

VIEWS AND ANALYSES FROM THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

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# 2011

## The year everything changed

**The Arab  
Spring**

**Bombing  
Libya**

**Intervention in  
Côte d'Ivoire**



**KENYA  
CHASING  
AL SHABAAB  
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TO CLIMATE  
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ARMS DEAL  
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# NO MORE looking north

Dear Reader...

**A** popular theme with African filmmakers is the story of the West African illegal immigrant who lives in squalor in a small flat in a European city, eking out a meager existence by doing odd jobs. He is cold and hungry but writes home about how rich and successful he has become in the Eldorado that is Europe.

No matter how much Africans see and hear about the financial crisis in Europe, there is still that irrefutable belief that living in London or Rome is so much better. Having a degree from France or Germany is the secret to success. Stardom cannot be achieved in Africa.

How much longer is this going to last?

**Europe's sovereign debt** crisis has now reached unprecedented proportions.

The European Union is the world's largest economic bloc and recession here, as in 2008, influences the entire globe.

Greece, of course singled out as bringing down the entire EU, is on the verge of implosion and there seems to be consensus it should never have been allowed in. Predictions are that Spain, Portugal and others could follow.

As we go to print Italy's €1.9 trillion (\$2.6 trillion) public debt and slow growth is sending shivers down the spines of world leaders. Will this be another debt blow-up like in Greece?

Reports tell of a middle class on the brink of poverty. Yet Italy's Silvio Berlusconi says Italy can't be poor because tourists are streaming into the country, restaurants are full. (A bit like former South African president Thabo Mbeki saying he's walked around Johannesburg and he hasn't seen any crime.)

**The economic crisis in Europe** is already having a profound impact on the levels of aid, exports and the number of

tourists visiting African countries, as columnist Dianna Games explains in her article 'Spillover effects of a meltdown' on page 40.

South Africa, one of Africa's main victims of the financial crisis three years ago, with a negative GDP growth rate in 2009, is still suffering huge job losses and stagnating investment flows.

Yet among Africa's young and frustrated, there are no signs yet that the desire to leave 'poor' Africa and move to Europe is dissipating.

Instead, a globalised information community is reinforcing the idea that being aspirational is striving to be elsewhere – to 'make it' outside of Africa.

## It makes economic sense to consolidate efforts in one geographical space

**Let's be honest**, saying that our underdeveloped states, plagued by insecurity, are better off than Europe would be disingenuous. There is no way one can compare the magnificent avenues and perfectly preserved historical buildings of Europe to our chaotic capitals. The carefully manicured countryside with perfectly tarred roads is nothing like the chaotic beauty of a rural African landscape. But the world is changing, and that which was once held up as an ideal might not be the model to aspire to.

**Africa can learn** from the mistakes made by the European Union, letting in countries, like Greece, who obviously didn't make the grade. Why should we always strive to equal the lowest common denominator?

Why should the African Union (AU), because of principles of consensus and rotation, be obliged to give a chance to a

longtime despot like Theodoro Obiang-Nguema of Equatorial Guinea to lead the institution? Why can't the big countries vie for a position as chair of the AU commission, because it has been 'tradition' that this post should go to a smaller country?

**The European crisis** and its global repercussions will certainly have an impact on the economies, but also, on the much longer term, on a mindset whose time has come. Africa should seek its own economic salvation.

Economists and development experts harp on this: for African economies to grow intra-African trade should improve; infrastructure should cut across states, enabling exports; border controls should be minimised and regional integration speeded up. We should be able to fly from Johannesburg to Tunis without passing through Paris. (Kenya Airways seems to be one of the few African players really linking up all our capital cities.) This can't be for any ideological 'United Africa' – another idea that has come and gone – but because it makes economic sense to consolidate efforts in one geographical space.

**In 2011**, new crises have shifted power even further from West to East – especially, symbolically, if China agrees to buy European debt. The Arab world has emerged from what was thought to be a silent, homogeneous, oil-rich region, to dynamic, albeit uncertain, players on the world stage.

Africa won't be untouched by these changes. Starting from a low base Africa can only move forward.

**Liesl Louw-Vaudran**  
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ahead of Tunisia's  
landmark Oct. 23 election  
to determine the future  
of this North African  
nation that overthrew  
its longtime dictator  
in January.  
(AP Photo/Francois Mori)

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## Swaziland reshuffle

Political tensions are high in Swaziland following a number of recent developments in the kingdom. Key among them are the deep divisions across the Swazi population over the causes of the country's current financial crisis. Last month King Mswati III for the first time acknowledged that the financial crisis was indeed a 'man-made disaster'. This was followed by a major cabinet reshuffle, prompted by the king, leading to polarised debate among civil society groups and ordinary Swazis over the motives behind his decision.

Barely a week after the reshuffle, Swazi MPs attempted to push through a motion of no-confidence against the

Cabinet for what they saw as its consistent failure to deliver on its mandate to citizens. These developments reignited civic debates on the political future of the country in general and its democratic reform in particular.

