

*The Open Door to Peace in Africa*¹

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Abstract. In the central, eastern, and western regions of Africa, dictatorial and militaristic regimes have established spheres of paramount influence in neighboring countries. Imperial ambitions and conflicts of extra-territorial interest have wrought havoc in those regions and inflicted miseries on oppressed nationality groups in countries that have been victimized by aggression and the aggressor states alike. The alternative to warfare in contested areas of Africa is an “open door” to commerce, investment, and ideas, so that economic partners and modernizing intellectuals from all parts of the world would be able to participate in Africa’s development without prejudice. Anti-militarists and democrats in Africa can promote the cause of peace by opening the doors that divide countries and their internal regions into spheres of privileged interest.

Introduction

Africa today is tormented by the scourge of war. While the human costs of warfare in Africa are difficult to calculate with precision, the toll of deaths attributable to war-like hostilities during the past five years surely exceeds five million. In the eastern Congo alone, more than three million have died during this time span as a result of warfare, both internal and international. Current reports indicate that some 13.7 million people in Africa suffer the hardships of having been driven from their homes by the impacts and threats of warfare. No fewer than 3.1 million of them have crossed international bor-

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ders as refugees.² War-related diseases, particularly the AIDS pandemic, have taken an immense toll of community and family life in Africa, resulting in the creation of millions of orphaned children.

Commentaries on the causes of warfare, in Africa as elsewhere, often indicate conditions of peace that might be attained by responsible leaders. One such condition is implied by the idea of an “open door” to economic and intellectual agents of change. Proponents of an open door policy for African countries believe that its adoption would minimize the impact of one of the principal causes of war, namely imperialism, meaning the control of one country or people by another. The efficacy of open doors as portals to peace in Africa could be tested in several zones of conflict without delay.

In diplomatic history, an American statesman, John Hay, secretary of state at the turn of the twentieth century, proclaimed the principle of an Open Door mainly with reference to China and other Asian countries. Its underlying maxim was openness to competition among traders, investors, financiers, and those who propagate ideas relating to the modernization of societies. Subsequently, it was applied globally and conceived, as Martin J. Sklar explains, as an international order in which there would be “shares in world development instead of spheres of interest or closed annexationist empires....[T]he distinguishing feature of the theory was the emphasis on investment expansion as differentiating modern capitalist imperialism from older territorial, settler, or commercial (goods-market) forms of imperialism, pre-capitalist and capitalist alike.”³

Compared with Asia and Latin America, American espousal of an Open Door in Africa was barely audible until the Churchill – Roosevelt debate of 1941 occasioned by the historic third clause of their famous Atlantic Charter, affirming “the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live.” Roosevelt insisted, contrary to Churchill’s view, that the declaration applied to “the whole world,” not excluding colonies.⁴ Before then, the United States had established a de facto protectorate

² U.S. Committee for Refugees, *World Refugee Survey*. Available at <<http://www.refugees.org/>>. Accessed 17 August 2004.

³ Martin J. Sklar, *The Corporate Reconstruction of American Capitalism, 1890-1916* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 80-81; see also M. J. Sklar, *The United States as a Developing Country* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 78-101; and M. J. Sklar, “The Open Door, Imperialism, and Postimperialism,” in David G. Becker and Richard L. Sklar, *Postimperialism and World Politics* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999), pp. 317-336.

⁴ Quoted in Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Political Blueprint of Nigeria* (Lagos: African Book Company, 1953), p. 77.

of its own in Liberia, justified by plausible threats of annexation by both Britain and France.⁵ In this vein of thought it would not be out of character for the American government to have favored, as it did at the Berlin Conference on Africa of 1885, Leopold II's personal acquisition of sovereign authority in the Congo Free State. That tragic blunder by the United States was born in part of the Belgian king's weakness by comparison with more robust colonial competitors, including Britain, France, Germany, and Portugal, as well as Leopold's false promise of duty-free American exports.⁶ Eventually, in 1908, the United States joined Britain in demanding the transfer of sovereignty from Leopold's heinous rulership to the Belgian Parliament.

Apart from its self-serving "protection" of Liberia, where from 1926 onward the Firestone Corporation produced immense quantities of rubber, the United States acquiesced in the European partition and occupation of nearly all of Africa. And, in 1935, the United States did no more than adopt a neutrality resolution, prohibiting the export of war material for the use of belligerents, when fascist Italy invaded sovereign Ethiopia. President Roosevelt's anti-colonial interpretation of the 1941 Atlantic Charter foretold a fundamental change of American policy towards Africa. With American encouragement, due in part to the growth of Soviet influence in Africa and Asia, Britain and France also acknowledged the right of colonial people to self-determination during the 1950s. Belgium accepted that inescapable necessity in 1960; Portugal, however, continued to defy the logic of self-determination until that country's democratic revolution of 1974.

Yet the Atlantic Charter did not translate into an American commitment to an Open Door policy for Africa. In Africa, as elsewhere, American principles of self-determination were sometimes subordinated to the perceived requirements of Cold War competition with the Communist powers.⁷ In Southern Africa, liberation movements against apartheid and other forms of white supremacy encountered ambiguous responses from the United States. Elsewhere in Africa, the United States sacrificed its aspirations

⁵ For a brief summary and sources, see Richard L. Sklar, "The Impact of the United States Upon West African Politics," in Toyin Falola, ed., *African Politics in Postimperial Times: The Essays of Richard L. Sklar* (Trenton, NJ and Asmara: Africa World Press, 2002), p. 599.

⁶ Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa* (New York: Avon Books, 1991), pp. 244, 398-399.

⁷ For an official statement concerning priorities in choosing between support of African causes and other strategic objectives, see Department of State, "Africa: Guidelines for Policy and Operations," March 1962; declassified 1976.

for an economic Open Door to the requirements of strategic cooperation with its European allies in the global contest with communism.

When the Soviet Union finally conceded defeat in the Cold War, long after Communist China had ceased to oppose American interests in Africa, American thinkers proclaimed a new era of “commercial diplomacy” as the nucleus of African-American cooperation.⁸ An economic Open Door would naturally foster other forms of bilateral and regional cooperation, including military assistance, that might be expected to undermine existing spheres of European influence and control. While Britain adjusted to the rising profile of the United States in Africa with little apparent difficulty, France sets great store by its multifaceted special relationship with francophone Africa and evinced deep resentment of American penetration. American diplomats, in turn, were not less than blunt in criticizing the proverbial *chasse gardée*, or preferred status for French enterprise in the former colonies.⁹

By the turn of the twenty-first century, a partiality for Open Doors as gateways to modern economic development had become evident throughout Africa. Open Doors signify opportunities for investors, traders, and thinkers from all regions of the world to participate in Africa’s economic and social development. However, access to the newly opened doors of many African countries has been impeded by a new breed of imperialists from within Africa itself. Instead of peaceful development, warfare is being fomented by rulers who seek to establish spheres of predominant interest for themselves and their compatriots beyond the borders of their own countries. The African wars in progress, and those of the past few years, confirm that observation. They have been, and are being, fought in three geographical sectors of the continent: Central Africa and Northeastern Africa, which are contiguous regions, and a group of Atlantic coastal states in Western Africa.

⁸ On the pioneering role of Ronald H. Brown, Secretary of Commerce in the first Clinton Administration, see Witney W. Schneidman, “U.S. Priorities in Sub-Saharan Africa: Looking Toward the 21st Century,” *CSIS Africa Notes*, No. 184 (May 1996).

⁹ Peter J. Schraeder, “Cold War to Cold Peace: Explaining U.S.-French Competition in Francophone Africa,” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 115, No. 3 (Fall 2000), 395-419.

Blocked Doors in Central Africa

Shortly after the sudden collapse of Belgian colonial rule in 1960, the United States assumed the role of protector of Congolese unity. To secure its own strategic interests and thwart those of its principal rival, the USSR, the United States supported the arbitrary and corrupt rule of President Joseph Désiré Mobutu for nearly three decades. Only in 1993, did the newly inaugurated administration of President Bill Clinton signal that Mobutu would be on his own. In 1994, the genocidal campaign against Tutsis in Rwanda created an opportunity for Mobutu to venture a personal comeback on Africa's central stage.

From April 6, 1994, when Juvenal Habyarimana, President of Rwanda, and Cyprien Ntaryamira, President of Burundi, were killed by missiles fired at their aircraft on approach to Kigali, capital of Rwanda, until mid-June, genocidal Hutus in Rwanda systematically slaughtered between 500,000 and 800,000 Tutsis, 75 percent of the entire Tutsi population as well as some Hutus who stood in their way. Predictably, an army of Tutsi exiles in Uganda, nurtured by the government of President Yoweri Museveni, invaded Rwanda. As the Hutu government collapsed, two million refugees fled to neighboring countries, mostly into Mobutu's Zaire. This massive exodus had the appearance of an organized retreat, facilitated by French forces, intervening on behalf of their Rwandan protégés for ostensibly humanitarian reasons.¹⁰ The evidence of collaboration between the French, the retreating army of Rwanda, and Mobutu's gatekeeper army was incontrovertible.¹¹

Hutu refugee camps, controlled by the leaders of the deposed Rwandan government and their genocidal allies, were set up near the border city of Goma in North Kivu Province and southward from there along the border between South Kivu and Rwanda. Although Mobutu at this time suffered from a terminal illness, he nonetheless attempted to revive his influence by providing sanctuary for the exiled Hutu and facilitating their rearmament. For two years, Hutu forces based in the camps attacked Rwanda, now under Tutsi control. Despairing of assistance from the United Nations and other countries, the

¹⁰ Gérard Prunier, *The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995, 1997), pp. 213-311.

¹¹ Wm Cyrus Reed, "Guerrillas in the Midst," in Christopher Clapham, ed., *African Guerrillas* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1998), pp. 134-154.

Rwandan army invaded Zaire and disbanded the camps. Although the Hutu militants, known as *Interahamwe*, fled to central and western Zaire, the vast majority of refugees returned to Rwanda, where they were channeled to their home areas and not, as a rule, subject to retribution. Within Zaire, however, the renegade Hutu were hunted and massacred by anti-Mobutu armies. Rwanda and its ally, Uganda, backed an insurgent Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo/Zaire (AFDL), headed by a faction leader of their choice, Laurent-Désiré Kabila. With their support, and that of Angola, Mobutu's forces were defeated. Near death's door, he fled the country and, at the end of May 1997, Kabila was sworn in as president of the restored Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). [Map 1.]

It took little more than one year for the euphoria of a hopeful new era, hailed by the presidents of South Africa and the United States as a shining example of the "African renaissance," to dissipate and reveal *le déluge* that Mobutu had foretold when his day was done. Kabila proved to be far more independent than his Rwandan and Ugandan sponsors had anticipated. In July 1998, Kabila asked the Rwandans to withdraw from the Congo in the wake of rumors that they plotted his assassination. The sequel was spectacular: on the one hand, a vain attempt by Rwandan and Ugandan troops, transported by air from eastern Congo to the vicinity of Kinshasa in the west, to seize the capital in collaboration with remnants of Mobutu's army; on the other, intervention by Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Chad, and Sudan in support of Kabila, who also recruited the beleaguered Hutu exiles to fight on his side. Burundi sided with the anti-Kabila alliance as did the Angolan insurgent movement, led by Jonas Savimbi. In all, the armed forces of eight different countries augmented by insurrectionist militias from Angola, Burundi, and Rwanda fought against one another, for or against Kabila's regime, on Congolese territory. This conflict was described memorably, by Herbert F. Weiss, as "Africa's First Continental War."¹²

One year after the onset of hostilities between Kabila and his enemies, an African peace initiative, supported by the United Nations and the United States, resulted in an agreement, signed in Lusaka, Zambia, by the governments of the Democratic Republic of

¹² Herbert F. Weiss, *War and Peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2000), p. 1.

the Congo, its allies Angola, Zimbabwe, and Namibia, its antagonists Rwanda and Uganda, and a few internal opponents of the Kabila regime. The Lusaka Agreement of July 1999 included these aims: a cease fire in anticipation of the withdrawal of foreign troops; disarmament of “negative forces,” specifically Rwandan and Burundian Hutu militias in the Congo; the initiation of a national dialogue leading to both the formation of an inclusive National Assembly and democratic elections; a peacekeeping mission authorized under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. But there were also ominous defects in the agreement, among them its failure to incorporate various political groups and militias in the volatile eastern Congo, and unrealistic assumptions relating to the disarmament of Hutu troops recently recruited by the Kinshasa government to bolster its own ragged military.

