In Sudan, for example, the areas selected for eradication campaigns, carried out by the army, have been those in which regime opponents live, and which contain land that can be expropriated once cleared of residents (and then allocated to regime supporters), such as the Beja region near Ethiopia, attacked in this fashion in 1997/98, or Darfur. A similar pattern can be seen in Casamance, where large scale eradication campaigns have occurred since 1995, under the aegis of the Drug Squad, but intended to deprive the local autonomist movement, the MFDC, of the taxes it levies on cannabis growers.

**Endnotes**

1. For these see the OGD website; http://www.ogd.org; see also OGD 1998.

2. For an analogous approach to the ‘Nigerian crime problem’, see Winer 1996.
Bibliography


Stephen Riley

We are saddened to announce the death of our friend and colleague who died suddenly on the 28th of December 1998. An Obituary and tributes will appear in the next issue of ROAPE.
Ghana's Drug Economy: Some Preliminary Data

Henry Bernstein

Ghana’s drug economy is relatively recent. Cannabis cultivation and trade, for domestic consumption and export, appears to have expanded significantly only since the 1960s. The transit/re-export of cocaine and heroin is a phenomenon of the 1980s, with the usual ‘spillover’ effect, and extension of their consumption to a wider social range of users than is commonly believed. The cannabis economy no doubt provides important sources of income for significant numbers of farmers and intermediaries in the chain of distribution. Large rewards for smuggling cocaine and heroin facilitate the recruitment of couriers, despite the high risks. While it is fatuous to suggest any simple or necessary connection between socioeconomic conditions and the nature, extent and patterns of drug production, trafficking and consumption, it can be hypothesised that the growth of the drug economy in Ghana has some relation to the enduring crisis of development and livelihoods, and its effects for social change. The drug economy in Africa today is probably one of the most dynamic and valuable spheres of ‘non-traditional’ exports and re-exports.

Introduction

The paucity of systematic information, let alone analysis, concerning the political economy of drugs in contemporary Africa is striking. To the extent that there is a literature on drugs in particular countries (for example, Nigeria and notably South Africa), it is primarily legal and medical in character, by contrast with knowledge of drugs production and trade in Southeast Asia and Latin America. In the case of Ghana, there are hardly any published sources of any kind on drugs, yet Ghana is particularly interesting for several reasons.

One is that the experience of Ghana – and of Ghanaians – has been at the forward edge, hence especially emblematic, of all three major moments of the history of sub-Saharan Africa in the second half of the twentieth century. In the moment of decolonisation, Ghana was the first country in tropical Africa to gain independence in 1957, with Kwame Nkrumah an influential analyst of neo-colonialism, pan-Africanism, and the centrality of the political kingdom to realising aspirations of nation-building and national development. In the next moment, Nkrumah's overthrow in 1966, followed by the accelerating and comprehensive crisis of the 1970s, gave early notice of the contradictions of the project of the developmental state in Africa, and the more dramatically so in the light of Ghana’s (relative) prosperity and prestige. Finally, in the current moment of the neo-liberal offensive, Ghana is portrayed by the World Bank and others as the ‘flagship’ of the success of structural
adjustment programmes, and since the 1992 elections of democratisation as well (Endnote 1).

A second, more specific, reason for the interest of Ghana is that the drugs considered here – marijuana, cocaine and heroin – are of sufficiently recent provenance in the country to allow an historical reconstruction of their introduction and spread, drawing on the evidence of participants in those processes. In the light of this research potential, the material presented here is only a tiny contribution (and perhaps stimulus?) to constructing a political economy of drug production, trafficking and consumption. The only pre-existing source on which the following account is able to draw is a report on cannabis/marijuana in Ghana by the Paris-based OGD (Observatoire Géopolitique des Drogues) published in 1995. The authors of that report acknowledge that its data are patchy and much of its analysis speculative, qualifications that apply equally here. Nonetheless, given the considerations noted, it seems worthwhile to make these preliminary data available to a wider audience concerned with processes, problems and prospects of change in Africa today (Endnote 2).

**Cannabis/Marijuana**

Ghana is a major producer of cannabis (second only to Nigeria in West Africa), much of it of high quality (high delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol or THC levels), with a large domestic market and large exports. OGD (1995:18-25) suggests the following periodisation of cannabis production and use in Ghana:

1) 1945-1960: introduction by soldiers returned from service in South Asia, with early cultivation in areas of Eastern Region close to Accra, and diffusion of ‘utilitarian’ (‘functional’) use among lower-class social and occupational groups, especially in the cities;

2) 1960-1980: major expansion in cultivation, especially northwest to the new major growing areas of Ashanti, the Afram plains, and Brong Ahafo, with continuing demand from the groups indicated, plus ‘recreational’ use by young upper-class Ghanaians (initially returnees from study abroad), and subsequent adoption among middle-class groups pauperised by the economic crisis of the 1970s and early 1980s;

3) 1980 onwards: Ghana’s cannabis market ‘reached maturity’, with regular or occasional use by an estimated 15 per cent of the population, and exports estimated at 50 per cent of domestic production by the Narcotics Control Board (NCB).

**Production**

There is a question whether cannabis – wild or cultivated – was known, and used for other purposes, before 1945 from when its introduction and diffusion for narcotic use is conventionally dated (the same uncertainty also applies to Nigeria: Klein, 1998). The South Asian provenance of (or stimulus to) narcotic use is suggested by the common term Indian hemp (also in Nigeria), and the term *bhanga* among marijuana smokers in the 1950s and 1960s (OGD, 1995:18; *banga* is still a common term in Cameroon: Mueller-Kossack, 1998, as is *bhangi* in East Africa). Otherwise, marijuana is also widely known in Ghana as *wee* (*wee wee* in Nigeria) and *abonsam tawa* (‘devil’s tobacco’; Twi).
In addition to the cultivation areas already listed, the OGD Report (1995) gives cultivation along the southeastern border with Togo, in parts of the southwest, and in eight areas of the north, only two of which were identified to OGD by police sources, supporting the perception that the less populous, remote and very poor rural regions of the north are barely policed.

Information on cannabis cultivation, as on most other aspects, is sparse. It is grown both in pure stands, typically in remote clearings, and intercropped with cassava, tomatoes and okra, which serve to conceal cannabis plants (that also benefit from irrigation applied to vegetables); 0.4 – 0.8ha is said to be fairly standard for fields of pure stands, with 3ha the largest size of farm given by OGD (1995:36). Recent press reports have referred to the destruction of larger than average farms: one of 3ha near Wenchi (Daily Graphic, 18 September 1996) and another of over 2ha (Ghana Times, 24 October 1997). While highly clandestine in relation to the authorities (and outsiders more generally), it is likely that cultivation is known about, assisted and protected in farming communities. The need to involve neighbours in vigilance was stated by a convicted farmer serving his sentence in Nsawam Prison.

Farmers are typically contracted by traders who supply seeds, and often advance cash or consumer goods against the crop. Growing times vary with conditions, between 3-5 months according to OGD (1995:36). A typical growing cycle (in the Eastern Region) was explained thus: 4-5 weeks for germination (often in seed beds); 2.5 months to grow to seed; 4-5 months in total to harvest.

Harvesting is done when the leaves start to drop (farmer interview), and the plant is then cut and dried. Drying can be a problem in deep forest areas where the best cannabis tends to grow, which may contribute to patterns of seasonality in supply (see below). When dried the cannabis is bagged – in ‘anta’ bags (3.5 – 4.5 kg), medium-sized fertiliser bags (up to 10kg), or ‘maxi bags’ (50kg cocoa sacks) that can hold up to 25kg of dried cannabis. The only form of on-farm processing is compressing cannabis into ‘bricks’ (using presses for making concrete building blocks) for easier transport (OGD, 1995:36-7).

The following types and sources of cannabis were identified by a trader (well informed about cultivation and trade in the south, but not the north), in descending order of quality: ‘no seed dope’: grown in the most fertile soils, often marshy and deep inside forests, on the Afram plains, in Ashanti and Brong Ahafo, with marijuana from Wenchi especially prized; ‘taffeta’: dense leaves and very small (concealed) seeds, grown in Volta Region; ‘seed dope’: which grows anywhere; ‘area dope’: grown close to Accra and cut early to avoid detection, giving the lowest quality marijuana.

That farmers sell their crop in the field to traders (OGD, 1995:37) is probably accurate in general, although there are press stories about farmers arrested off-farm trying to transport bags of cannabis.

Producer prices are very difficult to report with precision. OGD (1995:37) gives presumably ‘average’ farm-gate prices in mid-1995 of 50-60,000 cedis (at that time, $42-50) for a ‘maxi-bag’ of 25kg. However, producer prices are likely to vary widely by area (and distance from consumption destinations), quality, season, and relationships and negotiation between farmers and traders. Two sets of figures obtained from interviews (with a farmer and a trader) both refer to seasonal variations, and probably apply to medium- to low-grade ‘seed dope’. The farmer reported 50-60, 000 cedis per ‘maxi-bag’ after harvest, and 80-90,000 cedis at times of
strong demand. The trader said he paid growers 60-80,000 cedis or 80-100,000 cedis according to market conditions.

There seems little doubt that cannabis cultivation is lucrative to farmers, although this has to be balanced against the risks of detection, destruction of farms, and severe prison sentences (see below). OGD (1995:37) calculates that farmers can gain an annual gross income of 1-1.2m cedis per hectare, assuming a yield of 250kg, two harvests a year, and a producer price of 50-60,000 cedis a maxi-bag. OGD also suggests that many cocoa-farmers have diversified into cannabis cultivation. This is impossible to assess, but certainly some of the main supply areas (of high quality cannabis) are in 'classic' cocoa zones like Brong Ahafo.

Distribution
As noted, traders buy from farmers with whom they have contracted, or have relations of trust. Bagged cannabis is trucked to distribution/consumption centres concealed in loads of other produce, commonly charcoal (transported in massively loaded trucks) and sometimes fruit (for example pineapple) which conceals its smell. Bags of cannabis are sometimes carried in taxis or private cars, with a corresponding risk of detection at the police posts on all main roads, unless arrangements (bribes) have been made in advance. Another practice is to keep police posts under surveillance to determine the best moment to take cargo through, or else it may be unloaded and carried by a team of 'boys' through the bush around a police post and reloaded further down the road (trader interview).

The negotiation of police posts (including through bribery and 'timetabling' of major loads) was also pointed out by the Commissioner of Police in charge of the Narcotics Unit, who emphasised the well-organised and security conscious modus operandi of big traders. He said that shipments are stored at well-concealed 'warehouses' on the outskirts of towns and cities, whence they are distributed along a chain of 3 to 4 intermediaries to street (retail) sale. Arrests at street level are much more common than at the source of the distribution chain, although there are occasional raids on warehouses, as at Maamodi, Accra, in October 1996 when over 300kg of marijuana was seized (Daily Graphic, 10 September 1996).

The sorting of marijuana (leaves from twigs and seeds) apparently occurs at various points in the distribution chain, before it is divided into individual 'wraps' for final sale (Endnote 3). Three prisoners interviewed at Nsawam were probably dealers at one remove from street level, having been arrested in possession of 3.3, 3.5, and 7.7kg of marijuana. A street level dealer encountered in Nima had a packet (concealed nearby) of 0.5kg.

Nima (originally known as Lagos Town) was a zongo (immigrant township), located outside the boundaries of the Accra municipality until the late 1940s. Today it is a poor and congested residential area of some 170-200,000 people, known for its large population of northern Ghanaians and many immigrants from other West African countries (Endnote 4). Sociologically, it presents some contrasts with the downtown and beachside centres of drug dealing and consumption in Accra, discussed by OGD (1995:29-31). An informant said that Nima has 9-10 spots for buying and smoking marijuana, with 5-6 dealers operating at each. These spots are located near public utilities (for example public toilets and wash-houses), with access to quick escape routes through the dense networks of alleyways.
There is no precise, nor generalisable, price information, including mark-ups along the distribution chain. The trader interviewed claimed that his mark-up on loads bought from farmers is 20-25%. The dealer interviewed in Nima had bought his half kilo of seed dope for 10,000 cedis, from which he would realise 30,000 cedis when it was sold in individual wraps at 300 cedis. Assuming an initial producer price of 2,000 cedis a kilo, this gives a price spread of 3,000% from farmgate to consumer.

OGD (1995:28) gives a price of 100 cedis a wrap in mid-1995 (repeated in OGD, 1997), suggesting a three-fold inflation in the consumer price between then and early 1998 (with much lower increases in producer prices, above). However, consumer prices vary with quality: higher value wraps contain the best leaves and flowers of higher quality types of marijuana (above). The best leaves are known as shasha ('huff and puff': Hausa) or swali (in Kumasi), lesser quality leaves (from the main stalks) as bukata ('better than nothing': Hausa) or boka (Kumasi). Street prices are also likely to fluctuate with supply conditions. Another informant (a former smoker in Kumasi) said that in his experience there was always one reliable source of supply in any town or city quarter when marijuana was generally scarce. The inference is that there is a particularly well-placed or preeminent wholesaler in every urban area.

Consumption
Marijuana is consumed in the following ways, in probable descending order of frequency: smoked in pure wraps; as cannabis paste dissolved in locally distilled gin, akpeteshie (as a narcotic version of 'bitters'), mixed with tobacco, or mixed with/ dissolved in food; smoked in a mixture with other drugs; as cannabis oil, added to drinks or soaked in tobacco and smoked (said to be particularly potent); drunk as an infusion from leaves and flowers.

OGD (1995) has an interesting account of marijuana users in the framework of its periodisation (above), and summarised in two broad social categories (OGD, 1997) with which it associates ‘functional’ use by ‘the poor’ and ‘recreational’ use by ‘jet-setters’ and the ‘small middle class’ respectively.

The poor include a range of specific occupational groups, most of which evidently belong to the working class or ‘marginal’ groups (whose social boundaries with the working class are so fluid): construction workers, miners, stevedores and porters, transport workers, watchmen, sex workers, petty criminals, agricultural labourers, fisherman and sailors. What they share is work that is physically demanding, physically or socially dangerous, or otherwise gruelling. The demands of such work, and desperation it generates, are alleviated by marijuana use, ‘functional’ consumption of which also helps deal with ‘taboos’ on behaviour confronting soldiers and police, sex workers, thieves – and street children, who are drawn into casual prostitution and crime and almost universally use marijuana (Endnote 5). There is a striking parallel here with the ‘functional’ use of akpeteshie by particular categories of the urban poor and migrant workers, documented in Akyeampong’s pioneering social and cultural history of alcohol in Ghana (1996).

Some users – soldiers and police, and also musicians and artists, and students – do not correspond so readily to the two broad categories noted. Marijuana use does seem to cut across social classes and groups. On the other hand, more sociological analysis would be useful, not least of social interaction in consumption. For example, students – or certain more déclassé students – may be a particular link between different social arenas and practices of consumption (interview, Kumasi).
Some interactive patterns of consumption can be suggested, with the usual qualifications. The first is among migrant workers, especially construction workers (often northerners) who move from one site to another, living in the buildings they are working on, and subject to police harassment. They are commonly marijuana users (usually limited to the cheapest types) who smoke together after work, during which they exchange stories of their experiences and discuss their conditions of life, in sessions that take on a political edge directed to their oppression by the elites of business and the state (interview, Kumasi).

The highly articulate young dealers and smokers of Nima have an explicit ideological line on marijuana consumption, inflected by their passion for reggae. They have been smokers of marijuana since the age of 11 or 12 onwards, and present it as life-enhancing: good for ailments (asthma, appetite loss), reading, contemplation and sense of self — and sexual potency. This is combined with a similarly ‘ideologised’ rejection of other drugs (including alcohol), and critique of the ‘Babylon’ of concentration of wealth and exercise of state power in Ghana today: its privilege, arrogance and the oppression it inflicts.

A third group is Rastafarians, with their Cultural Centre ('headquarters') in the Labadi area of Accra where they are concentrated and subject to periodic police raids. They, of course, are the most explicit advocates of marijuana use on religious grounds (and have popularised the term ganga), and are said to combine such ideas, derived from the Caribbean, with a marked reverence for, and study of, the writings of Kwame Nkrumah which feeds into their ideology of black brotherhood and pan-Africanism.

More generally, the existence of a distinctive drug sub-culture — with its own vocabulary and social practices — was remarked on by drug users and police, and especially by staff at Nsawam prison and the Accra Psychiatric Hospital who deal with groups of drug users concentrated in particular institutional conditions.

When it comes to estimating, however roughly, the extent of marijuana consumption, we confront the usual problem of lack of any reliable numbers. On the basis of a guess by an officer of the police Narcotics Unit, OGD (1995:26) suggests that about 15 per cent of the population are regular or occasional users of marijuana: 2.5 million people from population figures for 1993, subsequently revised upwards to 3 million in 1997 (OGD, 1997). This is likely to be exaggerated for the following reasons.

First, marijuana use appears overwhelmingly, if not exclusively, to be a male practice, and is concentrated among younger urban men (anecdotal evidence suggests that many men relinquish the practice when they reach their thirties). The male population of Ghana between the ages of 15 and 29 in 1995 was 2,320,000 (World Bank database, 1997). If that is reduced by the proportion of urban in total population (36 per cent), it gives a figure of 835,200. Not all can be assumed to be marijuana users, but on the other hand we would have to add users from other categories of the population, especially young men in the countryside and older men from certain occupational groups, urban and rural. Even so, a population of regular consumers of, say, a million upwards, constitutes major demand, and a stimulus to production that can also direct supply to exports.

It is impossible to state with confidence current trends in the production, trafficking and consumption of marijuana. OGD (1995) considers that the domestic market has stabilised with any future increase following demographic growth, but does not
explain its reasoning. However, given what has been sketched here of incentives to production, with no foreseeable change in the conditions that generate demand (for both functional and recreational use), and with the numbers of livelihoods and incomes generated along the chain from cannabis cultivation to marijuana consumption, any reduction in the size of the domestic market seems most unlikely.

Exports
The NCB estimate that 50 per cent of domestic production is exported has been cited. It is impossible to assess, although there is no reason to doubt the large scale of the export trade, which the Director of the NCB considers to be increasing (interview). Marijuana is exported as dried plants, and in processed (hence compressed) form as cannabis paste, 'slabs' or oil. Paste is manufactured crudely by pounding with a little water (OGD, 1995:28), and a local form of 'hashish' manufactured by crushing mature (strong) leaves into a powder that is then compressed to make slabs (interviews with trader, Director NCB). Oil is extracted from seeds in a more sophisticated process, likened to the distilling of akpeteshie (interview with trader). A 'huge quantity of hashish oil' for export was seized in April 1997 (Ghana Chronicle, 23 April 1997), in fact 34.7kg of hashish and hashish oil (NCB, 1997).

Ghanaian marijuana is highly prized in neighbouring countries, with exports by road facilitated by the proximity of cultivation areas to the borders with the Ivory Coast, Togo and Burkina Faso (OGD, 1995:39) suggests that the organisation of exports to the Ivory Coast draws on networks previously used to smuggle cocoa out of Ghana).

Maritime export uses both major ports and the many fishing villages along the coast, where it is said to provide an important source of income given the fluctuating fortunes of the fishing industry (ODG, 1995:40). The ocean traffic is destined for African countries further to the west and east (Angola) and for Europe. The scale of shipments is suggested by major, if infrequent, seizures: a load of nearly 2 tons in the small fishing village of Komenda in 1993 (ODG, 1995:41), and 5.7 tons at Takoradi in May 1996, packed in 119 plastic drums (Ghana Times, 10 February 1997). In Europe, large consignments of Ghanaian marijuana, often concealed in loads of timber exports, include: in 1995, 0.5 tons seized by Belgian customs on the border with France (OGD, 1997); in February 1997, 3 tons in Rotterdam in a container of Ghanaian timber planks, in November 1997, 2.5 tons in Germany (NCB, 1997).

Air freight is much less important in export, but marijuana was found in 47 cartons of yams awaiting air freight at Kotoka International Airport (KIA), Accra, and is also said to be air freighted in loads of pineapples and coconuts (Weekend Spectator, 27 March 1997). In these instances, the inside of the foodstuffs is scooped out to contain and conceal the marijuana.

Cocaine & Heroin

Transit Traffic
Since the late 1980s, Ghana has become a significant transit route for cocaine from Latin America and heroin from Southeast Asia destined for North American and European markets, and lately for South Africa as well, stimulated by the size of the South African market (OGD, 1997), and the introduction of direct flights between Ghana and South Africa (interview: Commissioner of Police, Narcotics Unit). Cocaine is sourced mainly in Brazil and heroin in Thailand, and carried by couriers ('mules')
by various air routes, with journeys also broken by overland transport into and out of Ghana. A number of instances of overland traffic are provided by seizures by the Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS) at the Aflao border post (Togo border): of 93g of heroin, 15kg of cocaine, and 7 unspecified amounts of cocaine and heroin (The Experience, 4 August 1992, Ghana Times, 19 February 1993, 13 April 1995). There is no evidence of imports by sea, which does not mean that they do not occur. Cocaine and heroin are also smuggled by post as arrests in Ghana (Ghana Times, 29 March 1996) and the USA (Ghanaian Chronicle, 28 September 1992) show. The former case involved a ‘drug baron’, George Bonsu (aka Benjillo) who was sentenced in 1997 (Ghana Times, 1 May 1997), and the latter case a major Ghanaian international trafficker sentenced to 20 years in the USA for trying to import heroin worth $25m via Ghana (Ghanaian Chronicle, 28 September 1992).

The extensive involvement of Ghanaians as organisers, and especially couriers, in transit traffic is indicated by seizures and arrests at KIA in Accra (and at border posts), in source locations (especially Thailand, where 50 or more Ghanaians are serving long prison sentences in appalling conditions), and at destinations in Europe and North America. Between 1991-1995, at least 231 Ghanaians were arrested for drugs offences in other countries (NCB statistics).

It is generally believed that initial Ghanaian involvement was as intermediaries and couriers for Nigerian drug syndicates. There were said to be 300 Nigerians in the drug business in Ghana in 1996, who found it easier to operate there in the face of the draconian offensive by General Bamayi’s NDLEA, Nigerian Drug Law Enforcement Agency, from 1994 (Klein, 1998), and because there are fewer officials to ‘settle’ (bribe) – and/or perhaps at lower rates? (The News, 1 July 1996). However, there are now some significant Ghanaian operators in international trafficking. One Kumasi based ‘baron’, arrested in 1995, was said to be a regular commuter to Germany (Ghanaian Times, 18 December 1995).

Periodic accusations of involvement in international trafficking are made by the (sometimes scurrilous) opposition press in Ghana, against diplomats from other West African countries and senior associates of President Rawlings in his political party, the NDC (National Democratic Congress), and in the state security branches. The most dramatic and controversial recent case concerns a Ghanaian diplomat in Switzerland, Frank Yaw Benneh, well connected to the NDC, who was arrested on suspicion of cocaine trafficking. The Swiss police request for lifting of diplomatic immunity was refused, and Benneh was brought back to Ghana by the head of the NCB (and security adviser to the President), Kofi Quansont (Chronicle, 1 February 1996, 7 February 1996, Daily Graphic, 7 February 1996, 5 August 1996, Ghana Times, 9 February 1996).

It is easy to recruit couriers, attracted by payments of $2,000 or more a trip (OGD, 1997) which represents a fortune to most Ghanaians. Women are well represented among couriers (interview: Commissioner of Police, Narcotics Unit; newspaper reports). Couriers operating through Ghana also include many of other West African nationalities (not least Nigerians) and European citizens of Ghanaian origin. (Regular travel between Ghana and the extensive Ghanaian diaspora in North America and especially Western Europe is very common). In Ghana, as elsewhere, international trafficking is associated with ancillary criminal activities like the trade in stolen and forged passports. Police raided a ‘passport syndicate’ in 1994 (People’s Daily Graphic, 5
January 1994), and the purchase of Ghanaian passports by Nigerian drug traffickers was reported the following year (Weekend Spectator, 14 January 1995). In 1995 the Immigration Service established a dedicated passport fraud office at KIA (Ghana Times, 5 April 1995).

**Domestic Consumption**

The most important imported drugs consumed are cocaine and heroin, with instances of synthetic drugs, especially Mandrax and amphetamines (Endnote 6). There are also instances of abuse, both witting and unwitting, of ‘prescription drugs’ (though without prescription). The view of ODG (1997) that ‘consumption of hard drugs is rising in all of Ghana’s major urban centres’ is no doubt valid, although again impossible to quantify. The initial availability of cocaine and heroin, and introduction and growth of their use, is usually linked to spillover or leakage from their transit trade through Ghana (above), but may have now become a significant traffic for domestic consumption. Their entry and use is dated from the mid-1980s by Dr Asare (Director, Accra Psychiatric Hospital), and has grown in the 1990s concurrently with increasing transit traffic through Ghana.

The introduction of processing of crack cocaine from cocaine base in Ghana is attributed to a drug baron (and crack addict) who was sentenced in April 1993 (Chronicle, 19 April 1993), and there are occasional reports of raids on crack ‘kitchens’, as in Kumasi in December 1993 (People’s Daily Graphic, 23 December 1993). That crack is now widely known and used is suggested by local slang terms like goju and ‘African karate’. Cocaine, crack and heroin are usually smoked, mixed with wee and/or tobacco, and are also sniffed. Injection is said to be non-existent, as it is ‘un-African’ (interviews).

The NCB (1997) gives the street value of cocaine and heroin in 1996 as 40,000 cedis and 30,000 cedis per gramme respectively, but it has used this standard price since 1994, thereby disregarding inflation, and the standard also ignores different grades of cocaine and heroin. Seizures of these drugs, often in the form of ‘wraps’ or ‘wrappers’ ready for retail sale and consumption, suggest their spreading use in the 1990s (and even though such seizures represent a tiny fraction of drugs in circulation and possession). For example, 731 wrappers of heroin and cocaine were seized from a single dealer in Kumasi in December 1995 (Ghana Times, 16 December 1995), and 436 wrappers of heroin in a raid in Nima in February 1997 (Daily Graphic, 11 February 1997). Anarfi (1996:26) reports that street children in Accra buy cocaine – as ‘brown’ (cheaper) or ‘rock’ (dearer) – when they have a windfall earning (from petty crime) and/or when they pool earnings to buy and share the drug (Endnote 7).

The early use of heroin and especially cocaine is linked to (upper- and middle-class) Ghanaians who first experienced it while abroad, with the children of wealthy families, and with foreign residents (including diplomats) and perhaps tourists to Ghana. Elite Ghanaians and returnees are still the principal users, according to Dr Asare, together with pushers who are often addicts. He also says that use of these drugs by elite groups is less gender skewed than the consumption of marijuana by the poor.

However, such scant evidence as exists – of seizures (especially of large quantities of ‘wraps’) in working-class and poor districts, of the availability of cheaper crack cocaine (as elsewhere), and of the modes of consumption (above) – indicates that use is widely known, and no doubt increasingly so, among some of the occupational...
groups associated with 'functional' use of marijuana (Endnote 8). In at least one instance, fishermen have been persuaded to buy cocaine as a (work) 'performance-enhancing' drug analogous to, and more powerful than, the marijuana that they have long used (Dr S K Gayi, personal communication). This suggests that some people may be duped into buying cocaine without knowing what it is, which fits with widespread practices of buying and using medical drugs in ignorance of their properties and effects, detailed in Senah's study of a village near Accra (1997).

**International Factors**

Several relevant factors can be derived from the above account or added to it. The extensive land frontiers of Ghana and its southern coastline make effective border control and policing difficult in relation to inward and outward movements of drugs. The frontiers are permeated by historic trading, social and cultural ties. Popular perceptions of 'nationality' (or 'national' identity) recognise its fluidity (interviews, Nima), and in that sense are sociologically more accurate than the formalities of citizenship and identity papers, reflecting the continuous mobility, interactions, and patterns of settlement, both temporary and more permanent, across international borders.

Patterns of international shipments of heroin and cocaine are affected by the shifting benefits and costs of different routes and transit points (including the differential effectiveness of enforcement). On the 'demand' side, drug syndicates are alert to new routes and means of transporting high value drugs. On the 'supply' side, there are many willing to take risks as couriers and intermediaries for financial rewards that are relatively much greater for Africans, with the costs of circumventing or 'settling' enforcement agents no doubt much lower in African transit countries.

Also noted were the role of regional factors like the recent relocation of Nigerian organised trafficking to Ghana, and how a widespread and well-established Ghanaian diaspora facilitates linkages between transit of high value drugs through Ghana and their entry into countries of destination (without suggesting that any but a handful of people in that diaspora are involved in trafficking).

**Attitudes to Drugs**

Dr Asare, Ghana's leading psychiatric expert on drug use, believes that marijuana use is associated with aggression, lack of self-control, withdrawal/depression, delusion, and other negative psychological and behavioural traits. At the same time, he acknowledges that not all these traits are consistent with each other, and that drug use may catalyse certain personality predispositions rather than cause direct effects in any uniform manner (interview) (Endnote 9).

Popular perceptions are less nuanced. It is generally believed that drugs - most commonly marijuana, which is most widely known - cause madness, violence, and other anti-social and criminal behaviour. There is a definite stigma here (not least in the association with madness, which staff at the Accra Psychiatric Hospital all remarked on). This may reflect, in part, the relatively recent narcotic use of marijuana (and for older people, its negative association with the army in the 1950s and 1960s: Dr K A Senah, personal communication). This contrasts with attitudes to alcohol, as a valued substance which can be used properly or improperly. Alcohol has a long history of indigenous production and specified cultural and social uses (Akyeampong, 1996). The massive consumption of alcohol today, and resulting drunkenness on
important social occasions like funerals, is generally regarded with amused tolerance (and complicity?), rather than disapproval. (The notable exception is those evangelical churches that condemn alcohol – and indeed tobacco – use as much as other drug use.) The (undoubted) use of marijuana by many petty criminals (and urban ‘marginal’ males more generally) no doubt reinforces the stigma attached to it. It is striking how newspaper reports of crime – and especially erratic or random acts of violence – assume or speculate that it is caused by drug (typically marijuana) use.

On the other hand, such prevalent attitudes may not apply equally across social classes and groups. Some marijuana smokers do harbour anxieties about negative effects, including madness (interviews). Other sociological and (alternative) ideological aspects of marijuana consumption were noted above. To these should be added the possibility (suggested by observation) that in rural areas where cannabis is widely grown and ‘known’ traders welcomed – and where marijuana is smoked by (male) farmers and village ‘boys’ – it may be perceived differently, including ways that express collective ‘resistance’ to state authority. (One could hypothesise further than in the more contained, socially regulated, and continuous social world of rural communities, the presence of some older men who smoke marijuana all their adult lives encourages a more empirical attitude towards its effects). From a different social position, those working with drug users are often less moralistic, and observe links between drug use and common experiences of poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunities, and desperation (interviews: nursing staff, Accra Psychiatric Hospital; NGO staff).

Better educated Ghanaians associate the use of cocaine and heroin with the children of wealthy families, to whose social world they are relatively closer and of which they are vicarious observers (and often critics, if ambivalently so). They appear less aware of the growing use of those drugs among the urban poor. On the other hand, at a popular level there is a widespread assumption (also informed by envy?) that those flaunting new or unexpected wealth in recent years (in the form of houses, cars, clothing) have obtained it from activity as drug couriers (similarly in Nigeria: Klein, 1998). This may resonate a broader and long established alertness to, and ambivalence towards wealth – and its conspicuous display – in Ghanaian culture, expressed in the popular saying that ‘money be man’ (Senah, 1997).

**Drug Law Enforcement**

**Statutory Instruments & Agencies**

The Narcotic Drugs (Control, Enforcement and Sanctions) Law/PNDC Law 236 of 1990 replaced the Pharmacy and Drugs Act of 1961 (and subsequent amendments), and provides the current legal framework for supply reduction measures. Section 55 of Law 236 established the Narcotics Control Board as the central coordinating body for supply and demand reduction activities. Ghana is a signatory to the following United Nations conventions: 1961 Single Convention; 1972 Protocol Amending the Single Convention; 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances; 1988 Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

As the central coordinating body, the NCB works with, amongst others, the Police Force, the Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS), the Immigration Service, and the Prison Service. There is a police Narcotics Unit, with 35 officers stationed at Police HQ in Accra, and units in four regional capitals. CEPS has a high profile at the
main international airport KIA, and has officers stationed at border posts. The activities of the police and other state agencies are discussed in relation to their performance in the following sections. Performance is divided into detection, arrests and seizures, sentencing/convictions, and international cooperation.

Detection
There are three principal modes of detection, in ascending order of importance: occasional detection of dealers and users caught in the act in public places (for example, People's Daily Graphic, 6 May 1992, Ghana Times, 24 October 1994; Ghanaian Chronicle, 14 July 1997), and/or arrested for other offences like stealing (interviews with prisoners, Nsawam); raids on known centres of dealing and use, like nightclubs ('Entertaining Eye', 19 November 1992, Ghana Times, 8 September 1993), Rasta meeting places like the Afro-Caribbean Centre at Kokomlemle, Accra (Ghana Times, 25 July 1994, 28 July 1994), and Labadi Beach (Ghana Times, 22 August 1995, 23 August 1995), plus occasional joint police-army sweeps, as in Ashaiman, Tema, in 1993 (People's Daily Graphic, 28 June 1993) and Sekondi-Takoradi, in 1996 (Daily Graphic, 30 September 1996); raids following information received from tip-offs or from interrogations following arrests – on houses used for dealing and consumption (Ghana Voice, 7 June 1993, Ghana Times, 26 July 1993, Weekend, 13 January 1994), on cannabis farms (Ghana Times, 13 April 1995, Mirror, 22 February 1997), and the seizure of a truckload of smoked fish concealing sacks of marijuana, that was parked in Adabraka Market in Accra (People's Daily Graphic, 7 April 1994).

Surveillance does not appear to have a significant role in detection, except in individual cases of two types: when the police force has a particular, and perhaps particularly offensive, trafficker in its sights (interview: Commissioner of Police, Narcotics Unit), and interceptions of international couriers at KIA (or abroad) following intelligence cooperation with police authorities in other countries (see below). Beyond these special (and infrequent) instances, there is the much more common – and sociologically commonplace – phenomenon of lower-ranking police officers and street dealers and consumers knowing, and interacting with, each other (see further below).

Arrests
THE NCB compiles statistics on arrests, seizures and convictions but acknowledges the probable incompleteness of its records. It disaggregates statistics by principal drugs (cannabis, cocaine, heroin) but not by the scale and nature of seizures and subsequent charges. NCB data for arrests and seizures are summarised in Tables 1 and 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Cannabis</th>
<th>Cocaine</th>
<th>Heroin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991-4</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>988</td>
<td>939</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997*</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NCB Data * to end of September
Table 2: Seizures of Principal Drugs, 1991-1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cannabis ('000kg)</th>
<th>Cocaine (kg)</th>
<th>Heroin (kg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>12.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>3.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>18.32</td>
<td>3.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>11.24</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>209.51*</td>
<td>18.45</td>
<td>5.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>8.29</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* includes estimated weight of crop in farms destroyed

The *People's Daily Graphic* (27 June 1992) stated that 1,744 cases of narcotics offences were reported for the period 1984-1990, an annual average of about 250 in the seven years preceding Law 236 and the establishment of the NCB. In the next five years, drug arrests averaged just over 160 annually, until the massive increases in arrests in 1996 and 1997. The latter may reflect changes in reporting procedures or effectiveness in data collection. In any case, it is evident that the increase from 1995 to 1996 is accounted for by a seven-fold growth in cannabis related arrests – the total number of arrests for cocaine and heroin actually decreased. Equally evidently, there is no correlation between the numbers of arrests and size of seizures of cannabis in 1995 and 1996. The figure of 209 tons seized in 1995 (25 times the next largest seizures reported, in 1996) may reflect (inflated?) estimates of crops destroyed, as well as other idiosyncrasies (or anomalies). What can be inferred at most, given the shortcomings of the statistics, is that there has been a significant increase in arrests of suspected marijuana dealers and consumers (and perhaps farmers) in recent years.

There is a widespread perception that only the small fry are arrested, and subsequently charged and convicted (with the exception of some bigger traffickers targeted by senior police officers, whom they have offended in some way, as noted above). Street dealers (and marijuana traders) aim to have large sums of cash immediately available to buy off police officers in case of arrest, and there is an extensive folklore among marijuana smokers and street dealers of entrapment, extortion and beatings by police (interviews).

In a number of cases police raids result in injuries, shootings and deaths of both those targeted and of officers. Examples of the former include the death of a youth during a raid on dealers in Ashanti New Town, Kumasi, in 1992 (6 October 1992, newspaper not known); a farmer shot dead (*Ghana Times*, 2 August 1994); a ‘notorious drug boss’ shot in a raid on his home in Kumasi, where 40 young men were smoking weed and ‘sniffing heroin’ (*Ghana Times*, 11 February 1995); and a suspected dealer killed by police at the Zongo night market in Accra (*Ghana Times*, 21 October 1997). The farmer was killed during a raid to burn cannabis fields, mounted at 4:30 a.m. near Assin Manso in Central Region. The police party met stiff resistance from villagers who claimed they did not know the nocturnal raiders were police.

Instances of police injuries and fatalities include two officers hurt during a raid on a drugs house in Tema (*Ghana Times*, 13 July 1995); a sergeant from Vakpo Police Station in Volta Region, who died from beatings when he and other unarmed officers unwittingly entered a drug ‘den’ in search of a suspect (*Ghana Times*, 15 October 1994, 19 October 1994); another sergeant shot dead in a raid on dealers in Kintampo, Brong Ahafo (*Ghana Times*, 15 August 1995). In the same incident, a ‘popular’ drug dealer
was also killed, whose funeral attracted large crowds of well-wishers (Ghana Times, 17 August 1995, 18 August 1995).

In some ways, these kinds of incidents no doubt reinforce the widely perceived association of drug use not just with criminality (in a technical sense) but also with derangement and consequent violent behaviour. In other ways, some of their aspects suggest a deep hostility of particular communities or sub-groups to the police (and perhaps the state more generally).

**Judicial Practices**

The links between arrest, charge, remand/bail, and conviction/sentencing help illuminate processes and practices of enforcement. Arrest may not lead to charging (above), and may be made with a view to obtaining bribes, especially at street level. When charges are brought, there appears to be little consistency with courts exercising wide discretion.

For example, in two consecutive months in 1994 a woman farmer aged 71, arrested with 2.2kg of marijuana, was offered bail of 5m cedis (Ghana Times, 12 October 1994), and in another case of marijuana possession bail was refused (Mirror, 5 November 1994). More recently, an ex-soldier arrested in possession of 34 wraps of marijuana was likewise offered bail of 5m cedis (Mirror, 1 November 1997). On the other hand, some accused of trafficking in cocaine and heroin are posted bail of 5-10m cedis (like Frank Bennah, above), although a Nigerian charged with importing 56.7g of heroin was offered bail of 25m cedis (Ghana Times, 27 May 1993). The Ghana Times of 12 October 1995 quoted a 'police source' that 260 people charged with trafficking and dealing had absconded in the previous three years, although this was 'completely denied' by the Police Force.

Long delays in bringing cases to trial are also common, and similarly differentiated. Prisoners on remand (whether refused bail or unable to afford assurances on bail offered) often wait three to four years before trial (interview: Director of the Prison Service), while long delays in bringing to trial more substantial accused, who are released on bail, stimulate popular suspicion of deals being hatched (for example, Chronicle, 19 April 1993, and on the Frank Benneh case, Daily Graphic, 5 August 1996).

It is in the area of sentencing following conviction that the most dramatic inconsistencies occur, and with them lack of confidence in the competence and/or probity of the judiciary. Sentences (typically with hard labour) include the following examples (from newspaper reports and interviews with convicted prisoners at Nsawam Maximum Security Prison):

- **marijuana possession:** 1 wrap (a 29 year old cobbler): 18 months or 200,000 cedis (Mirror, 22 May 1993); 2 wraps (a farmer): 10 years (Ghanaian Chronicle, 14 July 1997); 2 grammes: 10 years (Ghana Times, 17 November 1995); 4 grammes (a Rasta musician): 10 years (Ghana Times, 17 November 1995); 3 wraps: 15 years (prisoner, Nsawam); 2 wraps: 10 years, added to 10 years for theft (prisoner, Nsawam);

- **marijuana dealing:** 300 grammes (Tamale): 12 years (Ghana Times, 17 January 1997); 3.3kgs (dealer, Osu, Accra): 10 years (prisoner, Nsawam); 3.65kgs (dealer, Osu, Accra): 10 years (prisoner, Nsawam); 7.7kgs (dealer, Kanishi, Accra): 10
years plus 5 years or 500,000 cedis (prisoner, Nsawam); 90kgs (Upper East Region): 5 years (Vanguard, 27 August 1992);

**cocaine trafficking**: 15 kilos from four couriers arrested at Aflao border post: 5 years plus 5 years or 5m cedis each (Ghana Times, 26 April 1993); 269 grammes (courier, Ghanaian ‘housewife’ with Dutch passport): 10 years;

**cocaine** (processing/dealing): crack ‘king’ Goka Dapor: 5 years (after 16 months on bail) (Chronicle, 19 April 1993);

**heroin possession**: 0.16 grammes (21 year old unemployed labourer, Nima): 10 years (People’s Daily Graphic, 6 May 1992); 0.8 grammes (addict, Nima): 10 years (prisoner, Nsawam);

**heroin trafficking**: 93.91 grammes (Nigerian arrested at Aflao): 10 years (The Experience, 4 August 1992).

Concerns with sentences regarded as too lenient (and in some cases implied to be corrupt) are sometimes voiced by detection and enforcement agencies. For example, in 1992 CEPS officers at the Aflao border post threatened not to arrest any more traffickers after a woman detained with a ‘large quantity’ of cocaine and US$6,000 in cash, and allegedly a major trafficker with a prison record in the USA, was convicted in Accra and sentenced to a fine of 2m cedis. In an uncanny reprise of that case, CEPS was again ‘outraged’ when a courier (previously convicted of heroin possession) intercepted at KIA with over four kilos of cocaine was similarly fined 2m cedis (Ghanaian Chronicle, 14-20 December 1992). More recently, NCB protested against ‘lenient sentences’ of three years or 500,000 cedis for possession (Daily Graphic, 7 February 1997; drug not specified).

What is striking about the examples cited is the draconian sentences so often imposed for possession of even tiny quantities of marijuana (as well as for dealing in it), which match or exceed sentences for wholesaling and for cocaine and heroin trafficking. The disparities are only emphasised by the vast difference in street value of the drugs concerned. It is reasonable to conclude, then, that sentencing practices are especially punitive for drug users (who include street dealers), which perhaps reflects the moral stigma of drug use, compounded by the social stigma of who uses drugs – or who is caught and tried for using them, namely those from working class or ‘marginal’ social groups.

Practices that also highlight this are the amounts of bail imposed, and the use of fines to substitute for, or reduce, prison sentences. A High Court judge (controversially) proposed the more systematic use of heavy fines to replace long sentences (Ghana Times, 27 May 1993). His reasoning was that revenue from fines could be dedicated to drug rehabilitation. The proposal is more likely to be perceived, however, as reinforcing circumstances in which substantial figures arrested find it easier to post bail (hence to abscond), and/or receive relatively lighter sentences, including by substituting fines (in full or part) for prison terms: options beyond the reach of the vast majority of those arrested and subsequently convicted. Even so, the kinds of sentences indicated appear to have little deterrent effect: many marijuana dealers and users encountered have friends in prison and know about the tough conditions of prison life.
Performance Issues
In the discourse of government agencies concerned with detection and enforcement (including the Prisons Service), issues of performance are typically linked to problems of capacity like resourcing (finance, staffing, equipment) and training. All senior officials interviewed, however, were frank about practices of corruption (in the lower ranks) associated with low salary levels relative to the scale of possible earnings from bribery and extortion.

The police are identified as one of the notable occupational groups involved in 'functional' use of marijuana, particularly when on night duty (OGD, 1995:19, 27). Street dealers interviewed said that police ('even in uniform') visit them to 'score' wraps of marijuana (without paying): 'they know us, and we know them'. Police officers are also involved in routine small-scale extortion from dealers (a letter from a 'concerned citizen' refers to this practice at the OSA bus station in Cow Lane, Accra, _Peoples Daily Graphic_, 13 December 1993, and the same practice was reported around Salaga Market in Accra, _People's Daily Graphic_, 1 January 1994), as well as extorting more substantial sums, whether during raids (official or 'unofficial'), at police barricades on main roads (above), or through chance detection.

A Railway Police corporal in Accra was arrested for stealing from 14 mini-bags of marijuana seized (_Mirror_, 16 October 1993), and a police constable in Kumasi for dealing in _wee_ (_Ghana Times_, 3 August 1994). When police at the Ansankare Police Barricade in Ashanti-Akim District refused a bribe from two brothers caught transporting 10 sacks of marijuana by taxi from Wench, this action received wide publicity – the size of the bribe offered was reported variously as one million cedis (_Ghana Times_, 1 October 1997) and two million cedis (NCB, 1997).

No instances of bribery at border posts were reported in the press between 1992 and 1997, but OGD (1997) states that bribery of CEPS officers at border posts by traffickers importing cocaine and heroin is common, and that a single bribe is typically equivalent to a month's salary of customs officers. A number of measures, both technical and organisational, are currently being pursued to increase the effective detection of drug consignments moving in and out of Kotoka International Airport in Accra (NCB, 1997).


 Allegations of involvement in drugs traffic by senior politicians and state officials, made in the opposition press, include those against the first wife of a Cabinet minister (_Ghanaian Chronicle_, 15 August 1993); an MP and businessman, in league with the ambassador to Ghana of a neighbouring country (_Statesman_, 25 September 1993); a High Court Justice being 'blackmailed' by the President (_Free Press_, 16 August 1995); against officers of the Bureau of National Intelligence (_Weekly Insight_, 4 September 1996); and the case of the diplomat Frank Benneh (above).
International Factors in Enforcement

Ghana’s Narcotics Control Board appears highly regarded by international agencies, and Ghana was re-elected for a third successive term (of four years) to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (a UN intergovernmental forum), with effect from 1 January 1998. Instances of cooperation with other national agencies include those of Canada (Ghana Times, 15 August 1992), the USA (interview: Security Officer, US Embassy, Accra), and South Africa (interview: Commissioner of Police, Narcotics Unit). The Police Narcotics Unit has an Assistant Commissioner who handles liaison with Interpol. Ghanaians wanted on drugs charges in the USA have been extradited from Ghana (Weekend, 30 June 1994), and it is government policy not to seek repatriation of Ghanaians imprisoned overseas (notably in the notorious conditions of Thai jails) to serve their sentences in Ghana (Endnote 10).