Media reports within Swaziland indicate that the reshuffle was, on the one hand, motivated by the government's desire to settle its internal scores, and on the other, an attempt to diffuse the outcry over the financial crisis and perceptions of its handling. Others see it as a diversionary strategy to sway the focus from the real political and governance problems facing the country, including the momentous challenge of democratic transformation.

## Politics of homosexuality in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's prime minister, Morgan Tsvangirai, stirred up a hornet's nest during his October visit to London, when he made an apparent U-turn on the issue of homosexuality by calling for constitutional reforms to recognise gay rights.

The debate is a sensitive one in the generally conservative Zimbabwe and, indeed, in Africa as a whole. Despite various international human rights movements advocating for gay and lesbian rights, a sizable proportion of Africans tend to perceive homosexuality as 'un-African' or 'unnatural'.

Indeed, Zimbabwe's president Robert Mugabe has been uncompromising in his opposition to homosexuals, labelling them 'worse than pigs and dogs'.

In 2006, the parliament passed legislation that criminalised all homosexual activi-

ties. During last year's International Women's Day celebrations, Mugabe maintained that the idea of introducing gay rights in the new constitution was 'just madness, insanity' and not debatable. At that time Tsvangirai appeared to support Mugabe's position, saying, 'I totally agree with the president'.

With Zimbabwe currently drafting a new constitution that is expected to be ready for a referendum early next year, Tsvangirai's new insistence that he 'would defend gay rights if he became president' may turn into a defining political question, especially if Mugabe makes it an issue in the run-up to the next elections. It could easily alienate Tsvangirai from a generally religious and culturally conservative electorate, particularly in the rural areas.

**KENYAN POLICE, here chasing after suspects in the town of Kisii in south-western Kenya, are being reformed.**



REUTERS/PETER ANDREWS (KENYA)

## Kenya's police: from a 'force' to a 'service'

Public confidence in Kenya's police force has been eroded due to accusations of impunity, excessive use of force, brutality, disregard for human rights, abuse of due process and malignant corruption. The promulgation of a new constitution in August 2010 was designed to change all that. It provided the bedrock for instituting extensive security sector reforms (SSR) in Kenya after decades of demands for political and socioeconomic transformation. The sector most notably affected by the reforms is the police.

Public demand for transformation of the police sector in particular has been driven by the latter's nefarious reputation and the erosion of public trust. Those feelings persist, but the ongoing reforms have brought some hope that the police force will transform into an accountable, professional and transparent public service with a human-rights-sensitive approach and the operational capacity to deliver on its obligations to the Kenyan public.

Successful implementation of the police reforms in Kenya will serve as a good model for SSR in the rest of Africa. With the next general elections set for 2012, and considering the conduct of the police during the last elections, the reforms have been widely welcomed by the public. The political goodwill displayed by the government to the reform process thus far is commendable and will be imperative for sustaining the reforms and delivering meaningful institutional change within the police service and across the security sector as a whole.

In this respect, outstanding Bills that have yet to be passed in parliament and signed into law by the President should be expedited. Also, civil society actors, who play an invaluable and active role in the reform process, should continue to raise awareness, advocate and monitor performance in the reform process, as well as conducting research and providing information and expertise relevant to achieving sustained and successful police reforms in Kenya.

ISS African Conflict Prevention Programme

## The toxic problem of e-waste

At the Maritime & Coastal Security Africa (MCSA) conference held in Cape Town from 26 to 28 October 2011, speakers frequently alluded to the problem of toxic waste pollution and the threat it poses to human security in Africa. What emerges from conferences such as these is the fact that there is a clear and lamentable dearth of knowledge with regard to the dumping and trade of hazardous waste in Africa. Despite these tacit acknowledgements, the scale and severity of the problem remain largely unknown.

Of growing concern is the harm posed to human and environmental security by the disposal of increasing amounts of e-waste (electronic waste) – mostly discarded televisions, DVD and video players, radios, computers and phones.

The export of and trade in e-waste has had positive spin-offs, such as the Ikeja Computer Village in Lagos, which supplies huge amounts of repaired equipment to local markets, generating significant wealth and employment. But it would be a serious mistake to remain indifferent to the waste trade and the dumping of waste, or to presume that the benefits will ultimately outweigh the costs.

## Working together to control firearms

Law enforcement organisations throughout southern Africa are taking a significant step forward to ensure better firearms control. Participating Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries recently

## Museveni under pressure

Political pressure on Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni's government continues to mount with the rekindling of the second phase of the walk-to-work campaign.

The developments in Uganda seem to indicate an uncertain future for Museveni, with growing public dissatisfaction over the continued general increase in prices of basic commodities and the cost of living. Ordinary Ugandans have blamed Museveni for their plight, accusing him of running a highly personalised ruling system

and condoning corruption. Museveni and his National Resistance Movement (NRM) have also been criticised for widespread bribery and for abusing state resources to run an expensive elections campaign in February this year.

The current discontent appears to cut across the political divide, with fissures appearing in Museveni's administration. The clearest signal of the growing challenge to his hold over the instruments of power is the recent parliamentary inquiries into corruption against his ministers,

as well as several motions submitted in parliament to probe some alleged dodgy government deals.