Hard on the heels of the Lusaka Agreement, the pursuit of peace in the DRC was complicated by an outbreak of armed hostilities between erstwhile allies, Rwanda and Uganda, in the northeastern city of Kisangani. The causes of that fateful rupture, in August 1999, were complex, involving conflicting ambitions to profit from the control and plunder of lucrative natural resources (diamonds, gold, coltan, other minerals, timber, and agricultural products), competing commitments to rival political clients, and different strategic motivations for encroaching upon the territory of their giant neighbor.¹³ Following the resumption of heavy fighting between Rwandan and Ugandan forces in May and June 2000, the United Nations Mission in the DRC (MONUC) deployed its “blue helmets” to supervise a negotiated withdrawal of the combatants. But the threat of warfare throughout the country mounted in August, when President Kabila announced his displeasure with the mediation process undertaken by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and his government’s decision to “suspend” the Lusaka Agreement. The impasse ended in January 2001 when President Kabila was assassinated, allegedly by one of his own bodyguards. With the acquiescence of Angola and Zimbabwe, barons of the regime chose Kabila’s son, Joseph, army chief of staff at age 29, to succeed his father as president.

¹³ John F. Clark, “Explaining Ugandan Intervention in Congo: Evidence and Interpretations,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 39, 2 (2001), 261-287.

In mid-1999, the DRC was divided effectively into four “politico-military zones” each controlled by an autonomous power group, as illustrated by Herbert Weiss [Map 2].¹⁴ Kabila’s regime effectively controlled some 40 percent of the country, from the southwestern region to the west-central and southeastern. In the vast southeastern province of Katanga, the diamond centers of Eastern and Western Kasai provinces, and the northwestern city of Mbandaka in Equateur Province, Kabila relied for security on his great ally, Zimbabwe, and the latter’s partner in Southern African regional politics, Namibia. Zimbabwe contributed 11,000 well equipped troops; Namibia up to 2,000.¹⁵ Zimbabwe also recruited, trained, and equipped thousands of Hutu refugees to fight for Kabila under the banner of a Rwandan Army of Liberation (ALiR). In turn, well-connected Zimbabwean (and a few Namibian) entrepreneurs anticipated lucrative trading and investment opportunities in diverse sectors of the Congolese economy, including military supply.¹⁶

In the southwestern region adjacent to Angola, including the capital district of Kinshasa, Kabila’s security depended mainly on Angolan forces, numbering fewer than 5,000 troops and stationed at strategic facilities – airfields, ports, and a major hydroelectricity dam.¹⁷ In addition, “Katangan Tigers” – Angolan soldiers born into an exile community that has supported the Angolan government for nearly three decades – performed crucial security services for Kabila’s government. In return, Angola has been free to tighten security near the borders of its oil-rich province of Cabinda, which is separated from the rest of the country by a sliver of Congolese territory and threatened by resilient separatists. A few Congolese concessions to Angola in adjacent oil fields have also been reported. Soon after the collapse, in 2002, of Savimbi’s insurrection, which had been supported by Mobutu and then aligned with Rwanda and Uganda against Kabila, Angola withdrew most of its regular troops from the DRC. Angolan leaders are reported to find the Zimbabwean president’s penchant for virulent anti-Tutsi rhetoric distasteful. Apart from their security and economic concerns in Cabinda and the Congo Basin, the Ango-

¹⁴ Weiss, *War and Peace*, p. 12.

¹⁵ International Crisis Group (hereinafter ICG), “Scramble for the Congo: Anatomy of an Ugly War,” ICG Africa Report No. 26, 20 December 2000, p. 60.

¹⁶ Michael Nest, “Ambitions, Profits and Loss: Zimbabwean Economic Involvement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,” *African Affairs*, 100 (2001), pp. 469-490.

¹⁷ ICG, *Scramble*, p. 57-60.

lans remain engaged in the DRC so that Kinshasa will not be almost entirely dependent on Zimbabwe. That inclination is strongly supported by the United States.

A second zone consists of the east-central Congo, where Rwanda and its client, the *Rassemblement Congolese pour la Démocratie* (RCD), with headquarters in Goma, exercise overall, although far from comprehensive, control. Created, in 1998, to spearhead the rebellion against Kabila, the RCD split into rival wings: RCD-Goma, sponsored by Rwanda, now exercises authority in the urban areas of South Kivu Province and parts of the provinces of North Kivu, Maniema, East Kasai, and northern Katanga; RCD-Kisangani/Movement of Liberation (K/ML), backed by Uganda, asserted itself in North Kivu and Eastern provinces. Initially, RCD-Goma appealed to Congolese Tutsi, known as Banyamulenge (people of the mountains) in South Kivu, who had been deprived of citizenship rights by Mobutu. By 2002, however, Banyamulenge and other indigenous eastern Congolese perceived Rwandans as exploitative invaders. This attitude was held with great intensity by the members of many indigenous Kivu militias, known as *Mai-Mai*, who were united by a shared antipathy to Rwandans, but little else.

A third zone to the north of Goma, encompassing most of the North Kivu and Eastern provinces, has been controlled by Uganda and its clients, including RCD-K/ML and a splinter group, RCD-National. This zone has been plagued by egregious mismanagement, plunder, and ethnic conflicts, particularly the reciprocal and recurrent massacres perpetrated by Hema and Lendu militias in the Ituri District of Eastern Province. Profiteers, including commanders of the Ugandan occupation, their Congolese associates, and diverse foreign interests are largely responsible for the multiple agonies endured by the people of this sector.¹⁸

A fourth zone, as shown in Weiss's map, comprises most of Equateur Province, including the late-Mobutu's home district, and adjacent portions of Eastern Province. It has been governed effectively by the Movement for Liberation of the Congo (MLC) under the leadership of Jean-Pierre Bemba, whose political ambition is quickened by great personal wealth. With the onset of hostilities between Kabila and his former patrons, Rwanda and Uganda, Bemba became an ally of Uganda's president, Yoweri Museveni.

¹⁸ "Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo," United Nations, S/2002/1146, 16 October 2002, pp. 19-24.

When Kabila was assassinated, in January 2001, Bemba refused to acknowledge as legitimate the expedient elevation of his son, Joseph Kabila, then commander of the Congolese army, by the ruling group in Kinshasa, subject only to the acquiescence of Angola and Zimbabwe. Yet in April 2002, he pragmatically agreed to hold office under President Joseph Kabila as prime minister in a transitional government, although that bargain was shortly thereafter superseded by more inclusive arrangements.¹⁹

In late July 2002, President Kabila concluded an agreement in Pretoria, South Africa, with Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, calling for withdrawal of the 25-30,000 Rwandan troops from Congolese territory within three months. In return, DRC authorities agreed that it would undertake to disarm the Hutu ALiR, estimated to number between 15-20,000 fighters.²⁰ Yet skeptics wondered whether Kinshasa would, or could, disarm and dispense with this crucial component of its armed forces. If not, it seemed doubtful that Rwanda would fully withdraw its occupation force. In September 2002, Museveni met with Kabila in Luanda, Angola, and agreed to withdraw his army from northeastern Congo within three months in return for both joint security arrangements at the border to contain Ugandan rebels based in the Congo and Ugandan participation in a pacification committee for the turbulent Congolese district of Ituri.²¹ Both the Pretoria and the Luanda agreements are being monitored by a South African mission, known as the Third Party Verification Mechanism, itself a notable contribution to the peace process.²²

With soporific indifference, the world has gradually awakened to the enormity of “Congo’s hidden war.”²³ In 2000, the respected International Refugee Committee, estimated that 1.7 million deaths were attributable to warfare in the eastern portion of the DRC since August 1998. By 2002, authoritative estimates of deaths attributable to fighting, assaults and massacres perpetrated against noncombatants, disease, and starvation in the eastern Congo were in excess of 2.2 million. In 2003, an informed observer estimated that a staggering 3.3 million “civilians” had died in eastern Congo as a direct or indirect

¹⁹ ICG, “Storm Clouds over Sun City: The Urgent Need to Recast the Congolese Peace Process,” ICG Africa Report No. 44, 14 May 2002.

²⁰ ICG, “The Kivus: The Forgotten Crucible of the Congo Conflict,” ICG Africa Report, No. 56, 24 January 2003, pp. 6, 8.

²¹ ICG, “Congo Crisis: Military Intervention in Ituri,” ICG Africa Report, No. 64, 13 June 2003, p. 7.

²² *Africa Confidential*, 44,8 (18 April 2003), p. 2.

²³ *The Economist*, June 17, 2000.

result of continuing warfare in that region.²⁴ This would appear to be the greatest toll of lives in any war on earth since World War Two.

MONUC was established by the UN Security Council in August 1999; in February 2000, the Council authorized the deployment of 550 unarmed observers and approximately 5,000 blue helmets assigned to assist and protect the observers, not to keep the peace. In December 2002, the total number of observers and their protectors was increased to the modest level of 8,700. Leading members of the Council, particularly the United States, have been reluctant to authorize additional forces in the absence of a firm political settlement. Yet the Council has responded quickly to crisis situations. Thus, in June 2003, it approved the dispatch of a multinational force of 1,500 peacekeepers, including Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and Uruguayan elements under French leadership to pacify and secure the embattled town of Bunia and its vicinity in Ituri District, where militias mounted by Hema, Lendu, and other ethnic politicians have brutalized and slaughtered thousands of villagers and town dwellers since 1999. On September 1, 2003, the French-led Interim Emergency Multinational Force was succeeded by a United Nations brigade of approximately 3,600 troops contributed by Ghana, Indonesia, and Nepal.²⁵ At the end of 2003, however, the entire UN force in the DRC (a country that is nearly one-fourth the size of the United States and second in land area to Sudan on the African continent) was not yet as large as that in Sierra Leone.

Meanwhile, in June 2003, President Kabila persuaded his principal domestic opponents, including most, but not by any means all, of the militia leaders to participate in a transitional government with a view toward holding national elections within two years. Jean-Pierre Bemba, national chairman of the MLC, agreed to assume office as one of four vice-presidents; vice-presidential appointments were also accepted by: Azarias Ruberwa, recently elected national chairman of the Rwandan-backed RCD-Goma; Arthur Zahidi N'goma, representing the unarmed political opposition groupings; Yeroda Abdoulaye Ndombasi, an establishment personality of Bas-Congo (southwestern) origin, chosen by the president. Two leaders of rival militias, based mainly in North Kivu, namely Mbusa Nyamwisi (RCD-K/ML) and Roger Lumbala (RCD-National) accepted appointments as

²⁴ John Prendergast, "Journey through Congo," *The International Herald Tribune*, November 4, 2003. The author is an official of International Crisis Group.

²⁵ *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 44, No. 16, 8 August 2003, pp. 1-2.

cabinet ministers. The government also demarcated ten military regions, appointing a military governor for each. Responsibility for three such regions were assigned to the central government; two each were allotted to the MLC and the RCD-Goma; one each to RCD-K/ML and RCD-National. The tenth military governor is General Padiri Karendo Bulenda, a leading Mai-Mai commander in South Kivu. Notably absent from the list of early appointments in the transitional government were the leaders of major militias in Ituri and the Banyamulenge militia in South Kivu. The Rwandan Hutu militias, *Forces Démocratique de Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR) incorporating ALiR, are encamped mainly in the Kivu provinces. Reports in 2004 appeared to indicate a growing disposition toward repatriation to Rwanda on the part of these exiled fighters, estimated roughly to number some 10,000 in the Kivus alone.