Conclusion

Notwithstanding the many necessary qualifications throughout this article, there seems little doubt that drug production, trafficking and consumption in Ghana have increased significantly, and that this is likely to continue. On this all observers, all participants in the drug economy interviewed, and all concerned with drug law enforcement in various capacities, concur.

Even if marijuana consumption has stabilised in terms of sociological categories of users, and patterns of use, demographic growth will generate steady incremental growth of consumption, which production and trade/distribution will grow to supply (OGD, 1995). Continuing poverty, deteriorating economic and social conditions, and social change, including urbanisation – not least urban migration by rural youth – may stimulate additional demand. Export demand will make its own contribution to reproducing – perhaps on an expanded scale – farming and trading activities, which generate significant numbers of livelihoods in the face of constrained alternatives.

Traffic in cocaine and heroin began and has grown fast in the 1990s. Future supply will be influenced by international factors, and by the effectiveness of Ghana’s enforcement agencies. Both affect the scale of the transit traffic, and the latter also affects the domestic consumption of imported drugs (and domestically produced derivatives like crack cocaine). It may be that consumption of heroin, cocaine and crack – especially among some social categories associated with the ‘functional’ use of marijuana – is the most important source of future demand growth, and the one most neglected to date.

Beyond this, it can be suggested that the political economy of drugs in Africa today furnishes a potent, if barely explored, means of investigating the dislocations and insecurity experienced by many, and the new opportunities (for some), charted by the collapse of the project of state-led development and the enforced plunge into the era of structural adjustment that followed it. Several aspects of this proposition can be illustrated briefly by way of conclusion.

First, in Ghana, as in other countries, several generations have grown up during the prolonged crisis of development, with its manifold effects for social relations and practices, livelihoods, attitudes and expectations. Expansions and shifts in the patterns of drug production, trafficking and use can illuminate, in many cases, the
tensions of class, gender, generation, rural-urban and other axes of differentiation, intensified by that enduring crisis of development.

Second, in many places it is likely that activities and tendencies in the drugs economy are routinised within the ‘crisis of governance’, or ‘criminalization of the state’ (Bayart et al. 1997) through the more or less mundane engagement of state personnel at various levels with drug trafficking. In addition, zones of conflict commonly stimulate demand for drugs; combatant forces are involved in drug trafficking as well as consumption; in some instances the course or aftermath of armed conflict generates new sites of cannabis production (for example, the reports of new plantation areas in Mozambique on the border with Zimbabwe).

Finally, and as noted for other parts of the world, drug production and trade constitute a distinctive, and in certain respects particularly instructive, case of border-crossing trade and, indeed, ‘globalisation’. At the end of the twentieth century, it is not implausible that marijuana, cocaine and heroin are among the most dynamic and valuable of Africa’s ‘non-traditional’ exports and re-exports.

*Henry Bernstein,* School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London

**Endnotes**

1. Limits of space prevent any assessment here of the trajectory of economic recovery and governance since 1983, which – inevitably – is keenly debated inside and outside Ghana. More bullish versions of success have been qualified by increasingly uneven macroeconomic performance (including inflationary pressures) since 1992 or 1993, as well as by evidence on poverty and social deprivation. A major World Bank poverty study, published in 1995, presents statistical findings up to 1992, downplaying evidence of increased poverty in Accra, while endorsing that of striking reductions in poverty in the countryside, which, however, it is unable to explain: ‘how the fall in (rural) poverty relates to the ERP (Economic Recovery Programme) is difficult to judge’ (World Bank, 1995:49). On the most positive recent assessment, about one third of the population lives in poverty, which is concentrated in the countryside (especially in the north) and increasingly among the urban unemployed and marginally employed of the informal sector – the majority of the urban population? Rates of inflation since 1993, and especially since 1995 (ISSER, 1997), have had a major negative impact on the living standards of most people, above all those in the three lowest quintiles of income distribution (or roughly twice the number classified as poor), estimated to receive 36% of total personal income.

2) Much of the information presented was generated by the author’s involvement in a study of social and economic aspects of drugs in eight African countries, conducted for the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) by the Centre for Development Policy and Research (CDPR) at SOAS. I spent two weeks in Ghana in February 1998, part of the time working in a team with Degol Hailu of SOAS, Dr KA (Kojo) Senah of the University of Ghana, and Douglas Keh of UNDCP. The UNDP office in Accra arranged meetings with various officials; more informal means were used to contact and interview participants in the marijuana economy. A collection of press cuttings for the period May 1992 – October 1997 at the Narcotics Control Board was of great value, as were the generous advice and comments of my colleague Richard Rathbone.
3. OGD (1995:27) says that a wrap contains 3-5g of unsorted marijuana; Douglas Keh (personal communication) assures me that a quite generous single wrap would not be more than 1g.

4. Richard Rathbone (personal communication) points out that Nima ‘also boasts more Forex bureaux, fax and email outlets than downtown Accra... it is the heart of Ghana’s informal economy and a place where very large sums of money change hands’.

5. OGD (1995, 1997) does not mention street children. Various recent estimates of the numbers of street children in Accra include 10,000 and 17,000 (Anarfi, 1996) and in Kumasi 1,000-1,500 (Korboe, 1997), although these are no more than guesses, as Anarfi (1996:3) observes. The very existence of street children, let alone their no doubt growing numbers, is highly sensitive, and indeed denied by some middle class Ghanaians: ‘every child in Ghana has a family’, ‘this is not Brazil’ (interviews). Both studies cited show that street children are economically highly active and self-reliant, in the typical range of informal sector ‘survival’ occupations both licit and illicit. Anarfi’s survey of more than 1,100 street children in Accra found that the great majority migrated independently from rural areas, and that most gave poverty as the reason. He also shows that street children are subject to extensive exploitation, both economic and sexual, including by the municipal police and others; that they experience a range of health risks, from poor nutrition to diseases including AIDS; and that they use drugs widely (commonly marijuana, cocaine when they can afford it).

6. The use of mandrax and amphetamines, usually dissolved in beer and known as ‘blue blue’ is said to be particularly associated with (male?) secondary school students. In contrast to reports from many African cities today, no instances of solvent sniffing were mentioned in any of the interviews or sources consulted.

7. Either Anarfi or his respondents are confused here: ‘brown’ is heroin (there is no such thing as brown cocaine). ‘Rock’ is often used to refer to a piece of crack cocaine of approximately 250mg.

8. Note, however, the suggestion of Richard Rathbone (personal communication) that many of the poorest can not afford to buy drugs, and that ‘drug-use has a specific if intricate class threshold’ – also suggested for Nigeria by Klein (1998).


10. This account of drug law enforcement has focused on ‘supply reduction’. Despite awareness of the importance of ‘demand reduction’ on the part of the NCB, Social Welfare Department, Prison Service and other public agencies, as well as NGOs, severe resource constraints have prevented progress in activities of drug education, treatment and rehabilitation.
Bibliography


This article presents a brief review of khatt; a macro analysis of its roles in the Republic of Somaliland; briefer sketches of divergences of roles in other Somali heartland territories and Kenya concluding with a speculative section on what might be desirable (for Somalis) ways forward. All of these topics are bedevilled by limited prior research, the special pleading strands in much writing, the difficulty in knowing of or securing much of what is known and written and the intensely emotional context of most discourse. The last is not inherently a bad thing – khatt matters. Half of urban household absolute poverty, of farmer cash income and of female instituted divorces are not matters particularly appropriate for mild, disassociated academic curiosity. However, emotion leading to a rush to unanalysed action, and to inventing ‘symbolic truths’, which have meaning but not analytical veridicality, can be the enemy of, just as much as the catalyst toward, the possible.

Jees, there’s drugs out there,
They’re all spaced out.
USA Marine, Mogadishu, 1992

Accursed are the khatt bearers
For they are the enemies of Allah
Somali women’s group leader, First
Somaliland National, Reconstruction
Conference, Hargeisa, 1998

You do not understand. Khatt is central
to Somali culture. Guns, camels and khatt,
these define us.
Guurti (elder), (Ibid.)

Khatt is the leading cash crop, import,
source of tax revenue, personal consumption category and cause of urban household poverty in Somaliland. Without studying its dynamics neither macro nor household economics can be understood.
Political economic analyst, (Ibid.)
Aspects & Images: Realities in Conflict

Each of the four speakers offers a torchbeam into some of the realities of *khatt* for Somalis socially, politically, economically and in respect of gender. Equally each is incomplete and carries a varying amount of unhelpful or inaccurate intellectual and emotional baggage.

*Khatt* is ubiquitous among urban Somali males and to an almost equal degree among male agro pastoralists and pastoralists with physical access to supply. It does – like alcohol whose use is almost non existent by Somalis – result in conviviality, sometimes boisterousness and a certain analgesic disassociation from the pain of reality. It diverts time from production and income from basic consumption in ways ringing alarm bells in northwestern minds (including those of black US marines) and in female minds. But it has little in common with – say – crack cocaine in terms of degree of user impact or (perhaps because *khatt* is not criminalised in major producing and using countries) with organised crime as distinct from organised economic and political entities.

*Khatt* is and has been a symbol – and to a degree reality – of what are perceived by Northwesterners as alien, violent, inscrutable, pastoral hordes ‘without the lines’ threatening law, order and the very existence of society (whether in the Horn in the late 1800s or the 1990s, north of the Roman Walls in Scotland or beyond the Great Wall in the Gobi rather earlier). That fear is objective and often valid (although more often than not the wall builders were the aggressors) but tends to distort, demonise, mythologise. The Mahdist cavalry, Zulu impis and Somali Klansmen who occasionally overwhelmed ‘the thin red line’ breaking the formidable squares which drained the life from Bonaparte’s empire were valiant, persistent and reckless of their own lives. Perhaps they were crazed from an English perspective, but resistance to external domination, commitment to a new, reformed order (in the Mahdist case) and both religious and political faith were the intoxicants. Sometimes – as at Khartoum when the Mahdist forces overwhelmed Gordon’s – there was a Jihad/Crusade element but even then the Mahdist Jihad was against the corrupt, colonial – but Muslim – regime of the Khaedive of Egypt not the indigenous ‘Peoples of The Book’ and it was Gordon’s ‘muscular Christianity’ (easily equatable with the Queen Empress’ ‘self-evident’ universal right to rule over ‘lesser breeds without the law’) which initiated the Crescent-Cross confrontation, real as that has become especially in the Sudan.

‘Afro pessimism’ like ‘orientalism’ is in large part Northwestern centrist, self-justifying, export racism and assuaging domestic fears (for example, the urban wastelands of the USA and the UK inner cities) by subliminally blaming them on those ‘out there’. The choice of transmuted symbols for example, *khatt* for crack and Aideed’s militias for black urban groups are only too suggestive.

*Khatt* is a mind-altering drug. Mind altering drugs (especially arrack and hashish albeit not tobacco) are condemned by The Messenger in The Holy Koran. *Khatts* ubiquitous use in the deeply Islamic Somali societies is anomalous. The social ills the women condemn – diversion of time from earning and of resources from women and children, household quarrels and spousal abuse – are ones The Messenger condemned and related directly to alcohol and drug use. The distinction between use and abuse (which has niches in Islamic discourse) is not very relevant to the urban Somali male chewing away half his time and all his income so his household endures in absolute poverty and his wife is despair secures a divorce on grounds of non-
support (quite approved and common under Sharia law as perceived and practised among Somalis).

But the elder is also correct. Guns (self and communal protection and respect), camels (income, mobility and reserve store of value) and khatt (male bonding and temporary suspension of too painful realities) are central to male Somali social self-definition. Male because women do not tend (much less own) camels, carry guns or chew khatt. Somewhat ironically khatt and guns (not camels) are now most ubiquitous in urban areas where they are far more corrosive loose canons (literally in the case of 'technicals') than in their pastoral nomadic historic context. That the same elder accepted ascriptive (ability) naming of 'young elders' and the case for an elected House of Assembly of men (or theoretically men and women) with skills more linked to modern economics and technology than those of most guurti - and would not dream of riding to a workshop on camelback brandishing an AK44! – suggests a flexibility and pragmatism of outlook apparently not applying to khatt use.

The political economist's focus on macro, state, external account, household and poverty economic aspects of khatt – the combined Somali analogue to tobacco/alcohol economic production, trade, consumption sectors in the Northwest – also grasps a seminal reality. It is parallel to/overlapping with the woman's concerns even if its apparently more detached, clinical formulation is apparently (and in some cases really) rather removed from the passionately expressed forms of much Somali (and for that matter outside) discourse on/controversy about khatt.

With khatt as with much else in the Horn and the Yemen one is in the realm of oral history and ascriptive self-definition by myth or fable (in the technical socio-anthropological as well as the colloquial sense). The plant originated either in the Oromian/Somali/Tigrean/Eritrean Highlands or those of Yemen. So did the Queen of Sheba, and one or more strands of the Somali peoples and arguably the initial conquering elites both of the Great Lakes Kingdoms and of Yorubaland). All of this oral history – and its partial written and iconographic supporting evidential fragments – has elements both of hard descriptive veridicality and of hard ascriptive self-definition (which when acted on has its own veridicality) as well as a certain vague romanticism when both veridicalities have become largely lost or transmuted beyond easy disentanglement. The Puntland myth is illustrative. Puntland existed from Pharaonic to early Medieval times. Egyptian (and to a lesser extent Graeco-Roman) iconographic and pictorial evidence places it on the Upper Nile with a commercial link (at times by canal) to the present Sudanese Red Sea Coast, perhaps near Suakin. It has somehow migrated (in the hands of a conquering group’s elders?) to Somaliland which incongruously uses a stylised Nile boat ('Moses in the bulrushes') picture as one of its symbols and to that most artificial (historically, physically and economically) of would-be Somalian statelets the Bosaso – Galcayo Puntland Republic.

Objectively khatt:

- is the leaf of a bush grown predominantly in the Northeastern Highlands of the Horn with an extension around Mount Kenya and possible small pockets in the Northern Yemen highlands;

- with considerable uniformity but varying taste and potency – one which most users agree apparently depends on attitude, levelness or otherwise of fields, rainfall levels and distribution and presence or absence of cool nights and
months. Hargeisa – Boramo khatt is considered somewhat inferior. (Too low? Too flat? Too few cool nights and, especially, days?);

- has (like alcohol, tobacco, coca leaves) primarily analgesic properties; acting as
- a screen against care, tension and pain whether physical or – especially – social, economic and political by reducing and altering consciousness;

- creating a perception (by users and to a lesser degree observes of conviviality (khatt is a social not a solitary drug), insight and warm relaxed happiness; followed by,

- a gradual descent into sleepiness and subsequent hangover;

- with mild physical and rather stronger social and psychological addiction; and

- a fuzzy line between occasional, recreational, episodic use and habitual, life-defining, time and resource engrossing use (or addiction). But,

- very little hard evidence of serious direct (as opposed to resource misallocation) damage to the health of the user or his associates and household (albeit in the latter case allocation away from food, health services, clothing and productive household interpersonal as well as earning time can have major negative consequences).

Khatt is overwhelmingly a Somali drug in use, trade and – with the exception of Kenya – growing. (Kenya’s growing zone is near Nairobi not in its Northwestern Somali heartland zone.) The main using communities are the 17.5 to 20 million Somalis in their home base zone of Northwest Kenya, Region 5 of Ethiopia, southern Djibouti, Somaliland and Somalia and the 5 million in the inner (East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula) and outer diaspora. Almost all adult males have used khatt, a large majority chew it at least recreationally and occasionally, a majority of urban male Somali are habitual users. For Somalis – and for no other peoples with marginal exceptions in the Yemen and Eastern Sudan – khatt is the drug of choice neither flowing from nor lending to the consumption of ‘hard’ drugs, marijuana/hashish nor alcohol albeit paralleled by cigarette smoking. In this context (as in those of camels and guns) Somali means adult, male Somali. In the Arabian Peninsula hashish – which like alcohol seems rather more associated with random and mob violence than khatt – is the historic drug of choice and the one (together with opium whose focal and entry point was in Iran and date arrack or raki alcohol) condemned root and branch by The Messenger in the Holy Koran and in the polity he brought into being.

Khatt production totals perhaps $900 million at wholesale prices almost all in Ethiopia ($500 million), Kenya ($300 million) and Somaliland ($50 million). Ethiopia uses perhaps half its output exporting the remainder to Somaliland, Djibouti, London, Yemen and Somalia. Kenyan Somalis use perhaps a fifth of output with the balance exported to Somalia and London. Somaliland is a user/importer (about one quarter domestically produced), Djibouti and the diaspora (to the extent khatt is available) are importers and users.

The only sustained, intense effort to eradicate khatt use in the Somali heartland was in the 1970s and 1980s by Salid Barre focusing (successfully) on production in Somaliland and (much less so beyond driving out of sight) consumption throughout the then United Republic. Because the production suppression was only in
Somaliland (next to none is produced in Somalia) and was earlier and more effective, Somalilanders associate khatt suppression with oppressive, colonial (from Mogadishu) rule. British and – a fortiori – French and Italian colonial efforts to control or abolish khatt use fairly quickly retreated to ‘don’t look, don’t see, don’t tell’.

This article presents a brief review of khatt, a macro analysis of its roles in the Republic of Somaliland; brief sketches of divergences of roles in other Somali heartland territories and Kenya concluding with a speculative section on what might be desirable (for Somalis) ways forward. All of these topics are bedevilled by limited prior research, the special pleading strands in much writing, the difficulty in knowing of or securing much of what is known and written and the intensely emotional context of most discourse. The last is not inherently a bad thing – khatt matters. Half of urban household absolute poverty, of farmer cash income and of female instituted divorces are not matters particularly appropriate for mild, disassociated academic curiosity. However, emotion leading to a rush to unanalysed action, and to inventing ‘symbolic truths’, which have meaning but not analytical veridicality, can be the enemy of, just as much as the catalyst toward, the possible.

**Khatt: A Background Perspective**

Khatt is the green (literally browny green) leaf of a shrub which takes five years to reach maturity then bearing fully for perhaps 10. It is capital intensive (because of time between planting and full output), water intensive and land intensive (because – at least in Somaliland – one to two hectares water field with channels need to be kept fallow to collect water for each hectare of Khatt). Khatt leaves are chewed green and totally unprocessed – 24 to 48 hours from plant to mouth is the ‘shelf life’ for effective ease. The requisite amount for full effect (over a 3 to 8 hour chewing, tea drinking and conversing session) is two bunches (branches) which in Somaliland cost about $5 nominally one day’s full time labour albeit that equation seems as subject to caveat as the daily minimum wage/one quart bottle of beer equation in Tanzania.

Khatt has been used by virtually all male Somalis over 15. Indeed it is – like weapons and camels – to a substantial degree a manhood symbol. Use by Somali women is unusual (and recent) and fairly widely disapproved (whether because it would challenge machismo or because sisters disapprove is less than clear). In Somaliland, Somalia, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya and London most Somali males are frequent – though not necessarily habitual (over 3 times a week) – users. Elsewhere logistic problems limit consumption. Non-Somali use of Khatt is unusual to non-existent (perhaps with some exceptions in North Yemen and Eastern Sudan).

In practice khatt production, trade and use is not criminalised in Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Somaliland, Djibouti, the Sudans and Yemen. It is (with uneven enforcement) in most of the Arabian peninsula and (nominally?) Tanzania. It is not in the UK (presumably by an oversight in controlled drug list compilation) but is elsewhere in Western Europe and North America.

Khatt use is mildly debilitating – primarily via hangovers albeit in some cases by spending so much on Khatt as to eat inadequately and fail to secure necessary medical services. It is very mildly hallucinatory and after an initial period of exhilaration (perhaps more perceived by the user and his fellows than present in objective reality) is moderately depressive. It is less likely than alcohol or hashish to lead to violent conduct during the exhilaration phase albeit more likely to do so than the use of coca
leaves, ganja or tobacco (‘tobacco rage’ flows from forced non-smoking, for example, on airlines or in bars, not from smoking).

*Khatt* – like all other widely used drugs – induces a reduction of stress and of psychological (and related physical) pain by distancing the user from a hostile world. It does so to a lesser degree than hard drugs (and probably than marijuana/hashish) for example, amiable, increasingly rapid conversation and mildly rose tinted relaxing observation of nothing in particular not near or total unconsciousness are its hallmarks. Like all depressants and consciousness restructuring substances it makes physical reactions slower and less predictably appropriate.

*Khatt* – unlike coca leaves and marijuana – has few potentially positive gains. Coca leaves do increase endurance and ability to remain active in the face of cold, hunger and tiredness. Marijuana does have substantial pain relieving properties and may be the most suitable analgesic for certain conditions. Detailed research and especially clinical trials are patchy to non-existent precisely because of criminalisation. *Khatt* has no such special endurance enhancing or pain reducing properties. All it has – in common with alcohol, tobacco, coca leaves, marijuana and ‘mild’ synthetic drugs is an ability to reduce tension and allow temporary respite from the cares of an hostile environment. That is not necessarily a bad thing if the relief is not purchased at the cost of masking reality for the *Khatt* user and making those dependent on him (rarely her) substantially worse. For that reason it is rather difficult to make out a robust case against occasional, recreational use of *Khatt* so long as its use does not lead to household deprivation and discord. *Khatt* does reduce alertness. Its use with alcohol would, for that reason, be a particularly lethal combination. Luckily it is also a particularly uncommon one - non-Somalis rarely use *Khatt* and Somalis very rarely use alcohol.

There is no strong direct medical/health impact case against *Khatt*. Association with mouth cancer and circulatory disease are probable but not very strong. In this it resembles marijuana and coca leaves. Even the professional medical practitioners among khan’s ardent Somali enemies do not base their case on health grounds. In addition, the medical risks from adulteration are low. *Khatt* is not processed, has a short ‘shelf life (dried *khatt* tea is a UK health food shop eccentricity) and is not subject to biological variations leading to poisonous varieties. Again this is rather like coca leaves and marijuana (albeit adulteration and, perhaps, rogue strains are more possible) and very unlike cocaine, heroin, opium and synthetic (soft or hard) drugs.

There is a health case but an indirect one. *Khatt* expenditure reduces the amount available for all other spending – including on health services. In particular it reduces male transfers to females responsible for taking children to and paying their bills at health service access points (public or private). In a poor country in which most cash income in most households initially accrues to males and there are gender divided budget payment obligations, this is by no means a minor criticism.

The basic cases against *Khatt* are socio-economic, household welfare/interpersonal relations and macro economic. In the Somali homelands it is the largest single consumption item (for many households even category that is, exceeding food). It literally eats up the money to feed children, wears out the resources to cloth them and their mothers and chews up ability to finance health care. As a result it creates intrahousehold tensions along gender lines often erupting into spouse abuse and divorce. At territorial level it is by far the largest import category in Somaliland and Somaliland and probably also Djibouti and Region 5 (Somali Region) of Ethiopia.
On the productivity/output side Khatt can be equally debilitating. Because a ‘good’ Khatt session takes 3 to 8 hours, costs a full day’s wages or more and is followed by a hangover it does reduce productivity. On the face of it a daily user’s productivity would be 60 per cent below that of a non or non working day recreational user (50 per cent on time devoted to chewing, 10 per cent on a one fifth loss in productivity the other half day because of hangover).

‘In a poor country waste is a sin’ quoted then President Mwalimu Nyerere. He was in fact talking of state corporation and ministry waste, but his words are very apt for a non-essential, at best amenity product which can eat up 25 per cent to 30 per cent of a poor territory’s household production and import capacity, reduce overall and household productivity significantly, exacerbate household and gender tensions in ways frequently leading to violence and marital breakup and dump many households into absolute poverty. That is an ethical/normative case against Khatt except for an occasional, recreational, marginal proportion of income use. The exception is not the norm in Somaliland, Somalia, Djibouti or the largely Somali regions of Ethiopia and of Kenya. This case is rather like the female ‘temperance’ (that is, prohibition of the Demon Alcohol) society case of the 19th century in the UK and USA – the man literally drank up the household income and the children and women went hungry in rags.

Somaliland figures are starkly illustrative. The absolute poverty line budget for a household is of the order of $1,250 a year. The cost of consuming Khatt habitually (say 300 days a year) is $1,500 a year. The average household income is of the order of perhaps $1,500 excluding and $2,500 including remittances. $1,250 is less than $1,500 and $2,750 is in excess of $2,500 even abstracting from the fact that over 50 per cent of households have less than $1,000 earned and $1,500 total (including remittances) income.

**Khatt in the Macro, Politico & Socio-economic Dynamics of Somaliland**

Somaliland has rather more and more readily to hand macro economic estimates than Djibouti or Somalia. The Somali Regions of Ethiopia and Kenya do not have separate territorial account estimates. Therefore macro analyses is focused here on the Republic of Somaliland with later notes on divergences in other Somali core states. Khatt matters at macro level because it is the largest item in:

- personal consumption at about 25 per cent;
- commerce and associated services at up to 20 per cent;
- crop production at about 50 per cent;
- imports on the order of 30 per cent;
- tax revenue contributing perhaps 25 per cent of central government revenue.

However to describe Somaliland as a khatt economy is misleading in macro political economic as well as structural terms.

There is no state-druglord clash (or/and collusion) with occult powers beyond government control and deeply corrupting the state as in Colombia, Mexico, Peru let alone druglord ruled enclaves with or without formal state approval as in Myanmar,
Afghanistan, Laos and Thailand. This is partly because *khatt* importation, trade and production are not illegal so neither the ‘need’ nor opportunity for a *khatt* based political cartel exist. *Khätt* is the main line of business of upper and middle income agro pastoralists, of some large merchants and of *khatt* kafes (as it is usually consumed communally with liberal associated milk tea drinking). However, except for their key product these farmers, merchants and restaurateurs are not readily distinguishable from grain growers, general traders or non *khatt* eating houses.

Structurally *khatt* accounts for at most a sixth of GDP and under a tenth of GNP. Further the commercial value added half of this total could – were *khatt* to vanish peacefully (for example, by changed social perceptions) – fairly readily handle different products. The $50 million agro pastoral income would, however, be difficult to replace as it is hard to see how any presently accessible substitute crop could yield over half as much farm income.

*Khätt* as a macro economic factor is therefore probably most analogous to the tobacco/alcohol sectors in Northwestern economies. Large, influential, hard for some to convert out of but not the key element of the economic arch. The picture is more analogous to a European economy with a large tobacco-alcohol sector including significant consumption, production and international trade than to Colombia or Burma.

However, the macro productivity bill – albeit not the direct health burden – is relatively higher. An habitual urban *khatt* chewer spends up to half his potential working time chewing. If 20 per cent of the labour force are habitual users (say 200,000, as plausible an estimate, as any) then the purely quantitative output loss is 10 per cent. In addition *khatt* – like alcohol – reduces the quality of work and after (hangover) euphoria so that it is arguable that lost production is of the order of $100 million a year.

Direct health costs are lower. There are preliminary research results from WHO relating habitual *khätt* use (abuse if one accepts the possibility of recreational use of *khätt*, as most non-Muslims would of alcohol) to somewhat higher incidence of oral cancer and of circulatory disease but, on the face of it, constituting less of a health threat than alcohol abuse or cigarette use.

At socioeconomic and household poverty – as well as at gender – levels the impact of *khätt* is greater. This is not because of any broad contribution to violence. Large *khätt* consignments are accompanied by armed guards (albeit in Somaliland not by brandishing of weapons which would attract negative police attention whatever was being guarded). But then so do movements of money in Europe. It is perfectly reasonable to argue that as *khätt* costs about $5 a day (a two bunch habit) and most users are not well off it must lead to illegal funding. As large scale crime and indeed theft backed by violence in general, is rare in Somaliland the probable forms are burglary and robbery. This conclusion is tentative because even opponents of *khätt* use in Hargeisa do not assert that it has led to high levels of crime to finance purchases.

However, in respect to household consumption overall and to its interpersonal distribution one is on more clearly visible ground in urban and, probably, agro pastoral areas. Habitual *khätt* use costs $1,500 a year. Even half would be enough to tip most households into absolute poverty, quite apart from income loss through a lesser number of hours worked and at a lower rate of productivity. Non-productive consumption of $250 million plus out of $950 million is not marginal.
The chief losers are women and children with food, clothing, housing (for example, rate of building or repairing a war destroyed or damaged) home and medical services less available because transfers from male *khatt* users to the domestic budgets of women (responsible for food, children and house maintenance) are attenuated or wiped out. That pattern clearly does exist in Hargeisa and probably in the Hargeisa-Boramo agro pastoral zone (although it is less evident in household surveys of the latter – perhaps because both *khatt* and off farm income chewed up by it escaped coverage?).

Pastoralist households – especially those which are usually well away from urban areas and main trade routes clearly consume less *khatt* if only because it cannot be available in the 24 to 48 hour post picking time window. Their use must be episodic which would imply something more like the urban recreational user than the ‘addict’. That may imply that urbanisation and modernisation (especially in respect to faster movement of goods) have transformed *khatt* use from a widespread but relatively benign form of quasi conspicuous consumption to a much more socially corrosive poverty and intra household conflict engendering one.

**Khatt Kontroversy: The Gender Gap**

In Somaliland *khatt* is very much a gendered issue. Very few men – including however a growing a minority of younger, more educated mosque Sheikhs and Khadis – condemn its use, at most treating it as an unwise indulgence damaging to income earning and opening gaping holes in purse and pocket. Women – especially but not only women’s group leaders, female health professionals and female employers – however, condemn *khatt* use root and branch and demand that something be done to deter and reduce it. The women’s case is multifaceted:

1) The Holy Koran condemns the use of drugs and of alcohol. Why are alcohol and drugs other than *khatt* nominatively condemned and effectively socially prescribed but *khatt* is not merely tolerated but often seen as a symbol of full manhood? This evocation of The Holy Koran is not usually purely functional or rhetorical. Somali culture is rooted in Islam even if its contextual evolution means that Islam in the Somali context is rarely ‘puritanical’, chauvinist or theocratic. Therefore in many cases the women are saying quite simply that their faith and its leaders should protect them, their children and their society against the perceived evil of *khatt* but are failing in their duty. The woman at the First National Somaliland Reconstruction Conference in Hargeisa in 1998 who said (in Somali), ‘Accursed are the *khatt* bearers for they are the enemies of Allah’ was perfectly sincere and perfectly serious.

2) *Khatt* is perceived as a massive drain in resources (of money and of time) and as corrosive of productivity when working at both household and macro levels. Since it appears to eat up over a quarter of all Somaliland personal consumption, to use up as much as a half of habitual users working hours and to result in hangovers the next morning this is a very valid point. *Khatt* does take the food out of children’s mouths and the cloth off women’s backs. While there appears to be no statistical study, *khatt* is perceived to be the largest cause of non support, abandonment and spouse abuse (consequent on arguments over the husband being a ‘bad provider’) leading to the high incidence of female instituted divorces in Somalia/Somaliland.

3) *Khatt* is condemned as causing both general moral decay (failure to meet household, blood group and wider social obligations because the time and funds to discharge them have been – quite literally – chewed up) and, in particular, crime and
violence. The later strand of this argument appears to turn on criminal activities (in Somaliland usually theft) to fund use with consequential violence against those resisting and household violence resulting from arguments over the absence of money and spouse.

This analysis of the Somaliland women’s case – feminist in the universal sense albeit not in terms of some northwestern variants because it seeks to save men, especially boy children and youths, from themselves and their khatt culture and to preserve marriage bonds/households – is not inaccurate but does not give an adequate representation of its passion and emotional depth. Somaliland women do not discuss khatt in an abstract intellectual way but condemn its use root and branch with great vehemence and eloquence.

The use of khatt by Somali women is unusual – until recently it was virtually unknown and perceived as seriously deviant behaviour. To what extent this is a male cultural norm (khatt like guns and camels is a symbol of manhood and/or machismo) and to what extent a female one based on the damage khatt does to households and to interpersonal and intergender relations is unclear. Interestingly and perhaps significantly the female opposition to khatt use is as fierce in the diaspora (including women from locations such as California where khatt use is virtually impossible for logistical reasons) as at home. The diaspora advocates cite the growth of a culture of smoker exclusion (not least in California) as a precedent and a guide as to how to proceed. When pressed they usually agree criminalisation without prior change of social norms will not work (again as exemplified in respect to marijuana, cocaine and designer drugs in California).

Somaliland women are less clear on what is to be done than on what is to be condemned and why:

1) Most see no practicable way to eradicate khatt use by law because the very context that supports male khatt use means the all male Houses of Elders and of Assembly would not pass legislation to that end nor would it be enforceable if they did. (That Said Barre did seek to ban khatt production and use and to enforce that law by violently repressive action in Somaliland probably is a significant element in the non-advocacy of criminalisation as a way forward);

2) The overwhelming view is that khatt use should be made socially unacceptable and the khatt user an outcast from household and civil society. How is not uniformly nor really coherently formulated. Somaliland women are well aware that while they are free to organise and to express their views and are listened to, men in general now condescend to them rather than take their priorities seriously;

3) The belief that Islam should be their foundation and bulwark to eliminate khatt use (a view with which a growing minority of Islamic leaders agree) does not as yet appear to have led to coherent strategies for reaching out to and forming alliances with Islamic scholars, teachers and clergy;

4) The case for not hiring khatt users (or at any rate habitual ones) because of low productivity and high absenteeism is, to date, operationally effective only in respect to the small minority of men hired by female headed enterprises. There does not seem to have been any coherent educational outreach campaign to convince male employers that the khatt user is a ‘bad boy’ as an employee;
5) The perception (not uniform) that khatt growers and petty distributors – unlike importers and big merchants – are victims of the system rather than architects leads to some sympathy with their ‘withdrawal’ problems if khatt use collapses. However, to date (perhaps because no rapid fall in use appears plausible over a foreseeable time perspective) this has not led to coherent elucidation of how they could be enabled to earn adequate alternative incomes.

**Somalia: The Sinews of War & the Laundrette Links**

The pervasiveness and characteristics of khatt use in Somalia are relatively similar to those in Somaliland. However, that generalisation is subject to exceptions.

Because khatt is the largest single component in commerce and of cash flow streams which tend to be concentrated in a few hands, access to khatt revenues and successful militia mobilisation, equipping and maintenance are closely interwoven. Khatt is a sinew of war in Somalia (as it is not in Somaliland). Initially businessmen channelled khatt revenues to warlords (that is, wartime leaders who displace Peacelord elders and merchants in wartime but, as in the Roman Republic, are supposed to relinquish their powers on the outbreak of peace) to gain protection and space to engage in ‘primitive accumulation’. Neither bribery nor coercion adequately describes this relationship – it was (is) symbiotic usually with the warlord as the dominant partner.

However, more recently some of the larger merchants – notably Osman Ato with his $100 million plus annual turnover, airline and two airports (one for general commerce and one for khatt) – have decided that their interests lie in a return to relative stability, commercial security and absence of risk of personal violence. As a result they have moved toward leaders who are similarly inclined – for example, Mahdi Mohammed, himself by origin a merchant – and hired their own militias, bought their own technicals to increase their politico military leverage.

The injection of direct merchant money – largely from khatt – in Somalia (unlike Somaliland where merchants paid militiamen to demobilise and lent money to the territorial government) has radically altered historic politico military balances for the worse. Historically Councils of Elders (sub klan or sub klan coalition) decided on war, appointed Warlord’s with plenipotentiary powers in respect to war for its duration, raised young men to fight and levies (especially but not only from merchants) to feed and to equip them. The Warlords powers (like those of their analogues under the Roman Republic) ended with the war. Peace negotiations were for Peacelords (senior elders) who had the power to cut off supplies and withdraw fighting men if Warlords sought to prolong fighting for their own ends.

The 1991 to date Warlords have in general (Mahdi Mohammed is a probable exception as are some more territorially limited leaders) achieved non-accountability. They recruit militia equip and pay directly and finance their operations by direct levies on merchants (including even external transnational corporations – for example, Dole and the Mafia in respect of bananas). Their Councils of Elders therefore cannot hold them to account, are largely excluded from peace negotiations (with the enthusiastic backing of the UN and of Egypt) and have no check on Warlord/militia personal interest in continued violence. Khatt via Osman Ato and via UNOSOM naivete (both in backing or involving and in criticising or attacking) made and sustained General Aideed when his own Council of Elders if in control would have negotiated a peace agreement with Mahdi Mohammed and sent Aideed back to his herds (or abroad).
True, the evil was the new financing arrangements leading to the collapse of Warlord accountability, not the source of the cash flow per se. But initially (say 1991 – 1994) the only adequate flows did derive from the khatt trade.

Ironically international agencies – global, multilateral, bilateral and NGO – have become agents for laundering/converting khatt proceeds. They need Somali shillings to meet local expenses. It is convenient to draw these from local merchants paying up at the end of the month in Nairobi in USA $ with a commission for the exchange services and interest on drawings. The transactions at this level are perfectly normal and neither illegal nor unethical. The difficulty is that the Somali shillings paid are in large part the proceeds of khatt sales which need to be converted into hard currency available in Kenya to meet leaf purchase, transport and ‘facilitation’ (‘mafuta’) costs. An uncharitable observer could well describe the agency contracts as khatt money launderettes. The situation in Somaliland is rather different. With an open market for Somaliland shillings in Djibouti, specialised remittance houses who make shillings available in Hargeisa within 24/48 hours on the basis of payments in Nairobi, Addis Ababa, Djibouti, Jeddah, Aden, London, New York or many other major cities and the degree of domestic security to make importing – holding – distributing notes, safe there is no need to use merchants (of khatt or anything else). In principal the Central Bank’s accounts (and internal transfer system) could be used, but in practice its artificial Somaliland Shilling 1,500 to USA$1 (versus the real market rate of 4,000) precludes that channel.

Thus Somali culture and preferences mean that Somalia is either first or second in global khatt consumption (Ethiopia joint 1 – 2, Somaliland 3, Kenya/Djibouti 4 – 5) at perhaps $350 – 500 million fob ($425 – 625 million retail) and khatt flights from Kenya and, secondarily Ethiopia, ubiquitous. The greater instability and violence (official, quasi official and purely private) mean the trade is more heavily armed and prone to violence than in Somaliland and Ethiopia. In turn the khatt cashflows have increased instability and reduced the potential for negotiated peace by enabling Warlords to escape from their traditional accountability to Peacelords (elders and merchants) while international humanitarian support and peace promoters have played major roles in converting/laundering khatt shillings into clean $ and to making Warlords central to the negotiating process while virtually excluding Peacelords. In these respects khatt’s political and military roles are more central and more malevolent in Somalia than in Somaliland and Ethiopia.

The Other Homelands: Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya

Ethiopia is the world’s largest producer of khatt (of the order of $400 to $500 million at wholesale/fob prices) with perhaps a third exported to Djibouti and Somaliland (and peripherally to Yemen and to Europe) and the bulk consumed in Region 5 (the Somali Region) and by the Somali community in Addis Ababa. Production and trade are both in Somali hands. The export, business probably focuses on ‘transnational family firms’ with blood, lineage or sub-klan links among the members in both countries. Export is partly by air but also by fast vehicle across the frontier near Baramo. Both are facilitated because khatt is not criminalised nor is its production and commercialisation restricted (except by faxes intended to raise revenue not to choke off use).

Djibouti is probably the worlds 4th or 5th largest user (after Ethiopia, Somalia, Somaliland and perhaps Kenya) at perhaps $50 to $75 million. Apparently all is imported – dominantly by air – from Ethiopia. (Some hill areas could produce khatt but are within the Afar/Danakil not the Isa/Somali zone). The results are widely
perceived to be/noted as non-attendance at work in the afternoon (especially but not only in government offices) and relatively low ('hangover' corroded) productivity when at work. While there are somewhat loose legal sanctions on khatt in Djibouti these appear to represent a formal vestige of the French colonial heritage and/or a bow to the international 'secular jihad' against drugs and to have little relation with reality.

In Kenya the production and use of khatt are formally unlawful and (somewhat paradoxically) importation is subject to a high rate of duty. The reality is quite different. Kenya is the world's number two khatt producer (on the slopes of Mount Kenya and on hills near Nairobi) totalling perhaps $200 to $250 million fob. Of this on the order of 75 per cent is exported to Somalia (not Somaliland) by plane with secondary exports to Heathrow and up to 25 per cent consumed in Kenya largely, but not only, Somalis in the Northwest and Nairobi. The growers are Kenyan but the trade is controlled by a handful of Somali merchants. It is a violent trade with vicious turf wars over sources of supply. Its links with other aspects of organised crime in Kenya are not adequately researched. So long as the khatt is produced for export or sale to Somalis and the violence is largely among Somalis (and peripherally their growers) the police and officialdom turn a blind eye viewing it as a useful source of purchasing power for farmers, foreign exchange for Kenya and 'occult' income for blind eye turners and protectors.

The Khatt Periphery

In Tanzania khatt is not widely consumed even among the Somali community – partly because of lack of ready access. It is apparently not grown in Tanzania (although it could be – and perhaps is on a small scale – in the Arusha-Moshi-Pare axis) and while travellers and small consignments by air from Addis Ababa or Nairobi clearly do come in there is little evidence of large scale trade. Tanzanian culture is on the whole hostile to drugs and while use of cannabis is not uncommon (even if illegal) large-scale importation, trade and/or production does attract negative police and judicial attention.

Possibly the apparently less central role of khatt in the Tanzanian Somali community relates to the fact that they are probably the most integrated into the overall host community/nation of all diaspora communities. Since the late 1970s or early 1980s (parallel to the creeping disintegration of the URT but well before its 1990-91 collapse) increasing numbers have intermarried, held Tanzanian birth certificates, identity cards and travel documents and invested savings on the basis that Tanzania had become and would remain their territorial home. This evaluation has been paralleled by an increasing acceptance by Tanzanians of individual Somalis and Somali households as fellow Tanzanians – which they certainly did not as recently as the early 1970s.

Yemen is on the face of it the only country in which indigenous community consumption of khatt is significant. (There is an historical case that at least some present Somalis came from Yemen after the collapse of the Great Dam and the polit-economy built around it at about the time of the Norman conquest of Anglo-Saxon England.) Whether there is local production as well as imports by air from Ethiopia is unclear as is the actual breadth and depth of non-Somali use.

Elsewhere in the Arabian Peninsula, three considerations pertain. Khatt is the intoxicant of choice of the Somali communities but its use is restricted by the logistical
difficulty of access and – in several cases – by very strong social, theological (for example, Wahabi) and government opposition to/intolerance of drug use. This anti-drug stance flows from The Holy Koran. The specific drugs condemned by The Messenger (the Prophet Mohammed) were hashish/marijuana and opium but the general interpretation is that the condemnation is generic not specific. The drugs of choice of Arab communities are traditionally hashish/marijuana and opium with heroin, cocaine and synthetic designer drugs a relatively recent elite (and especially rich youth) development.

Outside the Somali homelands (Ethiopia – Djibouti – Kenya – Somalia – Somaliland), East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula khat is not widely consumed by non-Somalis nor in many cases by them because of logistical and legal barriers to access. In North America logistical considerations make access to fresh khat virtually impossible – probably a more effective barrier than legal prohibitions, police and judicial enforcement, campaigns and draconic sentencing judging by experience with other drugs. In Europe substantial Somali use of khat is apparently confined to the UK, Italy and the Netherlands. Each – especially the first two – has a substantial Somali diaspora presence. In the UK khat (apparently by oversight) is not on any restricted drugs schedule and thus is – to date – legal and air transport links with Nairobi and Addis Ababa are good. In the Netherlands khat is de facto perceived as analogous to marijuana with personal use and small scale trading decriminalised. Italy (or at any rate Rome) has, like the UK and the Netherlands, direct air links to Addis Ababa and Nairobi and a burgeoning drug culture perceived as a nearly uncontainable problem. That appears to result in little attention to an ‘exotic’ drug not significantly consumed by the mainstream Italian community.

What Might Be Done?

Khat is and is likely to remain overwhelmingly a problem and an issue for Somalis and especially Somalis in Somaliland, Djibouti, Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, and the Arabian Peninsula. It is most unlikely to become the drug of choice of any other community. Certainly it has not done so in the Arabian Peninsula (with a marginal exception in Yemen) or among non-Somali Ethiopians, Sudanese, Eritreans or East Africans where there is no logistical barrier. Presumably the reason is that khat is relatively slow acting and not particularly strong. Further from its heartland khat is largely unattainable for logistic reasons which could only be overcome via local production were a substantial market to exist. There is no reason for panic in, or additional criminalisation of use and petty trade by Northern countries out of fear of khatomania among their majority populations. Nor as khat is – relative to Northern incomes – probably both lower cost than other drugs where available (for example, UK) and has not led to a progression to heroin – cocaine – synthetic drugs among Somalis, can radical action to ‘protect’ Somalis be seen as particularly useful.

The core issues are in the Somali homelands and for Somalis. No overall answer (unless one advocates laissez faire on libertarian grounds) will be short term and criminalisation is likely to be counterproductive if attempted before a change in socio-cultural context and, at most, marginally useful after such change has been substantial.

The case against khat consumption at present levels by Somalis is primarily the negative impact on household poverty and intrahousehold relations with special burdens on women and children. In the case of Djibouti, Somalia and Somaliland (but not Ethiopia) a secondary case is the substantial net import bill.
The case for attention to restructuring applies to *khatt* growers (who, at present, have no equally economically attractive crop) and to petty retail operators. Tax revenue sources could readily be shifted to whatever goods replaced *khatt* in consumption, large merchants could alter their product base, withdrawal symptoms for ex-users are relatively marginal.

The possibility of opening the campaign by criminalisation of production, trade, and/or use is negligible. Only under a dictatorship would it be possible – elected, predominately male assemblies of persons who are overwhelmingly *khatt* users would not pass such laws.