It appears that some members of the NRM are beginning to question Museveni's relevance and possibly see him as a liability to the party, as he seems detached from the concerns of ordinary Ugandans. What has become evident is that there are people within the NRM whose political careers are being damaged by Museveni's poor governance, and these people are likely to become increasingly resentful of his leadership.

**UGANDAN WOMEN** activists demonstrate over rising food and fuel prices across the streets of the capital Kampala. President Yoweri Museveni vowed to crush the protests and blamed the rising food and fuel costs on drought and global increases in oil prices.



REUTERS/JAMES AKEVA (UGANDA)

took possession of pin-stamping marking machines and, more significantly, now possess a computer software programme that would allow them to apply, track and trace individualised 2D markings on each of the firearms under their control. This process is a significant firearm control development in the SADC region.

In line with the requirements of the SADC Protocol, National Focal Points (NFPs) were established in the signatory states. The NFPs are members of the Regional Coordinating Committee (RCC) under the auspices of the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (SARPPCO), tasked with

implementing the legal requirements of the SADC Protocol. It is through its ongoing desire to cooperate and strive for a region safe from firearm violence that SADC is now on the verge of becoming the leader in firearms control in Africa.

*ISS Peace Missions Programme, African Conflict Prevention Programme, Arms Prevention Programme*





REUTERS/ENRIQUE DE LA OSA (CUBA)

**ANGOLA'S** President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos

## Angola heading for 2012 polls

Angola is due to hold presidential and parliamentary elections next year, and tensions appear to be mounting amidst varied incidents of political upheaval ahead of the polls. Both the ruling People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the opposition National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) are facing internal friction and possible leadership changes, while on the streets Angolans have been demonstrating with renewed fervour.

While the MPLA blames UNITA for the protests, the country's youth are reported to be largely anti-government

and have protested around a variety of issues, including the dubious and unconstitutional amendments to electoral law in the run-up to the 2012 elections. Some Angolan actors view these developments as a watershed for the country's politics, saying that the youth offer a beacon of hope for the country's future as they have managed to spur concerns regarding the ruling MPLA's grip on power.

While in all likelihood Dos Santos will emerge victorious from the next set of elections, opposition parties will need to try to consolidate in order to stand a better chance of electoral success. The run-up to the polls will be a crucial period in light of the rising public disgruntlement and political upheaval.

## AU to choose its leadership

The election of the AU Commission chairperson, deputy chairperson and eight commissioners is scheduled for January 2012. According to reports, the main candidates for the position of chairperson are outgoing commissioner Jean Ping and South African Minister of Home Affairs, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

Ping, the former foreign minister of Gabon, is said to have support from a majority of West African countries, while Dlamini-Zuma, former SA minister of foreign affairs and ex-wife of SA President Jacob Zuma, can presumably count on firm support within Southern Africa.

As stipulated in Article 17(1) of the Statute of the AU Commission, the chairperson and deputy chairperson shall serve for a period of two years.

The elected chairperson and the deputy chairperson shall be eligible for re-election only once. The AU Commission comprises a chairperson, a deputy chairperson and eight commissioners. According to the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, each of Africa's five regions is entitled to two of the ten positions in the AU Commission. The chairperson and deputy chairperson may not be from the same region and must be elected by a two-thirds majority vote of the Assembly.

Since the establishment of the African Union, the Commission has been headed by two chairpersons: Alpha Oumar Konare of Mali (2002 to 2007) and Jean Ping of Gabon (2008 to the present). There has also been one interim chairperson, Amara Essy of Côte d'Ivoire, who served during the transition from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to the African Union (AU) between 2000 and 2002.

**NKOSAZANA**  
Dlamini-Zuma

PHOTO LISA SKINNER/MAIL &amp; GUARDIAN

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# FILLING THE VOID LEFT BY GADDAFI

The dramatic events of the Arab Spring have changed the political landscape in Africa and showed up both the necessity and the shortcomings of the African Union. **Paul-Simon Handy** looks at the impact of the past year.

A year ago, on the eve of a 2011 packed with presidential polls, there was much concern that instability in Africa would result from political battles around elections.

Paradoxically, apart from Côte d'Ivoire, 2011 was not marked by major electoral instability but rather by popular uprisings, in a domino effect that swept North Africa and rippled across the rest of the continent in ways that are still to unveil themselves.

While all the ingredients for the possibility of change, which many thought would be gradual, were clearly in place in countries like Egypt and Tunisia, with autocratic systems, a youth bulge, high unemployment among an educated population, poverty, social inequality and migration, the autocratic systems nonetheless seemed inherently stable. In fact the Northern African neo-patrimonial state seemed to display features of a developmental state, unlike its Sub-Saharan neighbour.

If any governments were set to crumble, many analysts thought it would be the Arab monarchies, such as those in Morocco or Saudi Arabia, but instead it was the allegedly stable republics that floundered.

## DOMINO-EFFECT IN THE REST OF THE CONTINENT?

Scholars, analysts and policy-makers have been speculating about the possible effect of revolutions in North Africa on democratisation in the rest of Africa. In reality, North Africa has just caught up with the rest of the continent that went onto a democratisation process in the 90s. Even if the events in North Africa are more radical than the sub-Saharan gradual process they haven't yet led to the building of new forms of participative governance (except in Tunisia).