Every one of these militant groups, whether or not it has been included within the transitional governing coalition, has the capacity to either destabilize the national government or seriously compromise the scope of its jurisdiction. Each of them derives support from at least one external patron, thus: The largely Nande RCD-K/ML, the principal Lendu militia (*Front Nationaliste et Intégrationniste* – FNI), the Banyamulenge militia (*Forces Républicaines et Fédéralistes* – FRF), the Mai Mai militias, and the Hutu FDLR have received Ugandan assistance. Of these, the Mai Mai and the FDLR are part of Kinshasa's security network, although Kabila has also made contradictory commitments to demobilize the FDLR. The RCD-Goma, the RCD-National, and the Hema militia (*Union des Patriotes Congolaise* – UPC) look to Rwanda for military backing. Until the latter part of 2002, Bemba's MLC had been firmly aligned with Uganda; however, Uganda's mischievous and venal occupation of Eastern Province affected Bemba's alliances in the eastern Congo in ways that loosened his bond with Uganda and opened communication with Rwanda. Specifically, Lumbala's RCD-National, Bemba's ally, solicited Rwandan support for its own conflict with RCD-K/ML. Meanwhile, the Luanda agreement signaled collaboration between Uganda and Kinshasa, possibly at Bemba's expense, nudging him toward collaboration with RCD-Goma and that organization's patron, Rwanda.

In South Kivu and the northern sector of Katanga Province, a Congo-based portion of the Hutu opposition to Tutsi rule in Burundi (*Forces de Defense de la Démocratie* – FDD) has collaborated with that group's Hutu brethren of the FDLR. These Hutu mili-

tias have been equipped and trained by Zimbabwe as part of its program of support for the DRC. Unlike Rwanda and Uganda, Zimbabwe has not deliberately assisted any autonomous militias made up of Congolese. Whether or not the same observation would pertain to Angola depends on the (difficult to ascertain) whereabouts of the Katangan Tigers, a component of the Angolan armed forces that has fought effectively in defense of the restored DRC.

In any event, it is clearly the case that four covetous neighbors of the DRC, namely Angola, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, have acquired spheres of predominant influence in that massive, chaotic, and easily exploitable country. If these extraterritorial entitlements persist, others are likely to be created by opportunistic governments that acquire transnational capacities for exploitation of a weakened giant. Competition between regional predators who support rival Congolese clients strengthens the probability of episodic, if not indeed chronic, warfare in central Africa.²⁶

At the moment, there are three principal fault lines for military turbulence that pose potentially grave threats to the quest for political stability in the DRC. They can be represented as the sides of a triangle, as shown in Figure 1, anchored by three capitals: Kinshasa (DRC), Kampala (Uganda), and Kigali (Rwanda). The fault line from Kinshasa to Kigali is far more actively turbulent than that between Kinshasa and Kampala. Militias that threaten Kinshasa (or presently demonstrate a potential threat) are depicted on the fault line to Kigali, while those that support Kinshasa are depicted on the fault line to Kampala. In 2003 severe turbulence was produced by the UPC, a Hema militia, led by Thomas Lubanga, that had secured the backing of Rwanda for its bid to wrest control of Ituri District from majority population groups. The latter include the Lendu, who are supported by Uganda, and their Ngiti allies (*Front Révolutionnaire pour l'Ituri – FRPI*) who look for support to the Kinshasa government and its RCD-K/ML ally.²⁷ Horribly

²⁶ As noted in an investigation authorized by the United Nations Security Council, “criminal groups linked to the armies of Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo” are responsible for the outbreak of successive “microconflicts” based on “a self-financing war economy centred on mineral exploitation.” “Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources,” p. 5. The evidence presented in this report is compatible with the present writer’s thesis on the destructive effects of rival spheres of extraterritorial influence.

²⁷ ICG, “Intervention in Ituri,” p. 9. On the origin and evolution of the Hema-Lendu conflict, see Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers, “The Politics of Rebellion and Intervention in Ituri: The Emergence of a New Political Complex?” *African Affairs*, Vol. 103, No. 412 (July 2004), 385-412.

vicious cycles of revenge assaults against noncombatants, perpetrated mainly by Hema and Lendu militias, prompted the dispatch, in mid-2003, of French-led peacekeepers, who were soon thereafter relieved by a multinational MONUC brigade. MONUC's arrival in Ituri was opportune because Rwanda and its client militias, including RCD-Goma and the UPC do not trust France. The appointment of William L. Swing, formerly American ambassador to the DRC, as Head of MONUC in July 2003, was widely reckoned a deft maneuver by the UN Secretary General. At this time, MONUC's mission was broadened by the Security Council to authorize protection of both civilians and humanitarian workers as well as UN personnel and facilities. Still the UN Ituri Brigade, reported to consist of four infantry battalions, was and remains hard pressed to cope with the menace posed by no fewer than seven dangerous militias.²⁸

In May-June 2004, the Kinshasa-Kigali fault line was reactivated by a severe shock in South Kivu. Bukavu, the provincial capital, was seized temporarily by a coalition of Congolese forces loyal to RCD-Goma and its patron, the government of Rwanda.²⁹ The insurgents, a coalition of Congolese Hutu and Tutsi,³⁰ justified their action on the ground that Tutsi residents of Bukavu were about to be massacred by other Congolese. In this instance, communal fear appears to have been a product of friction between the provincial governor, an RCD-Goma stalwart, and a newly-appointed commander of the military region, who was a Kinshasa loyalist. President Kabila declared bluntly that Rwanda was to blame for having fomented the crisis. In Kinshasa, nationalist mobs reacted to the seizure of Bukavu by wrecking the offices of all four political parties that constitute the transitional government. They also destroyed property belonging to MONUC in protest of its failure to protect Bukavu from the insurgents. Although the

²⁸ On the formidable challenges of peacekeeping in Ituri District, involving alliances of armed groups that sometimes even result in Hema-Lendu cooperation, see ICG, "Maintaining Momentum in the Congo: The Ituri Problem," ICG Africa Report, No. 84, 26 August 2004. ICG recommends pre-emptive action, when necessary, against aggressive militias, and supports a pending request by the UN Secretary General to increase MONUC's force level from 10,800 to 23,900. Ibid, p. 16

²⁹ *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 45, No. 12, 11 June 2004, pp. 1-2; ICG, "Pulling Back from the Brink in the Congo," Africa Briefing, 7 July 2004.

³⁰ Hutu-Tutsi collaboration in North Kivu has been promoted by the governor of that province, Eugène Serufuli Nganyabaseke, a Congolese Hutu who is backed by Kigali and supports the RCD-Goma. Serufuli was complicit in the seizure of Bukavu by an ethnically diverse force under Gen. Laurent Nkunda, a Tutsi officer associated with RCD-Goma. Although the Tutsis of Bukavu are mainly Banyamulenge, the commander of the Banyamulenge militia, FRF, remained loyal to Kinshasa during the RCD-inspired seizure of the city. ICG, "The Kivus," pp. 20-21; *Africa Confidential*, 11 June 2004, p. 2; ICG, "Pulling Back from the Brink," p. 5, n. 19.

rebels withdrew from Bukavu after a week-long occupation, they vowed to return in the event of assaults on the Tutsi minority.

At the time of this crisis, MONUC's authorized troop strength was 10,800 for the entire country. The portion, reportedly 3,500 blue helmets, on duty in the Kivus is woefully inadequate for peacekeeping in the event of a region-wide rebellion. In October 2004, the Security Council authorized an increase of MONUC's troop strength to 16,700, which fell far short of the Secretary General's request for 23,900. Meanwhile, persistent military threats to Kinshasa's authority in the region heighten the probability of Rwandan intervention, both directly and via manipulation of proxy militias. Kigali continues to treat the Kivu provinces as a military buffer zone that is also available for opportunistic economic exploitation. In return, Kabila's government has abandoned its short-lived policy of compliance with an obligation to subdue the Rwandan exile army in favor of renewed collaboration with the beleaguered FDLR.³¹

Given the volatility of the Kinshasa – Kigali fault line, there is an ever-present danger that local turbulence will produce a chain reaction along the intersecting and comparably, if not even more, dangerous fault line from Kampala to Kigali. In other words, a seemingly local conflict in the eastern Congo could ignite a war between Uganda and Rwanda, which would have further inflammatory effects in the DRC and neighboring countries. Thus, an extension of hostilities to Burundi would be probable if the delicate peace process in that troubled country does not survive its currently critical phase.³² Specifically, failure of the predominantly Tutsi national army of Burundi to reconcile with the overwhelmingly Hutu citizenry, and with Hutu militias, would magnify the dangers of a widening war in east-central Africa, involving Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Spheres of predominant extraterritorial influence exacerbate such threats; open doors dissipate the dangers.

³¹ ICG, "Back to the Brink in the Congo," Africa Briefing, 17 December 2004, p. 4.

³² For comprehensive expositions, see ICG, "The Burundi Rebellion and the Ceasefire Negotiations," ICG Africa Briefing Paper, 6 August 2002; and ICG, "Fin de Transition au Burundi: Franchir le Cap," ICG Afrique Rapport, No. 81, 5 juillet 2004; also ICG, "Elections in Burundi: the Peace Wager," Africa Briefing, 9 December 2004.

Broken Doors in Northeastern Africa

The wars of northeastern Africa are publicized by their proximity to the heartlands of the Arab world. They comprise three distinct, but often interacting, theatres of warfare: Sudan, historic Ethiopia (including Eritrea), and Somalia. In Sudan, the central issue is resistance to Arabization by Christians in the southern portion of the country. Northern Sudanese are preponderantly Muslim Arabs of African racial descent. Eritrea gained its independence of Ethiopia in 1991, a few years after the Soviet Union abandoned Ethiopia to its fate. In 1998-1999, however, a border dispute between the two countries resulted in tank warfare on a massive scale, involving more than half a million combatants, of whom between 75,000 and 100,000 were killed. Since the conclusion of a peace agreement in 2001, the border area has been patrolled by several thousand UN peacekeepers. In Somalia, the collapse of a national government in 1991 inaugurated the current era of low-intensity warfare between clan-based militias.

The Republic of the Sudan [Map 3.]

Some 30 million people inhabit the spacious Sudan. Nearly 70 percent of them, in the northern and central parts of the county, profess the religion of Islam; among them, Arabs of African descent are numerically and politically dominant. Southern Sudanese, many of whom profess Christianity, have resisted “Arabization” of the south, including the establishment there of *shari’a*, the legal system of Islam, since the colonial era. Southern separatists initiated an armed struggle against the northern rulers in 1955, one year before the Sudan became independent of a joint British and Egyptian condominium. The rebellion was suspended by its leaders in 1973, when a Sudanese military ruler agreed to negotiate a settlement that would create an autonomous southern region. Ten years later, the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) resumed fighting in response to northern repudiation of the 1973 agreement and the regime’s declaration of its intent to establish *shari’a* throughout the country.