Further the Barre regime’s attempt to ban production and use – the former effective, the latter, despite serious effort and repressive actions, only very partially so – has made criminalisation even more of a non-starter especially in Somaliland. *Khatt* criminalisation is – however irrationally – seen as part of dictatorial, repressive, occupying force rule.

Judging by the results (or general lack thereof as far as consumption reduction goes) of broad brush criminalisation globally the fact that is not practicable in the Somali homelands is perhaps no bad thing. It certainly would in the context of evasion, guns and hireable fighting men have grave relative consequences for security and create a role for organised crime in Somalia and Ethiopia while diversifying its already too wide ramifications in Somalia and Kenya.

But the question of how is not answered by pointing to ‘No through road’ or ‘Bridge Out’ signs. The starting points toward an approach include:

- identifying the social evil to be overcome/reduced;
- analysing which social actors and groups are opposed to continuation of that social evil;
- working out ways to bring these actors and their groups into a working coalition;
- concentrate on education aimed at changing social attitudes; and
- identifying what measures (for example, barriers to employment, licensing of *khatt* ‘parlours’) might reinforce attitudinal changes.

Until socio-cultural shifts gather momentum the government’s main action should be to tax *khatt* more effectively – at say 50 per cent of import and farm gate value with at least 90 per cent coverage – on the Gladstonian premise that socially controversial amenity goods should contribute substantially to revenue. In Somaliland that could mean up to $90 million a year revenue (versus a total from all domestic sources of perhaps $25 million today) which would cover universal services, demobilisation training and a work for food public infrastructure programme. A secondary action to the extent feasible given general present male approval of *khatt* use – would be an educational campaign focused on the costs to poor households of abuse defined as habitual use disproportionate to income.

That approach would have the value of putting public revenue flows and service delivery capacity on a firmer foundation. What it would not do is reduce expenditure on *khatt*. The experience with tobacco taxes is that increases – in the absence of attitude
changes – raise tax revenue and reduce physical consumption (in itself of significant value in respect to tobacco but less so in respect to khatt) but do not alter total expenditure significantly (a key cost of khatt use). To pretend khatt can be taxed out or even down much is hypocritical or naïve. Indeed it is dangerous. Very high rates – say 100 per cent – would create illegal (tax evading) trade protected by gunmen. To act in ways facilitating the emergence of intrinsically unlawful, unaccountable private armed forces is the very last thing any government in the Somali homelands should envisage doing.

Once khatt consumption does show signs of sustained decline, selective household livelihood rehabilitation/restructuring support will be needed. The key group in Somaliland are middle to upper income (khatt is capital, land and water intensive relative to grain, milk or small stock) agro pastoralists in the Hargeisa-Boramo axis. They need information and demonstration to alter production mixes. To what is not clear – citrus or asparagus for Europe might be growable, but there is no present or likely air freight capacity to validate such production. This is a topic for research – perhaps funded by countries and international organisations committed to reducing global drug production.

For the present the initiative toward action and the leadership of campaigns to change cultural values must fall on Somali women’s organisations and those Islamic leaders who perceive khatt use as incompatible with the Holy Koran. They know the costs of khatt use; they know the normative social and theological arguments against it; they do receive a hearing – even if not a very open minded one – from most male Somali leaders (at least in Somaliland).

They might be well advised to seek studies from their sisters in the Diaspora (not least California) on how the anti tobacco crusade has achieved radical changes in social perceptions (including by smokers and employers) only subsequently reinforced by legal limitations and proscriptions. How relevant the campaigns’ successes are is not self evident – the fear of death is relevant to tobacco but not to khatt (albeit the secondary smoke risks, while real, are of a level not usually passing alarm thresholds) and the mores of California are not those of Hargeisa. The limited use of employer sanctions against smoking outside the workplace – partly on productivity but largely on health insurance cost grounds – may indicate Somali womens’ group hopes to use employment access barriers to khatt users as a major tool have limited potential. This is especially true because health insurance by employers does not exist in Somaliland (or for that matter Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya or Somalia). However, again the contexts are divergent – smokers rarely quit work at noon to smoke away the afternoon and evening while khatt users often do so to chew away 3 to 12 hours.

Reginald Herbold Green has been a student, advisor and practitioner of applied political economy in Africa for going on 40 years and in Somalia/Somaliland for over a decade. He is not an expert on drugs and came to significant interest in khatt via household poverty, gender and macro economic concerns. In that sense: I. Ahmed, and R. H. Green, ‘The Heritage of State Collapse and War in Somalia and Somaliland: Governance Reconstitution. Local Level Effects, External, Interventions and Rehabilitation’. Paper for COPE (Complex Political Emergencies) Project and Presented at the COPE Workshop, University of Leeds 16/17 March 1998 (shorter version in Third World Quarterly, 1999) and R.H. Green, ‘Toward a Macroeconomic Framework for Somaliland’s Postwar Rehabilitation and Construction, Paper for Complex Political
Emergencies (COPE) Conference held in Hargeisa, Somaliland 20/24 October 1998, are the starting points for this sketch. The proposals on reduction of khatt's economic drain and social economic household/gender relation negative impact are quite specifically focused on Somali homelands especially in Somaliland for which more data is to hand. However, it is also true that he doubts the value of criminalisation as a starting point for drug abuse reduction more generally noting the limited (or non and negative) results in Northern banned drug use and the major reductions in tobacco use and its acceptability spearheaded by activists achieving special social climate and normative changes only subsequently reinforced by legislation. He is, as it happens, a habitual pipe smoker and a low level recreational consumer of wine and other alcoholic beverages with no personal experience with khatt (unless spelled cat).
Nigeria & the Drugs War

Axel Klein

Over the past five years the Nigerian government has taken dramatic steps to improve the country's reputation as an international drug trafficking centre. As most of the emphasis has fallen on law enforcement and repression there has been a sharp increase in arrest rates and the prison population. In spite of such severe measures a correlative fall in consumption has not been registered. There is a danger that Nigeria is not only repeating the unsuccessful strategies employed in the US, but is also failing to take account of the very different conditions in the local drug scene. It follows that the ostensible outcome of drug control — reduced consumption and trafficking — has become secondary to the manipulation of drug law enforcement for the extension of state authority and to effect social and political control.

The debate on narcotic drugs (referred here strictly to illicit mind altering substances, principally cannabis, heroin and cocaine but also amphetamine-type drugs, sedative hypnotic agents and hallucinogen) though voluminous and wide-ranging, is tightly held within an intellectual frame set by medical practitioners, policy makers and the law enforcement agencies that have been established to implement policy decisions. By adhering to a narrow set of maxims these agencies have identified general patterns of drug related phenomenon on a global scale, which are documented by the rising rate of drug offences, that over the past two decades have constituted the highest increase in recorded crime in all UN member states (UN, 1993) (Endnote 1). Since the first international conference at Shanghai in 1909 a growing list of substances deemed harmful and dangerous has come under legal control in the signatory state. Policy makers in the US and Europe and the agencies created at national and international levels, such as the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) or the United Nations Drugs Control Board (UNDCP) are concerned that in spite of such legal measures, consumption trends continue to go up and are spreading to parts of the world like Africa which had hitherto been thought immune to drug abuse. According to the European Commission: 'A general assessment of the drugs situation today indicates a rapid spread of illicit drugs to the Third World' (Whetton, 1996).

One popular explanation has been that drug consumption, though inherently complex, is directly related to such processes as urbanisation, social fragmentation, poverty, family break-up, alienation and anomie (UNDCP, 1997). As these processes are the common experience of most member states, trends are comparable and allow for the deduction of general conclusions. These in turn form the basis of the desired harmonisation of policy among member states. Bilateral negotiations, such as those preceding the Memorandum of Understanding agreed between Nigeria and the US in 1995, and the three UN conventions — 1961, 1971, 1988, (Endnote 2) — are the instruments by which this is achieved. Preventing and repressing the consumption, cultivation/production, and distribution of drugs is deemed to coincide with the
general interest of all member states, including producer countries. (Some scholars even argue that drug related earnings are not a welcome boost of foreign exchange to a developing country, but undermine the balance of the economy). In response to pressure from trade and aid partners and international agencies, African countries are under increasing pressure to design and implement drug control, not only to prevent the export of narcotics to US and European markets, but also to 'help themselves' (Albright, 26 July 1998) by suppressing drug consumption locally.

The argument for the control of narcotic substances rested for several decades on the unchallenged assumptions that drug use was medically harmful, socially corrosive and conducive to violent crime. A more considered position has been taken by a number of writers in recent years, who in the light of the manifest failure of the drugs war in reversing drug trends in western countries, and the high social and financial cost, now recognise that regulation involves choices among different problems, rather than among solutions (Kleiman, 1992). Several European countries have relaxed controls on certain substances, with the tacit support of the law enforcement agencies. Without departing from the principle tenets that drugs are responsible for medical injury of the user, social dysfunction and criminal activity, the debate has shifted from prohibition to harm reduction.

In Nigeria a hard-line approach dominated by interdiction and repression prevails. According to the Nigerian Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), drug abuse is a cancer spreading across society leading to overdoses, the break-up of families and the collapse of law and order in the cities. Driven by such fears the agency devotes the bulk of its resources to interdiction, that is, the arrest of any individual involved in consuming, trading or benefiting from the profits of trading in drugs, and seizures of drugs, mainly cannabis, cocaine and heroin. Since the appointment of General Musa Bamayi as chairman of the NDLEA over 3,000 Nigerians have been incarcerated for drug related offences for terms of up to 25 years. If this trend continues, drug offenders will constitute the majority of Nigeria's prison population early in the next millennium.

Such harsh penalties serve two functions: according Bamayi, who advocates the death penalty for drug offenders, punishment is justice, retribution for evil men and women who have set out to endanger the young and smear the name of the nation. The retributive aspect of punishment is, in fact, emphasised in the Nigerian system of justice which has the third highest number of executions in the world. There is tacit popular support for 'capital punishment for capital crimes'. In a country where people are regularly the victim of crime, the judiciary has no mandate to protect the rights of the accused, which is reflected in the low rate of acquittals won by NDLEA defendants.

The NDLEA's international partner organisations including Interpol, the US Drug Enforcement Agencies, British Customs and Excise and the United Nations Drug Control Programme advocated the technical benefits of punishment as an instrument in supply reduction. Experience shows, however, that the effectiveness of deterrence is better provided by raising the chances of detection rather than by the severity of punishment.

While arrest statistics provide good information on law enforcement activity, they are a notoriously unreliable indicator for measuring wider social drug trends. The most objective method in evaluating the success of controlling the drugs influx are market prices. In February 1998 a pinch of heroin sold in Nigerian cities for N25 (nineteen
pence!). As the tightening of controls and the draconian punishments have proven only moderately effective in curtailing the supply and distribution of drugs to Nigerian consumers, the debate over the direction of the drugs war is under way. In addition to the drug debate specific considerations of harm reduction—Nigerian drug control—also raises issues of human and civil rights, government accountability, state-civil society relations, and international relations.

It has already been stated that the debate on drugs springs from interventionist measures, the most dramatic of which is probably crop eradication. In these exercises—the eradication of a vegetable species—drugs are only a secondary phenomenon. Interventionist measures are not concerned with biological processes but with human practice, which means that the ambit of the entire array of drug specific agencies operating on a national and international basis is not substance control, but social control. This is why law enforcement agents and their spokesmen figure so prominently in the discourse on drugs, and are the main sources of information. What the medical profession contributes is less spectacular, and often inaccessible to the layman, but important in providing legitimacy. If there were no serious health hazards enforcement would constitute an unconscionable infringement of civil rights.

This pattern of discourse, policy making and intervention has evolved in western countries, particularly the US during the first half the century and is being systematically exported by a series of mechanisms (Levine, 1979; Musto, 1987; Grivas, 1997). In the 1990s a strong push is being made into Africa, and Nigeria in particular. These developments need to be closely observed as drug control is so often the vehicle for other policy objectives, such as expanding national influence (Lee, 1995). Nigeria’s vulnerability to pressure from the US and European countries has undoubtedly been a key factor in shaping national drug control policies in the past fifteen years. Once initiated they have, however, become a factor in the complex matrix of Nigerian politics, where once again, issues of social control take precedence over the concerns with substances.

It is at this point that the discourse on drug control opens a window of opportunity for the anthropologists. Our professional detachment from concerns with healing and enforcement, obliges us to take a closer look at social processes involved in the wider drugs nexus, thereby delinking, for analytical purposes, the drugs from the control. While this runs the risk of minimizing the pathology of drug consumption, it allows for a re-evaluation of the principle tenets of the main stream discourse on drug control, and by offering a corrective, anthropological research, can hopefully play a role in influencing policy formulation.

Anthropological research is of particular relevance in countries like Nigeria where government policies are mainly informed by findings from studies conducted in the US and Europe. Moreover, the thrust of Nigerian research has been to emphasise how drug related phenomenon in Nigeria run in accordance with the principles defined in western research, confirming thereby, the general relevance of existing medical (Anumonye et al. 1980; Asuni, 1996; Borrofka, 1966; Lambo, 1965; Oloyede, 1996) and criminological (Dambazau, 1996, 1997, 1997b; Kalu and Osinbajo, 1990) paradigms. All the while, Nigerian research moves within the strictures set by modest budgets and political intervention. In Nigeria far more than in Europe, the constituency of informants is recruited entirely from within controlled institutions—schools, prisons, psychiatric hospitals and rehabilitation clinics—a selectivity that strongly predetermines the outcome of findings. This is all the more significant in a country where in spite of the most vigorous attempts of a struggling press, information is often difficult
to obtain and verify. Not only is little research conducted to challenge basic assumptions, there are few alternative voices outside the professions to publicly defy existing paradigms. In Western Europe, for example, such challenges have redefined drug control as a medical issue rather than a criminal issue, prioritising harm reduction over repression. This kind of process is difficult to envisage in Nigeria, where discussions on drugs do not follow a dialectic pattern, but merely as confirmation of existing principles. As a result, a 'peripheral discourse' has been initiated, mainly concerned with representing and reconfirming metropolitan definitions, the validity of metropolitan assumptions and even research methods (Adelekan and Odejide, 1989). As the conclusions drawn play an important role within the Nigerian polity, it is doubly important to redirect the debate on drugs driven by Nigerian concerns and informed by Nigerian research findings.

The History of Drug Control

At independence Nigeria inherited a rudimentary system of substance control from the outgoing colonial government. As a signatory to the Opium Control Treaty of 1912 at The Hague, Britain embarked on the gradual process of introducing the agreed controls in all her territories. In Nigeria, opium and other substances were controlled after the promulgation of the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance in 1935. Though opium was quite irrelevant to Nigeria, the control of intoxicating and mind-altering substances had long been an important item on the colonial agenda. Under pressure from national temperance societies and colonial settlers, the colonial powers had agreed at the Brussels Conference of 1889-90 to restrict the import of liquor to the freshly won African colonies. Very much a moral gloss to the imperial carve up at Berlin, European statesmen translated their concern for the protection of the native races who, according to the British delegate Percy Anderson, 'knew no moderation' into a system of tariffs and quotas on gin, schnaps and brandy imports. Formalised by the Brussels General Act of 1892, these restrictions on liquor, one of the most important import components in the 400-year-old trading relationship between Europe and Africa, were followed up with bans on distilled liquors, fermented beers, bottled beers and wine. Particularly in the settler colonies of southern and eastern Africa, African alcohol consumption was confined to demarcated areas such as beer halls out of fear of social protest (Ambler, 1990:297). In West Africa, however, alcohol was not only a topic of ethical concern, it was the financial pillar upon which the colonial state had been erected. Depending for over two-thirds of its total income from alcohol and tobacco tariffs, governors in Lagos and Accra were chary of impending reductions in their revenue base without compensatory grants from London (Akyeampong, 1997; Pan, 1975). As these were not forthcoming, the colonial government, in a spectacular exercise of official hypocrisy, appeared to be sternly disapproving and made this felt with education campaigns, licence restrictions and raised tariffs – of the very consumption patterns on which it was existentially dependent.

This reliance of colonial administration on mind altering substances was not confined to Africa. In Singapore, for example, income from the opium monopoly amounted to 59 per cent of total government revenue (Cheng, 1961); an arrangement much appreciated by the temporary governor Lord Lugard, before his posting to Nigeria. Opium, cocaine and cannabis, the three substances which were becoming subject of increasing government control in the 1920s and 1930s were as good as unknown in West Africa at the time.
There is scant evidence of the cultivation and use of mind altering substances in Nigeria, and West Africa in general, until the aftermath of World War Two (OGD, 1995; du Toit, 1987). While cannabis had been known to East and Central Africans for centuries, Nigerians and Ghanaians only discovered this plant when soldiers of the West African Frontier Force were returning from their tour of duty in India where they had been introduced to smoking hemp. It spread quickly across the country, particularly in the cities, where it became associated with 'loose morals' and dangerous living. In 1965 scientific attention was given to the drugs issue for the first time at a symposium at Ibadan under the chairmanship of Professor Lambo. The warnings were taken up by the Federal Military Government in the following year, with the promulgation of the Indian Hemp decree of 1966 which ushered in the death penalty, and was complemented by the Amphetamine and Other Drugs (Control) Decree of 1968. These legislative measures to curb the growing phenomenon were soon overtaken by events. With the outbreak of war in Biafra a new generation of combatants were introduced to cannabis and other stimulants (Anumonye, 1980:103). Moreover, in the cities – still growing at breakneck speed – cannabis was gradually becoming 'socialised', with the help of such celebrated icons of Nigerian popular culture as the musician and social critic Fela Kuti, who during his performances indulged in _igbo_ exhibitionism. In the 1970s the Nigerian public and political class were no longer much exercised by the issue of narcotics. It was increasingly recognised as a symptom of socio-economic developments and as being confined to cannabis (ICAA, 1980). Changing attitudes became manifest in legislative changes, and in 1975 the Indian Hemp (Amendment) Act in 1975 reduced the death penalty for cannabis related offences to a maximum ten years imprisonment. This dynamic local market absorbed most of Nigeria's cannabis production, while the Nigerian police, headed by the energetic Inspector General Alhaji Muhammadu Dikku Yussufu until his retirement in 1979, prevented more than a minuscule amount finding their way abroad (UN, 1974). Within a short period of time this would change drastically. By the late 1980s Nigeria was gaining international notoriety as a drug trafficking centre. Moreover, cannabis had been eclipsed by harder drugs imported from Asia and Latin America, which were spilling over into local markets (Klein, 1994; UNDCP, 1994).

**The Internationalisation of a Distorted Market**

The prevailing image of the Nigerian drugs economy is one dominated by tightly organised syndicates spinning a web of crime across Africa. Cameroon, Kenya and Senegal have been developed into alternative staging posts for couriers who travel between continents switching currencies and drugs along complex supply routes. But the most important transit point for Nigerian drug syndicates is South Africa. After the demise of apartheid, the incoming ANC government lifted visa requirements on citizens from countries which had supported the movement during its struggle. The majority of immigrants who have taken advantage of this opportunity came from the Southern Africa Development Community, but Nigerians have also been arriving in large numbers. In September 1998 alone 35,000 Nigerians entered the country. In the Johannesburg suburbs of Hillbrow and Berea, also known as Little Lagos, there are some 50,000 Nigerian residents. Many are well-trained professionals taking advantage of the jobs and salary levels which are simply non-existent in the recession hit economy at home. In the public perception, however, Nigerians have become notorious for their involvement in the drugs economy.

This operated on two levels: following the reintegration of South Africa into the world economy, Nigerian drug running syndicates took advantage of international airlinks.
and lax customs checks to develop South Africa into a hub for bringing in cocaine from Latin America, and heroin from Asia. The bulk of these shipments was initially destined for re-export to Europe and the US. An added attraction of South Africa as a location for drug smugglers was the country's sophisticated banking system which allegedly facilitated the laundering of profits. The details of these operations first came to light in 1992 when the first Nigerian was arrested on charges of cocaine smuggling arriving from Brazil. Six years later Nigerian nationals constituted two-thirds of the illegal aliens in South African jails. Heightened police suspicions have therefore forced the Nigerian gangs to change their tactics.

Many are now travelling with forged papers identifying them as citizens of other African countries. Alternatively, white South Africans or Europeans are recruited, often in a system known as 'shotgunning', when a syndicate runs several independent couriers on one and the same flight, banking on the likelihood of some at least evading the custom checks. These operations, though highly profitable, are so capital intensive that only tightly organised, well-financed syndicates can complete the on-shipment into European and US markets. Many Nigerians have taken the easier option of unloading their goods locally. After years of international isolation, South African consumers have moved fast to catch up with the rest of the world in drug consumption patterns. Cocaine and crack, and to a lesser degree heroin, are spreading fast across different social networks, and Nigerians are involved at every level of the distribution chain: as importers, bulk-dealers and even street peddlers. This is increasingly bringing them into conflict with local criminal organisations as well as vigilante groups. Violence against alleged Nigerian drug dealers have risen sharply, with over ten killings and 28 kidnappings over a short period of 1998 alone (Kibble, 1998:9). The associations of Nigerians, and to a lesser extent Zimbabweans, with the drug trade, which in turn is linked to violence and gang warfare has fuelled a new wave of xenophobia in South Africa. The first victims of this backlash have been bona fide migrants of Nigerian origin working across a range of sectors.

The most successful operators, however, use South Africa primarily as a staging post for Europe and the US. South Africa has become an extension of the operational bases Nigerians have established in Brazil and the Far East, and where they have specialised in cargo swaps before moving on to the lucrative markets in the north. Cocaine, for example is purchased in Brazil and swapped for heroin in Bombay and Karachi where maximum price can be obtained. According to Interpol, Nigerian syndicates accounted for a respective 25 and 35 per cent of heroin entering European and US markets by the early 1990s. Last February, US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright claimed that 'Nigerian gangs run networks that bring in much of the heroin which ends up in the United States'. This powerful presence in the drugs market requires closer explanation if we consider that Nigeria is not a producer country and has only a shallow history of drug use.

The dramatic increases in petrol revenue enjoyed by Nigeria after 1973 allowed an unprecedented number of Nigerians to travel and study abroad, mainly Europe and the US. As some became involved in the local drugs scene, particularly on university campuses, they could realise 'easy pickings' by smuggling Nigerian cannabis across lightly guarded custom controls. Unlike countries like Morocco, Lebanon or Colombia, Nigeria then had no history and no reputation of drug cultivation or use, making it easy for Nigerian travellers to evade the efforts of drug law enforcement officers. These initial forays into the drugs economy were opportunistic and casual. As the Nigerian economy slid further into decline, and stranded travellers came to depend on new sources of income, the Nigerian involvement with the international
Nigeria & the Drugs War 57

Drugs economy grew more intense and more organised. In this process they were the fortuitous beneficiaries of new political concerns in the US and Europe – the war on drugs.

Drug control had already been tightened up in the last years of the Carter presidency, but it was during the successive Republican administrations of Reagan and Bush that it was to become a central policy issue. Massive funding increases for the US Drug Enforcement Agency, and the vigorous expansion of counter narcotic measures to Latin America, the Caribbean and Asian countries, as well as the crackdown within the US, created a yawning gap between 'farmgate' and western street prices. Nigerian operators could insert themselves between the points of production and consumption, reroute the cargo via Lagos, Kano, or any number of African stopovers, and still realise a hefty profit. In the drugs trade, where profits are not proportionate to factor costs, that is land, labour and capital, but to risk and monopoly (Tullis, 1994; UNDCP, 1997), Nigerian businessmen could compensate for structural disadvantages with regard to market access, information, finance, and culture. An exemplary instance of the international division of labour evolved in the process, with Nigerian syndicates hiring out their specialised couriering skills to western importers, often organised criminal groups. More important still were Nigerian contacts in Asia and Latin America, where heroin and cocaine were sourced. These connections were another unintended consequence of the renewed war on drugs. Nigerians met up with their Pakistani and Colombian partners in US and European gaols where they were usually held on cannabis charges.

Nigeria's entry into the global drugs economy was therefore the outcome of a number of developments, all of which lay outside her jurisdiction. First, the overall level of demand for drugs in western countries proved inelastic to price increases and control measures. Second, Nigerians could only become serious contenders after the control measures put in place in the consumer countries had sent prices and profits through the roof. Finally, opportunities opened up through contacts made in the metropolitan centres which entirely transformed the nature of operations.

Government Responses

In Nigeria itself the term 'drug-barons' came into circulation in the early 1980s. A vague term, imported from America, it suggested the presence of high powered backers, and served as a signpost for the entire range of drug related activities and the fast, seemingly easy money these realised. While the civilian government of Shehu Shagari (1979-1983) remained phlegmatic on the issue, change came in 1983 with the return to power of the military under Muhammadu Buhari. Regarded as a 'corrective coup', the military take-over was initially backed by a fair degree of popular support in its attempts to tackle the country's growing social and economic problems. Government spending was reined in, agreements were reached with foreign creditors and campaigns against indiscipline and corruption launched in the country's public sector. This new puritanism spread across government, including tougher airport controls and draconian punishments to stamp out drug trafficking. The Special Tribunal (Miscellaneous Offences) Decree 2 of 1984 re-introduced the death penalty for drug smuggling, and three convicted traffickers in Krikri prison were executed, sparking off an ongoing public debate on the issue. Supporters point to the damage done to the nation and her international reputation. Critics claim that the executions, by drawing attention to the link between drugs and money, only served to advertise the profit potential of the drug trade.
The law was revised two years later under Ibrahim Babangida, who had ousted the Buhari regime in a bloodless coup in 1985. Capital punishment was commuted to terms of imprisonment with the 1986 amendment to the Special Tribunal (Miscellaneous Offences) Decree. It was rumoured in Lagos that the coup itself was prompted by investigations into the general’s own drug related activities. Allegations that the head of state or people close to him, particularly his wife, were involved in drug smuggling persisted throughout his stay in office. They were sustained by the assassination of Delegiwa, the founder and editor-in-chief of Newswatch magazine, allegedly in possession of the file on Babangida’s activities and increasing incidents of official collusion. Many traffickers were operating under the protection of highly placed ‘Godfathers’ who would guarantee their protection in Nigeria, and even abroad, as indicated by the abuse of diplomatic privileges by some members of the Nigerian diplomatic corps. The rapid proliferation of these activities established the country’s reputation as a drug trafficking hotspot by the end of the decade, putting the government under mounting international pressure to do something about it.

Within the country drugs were also becoming an important issue. Concern over medical problems, addiction and crime was fanned by sensationalist newspapers reporting. In Lagos, Kano, Port Harcourt, Benin and other southern cities ghana (heroin) and chanwe chunke (coca) were becoming widely available and the subject of much experimentation. At the heart of the matter, however, lay the increasing difficulty in obtaining foreign visas, and the repercussions suffered by Nigerian travellers in the light of their country’s blighted image. At international airports Nigerians, who had become accustomed to the privileges extended to the citizens of a wealthy oil-producing nation were treated as criminal suspects, with long delays and humiliating searches. In turn a large section of the Nigerian elite and aspiring classes came to support rigorous steps against drug traffickers.

In response to these grievances, the government took a series of measures, one of the most controversial of which being Decree 33 in 1990. Also known as ‘double jeopardy’, it provides for the trial of any Nigerian convicted of a drug related offence anywhere in the world for bringing the country into disrepute. The arrest of these returnees became the responsibility of a specially created anti-narcotics squad, the Nigerian Drug Law Enforcement Agency, established by Decree 48 in 1989 as the centrepiece of the government’s drug control strategy. It was placed under the chairmanship of Fidelis Oyakhilome, a retired police commissioner and first in a series short-lived service chiefs. The prosecution and adjudication of drug related offences had already been removed from the ordinary legal system and placed under the jurisdiction of the Miscellaneous Offences Tribunal (MOT). Since 1990, the MOT has had to be expanded considerably to keep up with the increasing case-load.

Two years later, Oyakhilome was forced out of office when a suspected trafficker, Jennifer Madike, made disclosures about pay-offs to one of the chairman’s close associates. The reputation of the organisation went into further decline under his successor Fulani Kwajafa, culminating in the spectacular escape of 47 detainees from the NDLEA’s Kano offices in 1993. Under the next chairman, Bappa Jam’are, it became evident that the organisation was deeply involved in drug trafficking. During a spot visit by the MOT chairman Oni-Okpaku to the NDLEA’s inventory of seized exhibits at Ikoyi, Lagos, only 12 out of a total of 637 registered wraps of heroin could be found. The rampant disappearance of exhibits indicated that a large number of agents were engaged in recycling drugs instead of preventing their production and distribution. Bappa’s absence at the time of discovery on an unauthorised visit to Cairo, hinted at the international entanglement of the agency.
The lassitude displayed by the Babangida administration (1985-1993) and the caretaker government of Ernest Shonekan (January-November 1993) was replaced by the vigorous stance taken by the new military head of state—Sani Abacha. Drug control became a government priority, a budget of $70 million set aside for the NDLEA and the agency placed in the hands of General Musa Bamayi. Under the chairmanship of this respected officer with an impressive record of service in Biafra, Liberia and Yugoslavia, the organisation turned over a new leaf. Within the first month, 331 people were dismissed, and charges brought against many high ranking officers. Weeding out corruption has been an ongoing exercise, with over 500 staff dismissed in 1996. The entire organisation was restructured from top to bottom, with tighter discipline, a rigid command structure and ongoing training programmes being introduced. These efforts have been recognised internationally, and since 1995 the US DEA and the British Customs and Excise, as well as the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) have been assisting with specialised training courses for NDLEA agents. Hardware has also been upgraded. The NDLEA now has a fleet of four wheel drive vehicles, speed boats to patrol lagoons and rivers along the borders, automatic weapons and x-ray detection machines at Lagos airport. Results in terms of arrests and seizures have been dramatic and the import of heroin and cocaine through Lagos airport has apparently been cut down to a trickle. The work at ports and airports has been followed up with raids on ‘joints’, the appropriately named bars in which drugs are bought and consumed, on street dealers, and an extensive crop eradication campaign called ‘Operation burn the weeds’. Less eye-catching than the midnight raids on the houses of suspected dealers, or the paramilitary assaults on cannabis cultivating farming communities has been the intelligence work of the agency. A public commitment ‘to go after the barons’ has been borne out in a web of new regulations enhancing the agency’s powers at the expense of civil liberties. A range of measures have been implemented to curb the flow of hard drugs into the country. Nigerians travelling to a drug producing country have to obtain clearance from the NDLEA first. In 1996, for example, 274 out of 5,489 applicants were turned down. In 1996 the government cancelled the landing rights of Varig, Pan Am, Air-India and Balkan Airlines, all popular carriers with drug couriers. The most significant move yet has been the closure of ‘business centres’—offices which offered telephone, faxing and computer services to the public. The US DEA claimed that these ‘business centres’ were an important element in the infrastructure of drug trafficking, and though they provide the sole means of telecommunications for the majority of Nigerians who have no private phone and live far from a Nitel (Nigerian telecommunications parastatal) office, the NDLEA moved to close down these centres in 1996.

The cornerstone of the Nigerian war on drugs, however, has been the Money Laundering Decree of 1995 which has obliged banks to disclose any transaction in excess of N500,000 (£3,700) by an individual, and of N2 million (£14,000) for a corporate body. In the attempt to locate narcotic drugs, or the proceeds earned in the trade therein, the NDLEA is empowered to place any bank account under surveillance, tap any telephone line and access any computer system. Moreover, any individual suspected of money laundering or trafficking has to reveal their sources of foreign exchange, placing the burden of proof squarely on the defendant. In 1995 the NDLEA moved against a number of car importers in Lagos on the grounds that the Nigerian retail price of these cars could not cover their purchasing costs abroad. It was therefore suspected that the cars were merely a vehicle for repatriating drugs money from abroad. Thirty car dealers were arrested and 1,612 cars screened, 464 of which were subsequently impounded. Since then the scheme has been extended and
personalised. People indulging in conspicuous consumption, or according to one newspaper, 'enjoying a flashy lifestyle', are now invited to the offices of the chairman to explain the origin of their wealth. The result of these measures has been dramatic. Aided by a reward policy for arresting officers, the number of convictions has shot up from 67 in 1994 to 1,062 in 1997. While Bamayi himself admits that 'the boys are suffering' – at current levels of remuneration high ranking agents are earning N3,000 (£22) a month – the rigorous regime imposed by the chairman has driven corrupt practices underground. The benefits for drug enforcement agents no longer lie with pay-offs or participation in the market by selling exhibits. Today it is the assets seized from suspects which maintain the force. Many of the impounded vehicles mentioned above were acquired by drug enforcement agents and judges of the MOT. Lower ranks seize their opportunity closer to the scene of the arrest. According to one former prisoner, an ex-soldier:

*The NDLEA came to my house one night. They had been informed by my neighbour that I was smoking hemp. I have been smoking for 22 years and have never been in any trouble. They break into my house and carried off all my property, the TV, videos, my papers, my pension.*

This kind of 'arrest to loot' is facilitated by Nigerian drugs legislation which makes no distinction between the kind or quantity of substances, first or repeated offences, the suspects intentions or record. Furthermore, drug offenders forfeit not only their liberty, but also their assets, which become property of the state. The overall increase and the pattern of arrests, therefore, is partly derived from the revenue imperative of the underpaid personnel, who need to make up for unrealistic wages. With barons and international couriers difficult to come by, 93.8 per cent of arrests over the past four years have been on cannabis charges, mainly against consumers.

**The Drugs Scene in Nigeria**

The alarm over the epidemiological spread of hard drugs in Lagos and other cities in the early 1990s has given way to a more sober assessment. The biggest danger to Nigeria, according to Bamayi, is cannabis – the only domestically produced illicit drug; rumours of poppy and coca plantations have never been substantiated. Indian Hemp, or *igbo, weeweet, goof or ganja* has become a substance of mass consumption in most big Nigerian cities. 'Wraps' of loose cannabis inside the paper that it is smoked in, is available from makeshift stalls, sold as one item among various petty consumer goods. The association with socially marginal groups in the 1960s has faded in a two-way process. Nigeria's decline in the 1980s has pushed a large section of the population out of the formal sector and into the proximity of illicit drug activities. Conversely, the use of cannabis has simply entered the cultural mainstream with increasing number of users in the motor parks, at university campuses and in the bars and places of enjoyment in the cities. Drug consumption seems to span social class status and gender, with young people as the most visible group of consumers (Oloko, 1993). The most spectacular flaunting of national drug laws occurs at a music venue in Lagos, called 'The Shrine'. The home and base of Nigeria's inspired musician and caustic social commentator Fela Kuti, it gained legendary status with an entire generation of Nigerians to whom the man's music and lifestyle were a welcome antidote to the corruption and hypocrisy of the authorities. During his concerts the late musician would demonstratively light up spliffs in between bursts on his saxophone. While celebrating the virtues of *igbo*, Fela would regularly harangue the audience about the pernicious effect of *ghana*. This is a distinction common among
drug users, many of whom compare the natural substance grown on home soil favourably against the chemical imports, including cigarettes. Cannabis smokers, among whom cases of addiction are rare, also distance themselves from 'junkies' and drug related crime.

In spite of widespread use, cannabis has hardly gained social acceptability. Newspapers and popular folklore associate cannabis with madness and social instability. Armed robbers, but interestingly also predatory policemen, are often described as 'being on drugs'. The link between cannabis, madness and violence is also maintained by the NDLEA. Not only dangerous in itself, cannabis also serves as a gateway to harder drugs. Though progression theory has long been discounted in the west, Nigerian drug enforcement agents illustrate the argument with information from addicts in Nigeria's rehabilitation clinics, most of whom had smoked hemp before getting involved with harder drugs. Were this argument applied consistently, cigarettes and alcohol would also be marked for their 'gateway' function. It can even be argued that the prestige of modern, western medicine and the ready availability of medical drugs from street pharmacies due to lax prescribing practice, has provided a 'pro drug socialisation model' for young people (Beckerleg, 1995; Joe et al., 1990). While cannabis stands certainly in a correlative relationship with cocaine and heroin use, a causal link is far from established. But as an operational hypothesis, it justifies the collapse of the various categories of drugs into a single ban, which in turn has several functions in the Nigerian war on drugs. It justifies the extension of NDLEA activities across the entire country, now divided into 20 zones, and provides the 3,000+ agents with a steady work load. It has also enabled the agency to shift resources from curbing international trafficking to combating cannabis at home.

According to Bamayi, the NDLEA is fighting a 'menace that is threatening mankind', - the work of his agents a sacred duty to future generations of Nigerians. This is received opinion as the chairman, who by his own admission is no specialist but owes his appointment to his leadership qualities. It is surprising then to find that no attempt has been made to develop in-house expertise at the NDLEA. This information gap is reflected in the posters and leaflets produced by the Drug Demand Reduction Unit which reproduce stereotypes of drug users as socially marginal characters of sickly appearance. Such images are a world away from the peer group role models in school yards and motor parks who are usually the first time suppliers. Young people, the constituency most vulnerable to drugs, do not reconcile the imagery and the exaggerated information with their own drug experience. This undermines the credibility of the entire drug awareness campaign. Of equally dubious preventative value are the educational campaigns in schools organised by the Drug Demand Reduction Unit of the NDLEA and various NGO's. They usually take the form of conventions, where students are assembled to listen to speeches and shout anti drugs slogans. One critical shortcoming is the lack of expertise among the campaigners, often local authority officials and local dignitaries, with no knowledge of drugs. Awareness campaigns then are a combination of exhortations by elders and the instilling of fear, not only of the drug but also of falling foul of the law. What these efforts do, however, is to press home the government's commitment to tackle drugs, a fact recognised by US ambassador Walter Carrington who is quoted as saying that: 'Nigeria is now serious in the drug war', the UNDCP, the INCB, and even members of the US congress.

It is this kind of recognition which keeps the wheels of the NDLEA moving. Public support for the war on drugs is largely related to travel restrictions and the country's international reputation. As Nigeria's image is hardly tainted by local hemp smokers,
the continuing crackdowns is justified by the blurring of substance boundaries. The importance of safeguarding Nigeria’s international reputation is difficult to underestimate. For a start, drug control measures have subjected high ranking members of the Nigerian elite to embarrassment and inconveniences abroad. They have thus effected a constituency which can make its opinions felt and bear an impact upon policy formulation. As argued above, they also enjoy the support of the vast class of aspirants hoping to improve their socio-economic status by travelling abroad for study, work or business. Beyond this calculated self-interest, drug trafficking allegations have managed to touch the raw nerve of national pride. Patriotic Nigerians are therefore behind stern measures to safeguard the reputation of the country, a point that figures dominantly in questionnaires on drug use. Reputations, unfortunately, though easily lost, take a long time to recover, even after the original course of misconduct has been remedied.

Drug Control as an Issue in International Relations

Drug control is second only to terrorism as an issue on which representatives of different governments are ready to co-operate. Though these two phenomenon are frequently associated (Clutterbuck, 1990), there is in fact little evidence of an overlap of drug smuggling and urban terrorist groups. The only organisation known to have used drug profits to finance terrorist activity has been the CIA (McCoy, 1991). As drugs are believed to constitute a threat to individuals and society, the international traffic has been blown up into a menace to international stability. Hence, interdiction is a political necessity to preserve harmonious relations between sovereign states, as well as to protect all that is sacred in society – the young, the family, social order etc. At the level of international co-operation, the drug warriors have taken a position that is morally irreproachable. Having been turned into a crusade, the campaign against drugs and drug trafficking has become dissociated from the original policy objectives – to stamp out drugs – and is moving under its own volition. The availability of drugs and consumption patterns are no longer key determinants. As control has become a moral imperative, success can be reported in arrests, seizures and the acreage of destroyed fields. Drug control has become its own purpose. In the US, substance control has served as a way of controlling particular sections of the population since the 19th century. It was also a foreign policy tool in the US expansion into the Pacific. Since World War Two it has been a major issue in US relations with Latin America and Asian countries. Over the past few years there has been a concerted effort to expand into Africa, with Nigeria, the largest and most populous state in sub-Saharan Africa, forming the bridgehead.

The most efficient way of expanding what are basically US and European drug policy concerns is the UN Control Convention. These treaties oblige signatories to introduce a range of policies, including the prohibition of certain substances, to launch prevention programmes and to set up rehabilitation centres and enforcement agencies. In the West African sub-region, eleven out of sixteen countries have been ready to sign up to all three post-war treaties on drug control: Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Mauretania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. While countries are pressured to become party to these treaties, the matter does not end with the delegate’s signature. The functions of the three UN drug units, the Division of Narcotic Drugs (DND), the UN Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) and the INCB Secretariat, were fully integrated into the United Nations Drugs Control Programme in 1991. The central function of the UNDCP is probably that of an supra-national information centre. Drug related information is gathered at
the Vienna offices, much new research has been commissioned, and conferences and seminars are organised to formulate and disseminate insights and policies. With a 1960-1997 budget of over $150 million, and the cachet of supranational neutrality, the UNDCP is in the process of asserting its intellectual authority. With the aid of a busy data processing machine, fuelled by constant updates on research results, the UNDCP is quickly becoming the last word in drug control. On the practical side, the UNDCP is there to ensure and assist with the implementation of the treaties. This comprises evaluations of the performance of countries in fulfilling their treaty obligations, assistance in the drafting of legislation, the design of master plans – a single document in which a government identifies what it intends to do about drug control – and with training courses for judges, investigators and officials. Failure to cooperate can result in the wrath of the US, and that implies the danger of decertification.

Every year the US State Department releases an International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, which lists the countries involved in producing and transiting illicit drugs. A country put on the list is ineligible for US assistance, except humanitarian and counternarcotics aid, until the president determines that is has fully cooperated with US and international drug control agencies and recommends its certification to Congress. The designation also requires US members in the International Financial Institutions to vote against loan requests by these countries. For African countries, the threatened withdrawal of World Bank and IMF financial assistance is a serious incentive for compliance. Yet certification can be provided regardless of government involvement in narcotics, if US national interest demands it. It seems that rules can not only be bent towards a more tolerant stance, but that equally, drugs can serve as a pretext to isolate a government which is out of favour. Moreover, the very process itself is a design to gain leverage over foreign governments without it appearing as crude ‘Realpolitik’. Drug control allows the gunboats to sail under UN flags. The US is not alone, as several European Union governments have formed the Mini Dublin Group to monitor and informally assist African countries on drug control. The drug trade may provide an appropriate opponent in the fight against which the EU may formulate a coherent foreign policy.

The drive into Africa is backed up with assistance packages, such as a recent British programme of £22 million to train the Ugandan police in drug control. But it also involves the posting of DEA and UNDCP personnel in the transit or producer country, and the continuous interference in national affairs. The closure of business centres in Nigeria followed information from the DEA. The DEA also issued a list of telephone lines suspected of being used for trafficking; they were all blocked. Extradition demands were made for eleven traffickers, four of whom were handed over to the US authorities. It is clear, however, that this is not a cooperative effort between equal partners. Nigeria’s request for the extradition of Jimi Lawal, a fraudulent banker who absconded to the US, was promptly denied on the grounds that a fair trial cannot be guaranteed in Nigeria.

And the pressure is applied continuously. In 1998 the senior DEA representative, lamenting the inadequacy of Nigeria’s cannabis eradication campaign, urged the government to purchase spotter planes and to undertake aerial spraying. The DEA, of course, pursues it own operational objectives. One of these is simply to account for its own failures in stemming the inflow of drugs into the US. Having worked for years in Mexico, Colombia, Bolivia, the Caribbean, and Southeast Asia, Africa is yet one more leak that needs to be plugged. This extension is, of course, covered by additional budget allocations. Equally the UNDCP, an organisation dedicated to drug control, has intensified its engagement in Africa. The key objective is: 'Keeping the Drug
issues alive and enhance their visibility' (UNDCP, 1997b). Both these organisations are rapidly stepping up their African programmes beginning in the priority countries of Ghana, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Senegal. One policy aim is to develop the institutional capacity of these countries in combating drugs. This means raising the ability of state institutions to assert themselves within these countries; in other words, to bolster the power of the state.

After two decades of denigration this is quite a turnaround in the fortunes of the African state. The trend towards the end of the 1980s moved towards the marginalisation of African states. Economic management of many countries had been taken over by the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and the flow of development assistance was being systematically redirected towards civil society institutions. In Somalia and Rwanda, national sovereignties were suspended altogether for humanitarian reasons – and with sobering results. The Somali experience was particularly critical in reshaping US attitudes towards African states. Next to the expense involved in maintaining the UN presence, an independent Somali state seemed a far more attractive option. In spite of its manifest failure, UN peace making efforts have concentrated upon resuscitating the Somali state. Critics have argued that this is doctrinaire, driven by protocol and demands by the diplomatic community for accredited official counterparts to work with (Prendergast, 1995). Somalia may benefit far more from a period of open reconstruction, outside the strictures of statehood. This is considered an anathema in official circles where disintegrating societies are perceived as a threat to global stability. The fallout of the associated violence is not just a local problem, but because: 'drug traffickers, money launderers, extremist political movements and terrorist groups move into the vacuum in places like Afghanistan, Liberia, Burma and Peru' (Atwood, quoted in Lyons and Samatar, 1995). The fear of uncontrolled spaces given over to organised drug cartels has injected new interest into the strengthening and preservation of the African state.

As drug control is a serious concern of US and European governments (even an obsession), the encouragement of institutions in African partner countries follows naturally and provides governments and international institutions with national counterparts they can engage with. Drug control is also an instrument in international relations, as the system of US certification shows (Grivas, 1997; Musto, 1987). This has become clear in the case of US-Nigerian relations, where Nigeria's considerable efforts in response to US decertification in 1994 has been dismissed as inadequate. Arrests and seizures have shot up, eradication raids have taken the war deep into the bush, roadblocks are being set up on all the main roads, and in the cities drug activity has been driven underground. None of these have rendered the desired results, certification by the US, and as Bamayi himself is aware, the reasons are political. In an overview of drug control events of 1996, the general said:

We are pleased to acknowledge the commendations from well-meaning countries, the United States for instance, which has revealed that the problem between our two countries has nothing to do with drugs (NDLEA, 1997:47).