**AN INGLORIOUS EXIT.** Former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi dreamt of a United States of Africa, with himself as the leader.

**Young people know they have power – whether it is through the so-called CNN effect Facebook or other means**

It is probably too early to say, but a possible impact is that they have certainly enhanced civil society confidence in many countries with repressive regimes.

The youth is increasingly aware of its power – whether it is through the so-called CNN effect, Facebook or other social networks, they know that it is becoming difficult for any regime to openly shoot at people protesting without paying a heavy price for it. There is no doubt that the Arab

revolutions will have major consequences going forward, as is already the case in the way the principle of Responsibility to Protect is perceived.

## UNPRECEDENTED PROTESTS IN ANGOLA

In Angola, for instance, streets protests are extremely rare, yet we have seen civil society protest marches on several occasions this year.

However, it is still at a fairly low level and there are no indications that President Eduardo Dos Santos' power is threatened by any popular uprising. Instead, he is threatened by divisions within his own political party and questions around how to manage succession.



In Malawi and Uganda there have also been waves of popular protest created by civil society to oppose the government, influenced by the popular revolts in North Africa. Interestingly, these protests were not around electoral issues, which indicates that opposition parties have lost their capacity to mobilise around their party-political agendas. Rather, as in South Africa, people are taking to the streets on bread-and-butter issues.

## A WAKE-UP CALL FOR THE AU

Paradoxically, even though the dramatic events in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya have provoked a timid, sometimes contradictory reaction from the African Union (AU), they have underlined the importance of a supra-national organisation. Both external actors and African countries feel the need for a stronger AU that would be able to arbitrate in such continental issues.

The lack of appropriate reaction from the AU stemmed firstly from the fact that it didn't have the appropriate mechanisms to deal with legitimate popular uprisings.

It was a missed opportunity, because the dilemma of whether to recognise new governments coming to power through popular uprising could have been referred to the AU Court of Justice.

Secondly, the AU should focus more clearly on issues of African governance, which this Arab Spring was about. We clearly need a governance architecture. To do this, the AU will have to be reformed. It will need a more independent Commission that can sometimes differ with heads of state.

The North African uprisings have made it clear to governments and to the AU itself that the continental government structure is completely disconnected from ordinary people. It remains very elitist and needs to rally people around a pan-African agenda, similar perhaps to what the European Union does (albeit not always successfully).

The problem is that the AU has no carrot-and-stick mechanism. The AU doesn't build roads or dams, yet it is the legitimate supra-national body.

## GADDAFI WILL BE MISSED

Pan-Africanism is not an issue that politicians use to win elections in Africa. The late Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi was para-



**NIGERIAN PRESIDENT** Goodluck Jonathan. His country could do more as a continental heavyweight.

doxically the only one who brought pan-Africanism to the village level, albeit for selfish reasons.

Former South African president Thabo Mbeki also managed to give pan-Africanism a slogan and tried to give it an economic impact, for example through the establishment of structures like Nepad (although Nepad too was also quite elitist).

What is clear is that Libya under Gaddafi was a driving force in the AU, even if he was sometimes driving it in the wrong direction. Now that he is gone, others will have to step into the void.

The only possible candidates are from the three other African heavyweights: South Africa, Nigeria and Egypt. At the moment, Egypt is too busy with its own problems and South Africa and Nigeria are locked in a battle for African leadership, especially when it comes to vying for a permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Neither South Africa nor Nigeria seems to have a clear vision of what they would like to achieve for Africa, and questions have been raised about the capacity of these two actors to lead the continent, either individually or in tandem.



**SOUTH AFRICAN** President Jacob Zuma. His country and Nigeria should work together.

It is clear that they are too small to lead the continent alone. They will have to make a plan to cooperate – perhaps, as I have suggested in the past, in creating a forum like a G5 for Africa – where they can find consensus on major issues. It is important for them to overcome their traditional rivalry, which is very damaging, and cooperate.

## RETURN OF AN ANTI-WESTERN SENTIMENT

Another disturbing legacy of the events of 2011 is the perception of a return of anti-Western sentiment across Africa. It started with the electoral battle in Côte d'Ivoire, where supporters of former president Laurent Gbagbo tried to rally around the notion that everything Western is bad.

The subsequent military intervention by UN and France led to conspiracy theories that are still influencing this trend, driven by South Africa and largely built on ignorance of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire.

The NATO intervention in Libya compounded this and sparked a dangerous anti-Western campaign that has had a profoundly damaging impact on relations between African and Western countries.

A lot of this is driven by parts of the African political and intellectual elite, which suffers from an inferiority complex at a time that Africa is more independent from external influence than ever before. It is also a result of the AU's inability to shape an independent and mature discourse. In South Africa, for example, being anti-French has become a catch-all agenda to blame all of the continent's ills on French interventionism. Yet France, which has never been weaker than it is today, is surprised by this fear of its alleged hegemony in Africa.