During the 1980s, three sectors of the northern leadership elite vied for paramount power – military commanders, leaders of the two main political parties (one historically anti-Egyptian, the other pro-Egyptian), and Islamic fundamentalists. In 1988, Sadiq al-Mahdi, leader of a party with messianic and anti-Egyptian nationalist traditions, formed a government of national reconciliation; but southerners were disappointed when Sadiq

dispensed with his secularist partners and embraced fundamentalism by reaffirming the introduction of *shari'a*. In return, Sadiq asked the fundamentalists for a free hand to negotiate a settlement with the southerners. His strategy failed when General Omar Hassan Ahmed al-Bashir seized power in the name of the National Islamic Front (NIF), a fundamentalist political party led by Hassan al-Turabi, a wealthy Islamist ideologue. Elected to the office of Speaker (presiding officer) of the National Assembly, Turabi used his influence to make Sudan an operational center and sanctuary for Islamist terrorists, notably Osama bin Laden, whose organization, Al Qaeda, was based in Khartoum, the capital city, from 1991 to 1996. By the mid-1990s, however, bin Laden's relationship with Turabi had deteriorated and he transferred his main base to Afghanistan. In 1999, Turabi clashed with President Bashir, who dissolved the parliament and consolidated his own power at Turabi's expense. The NIF then split into Bashir and Turabi wings, respectively the National Congress and the Popular Congress. Turabi's subsequent attempt to negotiate independently with southern leaders resulted in his arrest in February 2001 and detention in his home until October 2003.³³

The Sudanese civil war between proponents of Arabization and the southern resistance to that policy appears (in 2005) to have concluded with a peace agreement after more than two decades of fighting following the ten year hiatus of 1973-1983. Estimates of the human cost include more than 2 million civilian deaths in southern Sudan and more than 4.4 million southerners displaced from their homes, thought to be the largest number of displaced persons due to a single war in the world today. The hardships and suffering endured by civilians include starvation on a massive scale, war-related diseases, and the abduction of villagers, mainly women and children, by slave-raiding militias.³⁴ Organized southern resistance, however, has been divided by the ethno-linguistic rivalries of that region's Nilotic inhabitants. By far the most important, indeed majority, movement, based mainly among the Dinka people, is the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA; also Sudan People's Liberation Movement -- SPLM), founded in 1984. Its leader, John Garang de Mabior, had been a colonel in the Sudanese army; previously he had earned a doctorate in agronomy at the University of Iowa and had taught agricultural

³³ On the rise and fall of Turabi, see John Prendergast et al, *God, Oil and Country* (Brussels: International Crisis Group Press, 2002), pp.41-45, 71-80.

³⁴ Jok Madut Jok, *War and Slavery in Sudan* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001).

economics at the University of Khartoum. In 1994, a breakaway faction, representing Nuer dissidents mainly, and led by Riak Machar, founded the Southern Sudanese Independence Movement (SSIM) which cooperated intermittently with the government in opposition to the SPLA. In response, the SPLA joined a new National Democratic Alliance (NDA), organized by northern Muslim but secularist opponents of the NIF regime. Garang and the SPLA have always been partial to the vision of a united and secular Sudan, in preference to secession of the south. Sadiq al-Mahdi also joined the NDA, but briefly; given his personal theocratic predilection, the NDA did not prove to be a congenial home for him, and he returned eventually to the embrace of President Bashir in Khartoum. In 2001, Garang entered into an incongruous alliance of convenience with his ideological nemesis, Hassan al-Turabi, who was then placed under house arrest by the ruling Islamists.

The efforts of neighboring states to foster the cause of peace in Sudan were rewarded in 1994, when the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a regional organization of seven member-states), adopted a declaration of principles for settlement of the Sudanese conflict that recognized the right of southerners to a referendum on self-determination if the antagonists could not otherwise agree on a democratic and secular program of national unity. From time to time afterwards, interested parties (Egypt, Libya, Eritrea, Nigeria, and a European group) offered proposals that either deviated from or reinforced IGAD's approach.³⁵ Yet the IGAD process appeared to have been at death's door until it was re-invigorated by the United States in the immediate aftermath of the Al Qaeda terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Previously, African-American and Christian political activists in the United States had urged President George W. Bush to confront the Sudanese government on the question of slave raiding and slavery. In June 2001, the House of Representatives passed a "Sudan Peace Act," touted by its sponsors to "punish those who trade in blood oil" by "imposing capital market sanctions on companies investing in Sudan ... On September 6, President Bush appointed former senator John Danforth, an Episcopal minister, as Special Envoy for Peace in the Sudan."³⁶ The regime's first reaction to the events of Sep-

³⁵ Prendergast et al, *God*, pp. 153-175.

³⁶ Charles H. Cutter, *Africa 2003* (Harpers Ferry, WV: Stryker-Post Publications, 2003), p. 266.

tember 11 was to contemplate abandonment of the IGAD process and intensify its prosecution of the war.³⁷ But Danforth's mission, beginning in November, had salutary effects in the war zones, including an agreement to respect periodic ceasefires that would facilitate the delivery of food supplies and humanitarian aid to civilians. His political stature and personal dedication to the peace process signified a serious American commitment that appears to have "galvanized" the resumption of negotiations under IGAD auspices.³⁸

Having sidelined Turabi, the NIF-National Congress government held confidential talks with the SPLA/M leaders in Machakos, Kenya. In July 2002, a breakthrough agreement provided for a referendum in southern Sudan to be conducted six years and six months from whatever date the two sides would finally sign a comprehensive peace agreement. During that interim period the south would be governed on the basis of secular principles, while *shari'a* would apply throughout the north, including the capital district of Khartoum; in short, the formula for interim rule would be "one country, two systems." After more than one additional year of hard bargaining, and intermittent fighting in contested sectors of the country, negotiators agreed to security arrangements for the interim period involving the deployment of joint Sudanese army-SPLA units in the south, in three strategic border areas (Abyei, the Nuba Mountains, and Southern Blue Nile; see Map 3), and in the capital city, Khartoum.³⁹ In the Nuba Mountains and Southern Blue Nile, progress toward complete agreement turned on the vexing questions of local autonomy, the right to referenda on self-determination, and the establishment of *shari'a* during the six and one-half year interim period. In Abyei and its potentially oil-rich environs, Arab and Dinka peoples seek inclusion in the north and south respectively.⁴⁰ As the two sides inched toward a settlement, it was reported that, given a satisfactory agreement on the distribution of oil revenues, the government might cede Abyei to the south in return for southern acceptance of the northern position regarding the two other areas and, with particular reference to the application of *shari'a*, the national capital.

³⁷ Prendergast, *God*, p. 156-157.

³⁸ Cutter, *Africa*, p. 266. In 2004, President Bush nominated Senator Danforth to serve as ambassador to the United Nations. The universal approval expressed for this appointment was due, in no small measure, to widespread admiration for Danforth's performance as the president's special envoy to Sudan.

³⁹ ICG, "Sudan: Towards an Incomplete Peace," ICG Africa Report, No. 73, 11 December 2003, p. 6.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9; ICG, "Sudan's Other Wars," Africa Briefing, 25 June 2003; "Sudan Endgame," ICG Africa Report, No. 65, 7 July 2003.

In December 2003 the two-party negotiation reached an agreement in principle on a roughly equal (north-south) distribution of oil revenues, which have grown steadily since the export of crude oil began in 1999. The main operating oil fields are located south of the Nuba Mountains in areas contested by southern, primarily Nuer, militias that have battled the SPLA, often with government assistance, as well as the principal antagonists.⁴¹ In addition to havoc wreaked on villagers by marauding armies and militias, government forces have systematically driven civilians from their homes in areas along the routes of pipelines that are threatened by sabotage. These abuses were specifically addressed by Senator Danforth's mission, resulting in the creation of an American-led Civilian Protection Monitoring Team (CPMT) authorized to investigate and publicize alleged abuses. American companies do not participate in oilfield operations owing to a prohibition imposed by the Clinton administration. The largest and oldest producer is controlled by the state-owned companies of China and Malaysia, following the withdrawal of their Canadian partner, which had been subject to intense public criticism for its involvement; European producers include the Franco-Belgian company, TotalFinaElf, and the Swedish company, Lundin Oil, as well as other companies from Russia, Germany, Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.⁴²

The oil boom in conjunction with the American peace initiative of 2001-2002, and continuing British-American participation in the peace process, has revealed a bright horizon for modernity in Sudan. As John Prendergast and his associates observed astutely in 2002,

The 11 September attacks gave the Khartoum regime a chance to free itself of associations that had been useful during the period of regime consolidation but carried an international stigma. Oil money has rendered dependence on external Islamist financing obsolete. Turabi is a convenient scapegoat for what was once a much more widely shared policy.⁴³

⁴¹ ICG, "Sudan's Oilfields Burn Again: Brinkmanship Endangers the Peace Process," African Briefing, 10 February 2003.

⁴² When asked about China's participation in the Sudanese oil sector, China's Deputy Foreign Minister, Zhou Wenzhong, replied that "business is business...we try to separate politics from business. Secondly, I think the internal situation in Sudan is an internal affair, and we are not in a position to impose upon them." Howard W. French, "China in Africa: All Trade With No Political Baggage." *The New York Times*, August 8, 2004.

⁴³ Prendergast et al, *God*, p. 81.

Affirming its embrace of political toleration, the government released Turabi from house arrest in October 2003; in turn, Turabi endorsed the peace process and “credited Garang and international pressure [not the Khartoum government, which he excoriated] for his release.”⁴⁴ Time will tell whether these pragmatic declarations and gestures by rival Islamists signify an historic turning point in Sudanese history or cynical maneuvers for partisan advantage. While two-party negotiations between the Islamist government and the SPLA corresponds to the Sudan’s main historical conflict, they exclude crucial sectors of the political spectrum, among them northern political parties other than the National Congress, non-Arab northerners (notably the Beja of northeastern Sudan, Nubian migrants in the Nile valley, non-Arab inhabitants of the western region known as Darfur), and various southern political groups as well as militias that are not represented by the SPLA.

Darfur and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Indeed the bright horizon for peace was suddenly clouded in late 2003 by an upsurge of terroristic attacks on non-Arab villages by government-backed Arab tribal militias in Sudan’s western region of Darfur, inhabited by approximately seven million people. The vast majority of Darfurians belong to the Fur, Massaleit, and Zaghawa nationality groups; a minority, comprising 27 tribes of mixed Arab-African descent, affirm their identities as Arabs. Nearly all of the inhabitants of Darfur, Arab and non-Arab alike, are Muslims. Old disputes between the Arab and non-Arab Africans in Darfur, including rival claims to land and water for farming and grazing, have become ever more intense since the latter 1980s, when an organization known as the “Arab Gathering” and related militias, called “Janjaweed,” launched a campaign of massacre and abduction against the non-Arab Muslims.⁴⁵

In February 2003, two non-Arab political groups in Darfur, namely the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), initiated military actions that were intended to offset their anticipated loss of influence with the Khartoum government once a peace agreement was produced by the two-party (National Congress/SPLM) negotiating process in Kenya, in which they were not repre-

⁴⁴ ICG, “Sudan: Towards an Incomplete Peace,” p. 16.

⁴⁵ Ibid, pp. 19-23; ICG, “Darfur Rising: Sudan’s New Crisis,” ICG Africa Report, No. 76, 25 March 2004.

sented.⁴⁶ Khartoum retaliated against the Darfur rebels by unleashing merciless Janjaweed militiamen, supported by the nation's army and air force, against defenseless villagers. In May 2004, International Crisis Group reported that a ceasefire which had been negotiated between Khartoum and the rebels under Chadian auspices in April was proving to be ineffectual; that approximately 30,000 lives had been lost during the previous fifteen months of fighting, and that 1.2 million people had been driven from their homes, of whom 200,000 had sought refuge across the border in Chad. UN and other relief officials estimated that between 100,000 and 350,000 more Darfurians would probably die of starvation, disease, and direct violence depending on the time it would take for the government to assert control over the Janjaweed and open secure routes for emergency assistance.⁴⁷ Responding to outcries of protest in America and Europe against the genocidal outrage in Sudan, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell traveled to Khartoum and Darfur in June 2004, demanding cessation of the violence, facilitation of external relief operations, and unfettered external observation.⁴⁸ In July, the UN Security Council adopted a weak resolution, calling upon the Khartoum government to disarm the Janjaweed militias and apprehend persons who had incited and perpetrated atrocities. These directives were easily evaded, prompting the Secretary General to endorse a recommendation by his special representative to Sudan for authorization of a peacekeeping force of no less than 3,000 troops under the auspices of the African Union's newly created Peace and Security Council.

Darfur's agony has all but overshadowed the achievement of an agreement between the Sudanese government and the SPLA/M, in May, on the remaining substantive

⁴⁶ "Rebels in Darfur, not participants in the IGAD peace talks, concluded they had to fight lest decisions on power and wealth sharing for the entire country be taken without them." Ibid, p. i; also ICG, "Sudan: Now or Never in Darfur," ICG Africa Report, No. 80, 23 May 2004, p. 1.

⁴⁷ Ibid, pp. i, 1-3. By August 2004, the UN estimate of civilians killed in Darfur had risen to more than 50,000. *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 45, No. 16, 6 August 2004, pp. 1, 3. Subsequent estimates of the death toll by UN and other informed sources have exceeded 70,000, while the number of displaced persons has been estimated at approximately 2 million.