In Abuja, government officials fear that they have been caught in a twist. Regardless of the genuine problem with trafficking, these are not the grounds on which Nigeria has been decertified. The US government simply disapproves of military regimes, especially the current one which usurped power after what has been widely regarded as the cleanest and fairest political election campaign in the country. However hard Nigeria goes out of her way to accommodate US demands, these will not deliver the
desired results. Decertification can not be brought about by ever more draconian drug control measures, but only by a change of government.

The Internal Agenda

If it is recognised in Nigerian ruling circles that decertification is a political rather than a policy issue, why is drug control being pursued with such vigour? It has already been established that cannabis is the main target of law enforcement activity, and that hard drugs are confined to small sections of the urban population. While cannabis use should not be trivialised, as it ‘causes short-term memory loss, loss of concentration, impaired motor function and bronchial and pulmonary complications’ (UNDCP, 1997:194), these ailments hardly constitute a major public health priority in a country with as overstretched a public health service as Nigeria. Heroin and cocaine exact a higher toll, as the number of addicts undergoing rehabilitation testify, yet once again a sense of proportion is called for. The victims claimed by drug overdoses are measured by the handful. More than 40 people, by contrast, died in the space of two months (January-February 1998) when aviation fuel was sold as kerosene and used for domestic cooking. Of even greater concern is the number of fatalities on Nigerian roads where most accidents are caused by sub-standard vehicles. It is difficult to reconcile official indifference to such serious health hazards with the attention devoted to what in most cases constitutes a minor health risk.

The second reasons often given in justification for the resources devoted to drug control is that drugs breed crime. Case studies from the US, Colombia and Myanmar support the assertion that ‘crime and drugs walk hand in hand’ (Tullis, 1995:27). We can pass over the tautological application of this argument, which defines all drug use as criminal on the grounds that the substances are illicit. Public concern usually revolves around acquisitive crime by drug users, who steal in order to feed their habit, and organised crime.

In spite of a heavy presence of law enforcement and security forces, Nigeria is a society ridden by crime. Stories of violent hold ups and cunning frauds fill newspapers. In contrast to other countries with chronically high crime rates, such as the US, the Nigerian malefactor cannot easily be categorised as someone operating outside the formal economy. He may be the bank manager absconding with a family’s life-savings, a local government officer revoking a trading licence, a telecom engineer overcharging for the installation of a faulty line. Nor is it easy, or even possible, for plaintiffs to seek redress in the courts. The judiciary is subject to the same pathologies as other Nigerian institutions, but also cumbersome, overworked and severely constrained in enforcing judgement. As a result, public order is largely maintained by adherence to codes and a shared morality, which in the event of a crime being committed and detected, is quickly reduced to the lynch mob. Whatever the ethical considerations, the lynch mob is one of the main reasons why the streets of Nigerian cities, in spite of hustle and bustle, are fairly safe during the daytime. Preying on vulnerable victims – handbag snatching, robbing pensioners – the type of street crime which sustains heroin users in western countries, is largely ruled out by the likelihood of capture in the crowded inner cities and the terror of punishment. The main victims of acquisitive crime are therefore the families of the addict, for whom policing and medical issues often collapse into one. Rehabilitation clinics such as that at Yaba Psychiatric Hospital are doubly popular with addicts’ families, because they also keep him/her out of harms way. Equally, petty thieving is often tolerated for a long time as families are afraid that their loved ones will meet with a harsher fate if pushed
out of the home. As a result, chronic drug addiction is yet another of Nigeria’s many social problems that is already borne by the extended family. The government which funds only one rehabilitation centre in Lagos apart from Yaba Psychiatric Hospital, offers little comfort to such families. If they can raise the money they can seek help from private clinics; if not, they must turn to a handful of NGO’s working with drug addicts and church based organisations. In the meantime they are becoming increasingly exposed to the risk of crime and violence. As NDLEA’s activities are raising the price of heroin and cocaine, addicts commit more crime to make up for the rising prices. By the same token, the addict’s family are even more likely to fall victim to the ‘collateral damage’ inflicted by ‘drugbusting’ enforcement agents. Finally, it should be kept in mind that with cannabis the most commonly consumed drug, the problem of addiction and acquisition is confined to a very small section of the drug using population.

More sinister still, however, is the danger exuded by organised crime. Nigerian syndicates are reported to have linked up with Italian counterparts in a complicated division of labour over a range of activities including drugs, money laundering and prostitution. Lack of information restricts argument on these matters, but officials at the Federal Secretariat insist that Nigeria does not know organised crime. ‘There is no Nigerian who can beat his chest and say “I am a Mafiosi”’. There are organised criminals, there are local associations and there is a crime scene, but there are no large-scale organisations camouflaged by a formal exterior and in league with the state. The form of organisation that can be encountered is the association that operates under a different name to protect the interests of its members. In one of the main cannabis growing regions in Delta State (often referred to by informants as ‘Jamaica’), cannabis growers attend monthly meetings. One of their prime concerns is to ensure the regular pay-offs to key officials in the area, and an eye on the competition. There are two approaches to deal with this: incorporation or betrayal, depending largely upon the candidates standing in the locality. The same tactic is used by the ‘drug dealers’ in Benin city, mostly retired soldiers and policemen, who have carved up the drug retail business in the city among themselves. Using their former connections they stay abreast of developments and in touch with decision makers. Outsiders trying their luck in the trade are delivered to the enforcement agents. The importance of regulation in West African markets has long been recognised (Bauer, 1963:61). Yet the drug trade shares many of the difficulties of other retail trades in the sense that the remarkable ease of entry poses a severe constraint to profit margins. These can be protected by replacing competition with self-regulation through associational forms which have a strong cultural underpinning. Thanks to these arrangements, Nigeria has escaped one of the most deplorable epi-phenomenon to the drug trade - the turf war. This relatively peaceful, violent free manner of trading drugs is not confined to Nigeria. According to one recent study in Ghana:

... it would seem that the cannabis trade does not lead to violence, in contrast to drug trafficking elsewhere (OGD, 1995:38).

In the light of these findings, I suggest that linking drugs with violence is a reflection of ethnocentric bias rather that the elaboration of a general predictor. Instead of essentialising violence as an intrinsic attribute of the drug economy, it is should be interpreted as the outcome of prohibition and the culture of competition. As with many pronunciations on drug related issues, the critical data on the drugs/violence connection comes from the US. Here the introduction of cocaine in the late 1970s led to violent conflict between Cuban and Colombian syndicates. In the early 1980s
homicide rates peaked once again in the crack wars fought out between Jamaican and Dominican groups (Goldstein, 1985; UNDCP, 1997:120). This situation does not, however, apply to Nigeria, where the drugs market has been ‘shared’ out. In a sense the supply and distribution of narcotic drugs takes on same organisational forms as any other supply and retail trade. In Nigeria, outright competition in any commodity is frowned upon, accommodation and consensus prevail. This system has enabled Nigerians to constrain instrumental violence – violence designed to eliminate rivals – as well as to avoid to transference of ‘systemic crime’ into the drugs scene. The Nigerian data also challenges the prohibitionist argument: that were illegal drugs markets to disappear overnight, much of the systemic violence currently occurring within the drugs context would move elsewhere (UNDCP, 1997:117).

It remains difficult to understand the motivation behind the assault launched by the Nigerian government on drug users. We have found that neither medical problems owing to drug use, nor the crime generated by production and supply stand in any relationship to the resources committed to drug control. The government is even aware that its efforts in controlling the trade will not succeed in restoring relations with Nigeria’s trade partners. The question of why the drugs war is being waged with such vigour remains, therefore, wide open.

Drug Control within Nigeria: The Hidden Agenda

For a clearer understanding of the political motivation underlying the drugs war in Nigeria we need to look at the political background against which the war on drugs has been fought out. Enforcement efforts were dramatically intensified after Sani Abacha seized power from Shonekan, to establish the fourth military administration since 1984.

Not only did he assume office at a time when the military had lost the confidence of the population, he also took power at the expense of an elected presidential candidate, Moshood Abiola. Widespread popular protests, particularly in the southwest of the country were violently put down. Lacking in a popular support base, Abacha could neither tolerate public protest nor internal dissent. He mobilised the powers of the state against individuals and organisations protesting against policies and established interests. Among his most publicised victims was the internationally renown writer Ken Saro-Wiwa, who together with seven other leading members of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), was arrested on charges of conspiring to murder and commit acts of sabotage in 1994. MOSOP had been campaigning against environmental degradation in Ogoni country as a result of oil-production. After a lengthy show trial the eight MOSOP officials were executed by a firing squad. Equally repressive measures were taken against political activists, trade union leaders and journalists. The rule of terror was eventually extended over Abacha’s principal constituency – the army. In 1997 an alleged coup was uncovered leading to the arrest of the second in command, General Diya and all top-ranking Yoruba officers. Even the prominent members of a former military government, General Obasanjo – currently running as presidential candidate – and his former deputy, the highly regarded Shehu Musa Yar’Adua were placed under house arrest for their alleged involvement.

A record number of political detentions and assassinations characterised the Abacha regime as the most brutal in Nigeria’s history. It is important to situate drug law enforcement within the context of severe political control and the suspension of judicial process in Nigeria.
The often brutal approach to law enforcement in Nigeria often misleads foreign observers to over-estimate the power of the state, and the degree of acquiescence of the public. In fact, the executive power of the head of state is mediated by the officers in charge of conveying, and of executing his commands. Usually these have agendas of their own and powerbases to be reckoned with. Nigeria’s political class, meanwhile, remains vociferous and outspoken. They are backed up by a volatile populace, whose economic frustrations render them susceptible to violent solutions as illustrated by the outbreak of ethnic or communal conflicts. The southern town of Warri and surrounding villages were torn apart by bloody clashes between Urhobo and Itsekiri groups in May-July 1997. In March 1998 riots between neighbouring communities in Ile-Ife left dozens of casualties behind, including several policemen. These outbreaks illustrate the limitations of state power, and point towards the need for the establishment of ‘legitimate violence’.

One such form has been demonstrated by the Governor of Lagos State, Mohammed Buba Marwa, whose joint police and army patrol, also known as ‘shoot and go’, have dramatically reduced armed robbery in Lagos in 1997. In spite of the fallout from a policy of shooting first and asking questions later, ‘Operation Sweep’ remains popular. The protests and imprecations uttered by Nigerian motorists along the gauntlet of police roadblocks set up for the simple purpose of extortion should not be interpreted as an anarchist critique. The state may at times be experienced as a burden but it is widely expected to carry out its duties. These include maintaining the nation’s health, cracking down on crime and safeguarding the reputation of the country, soiled by Nigeria’s drug traffickers. A young woman who was an occasional cannabis smoker said in support of the NDLEA: ‘The truth is bitter, Bamayi is telling them the truth’. State violence, in other words, though unpleasant, is regarded as a necessary corrective. It is also a great leveller, which can bring down those who have earned riches from shady dealings. Directed against the rich the force of the law is supported by a current of social envy.

This level of public acceptance distinguishes the work of the NDLEA from that of the State Security Service (SSS) and other intelligence and security services with which it shares information. In spite of its depredations, the organisation is still widely perceived as a bona fide drug busting agency. Public awareness campaigns on the danger of drugs – which have little value as preventative measures – television interviews, press conferences are regular reminders of the official role of the agency. Bonfires of cannabis seizures are a spectacular reinforcement of the message that the NDLEA is there to enforce the law on drugs. Yet the relationship between the agency and the law itself is complicated by conflicts over competence and purpose. General Bamayi has repeatedly ignored rulings by the Lagos High Court to bring the agency’s operations into line. When urged by the minister of justice, Chief Mike Agbamuche, to obey a court order and release a number of cars seized by the NDLEA on suspicion of money laundering, Bamayi replied: ‘The NDLEA is in no position to comply with the said order as the court lacks jurisdiction to try drug-related offences’ (Constitutional Rights Report, 1996). On other occasions he swept aside legal injunctions with the claim that he was answerable directly only to the head of state. This dilemma, of enforcing drug control without upholding the law, runs through the entire organisation. Success is measured and bonuses paid for the number of arrests. This is why the war on drugs has had so many ‘grassroots’ casualties, including hundreds of people convicted on several year sentences for smoking cannabis inside a ‘joint’. Some charges are even more trivial. In 1996, Lagos market was sealed off and subjected to a violent search for cannabis containing hair products. These operations, like the roadblocks manned by the NDLEA in every state, press home to the public the power of
the agency, and is a reminder of the puissance of the state. The merciless treatment that awaits drug offenders, who are liable to be physically abused, robbed and raped, before being incarcerated for years has coined the term: 'The fear of Bamayi is the beginning of wisdom.' Drug control, then, can instil in the citizenry a wary respect for the state in a far more subtle way than any secret police.

As a means of social control, the war against drugs provides a perfect alibi for an unpopular government with a narrow constituency to impose the first Machiavellian principle of power – fear. The wide-ranging powers of telephone tapping, access to bank records have already been mentioned. Suspects on drugs charges have no right to police bail, and as the extraordinary conviction rate shows, chances of acquittal by the Miscellaneous Offence Tribunal are slim. It has been argued with reference to the US that: ‘The penal control of a substance is a precondition for penal and political control of its users’ (Grivas, 1997). Thus, opium legislation towards the end of the 19th century was used for control of Chinese immigrants in California, while the fast growing population of Afro-Americans in the cities were controlled through the penalisation of cannabis from 1914, and of crack-cocaine in the 1980s (Mauer, 1990). In Nigeria, NDLEA activities have been concentrated on the southwestern region, coincidentally the part of the country which displayed the greatest support for the winner of the abortive 1993 election, Moshood Abiola. This is now a region of significant political unrest, with an incipient secessionist movement seeking to establish an independent state under the name of Odudwaland.

In addition to extending the control of an unpopular regime over a recalcitrant populace, the war on drugs is also being used to serve Nigeria’s self-proclaimed role as a regional power. Proud of its own record in reducing trafficking flows, Bamayi has been eager to export his policy mix to neighbouring states, preferably with US backing. At the annual press conference in 1996 he said: ‘It is hoped we can work together with the US to address this growing menace of transit within the West African sub-region’ (NDLEA, 1997:46). The formulation of a regional strategy is the set goal of a meeting by the service chiefs of ECOWAS drug control agencies scheduled to take place in Abuja at the end of April 1998. West African politics may add another twist to the regional tale, and Nigeria, already the unlikely defender of democracy in the region, may emerge as champion of drug control.

**Markets, State & Paradigms: the Future**

Nigeria, like other African countries, was sucked into the international drugs economy by the dual process of western drugs demand, and the failures of drug control measures. Syndicates and couriers reacted to market openings in entrepreneurial fashion, and introduced cocaine and heroin at home. In the 1980s, western governments begun to step up the externalisation of their own drug problems by pressurising African countries into taking drug control. The measures that have since been adopted, with much external encouragement, are reminiscent of the hard line war on drugs, which have failed in reversing the flow in drugs trends in western countries at a hefty economic and social cost. Nigeria does not have the same resources at its disposal, hence the costs of the war are often passed on, and have begun to constitute a development impediment. The fallout so far includes the elimination of business centres, and thus the reduction of telecommunication facilities, the curtailment of international air links, especially with other southern countries, and additional bureaucratic hurdles for importers, travellers and financial institutions.
None of these issues are currently being considered in the discussion of drugs and drugs control, which is dominated by western models, and usually revolves around efforts of containing medical harm and violent crime. It has been argued that the medical damage caused by drug consumption are of minor concern in contemporary Nigeria, while the model linking drugs and violent crime is simply inadequate for the Nigerian situation. The discourse on drug control is yet another area wherein African countries need to assert their epistemological independence, as hegemony of western models, definitions and explanations only encourages the application of unsuitable policies.

Drug control has, in any case, become removed from the ostensible purpose of eliminating drug use. In Nigeria it is well funded and receives much government attention as the control of drugs is a subtle and effective way of controlling the population and of asserting the authority of a regime short of popular support. As a way of hardening the state, drug control is perceived as successful by international organisations even when the primary objective is manifestly unattainable. Organisations such as the UNDCP and bilateral aid agencies which provide drug control assistance, regard improving local capacity and institution building as policy aims. This pursuit of secondary objectives has the inbuilt danger of expanding and maintaining programmes long after their original function has been exhausted. For organisations like the DEA and UNDCP, Nigeria combines a great opportunity for institutional self-promotion, with the further evasion of public accountability. Most of all these organisations are the means by which western governments, who have turned drug control into an foreign policy tool, operationalise the pressure they bring to bear on African governments. In this respect too, the issue of drugs is of secondary import.

Nor will enforcement measures prove a likely way of curtailing either trafficking or consumption. Nigerian syndicates will continue to offer their courier services to international criminal organisations as long as this remains economically feasible. The danger comes less from an assault by numerous agencies, than the competition from Eastern Europe. As for cannabis, one of the effects of ‘operation burn the weed’ has been to spread the cultivation of cannabis, which until 1995 was mainly associated with the southwest, across the entire country. In Nigeria, as in other capitalist economies, enforcement measures may extract a high price, but cannot buck the market.

**International Interests**

The NDLEA is not the only organisation to pin hopes on Africa’s drugs industry. The US DEA as well as European police forces are increasing their presence to monitor and assist. For these agencies Africa plays a vital role in explaining years of failure. Africa is also important for the UNDCP, which having traditionally focused on Asia and Latin America, is approaching the continent as *terra incognita*, where large data gathering exercises have to be conducted before conclusions are drawn. In the meantime, it is collaborating closely with organisations such as the NDLEA, providing a valuable international profile for an organisation close to the heart of the beleaguered regime in Aso rock.

More importantly, the drugs issue serves as a leverage for western governments negotiating with Nigeria. The process of decertification is ideally suited for penalising countries currently out of favour. Moreover, this seems to be a policy strategy full of long term promise, as drugs neither in the western nor in the Nigerian markets, seem to be going away.
Conclusion
At the national and international level, governments believe passionately in the need to act against drugs. Control measures are one item on international agenda where agreement is reached with relative ease. Yet the determination to stamp out an evil symbolised by teenage heroin overdose victims and crack impaired foetuses, is tackled in measures which can rarely be squared with the professed desire to protect public health. Interdiction is the primary form of action, leading to arrests, seizures, and violent action, including shootouts. In Nigeria drug education and rehabilitation are poor cousins to law enforcement, and in any case crude, if not ineffective. While heroin and cocaine exports to the US have been re-routed away from Lagos, no drop in local prices has been registered, even though these drugs are not traded as openly as before. While cannabis eradication programmes have taken out some large plantations (up to 47 acres in Akure, Ondo State) cultivation is spreading fast to new areas. The smoking of cannabis, known in Nigeria as Indian hemp, seems as popular as ever, though this is hard to substantiate. The provisional conclusion seems that just as in Europe and the US, tighter controls force the trade underground, but fail to eradicate it.

This does not effect the position of the law enforcement agencies, nor government policies, which have a different end in mind than the protection of public health. Drug control is one of the most publicity friendly ways in which the government can assert its authority, instil fear in the public, and retain the moral high ground. The penalization of certain substances has turned the tables further against the civilian who can at any moment be searched – on suspicion – and be implicated through the simple planting of a widely available substance. Political opponents can be taken to task to explain the origin of their wealth.

In Nigeria drug control was used strategically by a deeply unpopular government to assert itself over its citizenry, without sparking off violent resistance. The transitional regime of General Abubakar declared drug control as one of its policy priorities within the first weeks of taking office. The drugs issue has presented itself as one where the state can act in the interest of the citizens, helping ‘addicts’ and sufferers to help themselves. The organisation that has been given life, the NDLEA, gently aided by the UNDCP, has a definite stake in maintaining the momentum on drug control. It is likely that the combination of strategic national and international interests will maintain the pressure on drug control even after the expected transition to civilian rule in the course of 1999.

Axel Klein, Lecturer in Social Anthropology at the University of Kent.

Endnotes

Bibliography


Douglas, Mary (1987), Constructive Drinking: Perspectives on Drink from Anthropology, Cambridge: CUP.


Mauer, Marc (1990), Young Black Men and the Criminal Justice System: A Growing National Problem, New York: The Lindesmith Centre.


Whetton, Jim (1996), Illicit Drugs in Developing Countries: A Literature Review, Swansea: Centre for Development Studies.

Newswatch 22 January 1996.
The EU & Structural Adjustment: The Case of Lomé IV & Zimbabwe

William Brown

This article will assess European Union (EU) (Endnote 1) structural adjustment support and the relationship of it to the policies of the IMF and World Bank in the case of Zimbabwe. It will argue that contrary to the claims of the EU Commission, aid from the Convention has become dominated by adjustment concerns and that these are closely tied to the priorities of the Bretton Woods institutions.

Introduction

The Fourth Lomé Convention between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, signed in 1989 and renewed in 1995, was significant above all because it involved the EU aid programme in structural adjustment support for the first time. Thus it moved the Lomé Convention, hitherto seen as a relatively unconditional source of aid for African countries, into a much closer relationship with the Bretton Woods institutions. Shortly after Lomé IV was signed, in 1990, Zimbabwe, one of the more developed and diversified of the ACP economies, embarked on an economic reform programme with World Bank and IMF backing. This article investigates the EU support programme for Zimbabwe's adjustment concentrating on the first financial protocol of Lomé IV (1990-1995).

The article will involve three stages: first we will review the introduction of adjustment support into Lomé and the question of its relationship to the Washington institutions. Second, we will review the adoption of a programme of structural adjustment in Zimbabwe and the role of the World Bank and IMF in this. Finally we will look at EU adjustment support and how this has related to World Bank and IMF policies.

Lomé & Adjustment

The Lomé Conventions, first signed in 1975 and renewed every five years, have been held out as an example of a progressive model for relations between north and south. The Conventions have trumpeted claims of equality, partnership and the right of self-determination for developing countries. These principles led some to argue that the Conventions were a step towards a new international economic order in the 1970s. And although by the 1980s few saw the Convention in such a positive light, it nevertheless gave aid on more conditional terms than was the case for most donors in the 1980s. However, by the time of Lomé IV, the debt crisis affecting the ACP countries and the priorities of the EU member states led the Commission to argue that Lomé should also provide aid for structural adjustment.
The EU and the Commission presented this evolution as essential to make development co-operation in Lomé more effective. Inevitably, not least for ACP countries struggling to comply with IMF and World Bank programmes, this move raised the question of the relationship of EU adjustment support to that already being implemented by the multilateral and bilateral donors. Would Lomé simply be subordinated to the wider trend of free market liberalisation, and if so what did this imply for the Convention’s long standing commitments to partnership? Or would the Convention offer a different type of adjustment support? At a time when the whole future of the Lomé Convention is being renegotiated, it is necessary to review the implementation of this aspect of EU development policy. Such a necessity is reinforced by the increasing emphasis that seems likely to be put on market-based economic reform in the new agreement to be concluded by 2000.

In the process of gaining acceptance for and publicising this modification of Lomé, the EU Commission went to some lengths to claim that its support for adjustment would remain independent of IMF and World Bank strictures. The Commission claimed that its adjustment support would learn the lessons of the ‘doctrinaire’ adjustment of the 1980s, would be more flexible, more attuned to the particular needs of the countries undergoing adjustment, would take particular notice of the negative social effects of adjustment and would be based on the priorities of the country concerned rather than on priorities imposed from outside (see, Council of Ministers (Development) 1988; CEC-DG VIII, 1992d; Brown, 1995:chapter 3). Indeed, even after the revision of Lomé IV in 1995, the Commission reaffirmed much of this analysis, criticising the overly-rigid approach to adjustment of the Washington institutions (CEC-DG VIII, 1996). It also argued that this change would not negatively affect the traditional long-term development aid which would still be available under Lomé. A 1988 EU Council of Ministers resolution which set out the EU position claimed that adjustment support would be,

... carried out in a pragmatic and differentiated manner, with due respect for economic policy options and taking account of the peculiarities and constraints of each country.
(Council of Ministers [Development] 1988).

And the Convention itself argues that adjustment should be ‘... economically viable and socially and politically bearable’ (ACP-EEC, 1989: Article 243). The Commission went as far as to claim, ‘The ideological neutrality of Lomé rules out the possibility of the Community living by doctrines, be they neo-liberal or otherwise’ (CEC-DG VIII, 1992d:16).

These commitments, if acted upon, would have important political implications, establishing the EU as a moderating influence upon the dominant neo-liberal policies of the Washington institutions. However, despite this rhetoric, the practice of Lomé IV across all ACP countries has shown that not only has adjustment support increasingly replaced long-term development aid granted under Lomé IV, but that this has been applied in close co-operation with, and subordinated to, the actions of the IMF and World Bank. The first financial protocol of Lomé IV (which ran from 1990-1995) allocated Ecu1.15bn for a separate ‘Structural Adjustment Facility’ (SAF) out of a total aid package worth Ecu12bn and the second financial protocol (from 1995-2000) allocated Ecu1.4bn out of Ecu14.6bn of aid (Endnote 2). This means that 9.6 per cent of the first envelope of Lomé IV aid and 10 per cent of the second financial envelope were allocated directly for adjustment support. However, two qualifications need to be noted. First, as far as the first financial protocol goes, this amount has been augmented by a substantial diversion of aid from National Indicative Programmes
The EU & Structural Adjustment: Lomé IV & Zimbabwe

(NIP – the allocation of aid to each ACP country) to adjustment support. By 1996, with a large proportion of Lomé IV first protocol of aid allocated, around 25 per cent of aid allocation decisions were for funds for structural adjustment purposes, including around 9 per cent of NIP decisions (CEC DGVIII, 1996; Parfitt, 1996:57). With the additional use of Stabex funds (Lomé’s stabilisation of export earnings scheme) for balance of payments support, this represents a significant reorientation of Lomé aid from long term development projects towards short-term adjustment support.

Second, adjustment support has been implemented in close co-operation with the Bretton Woods institutions. Commission officials claimed in interviews that there was no pretence in practice to follow any other path than that laid out by the World Bank and IMF and that Lomé adjustment support represented ‘... de facto support only for World Bank and IMF programmes’ (Interview: Brussels, 15 May 1993).

Given that this is the picture for Lomé IV aid overall (that is, to all ACP states), two key questions therefore need to be asked of the EU adjustment support in Lomé IV to Zimbabwe: first, how far has the politics of adjustment impacted on the ‘traditional’ provision of development aid? and second, how far has this support followed rather than moderated the policy prescriptions of the Bretton Woods institutions? In a review of the implementation of aid from Lomé IV in Zimbabwe we will seek to answer the first of the two questions, namely, how important has support for Zimbabwe’s adjustment programme become in the Lomé IV aid programme? Secondly, we will detail the adjustment support programmes funded under Lomé IV in order to answer the second question of how far EU support followed or moderated the role of the Bretton Woods institutions in Zimbabwe? This will allow us to judge whether the general picture of aid to all ACP states is true also in specific cases, and, from Zimbabwe’s point of view, how far Lomé can still claim to offer development cooperation free from conditionality and in a spirit of equality and partnership. However, first, we need to review the political and economic background to the implementation of Lomé IV in Zimbabwe which will focus on the adoption of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in 1990.

Political & Economic Change in Zimbabwe

Much of the background and history of Zimbabwe’s ESAP has been covered elsewhere and a brief review is all that is required here (in particular see Gibbon, 1996; Stoneman, 1991; Stoneman, 1993). Zimbabwe’s Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), published in February 1991 as *Zimbabwe: a Framework for Economic Reform 1991-1995* (Government of Zimbabwe, 1991), represented a significant political and policy change for the country both internally and in its relations with the major donors. As has been detailed elsewhere, for much of the 1980s Zimbabwe followed an economic policy which was independent of the major donors and in which the government retained considerable controls over capital, particularly in the fields of trade and foreign exchange (Stoneman, 1991). However, due to increasing economic pressures caused by low investment and foreign exchange shortages and increasing pressure from the World Bank the government embarked on lengthy policy review process, announcing its adjustment programme just after the elections in July 1990.

ESAP consisted of four main aims: the liberalisation of trade; the liberalisation of foreign exchange regulations; the deregulation of the economy; and the retrenchment of the state. In some respects, particularly in terms of its timetable and in the provisions for continued protection of Zimbabwean companies, the programme was a cautious move towards liberalisation. The government claimed it was ‘home-

These pledges of finance seemed to indicate donor approval of the pace and content of Zimbabwe’s reform programme. However, Stoneman has outlined how increasing reliance on donor funds, as ESAP began to be implemented, led to the control of the programme being transferred to the World Bank and IMF (Stoneman, 1991). Donors had become reluctant to release the support pledged in March 1991 on the argument that government monetary policy was too wayward, although a desire to have the IMF involved in the programme was also evident (The Herald, 17 July 1991; Africa Economic Digest, 1991). By June the World Bank was pressing for faster implementation of the reforms and by mid-1991 slow disbursement of the donors’ financing was causing serious Balance of Payments problems (EIU, 3/1991). In October 1991 the government was forced to seek Balance of Payments support from the IMF. In November the World Bank, which had not released money pledged in March, now made its US$125m conditional on an IMF loan and the US and UK refused to release funds until the World Bank did (Stoneman, 1991; Zwizwal, 1991; EIU, 1/1992). Following an IMF mission in November 1991, IMF funding was finally agreed in late January 1992, worth US$484m over three years. The extra conditions necessary for this were not made public although they included devaluation, further budget deficit cuts, trade liberalisation and parastatal reform (EIU, 2/1992). The US$700m already pledged in March 1991 now began to be released to Zimbabwe (EIU, 2/1992). This in effect transformed support for a ‘home-grown’ adjustment programme promised in March 1991 into support for an IMF programme in 1992 (EIU, 1/1992; Africa Economic Digest, 1991).

Through 1992-94 the reform programme continued with a third round of Paris talks in December 1992 at which US$1.4bn was pledged for ESAP support (The Chronicle, 2 December 1992) and a fourth in December 1993 (EIU, 1/1994). Throughout this period donors urged an acceleration of the reforms including more rapid liberalisation of imports, liberalisation of foreign exchange regulations and liberalisation of profit remittances by foreign companies in early 1994 (Government of Zimbabwe, 1993; EIU, 1/1994). However, a persistently high government deficit led to the suspension of Zimbabwe’s IMF agreement in June 1995 with disagreement continuing until 1998. The second phase of the reform programme – Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (‘Zimprest’) – was announced in September 1996 promising greater fiscal control, privatisation and deregulation. In June 1998 the IMF agreed a stand-by credit of US$175m to replenish dangerously low foreign reserves following a crisis-ridden six months from November 1997 (IMF, 1998a). The move was surprising given the clear inability of Zimbabwe to address the fiscal imbalance and the somewhat optimistic targets set for the programme (see below). However, by November 1998 US$53 million of this credit was itself being withheld by the IMF after the government escalated its fiscal crisis by sending troops to the war in the Congo and by its reneging on guarantees about its land reform policies (Financial Times, 2 September 1998; The Guardian, 30 November 1998).
How is this reform programme to be assessed? In terms of economic results the reforms have been disappointing. By the government's own targets (set out in the 1991 Framework document), ESAP was seen to be failing, one commentator dismissing the economic targets as 'ESAP's fables' (Moto, 1991). Growth averaged 1.7 per cent per year from 1991-1995 (over the period of IMF support) compared to the ESAP target of 5 per cent per year. Despite a recovery to 7.3 per cent in 1996 growth was down to 3.5 per cent in 1997 with projected further falls in 1998 (World Bank, 1998; IMF, 1998a). Indeed per capita income was estimated to have fallen by 9 per cent over the period 1990-1996 (IMF, 1998b). The budget deficit remained stubbornly high – an estimated 13.4 per cent of GDP in 1995, and still over 10 per cent in 1998 (EIU, 4/1995; Financial Times, 11 December 1997). Inflation was an estimated 18 per cent in 1997 rising to over 30 per cent by the summer of 1998 with interest rates similarly high (World Bank, 1998). Yet this poor economic performance has been on the basis of hugely inflated foreign borrowing. The original ESAP target of a fairly low proportional level of foreign financing for the reforms (US$3.5bn out of US$16bn) and the maintenance of a fairly low debt service ratio of 20 per cent, has in fact seen Zimbabwe turn into one of the most indebted countries in Africa (EIU, 3/1994; Government of Zimbabwe, 1991). Estimates for 1995 show total debt increased to US$5.1bn, or 91 per cent of GDP, with over one quarter of government spending (equal to 10 per cent of GDP) being used for debt repayment (Financial Times, 28 July 1995; EIU, 1/1995). The World Bank projected the figure would rise to over 100 per cent within a decade (cited in, IMF, 1998b). Despite some improved export performance, Zimbabwe is now in a 'debt trap' (EIU, 1/1997).

The IMF's suspension of loans in 1995 was a direct result of the failure to curb the budget deficit despite World Bank misgivings that any reductions would harm social programmes (EIU, 4/1995; 4/1997). However, the IMF did advance stand-by credit in 1998 agreeing to targets of deficit reduction that were optimistic to say the least (5.5 per cent of GDP in 1998 falling to 3.9 per cent in 2000) (IMF, 1998a). Such targets seemed all the more unrealistic with Zimbabwe engaged in the hugely costly adventure of sending troops to fight in the Congolese war and committed to an expensive (but long overdue) land reform programme without donor support (The Times, 14 September 1998).

However, from the point of view of assessing EU adjustment support, a number of other factors are important to note at this stage. First, Zimbabwe developed, at least in the early stages, a 'home-grown' adjustment programme. Although this differed little from standard adjustment packages, it did appear to allow a more gradual introduction of reforms which had the potential at least to be tailored to the country's needs. However, this was soon put more firmly under IMF and World Bank control as we have seen. Second, Zimbabwe experienced a severe drought in 1992 which certainly exacerbated some of the effects of reforms, yet saw little if any modification of the adjustment programme (see, Sachikonye, 1992). Despite extra relief aid being granted by donors, it soon emerged that the key priority of the World Bank and IMF was to ensure that the pace and scale of reforms would not be affected (EIU, 4/1992; Southscan, 1992). Third, the reform programme has resulted in severe social problems in Zimbabwe. From its inception the reform programme required austerity from the masses of the population and severe problems in education and health sectors have arisen (see, Gibbon, 1996 for a survey; also Southern African Economist, 1992:7-10). In the job market ESAP has caused substantial job cuts and a decline in real wages (Sachikonye, 1993). Finally in terms of the country's economy, the reforms have been implemented with little consideration to protect, much less enhance the relatively
diversified manufacturing base. Indeed, the expansion of the Open General Import License (OGIL), which was intended to be phased to allow existing firms to retool to face increased competition, instead resulted in intensified competition when firms were ill-prepared and facing additional problems due to drought, recession and renewed South African competition (EIU, 3/1992; Zwizwal, 1991).

Assessing these and other factors, an IMF-commissioned report has argued that the programme in Zimbabwe suffered from severe design faults (IMF, 1998b). Among the criticisms raised the report argues that the forecasts for growth were wildly optimistic, thus making budget deficit reduction appear more feasible than it was. In addition, the sequencing of reforms was not even addressed in programme appraisal with liberalisation proceeding ahead of budget deficit control, leading to declining growth and insurmountable obstacles to deficit reduction. This resulted in the programme relying on reduction of social expenditures to control the deficit, betraying the complete disregard of the distributive effects of the reforms by the IMF, and scant attention to the political feasibility of the cuts (IMF, 1998b). This stance even resulted in tacit opposition to social spending cuts from the World Bank as the IMF cut off support (EIU, 1/1996).

These points are all important because they all relate to the kind of pronouncements made by the EU Commission about its adjustment support: that it would be sensitive to the particular characteristics of the country, would be flexible, would be attuned to the economic and development priorities of the country concerned and would pay attention to the social effects of adjustment. So how did this new context impact upon Lomé IV and how far did EU aid live up to the claims made at the time of Lomé IV?

**Structural Adjustment & Lomé IV in Zimbabwe**

As highlighted already, there are two key questions to ask of Lomé IV adjustment support: first, how far has adjustment support dominated Lomé’s provision of ‘traditional’ project aid, and second, to what extent has Lomé adjustment support followed or modified the World Bank and IMF-directed reform programme in Zimbabwe? The first of these questions will indicate how far adjustment support is important in terms of the overall impact on the Lomé Convention. The second will show how far EU adjustment support contributes to and reinforces a wider process of liberalisation promoted by the Bretton Woods institutions.

**The Impact of Adjustment on Lomé IV Aid**

The National Indicative Programme (the country-allocation of Lomé aid) for Lomé IV for Zimbabwe was signed on the 29th of November 1990 granting Zimbabwe Ecu88m for aid projects, a nominal increase of around 15 per cent over the Lomé III NIP figure. In many respects the Lomé IV aid profile appeared similar to previous ones. The NIP maintained the central commitment to rural development of the previous two Conventions, earmarking 65 per cent of the NIP aid funds to this sector (CEC-DG VIII – Government of Zimbabwe 1990). It also continued the emphasis on the communal areas (the peasant farming sector) characteristic of Lomé’s II and III and included a number of follow-on projects from Lomé II and III. The Microprojects Programme also received increased importance, reflecting the increased role given to decentralised cooperation in Lomé IV and over two phases is allocated fully Ecu24m – nearly one third of the total NIP. Zimbabwe also received some aid from outside the NIP, qualifying
for Stabex funding (Ecu15m to compensate for coffee and cotton price falls) for the first time (Interview: Harare, 4 February 1994). Zimbabwe also received 80,000 tons of food aid from the EU (raised at a SADC conference in Geneva) to help with the food shortages caused by the devastating drought of 1992 and around Ecu0.5m to help cope with the influx of war refugees from Mozambique (CEC Delegation – Zimbabwe, 1994; McIvor, 1992:46). Furthermore it was envisaged that several regional aid projects would be based in Zimbabwe under the Regional Indicative Programme for the SADCC states signed in January 1992 which allocated Ecu21m for projects (a reduction of Ecu20m on the Lome III figure) (CEC-DG VIII – SADCC, 1992).

However, this continuity masks changes in the direction of aid in Lome IV. This took two linked forms. Firstly and most generally, there is some evidence, both from the data and from interviews, that greater importance was given to ‘income generation’ and employment rather than social policy as a means of improving the position of the poorest sectors of the population under Lome IV (CEC-DG VIII – Government of Zimbabwe, 1990; The Herald, 12 April 1990; Interview: Harare, 4 February 1994). This shift was recognised as being consistent with the then new moves of the government towards structural adjustment and the consequent reductions in the budget deficit as well as Lome IV’s stress on the private sector in development. This was true for example in rural development projects such as the Mashoniland East Fruit and Vegetable Project and in the microprojects programme, which became more focused on income and employment generation (CEC-DG VIII, 1993d; Interviews: Brussels, 26 May 1993; Harare, 10 February 1994, 2 March 1994).

The second and more important change in Lome IV is the introduction of support for structural adjustment. The details of the support programmes are given in the next section. The NIP agreement itself only made provision for possible adjustment support because the government had at the time only just begun formulating its reform programme.

However, this new aspect of Lome was to have significant repercussions on all Lome IV aid in Zimbabwe. Lome IV involved two programmes of support for Zimbabwe’s adjustment programme amounting to a total of Ecu60m. Of this Ecu24m came from the NIP and the rest from the Lome IV SAF. These figures are given in Table 1. This support for structural adjustment, while not a large proportion of Balance of Payments support received by Zimbabwe (pledges at the December 1992 Paris donors’ conference amounted to US$1.4bn for 1993), represents a significant amount of the total aid given to Zimbabwe for national purposes under Lome IV’s first financial protocol (that is, for 1990-1995). Of the NIP a total of Ecu24m (27 per cent) was to be dedicated to structural adjustment purposes.

Total aid for structural adjustment – which combines SAF funds and those allocated as structural adjustment supplement from the NIP (‘c’ and ‘d’ in Table 1) – amounted to Ecu60m which represented 50 per cent of Lome aid given to Zimbabwe 1990-1995. On top of this the ZimTrade support programme (funding for Zimbabwe’s export promotion organisation worth Ecu10.2m) is seen by Commission officials as clearly supporting economic reform in Zimbabwe (Laidler, 1993) and if included, raises the total aid supporting adjustment to Ecu68.2m. This would represent 56.4 per cent of total aid and 38.8 per cent of the NIP dedicated to support of structural adjustment.
Table 1: Zimbabwe: proportion of aid from Lomé IV given to structural adjustment support (in Ecu m) (not including emergency, regional or Stabex aid)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aid</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>% of NIP</th>
<th>% of total aid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) total aid (NIP + SAF)</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) NIP</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) structural adjustment</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Structural Adjustment</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) total structural</td>
<td>60*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adjustment funding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c + d)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Of this Ecu29m has not been released due to the programme being ‘off track’ in 1995 (see below).

As we have seen, structural adjustment funding was introduced into Lomé IV on the understanding that it would not lessen Lomé’s or the Commission’s commitment to long-term development aims. As part of this commitment the funds for structural adjustment were administered separately from normal aid money. However, this is seriously compromised by the evidence from Zimbabwe. Not only, as has been shown above, has almost 50 per cent of aid from Lomé IV been dedicated to structural adjustment but a high percentage of the NIP funds have also been diverted – undermining the claims that the establishment of a separate fund for structural adjustment would safeguard traditional development funds contained in the NIPs. Whereas at the time of the introduction of the SAF it was estimated that only around 10 per cent of NIP funds would be diverted to structural adjustment support, fully 24 per cent of Zimbabwe’s NIP has been directly transferred to the structural adjustment programme. Thus as far as the first protocol of Lomé IV aid goes, not only are adjustment priorities of trade and income generation ‘encroaching’ on rural development projects and even microprojects but long-term development funding is increasingly being diverted to support directly the adjustment process.

This picture is somewhat modified by the second financial protocol of Lomé IV. Because of the suspension of the adjustment programme, no aid has been allocated to this process. This means that the Ecu110m NIP signed in November 1996 does focus on ‘traditional’ aid sectors – for example the Ecu25m for Agricultural and Services Management project – as well as the ‘income-generating’ projects mentioned already including further trade development and tourism schemes (CEC DG VIII, 1997). While on the face of it this would seem to support the view that Lomé aid is protected from becoming fully subordinated to adjustment criteria, two things should be noted. First, only 70 per cent of the second financial protocol of aid is allocated at the start of the aid process, the remainder is dependent on the ‘successful’ implementation of the first ‘tranche’. The criteria for what is deemed ‘successful’ are not clear and were the subject of some dispute when introduced in the revision of Lomé IV in 1995 but include a ‘broad assessment’ of a country’s development policy (see, Brown, 1995; CEC DG VIII, 1996). Second, there is considerable doubt that EU aid will be allocated in this fashion in any ‘post-Lomé’ agreement – a point we will return to at the end.
The EU & Structural Adjustment: Lomé IV & Zimbabwe

The Lomé IV Structural Adjustment Support Programme

The second question relating to Lomé adjustment support which we need to deal with is that of the relationship between Lomé adjustment support and the role of the Bretton Woods institutions. As we have seen, the Commission's stated policy on adjustment was that structural adjustment support in Lomé IV should be a more pragmatic and flexible policy than the 'orthodoxy' of the other major donors and one which would take on board the criticisms of previous SAPs. As such it would take more account of different countries' differing adjustment needs rather than applying a uniform prescription to all; it would demonstrate a greater concern for long-term development issues in line with Lomé's principles; and it would ensure a greater consideration for dealing with the negative social effects of adjustment. Furthermore, the Commission stressed the benefits of adjustment being 'internalised' with a greater emphasis on countries developing their own adjustment programmes rather than having them imposed from outside.

The above outline of Zimbabwe's economic reform has shown how, with IMF involvement it adhered in all important respects to the 'orthodoxy' of adjustment programmes. While this is implicitly contradictory to the EU's aims for adjustment lending laid out above, it is arguable that such a 'differentiated' and pragmatic EU approach could have had some benefit for Zimbabwe. One example might be the question of liberalisation of trade. Zimbabwe's diversified exports and significant manufacturing sector could have demanded an adjustment programme which ensured their survival was not imperilled by sweeping import liberalisation. Zimbabwe also adopted a programme that, at least in its early stages, was intended to differ somewhat from the traditional SAPs. With this position bolstered by the government's claim to have a 'home-grown' adjustment policy it could be suggested that the country was a good candidate for an EU policy which promoted 'internalised' reforms. Finally, given the government's (at least rhetorical) commitment to social equity and the needs of the poor in Zimbabwe, it might have been expected that there would be a greater awareness of the need to counter the negative impact of adjustment on the poor. In order to assess how this kind of 'differentiated approach' was pursued in the EU's Structural Adjustment Support Programme (SASP) to Zimbabwe we will first look at the programme as it was implemented before measuring it against the EU's stated aims for adjustment support. This evaluation will also demonstrate how far the stated policy in Lomé has been determined by the wider political relationships and strategies involving the World Bank and the IMF.

Even before Zimbabwe's adjustment programme had been announced the EU had indicated that it would support liberalisation through import programmes once the details were known (The Herald, 12 April 1990). With the agreement of the major donors to fund Zimbabwe's ESAP in the spring of 1991, Zimbabwe qualified for support from the Lomé Structural Adjustment Facility (SAF) under Article 246 of Lomé IV which states that:

ACP States undertaking reform programmes that are acknowledged and supported at least by the principal multilateral donors ... shall be treated as having automatically satisfied the requirements for adjustment assistance (ACP-EEC, 1989: Article 246).