The ideological stances of South African politicians filter through to the rest of society. That is when you see young people with the ANC Youth League leader Julius Malema wearing T-shirts bearing an image of Gaddafi who, in their words, was an 'Economic Freedom Fighter'.

This kind of knee-jerk reaction – born of a genuine ignorance of Gaddafi's Libya – will not get us very far. Having genuine reservations about the NATO intervention in Libya should not lead to the blind support of an autocratic regime. This kind of pan-Africanism is reactive and misleading. **E**

# Chronicle of a momentous



The United Nations sanctioned foreign military intervention in two major African conflicts this year, with a profound and ongoing effect on the shape of world politics.

**Lansana Gberie** observed the stormy months from the UN galleries in New York.

**T**he widely circulated pictures of two dramatic spectacles in Africa this year – Côte d'Ivoire's Laurent Gbagbo, cowering and humiliated with his family as he was dragged from his hiding place to prison, and the blood-stained carcass of Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, evidently tortured, with a bullet hole in the head – must surely strike terror in the hearts and other viscera of some of the continent's dictators. But it is doubtful whether this will bring any of them to san-



# year



**A CONTROVERSIAL VICTORY.** Libyans in Benghazi celebrate after the death of longtime leader Muammar Gaddafi.

AP PHOTO/FRANCOIS MORI

ity. After all, Samuel Doe met an even more gruesome torture and death at the hands of his oppressed fellow citizens in 1990. However, the impact on Africa as a whole, particularly the relationship between the African Union (AU) and the UN, may be more palpable.

## A CALL TO ARMS IN LIBYA

On 25 February 2011, the UN Security Council (UNSC) held a 40-minute briefing on 'Peace and Security in Africa'. Such brief-

ings have now become a staple of the UNSC's work: African woes occupy about two-thirds of its time. All of its members attended under the rotating presidency of Brazil. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon was briefing on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire (whose leader, Laurent Gbagbo, was refusing to hand over power to Allasane Ouattara, who had recently defeated him at the polls) as well as on the fast-developing situation in Libya. In a carefully choreographed move, and using Rule 37 of

the Council's provisional rules of procedure, Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, the UNSC's Brazilian president, also invited the Libyan permanent representative to the UN, Abdurrahman Mohamed Shalgham, to brief. It was a fateful moment.

Shalgham, a balding, bespectacled man who had been close to Gaddafi even before the latter seized power in 1969, and who was Libya's foreign minister from 2000 to 2009, had earlier condemned the ongoing attacks on anti-Gaddafi forces in Libya and defected from the regime. His extraordinarily effective theatrical presentation, lasting for less than 10 minutes, was instrumental the following day in the unanimous passing of Resolution 1970; the resolution that was used to justify massive NATO bombardment of Libya. The chain of events finally culminating eight months later in the squalid death of Gaddafi, his bloodied cadaver, triumphantly displayed by his enemies as a reminder, if any was needed, of the utter vulnerability of Africa in world affairs. No other event since the end of the Rwandan genocide in 1994 (the kind of thing that the Libyan action was supposed to prevent) has thrown into such bold relief the deeply fraught relationship between the UN and Africa.

In consequence, Africa, and especially the AU, cannot accept the triumphalist view of the West that Gaddafi is a victim of his own obduracy in the face of the inexorable Arab Spring.

## SOUTH AFRICA'S SURPRISING VOTE

The response of the UNSC's three African member states – Nigeria, South Africa and Gabon – to the decision authorising the use of force in Libya has been the focus of much debate.

Libya under Gaddafi was an important member of the AU, but nowhere near as commanding or influential as the organisation's critics have tended to portray him. For example, it had no influence on the African UNSC members this year; in fact its relationship with Nigeria was distinctly bad since Gaddafi called for a breakup of Nigeria about two years ago. Gabon, meanwhile, is reliably pro-France. The main issue throughout the UNSC's discussions on Libya was where South Africa stood. >>

Since South Africa is the most influential of the three countries, and in part because of its consistently independent posture in international affairs, its support for Resolutions 1973 and 1970 has caused particular outrage and confusion, and the reverberations from that decision may yet continue to impact negatively on the relations between the UN and the AU.

During its 2007-2008 tenure on the UNSC, South Africa opposed key issues promoted by the Western powers, including a resolution condemning the human rights situation in Zimbabwe and Myanmar, greater sanctions on Iran, and placing the issue of climate change on the Council's agenda. It was therefore taken as a matter of course that South Africa would oppose the resolutions on Libya, especially as they were so fundamentally far-reaching. Why, then, did South Africa vote in favour of them?

### It is easy to criticise the AU's initial paralysis on Côte d'Ivoire – caused in large part by South Africa's cautious approach to the issue

Baso Sangqu, South Africa's permanent representative to the UN, made his country's position clear just before the 26 February vote on Resolution 1970. The compelling factor, he said, was the passionate plea by Shalgham, the Libyan permanent representative, who had called for a 'swift, decisive and courageous resolution' to put an end to an ongoing 'genocide'. Sangqu also mentioned the AU's communiqué, which had condemned the 'indiscriminate' attacks on civilians by the Gaddafi regime and recognised the 'legitimate' aspirations of the Libyan protestors. Sangqu has continued to maintain this position, and there is no reason to doubt his sincerity. (Both Russia and China, which could have vetoed the resolution and prevented the NATO action, said they were persuaded by the AU's and the Arab League's call for action against Gaddafi to support the resolution.)