⁴⁸ The genocidal nature of aggression by the government-backed Janjaweed militias was depicted in a series of poignant and influential columns by Nicholas D. Kristof in *The New York Times* during the spring, summer and fall of 2004. For references to systematic aggression, particularly rapes, against women and girls, see ICG, "Darfur Deadline: A New International Action Plan," ICG Africa Report, No. 83, 23 August 2004, p. 6, n. 40; also Samantha Power, "Dying in Darfur," *The New Yorker*, August 30, 2004, pp. 56-73. In January 2005, a commission appointed by the UN Secretary General, as directed by the Security Council, concluded that the pattern of killing and forced displacement did not constitute genocide despite the "genocidal intention" of some of the perpetrators, who should be prosecuted before the newly created International Criminal Court.

issues, specifically these: composition of a government of national unity for the six year and six month interim period; administration of the contested areas of Nuba Mountains, Southern Blue Nile, and Abyei; an eventual referendum in Abyei to determine whether it will be placed in northern or southern Sudan. But the Darfur crisis has dangerously impacted the concluding phases of the Khartoum-SPLA engagement. Uncertainty about the value of a deal between the principal antagonists so long as fighting continues in Darfur was balanced by fear that diminished momentum toward completion of the agreement would threaten its fruition and encourage belligerence on the part of groups, like the Darfurians, that resent their exclusion from the process.⁴⁹ At this critical juncture, the UN Security Council fostered a sense of urgency by convening in Nairobi, Kenya, in mid-November 2004, prompting an agreement between the Khartoum government and the SPLA/M to finalize the elusive accord by year's end. That milestone was reached on January 9, 2005, when the SPLA's Garang and Vice President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha, the government's principal negotiator, signed an historic Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Non-Arab minority ethnic groups of northern Sudan, outside of Darfur, might learn a harsh lesson from that region's humanitarian disaster. A resort to violence by rebels in pursuit of their political aims incurred a response of unmitigated brutality by the government. In that circumstance the occurrence of genocide is also "genocidal retaliation," as identified by Alan J. Kuperman in his study of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. In both cases, genocidal responses were produced by military provocations.⁵⁰ In Sudan, non-Arab Muslims dread the thrust of Arab imperialism. Yet the two non-Arab rebel organizations in Darfur have divergent political orientations. One, the SLA, based firmly on the Fur and Massaleit ethnicities, is affiliated with the secularist National Democratic Alliance, in particular with the non-Arab Beja Congress. The other, JEM, is primarily Zaghawa; its leadership is aligned with Hassan al-Turabi's Popular Congress, the Islamist opposition to President Bashir's government, which is reported to fear the Zaghawa re-

⁴⁹ ICG, "Darfur Deadline," pp. 16-21.

⁵⁰ Alan J. Kuperman, "Provoking genocide: a revised history of the Rwandan Patriotic Front," *Journal of Genocide Research*, 6/1 (March 2004), pp. 61-84. The phrase "genocidal retaliation" appears in the title of his 2002 PhD dissertation. *Ibid*, p. 83.

bellion as “the main threat” to its interests.⁵¹ At stake for Bashir is nothing less than control of the domineering Islamist movement in Sudan.⁵²

Northern Uganda. A cruel and brutal insurgency, known as the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA), has plagued Northern Uganda since 1987. Its founder and paramount leader, Joseph Kony, perpetuates a Christian millenarian tradition that emerged among the Acholi of Northern Uganda as an expression of their grievances against the central government.⁵³ The record of this rebel army’s barbarity, including the abduction of children, systematic rape, torture, mass mutilation, merciless killing and unrestrained plunder, may be the grimmest chapter in the Republic of Uganda’s history of oscillation between periods of heartening reform and dismaying reversion to despotic rule. A reliable estimate of the number of internally displaced persons attributable to these outrages, and the national army’s largely vain efforts to prevent them, is 1.5 million.⁵⁴ Inasmuch as nearly all of the perpetrators and victims of these political crimes alike have been Acholi people, Northern Uganda’s agony is reminiscent of the auto-genocidal horrors of 1975-1979 in Cambodia.

Kony’s barbarous onslaughts against his own people, in the adventitious name of Christian religiosity, could not have been sustained for so many years without logistical support provided by the Islamic fundamentalist regime in neighboring Sudan. To be sure, Sudan has supported the LRA in retaliation for Uganda’s support of the popular rebellion against compulsory Islamization in Southern Sudan. From the standpoint of realpolitik (the pursuit of a narrowly defined national interest) a moral distinction between cultural defense in Southern Sudan and pure destructiveness in the Acholi districts of Uganda may be irrelevant. Yet Khartoum’s involvement with LRA is surely an outgrowth of Arab Islamist imperialism in Sudan itself.

⁵¹ ICG, “Darfur Rising,” pp. i, 4-11, 18-20; ICG, “Sudan: Now or Never in Darfur,” pp. 8-10. Ironically, the JEM strongly opposes mediation under Chadian auspices even though Idriss Déby, President of Chad, is himself Zaghawa. Déby has been an ally of President Bashir, who supported his seizure of power in 1990. Recently, however, domestic and French pressures on Déby have weakened his ties with Khartoum. ICG, “Darfur Deadline,” pp. 12-13.

⁵² The political vulnerability of Bashir’s National Congress Party is indicated in ICG, “Sudan’s Dual Crisis: Refocusing on IGAD,” Africa Briefing, 5 October 2004, p. 8.

⁵³ On the immediate antecedents and emergence of the LRA, see Heike Behrend, “War in Northern Uganda: The Holy Spirit Movements of Alice Lakwena, Severino Lukoya and Joseph Kony (1986-1997),” in Clapham, ed., *African Guerrillas*, pp. 107-118.

⁵⁴ ICG, “Northern Uganda: Understanding and Solving the Conflict,” ICG Africa Report, No. 77, 14 April 2004, p. i.

Khartoum's assistance to the LRA has included the provision of food, medical supplies, weaponry, sanctuary in secure bases within Sudan, and easy access to Uganda. The LRA has also relied upon the assistance of Southern Sudanese (non-Arab) militias that have allied with the Khartoum government because they too have opposed the SPLA.⁵⁵ If the Khartoum-SPLA/M comprehensive peace agreement of 2004 proves to be durable, the LRA would be in dire straits. The agreement allows the government to station no more than 12,000 troops, functioning in joint commands with contingents of the SPLA, throughout the entire south. Furthermore, Khartoum would no longer support its "proxy militias" that have assisted the LRA. In Northern Uganda, unlike the Sudanese region of Darfur, the potentially historic agreement, sponsored by IGAD with the investment of crucial Anglo-American support, might yield an immediate humanitarian dividend.

*The Sub-region*⁵⁶ [Maps 4 and 5.]

In 2004, the geographical sub-region comprising Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia, was relatively quiescent, although the possibility of renewed warfare between Eritrea and Ethiopia loomed ominously, while sporadic intra-clan conflicts were endemic in Somalia. Eritrea, a former Italian colony of some 4 million people, had wrested its independence from Ethiopia, a much larger country with a population in excess of 60 million, in 1993. Two years earlier, the avowedly communist Ethiopian regime had collapsed when the dying Soviet Union withdrew its support. The successor regime in Ethiopia, like its counterpart in Eritrea, opportunely discarded its own communist ideology to cloak itself in professions of economic liberalism and, more dubiously, political pluralism. During President Clinton's second term, Meles Zenawi and Isaias Afewerki, presidents of Ethiopia and Eritrea respectively, were hopefully "lionized" by the United States as members of a cohort of "new leaders" of an "African renaissance."⁵⁷ These hopes were falsified, several weeks after Meles, Isaias and several other "new leaders"

⁵⁵ Ibid, pp. 7, 24.

⁵⁶ I respect Professor Negussay Ayele's rejection of a commonly used term for this sub-region, "The Horn of Africa," as a "jinx." He writes, "It is not even a historical, geographic or cartographic descriptive term." Negussay Ayele, *In Search of the DNA of the Ethiopia-Eritrea Problem* (California: MediaETHIOPIA, 2003), p. 122.

⁵⁷ For a contemporary account and realistic assessment of this hopeful phase, see Marina Ottaway, *Africa's New Leaders: Democracy or State Reconstruction* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999), pp. 2-3 for quotations.

had met with President Clinton in Africa, when the two countries went to war over a border dispute. The ferocity of fighting, estimated recently to have taken “some 100,000 lives between 1998 and 2000,”⁵⁸ meant that Clinton’s legacy in this sub-region would be a salvage operation at best, rather than an example of progress.

The form of salvage was an arduous process of negotiation led by Anthony Lake, a former national security adviser to President Clinton, who appointed him as a special envoy to mediate this dispute. In December 2000, Isaias and Meles signed an agreement in Algiers providing for, *inter alia*, a UN peacekeeping mission, a 25 km-wide demilitarized zone, lying entirely within Eritrean territory from one end of the 1,000 km border to the other, and a commission to delimit the border on maps so that it could then be demarcated on the ground. Both parties agreed to accept the commission’s decision as “final and binding.”

In April 2003, the commission, consisting of five eminent jurists, scholars, and diplomats rendered a decision based on colonial treaties as required by the Algiers agreement. It ruled that the small, but bitterly contested and therefore highly symbolic, village of Badme, itself the ostensible *cassus belli*, would be inside Eritrea, while most of the surrounding plain would be Ethiopian. Although both sides accepted the decision, Ethiopian resentment was manifest in its attempt to delay the process of demarcation pending further review of both the decision and its effects. For its part, Eritrea, backed by the commission, insisted on immediate demarcation of the boundary, after which humanitarian and other considerations might become the subject of further negotiation.⁵⁹

At the time of writing, a stalemate of nearly two years duration has aggravated the threat of renewed warfare. The borderland has been remilitarized and troops from both sides have encroached upon the demilitarized zone. Ethiopian ardor for the recovery of its historic coastal province, lost in 1993, overshadows the government’s acknowledged obligation to comply with the unpopular ruling of 2002 in favor of its smaller but resolute neighbor. The heirs of King Solomon in Addis Ababa look to New York and Washington for redemptive Solomonic statesmanship.

⁵⁸ ICG, “Ethiopia and Eritrea: War or Peace?” ICG Africa Report, No. 68, 24 September 2003, p. i.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

Somalia, a country of approximately 7.8 million, is the prototypical “failed state” of the current era; the central government collapsed in 1991, and attempts to restore it (prior to the one now in progress) have been unavailing. Today, the functions of government in Somalia are exercised by an assortment of political organizations and militias associated with large lineage groups known as clans and sub-clans. A Transitional National Government, created by a conference in 2000, convened in neighboring Djibouti and attended by community leaders and other influential persons, was recognized by Djibouti, Eritrea, several Arab governments and various international organizations; but it scarcely functioned within Somalia itself and was superceded, in October 2004, by a so-called Transitional Federal Government. The new interim president, elected by a clan-based transitional parliament, is Colonel Abdillahi Yusuf Ahmed; at the time of his election he was president of an autonomous northeastern region, known as Puntland, although his authority there was bitterly contested by leaders of rival militias.

In northwestern Somalia, adjacent to the Gulf of Aden, a Republic of Somaliland (formerly British Somaliland, while the eastern and southern sectors had been Italian Somaliland), comprising approximately 22 percent of the country’s land area and about 30 percent of the entire population, had declared its separate independence in 1991. Although Somaliland has maintained a stable, effective, and increasingly democratic government, no other government or international organization has recognized its right to sovereignty.⁶⁰ Yet its very existence belies the Somali nation’s stereotypical reputation as a failed state.