Even immediately prior to and after the first Paris donors' conference in March 1991, Commissioner for Development Manuel Marin, in talks with Mugabe and other ministers, confirmed that funds to support the structural adjustment programme would now be available from the EU (Financial Gazette, 8 March 1991; EIU, 2/1991; Bulletin of the EC, 3-1991 1.3.39-40).
It is presumed, given this early vote of support from the EU, that indications as to the amount available from Lomé formed part of the US$700m pledged at this first donors' conference. Remarkably, however, it was not until September 1992 that a financing proposal was presented to the European Development Fund Committee (EDF – the committee which decides on allocations of Lomé aid) for a total of Ecu19m of support (CEC-DG VIII, 1992). This was to be made up of Ecu9m from the NIP and Ecu10m from the Structural Adjustment Facility (SAF). Even then, it was revealed in interviews, representatives of some member states insisted on delaying a decision until a further vote of confidence had been given to Zimbabwe by the IMF and World Bank at the third donors' conference in December 1992 (EIU, 1/1993; Interview: Brussels, 15 May 1993). As a result the Commission did not agree the support programme until December 1992 (Interview: Brussels, 25 May 1993) with the implementation agreement and an additional protocol not signed until 14 of January 1993, and the financial agreement finally signed by Manuel Marin and finance minister Bernard Chidzero on 27 of January (CEC Delegation – Zimbabwe, 1992; CEC-DG VIII, 1993b; 1993c). The first part of this money was disbursed in early 1993 despite the indication of EU support in mid-1991 and full Zimbabwe eligibility for support (when it gained IMF approval) in the autumn of that year – a delay of at least 15 months. However, following support from the third donors’ conference the EDF committee did raise the allocation from the SAF to Ecu9m to add to the Ecu9m from the NIP (CEC-DG VIII, 1993a).

The EU finance was to be disbursed in the form of a General Import Programme (GIP) aimed at balance of payments support specifically in support of the liberalisation programme through the expansion of the Open General Import License (OGIL) and Export Retention Scheme (ERS). However, broader support for the full adjustment package was evident, the financing proposal stating:

... a highly regulated economy will have to move to one where market forces are allowed to play a more decisive role ... (CEC-DG VIII, 1993a:4),

and that the support would, '... as far as possible be aligned to that of other donors' (CEC-DG VIII, 1993a). Furthermore, the EU support was conditional upon Zimbabwe maintaining continued adjustment with the support of international donors. A secondary aim of the programme was for the Counterpart Funds (CPF) (the local currency equivalent of the foreign exchange provided by the EU) to be used in support of the 'social dimensions of adjustment' (SDA) programme of the government which aimed to mitigate some of the worst social effects of the reform programme. This was in line with the stated Commission philosophy of addressing the social side of adjustment and with Article 244 of Lomé IV which committed structural adjustment support to, '... deal with the negative social effects that may result from the process of adjustment efforts ...' (ACP-EEC, 1989: Article 244 (f)).

The support was divided into two tranches – the first of Ecu13.5m to be released in early 1993 and the second, of Ecu14m to be released in early 1994 (CEC-DG VIII, 1993a). The balance of Ecu500,000 was used for technical assistance to plan the use of CPFs generated by the programme. The two tranches had certain conditions attached. For the first tranche this included Zimbabwe putting more than 20 per cent of imports on the OGIL list; opening accounts to administer the aid and the CPFs, and signing an implementation agreement and a protocol on CPF use (CEC-DG VIII 1993a:3). For the release of the second tranche Zimbabwe had to have met ESAP targets for OGIL expansion by the end of 1993; have ‘justified’ 90 per cent of the first tranche (that is, proved the use of foreign exchange provided by the programme in line with its rules);
consulted the Commission on the review of public expenditure and the draft budget for 1993/94; included provisions for the use of CPFs in the budget and have disbursed 50 per cent of CPFs from the first tranche (CEC-DG VIII, 1993a). More broadly Zimbabwe had to show it had maintained its structural adjustment programme and the support of the international donors, demonstrated continuing liberalisation of trade and implemented the social dimensions of adjustment programme (CEC-DG VIII, 1993a).

The use of CPFs was tightly controlled, the EU insisting on a separate protocol covering their use with sub-sectoral allocation or 'earmarking' of the funds. The CPFs were to be transferred immediately by the government upon the release of the SASP funds to a separate account in Zimbabwe which was to be controlled by a 'joint signature' of the Zimbabwean National Authorising Officer (NAO – responsible for administering Lomé aid in a recipient country) and the Commission’s Head of Delegation in Harare (CEC-DG VIII, 1993b). The funds were targeted specifically at the primary education and health sectors, were not to be used for recurrent expenditure, would not require imports and would be aimed at the poorest sections of the population. The programmes to be funded included providing basic materials for primary schools, school sanitation programmes, improved health facilities in drought affected areas and technical assistance. The costs of the projects varied from Z$1m to Z$20m and were to be administered under both first and second tranches, the second tranche CPFs to be completed by the end of the 1994/5 budget year. To monitor the use of the funds the EU insisted that the NAO would provide the Commission with information on the preparation of the country’s budget, ‘...with the specific purpose of ensuring the correct use of the Counterpart Funds ...’ (CEC-DG VIII, 1993b).

The structural adjustment funding provided by the EU was disbursed from February 1993 and by February 1994, 90 per cent of the foreign exchange from the fund had been spent. The EU funding was 'justified' (that is, accounted for) mainly through the import of chemicals from Germany (Interview: Harare, 21 February 1994). The disbursement of the CPFs was somewhat slower with the target for the release of the second tranche – of 50 per cent disbursement of CPF funds – not reached until in the second quarter of 1994. However, while this left the second outstanding tranche of adjustment support of Ecu14m still to be disbursed, Zimbabwe applied for further structural adjustment support from Lomé in early 1994. The Commission decided to grant further support and roll the first programme into the second with the outstanding Ecu14m effectively becoming the first tranche of a second programme.

The second programme consisted of the Ecu14m left over from the first programme, an additional Ecu17m from the Lomé SAF and Ecu15m more from the NIP (Interview: Harare, 25 February 1994; 4 February 1994; CEC DG VIII, 1996). This brought the total Lomé funding for structural adjustment support in Zimbabwe to Ecu60m of which Ecu24m came from NIP funds and Ecu36m from the SAF. With the suspension of IMF support in June 1995, however, the EU and other donors also suspended support. This left Ecu29m of this programme not dispersed. At the time of writing (1998), the EU support has not been reinstated as dispute with the IMF continues. These figures are contained in Table 2.
Table 2: Zimbabwe: Lomé Funding for Structural Adjustment Support (in Ecu m)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Source Total</th>
<th></th>
<th>SAF</th>
<th>Date Financial Decision</th>
<th>Disbursed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NIP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Programme</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of which:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st tranche</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Dec '92</td>
<td>Feb '93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd tranche</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dec '92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Second Programme</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>spring '94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) Not including the Ecu14m second tranche of the first programme which effectively forms the first tranche of the second programme; b) Ecu29m of which remains not dispersed


Assessment of EU adjustment Support

There are several points which need to be made to assess the EU’s structural adjustment support to Zimbabwe. First, it is clear that overall EU support was far from rapid, although once the decision had been made to support Zimbabwe’s reform in December 1992 this led to a quick disbursal of the first tranche of aid three months later in February 1993. However, it took almost two years between the EU pledging to support ESAP in March 1991 along with other donors, and actually disbursing the first funds to do this.

The lack of funding – in particular between March and September 1991 when only the Swiss, Swedish, Japanese and part of the Africa Development Bank’s pledges actually began to be disbursed – was a crucial stage in the evolution of ESAP as we have seen with a substantial shift taking place in government policy to secure the promised funds. It has been argued by some that this delay enabled donors to press Zimbabwe into an agreement with the IMF (Stoneman, 1991). If this was also true of the EU then this would have been a very serious departure from Lomé aid and structural adjustment principles. The slow preparation and decision making procedure of Lomé aid may have had a role and there is no hard evidence that a deliberate delay was engineered. However, there is evidence that some member states were keen to ensure at all stages that IMF approval was forthcoming. It was revealed in an interview that the proposal which was put to the EDF committee in September 1992 was delayed at the insistence of some member states pending IMF approval of the reform programme in the December Paris donors’ conference of that year (Interview: Brussels, 15 May 1993). If this condition has been applied to EU adjustment support as a whole then it means that the support of ‘principle multilateral donors’ (which under the terms of the Convention guarantees access to Lomé adjustment support) is interpreted very strictly to mean the IMF must be involved. This would make a mockery of any notion that EU support could be applied with any meaningful independence from the Bretton Woods institutions.

In addition, a later delay in funding occurred between the first and second tranche of EU support. The second tranche was delayed by at least three months due to the slow disbursal of the CPF funds generated by the programme. One of the conditions of release of the second tranche was that 50 per cent of CPFs would be used up. This was not achieved partly due to a slow budgetary process in the government, but also
because of the very strict criteria that the EU had insisted upon in the use of CPFs. This issue led to a certain amount of tension between the EU and Zimbabwe in the planning of the programme with Zimbabwe critical of having to give the EU a say in domestic social sector policies, and with the World Bank who viewed the conditions of use of CPFs unnecessarily restrictive (Interviews: Brussels, 15 May 1993, 25 May 1993; Harare, 17 February 1994). The Commission relaxed this policy for the subsequent CPFs from the second tranche Commission officials claiming at the time that the government was now 'much more open' and prepared to discuss its budget and social policies thus making such stringent conditions less necessary (Interviews: Harare, 25 February 1994, 4 February 1994, 21 February 1994). In any case it appears that a fairly rigid and slow response has been in evidence overall in EU adjustment support and one which in no way backs up the Commission's claim to be independent and flexible in its approach to structural adjustment.

A second issue which needs to be addressed is that of the EU’s claim to provide structural adjustment support which takes account of different countries’ differing needs and priorities. With regard to Zimbabwe there is very little evidence of any such approach. When the ESAP programme was first announced in October 1990 it received verbal donor support with very little extra conditionality at that stage. As such it could just about claim to be a ‘home-grown’ programme as the government maintained. Its deviation from a standard adjustment package was small but certain differences in timing and emphasis were made apparent when the IMF eventually demanded more stringent conditions and other donors refused to release funds in late 1991. One of these areas was that of trade liberalisation and tariff protection. In the early stages of reform some import protection was deemed necessary for domestic industry. However, as the World Bank and IMF increasingly dictated the pace of reform, the scope of liberalisation, the level of such protection and even its need was questioned. Yet it was precisely liberalisation – and the integration into the world market that this represents (whatever its consequences for domestic industry) – that was stipulated as the key purpose and condition for EU structural adjustment support. Indeed it was keeping to ESAP targets on liberalisation through the OGIL system, even though their implementation was damaging, that was one of the conditions for the release of the second tranche. In addition it appears that EU support also failed to take account of the country’s situation in terms of the effect of the drought. There is no evidence of relaxed conditions or quicker disbursal of funds to meet urgent needs in the wake of the drought, and as with other donors there was a concern to see that reforms remained ‘on track’ (CEC Delegation – Zimbabwe 1992).

It is clear that Lome structural adjustment funding did not follow the Commission’s own stated policy aims. Indeed it appears that the EU support was not only virtually indistinguishable from that dictated by the Bretton Woods institutions but was in fact implemented with open recognition of World Bank and IMF leadership. Despite Commission claims that its adjustment support would be more subtle, more attuned to a country’s needs and less dictated by doctrine and theory than that of the Bretton Woods institutions, its support in Zimbabwe followed on the heels of, rather than added a new dimension to, a World Bank and IMF driven programme. This is in sharp contrast to the ‘spirit’ of Lome adjustment support as proclaimed by the Head of the EU Delegation in Harare, Michael Laidler, when he said EU support aimed, ‘... neither to open parallel avenues to those of the IBRD [the World Bank] and the IMF nor to subject its actions to decisions taken by them alone’ (Laidler, 1993:10-11, emphasis added). Indeed, indicating a more nuanced approach to adjustment, he claimed the touchstone of EU policy was to make adjustment, ‘... not only economically viable but politically and socially bearable’ (Laidler, 1993:12, emphasis original).
In fact, contrary to these claims and the Commission’s public statements on adjustment which we have reviewed above, EU support has been implemented subject to the decisions of the Bretton Woods institutions. Not only was there was no Lomé funding for the ‘home-grown’ policy forthcoming in 1991 when other donors were holding back funds in anticipation of IMF involvement and control, but the Commission’s criticisms of ESAP and its perspectives on the future direction of reform in Zimbabwe are not noticeably different from those of the World Bank (Interviews: Harare, 25 February 1994, 4 February 1994). In addition EU officials interviewed claimed that while the Commission was happy to go along with changes to the liberalisation system because it wanted to let the government decide its own policy, this was conditional on the World Bank and IMF agreeing to any changes (Interviews: Harare, 25 February 1994, 4 February 1994). The implementation agreement itself made provision for as close co-operation as possible with the IMF and World Bank and Commission officials interviewed made it plain that a very close relationship existed in the day to day as well as more long-term administration of the programme (Interviews: Harare, 25 February 1994, 4 February 1994, 21 February 1994). However, it was admitted that this ‘close co-operation’ in practice meant that the EU approach to adjustment was almost entirely subordinated to the dictates of the Bretton Woods institutions (Interviews: Harare, 25 February 1994, 4 February 1994, 21 February 1994). This was contrary to earlier EU statements on Lomé adjustment support which claimed the Commission would be able to suggest modifications to the World Bank/IMF reforms or ‘mediate’ between the these institutions and an ACP government.

Such subordination was graphically illustrated by the suspension of donor support for the whole reform programme, including EU support, in the summer of 1995. This was despite some apparent misgivings on the part of the Commission, one publication citing the Zimbabwe case as showing too much rigidity on the part of donors (CEC DGVIII, 1996). But the Commission has so far failed to chart an independent path, or provide and real alternative to, or modification of, the approach of the Bretton Woods institutions. While subscribing in all important respects to the direction of adjustment reforms in its development policies and importantly in its proposals for a new Lomé agreement, it has yet to show any means of changing the basic features of conditionality:

Some of this is not surprising. The level of funding from Lomé is simply not large enough to significantly modify the reforms which were being dictated by the Washington institutions, even if the Commission was serious about doing this. In Zimbabwe total Lomé structural adjustment support of Ecu60m compared to a single year’s World Bank support of an estimated US$200m (Interview: Harare, 17 February 1994). The EU therefore could not easily compete with the Bretton Woods institutions for influence over the reform programme. Indeed, the lack of financial weight of Lomé support more generally was highlighted by commentators during the Lomé IV negotiations as a stumbling block for an ‘independent’ Commission line on adjustment and illustrates the wider failure to seriously pursue an alternative approach to adjustment (Stevens and Killick, 1989). However, Commission officials interviewed in Brussels and Harare did not maintain any pretence about even attempting to pursue an ‘independent’ policy, claiming Lomé support formed only one part of the wider, World Bank/IMF-led donor strategy (Interviews: Brussels, 15 May 1993, 25 May 1993; Harare, 25 February 1994, 4 February 1994, 21 February 1994). They were supported in this view by a World Bank official interviewed who spoke rather contemptuously of ‘bells and whistles’ being added to EU policies but making
little practical difference (Interview: Harare, 17 February 1994). Indeed, this official indicated that he could not see what role or purpose such an ‘independent’ policy might serve (Interview: Harare, 17 February 1994). Some EU member states supported this analysis, a British aid official claiming that the British government agreed to the Commission’s rhetoric on adjustment as long as it made no practical difference to World Bank and IMF reforms (Interview: Brussels, 27 May 1993).

This cohesion between the EU and the Bretton Woods institutions, and indeed between donors more generally, serves only to increase the ability of the Bretton Woods institutions to dictate the direction of Zimbabwe’s economic policy and to determine the future political economy of the country. Given Zimbabwe’s increasing reliance on external funding since the beginning of ESAP, and the likelihood that this will continue due to greatly increased indebtedness, it becomes vital for the country’s ability to bargain with donors over policies that donors who express a commitment to a more ‘sympathetic’ approach to adjustment conditionality live up to their policy statements. Unfortunately for Zimbabwe the EU has not done this. Indeed, the Commission appears to support much of the ideological and political thrust of World Bank and IMF reforms. Thus while raising doubts about the suspension of support to Zimbabwe it has shown little ability or inclination to chart alternatives. Given the serious criticisms of the design of the IMF programme noted earlier, such subordination is particularly damaging.

**Conclusion: Future Prospects**

The introduction of support for structural adjustment into Lomé represented a significant move away from the basic principles of the Lomé Convention of non-conditionality of aid, of equality and partnership. Contrary to Commission assurances at the time of this innovation, Lomé adjustment support had failed to offer anything different from the conditionality imposed by the World Bank and IMF. It is clear that the EU has failed to offer any prospect of an alternative to, or moderation of, the dominant neo-liberal priorities of the World Bank and IMF. The experience of Lomé IV leaves the clear impression that the Commission’s rhetoric on adjustment was designed more to assuage ACP sensibilities and to give the appearance of living up to Lomé principles. So what are the future prospects?

Unfortunately for Zimbabwe and other African countries labouring under Bretton Woods programmes, the prospects are not bright. Rather than try to live up to Lomé rhetoric, the EU appears to be questioning even the very basis of its partnership with the ACP countries. The mid-term review of Lomé IV in 1995 re-affirmed the emphasis on adjustment-oriented development and indicated that future aid allocations would be increasingly dictated by a countries’ willingness to implement market reforms (see Brown, 1995; Parfitt, 1996). And discussions over the future of relations with the ACP countries now taking place indicate that any successor to the Lomé Convention in 2000 is likely to have more rather than less emphasis on compatibility with the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organisation. Such moves will further erode the availability of ‘traditional’ project aid, which we have seen was still of use to Zimbabwe under the second phase of Lomé IV. Indeed the Commission has long intimated that it wishes to see a fundamental change in the structures through which it provides aid to the developing countries. Its existing position of a rhetorical but ineffective commitment to a modified approach to adjustment coupled with the de facto leadership of the Bretton Woods institutions mean that unless there is a rethinking of EU development priorities there is little prospect of Lomé’s principles of
partnership and equality surviving the neo-liberal tide. Indeed, unless the Commission can show that its development policies add anything of value to the existing multilateral and bilateral channels for aid, the very future of an EU, as opposed to member states', aid programme, may be in question.

William Brown, School of Social & Historical Studies, University of Portsmouth, UK.

Endnotes
1. ‘European Union’ or ‘EU’ will be used for the sake of consistency although for some of the period under review the term ‘European Community’ (EC) would be more accurate.

2. Unlike Previous Conventions Lomé IV runs for 10 years (1990-2000) with the aid packages divided into two five year ‘protocols’. At the time of writing much of the first protocol had been completed while the second was still in early stages of implementation.

Bibliography


Other references

Interviews: (Referenced by place and date)

- Brussels: April and May 1993: with officials of the Commission of the European Community and other officials.

Also consulted:

- Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU): Zimbabwe Quarterly Country Reports referenced by quarter and year. For instance, 4/94 for fourth quarter 1994 etc.


Newspapers: (Referenced by name and date)

- The Herald: Harare, Zimbabwe
- The Financial Gazette: Harare, Zimbabwe
- The Chronicle: Bulawayo, Zimbabwe
- The Times: London
- The Financial Times: London
- The Guardian: London

Magazines: referenced in text by magazine name, date and included in bibliography (above). Authored articles by author’s name, date and in bibliography.
Kenya’s general election of December 1997 saw the return of President Daniel Arap Moi and the Kenya African National Union (KANU) but has inaugurated a period of intense political fluidity. On the one hand, the ruling party won the election, but its sense of vulnerability has been reinforced by widespread recognition that a less divided opposition could have displaced it. On the other, apparent acceptance by the President of a 1992 constitutional amendment which dictates that his re-election would signal his last term of office has precipitated a struggle around the succession. In turn, the uncertainty has been compounded by the fact that, prior to the election, the government was forced to concede a political reform package which not only partially corrected the imbalance in the electoral rules which systematically favoured the ruling party, but which also conceded that these changes would lead on to an open-ended review of the constitution starting in the new year (Southall, 1998). The immediate outcome has been dramatic, for whilst Moi has been casting around to shore up the increasingly shaky foundations of his regime, rivals for the presidency have begun to jockey for position and the opposition parties to re-assess their options and relations to both KANU and each other. Additionally, the political class as a whole has been shaken by a series of financial scandals which threatens its control over an increasingly troubled economy. In short, whilst the new fluidity suggests some opportunity for a genuine democratic opening, the situation is also fraught with the danger of a simultaneous collapse of the state and of the ramshackle foundations which sustain it. Yet even if Kenya does pull off a ‘successful’ transition, it does not follow that this will matched by the arrival of a new government able and willing to confront the political roots of the economy’s stagnation.

Kleptocracy & Stagnation in Moi’s Kenya

Ajulu (1998:278-80) has argued that the roots of Kenya’s political crisis lie in the character of the post-colonial state, particularly its forms of accumulation over the last thirty years or so, and the character of the class forces which have traditionally controlled it.

Because the government became the driver of the accumulation process and the most important dispenser of patronage and resources, control over the state became the central preoccupation of politics. Meanwhile, because the (spatial and social) uneven development fostered under imperialism magnified ethnic inequalities, ethnic
competition has became the most important mode of political contestation, regulated as under colonialism by authoritarian means. This was to provide the framework for the battles between KANU and the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) in the lead up to independence in 1963, the absorption of the latter into the former in 1964, the suppression of Oginga Odinga's Luo-based Kenya People's Union in 1969 in favour of one-partyism, as well as for the eventual capture of the ruling party from within by the Kalenjin ex-KADU elements under Moi (who succeeded to the presidency in 1978). However, whereas Kenyatta's ruling clique was drawn from the most prominent pre-colonial and colonial primitive accumulators, the Moi coalition was relatively impoverished, and therefore - in the absence of fresh areas of accumulation - was compelled to 'loot' the old accumulators, this requiring an intensification of the kleptocracy and authoritarianism whose patterns had been well established under the previous regime. Come a reluctant return to formally democratic multi-party politics in 1992, it was therefore inevitable that opposition versus government competition would be fought in ethnic terms, between the outgroups (notably the Kikuyu and Luo) and the incumbent Kalenjin. But precisely because Moi's base is founded upon a linkage of minority groups, KANU's electoral victories in both 1992 and 1992 were secured not only by undemocratic means (notably by the gerrymandering of the first-past-the post-electoral system), but also by Moi's astute exploitation of fissures amongst his opponents.

Ajulu's interpretation needs to be supplemented by that of Himbara (1994). He, too, argues that Kalenjin consolidation under Moi was achieved at the expense of the Kikuyu, but he also roots the present crisis in Kenya in the inadequacies of the post-colonial state and the African business class it has attempted to foster. Industrial development during the latter colonial period was 'spectacular', and after independence, Kenya avoided the precipitous economic decline experienced by most other African countries because, unlike in Uganda and Tanzania, the Kenyan national leadership recognised the historical role played by a technically skilled Indian bourgeoisie (even though they did not hesitate to scapegoat them when it was politically convenient to do so). Of course, the attempt under Kenyatta to Africanise both the public and the private sectors worked out as 'Kikuyuisation', a practice which alienated other ethnic and racial groups. But in addition, it also stunted growth, for whilst the new breed of African managers and capitalists lacked the requisite skills to run advanced manufacturing industry, forced Africanisation precipitated a steady departure of multinational capital from that sector, which is now increasingly dominated by an Indian bourgeoisie which although formally Kenyan, is politically insecure and is still regarded as essentially foreign. As a result, the present Kenyan state is a 'heap of contradictions' (Ibid:161): a coherent national political elite scarcely exists either in government or opposition, and the economy has declined to the extent that it is now increasingly subject to the demands of the international financial institutions (IFIs), notably the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In this context, the influence of these institutions is making a direct impact upon the re-shaping of Kenyan politics.

Moi's Dilemma: Economic Reform & the Political Succession

Under pressure from the IMF, Kenya had been implementing a structural adjustment programme since the early 1990s, the aim being to improve the 'investment climate' via the usual mix of decontrol of prices, removal of import licensing and exchange controls, liberalisation of the domestic commercial and labour markets, privatisation of parastatals, and not least, reduction of government deficits by cuts in expenditure.
Improved growth (from 0.2% in 1993 to 4.6% in 1996) earned kudos from the IFIs, yet – as indicated – the IMF and WB had remained unimpressed by the level of the government’s commitment to reform, notably with regard to its reluctance to tackle high-level corruption. As a result, the 1997 election had been run against the background of international creditor disapproval.

This had culminated in the decision by the IMF to halt an Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) loan of $215 million in late July, this followed two months later by the European Union opting to withhold an aid package. Both decisions were probably partially intended to prompt Moi into making political concessions to the opposition (then riding on the back of popularly based demands for constitutional reform), but more particularly they registered impatience at Moi’s failure to confront graft. The result was that the country’s economic problems were immediately deepened. During the period immediately after the ESAF lapsed, external investors repatriated about $250 million forcing a 20% depreciation in the shilling and a hike in the official interest rate from 18% to 27%. The seriousness of the situation was also compounded by the government’s pre-election concession of substantial pay awards to police, civil servants and teachers, as well as by the unexpected costs of food relief operations consequent upon both widespread drought and flooding. Meanwhile, pre-election violence (notably at Likoni on the coast) devastated the package tourist industry, already negatively affected by the longstanding deterioration in basic infrastructure (notably the road system). Manufacturing output grew by only 1.9% (3.7% the previous year) and formal job creation growth decreased from 4.15 to 1.8%. Meanwhile, the informal sector was reckoned to have performed equally badly, with the proportion of the population living below the official poverty line having increased from 44% in 1989 to 50% in 1997. All in all, although Kenya benefited from somewhat better prices for its traditional exports, the election was conducted against a background of declining growth, recording a slow down to 2.3% against a projected 5.0%. More particularly, its difficulties forced the government into massively increased domestic borrowing, as its total expenditure as a percentage of GDP increased from 33.3% in 1996/97 to 45.4% in 1997/98, during which year it was spending fully 40% of its current revenue in servicing its debts (Republic of Kenya, 1998a; 1998b).

Moi secured victory in the presidential election with (just) 40% of the popular vote, and KANU clung on to a narrow overall majority in parliament (winning 107 out of the 210 elective seats). Election monitors recorded numerous flaws in the electoral process, yet nonetheless opined that the results reflected the wishes of the Kenyan people: ‘a clear outcome had been peacefully arrived at. A government was voted in, even if more Kenyans voted against it than for it’ (Report on the 1997 General Elections in Kenya). But this was now a government which was now facing a post-electoral economic crisis, requiring an urgent rapprochement with the IMF if the economy was not going to plunge further into an abyss.

Moi responded by the appointment of Simeon Nyachae as Minister of Finance, a move which reflected a significant shift in the balance of power within KANU and within the cabinet. Nyachae was generally viewed as leader of the so-called KANU A faction within the party, but his political star had been on the wane since his demotion from the high-profile Agriculture portfolio to the Ministry of Land Reclamation, Regional and Water Development the previous January. Worse, his principal supporters within the party had been defeated in the party primaries which preceded the election, apparently leaving him with little room for manoeuvre, whilst his enemies in the KANU B faction (led by then Vice-President George Saitoti, Education
Minister Joseph Kamotho, and the powerful Nicholas Biwott) worked to convince the President that Nyachae should bear the primary responsibility for the divisions which afflicted the ruling party. Furthermore, they depicted Nyachae as virulently anti-Kikuyu whereas they themselves (or some of them) were campaigning to broaden KANU’s support and dish the opposition DP and Ford-K by driving a KANU wedge into their ethnic Kikuyu power base. But their credibility fell apart when KANU candidates failed miserably at the polls throughout Kikuyuland.

Yet more significant after the election was that whereas KANU B was identified as opposing IMF pressures for opening the economy (which was highly threatening to the beneficiaries of the present spoils system), KANU A was seen as more sympathetic to both political and economic deregulation (although as Agriculture Minister Nyachae had run up against powerful sugar importing interests which were flooding the local market at the expense of small farmers and the local sugar industry). It was apparently because he combined a predisposition to structural reform with the courage to take on vested interests (as well as having risen to the Cabinet via senior posts in the civil service and the Central Bank) that he now earned Moi’s approbation as just the man to repair his government’s links with the IMF.

Nyachae did not disappoint. Warning that the Kenyan economy was on the verge of being controlled by a Mafia-like cartel, he promised war on corruption as, in early February 1998, an IMF team flew in to Nairobi on a supposedly routine monitoring visit. Yet tough talk was not yet enough to heal the breach, the IMF mission declaring that Kenya was still a long way from fulfilling the conditions that would lead to the resumption of loans: insufficient progress on curbing corruption was matched *inter alia* by slow progress in prosecuting those responsible for the Goldenberg financial scam (involving a $200 million rip-off from public coffers in a suspect gold export compensation scheme), and a failure to strengthen the Kenya Revenue Authority. However, that Nyachae’s appointment heralded increasing IMF influence was indicated by the return to key positions in the Treasury of a number of individuals regarded by that body as its allies, but who had been previously ousted following pressure upon Moi by the anti-reform lobby. But more particularly, Nyachae committed the government to a major austerity programme, this involving certain new taxes and, most notably, the imposition of cuts in government expenditure. Given that approaching 70% of the recurrent budget went on salaries of civil servants and teachers, and given that the wage bill following the pre-election adjustment in teachers’ salaries was scheduled to go up, this immediately raised the issue of whether the Finance Minister would receive the necessary political support to follow through on the structural adjustment programme, or whether he would almost immediately fall victim to the machinations of his opponents.

Nyachae responded by declaring in April that the government was ‘broke’. Addressing a multi-party seminar in Mombasa on economic governance, he insisted that the level of public expenditure was totally unsustainable, and that to reduce domestic debt payments the government should aim for a 3% budget surplus over the next three years as well as engaging in a major rationalisation of the civil service and spending programmes with a view to reaching an early agreement with the IMF. Nyachae’s declaration met with Moi’s explicit disapproval. However, he could not move against his Finance Minister without offending the IMF and sparking another run on the currency.

The growing weight of the reformists was subsequently confirmed by Nyachae’s presentation in June of a budget which was the first in some years to propose limiting
expenditure to revenue by introducing various new taxes and by cutting the public wage bill. This latter element included a commitment to slash the number of civil servants by 59,000 over the next three years and 'rationalise' benefits such as housing allowances and use of official vehicles, but most particularly Nyachae insisted that the government's pre-election agreement with the teachers would have to be renegotiated, and that the number of teachers would have to be reduced. Were the agreement to go ahead, he argued, the combined public sector wage bill combined with debt servicing would absorb more than 92% of revenue, leaving less than 8% for operations, maintenance and development expenditure.

Bank workers and postal workers were amongst those who threatened strike action to protest against a new benefit tax on their incomes, but it was the teachers who put up the stiffest resistance, threatening a nationwide strike to demand that government withdraw the Bill which would have revoked the pay agreement. Initially, in order to avoid a confrontation which it feared might spark off widespread industrial unrest, the government backed down. But once it had received the backing of the KANU parliamentary group, it resolved to go ahead, Moi declaring that the dispute had become politicised. The outcome was the launch by the teachers' union of a strike in early October which began to make a connection between worker grievances and official corruption and mismanagement. But never having been in the position to afford the agreement in the first place, and increasingly desperate to impress the IMF by living within its means, the government countered with force, deploying police in a vicious crackdown on protestors. The strike, maintained by the union's 240,000 odd members around the country, eventually cracked after two weeks. Yet what the confrontation also revealed was Presidential support for the Finance Minister (increasingly a hero in 'donor' circles), if only to elicit a resumption of lending from the IMF, which at this moment was content merely to monitor progress without making any firm commitments. However, what this did not imply was that Moi was backing Nyachae or, indeed, KANU A in the emerging struggle around the succession, which focused upon the position of the Vice-Presidency.

Under the Kenyan constitution, as it presently stands, the Vice-President is the choice of the President and serves at his discretion. However, because the Vice-President succeeds to the Presidency in the event of the death of the incumbent, as happened when Moi took over from Kenyatta in 1978, the person in situ is generally regarded as heir apparent, even though he would be required to face a presidential election within 90 days.

The Vice-Presidency had been held since October 1989 by George Saitoti, whose past loyalty to Moi did nothing to prepare him for his demotion after the election to the Ministry of Planning and National Development. But Saitoti had earned the wrath of the IMF, which at the time of the suspension of ESAF was reported to have demanded his prosecution for his alleged involvement in the Goldenberg scandal, which had occurred during his tenure as Minister of Finance. But with the election over, when Moi was able to turn his attention away from the internal politics of KANU to the more pressing demands of the economy, Saitoti's star waned, as did that of the anti-reform faction with which he was so strongly associated. Yet against that, Moi – whose support for IMF-driven reformist prescriptions was driven only by necessity – was far from prepared to throw his weight behind any other faction or individual. Instead, without announcing any intention, he opted to leave the Vice-Presidency open, reportedly waiting upon the ruling party to elect a Vice-Chairman at its next conference whom he would then appoint Vice-President. But as no date was set for such a conference, which in any case had been much postponed, the effect was to leave
the Vice-Presidency dangling in thin air – a solution (of dubious constitutional legitimacy) which avoided immediate division within KANU whilst maintaining his own space for manoeuvre. In particular, given KANU’s electoral vulnerability, its tenuous control of parliament, and the penchant of Kenyan politicians for switching parties, postponement of the appointment increased Moi’s freedom to rearrange his political alliances and to re-shape the country’s constitutional future.

The Re-Shuffling of the Pack

The result of the 1997 election had confirmed the ethnic pattern of voting: the Kalenjin voted for KANU and Moi (107 seats and 40% of the vote in the presidential election), the Kikuyu for the Democratic Party (DP) (39 and 31%) and Mwai Kibaki, the Luo for the National Development Party of Kenya (NDPK) and Raila Odinga (21 and 11%), the Luhya for the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (Kenya) (FORD-K) and Michael Wamalwa (17 and 8%) and so on, with the smaller ethnic communities which did not have their own presidential candidate throwing their lot in with Moi. There were numerous sub-texts in the ethnic and political outcome, but in the post-electoral, pre-constitutional review context, one major consideration stood out. The Weekly Review (9 January, 1998) put it this way:

The reason KANU won is not so much that it is more national in its appeal, but that it represents the collective fears of the smaller communities about the political and economic power of the Kikuyu, especially if combined with (that) of the Luo. The two are the largest single tribes in the country, for except in name the Luhya and the Kalenjin are not single tribes but collections of tribes with similar languages and cultures ...

... it is precisely because of the Kalenjin factor in Kenya politics that the country could well see some shifts in ethnic alliances before the next general election. The Kalenjin-dominated Rift Valley Province represents the largest single provincial block of votes and parliamentary seats in Kenya. In the foreseeable future, that block will remain a KANU block. Given the arithmetical and ethnic realities that have now twice embarrassed Kikuyu and Luo presidential aspirants, it is clear that no ethnic alliance of any two tribal groups that does not include the Kalenjin can succeed in a presidential race. Sooner or later, Kikuyu and Luo leaders will come to this realisation too. Some of them may decide that KANU is the only road they can take to State House.

Or, in other words, because mutual suspicions between the Kikuyu and Luo had seen those communities congregating behind different political leaders and parties in both 1992 and 1997 and seemed unlikely to heal their differences, the potential existed for the Kalenjin to do a deal which could shore up KANU’s position and retain its hold on power.

This sort of thinking guided the politicking which followed the election, the most notable features of which were a series of moves widely interpreted as being anti-Kikuyu, complemented by Moi reaching out politically to the Luo via a rapprochement with the NDPK.

The decline of influence of the ‘Kikuyu lobby’ within KANU was most explicitly signalled by Saitoti’s demotion, but it was accompanied by increasing discussion of the so-called ‘Rift Valley’ factor. Basically, this argued that, following the election, the Kalenjin political elite was moving to a realisation that its long-term security would come to depend upon a political dispensation that would protect them from retribution by the Kikuyu. During the Kenyatta era, some hundreds of thousands of
Kikuyu (and to a lesser extent, Luo, Luhya and Kisii) had been settled in parts of the Rift Valley on farms previously owned by white settlers, in effect challenging the historic claim to those areas of the so-called Kamatusa (Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu) communities. The result was that following the return to multi-partyism and the rise of Kikuyu-based parties as strong opponents of the government, prominent Kamatusa leaders had issued dire threats that the Rift Valley was KANU territory and that Kikuyu and other 'settlers' would vote for the opposition at their peril. The 1992 election was preceded by an outbreak of ethnic violence which continued sporadically through till 1994, whose principal expression featured attacks apparently by Kalenjin warriors upon areas of Kikuyu settlement, some hundreds being killed and thousands of families displaced. Fingers were pointed at top ranking members of the government, notably ministers Biwott, Ntimama and Kipkalya Kones, for having orchestrated the violence, although subsequent official enquiry failed to pinpoint responsibility. Whatever the case, following the failure of KANU to win even a single seat in 1997 on the basis of Kikuyu support, it was these same politicians who at a series of KANU victory rallies in Narok, Bomet and Nandi made inflammatory attacks upon the Kikuyu and asserted Kalenjin determination to fight for their 'rights' in the Rift Valley.

A wave of ethnic killings followed, in which some 50-odd Kikuyu peasants were massacred and hundreds displaced in the Laikipia and Nakuru districts, apparently spearheaded by an organised, private militia which was transported from one location to another to launch separate attacks. Whilst there was no immediate evidence to link the attacks to particular individuals (although churchmen accused the government of complicity), the violence was widely interpreted as a statement that the Kalenjin elite would demand that the rights of the 'indigenous' population of the Rift Valley would require explicit safeguards in any new constitution. In the event, although DP leader Kibaki calling upon Kikuyu to rise against their persecutors, the mayhem did not spread, not least because it prompted a wave of popular revulsion. Yet the government's own low key response to the violence (as during 1992-94, it was the churches which took primary responsibility for assisting the victims) seemed to confirm a KANU backlash against what one provocative columnist termed 'Kikuyu ingrates' (Njenga, 1999).

His own strong showing in the presidential election and the DP's emergence as the second largest party meant that Kibaki had emerged as the pre-eminent Kikuyu and opposition leader. But prospects that the DP would manage to forge a coalition of opposition forces to face KANU dissolved almost immediately after the election when, having initially supported Kibaki in his rejection of the presidential results as rigged, Odinga of the NDPK changed his tune and congratulated Moi on his re-election. Whilst it was expected that the DP would continue to receive the support in parliament of the SDP and Safina, the chimera of Kikuyu unity continued to be exposed by utterances from the sidelines from Kenneth Matiba, Moi's major challenger in 1992, who as leader of FORD-Asili had argued for an opposition boycott of the 1997 election. Matiba's boycott strategy had effectively destroyed FORD-A, whose supporters fled to the DP, but his formation of a new party, Asili Saba Saba, signalled his continuing ambition to run for the Presidency. Meanwhile, whilst both Kibaki and Matiba were playing to challenge the government's electoral legitimacy, neither of them were proving willing to align themselves unambiguously with the National Conventions Executive Council (NCEC), the radical lobby group which – having led the struggle for constitutional reforms before the election – continued to project itself as leading 'civil society'.
Whilst the DP appeared determined to pursue its own line, the NDPK and FORD-K made rapid moves to enter a rapprochement with KANU. Within a few short weeks of the election, relations between Moi and both Odinga and Wamalwa were visibly warming, and in late April the President confirmed an emergent pact with the NDPK by a formal visit to Nyanza, which – much to the chagrin of local KANU leaders – stressed mutual recognition of the regional strengths of parties as central to the cooperation. Immediate benefits followed: senior Luo received promotions in the civil service, Moi acceded to NDPK requests for the creation of two new districts, and Lt. General Daniel Opande – one of the few Luo highly placed Luo in the army – was appointed deputy armed forces chief of staff. Furthermore, a government initiative to rehabilitate the cotton industry around Kisumu was soon said to be in the works. NDPK Vice-Chairman Prof. Geoffrey Maloiy – the only Maasi leader in the party’s hierarchy – subsequently resigned in protest, but otherwise Odinga took the bulk of his Luo-based support with him.

Odinga had long forged a reputation as a radical, and was to be accused by the DP of selling out the opposition. Yet now it seems he was responsive to those within his own party who were arguing that it was the Kikuyu who had betrayed the Luo (first under Kenyatta, whose deal with KADU led to Oginga Odinga’s formation of the KPU, second after 1992, when Kikuyu leaders had declined to rally behind the leadership of the old man, who had battled the single party regime for years before the major multiparty campaigners had entered the fray). Distrust of Kibaki was therefore matched by the expectation that a deal with the Kalenjin elite would allow the Luo greater leverage in determining the constitutional future and edging closer to the centre of power.

Moi matched his entrapment of Odinga by a series of other initiatives designed to contain tensions within KANU and further divide the opposition. Mutual suspicions between the competing elements within the ruling party served as the perpetual backdrop to Moi’s manoeuvres, fuelled by the emergence of a group of so-called dissidents (dubbed KANU C) whose most prominent leader, Cyrus Jirongo, (a former party youth leader), sought to combine a bid for Luhya leadership (at the expense of Wamalwa) with an apparent challenge to the incumbent leadership generation by threatening to break from the party and run for the presidency in 2002. An announcement by Moi that he would retain the party leadership even after leaving the presidency complemented his unwillingness to nominate a Vice-President, and sought to pre-empt suggestions that the ruling party was set to disintegrate as it faced the transition. Meanwhile, as the puppeteer of Kenya’s ethnicity-dominated landscape, he manipulated an action packed drama destined to confirm his own mastery of the unfolding plot. In particular, he unsettled KANU barons by making up with the 78 year old Charles Njonjo, the once immensely powerful Attorney-General who had fallen from grace in 1983 after he was accused of plotting to overthrow the government. Although wild talk that he would be elevated to the Vice-Presidency was rapidly discounted, Njonjo’s rehabilitation was Moi’s way of signalling to the Kikuyu that they need not be excluded from the political mainstream, and sought to increase doubts amongst DP parliamentarians concerning the wisdom of Kibaki’s strategy of unmitigated confrontation. Meanwhile, Moi also began to cultivate relations with the Safina party’s Paul Muite, a close ally of Njonjo, who before the election had been strongly aligned to the NCEC but who was now regarded as positioning himself to wrest leadership of the Kikuyu from Matiba and Kibaki.

Ever a master of political manipulation, Moi capped his dealings by securing KANU’s comprehensive defeat (137 votes to 67) of a no-confidence proposed in October by a
member of FORD-K. Nineteen NDPK MPs voted with the government, the DP (the official Opposition) was outpaced, and KANU dissidents stayed in line. This was matched by the success he had enjoyed in modulating the process of constitutional review.

The Constitutional Review Process: Containment or Consent?

Moi had successfully headed off mass-based demands for constitutional review before the election by inducing the principal opposition parties to abandon their link with the NCEC and other lobby groups in favour of their joining an Inter-Party Parliamentary Group (IPPG) tasked with negotiating a minimum package of reforms. The deal which resulted was embodied in an Act which, *inter alia*, facilitated opposition participation in the election and which provided for a subsequent review of the constitution. This latter task was to be conducted by a Constitution of Kenya Review Commission, whose chairman was to be appointed by the President, who would also select some 29 commissioners out of some 45 nominations proposed by parties, churches and civic organisations. This body would then gather public opinion, and submit recommendations to parliament.

Those opposed to the IPPG, including the NCEC and Matiba, declared the reform package a sell out. They complained that it allowed Moi too much say in selecting the Commission, that it did not insist upon a deadline for passage of a new constitution, and that there was no provision for a draft constitution being referred to a referendum before it was presented to a parliament elected under rules which still favoured KANU. In contrast, the mainstream opposition felt that they had secured some reasonable gains which would allow for their improved performance in the election and provide for further advances afterwards.

The NCEC had hoped that their erstwhile allies within the parliamentary opposition would be so disillusioned by the outcome of the election that they would once again join it in a popularly-based coalition to press for a fundamental constitutional review. However, the moment had passed. Indeed, whilst Matiba (who appeared the lobby group’s most natural ally) addressed the NCEC’s first major mass rally after the election in early February, he was known to be as wary of that organisation’s more radical agenda as he was dismissive of its primarily academic, professional and middle-class leadership. Meanwhile, few other mainstream opposition politicians felt that re-association with the NCEC had anything to offer. Yet even with the NCEC and Matiba increasingly isolated, the conviction grew that the constitutional reform package needed to be renegotiated.

The initiative was taken by the major churches, which in February 1998 issued a call for the urgent convening of a multiparty Conference for a Democratic Kenya to replace the ‘fundamentally flawed’ Constitution Review Commission. The first step should be for KANU and all political parties, church leaders, the business community, trade unions and civic society to come together to promote the appropriate climate for constitutional discussions; secondly the parties should sign a ‘peace accord’ and lay down rules for negotiations; thirdly, a new constitutional order should be hammered out by a convention.

Senior churchmen subsequently moderated this position at a meeting of the National Convention Assembly (the NCEC’s plenary body) when in response to criticisms that they were trying to sideline parliament, they stated that the churches were now calling for a national consultative council composed of 150 members from parties,
religious bodies, civics, unions, womens' organisations and business and the professions and so on. This would receive recommendations from a 29 member constitutional commission, before submitting a draft constitution (endorsed, if necessary, by a referendum) to parliament within a stipulated period.

The churches had been propelled into action by the recent wave of ethnic killings, which they feared might spiral into the violent disintegration experienced by Burundi, Rwanda and Somalia. Only a new constitutional dispensation which would de-politicise ethnicity would enable Kenya to face the challenges posed by poverty, a collapsing economy, mafia-like corruption and so on.

The churches' action revived the flagging momentum of the constitutional debate. The NCEC proclaimed it would return to mass action (including sustained strikes and civil disobedience) to back demands for constitutional renewal, and succeeded in attracting a number of opposition MPs (including Muite and SDP presidential candidate Charity Ngilu) to its cause. A mass meeting announced a one-month general strike for July, this to be backed by a revolt against recent tax increases.

The NCEC and its small group of parliamentary allies was dismissed as extremist by the government, yet the latter was clearly concerned to pre-empt the revival of a democratic coalition linking civil society groups to the opposition. Reports also spoke of external powers (notably the German government) urging Moi towards a politics of reconciliation and moderation. Consequently, just as it had drawn the political parties into the IPPG the previous year, the government now sought to head off popularly based agitation by the formation of a new 25 member inter-party parliamentary committee (IPPC), chaired by the Attorney-General, whose task would be to suggest changes and amendments to the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission Act of 1997 which governed the existing process. The new committee included all ten parties represented in parliament, and drew in various high profile MP's (including Odinga, Ngilu and Muite) as well as a number of Ministers, and was soon mandated to solicit views from the wider public and stakeholders as to how the Act should be changed.