## 'IT WASN'T ABOUT PROTECTING CIVILIANS'

**Liesl Louw-Vaudran**

spoke to Dumisani Kumalo, South Africa's former ambassador to the United Nations and CEO of the Thabo Mbeki Foundation.

**Q South Africa's previous term on the UN Security Council was much criticised, especially its decisions on Zimbabwe and Myanmar. Looking back, do you think you were right at the time?**

We were right all along and we were proven right. We said we wanted the Zimbabwean people to sit down and determine their own future and that is exactly what is happening. We were also right about Lebanon and about Myanmar. People only remember what they think you did wrong and never follow up.

**Q This year South Africa voted in favour of Resolution 1973 that authorised a no-fly zone over Libya, then shortly afterwards it criticised the NATO intervention. Why?**

I take the South African government's explanation that it really believed that this unfortunate resolution would help civilians. We couldn't, as South Africa, sit there if civilians were going to be killed, but of course we know now it wasn't about civilians. The UK, the United States and France went and armed the rebel opposition movement against [Muammar] Gaddafi, who was a terrible president, we all admit. But the Security Council isn't in the business of arming rebel movements. Or what about the Palestinian rebel movement, and what about the Congolese rebel movement?

**Q Later the impression was created that the African Union (AU) supported Gaddafi.**

Gaddafi had been in power and oppressing people for 40 years, and maybe what the AU did wrong was that we were not vocal enough about what a bad leader Gaddafi was, so when we took a principled position they thought we were supporting him. To use NATO to bomb an African country to serve the interests of one faction is very bad.

**Q Did South Africa vote for the solution in order to position itself for a seat on the UN Security Council?**

If it was meant to boost South Africa as a permanent member, we might have lost a few votes already, because I don't know many African countries that agree with this. Africa is divided on this issue.

**Q South Africa and Nigeria had different views on what to do in Côte d'Ivoire, which is in the West African region. Did that sour relations?**

In the beginning in Côte d'Ivoire, South Africa stood on principle and I think we were right, but in the end we gave in to the others. All countries in the Security Council don't have to agree, but in my experience of the Zimbabwe issue, there was an understanding that South Africa should handle it because we are closer to



Zimbabwe and it is in the SADC region. For example at the time, both Libya and Burkina Faso did not agree with us but didn't vote against us. Though, perhaps things have changed since then.

### **Q Are African countries vying for a permanent seat on the Security Council?**

Security Council reform happens in the General Assembly, where three countries have been mentioned: Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa, though that process is going nowhere.


### **Q South Africa abstained on the resolution to impose sanctions on Syria, yet civilians are being killed there.**

Unfortunately, because countries were misled in the case of Libya, it makes them more reluctant even in a deserving case like Syria, where we know entire towns are being attacked.

Many countries now have doubts about the resolution on Libya. None of them said these people [the Libyan rebels] should be armed or have military advisors from the UK, the US and France.

South Africa was right to vote against unblocking funds that were invested in the name of Libya. They were given to a group that had not even formed a government, who were not even representative of the population. You can't just give money to a group because it has arms and very good backers.

### **Q There now seems to be a serious rift between Europe and Africa. How will you overcome this?**

I think Africans and Europeans should get people together to talk frankly. Ironically, Europeans are now saying that Libya is closer to Europe, but all along their view has been that these countries are too close. They looked at them in terms of immigration and not in terms of development. President [Nicolas] Sarkozy of France was the only one with a Mediterranean vision, but that initiative died. Libya is in Africa. 

As already mentioned, Shalgham was invited to speak about the situation in Libya on that crucial day. Taking off his glasses for effect, he began by evoking Pol Pot and Hitler, two notorious historical perpetrators of genocide, implying that Gaddafi was becoming the third. A great deal of his power in the UNSC appeared to come from his intimacy with Gaddafi. 'I regret being in this position,' he said. 'The first time I heard [Gaddafi], he was addressing a secondary school, in the south, in 1959. He was talking about how he wanted freedom for the Congo. In 1960, I listened to him denounce the French nuclear tests in Algeria... Today, I listened to him telling his people, "Either I rule you or I destroy you".'