The restoration of a viable national government for Somalia, exclusive of Somaliland, depends on the resolution of struggles for power between rival clan chieftains and militia warlords. In 2002, IGAD initiated a program for national reconciliation and reconstruction of a central government for Somalia. To manage the process, IGAD created a Technical Committee consisting of the three countries that have common borders with Somalia, namely Djibouti, Ethiopia, and Kenya. The Technical Committee, however, was debilitated by partisan rivalry between two of its members, Djibouti and Ethiopia. Djibouti, a member of the Arab League, performs as a surrogate for Egypt, whose policy

⁶⁰ ICG, “Somaliland: Democratisation and its Discontents,” ICG Africa Report, No. 66, 28 July 2003; Cutter, *Africa*, pp. 229-231.

is contrary to that of Ethiopia. Kenya chaired the committee and provided venue for conferences and committee meetings. Yet the best efforts of Kenyan diplomats have often been stymied by the divisive effects of Egyptian-Ethiopian rivalry.⁶¹

After Nigeria, Egypt and Ethiopia have the two largest populations in Africa. Egyptian agriculture is dependent on the waters of the Nile, which derive mainly from the Blue Nile that rises in Ethiopia, where the government plans to use increasing amounts of water for hydroelectric generation and irrigation. The dominant ethnic groups in Ethiopia are preponderantly Christian, although some 50 percent of the national population is Muslim. Egypt is also wary of Ethiopian support for Christian separatists in Southern Sudan, who might be tempted to reduce the northern flow of the White Nile. These potential conflicts of economic interest and cultural outlook could be contained by constructive diplomacy, but there is little evidence of conciliatory statesmanship by either of these two regional powers with regard to Somalia. On the contrary, they have assiduously created “spheres of influence” for themselves in the torn fabric of Somali politics.⁶²

Egypt backed the Transitional National Government, as did those clan organizations, including militias, that are either supported by Egypt or otherwise linked with Arab interests. Ethiopia, contrarily, viewed the transitional government as “a stalking horse for Arab and Islamic domination of the Horn of Africa, and also accuse[d] it of being a front for al-Qaeda.”⁶³ In response to that threat, Ethiopia has supported both Somaliland and Yusuf’s cause in Puntland; in the southern sector, it has “engineered the formation” of a Somali Reconciliation and Restoration Council as an alternative to the transitional government.⁶⁴ Yusuf’s emergence as interim president has been assayed soberly as representing “not a national consensus, but rather the victory of one camp in the long-running civil war.”⁶⁵

To be sure, Somalia’s inability to restore its national government is due to internal causes primarily. These, and the existence of a Somali terrorist organization, al-Itihaad

⁶¹ ICG, “Salvaging Somalia’s Chance for Peace,” Africa Briefing, 9 December 2002; ICG, “Negotiating a Blueprint for Peace in Somalia,” ICG Africa Report, No. 59, 6 March 2003; ICG, “Biting the Somali Bullet,” ICG Africa Report, No. 79, 4 May 2004.

⁶² ICG, “Somalia: Countering Terrorism in a Failed State,” ICG Africa Report, No. 45, 23 May 2002, p. 8.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 7.

⁶⁴ Ibid, pp. 7-8.

⁶⁵ ICG, “Somalia: Continuation of War by Other Means?” Crisis Group Africa Report, No. 88, 21 December 2004, p. 1.

al-Islami, with links to Al Qaeda,⁶⁶ are reason enough to anticipate the necessity of temporary international trusteeship in some form in addition to eventual UN peacekeeping. Egypt and Ethiopia are not responsible for Somalia's national tragedy, but their relationships to it have been anything but benign. Since both of them are strongly influenced by the United States, it is not surprising to learn from ICG researchers that Somali hopes for increased American involvement in the peace process are "nearly universal."⁶⁷

Opening Doors in Western Africa

In recent years, combinations of internal and cross-border warfare have taken a heavy toll of lives, human relations, and prospects for progress in a cluster of West African states with Atlantic Ocean seacoasts. The impacts of war on Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Sierra Leone have been truly devastating, while Guinea has been invaded by forces from across the border it shares with each of the other three. Charles Taylor, a Liberian insurgent who brutalized youngsters and trained them to kill and loot without mercy, is the principal malefactor in this regional calamity.⁶⁸ His independent protégé in neighboring Sierra Leone, Foday Sankoh, created an army of insurgents, mainly adolescent and child soldiers, notorious for their use of mutilation during the course of rampages against non-combatants.⁶⁹ The godfather of both insurgencies was Moammar Qadhafi, the Libyan dictator, who schemed to destabilize both countries for his own imperial purposes.⁷⁰ He launched his Liberian venture in collaboration with a regional ally, Blaise Compaoré, president of Burkina Faso, which became a staging area for Taylor's invasion of Liberia in December 1989.

An Arc of Violence [Maps 6-13.]

Taylor's militia entered Liberia via Côte d'Ivoire with the acquiescence of that country's conservative president, who harbored a personal grievance against the Liberian

⁶⁶ ICG, "Biting the Somali Bullet," pp. 5, 11-29; Ken Menkhaus, "Terrorism in Somalia: Threat Assessment and Policy Options," in United States Institute of Peace, "Terrorism in the Horn of Africa," Special Report 113, January 2004, pp. 9-11.

⁶⁷ ICG, "Salvaging," p. 9.

⁶⁸ For a learned account, see Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy* (New York: New York University Press, 2001).

⁶⁹ John L. Hirsch, *Sierra Leone: Diamonds and the Struggle for Democracy* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2001).

⁷⁰ Ellis, *Anarchy*, pp. 69-72, 158-59, 306.

president, Samuel K. Doe. The sector chosen for entry was inhabited by Gio and Mano people who have ethnic affinities with Ivoiriens across the border. Taylor's initial success among these groups provoked brutal reprisals against them by the Liberian army, whereupon they rallied en masse to Taylor and retaliated against Krahn villages in Doe's ethnic homeland. By mid-1990, Taylor's rapidly growing militia controlled large sectors of the Liberian countryside. He and less powerful warlords acquired fortunes by plundering Liberia's abundant natural resources to finance their armies and personal ambitions.⁷¹ Liberian suffering as a result of internecine warfare between 1990 and 1996 is indicated by these widely accepted estimates: no fewer than 150,000 deaths, the flight of 700,000 refugees across national borders, and well over a million more people displaced from their homes, all of these victims from a national population then estimated to be under three million. Meanwhile, the capital city, Monrovia, was protected by an American-aided West African force, known by the acronym ECOMOG, for Economic Community of West African States Cease-fire Monitoring Group, consisting mainly of Nigerian troops and commanders. Reliable accounts of the ECOMOG operation at this time record the indiscipline of troops, venality of many of their commanding officers, and general demoralization of the peacekeeping force.⁷²

In 1996, the rogue militias assaulted Monrovia with a vengeance, looting, killing, and maiming the residents for several weeks. In desperate straits, foreign ambassadors and UN representatives residing in the capital mediated a tenuous cease-fire among militia leaders, who may have been unnerved by their own loss of control. For ECOMOG, the prolonged spasm of anarchic terror was a humiliating debacle. Only then did the Nigerian military government resolve to end the impasse. Nigeria's head of state appointed an exceptionally competent commander, Major-General Victor Malu, to revive ECOMOG and implement a carefully negotiated political agreement involving disarmament and demobilization of the militias in anticipation of an election. With financial assistance from the U.S. and the U.N., Malu's multinational force, including contingents from Ghana, Guinea, and Mali, as well as a majority of Nigerians, accomplished a political

⁷¹ On Taylor, his precursors in plunder and rivals, as well as this phenomenon in general, see William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 1998).

⁷² Kenneth L. Cain, "Send in the Marines," *New York Times*, August 8, 2003.

transformation that few could have imagined in the spring of 1996 when mayhem erupted in the beleaguered capital.

For the election of July 1997, rival militias metamorphosed into political parties, while politicians without armies formed several parties of their own. Taylor's immense advantage in funds and organization virtually guaranteed that his party would win; indeed it garnered 75 percent of the vote with a high turnout of voters. Many analysts reported that most people voted for Taylor because they feared he would resume the war if he lost, but hoped that he would keep the peace if he won. Soon after the election, regional leaders gathered in Monrovia for Taylor's inauguration as president. In his inaugural address, he pledged to pursue national reconciliation and uphold human rights; he also expressed his gratitude to Nigeria's military dictator, for whom the occasion was a personal diplomatic triumph.

Taylor's legitimacy as Liberia's leader derived primarily from regional acclamation of the election result. In return for comprehensive external recognition, Taylor agreed that the ECOMOG force would remain in Liberia to organize and train a new national army. The sponsors of this questionable electoral exercise, including Nigeria, the United States, the United Nations, and the West African states, gambled, and lost, on Taylor's desire for regional acceptance.⁷³ They underestimated both the magnitude of his political ambition and his contempt for legal and moral restraints on his power. He soon reneged on his agreement to permit Nigeria's military mission to recruit and train a non-political national army. Instead, he clandestinely fomented rebellion in Sierra Leone, thereby prompting Nigeria to re-deploy its forces in Liberia across the border into that neighboring country.

The histories of Liberia and Sierra Leone are intimately entwined, but never more tragically so than during the final decade of the twentieth century.⁷⁴ In 1991, Taylor

⁷³ I was a member of the United Nations election observer mission and remained in the country for several days afterward lecturing under the auspices of the American embassy. I quickly learned that Monrovia intellectuals realistically dreaded the prospect of Taylor's impending rule. For my account of this experience, see Richard L. Sklar, "From Bullets to Ballots in Liberia," *IGCC Newsletter*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Fall 1997), pp. 5-7, published by the Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation of the University of California.

⁷⁴ On the related intellectual histories of these countries from the latter eighteenth century until the era of twentieth century African nationalism, see Robert W. July, *The Origins of Modern African Thought* (1967; Trenton and Asmara: Africa World Press, 2004).

helped to create an army of bandits in Sierra Leone, known as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), under the leadership of his Libyan-trained ally, Foday Sankoh.⁷⁵ Unable to either cope with a dire threat or obtain effective military assistance from other West African governments, the military rulers of Sierra Leone hired a South African private military company, Executive Outcomes, to provide security.⁷⁶ That company's highly successful strategy involved the enlistment and training of a "home guard," known as Kamajors, based on local hunting societies that had already mobilized to protect villages in the southern, or Mende, part of Sierra Leone from RUF onslaughts. By 1995, reasonable security had been restored in most parts of the country. Political reformers then gained control of the military government and decided to hold elections in 1996. Later that year, the elected President, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, signed a peace accord with the RUF. The terms of that accord, and the insistent views of his peers in the region, compelled Kabbah to dispense with the services of Executive Outcomes. Yet he did not trust the rag-tag regular army and relied increasingly on his Kamajor gendarmes for security.

In May 1997, disgruntled army officers toppled Kabbah's government and invited the RUF to join them in power, although Foday Sankoh was then unavailable as he had been arrested in Nigeria and was being held there in detention. When the coup d'état occurred, the annual meeting of heads of state and government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was assembling in Harare, Zimbabwe. The summit immediately denounced the coup and authorized the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), meaning as a practical matter Nigeria, to restore the legitimate government headed by Kabbah, who had fled into exile in Guinea. Meanwhile, the RUF ran amok across the country, pillaging and looting everywhere except in areas controlled by the disciplined Kamajors.

Methodically, ECOMOG II, under Nigerian command, encircled Freetown, the capital city. In February 1998, ECOMOG forces entered the capital and defeated the junta after several days of intense fighting. When Kabbah returned in March an African army had restored a democratically-elected government for the first time ever. Paradoxically,

⁷⁵ On the nature and methods of Sankoh's organization, see Ibrahim Abdullah and Patrick Muana, "The Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone," in Christopher Clapham, ed., *African Guerrillas*, pp. 172-193.

⁷⁶ Reno, *Warlord Politics*, pp. 129-139.

cally, Nigeria itself was then a military dictatorship, suspended from the Commonwealth of Nations and subject to sanctions imposed by Britain, the European Union, and the United States for its repressive rule. Although ECOMOG commanders in Sierra Leone pledged to defeat the RUF once and for all, their inability to mount a successful campaign in the interior of the country enabled the RUF to bludgeon Freetown yet again. In January 1999, RUF fighters infiltrated the capital through ineptly maintained defenses and terrorized the civilian population. Young men and boys on drugs committed horrific atrocities, specifically mutilations of live victims, for which the RUF was notorious, on a massive scale. Their rampage was touted as “Operation No Living Thing.” Much of the city, including the main hospital and an historic university, was destroyed. Thousands of additional troops, from Ghana, Guinea, and Mali, as well as Nigeria, were required for ECOMOG to regain control of the situation and drive out the marauders.