The formation of the IPPC immediately changed the political landscape. The key to this was the marginalisation of the NCEC. Initially, apparently pressured by the foreign donors who sustained it, the NCEC announced that it was suspending its programme of mass action (scheduled for May and June) to participate in the process of dialogue invited by the IPPC. However, at a first meeting attended by over 400 delegates from diverse interests called by the IPPC at the Bomas of Kenya in Nairobi on 11 May, the NCEC staged a walkout when Attorney-General Amos Wako refused to abandon all other business to discuss its own presentation on the constitutional review process entitled 'The Way Forward' (which \textit{inter alia} called for the replacement of the IPPC by a committee representative of civil society as well as of parliamentarians). Yet in walking out, the NCEC not only alienated what allies they had amongst MPs but also drove a wedge between themselves and the churches, which opted to continue working within the official process.

To be sure, there were complaints by various opposition MPs at the Bomas meeting about the way the IPPC was being steered by the government, and there were calls for the IPPC itself to be expanded and to be given a wider mandate to collect views on the content of actual constitutional reform. But Wako remained adamant that the IPPC had been formed only to consider the mechanisms of the constitutional review process (or in effect, that its sole function was to make recommendations to
parliament concerning amendments to the 1997 Constitution of Kenya Review Commission Act). Yet he held the meeting together by giving assurances that the government would listen to all stakeholders, agreeing to a further two-day forum in June, and conceding to demands for a clear time frame for the review process by promising that the there would be a new constitution within three years. But substantively, what was most important was his concession that the size of the eventual Review Commission itself should be expanded to include a wider array of interests within society.

The subsequent meeting was held at the Safari Park Hotel, where the IPPC was joined by delegates of some 29 invited organisations. These included the NCEC, which was reported as having agreed with other radical groups to disrupt proceedings by staging a further walkout to meet protestors outside. However, their proposals drew little support from beyond a small group of other NGOs, and under pressure from the churches, western embassies and others, the NCEC delegates abandoned their plans, and thereby signalled that radicals would – for the moment, at least – operate within the official process. This was then confirmed by the forging of a general agreement that the reform process should continue via appointment of a Constitutional Review Commission, rather than through a national convention. However, this major concession, by the NCEC and the churches, was matched by a further agreement that the IPPC itself would be replaced by a 10-person committee (composed of 5 members of the IPPC and 5 appointed from the religious and civic society groups present) which would take on the redrafting of the 1997 Act. Furthermore, when nominated, that committee was composed of just one KANU and four opposition MPs (including Odinga), and representatives from the churches, the Muslim community, women, youth and, not least, the NCEC.

Although the outcome of what became known as ‘Safari Park I’ were hailed in official quarters as a victory for moderation, the process remained fragile, for agreements had only been secured as a result of bitter wrangling between representatives of KANU, on the one hand, and the more radical opposition reformists. In particular, there was deep distrust in opposition circles with the chairmanship of Wako, who was viewed as partisan and as attempting to impose the government’s agenda. However, despite protests from especially the NCEC, the latter chaired a further IPPC forum (‘Safari Park II’) in July at which further modalities of the review process were discussed. This resulted in the expansion of the draft committee from 10 to 12 (to allow for greater representation of women), but more importantly, it reached a consensus on a three-tier structure for the constitutional review process. This would operate via: (1) district committees, charged with coordinating the presentations of views on reform to: (2) the constitutional review committee, which would be expanded from 29 (as prescribed by the 1997 Act) to between 51 and 100 members; and (3) a 224-member National Consultative Forum drawn from the 65 administrative districts which would approve or reject the recommendations of the review committee before they were taken to parliament for enactment. Meanwhile, the draft committee was mandated to draw up final recommendations for amending the 1997 Act for presentation to yet another forum in August.

The draft committee’s major task was to somehow resolve the major dilemma which yet confronted the whole process. This revolved around differences regarding the basis of representation, which in turn reflected the divergent interests of the different players. On the one hand, the more radical reformists, reflecting their own
composition, argued that representation should be via established interests groups, churches and organisations. On the other, there was KANU, which expressed its alarm at what it perceived its declining control over the process by insisting that the basis of all participation should be via the districts – an approach which was viewed with suspicion by its opponents as not only enabling the ruling party to skew selection, but also as a device for, in effect, producing a system of ethnic representation. KANU argued in response that the established interest groups were primarily representative of fringe and urban elites, and that only district representation would give voice to the grass roots. In consequence, the three tiered structure for the review process agreed upon at Safari Park II had evolved as something of a compromise designed to accommodate KANU’s desire for district representation to opposition reformists calls for representation by interest (whilst the NFC also bore something of the qualities of a national convention). Yet even after that there remained differences as to how the actual constitutional review committee should be selected.

The real point at issue was that the government’s most radical opponents suspected that KANU’s quest for district representation was a cover for majimboism, what they characterised as the wish by powerful elements in the ruling party to prepare for the loss of control of the state which they might encounter in a post-Moi Kenya by devising a new constitutional arrangement which would devolve the bulk of power to the provinces, which in effect would become ethnic redoubts. From this perspective, majimboism therefore represented at best a return by especially the Kalenjin to the protective regionalism originally espoused by KADU, and at worst, a destructive drive for balkanisation and the carving up of Kenya into ethnic fiefdoms which would bring with it the eviction of ‘non-indigenous’ minorities from areas such as the Rift Valley. They justified their fears by reference to the pre- and post-electoral ethnic violence which they strongly suspected as having been organised by leading figures in the government. In contrast, the majimboists themselves argued that majimbosim was nothing more than a Kenyan version of federalism, a system of government that devolves power in recognition of diversity in society and which provides for the protection of minority rights. Centralism, argued Ntimama (1998), was outdated, encourages dictatorship and excess of power. Democracy demands that people at the local level be empowered to be in charge of their own affairs.

Moi himself is on record as labelling talk of majimboism as divisive. In contrast, informed sources close to him were cited as saying that he was convinced that only a broad-based coalition government where all major ethnic communities in Kenya share power will be able to withstand centrifugal pressures and the forces of instability that will be released when he leaves the scene (Weekly Review, 3 July 1998). And this was said to be why he had entered into ‘constructive engagement’ with the Raila, Wamalwa and Muite. Most certainly, he did nothing to discourage speculation that inter-party cooperation could eventuate in a ‘grand coalition’. Equally, however, when KANU parliamentarians met in consecutive meetings following Safari Park II, he was adamant that the party would insist upon district representation on the Review Commission, and stated publicly that the ruling party was unhappy with the three tiered process, now reiterating the view that constitutional change should be the preserve of parliament. In the event, a clash between KANU and the reformist lobby was avoided. What went on behind the scenes is unclear, but when the draft committee presented its proposed amendments to the 1997 Act to the Safari Park III meeting in August, a compromise was reached. The basis was laid by Moi conceding that the presidency had become too dominant (which pleased both majimboists and reformists). He also indicated that KANU would drop its opposition to the three
tiered reform structure and its insistence on exclusive district representation on the Commission if the latter body were to incorporate an expert group of constitutional lawyers and theorists. This provided the basis for agreement that the Commission should be composed of 25 members, all of whom should have a university degree and experience in public life. The precise manner of how they would be chosen and the proportion of representation for interests was referred back to the draft committee, but it was agreed that alongside the legal experts, the Commission should include 12 members from certain identified religious and civic organisations and 13 politicians, should include at least eight women, and that none of the eight provinces would have less than two members. This agreement nearly broke down at a subsequent Safari Park IV forum in October, when it transpired that the Attorney-General’s office had tampered with the final recommendations of the draft committee (to decrease representation upon the Commission of certain civic groups regarded as aligned with the opposition), yet eventually it provided the framework for a Constitution of Kenya Review (Amendment) Bill which passed through parliament in October 1998.

Critics allege that the government had secured a device which would eventually allow for the imposition of majimboism: the Act did not limit the power of the President to dissolve parliament and thereby nullify the process before it is completed; the appointment of two members from each province to the Commission will replicate ethnic imbalances to the benefit of KANU; and the list of organisations from which the Commission will be drawn omits the NCEC but still includes KANU-friendly bodies (despite the objections at Safari Park IV). But most particularly, because any amendment to the constitution must eventually be passed by parliament, KANU could act in concert with its new allies in the NDPK and Ford-K to frustrate the entire process by refusing to pass or amending any final Bill despatched to it by the NCF (Kuria; SDP, 1998).

Whatever its flaws, the constitutional review process has now been established and the scene is set for the most fundamental discussion of Kenya’s political structure since independence. The fact that KANU has been propelled very much against its instincts into conceding a process which incorporates public participation as a substantial element suggests that the eventual outcome is not predetermined to be a product of the political elite — rather, it will reflect the balance of forces in the wider society. But these in turn will be influenced by the extent to which social forces pushing for democracy are able to take advantage of divisions within that elite now being widened by Kenya’s deepening financial crisis.

**Fiscal Crisis, Conditionality & the Prospects for Democracy**

Corruption in Kenya is endemic. The most recent Auditor-General’s report, whose publication was conveniently delayed until after the 1997 election, as ever chronicles extensive misappropriations, theft and graft. Public servants systematically require bribes, Nyachae has warned that the import-export nexus is dominated by a mafia, and public property — including land and public corporations — is blatantly looted by the political elite. Last year, Transparency International rated Kenya 11th out of the 85 countries perceived to be the most corrupt (*Business Day*, 3 December 1998). As expressed in a recent editorial:

*We do not have capitalists in this economy. Nor do we have what marxists refer to as a national bourgeoisie. What we have are a group of parasites who depend on the patronage of the state to stay in business, and who depend on money borrowed from banks to live opulent and ostentatious lives.*
The Weekly Review (4 December 1998) was commenting upon a spate of scandals in the banking sector which threatened to bring about the collapse of the country's financial system. In March 1998, revelations that its two most senior executives owed the major Kenya Commercial Bank millions of shillings in unserviced loans led to their dismissal by the Ministry of Finance. Then, in September, the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) took over control of Reliance Bank, one of the so-called Asian banks, after an internal fall out led to major withdrawals and the arrest of its directors and some of its major clients on charges of fraud. Panic then swept the financial sector, as statements by the CBK targeted the Asian Banks as facilitating money laundering, tax evasions and transacting corrupt payments. Two more, Trust Bank and Bullion Bank, soon followed in closing their doors as desperate depositors clamoured to withdraw their savings. This threatened a crisis of confidence in the smaller banking sector, which serves an important role in linking the formal to the informal economy - but at the cost of speculative practices, which most recently had been encouraged by the rise in the official interest rate attendant upon the rapid fall of the shilling. Now it was feared that the collapse of further banks could lead to a flight of Asian capital and yet further pressure on the currency. All this pointed to lax financial regulation, resulting in the proclamation of stricter measures by the CBK. Yet it was a subsequent run on the National Bank of Kenya (NBK), the country's fourth largest bank, accompanied by the CBK's publication of a list of debtors who had bankrupted other commercial banks, which had major political as well as fiscal implications.

The NBK was exposed as bankrupt following a $25 million run on the bank by creditors in November (1998). As ever, the problem was a low deposit basis, and wholly inadequately serviced and backed loans. However, the list of bad debtors published by the CBK exposed a large clutch of senior government ministers (including Biwott, Ntimama and Kones), former ministers, parliamentarians (mainly but not exclusively KANU), and senior public servants (including a High Court judge) as owing literally billions of Kenyan shillings to the NBK and other vulnerable banks. Most borrowed money was reported as having gone into real estate, a sector which had boomed with the steady decline of the shilling, this encouraged by politically connected directors of commercial banks financing the construction of buildings believing that they could sell them to cash-rich state institutions like the National Social Security Fund (one such being Cyrus Jirongo, who owed one failed bank a whopping shs.7,366 million). However, as the economy steadily sank in the run up to the elections, prices in the property sector began to tumble and with them the book value of debtors' collateral.

The scandal exacerbated the existing tensions within the ruling party, not least because so many of those named were so close to Moi. The anger within the KANU parliamentary group was soon translated into attacks upon Nyachae, CBK governor Mical Cheserem and the fiscal reform lobby, and there was little doubt that the president was under immense pressure to step in to rescue the NBK, whose total collapse could precipitate a wave of other bankruptcies. But he was also subject to contrary pressures, with an IMF official stating publicly that all defaulters, including cabinet ministers, had to be made to repay their loans. The immediate result was that the finance ministry organised a $34 million bail out for the bank, subject to the IMF appointing its own team to overhaul key aspects its operations.

The longer term political fallout has yet to become evident. But what is clear is that (1) the kleptocrats are being increasingly squeezed by a diminishing supply of easy money and state resources to plunder; (2) the pressure upon them is being increased by unionised lower middle class groups, such as teachers and bank employees, who
are reacting militantly to increased taxes and declining real wages; and their demands (3) are being reinforced, from above, by international creditors, notably the IMF, which is still declining to resume business as usual until it sees concerted action against corruption. Yet the immediate problem for Moi is that a fiscal deconstruction of the cronyism which has, in effect, underpinned his regime threatens to undo the entire political order.

When combined with the threat posed by the political transition, the likely result of any sustained attempt to regularise the distribution of largesse will be to further fracture the political class. This tendency was already evident within KANU even before the recent spate of bank closures. When John Mwau, chairman of the Kenya Anti-Corruption Authority attempted to instigate criminal proceedings against top brass in the Treasury he earned initial popular support, yet following his surprise dismissal, it was alleged that his drive against high level corruption was motivated a political agenda of discrediting officials viewed as allies by the IMF (Weekly Review, 7 August 1998). Reports have been floated that Nyachae himself has been involved in intimidating police and customs officials against his relatives involved in profiteering from transit oil dumped on the local market (Finance, 30 August 1998). And more recently, Kamlesh Pattni, a key figure on the Goldenberg scam, has accused Paul Muite of Safina of having received shs.20 million in 1993 in return for his silence. More such internecine fighting should be expected as the thieves begin to fall out, and as the opportunities for graft at the centre dry up, it is likely that they will fall back to their reserve positions in their localities: it is not for nothing that the call for majimboism issued by Kalenjin politicians is being increasingly echoed by a raft of Coastal and even Kikuyu MPs. In short, a worsening of the present crisis could seriously threaten the very integrity of the Kenyan state, a danger clearly indicated by the repeated incidents of organised ethnic violence. Leading politicians are by no means unprepared, in extremis, to transform themselves into warlords.

It is the real threat of civil war, of Kenya plunging into the chaos of a Burundi or Rwanda, which dictates that the pursuit of majimboism has a limited logic. Of course, any return to majimboism would doubtless be via a fine sounding federal constitution, yet given the ethnic basis of political mobilisation, it could so easily degenerate into an unstable ethnic-state confederation. But if this were to lead to the disintegration of the central state, this would in turn collapse what has hitherto been politicians’ principal source of accumulation. Kenyan Asian capital (pace Himbara) would drain out of the country into the Indian diaspora, and transnational investment (already threatened by one majimboist MP who has called for the appropriation and redistribution of foreign owned agricultural estates) would decamp. A presently declining economy could be transformed into a wasteland.

There is little doubt that Moi appreciates this, and hence wants a carefully managed transition which will see the survival of the central state. So does international capital, and so do the mass of ordinary Kenyans. Hence we now have the present combination of the rise of the economic reformists under Nyachae (although they are increasingly isolated within KANU) and a cautious, reluctant acceptance by the political establishment of the need to accede to constitutional reform which, whilst attempting to balance different agendas, does not yet have a predetermined outcome. Moi’s objective would seem to lead Kenya to a workable arrangement which will protect essential Kalenjin interests, probably as part of a broader inter-ethnic coalition, perhaps dressed up as a South Africa 1994-style Government of National Unity. So long as this is linked to Moi’s continued support for the imposition of greater fiscal accountability, it will likely secure the backing of Western governments and the IFIs.
Indeed, precisely because they will see Moi as the key figure able to contain the wilder men in his party, the skilled manipulator capable of pulling political opposites together, they will look to him to steer the constitutional negotiations through to a conclusion which holds the state and a reasonable peace together, even if it fails to address key items of concern (such as increased safeguards for human rights). Their support for forces in civil society pressing hard for constitutional concessions to embed democratic practices are therefore likely to be equivocal, even if they back new constitutional forms which seek to de-emphasise the role of ethnicity. As will Moi, they will look to the handing over of the presidency to a successor able to maintain rather than disaggregate the present configuration.

The problem of the ‘democracy lobby’ in Kenya is that, although organisations like the NCEC are able on occasion to mobilise mass action, they are generally unable to sustain it. Their politician critics are correct: the more radical NGOs are urban based, they do tend to express the views of an educated elite, and – their achilles heel – they are largely foreign funded. Furthermore, ‘the organs of civil society’ themselves are highly divided, the long era of one party rule having ensured that numerous NGOs are strongly KANU aligned. The established churches, too, are far from united, their hierarchies fractured along ethnic lines. In short, whilst there is reasonable prospect that astute politicking and alliances made by civic representatives in the forthcoming constitutional review process will secure worthwhile gains, they are operating from a position of structural weakness which suggests they will make minimal impact concerning crucial issues of power.

Yet where the civic organisations could gain support from external backers is if they focus on establishing the links between democracy and fiscal accountability, for one is impossible without the other. Indeed, given the present inequalities in the world economic order, the best way for Kenya to arrest its spiralling decline is by increasing its rate of domestic saving. As correctly argued by the IFIs, this does require a concerted attack upon corruption and the diversion of squandered resources into productive investment. However, whether a political order which will provide for such desperately needed economic growth will emerge out of the re-forming of the state depends upon the peculiarly volatile mix of Moi’s machinations, politicians’ agendas, and civic and international pressures. It looks like being an extremely rough ride.

Roger Southall, Rhodes University, South Africa.

References


Debate

Parliamentary Opposition & Democratic Consolidation in South Africa

Adam Habib & Rupert Taylor

We print below a contribution which argues the need for an effective electoral opposition in South Africa that is class and policy-based rather than racially conceived. It can be linked both to recent articles on shifts in the ANC's policies and economic strategy (Saul, Gall, and Adams, all in Review 72 of 1997, McDonald in 75, and Padayachee, and Hall, in 76 – both 1998), and to earlier Debates pieces on the relationship between nationalism and democracy in South Africa, notably that by Robert Fine in Review 45/6 (1989).

As South Africa approaches its second democratic election, which is constitutionally bound to be held before the end of July 1999, a public debate has emerged on the necessity for, and viability of, parliamentary opposition parties. This debate, held mainly in the media, has been coloured by the immediate electoral concerns of both the parliamentary opposition parties and the governing party. The former fear that the African National Congress (ANC) will receive a two-thirds majority in the 1999 elections and will use this to change the constitution. In a bid to avoid this, parliamentary opposition parties have unsuccessfully engaged each other on the possibility of establishing either alliances or a new super party capable of taking on the ANC at the polls. The ANC for its part maintain that the fears of opposition parties are unfounded, and that they are merely using the 'two-thirds' threat as an excuse to deflect attention from their own shortcomings and failure to develop alternative policies. The ANC has reiterated its democratic right to achieve an 'overwhelming electoral mandate'.

This electoral posturing, while clearly predictable in the run-up to the 1999 election, has unfortunately polarised the debate and undermined serious analysis of South Africa's parliamentary opposition and its potential to contribute to democratic consolidation. The important point is that parliamentary opposition parties are necessary institutions if political initiatives towards the consolidation of democracy are to succeed. Leading democratic theorists, from South Africa and elsewhere, insist that both the constitutional right to form a parliamentary opposition and the reality of a viable electoral alternative must exist for the successful consolidation of democracy.

Several reasons have been advanced as to why a viable parliamentary opposition is necessary for the consolidation of democracy. First, opposition parties are seen as necessary institutions to facilitate a peaceful alternation in government, allowing counter political elites the opportunity to organise and contest for power. This ensures that any critical engagement with the government is not automatically translated into a delegitimation of the democratic order. Second, opposition parties enable the performance of a variety of public interest functions; such as monitoring government performance and exposing corruption. As Courtney Jung and
Ian Shapiro maintain, oppositional institutions which 'have an interest in asking awkward questions, shining light in dark places, and exposing abuses in power', tend to serve as a check on 'governments which have an incentive to camouflage mistakes or controversial decisions that might threaten their popularity'.

Particularly relevant for South Africa, though, is an additional reason why opposition parties are necessary for the consolidation of democracy. Democratic consolidation in South Africa, as elsewhere in the developing world, is dependent on the government's ability to address the widespread poverty and economic inequalities within society. In recent years, however, the ANC has implemented a neo-liberal economic policy that is unlikely to address these problems. Indeed as Alex Boraine, who served as Deputy Vice-Chairperson of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, has stated: 'The transformation of the economic and social order ... hasn't happened. The lines of wealth and poverty are still as stark as they were.' This state of affairs is partly due to the fact that ANC policy choices are largely being conditioned by an unfavourable set of power relations between it and international financial agencies and domestic and foreign capital. More 'people-centred' policy outcomes are thus unlikely to be forthcoming unless this situation is challenged. This requires the development of institutional mechanisms, of which a viable parliamentary opposition is one component, that will ensure – as The Sunday Independent (17 January 99) argued in a recent editorial advocating a new opposition – 'meaningful and dramatic socio-economic improvements for the majority of the population'.

In Search of a Strong Opposition

A strong parliamentary opposition is thus seen as necessary for the consolidation of democracy. Mainstream opinion in South Africa suggests, however, that it is impossible to establish a viable parliamentary opposition because of the racialised structure of South African politics and society. This view holds that the political activities and electoral preferences of South African citizens are primarily determined by 'race'; with whites voting for the National Party and blacks for the ANC. In particular, it is argued that as long as there is no split in the ANC, black voters will not cast their ballot for opposition parties. Thus, for example, two leading academic commentators – Hermann Giliomee and Charles Simkins – maintain that because the post-apartheid regime favours black citizens, electoral outcomes are likely to continue to resemble a racial census.

This position, though, needs to be contested; particularly since there is no attempt to prove the presumed prevalence of racial identity, and beyond this how 'race' determines voting behaviour. Lines of causality are presumed to exist between racial categories and voting patterns by simply demonstrating a strong degree of correlation between the two; but even if one accepts that there is a strong degree of correlation between racial categories and voting patterns, and this is by no means conclusively proven, such correlation cannot be simply interpreted as causation. In fact, because it ignores issues of self-representation, identification and motivation, this reading is itself overly contaminated with racial thinking. Notably, it overlooks the fluidity of partisan identification.

There is significant empirical evidence to suggest that 'race' should not be prioritised as the explanatory variable accounting for electoral behaviour. In February 1998 the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa) released its first Public Opinion Service (POS) Report which suggested that the South African electorate is not as rigid and stagnant as is conventionally assumed. Arguing that mainstream assumptions are “partly based on the fact that most surveys only
focus on voting intentions”, the POS report distinguished between this and partisan identification, and investigated both in three surveys conducted in 1994, 1995, and 1997. Subsequently, in late 1998, as part of the Opinion ‘99 Consortium, Idasa conducted two more opinion polls.

The overall results of the five surveys, reflected in Table 1, indicate that the proportion of the electorate that strongly identified with a party fell from 88 per cent in 1994 to 43 per cent in late 1998. The number of independents increased from 12 per cent in 1994 to 58 per cent in late 1998. Remarkably, as of the end of 1998, 50 per cent of African voters, 80 per cent of white voters, 75 per cent of coloured voters, and 89 per cent of Indian voters saw themselves as independents.

The results also indicate, as reflected in Table 2, that the proportion of the electorate that strongly identified with the ANC decreased from 58 per cent in 1994 to 34 per cent in late 1998. The National Party’s support in the corresponding period decreased from 15 to 3 per cent. Generally, by late 1998 less than one-in-ten identified with any opposition party.

On the other hand, the decline in the figures for voting intentions is much less dramatic. As Table 3 indicates, the proportion of the electorate intending to vote for the ANC was down from 61 per cent in September-October 1994 to 54 per cent in October-November 1998. In the corresponding period, those intending to vote for the National Party was down from 16 to 9 per cent. Just under one-in-five voters did not know how they would exercise their vote.

What is the significance of these findings? The marked decline in partisan identification with the ANC and NP between 1994 and 1998 suggests that their electoral support is not cast in black or white stone. Support for the ANC among Africans has declined from 75 per cent in 1994 to 45 per cent in 1998. The NP’s support among whites decreased even more dramatically, from 48 per cent in 1994 to 7 per cent in 1998. And the largest shift in voting patterns in both the African and white communities has been towards the independent category. These facts are to some extent offset by the finding that in terms of voting intentions the ANC still maintains majority support amongst the electorate, but what this suggests is that voters currently see no serious alternative to the ruling party. Thus, as an Opinion ‘99 press release argues, what ‘these developments demonstrate (is) the potential for important shifts that could leave South Africa with a very different electoral landscape’.

Why then have parliamentary opposition parties not been able to capitalise on this situation? Basically, the problem is that the electorate does not see current opposition parties as representing their interests. Rather the major parliamentary opposition parties, given their historical legacy and current electoral posturing, are seen to articulate the interests of only some racial and ethnic groups. Instead of developing catch-all electoral policy positions (distinct from those of the ANC), opposition parties remain tied to those narrow sections of the electorate from which they originally originated. The Inkatha Freedom Party, for instance, has projected itself as the defender and representative of the Zulu people. By doing so, it reduced its appeal to non-Zulu independents. In recent years the NP and Democratic Party, historically seen as serving the interests of Afrikaner and English whites respectively, have consistently targeted white, coloured, and Indian sections of the electorate, but have failed to appeal to African voters who constitute at least two-third of the independent voter category.

The existing parliamentary opposition parties are not serious contenders for power because they do not offer policies that would enable them to attract a
significant electoral constituency. A strong opposition party would only be viable if it were able to weave a policy programme capable of attracting the support of a diverse set of constituencies, and in particular the growing number of independent African voters. To break the mould, such a party would have to offer a set of socio-economic policies that would attract the support of the lower middle class, working class, poor and unemployed of all 'racial groups'. This would entail advocating a socio-economic programme similar to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) advanced by the ANC prior to its ascension to office. It would require offering a substantive and pro-active policy choice to the electorate on a range of other major issues.

Thus, the failure to develop a strong parliamentary opposition is not, as is commonly perceived, the fault of an electorate voting in racial terms, but rather reflects the fact that parliamentary opposition leaders are incapable of smashing the racial prism through which they view their electoral strategies, particularly in terms of macro-economic policy. As long as this remains the case, the prospects for consolidating democracy are weak.

**Whither the Tripartite Alliance?**

One of the most significant findings of the Idasa and Opinion '99 surveys is that African voters are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the government's performance. For example, in 1997 some 53 per cent of African voters expected the economy to improve in the next 12 months; by September 1998 this figure had dropped to 41 per cent. And significant sections of the African population believe that reconciliation has gone too far, and is occurring at the expense of economic transformation. Such dissatisfaction is likely to be closely tied to the fact that by late 1998 over 50 per cent of African voters saw themselves as independently aligned. While most surveys do not detail the class location of respondents, it is fair to assume, given the social realities of apartheid South Africa, that a significant proportion of the dissatisfied and independent African voters are from the working class, lower middle class, and unemployed categories.

These are the natural constituency of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) and the South African Communist Party (SACP), and thus it could be argued that they are well placed to capitalise on the decline in partisanship and initiate a new strong parliamentary opposition. In particular, having played a central role in the drafting of the 'people driven' RDP with its focus on the alleviation of poverty and 'growth with development', Cosatu and the SACP have a solid track record in advancing a social democratic political economy.

It is certainly the case that outside the existing parliamentary opposition parties, Cosatu and the SACP are the only other political forces with the capacity and potential to serve as a viable parliamentary opposition; yet both of them are excluded from doing so by their strategic alignment – the Tripartite Alliance – with the ANC. The Tripartite Alliance between the ANC, SACP and Cosatu should, however, not be seen to be cast in stone; especially given that in recent years the ANC leadership has been centralising power and bypassing representative party and state structures in the formulation of policy.

The Tripartite Alliance, although only formalised in the early 1990s, dates back to the establishment of Cosatu in December 1985 (being preceded by an alliance among the ANC, SACP, and South African Congress of Trade Unions that dates back to the 1950s). The emergence of Cosatu witnessed the amalgamation of two traditions of unionism that emerged in the post-1973 era, a community unionism aligned to the ANC that was typical...
of the 1950s, and a shop-floor unionism that stressed the importance of unions retaining their independence from the national liberation movement. The compromise struck in Cosatu was that it would participate in the political struggle on terms favourable to the working class. In effect this meant that Cosatu entered into a strategic alliance with the ANC, ultimately replacing the South African Congress of Trade Unions as the union component of the Congress alliance.

The Tripartite Alliance had two fundamental objectives. First, it was intended to maximise opposition against the apartheid regime. Second, it was to ensure that a working class bias prevailed in the policies and programmes of the national liberation movement. In terms of its first objective it was spectacularly successful. The Tripartite Alliance ensured that when the political structures of the popular movement were forced on the defensive in the 1987-88 wave of repression, the union movement, and in particular Cosatu, took up the cudgels of political resistance. By sustaining resistance, Cosatu forced on the state a realisation that resistance and instability would not simply disappear with bannings and repression. This in no small measure contributed to convincing the state of the need to unban anti-apartheid organisations, release their leaders, and enter into negotiations on a future political dispensation.

In terms of its second objective, the Tripartite Alliance was singularly unsuccessful. Instead of influencing the programmes of the ANC, the opposite has in fact occurred. For a short period, before and after the 1994 elections, Cosatu influence seemed to have prevailed within the ANC, in particular because of the adoption of the progressive Reconstruction and Development Programme. Since then, however, it has become increasingly apparent that the promise of the RDP has not been realised. Any doubts on this score were put to rest when the ANC adopted its new macro-economic programme in June 1996 – the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR) – whose policies bear a striking resemblance to those called for by the National Party and the business community in their respective programmes (the 'Normative Economic Model' and 'Growth for All').

The government’s adoption of GEAR has provoked serious discontent and created enormous strains within the Tripartite Alliance. GEAR was adopted by the Cabinet without adequate consultation with constituencies in the party or social partners in corporatist institutions. As a 1997 Cosatu discussion paper stated:

_Government positions on privatisation and GEAR have been presented to the Alliance as a fait accompli ... No one from the movement, except some in Government, was involved in its formulation._

And at Cosatu’s sixth annual conference in September 1997, delegates from the National Union of Metalworkers went so far as to call upon Cosatu to re-examine its ties with the ANC. In 1998, at the SACP’s National Congress, Cosatu and the SACP openly opposed GEAR and were publicly chastised for so doing by both President Nelson Mandela and Deputy-President Thabo Mbeki. Moreover, apart from Cosatu’s marginalisation from decision-making with regard to macro-economic policy, there have been very few substantive (as opposed to crisis-management) meetings of the Alliance since 1994. Increasingly, the ANC has turned to technocratic class-neutral forms of decision-making, such that formalised Alliance structures have declining influence on policy formulation.

These developments have served to put the public spotlight on the Tripartite Alliance and provoked a debate on its future. Two views prevail within the Alliance. On the one hand, there is a
newly ascendant and recently converted layer of leadership who argue that the ANC’s role is one of deracialising the market economy so that the African bourgeoisie and managerial and professional middle classes can have their place in the sun. For this layer, an alliance with Inkatha is more important and strategic than one with Cosatu and the SACP. On the other hand, there is the leadership and activist layer of Cosatu and the SACP, many of whom wear multiple hats and move easily within the Alliance. Committed to a social democratic political economy, this group places its hope in the fact that a struggle can still be waged for the ‘heart and soul of the ANC’.

Increasingly, however, the latter view seems unrealistic. The Tripartite Alliance has not enabled Cosatu and the SACP to imprint a developmentalist political economy on the post-apartheid ANC government. Instead, continued participation in the Alliance has led to a situation where Cosatu and the SACP are under pressure to abandon their most progressive commitments. This, together with the fact the prospects for realising a social democratic political economy are increasingly tied to the possibility of establishing a viable parliamentary opposition, has forced some activists within Cosatu and the SACP to consider the possibility of withdrawing from the Alliance.

The irony of the situation should not be lost. After assisting the ANC to survive the many years of repression, Cosatu and the SACP are now under increasing pressure to rethink their future relationship with the governing party. The fact that Cosatu and the SACP retain a commitment to advancing a social democratic political economy, and the fact that their support base is the working class, lower middle class, and unemployed, indicate that they are well placed to break the racial divide and create a truly non-racial, and thereby viable parliamentary opposition.

Conclusion

The emergence of a dominant party system in South Africa, and the relations of power in the global and national arenas, has meant that peoples preferences have become secondary to the interests of capital, of foreign investors and the domestic business community. This has manifested itself in the ANC’s abandonment of the RDP and its adoption of a neo-liberal economic strategy. The likely outcome of such policy choices is increasing economic inequality and poverty, and the undermining of democracy. The solution is the establishment of a viable political opposition that will enable peoples preferences to be taken seriously in the corridors of political power.

This debate suggests that the prospects for strong opposition politics (and thereby democratic consolidation) rest on (1) existing parliamentary opposition parties ability to break their racial mould, and/or (2) the fracturing of the Tripartite Alliance. In whatever case, what is required is the development of a non-racial class politics that would counter the neoliberal economic agenda of the African National Congress. Whilst there are already indications that such social dynamics are at work (particularly within the Tripartite Alliance), the development of a strong opposition is a long term project that is only likely to fully unfold in the new millennium.

Adam Habib is Senior Lecturer in Political Science, University of Durban-Westville. Rupert Taylor is Senior Lecturer in Political Studies, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Bibliographic Notes

On political opposition and democratic consolidation in South Africa:

Jung, Courtney & Ian Shapiro (1995), ‘South Africa’s negotiated transition: democracy,
opposition and the new constitutional order', *Politics & Society*, 23 (2).


On Partisan Identification and Voting Intentions since 1994:


**Opinion '99 Consortium media releases.**

On the Politics of the Tripartite Alliance:


**Cosatu** (1997), 'A programme for the Alliance', *African Communist*, 146 (1).


**Lodge, Tom** (1999), 'Policy processes within the African National Congress and the Tripartite Alliance', *Politikon*, 26 (1).
Africa, Asia & Anxieties about Globalisation

Ernest Harsch

For a number of African finance ministers, October 1998 was a month of heavy travel. First came the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank in Washington, then a little more than a week later the Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD-II). In Washington, the Asian financial crisis and its impact on the world economy was the major preoccupation, yet, as Finance Minister Cassim Chilumpha of Malawi later remarked, the discussions unfolded as if Africa scarcely existed. In Tokyo, by contrast, Africa took centre stage. Delegations came from virtually every African country - including 13 African heads of state or government - to discuss the continent's development prospects with Japanese and other Asian leaders, as well as with representatives from major Western donor governments and agencies.

The heavy rains and winds of typhoon 'No. 10' had already cleared from the Japanese capital by the time the delegates began arriving for TICAD-II's opening on 19 October. But throughout the three-day conference, Asia's continuing economic storms darkened the overall mood, a somber reminder of the vulnerability of even rapidly growing economies to the turbulence of an increasingly globalised world, let alone Africa, still 'the most vulnerable of the continents to exogenous and persistent shocks' (Degefe, 1998:5).

When active planning for the second TICAD began more than a year earlier, as a follow-up to the first conference in 1993 (convened jointly by the Japanese government, United Nations and Global Coalition for Africa), some organisers thought it would be a relatively upbeat affair, a virtual celebration of renewed economic growth in numerous African countries, after more than a decade of stagnation. Despite a range of continuing problems - including widespread poverty - they believed that the revival of growth rates confirmed the soundness of the economic liberalisation policies the donor governments and institutions had urged on African countries. Additionally, they hoped the evident success of Asia's economic 'tigers' would help convince African policymakers that a similar heavy emphasis on investment, trade and private enterprise also would hold the key to that continent's economic renaissance.

By the time TICAD-II actually came around, however, such assumptions rested less easily, and even confirmed African believers in structural adjustment were led to express misgivings and skepticism about rushing head-long into the global marketplace. To better understand how they viewed the recent Asian crisis, it would be helpful to first make a brief excursion into the way Asian issues previously intersected with ongoing policy debates on Africa.

Interpretations of the Asian 'Miracle'

For several decades, a number of the larger East and Southeast Asian econo-
Asian tigers (or ‘dragons’) often were held forth as a model, the interpretations of that model varied greatly.

Initial explanations by World Bank analysts during the 1970s and 1980s tended to minimise the role of state intervention in the East Asian economies and to emphasise the export-led nature of Asian economic growth and industrialisation, implicitly or explicitly as a critique of the ‘failed’ import-substitution policies then favoured in many Latin American and African countries. Against this perspective, a number of detailed academic studies of East Asia found that ‘developmental’ states had indeed played notable roles in shaping the direction and growth of their economies, through a broad array of regulatory institutions, market-guiding policies, and even protectionist support for national industries, albeit with strongly authoritarian controls to stifle organised labour and political dissent (Amsden, 1985; Haggard, 1990). During the debates of the 1980s over structural adjustment in Africa, African ministers frequently cited this heavy state role in East Asia in response to pressures from the World Bank and other donor institutions for sweeping liberalisation. But as more and more African countries were obliged to cut back on their public sectors, scrap trade controls and privatise state enterprises, the argument for maintaining a strong state seemed a lost cause, while other aspects of the Asian experience – how to promote the private sector, attract foreign investment and carve out new export markets – tended to elicit greater acceptance among African officials.

The World Bank, for its part, finally conceded some role for public policies in the ‘miracle’ of East Asia’s economic growth, while adding that the changing global economy would preclude most other countries from trying to employ similar state interventions (World Bank, 1993). For Africa, structural adjustment remained the most advisable course, al-
though the continent nevertheless could learn certain ‘practical lessons’ from East Asia’s industrial and trade policies (World Bank, 1996). This echoed some of the themes of the first TICAD conference in 1993, which cited investment, trade and a strong private sector as keystones for Africa’s development, with a particular stress on expanded Asia-Africa ‘cooperation’ (UNDP, 1998).

Market-leaning interpretations of the Asian experience also fit in very closely with the notions of economic globalisation that became prevalent in the 1990s, following the collapse of the Soviet bloc. Open trade, free flows of finance, the rapid dissemination of new technologies and ideas, heightened competition among national and regional economies, new accumulations of wealth and capital, abrupt shifts in production by transnational corporations in search of lower wages, equity investment funds hunting the most profitable ‘emerging markets’, the buying and selling of national currencies – all pointed to the increasingly complex and interlinked nature of the world economy, and to the greater predominance of the market over the state. Some, especially among the industrial country elites, spoke of globalisation in almost celebratory terms, as an integrating process that would finally place the stamp of ‘modernising’ Western civilisation on the rest of the world. Others, while agreeing that globalisation may bring benefits and new opportunities to some sectors, nevertheless have pointed to its accompanying instability and negative consequences, including through erosion of labour standards and growing social inequities (Sassen, 1998). When they turn their gaze to Africa, such critical analysts focus primarily on the continent’s fragile economic structures, low educational levels, lack of advanced technologies, weakened state institutions and other factors which make it very difficult for African countries to compete internationally and keep them ‘excluded’ from a globalising world economy (Hoogvelt, 1997; Aryeety, 1998). From this perspective, African countries ‘are by and large bystanders in the globalisation process’ (Edoho, 1997:5).

**A Tarnished Model**

The virtually overnight collapse of the East Asian miracle suggested, however, that marginalisation may not be globalisation’s only major pitfall for Africa. Integration comes with its own problems. After several years of very large inflows of foreign investments, loans and other financing, an unprecedented financial crisis suddenly swept the region during the last half of 1997 and the early months of 1998, hitting Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and South Korea especially hard. The value of national currencies plummeted, many businesses went bankrupt, banks were left holding uncollectable loans, foreign equity investors fled en masse, and in Indonesia mass unemployment contributed to the popular mobilisations that brought down the Suharto regime (Jomo, 1998). Japan was thrown into its worst recession since World War II.

By mid-1998, the crisis took on global proportions, as the Soviet economy also crashed and the shockwaves of the Asian crisis were felt as far away as Wall Street and Brazil. Growth estimates for all regions were revised downwards, but ironically, this left Africa in the unprecedented position of having the highest average growth rate in the world, at 3.7 per cent, according to IMF forecasts. Less integrated into world financial markets, Africa was less immediately hit by the global turbulence. Marginalisation, it seems, was not entirely without its charms.

However, a number of African countries with major export markets in Asia, or, like South Africa, with sizeable foreign portfolio equity holdings, did feel some direct repercussions from the Asian crisis. A broader range of African countries
will be affected more indirectly, as export demand is dampened by the global slowdown, primary commodity prices drop, foreign investors generally shy away from ‘emerging markets’, and Asian countries, following devaluation, are able to offer their own products even more cheaply on the world market (Brinkman, 1998; Degefe, 1998; Harsch, 1998).

Because of the Asian crisis and its global impact, many of the old neo-liberal arguments of the international financial institutions have been badly tarnished, with long-time critics among non-governmental organisations (NGOs) now joined by more high-level voices of dissent. Predictably, the IMF has tried to defend its basic approach, essentially blaming Asian governments for a lack of ‘transparency’ in their business relations (a problem of little previous concern to IMF analysts) and for disregarding the Fund’s warnings of potential trouble (Fischer, 1998). Others, although strong proponents of market liberalisation, faulted lax public regulation of financial markets in Asia and the IMF’s initial interventions, which worsened the effects of international financial market instability (Radelet and Sachs, 1998; World Bank, 1998). Yet others saw the root cause of the crisis in a ‘departure’ from the earlier Asian model of state-led development, as a result of pressure from the Bretton Woods institutions for hasty and excessive financial liberalisation (UNCTAD, 1998). At the IMF/World Bank annual meetings in Washington, the disarray among the finance ministers of the world’s most powerful countries was palpable, bringing little agreement about what went wrong in Asia or, more significantly, how to respond.

‘Capitalism in its Worst Form’

The Tokyo conference was not convened to specifically consider the implications of the Asian crisis or of these recent policy debates for Africa. Indeed, TICAD’s ‘Tokyo Agenda for Action’ was drafted well in advance, and, with its simultaneous focus on reducing African poverty and more fully integrating the continent into the global economy, seemed somewhat oblivious to the problems of integration raised by the Asian turbulence. A suggestion by a representative of the European Commission to insert into the document a brief reference to the impact on Africa of the economic crisis was not taken up. World Bank Vice-President for Africa Callisto Madavo appealed to African participants to stay the course of structural adjustment, and not let the recent international instability dissuade them: ‘It is now even more important to reform policy and the institutional framework to enhance Africa’s competitiveness on a global basis, and to attract investment’. Some of the delegates’ anxieties, nevertheless, did make their way to the floor.

Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamed of Malaysia, reviled by Western leaders for imposing capital controls to stem the financial freefall in his country, was the most direct and forceful. Speaking early on the opening day, he gave a brief history of the brutal rise of European capitalism, which only acquired a ‘friendlier face’ under pressure from the working classes and in an effort to contain communism following the Russian Revolution. For a time the countries of Asia and Africa could enjoy being wooed by both sides, but with the collapse of the Soviet bloc, they no longer have any choice but to submit to ‘capitalism in its worst form’, as exemplified by the crisis in East Asia. Mahathir’s bitterness was evident:

‘Capitalism, the free flow of capital, deregulation and globalisation are trumpeted as the new religion, the new ideology, the only ideology for the whole world. Question it and you will be labelled a heretic. If democracy stands in the way it too must be brushed aside. And so duly elected governments must allow themselves to be disciplined by
market forces, meaning the rich with their billions invested in funds which indulge in currency trading and raids on stock markets. This is the world of the new millennium. Developing countries must take note of this. If we are not careful, if we do not take the job of developing our countries seriously, we may revert to being colonies again.

Some Western representatives rolled their eyes at Mahathir’s speech. And while several African participants also appeared taken aback by the Malaysian prime minister’s blunt words, many were not unhappy that he had posed the issues so directly. For the most part, however, they expressed their own concerns more cautiously. Finance Minister Leketeke Victor Ketso of Lesotho said that many African countries have good reason to ‘hesitate in opening up’ their economies, given that sweeping economic liberalisation exacts high short-term costs, while any benefits may take some time to materialise. President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, speaking as chairman of the Organisation of African Unity, basically pleaded for time, arguing that Africa should be able to join the globalisation process at a more measured pace, ‘as our capacities develop’, perhaps beginning with steps towards greater economic integration within Africa.

Repeatedly, African delegations turned to issues of aid and debt relief, despite the fact that the Tokyo Agenda for Action scarcely mentioned them, focusing instead on trade and investment as the main sources of revenue for Africa’s development. The continent’s high debt burden ‘is debilitating to Africa’s growth prospects’, emphasised President Festus Mogae of Botswana. Tanzanian Prime Minister Frederick Tiwaiy Sumaye noted that the high cost of debt servicing ‘denies us the degrees of freedom to spend on the core issues for development. It denies us the opportunity to spend on the social sectors, on infrastructure’. Many charged that current international debt-relief initiatives were not seriously addressing the problem.

The downward slump in official development assistance (ODA) to Africa in recent years also was a source of agitation. UN Economic Commission for Africa Executive Secretary K.Y. Amoako appealed to donor countries not to focus on whether to aid Africa, ‘but how to enlarge and make aid more effective’. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, noting the decline in aid, scored the ‘mistaken belief that private capital flows have rendered ODA obsolete’.

While a number of donor representatives continued to urge Africa to seek out new sources of private financing and revenue, others (mainly from Europe) expressed support for African demands for more sweeping debt relief, while the UK and Sweden announced they actually would increase their aid budgets over the next few years. A few likewise acknowledged some of the problems Africa faces due to the volatility and inequities of the international market. ‘While I consider globalisation to be both inevitable and full of promise’, declared French Cooperation Minister Charles Josselin, ‘I also believe that governments must be vigilant actors, to regulate its movement and pace and to soften certain destabilising effects’. Eveline Herfkens, development cooperation minister of the Netherlands, stressed that a stable world economic order must be more than just a ‘paradise for the winners’.

‘Ownership’ and Institutions
A common catch-phrase throughout the conference was the need for African ‘ownership’ of national development strategies. This was not only a plea from the African delegations, but also the voiced preference of the donor representatives themselves. ‘More ownership and less donorship’ was how it was put by James Michel, chairman of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisa-
tion for Economic Cooperation and Development, representing most of the major donor powers.