This kind of rhetorical flourish is highly unusual in the austere chambers of the UNSC, as opposed to the General Assem-

bly hall. Its power was that it was exactly apposite to the unhinged rants and bluster coming from Gaddafi's televised speeches as the rebellion against his 42-year old regime unfolded. We now know that Shalgham's statements were largely misleading, that there was no genocide going on in Libya, and that in fact the casualties from Gaddafi's actions against his enemies were rather modest and certainly did not exceed those in Tunisia and Egypt. (On 16 February, the *New York Times* ran a telling and predictable story; 'Libya counts more martyrs than corpses', belatedly ridiculing the exaggerated claims about Gaddafi's atrocities by the National Transitional Council). But with the Rwandan genocide still fresh in many minds, and with Gaddafi calling his enemies 'rats', who would have bet on that? >>

### **▶ Resolution 1970**

Promoted by Britain, considered 'the widespread and systematic attacks' against civilians by Gaddafi's regime as likely constituting 'crimes against humanity' and imposed an arms embargo, asset freezes, and a travel ban on Libyan officials. Fighting continued in Libya, and on 17 March,

### **▶ Resolution 1973**

was unanimously passed imposing a no-fly zone over Libya, referring the Libyan leadership to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for prosecution (a first in the UNSC's history, and curious since key members, including the US, Russia and China, are not signatories to the ICC), and effectively authorising NATO to enforce the no-fly zone and take 'all measures necessary for the protection of civilians'. Almost immediately, France and Britain, supported by the US, began their eight-month aerial bombardment of Gaddafi's forces – culminating in Gaddafi's killing in October.

### **▶ Resolution 1975**

Ivorian leader Alassane Ouattara (depicted below) came to power in Côte d'Ivoire following UN Resolution 1975, which resulted in military action against deposed president Laurent Gbagbo.



### THE AU CONFUSED

Now that Gaddafi is dead, with his regime destroyed and a distinctly anti-AU government emerging in Libya, what does all this mean for Africa? More importantly, perhaps, both South Africa and the AU have declared that NATO overstretched its mandate of protecting Libyan civilians to fight for, and achieve, regime change.

So what does this mean for the AU's future relationship with the UN – a relationship that has been in the process of institutionalisation over the past few years?

### MUSEVENI'S VIEW

**T**he view from Africa was well captured by Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni in an article for the liberal journal *Foreign Policy* on 24 March, a day before the UNSC meeting on Libya.

Gaddafi, Museveni wrote, had made serious mistakes in the past (including supporting terrorists) and had been in power without holding elections for far too long. But now that he was facing an armed assault against the state, he had a responsibility, as the leader of Libya, to defend it. Armed rebellion is different from peaceful mass protest.



This position broadly reflected the views of many African leaders, but it would have been difficult for the AU to calibrate it in the face of the powerful propaganda, aided by Gaddafi's own demonic public posturing, that genocide was in process in Libya.

**Once the AU's condemnation of Gaddafi's early attacks on protestors had been appropriated – or misappropriated – to fashion the two resolutions on Libya, the AU's contribution was no longer welcomed**

Along with the rest of the world, the AU was taken by surprise by the Arab Spring: the turn it took in Libya, at any rate, was most unexpected. In consequence, the AU's response was at first cali-

brated to the lowest common denominator: it was confused. The AU's foundational principle, enunciated in its Constitutive Acts, opposes all unconstitutional changes of government, but it also asserts the responsibility to protect civilians in the face of crimes against humanity being committed by their governments.

The Arab Spring, therefore, challenged the AU's core principles in a rather invidious way. Mercifully, the regimes in Tunisia and Egypt expired without a prolonged fight and were replaced by regimes that promised to hold elections. Libya's revolt was, of course, different from the start.

By the time the UNSC met to discuss Libya, war was in full swing and protestors were heavily armed. There was even a pirate radio station in Benghazi, Libya's

## Captured



**L**aurent Gbagbo, in power for ten years, lost to Alassane Ouattara in elections conducted last November, but he refused to cede power.

ECOWAS threatened to use military action to remove him but the AU dithered. On 1 April, AU chairperson Jean Ping finally urged Gbagbo to 'immediately hand over power' to Ouattara, 'in order to shorten the suffering of the Ivorians.' Instead, Gbagbo's forces launched attacks against civilians believed to support Ouattara, as well as against UN forces in the country, seriously wounding four UN troops on 2 April. The next day, the UN Secretary-General wrote to French president Nicolas Sarkozy requesting the support of French troops (who operate in Côte d'Ivoire under a UN mandate) for military operations to be conducted by the UN Operation in Côte

d'Ivoire (UNOCI) to neutralise heavy weapons used against civilians and UN personnel, in line with Resolution 1775. Sarkozy agreed to this request. On 30 March, Resolution 1775 was passed unanimously.

As with Resolution 1970 in the case of Gaddafi's Libya, Resolution 1775 considered Gbagbo's attacks on civilians as likely constituting crimes against humanity, and authorised the UN (and the French Licorne forces backing it) to 'use all necessary means to carry out its mandate to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence': exactly the same language used in Resolution 1973.

In short, the military action, this time backing pro-Ouattara forces, led to the 11 April capture of Gbagbo, his wife and some associates, putting an end to that particular phase of Côte d'Ivoire's troubles.



second-largest city, that called for the overthrow of 'the dog Gaddafi and his Mafia'.

### AFTER GBAGBO

It is difficult to analyse the UN's action on Libya without reference to the concurrent crisis in the Ivory Coast, though the two issues were handled very differently by the UNSC. It is easy to criticise the AU's initial paralysis on Côte d'Ivoire – caused in large part by South Africa's cautious approach to the issue – but in retrospect the final outcome was almost certainly less destructive, prolonged and bloody than it would have been if the ECOWAS military had intervened at the time it wanted.