Taylor’s complicity in support of the RUF, including the participation of his own agents in the sack of Freetown, was unmistakable.⁷⁷ What followed, however, is a textbook case of misguided belief on the part of regional and American conciliators that persons who commit atrocities as a matter of course and preference could be relied upon to abjure violence in favor of peaceful and constitutional methods of dispute resolution.⁷⁸ In July 1999, Kabbah and Sankoh signed a peace agreement that conceded four ministerial positions to the RUF and provided for the appointment of Sankoh, himself, as chairman of a commission for the management of strategic resources, national reconstruction, and development, with “the status of vice president.”⁷⁹ It was also agreed that ECOMOG would disarm the RUF, which would become a political party. This was wishful thinking

⁷⁷ The infiltration of RUF fighters and supplies past ineffectual check points had begun some months earlier. *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 40, No. 2, 22 January 1999, p. 2, where reports from Freetown of Liberian operatives alongside the RUF are also cited. Taylor’s continuing engagement with the RUF was corroborated by American and British intelligence reports and confirmed independently by the Ghanaian and Nigerian governments. *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 41, No. 13, 23 June 2000, pp. 1-2. In 2003, Taylor was indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, a treaty-based tribunal created by an agreement between Sierra Leone and the United Nations, for war crimes relating to his support of the RUF. ICG, “The Special Court for Sierra Leone: Promises and Pitfalls of a ‘New Model’,” *Africa Briefing*, 4 August 2003.

⁷⁸ John Hirsch, a former American ambassador to Sierra Leone, suggests that President Kabbah agreed to negotiate a settlement with Sankoh, despite the death sentence for treason that had been imposed on him by the High Court of Justice in Sierra Leone, feeling that Sankoh had experienced “a change of heart.” Hirsch discounts the influence of American, British, and Nigerian pressures on Kabbah. *Sierra Leone*, pp. 79-80. For a contrary view of the American role, see Ryan Lizza, “Where Angels Fear to Tread,” *The New Republic*, July 24, 2000, pp. 22-27.

⁷⁹ Hirsch, *Sierra Leone*, pp. 84-85, quoting the agreement.

on the part of those who yearned for an end to the eight-year war that had resulted in 50,000 deaths and 2 million displaced persons, in a population of 5.6 million. The UN Secretary General asked the Security Council to establish a mission in Sierra Leone with up to 6,000 blue helmets for disarmament and peacekeeping.

The folly of this agreement soon became apparent, as the RUF continued to train fighters in Liberia with Libyan assistance. Sankoh, now chairman of the commission responsible for “strategic resources,” continued to pay Taylor in diamonds for military assistance and supplies. In May 2000, RUF bands captured some 500 unwary UN peacekeepers. At this juncture, Britain exercised an historic initiative and responded to the emergency by sending 800 paratroopers to secure Freetown and its environs. In concert with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the British undertook to train a revived Sierra Leone army. Were it not for Britain’s timely and decisive intervention, Taylor and the RUF would probably have gained the upper hand in Sierra Leone, thereby creating a two-country dictatorial threat to fledgling democracies (Ghana, Mali, and Senegal) in the region. With support from like-minded regional allies, notably Presidents Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso and Gnassingbe Eyadéma of Togo, the aggressive dictators, in league with Moammar Qadhafi, could have spread the scourge of war throughout West Africa.

Instead, the RUF splintered; Sankoh was captured and died in custody pending trial for war crimes before a special court, sponsored by the UN. Most RUF combatants were disarmed voluntarily by the UN peacekeeping force, which increased to 17,500 in 2001, the largest contingent of blue helmets anywhere in the world at that time. Meanwhile, the UN Security Council imposed both an embargo on the sale of diamonds from Sierra Leone and sanctions against Liberia for having supplied weapons to the RUF in return for diamonds. Taylor responded to these setbacks by launching an invasion of southwestern Guinea from both Liberia and Sierra Leone, hoping thereby to exploit that country’s own political instability and establish safe havens within striking distance of the nearby diamond fields of eastern Sierra Leone for die hard remnants of the RUF. This strategy, born of desperation, proved to be Taylor’s fatal blunder.

Guinea’s President, Lansana Conté, has been associated with Nigerian efforts to foil Libyan schemes in West Africa since 1990, when he contributed troops to the ECO-

MOG force that blocked Taylor's march on Monrovia. Despite his retention of the presidency since 1984, with resort to dubious electoral means since the introduction of multi-party politics in 1992, his regional policies have been rewarded by the United States with military aid and training programs, while American firms are the leading foreign investors in Guinea. In response to Liberian and RUF incursions in 2000, Conté sponsored a recently organized anti-Taylor army of insurrection, known as Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD).⁸⁰ By 2003, in the third year of fighting between Liberian government forces and LURD, the balance tipped decisively in favor of the latter.⁸¹ Portentously, the diplomatic background to this conflict was clouded by the shadow of Franco-American rivalry. Since the United States had become francophone Guinea's main military patron, France returned the favor by giving diplomatic and logistical support to Taylor. But Taylor's defenses were irreparably weakened by a political upheaval in Côte d'Ivoire.

With its bountiful export trade in cocoa, coffee and other agricultural products, nascent industries, well-developed port facilities, serviceable road system, and a population approximating 17 million, Côte d'Ivoire has been the uncontested commercial center of francophone West Africa. Until recently, more than 20,000 French citizens have lived in the country as integral contributors to its vaunted economic success. In 1993, the founding president and leader of the once sole legal party (*Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire* – PDCI), Félix Houphouët-Boigny, died and was succeeded by Henri Konan Bédié, a fellow Akan-speaking Baoulé from the southeastern region. Lacking his predecessor's national support, Bédié reversed Houphouët's "open borders" policy and fomented xenophobic sentiments of hostility toward "foreigners," meaning those residents who could not prove that their parents and grandparents had been born in Côte d'Ivoire.⁸² The targets of Bédié's exclusionary policy were mainly Muslims from the heavily populated and relatively poor northern parts of the country, and the adjacent Sahelian coun-

⁸⁰ ICG, "Liberia: The Key to Ending Regional Instability," ICG Africa Report, No. 43, 24 April 2002, pp. 4-12, 21-25; ICG, "Guinée: Incertitudes Autour d'Une Fin de Règne," ICG Rapport Afrique, No. 74, 19 décembre 2003.

⁸¹ For details on the course of the war, external alliances, ethnic factors, and factionalism within LURD, see ICG, "Tackling Liberia: The Eye of the Regional Storm," ICG Africa Report, No. 62, 30 April 2003.

⁸² With "an estimated three million people officially described as 'residents of foreign nationality,'" and two million more described as "migrant workers and their descendants,....some 30% of the population could be demagogically defined as 'foreign.'" Cutter, *Africa*, p. 35.

tries of Burkina Faso and Mali. They abandoned the PDCI and rallied to an opposition party, the *Rassemblement des Républicains* (RDR), led by Alassane Dramane Ouattara, a former prime minister who was born in Burkina Faso and therefore barred from running for president in 1995. He then became a deputy director of the IMF, holding that office until he once more accepted his party's nomination for president in 1999. A national crisis, arising from the government's challenge to Ouattara's citizenship and qualification to be a candidate, culminated in a coup d'état on Christmas Eve 1999, and the assumption of power by General Robert Gueï, who organized a presidential election for October 2000. Once again, however, Ouattara was disqualified.⁸³

Geuï's principal opponent, Laurent Gbagbo, leader of the *Front Populaire Ivoirien* (FPI), was widely admired as a principled democrat among intellectuals in Côte d'Ivoire and France. From the standpoint of ethnicity, he represented the Kru-speaking Bété people of the southwest, while General Gueï was Yacouba, a subgroup of Southern Mande speakers in the western part of the country. Both the Bété and the Yacouba, like the Baoulé, are preponderantly Christian. Hence the exclusion of Ouattara's candidacy angered the Muslim Northern Mande speakers, including the Malinké, the Dyula (Ouattara's people) and the numerous Muslim Sénoufo.⁸⁴ Gueï's loss of power to Gbagbo has been described succinctly thus:

“When the electoral commission proclaimed Gueï the winner in October elections, Gbagbo called out his supporters to protest. People took to the streets in massive demonstrations – Gbagbo supporters protesting falsified results, Ouattara supporters protesting the unfairness of the process. The general fled and Laurent Gbagbo proclaimed himself winner and president.”⁸⁵

Gbagbo's rise to power sealed Taylor's doom. Successive Ivorian presidents, Houphouët, Bédié, and Gueï, had backed Taylor for a decade, none more fervently than Gueï, whose Yacouba people had provided material support to their Liberian ethnic cousins, the Gios.⁸⁶ As previously noted, the Gios had supported Taylor's invasion of Liberia in 1989. Gbagbo's anti-Taylor predisposition is rooted in his opposition to all three pre-

⁸³ Ibid, p. 36.

⁸⁴ Ibid, pp. 36-38 from which this ethnic and political analysis is largely derived.

⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 36. Gbagbo's accession to presidential office was not without bloodshed: soldiers loyal to Gueï killed dozens of Gbagbo's supporters; Gbagbo's enforcers, in turn, killed Ouattara's supporters.

⁸⁶ ICG, “Tackling Liberia,” p. 15.

vious presidents and partially attributable to the ethnic relationship of Kru-speaking Guéré people, who support Gbagbo in the western region, to the anti-Taylor Krahn in Liberia.⁸⁷ Arguably, and surely in his own mind, Taylor's future hinged on the fortunes of Gueï and his Ivorian allies. Gueï appeared to be preparing a coup attempt in September 2002, with the aid of Liberian and Sierra Leonean/RUF operatives, when he was assassinated by Ivorian soldiers loyal to Gbagbo. Taylor responded by sending Liberian and Sierra Leonean fighters to invade western Côte d'Ivoire in support of Gueï loyalists. His regional ally, President Compaoré of Burkina Faso, was also hostile to Gbagbo, owing in part to the latter's alleged persecution of Burkinabé migrants in Côte d'Ivoire. Hence Compaoré supplied arms to Taylor's fighters as well as northern Muslim dissidents.⁸⁸

Yet Taylor's forces were hopelessly over-extended. They were losing the war to LURD, backed by Guinea, in northern Liberia and faced a LURD offshoot, backed by Gbagbo, on the frontier with Côte d'Ivoire in the east. The eastern armed opposition, largely Krahn, was ethnically distinct from that in the North, where most of the fighters were Muslim Mandingos. In early 2003, the name of the eastern militia was changed to Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL). In deference to Gbagbo, France had abandoned Taylor; by now he had also become a disposable liability for Qadhafi, who sought improved relations with the United States.

In retrospect, one wonders whether Taylor could have survived politically by accepting the constraints of dictatorship in one small country. That, after all, appears to be the choice made by his patron, Qadhafi, in Libya. In Liberia, however, the ideals of constitutional democracy are traditional, regardless of their having been honored there more often in the breach than in practice. Taylor may have sensed that imperial expansion, involving alliances with compliant strongmen throughout the region, was the necessary condition for his continued exercise of autocratic rule at home. His ambition was thwarted, indirectly, by Britain in Sierra Leone and the United States via Guinea.⁸⁹

With decisive support from Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire respectively, LURD and MODEL were victorious in the countryside. MODEL forces, including Ivorian recruits,

⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 22.

⁸⁸ Ibid, pp. 17-20.