Some participants pointed out, however, that 'ownership' implies real choice over policies, and so far few donor governments and agencies have shown much willingness to ease up on the conditions they demand in exchange for aid or debt relief. President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana sharply criticised the common donor practice of tying aid to the purchase of goods or services from that particular donor country. Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia noted that participants in the conference could debate whether global integration is good for Africa or not, but such debate would be beside the point since globalisation is 'the only game in town'. Citing a survey of donor representatives in Tanzania, Meles stated that donor officials often seem to believe the concept of ownership means that 'African countries do what the donors want them to do, but they do it without kicking and screaming, they do it voluntarily. That, in my view, is not ownership'.

At an academic conference held at the UN University's Tokyo headquarters a few days before TICAD, Thandika Mkandawire, the recently appointed director of the UN Research Institute for Social Development, noted that while democracy has made major advances in Africa in recent years, this is often a 'choiceless democracy' in which elected governments have no right to determine their own budgets, given the condition-alties imposed by external financing agreements.

One reason for this, speakers at both the university conference and TICAD observed, is the current weakness of African states and state institutions. These had been seriously eroded during the 1980s and 1990s by structural adjustment's 'wholesale sacking of state institutions', declared A.M. Dirar, director for economic development of the Organisation of African Unity. If Africa is to determine its own course and join the globalisation process in a less subordinate position, then its state institutions must be systematically strengthened, many agreed.

Mkandawire, acknowledging that he had long been a vocal critic of authoritarian states in Africa, nevertheless argued that enhancing state capacities is vital for the continent's overall development, not only in the economic sphere, but also for nation-building and improving democratic interaction with society. African governments, he said, must be in a better position to manage their economies' competitiveness and to make integration into the global economy 'a deliberate process', even if that means integrating more slowly. 'Hopefully', he concluded, 'the crisis in Asia will once and for all undermine the dogma of markets, and lead to a serious revisiting of the role of the state'.

Ernest Harsch is a journalist specialising in African political and economic issues, and a PhD candidate in sociology at the New School for Social Research, New York.

References
All quotations from participants in TICAD-II are from the author's notes and tape recordings, or from the texts of speeches circulated during the conference. Major TICAD documents are available through the Website: www.mofa.go.jp/region/af fica/ticad2.

Amsden, Alice H (1985), 'The State and Taiwan's Economic Development', in Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol (eds.), Bringing the State Back In, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.


Brinkman, Henk-Jan (1998), 'Financial Sector Reforms in and Private Capital Flows to Africa
and the Lessons from Asia’, paper presented to a UN expert group meeting, New York, 21-23 July.


UN Development Programme (1988), ‘National Reports on Asia-Africa Cooperation; Asia-Africa Private Sector Cooperation Reports’, submitted to TICAD-II.


West African Workshop on Women in the Aftermath of Civil War

11 to 13 December 1998, CESAG, Dakar, Senegal

Meredeth Turshen

Final Report

Over and over again, women speak of violence in their experiences of war, of how war entrenches violence in their communities, of how violence is experienced differently by women and men. Societies become militarized in civil war and the militarization lingers afterwards. The military sow a culture of violence in long wars that is hard to eradicate. This violence makes life difficult and dangerous for women, especially with the diffusion of cheap small arms. And violence against women does not stop when treaties are signed to end the war; in fact violence escalates. What can we do to protect ourselves during conflict and in the aftermath? How can we prevent violence? How can we help women to heal from the trauma?

This bilingual Workshop, with participation of women from Liberia, Niger, Senegal, and Sierra Leone, was opened by Cheich Tidiane Diop, Chef de Cabinet of the Senegalese Ministry of Family, Social Action and National Solidarity at 9 a.m. on 11 December 1998 at CESAG in Dakar. He said that, as we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, women can hope to live in a world without violence, that citizenship is not symbolic but must signal the full and active participation of women, and that this meeting would benefit women in conflict all over the world.

With Codou Bop (Women Living Under Muslim Laws-Senegal) presiding, the par-
and the Lessons from Asia’, paper presented to a UN expert group meeting, New York, 21-23 July.


UN Development Programme (1988), ‘National Reports on Asia-Africa Cooperation; Asia-Africa Private Sector Cooperation Reports’, submitted to TICAD-II.

Participants introduced themselves and described the organizations they represent, positive aspects of their work, and the challenges they face (see attached list of participants). Several women had sent papers in advance, which were copied and circulated in the packet of materials everyone received; others came with short statements, which they read out. Participants represented a range of disciplines and training (law, medicine, psychology, social work, etc.). Each laid out her specific goals and objectives for the Workshop (for example, to share experiences, network, and find ways to alleviate poverty).

The Workshop organizer, Dr Meredith Turshen (School of Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey), welcomed the participants and thanked the Ford Foundation, the West African Research Center, the Committee on Health in Southern Africa, the Workshop Advisory Board (Endnote 1), and Women Living under Muslim Laws (Senegal) for their financial, organizational, and intellectual support in planning this Workshop.

This Workshop was conceived as a follow-up to work undertaken with Clotilde Twagiramariya of Rwanda on our book, *What Women Do in Wartime: Gender and Conflict in Africa*. The participants were invited to share their experiences and provide information on what happens to women in the aftermath of civil war, which is even less well known than women's experiences in wartime. What are women's specific needs in the wake of war? When so many women are displaced persons or refugees, which institutions and what kinds of organizations can respond to their needs? These questions are particularly acute after civil wars in which health and education services and service personnel are often 'military' targets. In the current economic climate, which emphasizes private sector solutions and self-reliance, women have limited expectations that governments can or will provide the services they need.

**Workshop Objectives**

The initial objectives of the Workshop grew out of discussions with the organizers (Endnote 2) of the Conference on the Aftermath: Women in Post-war Reconstruction to be held in 20-22 July 1999 at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, represented at the Workshop by Anu Pillay.

- Motivated by a belief that women's common experiences of suffering offer the best hope of reconciliation, the first objective is to bring together women on all sides of civil conflicts to initiate a dialogue on healing.

- In the belief that we can learn by comparing international experiences, the second objective is to develop a multi-disciplinary understanding of healing and transformation, and to develop as many different ideas as possible to address the diverse problems of aftermath experiences.

- Similarly, we believe that we have much to learn from the many disciplines and professions that we represent to develop theories that will enable full healing and empowerment among survivors in grass-roots organizations.

- A fourth objective is to develop strategies to influence the process of democratic representation of women's interests in achieving durable peace.

- Finally, mindful of how war changes relations between women and men, between women and their families, and between women and their communities, we seek ways to further the social transformation of those relations in the context of the state and society.
The Agenda

On 12 December the Workshop opened with a plenary session to hear Mme Aichatou Ben Wahab, who represented AGADJI, and Zara Elh Mamadou dit ‘Alitane’ of TANAT (both non-governmental organizations); they spoke of the participation of Touareg women in the Niger rebellion and their experiences in the aftermath. A lively discussion followed on how the rebels were dealt with, their political and social reintegration, the status of so-called minorities, the role of foreign powers, and how women were forgotten in the aftermath. We then broke into small groups to discuss the five major themes of the Workshop:

- **Violence against women** (protecting women during conflict and in the aftermath; violence prevention; healing from the trauma);

- **Women organizing in wartime** for survival and in peacetime to build the new social order;

- **From reconstruction to transformation**: import and impact of war-related shifts in gender relations; changes in material status of women (for example, poverty, loss of access to land); demographic changes (for example, more widows, fewer men, more polygamous marriages, rising birth rates);

- **Healing**: problems of identity, solidarity, and reconciliation (ethnic/religious identity in intermarriage and in the aftermath; women’s solidarity across ethnic/religious lines; the roles in healing of truth and reconciliation commissions, international criminal tribunals, and national courts); and,

- **Relation of the state to society in the aftermath** (new legal and service structures, for example, legal reform of women’s access to land, public health services).

On the morning of 13 December, with Etweda Cooper presiding, the participants met to consider and adopt the following report, which reflects the workshop discussions.

**Violence Against Women**

*Protecting women during conflict and in the aftermath,*

*preventing violence, and healing from the trauma.*

**A Typology of Violence Against Women**

We started with a discussion of Elizabeth Bai-Marro’s paper on violence against women (see annex), in which she divided violence into two categories: domestic violence and sexual violence. She talked of the protective strategies that could be used during and after conflict and offered some suggestions for prevention and healing, which are discussed below.

The group agreed that it would be useful to outline a typology of forms of violence that occur during and after conflict. In this typology we noted that the violence inflicted on women is different from the violence to which men are subjected and that the violence against women is both explicitly and implicitly sexual. The typology we drew is a veritable alphabet of violence against women.

**Explicit violence includes:**

- Systematic rape (men use rape as a way to dishonour and humiliate not just women, but the enemy group);
- Forced pregnancy (to leave the enemy’s marker);
- Shooting women through the vagina (rendering women infertile and ensuring the end of the group’s ability to reproduce);
- Forcing children to witness their mother’s rape;
- Gang rape;
Mutilation of women's limbs;
• Cutting open the pregnant womb and killing the fetus;
• Sexual slavery;
• Forced labour (cooking for the military).

Implicit violence includes:

• Abandonment of women left to fend for themselves and their children;
• Harassment and intimidation by police and military;
• Vulnerability to opportunistic men (bandits, rapists, thieves);
• Discrimination by social and governmental institutions (denial of access to media);
• Forced prostitution (which increases in the aftermath of conflict);
• Silence of leaders on issues of prostitution makes them accomplices;
• Dispossession of women by looters (who are protected and vindicated by leaders);
• Verbal abuse and disrespect of women politicians by ruling government and media;
• Denial of access to resources, restriction to women of certain political affiliations;
• Sexual harassment of women who join the armed forces (promotion tied to sexual favours);
• Denial of abortion on demand in cases of pregnancy resulting from systematic rape;
• Rejection of women victims of systematic rape, rejection of children conceived in rape;
• Imprisonment of women of all ages, without recourse to justice or outside assistance;
• Lack of research or reliable documentation on state of women before, during and after war (this amounts to a conspiracy of leaders to maintain silence).

Protecting Women Against Violence

We returned to Elizabeth's suggestions for protecting women during conflict: she said that women should have recourse to the regular defence force or army of the country (buttressed by a strong women's platform in the parliament); a crash course in basic self-defence; and the assistance of a neutral party willing to minister to both sides. After conflict, women can be protected by immediate provision of food and clothing, by involvement in work programs, and by establishing camps for homeless women. The group raised the following questions and discussed the following points:

1) What is the responsibility of the state in protecting women and children?
2) What are the responsibilities of citizens?
3) Should we not look to such social forces as human rights organizations instead of defence forces (army and police)?
4) Could women's organizations be encouraged to put pressure on international human rights organizations?
5) There is a need to sensitize the army;
6) There is a need to establish pressure groups and lobby groups;
7) We need to be proactive during peacetime and to sensitize and educate women and children;

Participants made the point very strongly that this Workshop should plan something concrete and sustainable that they could take back to their countries. The group discussed the urgent need to create the beginning of a strong network that could do the following:

• Put pressure on states through solidarity with other national and international agencies;
• Lobby for support for women in the country that is in conflict;
• Assist with training and sensitization programs of healing, education, etc.

• Popularize rights and the gendered nature of problems that women face during and after conflict;

• Receive and disseminate information.

Other possible activities discussed were:

• Writing formal letters to government leaders and international agencies informing them of the creation of the network;

• Coordination of actions in different countries;

• Compilation of country reports into a regional newsletter

Healing

Healing and Reconciliation

While there is an urgent need for reconciliation in nations emerging from conflicts, there is also the need for repentance and some forms of punishments, as well as rehabilitation programs for ex-combatants. For example, ex-combatants were successfully reintegrated into military, paramilitary and other societal structures in Niger. This is not the case in Sierra Leone.

The participants raised questions about:

• Child soldiers and how they should be punished afterwards. Are they responsible or are those who recruited them responsible for the violent acts they commit? The point was made that the children are often coerced or drugged.

• Compensation for women and children who are not part of the decision to create conflicts but who suffer the most from violence, while soldiers receive compensation and aid.

• Should there be a national consensus on how punishment should be meted out to those who are still committing atrocities in some countries?

Discussion of Strategies for Reintegration

Participants suggested and discussed the following strategies:

• Artificial barriers of ethnicity and religion could be transcended; for example, Nigeria has experimented with a Youth Service Corp. which sends young people out from their home base to serve in other regions.

• National conferences that mediate integration between civilians and the military could advance the healing process. Participants from Sierra Leone gave the example of a conference during which members of the disbanded army publicly apologized to the population;

• In another example, a conference brought together wives of ex-combatants to meet with women from centers for displaced persons;

• Religious institutions could play an important role by preaching peace. However, they too need to be conscientized first because they can be divisive as in the case of Sierra Leone. The Interfaith Mediation Committee of Liberia was cited as an example of different faiths working together to bring peace;

• The role of the media was raised. There is a need to conscientize the media since they are a powerful tool for educating and sensitizing the populace;

• Mass education through interpersonal contact was discussed as a way to awareness and to advance the healing process;
• Trials and tribunals could be part of the healing process, but they also have the potential to be negative factors. In Sierra Leone, twenty-four alleged collaborators were executed without due process;

• Creating networks for women to support each other was considered to be important. Women could demonstrate against small arms sales to Africa by Northern nations, against dictatorial governments, against cross-border incursions and rebel collaboration, against rampant recruitment of soldiers and the creation of professional mercenaries;

• Economic empowerment of women through adult education and training in income-generating skills would assist in alleviating poverty. Women-initiated ‘susu clubs’ (tontines, stokvels) were mentioned as a useful form of microlending;

• Resettlement should be voluntary: though women often welcome returnees after conflicts, whether women relocate to their original residences or remain where they are at war's end should be their choice. Laws may be needed to protect women and others wishing to return to their original homes after conflict, since in many cases new occupants harass them and prevent them from resettling;

• The lack of formal education need not be a barrier to political participation. For example, during a recent election of the National Women’s Secretariat of NGOs in Liberia, three unlettered sisters were elected to the Board of the Secretariat;

• It was agreed that talking helps prevent and resolve disputes. Communities should engage in more dialogue.

Healing from the Trauma of Violence

Participants discussed the following points about treatment and healing:

• Alleviation of poverty and reconciliation are not enough to facilitate healing. The example of inadequate support provided after testimony at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa was cited. Many participants said that while we have to forgive we should not forget, in order to prevent a recurrence of events. People do need to talk openly and honestly about what happened in order to conscientize ourselves and others.

• We need to look at healing holistically. The following emerged as aspects of the process:

  • Sensitization of the population to create awareness of the consequences of war;

  • Education to foster mutual tolerance and to understand the gendered nature of violence;

  • Networking for solidarity and mutual support;

  • Taking responsibility for our roles as women being the primary educators of children;

  • Using caution with religious bodies as healing mechanisms. For example, the church could not protect nuns who were raped in the Congo, and the Catholic Church in Rwanda denied abortion on demand to rape victims;

  • Finding creative and appropriate ways to heal in different situations and in different cases. For example, South Africans considered Wilderness and Adventure Therapy a successful experiment to reintegrate militarized youth; and shelters built in Casamance
helped rehabilitate people who were victims of landmines;

• We need to understand rape as a socially constructed experience. The intensity of the trauma is dependent on the response of the society. For example, in post-war Berlin German society did not blame women for the mass rapes that occurred; instead they offered women abortion on demand and as a result, they minimized the trauma (physical and psychological), whereas in Rwanda society's rejection of raped women intensified the trauma;

• To avoid women individualizing or personalizing their experience, there is a need for a political analysis of traumatic experiences to be integrated into the healing process;

• There is a need to conscientize the whole community. For example, some Algerian women raped by combatants were killed by their parents when they returned home;

• We need to understand how patriarchy ties honour to virginity and women's sexuality.

**Participants wished to include in the final report several other points discussed:**

• We questioned whether orphanages are a good solution for child victims. The argument against orphanages was that they alienate children from society. Other participants felt that post-conflict economic crises prevent Africans from assuming traditional family responsibilities;

• The roles of Northern industrial nations and international agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in creating or supporting political conflict for their own interests was raised. Women's organizations could network to put pressure on these governments and agencies to compensate civilian victims, and we should try to prevent future interference;

• Women are tax-paying citizens and as such must exercise their rights by demanding that their governments support initiatives for peace and make adequate healing mechanisms available to women;

• Women need to join forces and use the tools that women have to accomplish our goals.

At the end of the Workshop, the group unanimously adopted the Declaration that creates the African Women's Anti-War Coalition/Coalition de Femmes Africaines Contre la Guerre (see annex). The group named Codou Bop and Anu Pillay as Co-coordinators of the Coalition, and the following women as national contact persons and alternates: Barbara Koffa and Etweda Cooper (Liberia), Aichatou Ben Wahab and Zara Elh Mamadou dit 'Alitane' (Niger), Marguerite Coly Keny and Marie Jeanne King (Senegal), and Margaret Nelson-Williams and Elizabeth Bai-Marro (Sierra Leone).

For the final evaluation, the participants returned to their initial expressions of what they hoped to gain from the Workshop. Codou Bop showed how the desire to create a network of solidarity, which more than half of the participants had wanted, was realized, as was the desire to share experiences. Reflecting both the specific local situations of women in different countries and the need for government response, the wish to find ways to heal war trauma was more difficult to fulfil, as were the hopes for more personal involvement in the peace process.
eration among participants was notable, especially the rapid production of workshop reports and the declaration. The difficulties mentioned were the realizations that government assistance is necessary and not forthcoming and that treating trauma is not easy. Practical difficulties revolved around the tight three-day schedule and the wish for more time, especially for 'sightseeing'. Everyone seemed to approve of the agenda, though several participants said they would have liked more discussion of the causes of war with a view to prevention, and a larger public audience. Many women wanted a longer, larger conference, with the representation of more countries.

Declaration of African Women's Anti-War Coalition, Dakar, Senegal, 13 December 1998

We, the participants of the West African Workshop on Women in the Aftermath of Civil War held in Dakar, Senegal from 11-13 December, 1998,

Recalling:

• The objectives and principles of the United Nations Charter,

• The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the central concern of which is human beings and the defence of their human rights, as well as the African Charter on nation's rights and human rights,

• The constitutive acts of UNESCO and the World Health Organization,

• The recommendations of the World Conference on Human Rights (held at Vienna, June 1993), of the World Summit on Sustainable Social Development (Copenhagen, March, 1994), of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, September, 1994), of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, September, 1995),

• The International Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW),

• The resolution on the cultures of violence and peace adopted by the 28th session of the UNESCO general conference held in November 1995, and the resolutions adopted during the 49th and 50th sessions of the World Health Assembly in 1996 and 1997 which recognized violence as a public health issue.

Noting:

The rapid spread of conflicts throughout Africa which have severe consequences for populations in general and for women and children in particular;

The increase in violence, particularly against women and children, and the specific nature of the violence against women;

The inadequate and insufficient commitment and political will on the part of governments and international agencies to defend and protect women's human rights during conflicts and in the aftermath;

The lack of appropriate government-supported mechanisms to address the consequences of violence against women and ongoing violence in the aftermath;

The persistent gender inequalities in African societies which continue to deny women access to resources and to redress of wrongs.

Considering:

The responsibility of the state to protect all citizens, especially the most vulnerable, in this case women and children;
That an understanding of violence against women and action to end this violence should begin with local and regional initiatives;

That reconciliation and the alleviation of poverty are not enough to facilitate healing in the aftermath;

That there is a need to be proactive during peacetime to sensitize and educate women, children and the general population including the armed forces to the consequences of warfare.

We, the participants, therefore recommend to all governments:

That they make a firm commitment to end conflicts worldwide and particularly in Africa;

That they take full responsibility for the facilitation of holistic reconstruction (social, psychological, physical and economic) of society, taking particular note of women's needs for special reparations;

That they recognize and enforce national, regional and international laws and treaties pertaining to the protection of women and children;

To international agencies and Northern industrial governments:

That they acknowledge the roles they play in creating or supporting political conflict for their own interests;

That they compensate victims, particularly women and children, and;

That they work towards the prevention of conflict in the future;

We, the participants, have therefore resolved to:

1) Establish this network of African women opposed to war, which we have named the African Women's Anti-War Coalition;

2) Support the Declaration of Algiers adopted at the International Colloquium on All Forms of Contemporary Violence and the Culture of Peace on 22 September 1997 and all other such declarations and initiatives;

3) Use the African Women's Anti-War Coalition to:

Put pressure on states, through solidarity with other national and international agencies, to end present conflicts and to prevent future conflicts;

Lobby for support for women in the country that is in conflict;

Assist with training and sensitization programs for human rights, healing and education;

Popularize rights and the gendered nature of problems that women face during and after conflict;

Receive and disseminate information regionally and internationally.

Endnotes

1. The Advisory Board comprised Professor George Bond, Director of the African Institute, Columbia University; Jennifer Davis, Director of the Africa Fund; Dr. Paul Farmer, Director of the Institute of Health and Social Justice, Harvard University; and Dr. Jack Geiger, Director of Physicians for Social Responsibility.

2. The organizers of the Johannesburg Conference are Dr Sheila Meintjes (Political Studies), Anusanthee Pillay (Student Affairs), and Lilian Kimani (Public and Development Management) of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa, and Dr Meredith Turshen (School of Planning and Public Policy) Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA.
Declaration de la Coalition Anti-guerre des Femmes Africaines

Dakar, Sénégal, 11 au 13 décembre 1998

Nous les participantes à l'atelier sur 'Femmes et les séquelles de la guerre civile' tenu du 11 au 13 décembre 1998 à Dakar,

Rappelons.

Les buts et principes de la Charte des Nations Unies,

- La déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme, qui place la personne humaine, la promotion et la défense de ses droits, au centre de ses préoccupations, ainsi que la Charte africaine des droits de l'homme et des peuples,

- Les actes constitutifs de l'UNESCO et de l'Organisation Mondiale de la Santé (OMS),

- Les recommandations de la conférence mondiale des droits de l'homme (Vienne, juin 1993), du Sommet mondial sur le développement social durable (Copenhague, mars 1994), de la conférence internationale sur la population et développement (Le Caire, septembre 1994), et de la 4e Conférence mondiale des femmes (Beijing, septembre 1995),

- Les conventions internationales relatives aux droits de l'enfant et à l'élimination de toutes les formes de discriminations à l'égard des femmes,

- La résolution consacrée au phénomène de la violence et à la culture de la paix adoptée par la 28e session de la Conférence générale de l'UNESCO en novembre 1995, et les résolutions des 49e et 50e sessions de l'Assemblée Mondiale de la Santé en 1996 et 1997 plaçant la violence parmi les préoccupations de santé publique.

Constatons:

- La rapide prolifération dans toute l'Afrique de conflits dont les conséquences sont sévères pour les populations en général et pour les femmes et les enfants en particulier,

- La percée de la violence particulièrement à l'égard des femmes et des enfants, et la particularité de la forme de violence utilisée à l'égard des femmes,

- L'inadéquation et l'insuffisance d'engagement et de volonté politique de la part des gouvernements et institutions internationales pour défendre et protéger les droits humains de la femme pendant et après les périodes de conflits,

- Le manque de mécanismes gouvernementaux appropriés pour traiter des conséquences des violences à l'égard des femmes pendant les conflits et perpétables dans la période après-guerre,

- La persévérance de l'inégalité entre les (deux) sexes dans les sociétés africaines qui continue à nier l'accès aux ressources et au redressement aux femmes,

Considérons:

- La responsabilité de l'Etat à protéger tous les citoyens, en particulier les plus vulnérables, dans ce cas les femmes et les enfants,

- Qu'une compréhension de la violence à l'égard des femmes et des mesures pour mettre fin à cette violence doivent commencer avec l'appui des initiatives locales et régionales,
• Que la réduction de la pauvreté et la réconciliation à elles seules ne sont pas suffisantes pour faciliter la guérison dans la période après-guerre,

• Qu'il faudrait d'être proactive pendant la période de paix afin de sensibiliser et éduquer les femmes, les enfants et la population en général tout en incluant les forces armées,

Par conséquent, nous les participantes recommandons:

à tous les gouvernements:

• Qu'ils s'engagent fermement à mettre fin aux conflits mondiaux et en Afrique en particulier,

• Qu'ils prennent une responsabilité totale pour faciliter une reconstruction d'ensemble (sociale, psychologique, physique et économique) de la société, en prenant particulièrement compte des besoins des femmes pour des réparations spéciales,

• Qu'ils reconnaissent et fassent valoir les lois nationales, régionales, et internationales et les traités relatifs à la protection des femmes et enfants,

• aux institutions internationales et aux gouvernements du monde industrialisé du Nord:

• Qu'ils admettent le rôle qu'ils ont joué (ou jouent) dans la création ou leur appui politique aux conflits pour leurs propres intérêts,

• Qu'ils indemnisent les victimes, en particulier les femmes et les enfants,

• Qu'ils oeuvrent pour la prévention de conflits dans l'avenir.

Par conséquent, nous les participantes avons pris la résolution:

• D'établir un réseau de femmes africaines qui s'opposent à la guerre sous l’appellation 'La Coalition Anti-Guerre des Femmes Africaines',

• De soutenir la Déclaration d’Alger adoptée lors du Colloque International sur les Formes Contemporaines de la Violence et Culture de la Paix tenu du 20 au 22 septembre 1997 et toutes autres déclarations et initiatives de même nature,

D’utiliser le réseau ‘La Coalition Anti-Guerre des Femmes Africaines’ pour:

• Faire pression sur les Etats, en solidarité avec d’autres organisations internationales, pour mettre fin au conflits en cours et prévenir les conflits dans l’avenir,

• Faire pression pour l’octroi de soutien aux femmes dans le pays où le conflit est en cours,

• Aider avec les programmes de formation et sensibilisation en matière des droits de l’homme, guérison et éducation,

• Vulgariser l’éducation sur les droits et la nature des problèmes de préjugés liés au genre auxquelles les femmes sont confrontées pendant et après les conflits,

• Recevoir et vulgariser les informations à l’échelle régionale et internationale.

Dakar, le 13 décembre 1998
New Hope for Somalia? The Building Block Approach
Matt Bryden

Somalis may be forgiven if they have become wary of foreign help in putting their shattered country back together. Since the absurd colonial dismemberment of the Somali nation between five sovereign states, external involvement in Somalia has ranged from the mediocre to the disastrous. The anaemic preparations by the British and Italian governments for Somali independence and statehood, the enthusiastic support of both cold war blocs in the training and armament of the small country’s security services and armed forces, and the United Nation’s ruinous attempts at nation-building are notable benchmarks in a long history of foreign meddlers - some of them sinister, some benign, others simply incompetent - but all of them ultimately unsuccessful.

It is thus somewhat surprising that new hope for a lasting settlement of the Somali crisis should come from the outside - all the more so that it should emerge from an unexceptional diplomatic body endowed with the cumbersome label ‘Committee on Somalia of the IGAD Partners Forum’. That this Committee comprises representatives of so many interlopers from Somalia’s unhappy past - among them Italy, Ethiopia, Egypt, and the United Nations - only compounds the novelty of the moment.

The inspiration for the breakthrough is to be found in a position paper drafted in late 1998 by the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs - an institution with a decidedly uneven track record in matters Somali. Reluctantly accepted by some other members of the Committee, the essence of the Ethiopian proposal lies nearly buried in the concluding paragraphs of the text of the Committee’s second meeting, appearing almost as an afterthought. It notes simply that ‘local administrative structures could constitute building blocks’ in the restoration of peace and statehood to Somalia and that ‘an important role should be played by civil society – the emergence and role of which should be encouraged by the international community’.

Banal as such an observation may seem, the import of its underlying logic should not be underestimated. External actors have spent much of the past decade trying to re-impose the kind of centralised, unitary government that led to Somalia’s civil war and prolonged misery in the first place. Their gradual retreat from ‘top-down’ solutions and their slow collective embrace of what has become known as the ‘building block approach’ opens a new window of opportunity for external involvement in Somalia.

External Engagement in Political Reconstruction: A Brief Overview

An early precursor to the ‘building block’ strategy was articulated by Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun, Special Representative of then UN Secretary General Boutros-Boutros Ghali, in mid-1992. Confronted with the menace of widespread famine and a highly polarised political environment, Sahnoun advocated using Somalia’s four major ports for the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Although ostensibly an operational decision, Sahnoun’s reference to Berbera, Boosaaso, Muqdisho and Kismaayo deliberately corresponded with the four main power blocks existent at that time: the SNM-led government of the newly declared ‘Republic of Somaliland’ in Northwest Somalia; the SSDF faction controlling Northeast Somalia; the rival factions of the USC faction in the former capital, Muqdisho; and the unstable Daarod coalition based in Kismaayo. But lack of support from within the UN secretariat and the various operational agencies precipitated Sahnoun’s resignation and the abandonment of his painstaking diplomatic groundwork. In the frenzied ac-
tivity that accompanied the deployment of international forces, Sahnoun’s successors would pursue the logic of centralisation to such an extent that many foreigners considered the name of the former capital, Muqdisho to be synonymous with the entire country.

The idea of a more decentralised approach resurfaced briefly in March 1993 at a reconciliation conference for Somalia organised by the UN in Addis Ababa. The Canadian Ambassador led a group of donor countries in lobbying for greater support to areas of relative peace and stability – an indirect reference to Somaliland and Northeast Somalia. The proposal was tabled and endorsed, but UNOSOM’s leadership wasn’t listening: it was too engrossed in its own extravagant plans to construct a state around Somalia’s burgeoning warlord class.

UNOSOM’s political section was thorough in its dubious work. When then operation withdrew in early 1995, it counted among its achievements the substitution of propaganda for diplomacy, the exaltation of the political cult of warlordism, and the destabilisation of Somalia’s principal reservoirs of peace and stability: Somaliland and the Northeast. It would be almost two years before either territory retrieved its pre-UNOSOM stability.

Aid workers were quicker than diplomats to come to terms with Somalia’s fragmented political landscape. Their vocabulary soon came to reflect an understanding of the society’s ‘radical localisation’. In 1995, the Somali Aid Coordinating Body (or SACB) established a ‘code of conduct’ defining the conditions for external assistance to ‘responsible local authorities’ – a term that allowed aid agencies and their donors to circumnavigate the claims of various leaders to national leadership. In a similar vein the United Nations system divided its presence in Somalia between zones of ‘recovery’, ‘transition’, and ‘crisis’.

Tentative as such efforts may have been, they symbolised a gradual dawning of awareness among Somalia’s aid partners of the importance – and inevitability – of sub-national dynamics in a collapsed state. International interest – and aid resources – began to shift away from Muqdisho and towards the north, where security was comparatively better than in much of the south, and where functional administrations had begun to emerge.

Any suggestion that political engagement might take its cue from the humanitarian was quickly dispelled by high profile attempts in 1996 and 1997 by Ethiopia and Egypt respectively to restore central government to Somalia. Though divergent in their choice of partners and power-sharing paradigms, both privileged the faction leaders as legitimate interlocutors for the Somali people – a misapprehension that would ultimately undermine both initiatives.

These most recent failures seem to have injected a new pragmatism into international efforts to restore Somalia to the global community of nations. The facts on the ground speak for themselves: regional and local governments are becoming reality, national government remains a chimera. Muqdisho has lagged behind the rest of Somalia in terms of security, stability, and respect for the rule of law, implying that its leaders may not in fact hold the keys to national reconciliation and recovery. The prospects for a revival of unitary government have been damaged, perhaps irrevocably, by Somaliland’s secessionist ambition and Puntland’s declaration of a federal ‘state’.

**Building Blocks: Reading Between the Lines**

In examining one of the ‘clan maps’ of Somalia that have proliferated on the walls of embassies and aid agencies in recent years, it becomes tempting to define ‘building blocks’ strictly in terms of kinship. A future Somali state might
thus resemble a patchwork of semi-autonomous territories defined in whole or in part by clan affiliation, leading to a breakdown roughly as follows:

• An Isaaq dominated state in the northwest, corresponding roughly (if not exactly) to the boundaries of former British Somaliland;

• In the Northeast, a principally Mijerteen polity, involving some (if not all) of the broader Harti community in Sanaag and Sool regions;

• A Digil-Mirifle territory centred on (but not necessarily restricted to) the regions of Bay and Bakool;

• Juubaland, an admixture of groups from the Juuba valley, possibly extending as far north as Gedo region;

• An elongated central territory inhabited principally by the Hawiye;

• A national capital (probably, but not necessarily Muqdisho) administered separately as a cosmopolitan hub for all Somalis.

But a map-making exercise in ethnic paint-by-numbers, whether in Somalia or Bosnia, is no substitute for the difficult business of mending relations, building trust and consensus, and developing the common frames of reference that underpin post-war rebuilding. Militia leaders and their cronies will remain an obstacle to progress, whether they are labelled with place-names or factional acronyms. The rationale for the building block approach must therefore go beyond a neat formula for the administrative subdivision of Somalia along ethnic or clan lines. What matters most is what cannot be shown on maps: the quality and legitimacy of national and sub-national leadership; the effectiveness of local administrative arrangements; the restoration of basic human rights and the rule of law; a social and political scale of values based on accommodation instead of aggression, compromise instead of coercion. Only if the building block approach goes beyond the lines on maps to reach the spaces in between, can it be expected to make a real contribution to the restoration of peace and government in the former Somali Republic.

The fact that two ‘building blocks’ already exist lends substance to the model. Somaliland and Puntland represent a qualitatively different type of leadership and a manifestly more successful paradigm of political reconstruction than in the rest of Somalia. In both cases, factional structures have been gradually dismantled and the political leadership has been obliged to seek a mandate to rule. A social compact, combining elements of traditional xeer (customary law) with contemporary constitutional models defines the powers, prerogatives and limitations of government. The comparative advantages of having chosen this path seem clear: both areas have far outpaced the remainder of the country with respect to security, economic recovery and administrative development.

**Somaliland**

The most mature of the building blocks, the self-declared Republic of Somaliland, was established in 1991 following the victory of the guerrillas of the SNM in their ten-year struggle with the forces of the Barre regime. Although ostensibly committed to the unity of the Somali state, the Isaaq-based SNM was infuriated by the unilateral declaration of a government by the USC in Muqdisho. On 18 May 1991, the SNM declared the dissolution of Somalia’s 1960 union and the restoration of Somaliland’s sovereignty as an independent state. Unrecognised internationally and disparaged by southern Somali leadership, successive Somaliland governments have nevertheless presented articulate historical and legal arguments in support of their case, and have made considerable progress in
establishing de facto administration throughout much of Somaliland's territory.

Somaliland's success can be attributed to a number of factors, not least the commitment of many Issaq to independence from Somalia. Historically, the separate development of the northwest under British colonial rule and subsequent estrangement from the machinery of state power helped to foster a distinct sense of identity. In more recent times, the Issaq experience of collective suffering at the hands of the state and the decade-long, popular struggle of the SNM have combined to engender feelings of both political autonomy and economic self-reliance. The indifference of the international community and the constant challenge from the south have only served to heighten popular commitment to the symbols of their sovereignty: government, territory, and the vocabulary of nationhood.

Behind the liberation rhetoric in Somaliland lies the quietly stabilising influence of political maturity. Unique among Somali factions, the SNM engaged in nearly a decade of uninterrupted struggle. The civil war served as a cruel university in the arts of political mobilisation and popular leadership, preparing the SNM better than most for the challenges of peacetime leadership. The SSDF struggle predated that of the SNM, but was interrupted in 1985 by internal feuding and the detention of the Front's leadership by the Ethiopian government. Most other factions date from 1989 or later, and failed to develop the ideological platform or base of support required to transform military victory into working administration and responsible government.

Nevertheless, large parts of Somaliland remain beyond the remit of functional administration - phenomenon which can be explained by a number of key factors. First, the relative poverty of the Somaliland administration does not permit institutional expansion; indeed, government workers are severely underpaid, and most offices function on only a token budget. Second, allegiance to Somaliland is spread unevenly amongst the territory's various clan groups. A significant number of representatives from the eastern Harti clans have declared their loyalty to Puntland, Somaliland's recently established neighbour to the east. Third, non-Issaq groups share neither the Issaq experience of persecution, exile and popular struggle, nor their enthusiasm for independence, and have thus tended to approach the problem of political reconstruction with less conviction. Lastly, many non-Issaq fear their own subordination to the Issaq within a primarily Issaq state - a concern the Somaliland leadership have yet to address convincingly.

Somaliland's commitment to independence from the rest of Somalia suggests that the label 'building block' may yet prove to be overly optimistic. Few Issaq envision Somaliland within a larger Somalia, although the possibility remains the subject of discreet discussion in political and commercial circles. But Somaliland's unique success in retrieving de facto sovereignty, establishing the organs of government, and creating a climate for extraordinary economic growth in the absence of bilateral economic assistance is of tremendous exemplary value for those who would restore government to all or part of the former Somalia.

**Puntland**

Founded on 1 July 1998 at a congress of representatives from the Harti Daarood clans, the North-eastern state of Puntland perceives itself, not as a secessionist polity like Somaliland, but as the cornerstone of a future federal Somalia. The long delay (7 years) in establishing an administration following the collapse of the Barre government can be attributed to a number of factors, but it seems likely that the intervening years have served as
a ‘university’ for the Mijerteen leadership in much the same way that the liberation struggle did for the SNM.

Another contrast with Somaliland, whose territory is based on historical precedent (its borders are those in existence at the moment of its independence from the British), is that the essence of Puntland’s identity is kinship and its territory is consequently defined by the living space of the Harti clans. Although attractive to many, this Somali version of ethnic federalism is not without its drawbacks. To the west it has the potential to generate dangerous tensions with Somaliland over the territory inhabited by the Harti sub-clans of Dhulbahante and Warsengeli; to the south it risks a confrontation with the Habar Gidir who contend that the living space claimed by the Harti infringes upon their own lands. Optimists thus see in Puntland a brave new ethnic model for Somali self-government; pessimists see a newly built house with two walls already on fire.

Since the establishment of the Puntland administration, the SSDF has officially been dismantled, but its informal structures have remained largely intact, underpinning the fragile organs of the government. Like the SNM before them, the SSDF leadership have surrendered much of their power within the newly established administration, but many of the senior faces remain the same. Among the Dhulbahante and Warsengeli clans, declared support for Puntland has yet to be matched by political developments on the ground – a fact only partly explained by the rival influence of Somaliland. The likelihood of divergent leadership perspectives, and incomplete consensus among the Dhulbahante and Warsengeli populations may yet prove decisive in Puntland’s political future.

Central & Southern Somalia

Building blocks in the south remain for the time being in the realm of the hypothetical. What follows below should thus be understood as speculation rather than prayer or prophesy.

One possible ‘block’ seems to be the mainly Digil-Mirifle area centred on the administrative regions of Bay and Bakool. A heterogeneous agglomeration of chiefly agropastoral groups, the Digil-Mirifle have come increasingly to define themselves in terms of their shared experience of marginalisation, persecution, and suffering at the hands of other clans. The Digil-Mirifle leadership have agitated since before Somalia’s independence for some kind of autonomy within a federal arrangement, and nearly realised their ambitions in 1995 when they established a ‘Supreme Governing Council’ for their areas (the precise demarcation of these areas proved controversial). The experiment was aborted when rivalry among various groups opened the door to occupation of parts of Bay and Bakool (including the principal towns of Baydhowa and Xuddur) by militia under the leadership of General Mohamed Farah Aydiid. Challenged by the newly-formed Rahanweyn Resistance Army (RRA), Aydiid’s faction has found occupation to be a violent and costly enterprise. A return to a situation approximating the 1995 status quo would seem to be essential to settlement of the conflict, and possibly a defining element in the future configuration of Somalia.

In Somalia’s southwest, along the Kenyan border, the strategic and material resources at stake in the Juuba make the area the scene of one of the most complex and seemingly intractable conflict systems in the former Somalia. Most attention has naturally concentrated on struggle between different groups for control of Kismaayo port and its revenue potential. But the fertile farmlands along the banks of the Juuba are also the object of a multitude of claims and counter-claims, based on successive waves of land acquisition by different groups from within and without the valley. The ongoing fighting in the southern valley has
involved not only the inhabitants of the areas, but also members of the Marehan clan from northern Gedo region – implying that a comprehensive agreement on power – and resource-sharing along the length of the valley will be required before peace is finally restored and Juuba can take its place alongside other building blocks in a reconstituted Somali state.

Perhaps most complicated is the future of the central regions dominated by the Hawiye clan, including Muqdisho, the former capital. Long the focus of international attention, the persistent struggle for control of Muqdisho between its Hawiye custodians has routinely been confused with the contest for national leadership. Not surprisingly, the Muqdisho-based factions have encouraged this confusion, which favours their role in any national power-sharing agreement. They have also been among the most reluctant converts to a decentralised political model, arguing that it may lead to the break of the Somali state. International focus on the former capital and its politicians has indulged such misconceptions, impeding progress towards a comprehensive and broadly acceptable political settlement.

The recent formation of an administration for the Baanadir area suggests that the Hawiye groups have begun to seek a local solution before proceeding to the national level. However, progress seems to be suspended between the dismantling of the factional structures and the development of a common administration. Today, faction leaders and municipal government cohabit in the same confined political space, a situation that will probably have to change before any durable solution can be reached.

The composition of the Muqdisho administration also complicates the long-term prospects for a settlement since it assigns a predominantly Hawiye leadership. Most other groups insist that the future capital of Somalia must be a cosmopolitan place with a nationally balanced government – and that Muqdisho’s eligibility as national capital will depend on its meeting these criteria. But few doubt that reconciliation among the Hawiye must precede their participation in a national settlement and that either together or separately, the central regions and Baanadir coast represent a key building block in a future peace.

Where Next?

What if the ‘building block approach’ does in fact become the defining paradigm of international engagement in Somalia? Will it help to bring Somalia closer to a lasting peace? Sadly, the answer is probably not. International enthusiasm for a quick fix in the Somali crisis has too often prevailed over more sober reflection. If past experience is any indication, then the laudable intentions of the IGAD Committee to acknowledge Somalia’s political diversity and to engage ‘civil society’ are likely to be diluted beyond recognition by the fractious and largely unimaginative functionaries charged with carrying them out. Foreign governments and their envoys remain too quick to personalise Somali politics, exaggerating the role of individual politicians at the expense of their putative constituents. True, it would be naïve to wish the faction leaders away: their military assets, their networks of patronage, and their sensationalist political tactics render them indelible features of the Somali scene. But unless they are fixed within a broader dialogue – a political space they must share with other leaders of Somali society – then the promise of the building block approach will never be realised.

Nor is successful diplomatic engagement sufficient to call a state back into existence. Positive diplomacy can indeed create a climate in which new public institutions can emerge – can even encourage these institutions to be democratic and responsible in their orientation.
But the restoration of the governmental structures requires the confidence and investment of the people. Somali society has spent the past few years denying its leaders the power they might abuse; reversing that trend will mean convincing the people that it is safe to do so. A power-sharing arrangement between the prime architects of Somalia’s misery is unlikely to achieve that.

The real strength of the building block approach is simply its recognition that Somalia’s factions are slowly, inexorably being overtaken by more responsible, stable and popular administrations. These local governments are typically the products of lengthy, broadly-based consultative or ‘electoral’ processes; their powers are encoded in social compacts that combine elements of modern constitutions and traditional ‘xeer’; and their powers are circumscribed by the terms of the ‘compact’ and the need to maintain consensus. Perhaps even more importantly, however, they derive their legitimacy primarily from the explicit consent of the governed; not from access to arms or external resources, nor from their participation in international reconciliation fora. It is in regard to this latter point, that the prospects for the success of the ‘building block’ approach are most clear.

Whatever the international community does, it seems likely that the trend towards cohesive socio-political blocs will continue within Somalia. As popular fatigue with predatory and irresponsible politics grows, so does the authority of the factions wane and alternative leadership acquire experience, confidence, and skill. A new Somalia is beginning to take shape. If foreign powers are not prepared to play midwife to it, they should at least stand aside and let it come to pass.

---

National Parks & Biodiversity Conservation: Problems with Participatory Forestry Management

Silas A. Alashi

Silas Alashi lives and works in Nigeria where he has seen community conservation and development projects at first hand. He argues that local communities have their own ideas about empowerment and participation, which differ from those of interested outsiders as park management, government and donors. He suggests that this difference, and management’s lack of information about community agendas, is a major reason why participatory management is not succeeding at present.

Conservation is about whether shrinking forest resources shall be ‘mined’ to death now, whether they should be used more sustainably so present and future generations benefit, or whether they should be preserved in perpetuity by foregoing all use. The conservation literature contains plenty of examples of groups – Western and national elites (aid donors, logging corporations, conservation agencies) and local big men and commoners – struggling for control over forest resources. (Poffenberger, 1990; Cliffe, 1988; c.f. Amin 1976). Conservation is about who controls access to and management of shrinking forest resources.

My observations of trends in an officially protected forest – a Nigerian national park – with populous villages on its perimeter offer an opportunity to investigate socio-political constraints on local participation in forestry management. It offers as well a window into indigenous notions of empowerment as youth and elders fashion through ‘resistance’ the terms of their engagement with ‘outside’ interest groups or stakeholders as Forestry, Park, logging companies and NGOs.
But the restoration of the governmental structures requires the confidence and investment of the people. Somali society has spent the past few years denying its leaders the power they might abuse; reversing that trend will mean convincing the people that it is safe to do so. A power-sharing arrangement between the prime architects of Somalia's misery is unlikely to achieve that.

The real strength of the building block approach is simply its recognition that Somalia's factions are slowly, inexorably being overtaken by more responsible, stable and popular administrations. These local governments are typically the products of lengthy, broadly-based consultative or 'electoral' processes; their powers are encoded in social compacts that combine elements of modern constitutions and traditional 'xeer'; and their powers are circumscribed by the terms of the 'compact' and the need to maintain consensus. Perhaps even more importantly, however, they derive their legitimacy primarily from the explicit consent of the governed; not from access to arms or external resources, nor from their participation in international reconciliation fora. It is in regard to this latter point, that the prospects for the success of the 'building block' approach are most clear.