⁸⁹ The probability of significant U.S. military support for both LURD and MODEL in the war to oust Taylor is indicated in ICG, "Liberia: Security Challenges," ICG Africa Report, No. 71, 3 November 2003, p. 14.

secured the eastern counties up to and including the strategic port city of Buchanan. LURD controlled the northern and western counties; in areas bordering Sierra Leone, LURD collaborated with Kamajor militias, who have resented their abandonment by the Kabbah government after years of service in the ultimately successful struggle against the RUF.⁹⁰ Once again, in June and July 2003, the residents of Monrovia were engulfed by lethal combat and related spasms of mayhem while LURD fighters engaged Taylor's dwindling army in the capital. Britain, France, the UN Secretary General, and West African governments called on the United States to lead an emergency peacekeeping mission to Liberia. President Bush responded by making Taylor's abdication a condition of American participation. But Taylor had been indicted for crimes against humanity by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, and was wary of being apprehended. To resolve the impasse, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria offered asylum to Taylor, who declared that he would accept the offer once peacekeepers arrived to provide security in Monrovia. Obasanjo then dispatched a "vanguard force" of some 1,500 Nigerian troops to Monrovia and Taylor departed in August. An American amphibious landing force, including more than 2,000 marines, approached Monrovia, but only some 150 of them were sent ashore for under two weeks to provide technical support for the Nigerians.

A new era dawned for Liberia in September 2003, when the UN Security Council established the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), authorizing 15,000 military personnel and 1,115 international police. When it attained full strength in 2004, while its counterpart in Sierra Leone was being reduced to fewer than 4,000, UNMIL became "the largest and most robust UN mission in the world."⁹¹ It functions alongside a National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) consisting of representatives of the former government, the two successful rebel movements, and non-combatant political groups, in preparation for a national election in October 2005. UNMIL's success depends in large part on these external conditions: the maintenance of peace in Sierra Leone; political stability in Guinea; above all, the containment and resolution of civil wars in Côte d'Ivoire.⁹²

⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 10.

⁹¹ Ibid, p. 1.

⁹² For a somber appraisal of prospects in both Liberia and Sierra Leone toward the end of 2004, including an argument for some form of international trusteeship in Liberia as well as an American security guarantee

In the immediate aftermath of General Gueï's vain attempt to seize power in September 2002, resulting in his own violent death, rebellious elements of the Ivorian national army rallied to a new organization, *Movement Patriotique de la Côte d'Ivoire* (MPCI), that surfaced in the north. The principal organizers of MPCI had devised their strategy in neighboring Burkina Faso, with the approval of President Compaoré. They planned to capture the seaport metropolis of Abidjan, populated by approximately 3.5 million; but their aims were thwarted by French troops, intervening at the request of the Ivorian government. France then agreed to supervise the maintenance of a ceasefire line, negotiated by Abdoulaye Wade, President of Senegal, extending from the northeastern border with Ghana into central Côte d'Ivoire and thence to the northwestern border with Guinea. [Map 13.]

In western Côte d'Ivoire, however, the ceasefire line culminated in combustion, as the region was soon aflame with rebellions launched by two insurgent militias, each seeking revenge for the assassination of General Gueï. Each was also penetrated by Liberian and Sierra Leonean (RUF) militia leaders and fighters. One group, *Mouvement pour la Justice et la Paix* (MJP) was sponsored by MPCI, and favored by Compaoré; the other, *Mouvement Populaire Ivoirien du Grand Ouest* (MPIGO), was created by Charles Taylor, who mistrusted MPCI because it recruited Liberians of diverse loyalties, including his enemies. Taylor decided that he wanted a militia of his own in Côte d'Ivoire, one that was not beholden to his Burkinabé-backed allies. Yet another militia, *Forces de Libération du Grand Ouest* (FLGO), promoted by President Gbagbo, recruited Guéré people, "ethnic cousins" of the Liberian Krahn, to fight against Taylor's MPIGO. The latter recruited mainly Yacouba fighters, who were loyal to the late General Gueï, and therefore to Taylor. These three militias, and several smaller bands of fighters, wreaked havoc on the village dwellers of the embattled western region.⁹³

Despite friction between the Ivorian protégés of Compaoré and Taylor, and therefore between the principals themselves, these old allies were united in their opposition to Gbagbo. Citing a report by the humanitarian organization, Global Witness, and corroboration

for a fifteen to twenty-five year period, comparable to the British pledge of timely intervention to preserve legitimate government in Sierra Leone, see ICG, "Liberia and Sierra Leone: Rebuilding Failed States," Crisis Group Africa Report, No. 87, 8 December 2004.

⁹³ For an authoritative analysis of the conflicts in western Côte d'Ivoire, see ICG, "Côte d'Ivoire: 'The War Is Not Yet Over,'" ICG Africa Report, No. 72, 28 November 2003, pp. 18-27.

rative evidence, International Crisis Group, highly respected for the reliability of its research and judgments, affirmed the existence of “a Tripoli-Ouagadougou-Monrovia axis” as late as mid-2003.⁹⁴ By then, however, Taylor was on the verge of his abdication, and Qadhafi was edging toward rapprochement with the Western powers. Compaoré’s own influence was also diminishing as a result of conflicts among his northern Ivorian clients. In search of an exit strategy for its combat troops in Côte d’Ivoire, France hosted peace talks, in January 2003, attended by the leaders of Ivorian political groups and parties. The outcome, including a broadly based government of national reconciliation and an agreement to liberalize citizenship rights for persons of foreign origin, was a signal achievement for the northern insurgents, who then formed a combined organization named the *Forces Nouvelles*. Formal acceptance of the accords on behalf of the ruling FPI was belied and vitiated by Gbagbo’s denunciation of them as a reversion to French “neo-colonial” domination. Violent protests by militant political groups associated with Gbagbo’s party, in Abidjan and elsewhere in the south, soon offset the advantages gained by northerners allied with Compaoré by means of negotiation.

France responded to Gbagbo’s hostility by activating both ECOWAS and the United Nations. In February 2004, the UN Security Council authorized the deployment of 6,240 peacekeepers in Côte d’Ivoire, including a relatively small West African contingent of 1,000. French troops, exceeding 5,000 by the end of 2004, operate independently of the UN command, but with the Security Council’s formal approval. Franco-Ivorian antagonism peaked in November 2004 when Ivorian aircraft raided a French peacekeeping station, resulting in ten deaths. French forces retaliated by destroying the small Ivorian air force; the Security Council then imposed an arms embargo on Côte d’Ivoire as requested by France, firmly supported by the African Union.

Ironically, Gbagbo’s government has been preserved by France regardless of his anti-French posture and rhetoric. (Parenthetically, Gbagbo’s personal, presidential security is organized by Angolans, Bulgarians, and Israelis⁹⁵.) Furthermore, Gbagbo forced France to reverse its position on Liberia and cooperate with the United States: no more

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 12, n. 56.

⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 17-18.

chasse gardée in Côte d'Ivoire;⁹⁶ no more engagements with anti-American axes anchored in Tripoli or elsewhere. For Ivorian nationalists, like Gbagbo, the American-style Open Door is better than any sphere of predominant influence, be it French, Libyan, or Taylorite. Now Ivorians can try again to sort out their own problems and solutions, with modest assistance from the United Nations and the international financial institutions. Perhaps Gbagbo and his southern supporters will eventually find their way back to neo-Houphouëtist ethnic toleration and prosperity.⁹⁷

Conclusion

By the early 1980s, commentaries on the disturbing retardation of economic development in Africa had begun to recognize a clearly discernible relationship between economic decline and a widespread postcolonial belief in the developmental merits of dictatorship.⁹⁸ In 1990, the existence of a crucial “link between development and democracy” was affirmed by the organizers of a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa, initiated by the Africa Leadership Forum, chaired by General (ret.) Olusegun Obasanjo, in collaboration with the secretariats of the Organization of Africa Unity and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.⁹⁹ Today,

⁹⁶ As noted by ICG, “the French lost their monopoly on [Côte d'Ivoire's] ‘black gold’, cocoa, to American multinationals in the early 1990s.” *Ibid.*, p. 30.

⁹⁷ President Gbagbo's nationalist credentials have been questioned in a recent ICG report, cited below, where he is depicted as being, first and foremost, a Bété nationalist and champion of the indigenous people of southwestern Côte d'Ivoire. In that region of the country, cocoa and coffee production sustained the “Ivorian miracle,” or economic boom of the 1960s and 1970s. However the indigenous people of this area have resented the acquisition of productive land in the cocoa and coffee belt by migrants from the east (mainly Baoulé), the north (mostly Malinké and Senoufo), and the neighboring countries of Burkina Faso and Mali (Dyula and other Muslim groups). Gbagbo's FPI and its allies represent the political resurgence of southwesterners seeking “reclamation” of what they believe to be theirs. Well-documented reports have also shown that Gbagbo's political coalition includes an extra-legal “parallel” or “shadow” government, one that uses force, murder, and corrupt financial means to assert its interests and enrich its members. A growing number of influential analysts now contend that anarchy and warfare in Africa is often the consequence of unrestrained greed, as suggested by this statement relating to the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire: “Today's political actors have found that war serves as an excellent means of enrichment, and they may be ill-served by the restoration of peace and security.” ICG, “Côte d'Ivoire: No Peace in Sight,” ICG Africa Report, No. 82, 12 July 2004, p. 4. This stringent explanation represents a change in direction for ICG reports on conflicts in Africa. I think that its economic premise is too narrow and offer as an alternative the interpretation set forth in this essay and summarized in its conclusion.

⁹⁸ Richard L. Sklar, “Democracy in Africa,” *The African Studies Review*, Vol. 35, Nos. 3&4 (1983), pp. 11-24.

⁹⁹ Report of a Brainstorming Meeting for a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, November 17-18, 1990, pp. 7-8.

it is apparent that while democratic government may be a necessary condition for sustained economic development in Africa, it is not, by itself, a sufficient condition. Chronic warfare in the central, eastern, and western regions of Africa presently undermines the continent's overall potential for economic and social improvement.

Just as the relationship between democracy and development was obscured for many years by ideological preconceptions, so too has the relationship between democracy and peace been minimized by analysts of warfare in Africa, but for other reasons.¹⁰⁰ In war-torn environments, it is only natural for socially concerned thinkers to focus on the restoration of order without due regard to the importance of freedom as a condition of peace. The evidence presented in this paper is consistent with demonstrably causative relationships between dictatorship and war in the Congo, Sudan, and the arc of violence in Western Africa. Weighty corroborative evidence could be adduced with regard to other countries as well as many postcolonial conflicts in Africa that have by now subsided. Furthermore, democratic reforms are critical to the emergence of genuinely autonomous peace movements in African countries, where they are surprisingly rare, if not indeed almost entirely nonexistent.

In fits and starts, but inexorably, the democratic movement forges ahead everywhere in Africa. As dictatorship recedes, the causes of war in Africa can be traced with increasing clarity to rulers who decide to establish spheres of predominant interest for themselves and their compatriots in countries within their reach. The evidence presented concerning this form of imperial aggrandizement can be tabulated with reference to commanding personalities thus.

- In the Congo, Mugabe, the insecure ruler of Zimbabwe; Dos Santos, the covetous ruler of Angola; Kagame, the minority group ruler of Rwanda; Museveni, the ambitious but often frustrated ruler of Uganda.
- In Northeastern Africa, Bashir, the theocratic ruler of Sudan, belligerent in retreat; Meles, an insecure Ethiopian ruler battling to overcome Egyptian influence in Somalia; Mubarak, a cautious ruler seeking to secure Egyptian interests in Somalia and Sudan.

¹⁰⁰ The plausibility of a causal relationship between democracy and peace was suggested by the present writer in a previous study of warfare in Sahelian Africa. Richard L. Sklar and Mark Strege, "Finding Peace Through Democracy in Sahelian Africa," *Current History*, Vol. 91 (May 1992), pp. 224-229.

- In Western Africa, Qadhafi, ruler of Libya and a resourceful utopian; Taylor, a Liberian dictator in exile; Compaoré, a survivor who still rules Burkina Faso.

Unarmed democrats cannot repulse armies and militias that desolate their countries. For that purpose, armed intervention is required, either by international organizations or by governments acting on behalf of a respected consensus. Unarmed democrats can, however, promote the cause of peace in Africa by calling for open doors in preference to spheres of predominant interest.