Whatever the international community does, it seems likely that the trend towards cohesive socio-political blocs will continue within Somalia. As popular fatigue with predatory and irresponsible politics grows, so does the authority of the factions wane and alternative leadership acquire experience, confidence, and skill. A new Somalia is beginning to take shape. If foreign powers are not prepared to play midwife to it, they should at least stand aside and let it come to pass.

---

National Parks & Biodiversity Conservation: Problems with Participatory Forestry Management

Silas A. Alashi

Silas Alashi lives and works in Nigeria where he has seen community conservation and development projects at first hand. He argues that local communities have their own ideas about empowerment and participation, which differ from those of interested outsiders as park management, government and donors. He suggests that this difference, and management's lack of information about community agendas, is a major reason why participatory management is not succeeding at present.

Conservation is about whether shrinking forest resources shall be 'mined' to death now, whether they should be used more sustainably so present and future generations benefit, or whether they should be preserved in perpetuity by foregoing all use. The conservation literature contains plenty of examples of groups - Western and national elites (aid donors, logging corporations, conservation agencies) and local big men and commoners - struggling for control over forest resources. (Poffenberger, 1990; Cliffe, 1988; c.f. Amin 1976). Conservation is about who controls access to and management of shrinking forest resources.

My observations of trends in an officially protected forest – a Nigerian national park – with populous villages on its perimeter offer an opportunity to investigate socio-political constraints on local participation in forestry management. It offers as well a window into indigenous notions of empowerment as youth and elders fashion through 'resistance' the terms of their engagement with 'outside' interest groups or stakeholders as Forestry, Park, logging companies and NGOs.
These developments at the grassroots should be approached in the light of what donors and government are trying to achieve by engaging in twin track action: protecting from all use tracts of unique bio-diverse forest whilst conserving for limited (sustainable) use forest blocks said to be less unique.

National parks originated in the United States in the nineteenth century when ‘special places’ were ‘set aside’ from the damages of ordinary uses. Over the decades parks’ policing role in bio-diversity protection, in which guard patrols and penalties are applied to exclude local people from protected areas, has come under heavy criticism. Machlis and Tichnell (1985) among others have argued that ‘this “preservationist approach” requires an essentially militaristic defense strategy and will almost certainly heighten conflict’.

In the last ten to fifteen years there has been increasing recognition that successful park management for bio-diversity preservation and more sustainable use (conservation) by people living around parks necessitates local people’s involvement (participation) in decision making, design and implementation of action plans. Participation or democratic involvement is incorporated in contemporary park management programmes. But participation is still a myth rather than a reality in most protected areas in Nigeria, though Zimbabwe’s CAMPFIRE movement offers some instructive lessons in progress towards real participation (Endnote 1), while the Old Ekuri project in Cross River State (Nigeria) is being held up as a model for participatory forest management. (Caldecott, 1996; c.f. Bisong, 1994). In general, like parks elsewhere, Nigeria’s national parks lack clearly defined strategies for partnership and institutional linkages for natural resource management (Thin, 1996). Local people’s actual engagement in capacity building for managing their natural resources more sustainably is either very limited or non-existent. At the same time, a mix of factors – cultural orientation, the size and perceived value of the protected forest, the strength of indigenous political institutions and capacity of local elites to work for an equitable division of the cake means that communities’ willingness to participate with outsiders in conserving resources they often regard as their own, to deal with as they see fit, may vary from one sub-region to another. Management agencies promoting local empowerment for more sustainable use or complete protection of endangered bio-diversity should recognise these variations and adjust programmes so as to build, on rather than clash, with local beliefs, management practices, and notions of political control or empowerment.

A case in point is the Cross River National Park. Established by decree in 1991, the Park enclosed 60% of Cross River State’s forests – the last large humid forest in the country, and with the abutting Korup National Park (Cameroon), the last extensive block of tropical forest in West Africa. The Cross River National Park is managed by the Federal Government of Nigeria alongside five other parks. Its forests are home to about one-third of Africa’s primates including some of the rarest and most endangered species as drills (pandrillus) and monkeys (preuss guenon, red capped mangebey etc). The areas enclosed are gazetted for protection in perpetuity from any use by human populations; those abutting the Park are designated for conservation (sustainable use) so future generations may enjoy the environmental, economic and social benefits of large tracts of rain forest.

The Park’s principal objective is biodiversity protection complemented by rural development in contiguous areas to improve the basic conditions of existence. Economic development is intended to motivate people living around the Park to reduce levels of exploitation of timber and non-timber forest products and an-
Annual burning and clearing for farms. In order to encourage villagers' active participation in the Park's protection and management, the concept of a support zone was adopted by the management of the Park's northern division. The support zone development programme seeks through its activities (that is, road construction, health clinic and primary school construction, small livestock husbandry, women's income generating projects) to 'compensate' villagers for loss of income resulting from enclosure inside the Park of large tracts of bio-diverse forest rich in bush meat and useful plants. The support zone development programme is thus the 'meat' in the sandwich of bio-diversity protection authorised by Federal Government to 'compensate' villagers for the loss of customary rights of use to 'their' commons, that is, tracts of forest enclosed inside the Park in 1991.

Official Park-wide strategies to involve communities in management are limited at present to employing agents of change (that is, local Park Rangers, field assistants, extension workers). However, the Park's northern division also established 'modern' committees in all support zone villages to improve local management of farming, health, education, roads and public works, women, and micro-credit. Integrated Village Rural Development Committees are intended to enhance democratic decision making and thus prepare for participation in Park and community forest management. Representatives (one per village cluster known as a 'cell') sit on northern division management, the level below the Park Management Committee. Village Integrated Rural Development Committees are supposed to hold regular meetings and workshops with northern division Park officials so as to strengthen local decision making capacity for bio-diversity protection.

In reality, however, the Park's northern division participatory development and management activities through committees have not always been well received nor have they been successful, at least in the short term. Factors impeding participatory progress include, importantly, the management agency's overemphasis upon biophysical research and neglect of reliable socio-economic and environmental research so they are well informed about the conditions of existence, land tenure systems and political institutions (decision-making, conflict resolution) in support zone and enclave communities. Equally, management is not well informed about differences between communities in important factors (land tenure and extent of household dependence on forest resources) that shape community interest in the forest, and therefore, their commitment to participating with outsiders in regulating how these resources are used and managed. Management agencies, donors and government are not sufficiently knowledgeable about the range of opinion and interests in forest resources within and between communities throughout the support zone. Therefore, they continue to assume that their notion of communities being empowered by participatory forest management is snared by support zone villagers, though there are plenty of instances of open resistance to Park officials and policies by vigilante youths.

Another important obstacle holding up progress towards the official goal of participatory management is local people's misunderstanding of the Park's primary objective (bio-diversity conservation). Deprived for decades of the infrastructure inputs necessary for modernisation, many villagers see the Park's Integrated Rural Development Programme as a kind of 'welfare state' responsible for providing social and physical facilities (health, schools, roads) not supplied by remote and neglectful government. So support zone communities use the objective of participatory forest management purveyed by powerful outsiders as a political ploy with which to lever government-style welfare
programmes from the Park – though of course its principal objective is not social welfare but bio-diversity protection. Securing such benefits is an important local interpretation of empowerment.

Somewhat disheartening, though perhaps hardly surprising, is the persistent power playing among influential stakeholders and their agents in support zone villages – that is, management agencies working for the Park and environmental protection, timber companies, federal and state departments as forestry and health with oversight roles in support zone areas outside the Park; local and state/federal elites claiming ‘sons of the soil’ status and entitlement to an important role in resource management decision-making. Each group has its own interest in how the community should use/manage its forest resources. The ‘politics’ of road construction is an example.

Communities enclosed in the Park demand roads in pristine forests as compensation for economic opportunities lost because they cannot get their farm produce to markets, so they remain underdeveloped and impoverished. Villages in the support zone also demand, and at times, are granted roads close to the Park boundary. Building access roads may improve the social and economic life of people living around the Park. But conservationists say that this also means opening up the forest for timber exploitation, agricultural settlement and fuelwood salvaging: road building may increase rather than take the pressure off the forest. However, local youth are asking: why should we bother about the anti-conservation consequences of road construction when local, state and national elites are limiting our village’s use of its forest resources by granting logging or forest product extraction concessions to a few of their number or to multi-national companies?

Therefore, the conservationist assumption that benefits generated from integrated conservation and development projects will reduce pressure on forest resources is still a pie in the sky. Conservationists who believe that local people benefiting from development programmes will cease hunting in protected areas need to revise their management plans.

Parks which emulate the Cross River National Park’s blueprint on integrated conservation and development will experience the same double bind: on the one hand, there is the Park’s primary bio-diversity mission; and on the other, there is the persistent pressure from support zone villages for welfare infrastructure creation in exchange for ‘partnership’ in resource management. I cited road building as a case in point. Roads gave villagers access to markets for their farm produce and cash-crops, and facilitated income generating activities. But villagers (mainly youth) periodically block newly made roads against Park staff, and hunters continue to hunt inside the Park. Some (not all) groups feel their community’s needs are not being met, and that before participatory empowerment another kind of empowerment is needed; namely, securing from government full recognition of communities’ inalienable rights to control their customary rights of ownership over remaining forests – then full participatory management may follow. However, we should note that in communities where multiple stakeholder interventions have been initiated internal conflict is growing; it appears to be associated with a widening social and economic inequality gap.

This is not to suggest that integrated conservation-development projects are completely out of place. After all, traditional approaches towards forest management have had little success in stemming deforestation. Every day we can see what is happening; contrary to fashionable views that people plant trees and rest used forest long enough for secondary forest regrowth to take place.
(Leach and Fairhead, 1996), in reality, in Nigeria, forests are shrinking.

The point is, that if agencies are serious about pursuing their goal of working with communities on a democratic footing they should be working at the grassroots to understand how communities manipulate Park development programmes so as to achieve their empowerment priorities, such as roads and schools. If agencies are serious about developing community management relevant to local interests and needs, they should obtain reliable data by standardised research methods on socio-economic conditions, land tenure and resource use decision-making in communities that exploit different forest environments. Agencies should investigate and document what different interest groups in communities are thinking—that is, youth, women, elders, chiefs and outside based elites ('sons of the soil')—about village land and forests. Then they can use this knowledge to adjust to local interests and practices 'participatory' management strategies developed by donors or agencies in far away offices. Will more 'appropriate' strategies be more acceptable?

We have to recognise that these are tinkerings with a top-down intervention strategy in which powerful interests masquerading under the logo 'participatory' (democratic) seek stakes in forests villagers have customarily claimed as theirs. The bottom line is that villages are being enticed into abandoning their customary rights of use, management and ownership over forests they have long exploited. However, villagers have very different notions to government, donors and management of what empowerment means and how they should go about doing it. The more vigilant youth are determined to secure their rights to forests claimed under customary law, though we know that securing land tenure may not stem the tide of deforestation.

To always push the blame for failure in participatory forest management on local people is like prescribing a single drug for all illnesses. It obscures the wider reality in which villagers see themselves as the traditional owners, but are being invited into 'partnership' with more powerful and wealthy interest groups so as to manage their resources more sustainably.

Endnote
1) CAMPFIRE movement, Zimbabwe. Inaugurated in the 1980s to conserve remaining dry forest for the African elephant and for local exploitation. Communities motivated in principle to protect the forests and the elephants by involvement in forest management and all decision making, i.e. closed and open seasons on hunting and resource extraction, culling of elephants, etc.

References


European Union Aid Scandal

With £1.4 billion in its coffers, the EU has become the world’s second largest development aid agency after the World Bank. But the projects it is funding are doing more harm than good, reveals a report by the Rainforest Foundation.

In Nigeria, for example, £48 million has been spent on an oil palm project in the River Niger delta. 29,000 hectares of forest, farmland, fishponds and cemeteries were forcibly expropriated and then destroyed. No environmental assessment was carried out and local people’s objections were ignored. Landowners were paid as little as £7 a hectare in compensation.

A £48 million road-building project in Cameroon has upgraded roads crossing the densely forested Haute Nyong region. One 54 km road runs close to a 520,000 hectare game reserve. In 1993 the African Development Bank refused to fund the same project because of its likely impact on the forests and 3,000-strong Baka pygmy population. In 1996, the EU funded it anyway. And now nine new timber-felling licences have been granted, a 200-person Baka village has been destroyed to make way for a vast saw mill, and there has been an explosion in the trade of illegal bush-meat in the region. The 520,000 hectare game reserve is said to be producing around 10 tonnes of bush meat a week.

Thanks to a cloak of secrecy, the scandalous nature of the EU aid programmes has remained hidden. The Commission refuses to release development documentation, in direct contradiction to its own Code of Conduct. Furthermore, the aid agency rarely consults with non-governmental organizations or the people who will be most affected by the projects.

‘Often, the first time local people hear of development projects is when the bulldozers arrive in their villages,’ said Simon Counsell, director of the Rainforest Foundation.

The projects are ‘almost always totally beyond the control of any elected or accountable European institutions’ he continued. And environmental regulation is viewed as a hindrance to the smooth running of project implementation.

‘This is an unacceptable situation,’ concludes Counsell. ‘Member governments, such as the UK, urgently need to reform the way in which the EU organizes its aid programme.’

To see the Rainforest Foundation’s report contact Simon Counsell, Tel. 44 +(0)171-251-6345; Fax 44 +(0)171-251-4969; ©The Ecologist (1999).

---

Why is nobody listening? the issue of ‘GMO's’

In this issue (also see ROAPE 77 & 78) we continue to be concerned about the tidal wave of protest that our government's are ignoring regarding the use of genetically modified organisms, and why. The bio-tech industry is big business and as we approach the 21st century there is increasing evidence of the emergence of the global corporation – a form of corporate feudalism. This ‘profits before people’ stance is even more threatening in less developed countries, locking peasants into a future of total dependence – a new form of enslavement.

Government For, By & of Monsanto

The United States, the world’s largest producer of genetically modified food,
European Union Aid Scandal

With £1.4 billion in its coffers, the EU has become the world's second largest development aid agency after the World Bank. But the projects it is funding are doing more harm than good, reveals a report by the Rainforest Foundation.

In Nigeria, for example, £48 million has been spent on an oil palm project in the River Niger delta. 29,000 hectares of forest, farmland, fishponds and cemeteries were forcibly expropriated and then destroyed. No environmental assessment was carried out and local people's objections were ignored. Landowners were paid as little as £7 a hectare in compensation.

A £48 million road-building project in Cameroon has upgraded roads crossing the densely forested Haute Nyong region. One 54 km road runs close to a 520,000 hectare game reserve. In 1993 the African Development Bank refused to fund the same project because of its likely impact on the forests and 3,000-strong Baka pygmy population. In 1996, the EU funded it anyway. And now nine new timber-felling licences have been granted, a 200-person Baka village has been destroyed to make way for a vast saw mill, and there has been an explosion in the trade of illegal bush-meat in the region. The 520,000 hectare game reserve is said to be producing around 10 tonnes of bush meat a week.

Thanks to a cloak of secrecy, the scandalous nature of the EU aid programmes has remained hidden. The Commission refuses to release development documentation, in direct contradiction to its own Code of Conduct. Furthermore, the aid agency rarely consults with non-governmental organizations or the people who will be most affected by the projects.

'Often, the first time local people hear of development projects is when the bulldozers arrive in their villages,' said Simon Counsell, director of the Rainforest Foundation.

The projects are 'almost always totally beyond the control of any elected or accountable European institutions' he continued. And environmental regulation is viewed as a hindrance to the smooth running of project implementation.

'This is an unacceptable situation,' concludes Counsell. 'Member governments, such as the UK, urgently need to reform the way in which the EU organizes its aid programme.'

To see the Rainforest Foundation's report contact Simon Counsell, Tel. 44 +(0)171-251-6345; Fax 44 +(0)171-251-4969; ©The Ecologist (1999).

Why is nobody listening? the issue of 'GMO's'

In this issue (also see ROAPE 77 & 78) we continue to be concerned about the tidal wave of protest that our government's are ignoring regarding the use of genetically modified organisms, and why. The bio-tech industry is big business and as we approach the 21st century there is increasing evidence of the emergence of the global corporation – a form of corporate feudalism. This 'profits before people' stance is even more threatening in less developed countries, locking peasants into a future of total dependence – a new form of enslavement.

Government For, By & of Monsanto

The United States, the world's largest producer of genetically modified food,
has been accused of ‘bullying’ foreign governments to protect the global ambitions of Monsanto Corporation.

Cabinet documents from New Zealand show that the US government threatened to pull out of a potential free-trade agreement with New Zealand over its plans for labelling and testing genetically modified food. The documents also show that the US was concerned that curbs on selling GM foods in New Zealand might set a precedent for European countries.

Those claims of bullying tactics were further backed by former New Zealand Health Minister, Neil Kirton, who says he was visited twice regarding the issue by an ‘aggressive’ US Ambassador, Josiah Beeman, after he called publicly for the compulsory labelling of genetically modified food. Mr Kirton’s replacement in office consequently adopted the opposite stance on the issue, and supported the view that GM foods need not be labelled.

Opposition MPs have accused the New Zealand government of backing down on GM food under pressure from the US. British MPs say the documents give the first clear evidence of the lengths to which the US will go to defend the interests of the American biotechnology industry.

What’s more, they believe that Tony Blair has privately come under similar pressure from President Bill Clinton and the US government. They ask now that he reveal publicly what discussions the British government has held with the White House (which has famously close links with Monsanto) about the growth and sale of GM crops in Britain.

Adapted from articles in The Independent and The Evening Post (UK) and reprinted here with permission from The Ecologist.

‘You see, the US government and Monsanto feel …’

US government officials have warned New Zealand and Japan that plans to impose mandatory labelling of genetically modified (GM) foods could lead to serious economic reprisals.

In Japan, US Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman opposed the countries’ decision to label all GM foods. ‘It’s not appropriate’, he said. Under the World Trade Organization’s General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, labelling could be deemed a barrier to trade and lead to a Japan/US trade war.

Yet a 1997 national survey showed that 91% of Japanese consumers want ‘safety information’ on genetically engineered foods. The Japanese government has been sent several million signed petitions on the matter from concerned citizens.

In New Zealand, former Associate Health Minister, Neil Kirton, accused the US Ambassador, Josiah Beemon, of ‘bullying’ him on two separate occasions over the testing and labelling of genetically modified foods. In February, the Ambassador informed Kirton that New Zealand’s approach ‘could impact negatively on the bilateral trade relationship and potentially end any chance of a US-NZ Free Trade Agreement’.

‘It now seems that the US government is acting on behalf of Monsanto in their attempts to force GM food on unsuspecting consumers’, observed a Liberal Democratic spokesman on food safety. ‘This is nothing short of international bullying’, said Adrian Webb of Friends of the Earth.

For more information on genetically modified foods, please contact Ronnie Cummins, Campaign for Food Safety, 860 Highway 61, Little Marais, Minnesota 55614, USA, Tel. +218 226 4164 Fax. +218 226 4157 Email. alliance@ mr.net. Web. http://www.purefood.org
New Euro Challenges Dollar Hegemony: Impact on SADC Still to Come

Munetsi Madakufamba

The Euro, a common currency for 11 of the 15 member countries of the European Union (EU), was launched at the beginning of this year, marking an end to the US dollar's century-old hegemony as the leading reserve and trading unit.

The historic occasion received widespread media coverage in Europe, the US and Asia. However, very little has been explained about the possible impact of the fledgling currency to southern Africa despite the fact that the EU is the region's largest trading partner in the world.

Between 20-50 per cent of exports from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region find their way to Europe, most of them under the Lomé pact which expires next year. The major
New Euro Challenges Dollar Hegemony: Impact on SADC Still to Come

Munetsi Madakufamba

The Euro, a common currency for 11 of the 15 member countries of the European Union (EU), was launched at the beginning of this year, marking an end to the US dollar's century-old hegemony as the leading reserve and trading unit.

The historic occasion received widespread media coverage in Europe, the US and Asia. However, very little has been explained about the possible impact of the fledging currency to southern Africa despite the fact that the EU is the region's largest trading partner in the world.

Between 20-50 per cent of exports from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region find their way to Europe, most of them under the Lomé pact which expires next year. The major
trading partners are Britain, Germany, France and Italy.

Since the emergence of market-driven economic policies, and their eventual consolidation through the formation of the Bretton Woods Institutions the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1944, the US dollar has become the globally acceptable prime reserve and trading currency. The more US dollars a country has in its coffers, the stronger its national currency is against other currencies and ultimately, the stronger its economy.

For SADC, like other African states, the use of the US dollar as the main trading unit was not just the legacy of colonialism, but an outcome of the current wave of globalisation that is shaping the international economic landscape.

Although the Euro will only exist as a book currency, tradable between banks in electronic form, notes and coins are to be introduced in the year 2002. Options on stock markets and other international transactions have been widened. The 36-month transition phase which is laid out under the Maastricht Treaty, forbids invoicing or use of Euros in the EU countries as the sole legal tender until 2002.

The currencies of the 11 EU countries will continue to exist as denominations of the Euro during the transition period. Exchange rates of the currencies were fixed against the Euro at the time of its launch.

The 11 EU countries of Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Austria, Ireland and Finland may at a latter stage be joined by Britain whose membership at the moment remains in abeyance, as is that of Denmark, Greece and Sweden.

Although Britain, one of key European destinations for SADC exports, is not yet speaking the Euro language, its private sector will be compelled to open parallel Euro accounts for transactions with companies in fellow EU countries and beyond.

Official transactions by governments and central banks in the zone will be denominated in the new currency. Likewise, foreign exchange reserves of the 11 EU currencies held by African central banks, SADC included, will be redenominated in Euros with effect from 1 January 1999.

An independent European Central Bank (ECB) also began operating at the beginning of the year, and all open market operations including monetary policy will be handled in Euros by the mother bank. The ECB, based in Frankfurt, Germany, assumes the 11 Euro members' right to finance budget deficits by printing more money and to boost exports temporarily by devaluation.

The Euro is the EU's biggest economic adventure since its formation in 1957, with a prime desire to avoid war, after the devastating first and second world wars that ended in 1918 and 1945 respectively. As individual countries, national currencies of the EU have largely tracked the US dollar.

Since its establishment more than 200 years ago, the US dollar has dominated world transactions, more so after the US's majority shareholding in the Bretton Woods Institutions ensured the country total political and economic control of the world.

World Bank figures show that about 50 per cent of trade flows are invoiced in dollars compared with about 30 per cent in EU currencies. Similarly, the denomination of global assets is skewed in favour of dollars. For instance, almost 70 per cent of official foreign reserves are held in dollar accounts, compared with 20 per cent in EU currencies.

World Bank estimates show that 43.3 per cent of sub-Saharan Africa's US$222.6
billion external debt in 1997 was in dollars, while 21.3 per cent was in Europe’s major currencies – the British pound, French franc and the German deutschmark.

But the Euro has now challenged the dollar hegemony. If combined, the 11 ‘Euroland’ countries emerge as one of the world’s economic superpowers, representing more than 300 million consumers and responsible for one-fifth of world output – a little behind the US.

With the 11 founding member countries, the Euro is set to be the world’s second major currency after the US dollar, and will be followed by the Japanese yen.

If all the 15 EU countries join the Euro, they will exceed the US, both in terms of gross domestic product (GDP) and foreign trade, and is expected to eventually overtake the dollar. Available statistics show that the EU’s GDP in 1996 was US$8,573 billion compared to US$7,342 billion for the US. Similarly, the EU enjoyed 21 per cent of world trade in the same year, compared to 19.6 per cent for the US.

On the foreign exchange market, analysts say the arrival of the Euro is going to reduce over-reliance on the dollar. The IMF believes the new currency will complement the dollar as a prime reserve currency especially for market intervention purposes.

The US dollar’s dominance on international transactions has not only left developing countries at the mercy of externally determined forces, but has put to question the effectiveness of free market economies. Without enough hard currency, a country is doomed.

Developing countries, SADC included, have had to beg for US dollars from the World Bank and the IMF to bail out ailing currencies. For instance, Zimbabwe, whose currency, the Zim dollar, has been on a freefall since November 1997, is still looking to the IMF to release US$53 million that is needed to cushion the local currency from further collapse.

SADC countries, like any others on the continent, settle their import bills mainly in US dollars despite the fact that North America is not the region’s biggest trading partner.

At the continental level, Africa’s 1997 exports to the EU were US$48 billion or 43 per cent of total exports, while imports reached US$52 billion or 50 per cent.

With the arrival of the common currency, the Euro, trade transactions between the two regions are likely to be less complex. Trade could be further boosted if the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries secure a favourable deal out of the ongoing Lomé negotiations.

At micro level, the Euro should make life easier for institutions such as banks as the single currency will allow companies to use services of fewer major banks in Europe for handling all EU commitments. Local businesses will also have to deal with one exchange rate risk, as opposed to 11.

While the Euro received a lukewarm reaction in SADC, partly because the impact has not been so direct, it was a totally different story in the French-speaking West African nations that share the CFA franc. The Euro was greeted with panic as the West Africans were concerned that the French franc, to which the CFA franc is pegged, will eventually give way to the new currency.

The CFA franc lost half of its value in 1994 when it was devalued by the French Central Bank from 50 to one French franc to 100:1 against the same currency, the rate at which it will be interlocked in relation to the Euro. The French Central Bank will likely hand over its powers to control the CFA franc to the ECB, which
could mean another devaluation. The CFA zone comprises Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

For Africa, the impact of the Euro will be much clearer after the outcome of the current talks on the Lomé pact which will be concluded next year. And for the business community in SADC, the impact will be gradual as their EU counterparts will run parallel invoicing in Euros and existing currencies for the next three years (©SARDC).

Between the force of structural adjustment and the general weight of Afro-pessimism, it is usually assumed today that studies in African political economy and especially studies of modern industry and industrial workers can only be told in an atmosphere of unrelieved gloom. This full-length study of trade union activity in a major Nigerian industry by Andrae and Beckman, authors of The Wheat Trap, makes an important and thought-provoking contrast. The Nigerian textile industry, which at peak employed as many as 100,000 workers, did indeed enter a serious period of decline at the end of the oil rush of the 1970s, a phase I documented in a short study for this review some twenty years ago. However, with some state support and aided by the devaluation of the naira, it stabilised and even recovered in the Babangida era. Capacity utilisation, which may have fallen to 30%, rose again to perhaps 70% while linkages to the Nigerian cotton crop increased.

In 1985, the manufacturers association recorded 64 factories but the number has ebbed and flowed over the years. Owners include the federal and state governments, Westerners, Lebanese with strong Nigerian connections, Indian and Chinese capitalists with weaker connections and members of the Nigerian bourgeoisie in varying combinations. The largest and most diversified plants have proven the most successful in these rough seas and there has even been substantial export to the franc zone countries of West Africa with their harder currency. While renewed crisis has put paid to this expansion in the last five years, Andrae and Beckman point towards the surprising resilience and adaptability of this industry. They have also emphasised the need to contrast the social culture of two major textile cities, Kaduna and Kano. Kaduna, established as the capital of colonial Northern Nigeria, is the seat of big factories and home to workers who have few options other than factory work. Here the union is headquartered and made its first advances. Kano, by contrast, is an industrial centre contextualised within an old merchant-dominated city where paternalist work regimes in small factories intimately tied to the local state were captured forcibly in a well-known study a decade ago by the American sociologist Paul Lubeck. As Andrae and Beckman point out, it was a much harder struggle for the unions to crack Kano factories and establish themselves on a strong basis.

The real subject of this study, in fact, is not the industry but its workers and especially the union that organises them, the National Union of Textile, Garment and Tailoring Workers of Nigeria (NUTGTWN). For it is not only the textile industry that has endured the travails of the past twenty years in Nigeria but also the textile workers union. Nigeria. The NUTGTWN has developed skills in difficult times. There is now a long tradition of honest and hard-fought internal elections and constitutionalism although it is not entirely clear how effectively shop steward structures operate. It has fought the tendency to downsize and move into casualisation and allowed hard times to be met to an important extent by short
time work. It has learnt to balance direct wage demands with struggles for critical fringe benefits. When the industry's prospects have improved, the union has been critical in pursuing higher wages aggressively. It has learnt to cope with the vagaries of hyper-inflation. This is a union which, despite occasional scandals, has a reputation for probity and accountability among workers who are increasingly committed to urban wage labour. The workers in Kaduna and Kano are relatively well-educated, male and most typically Christians from what used to be called the Middle Belt provinces of Northern Nigeria.

While the union has gradually built up an expertise in bargaining and negotiation and indeed has constantly had to concern itself with layoffs and plant closings, the authors argue that it has been kept honest most significantly by the undercurrents of militancy that recur in crisis phases. In 1993, within a climate of rumour and misinformation, for instance, the union headquarters was burnt down in Kaduna and workers rampaged in classic mode, only gradually returning to the union fold. (The headquarters has been rebuilt). For the leadership, the possibilities of settling into a corporatist mould detached from the temper of the workplace has not been a real option for long. In general, the authors express admiration for this leadership especially Adams Oshiomhole, long-time general secretary who rose from the shop steward ranks. Keeping faith with the militancy and keeping the union together in phases of substantial workplace downsizing is certainly a sign of remarkable political skills.

The issue of corporatism comes to mind because the other side of the story is the relationship of trade union to state. Andrae and Beckman argue that, despite the intentions of the state, the establishment of a national bargaining forum through the recognition of the Nigeria Labour Congress by the newly redemocratised state in 1979 did a great deal to further the unions interests. (The impact of the legalisation of black trade unions in South Africa in the very same year represents an obvious if surprising parallel). The position of the Nigerian state has been quite complex; it obviously has good relations with management and hardly has sought to impose a militant and unified working class movement on industry. It has rather wanted a controlled and corporatist industrial environment to develop. However, important sections of the Nigerian government clearly have felt that negotiations and collective bargaining represent an essential element of stability and governance and they have offered enough space in which this surprisingly strong and effective union has been able to build and grow. In a final chapter, the virtual breakdown of this 'labour regime', as the authors call it, under Sani Abacha is documented but Andrae and Beckman suggest that the unions strength is now such that it is not going to be ground under by a shift in policy in Lagos. Its prospects are considerably brighter than the public service unions which once formed the heart of Nigerian trade unionism but which are devastated by structural adjustment and dictatorship.

Nigeria is a challenging country for a researcher and notably for foreigners such as Andrae and Beckman. They gained important access to the views of management but rely above all on what was obviously very substantial trust from the unions. Much of their story of the unions struggles is read off the excellent and fascinating documentation which the union itself possessed to which it gave them access. There is less on the perspective of the state - local and national.

There are many questions that come to mind as one advances through this volume. The authors never succeeded in doing substantial research in the third major textile centre, Lagos, or in the one-industry towns such as Funtua. In Lagos garment shops are found the only sub-
stantial groups of women workers; they also would be worth a study. While workers answer some important questions in surveys, I would have been interested in knowing what other family members do, what is expected of workers children and what worker living conditions are like. Beckman, the political scientist, has very acute things to say about the role of the state in regard to the industry but rather little about the relation of national to union politics or worker perspectives on Nigerian society and economy. But these are complaints which should point others in the direction of new studies. This is an immensely fertile work which should inspire the projects of new students. Having recently read Catherine Boones brilliant but depressing monograph on the equivalent industry in Senegal, this more equivocal and complex story makes a valuable comparison; it not only puts the emphasis on actual workers but also reminds one of the continuing complexities of the development picture in West Africa that rewards the research work of the committed and open-minded scholar.

Bill Freund, University of Natal, Durban.

East African Alternatives

This new magazine aims to be ‘a Bi-monthly Review of Political Economy in East Africa’ and as such deserves attention and support from readers of ROAPE.

The launch issue came out in Sept/Oct 1998. It contains useful analyses of recent developments in each of the three main countries, which will be regular features. This issue provides an exploration of the economic crisis in Kenya, the ongoing process of constitutional reform and the Moi succession – and their interconnections. The ‘Letter from Dar es Salaam’ reviews the record of President Ben Mkapa’s three years in office. The partial discrepancy between President Museveni’s international renown and tensions which appear to be growing in some parts of Uganda is the focus of the Kampala report.

The issue’s main articles are not, however, restricted to East Africa proper, reflecting the flexible interpretation of the Review’s intended geographical coverage. A piece by the Editor, John Githongo, is as sensible explanation of the Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict as any that has appeared. Three features on the Great Lakes area are symptomatic not just of developments in countries neighbouring East Africa but of the fact that the three states have been and remain involved in events in the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi. Indeed, two of them provide analyses of the line-up of a whole array of African states behind either President Kabila or the rebels challenging him and the many factors – calculations about regional alignments and about both external and internal enemies – that motivate eastern African countries like Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea to involve themselves in the Congo. Another piece looks back to the earlier involvement of the Rwanda government in the rebellion lead by Kabila in 1996-97 – and what the ‘management’ of news about by the Rwanda leadership implies for current and future events in Congo and the Great Lakes generally.

An exchange between an independent analyst and Tanzanian and Malaysian corporate representatives about whether a proposed fuel rather than hydro generated electrical plant is a ‘white elephant’ or not highlights issues about the implications of multinational companies’ role in the era of privatisation, which has echoes of debates a generation ago about MNC’s links with parastatals in Tanzania.
The pieces are well short of the length of journal articles but are still informative, bringing out stories not dealt with in the media, and they raise serious debate – a format that should stimulate a broader audience than a purely academic publication. This is in fact a fairly explicit, locally appropriate, copy of the model offered by the extremely valuable Southern African Political Economic Monthly, published in Harare – and, of course, in turn of the famous Political & Economic Weekly in India.

Like SAPEM, the new East African review is but one of the outputs of a body, the Series on Alternative Research in East Africa Trust (SAREAT), which has been set up to promote locally-lead, radically-oriented research and publications in the region. Some working papers have already appeared and the first three titles in a book series have been announced. These latter are:


Subscription details for Alternatives, Working Papers and books, plus information about the organisation can be obtained from SAREAT, P.O. Box 6038, Nairobi, Kenya.

e-mail: sareat@iconnect.co.ke
The following section gives notes of books recently received which may be of interest to our readers; some may be reviewed in depth at a later date. If you would like to review books for ROAPE, please get in touch with the book review editors Roy Love (at the ROAPE office) or Ray Bush and Morris Szeftel (Politics Department, University of Leeds, UK). Compiled by Roy Love


With a map of Africa on the front cover and a photograph of the editor on the back there is a rather conventional feel to this volume, but within its own terms of reference it offers an interesting mix of country studies and wider commentary, the latter provided mainly by the editor. The specialist reader should be warned, however, that five of the chapters have been published elsewhere, including Kpundeh on Sierra Leone (*JMAS*), Ellis on Seychelles (*AA*) and Jua on Cameroon (*Africa Insight*). The two chapters on Nigeria are the only country specific studies that appear to have been commissioned for the present volume. Two of the editor’s own chapters on ‘bureaucratic corruption’ have also been published before, though in journals which would not normally be scanned by Africanists. This point reflects his background as Professor of Economics at Weber State University from whence he takes a public choice perspective of corruption, neatly summarised in the contention that ‘bureaucratic corruption is related primarily to government control and regulation of economic activities’ (p. 272).

In looking at the history of the failure of ‘clean-ups’, and the frequent persistence of corruption through successive governments, he claims that only a change in the constitutional rules to minimise the possibilities for rent-seeking and to introduce self-policing mechanisms will bring an end to high levels of corruption. The problem of external constraints on such a process is well portrayed, however, in Ellis’s chapter on the Seychelles in which the broader conclusion is reached that the ‘unregulated’ capitalism of African states provides a convenient laundering network for international capital of dubious origins, an interesting theme which merits further research.


This is one of those books that is virtually impossible to summarise, being a compilation of twenty conference papers covering a wide range of topics from economic transition to theatre and to the Holy Spirit Movement in the north of the country. The variety does, however, in this case lend itself to a fairly logical classification into four groups headed ‘Growing out of Poverty’, ‘Transforming Political Representation’, ‘Policy Imperatives’ and ‘Development at the Grassroots’ and with chapters (of varying lengths – some fairly
short) on economics and industry, privatisation, poverty, urban agriculture, local women's associations, indigenous NGOs, AIDS, urban management, theatre for development, and the values of development (local level studies).

The collection is from the fifth conference organised by the Institute of Commonwealth Studies and the University of Copenhagen and those interested in Uganda on a wide front will be grateful to the joint venture of four publishers, including two African, for making this interesting collection of papers available to a wider readership.

---


A book like this should be essential reading for all male consultants, academics and researchers whose normal circles tend to be amongst other male privileged. It is the second volume to come out of the 'gender research programme on Urbanisation, Planning, Housing and Everyday Life' (GRUPHEL) in Southern Africa, sponsored by SIDA, and highlights problems of women's access to housing in both the formal and informal sectors, different patterns of migration for men and women, gender aspects of street vending, taxi driving, beer brewing, and gender related violence. The editors relate these issues to six themes: public-private dichotomy, gender equality, the meaning of place and housing, poverty and coping strategies, gender separation, and household power structure. These are expanded on in the introduction which also contains a brief overview of gender 'contracts' which form the analytical reference for a number of the chapters which follow. The way in which the law, both customary and civil, operates against women in access to loans and housing is explored, and the entire book is a fairly well balanced mix of descriptive case studies and interpretation, reflecting an deliberate decision within the research programme to emphasise qualitative methods, in order, as the editors say, to 'uncover hidden assumptions ... and to avoid the risk of cementing old, or producing new stereotypes'. By and large this works, though in such a collected volume of papers a certain repetitiveness creeps in to the case studies.

Perhaps inevitably, such studies on gender focus largely on female experiences, but a full understanding must also draw on the motivations of the men who tend often to be somewhat feckless shadowy characters in the background to the case studies and whose lives are often deeply oppressed in different ways. This is, nevertheless, a most valuable and interesting set of studies revealing close contact with the subjects of analysis.

---


In his introductory chapter the editor points out that in most of the book the term 'insurgencies' is used, partly to enable inclusion of groups which may not strictly qualify as 'guerrilla' but also to 'avoid some of the ideological and even romantic associations which "guerrilla" has acquired'. It is unfortunate that the term is therefore retained in the title, perhaps in the hope that 'romance' will help to sell the book! Despite Christopher Clapham's attempt at a taxonomy of insurgency by referring to the four cat-
categories of liberation, separatist, reform and warlord, and despite a number of interesting chapters on the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, the Tigre People's Liberation Front, the Sudan People's Liberation Army, Somali armed units, the National Resistance Army and the Holy Spirit Movement in Uganda, the Rwanda Patriotic Front, Liberia's warlords, and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, the book does not, I felt, add up to more than the sum of its parts. These provide useful individual reviews and records by a number of authors who have written on these topics before, including Prunier on Rwanda, Pool on Eritrea, Young on Tigre, Ellis on Liberia, and Behrend on the HSM, but with little cross reference or attempt to develop the editor's introductory eighteen pages in a searching for common themes or a more conceptually based analysis which might give the book greater focus. Even the introduction, while raising a number of interesting points, is essentially self-standing with virtually no reference to the similarly self-standing chapters which follow.


With a certain similarity in theme to the volume edited by Clapham (reviewed above) this collection of conference papers, to my mind, works more successfully, perhaps because there has, as it claims, been a movement towards the reintroduction of multiparty politics in many African countries, and it is easier to discuss comparative opposition politics than it is to look for common causes in a variety of geographically spread violent insurgencies. There is also, as the editor points out in Chapter 1, a common backcloth of structural adjustment, conditionality and 'good governance' behind the presumed 'movement'.

There is, too, added interest in this volume in that it covers opposition politics not only in Nigeria, Uganda (yet again) and South Africa this time but also in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Niger and Senegal. While recognising, in his thoughtful introductory Chapter, that 'the form of the pre-existing state, the internal coherence of the ruling party ... the nature of the civil society that was in place ... the history of political society, the domestic resource base of the country, and the patterns of interaction between the local political economy and the international system are some of the factors that explain the specificities of each country', Adebayo Olukoshi also points out that there are certain common features such as the tendency for ruling parties to have, and to exploit, a rural base of support.

Periods of military government also tend to have been common, though not in all cases examined. An inability of opposition groups to present a united front is apparent in a number of cases such as Senegal, Zimbabwe and Nigeria, and for ruling parties to foment this tendency.

Niger provides an interesting example of a country where power has fluctuated from one party rule, to democratic pluralism and to military intervention and in Chapter 5 Ibrahim and Souley effectively explore the intricacies of these changes. In Chapter 4 Nkiwane examines, inter alia, the problem of ethnic dominance in a situation like that in Zimbabwe, while Kanyinga in Chapter 2 demonstrates how KANU has exploited ethnic differences as part of its strategy to retain electoral power.

The role of civil society reappears frequently and Neocosmos offers an interesting extended chapter on the transformation of 'popular politics' in South Africa to 'state politics' in the
period following 1990. After a final chapter on Nigeria between 1985 and 1996 by Agbu the book closes with a tabular summary of parties and most recent election results for the entire continent. It is perhaps worth noting that the chapter authors are all based in African universities.

The selection may not suit all courses on Africa but it is certainly a useful addition to University libraries where it will provide students with a direct introduction to the seminal work of many scholars which is so often filtered and generalised by the time it appears in textbooks, and, with the aid of the editors’ introduction to each section, arrive at a greater degree of self-reflection with regard to their own ‘perspectives on Africa’.


As the editors remark in their preface, ‘African studies is encyclopaedic’ and in this 736 page volume of forty-four extracts we have apt testimony to this obvious fact. The emphasis is on cultural and social anthropological studies, as evidenced in the section headings: From Tribe to Ethnicity, Economics as Cultural System, Hunter-gatherer Studies, Witchcraft, Science and Rationality, Ancestors, Gods and Religion, Art and Aesthetics, Sex and Gender Studies, Europe in Africa, Nations and Nationalism, Representation and Discourse. Each of these has four to five readings which have been rather interestingly selected from both classic and more recent writers in each area.

Thus Part 1 has an extracts from Meyer Fortes on unilineal descent groups, Evans-Pritchard on Nuer concepts of time and space, Aidan Southall on the illusion of tribe, Leroy Vail on ethnicity in Southern African history, and John Comaroff on totemism and ethnicity. It is impossible to give a summary of the rest of the book but others included are Terence Ranger, Walter Rodney, Ester Boserup, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Frantz Fanon and Kwame Anthony Appiah.


Although there is little reference to African experience or African examples of policy this book will be of interest to those interested in comparative constitutions and in how countries elsewhere in the world have grappled with problems of territory, political access and ethnicity within their boundaries. An introductory overview by the editor is followed by chapters on decentralisation, electoral systems, education, indigenous peoples, immigrant minorities in Europe, and preferential policies for disadvantaged ethnic groups. This is fairly wide ranging, and many of the examples, often from Asia, are somewhat briefly summarised. They are useful reminders, nevertheless, that many African problems are not unique – that there is not an essentially ‘African problem’ in most of these areas. Thus the status of immigrant workers as in South Africa, Ghana or Nigeria; the position of disadvantaged indigenous groups, such as the San in Botswana or the Afar in Ethiopia; and the potential for federalism to cope with ethnic diversity, as in Ethiopia or Nigeria, are all issues which have counterparts in other continents and where lessons may be gained. The arguments around preferential poli-
cies in employment, for instance, are common not only to countries such as the USA or Malaysia or even South Africa but to any country where one ethnic group has traditionally dominated government and/or business. This is not a highly theoretical collection of papers but it does contain a number of interesting comparative empirical studies.


Alex de Waal's critical views on the 'aid industry', particularly on that part occupied by the international NGOs, have become fairly well known (at least in Britain) through newspaper and other similar outlets, but it is useful to have his arguments presented in the extended argument of book form, in which he provides a much more considered analysis of the connection between human rights, broadly defined, and the occurrence of famine.

He opens with a review of the 'conquest of famine in the Far East', taking Sen's entitlement approach from a political rather than a narrowly technical perspective, and moves on to a consideration of actual famine situations in Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia during the 1980s and 1990s alongside discussion of Zimbabwe, Botswana, Rwanda and eastern Zaire. In Chapter 4 he critiques what he terms the 'humanitarian international' along lines which are picked up again in the concluding chapter where a 'fund-raising culture' amongst international NGOs together with assumptions of being non-political create misleading impressions of what they are able to achieve in the absence of reformed political and human rights in the host countries - a considerably more difficult task than immediate relief organisation.

This is a closely argued book that is difficult to summarise, containing, as it does, considerable detailed evidence from recent famine situations from which the author's conclusions are intricately drawn. It undoubtedly provides a thoughtful read, in which the political as much as the economic and humanitarian aspects of famine, its relief and prevention, are emphasised.

**Books Received**


cies in employment, for instance, are common not only to countries such as the USA or Malaysia or even South Africa but to any country where one ethnic group has traditionally dominated government and/or business. This is not a highly theoretical collection of papers but it does contain a number of interesting comparative empirical studies.


Alex de Waal's critical views on the 'aid industry', particularly on that part occupied by the international NGOs, have become fairly well known (at least in Britain) through newspaper and other similar outlets, but it is useful to have his arguments presented in the extended argument of book form, in which he provides a much more considered analysis of the connection between human rights, broadly defined, and the occurrence of famine.

He opens with a review of the 'conquest of famine in the Far East', taking Sen's entitlement approach from a political rather than a narrowly technical perspective, and moves on to a consideration of actual famine situations in Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia during the 1980s and 1990s alongside discussion of Zimbabwe, Botswana, Rwanda and eastern Zaire. In Chapter 4 he critiques what he terms the 'humanitarian international' along lines which are picked up again in the concluding chapter where a 'fund-raising culture' amongst international NGOs together with assumptions of being non-political create misleading impressions of what they are able to achieve in the absence of reformed political and human rights in the host countries - a considerably more difficult task than immediate relief organisation. This is a closely argued book that is difficult to summarise, containing, as it does, considerable detailed evidence from recent famine situations from which the author's conclusions are intricately drawn. It undoubtedly provides a thoughtful read, in which the political as much as the economic and humanitarian aspects of famine, its relief and prevention, are emphasised.

**Books Received**