**The most profound legacy of both the Ivorian and Libyan actions may well be the deepening of France's hegemonic interests in Africa**

The problem with the Libyan action was that it went on for too long and its end was far messier.

During an extraordinary session in Addis Ababa on 25 May, in the course of NATO's strike on Libya, the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government called for a peaceful resolution of the Libyan



WALDO SWIEGERS

'I feel bad about the way (Muammar) Gaddafi ended and a lot of Africans also feel bad about it. Gaddafi had been using a lot of money for construction, for food aid to African countries. This is why people listened to him, hoping their countries will be helped. But he also wanted something in return.' – *former president of Sierra Leone, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah on a visit to the ISS in Pretoria in October.*

crisis through negotiation that would fashion a constitutional transition process.

It was clear that once the AU's con-

demnation of Gaddafi's early attacks on protestors had been appropriated – or misappropriated – to fashion the two resolutions on Libya, the AU's contribution was no longer welcomed. Gaddafi was now being dealt with by his traditional enemies, the US, Britain and France, and they were bound to win.

Sadly, that action has strained the important progress made in the past two years to institutionalise the relationship between the UNSC and the AU Peace and Security Council to prevent and end violent conflicts in Africa. But such is Africa's need for the UN that, as with the UN's earlier failings in the Congo and later in Rwanda, this too will pass.

The most profound legacy of both the Ivorian and Libyan actions may well be the deepening of France's hegemonic interests in Africa – and this will be an irony since the UN played such an influential role in Africa's decolonisation process. **E**

### AU ROADMAP SHELVED

In July, the AU sent Hamady Ould Hamady, Mauritania's foreign minister, to brief the UNSC on the AU's position. Hamady spoke about the **'indescribable suffering of the Libyan population'** as a result of the NATO action, as well as the **'fate of African migrant workers and others desperately seeking to escape from Libya'**. Confirmed reports indicated that the Libyan rebels were targeting African migrant workers as a racist policy. Hamady then described the AU's 'road map': **'The immediate cessation of all hostilities; the cooperation of the relevant Libyan authorities in facilitating the effective delivery of humanitarian aid to populations in need; the protection of foreigners, including African migrant workers living in Libya; and the adoption and implementation of the political reforms necessary to eliminate the causes of the current conflict.'** Hamady's presentation was simply set aside and shelved as a UNSC document.

# Victory within reach

The uprisings and rebellion in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen and Syria have had a profound influence on the Arab world.

**Ghania Mouffok** says these are precursors of the current global movement against economic inequality.



In setting himself alight in this eventful year 2011, the young Mohamed Bouaziz, an informal trader in a Tunisian province, didn't realise that he would become a hero of modern times and throw the Arab world into disarray.

This fire that burnt him to death was, for the majority of people in our part of the world, testimony of an unbearable situation they could no longer accept. The spectacular protests, hereto violently crushed, sent a message to the world about people's refusal to continue accepting the unacceptable. The inhabitants of the Arab world stood up to the despots and took their destiny into their own hands.

But the fall of the dictators, even though it embodies an initial victory for this seem-

ingly unstoppable movement, also reveals the magnitude of the task that lies ahead: to invent, imagine and implement democratic alternatives and social justice.

Unfortunately the fallen dictators didn't take their legacies with them into exile. Having chased away those responsible, the society still bears the burden of the destruction of social fibre and mutual solidarity; the heavy burden of an imposed neo-liberal economy, of profound social inequalities, of broken political and intellectual elites and an impoverished middle class.

The years of dictatorship used violence to slowly but surely suppress all forms of autonomous political organisation – a process that ran parallel to huge social transformations and the deepening of inequality.

### HUGE CHALLENGES

Even though all 22 countries that make up the Arab world are rich in diversity, with each having its own history and geographical space, today the only organised elements in these countries are, without a doubt, on the one side the security forces – the military and police, the product of the former regimes – and, on the other, the political Islamic movements. They now propose to the people an alternative to what had gone before. Evidently, in this context the democratic and economic challenges are huge. And only time and the evolution of these popular movements will tell whether 2011 has changed the Arab world, or was simply a reorganisation of the political landscape ... precisely so that nothing changes.





REUTERS/ASMAA WAGUIH (EGYPT SOCIETY FOOD RELIGION)

**DECADES** of dictatorship have destroyed the social fibre of society in countries like Egypt.

## AN IMPOSED ARAB IDENTITY

One thing is clear: in invading the public space to express their dissatisfaction and their refusal to continue accepting the status quo, 'ordinary Arabs' have once and for all shattered the discourse around so-called 'Arab exceptionalism' – a definition in which the Arab identity was locked up by those who wanted to justify their 'total war against Islamic terrorism'. From the Arab point of view this notion was synonymous with neo-colonialism imposed by the Western world.

In his book *Considerations sur la malheur arabe* ('Reflections on the Arab misfortune'), published in 2004, the Lebanese historian and journalist Samir Kassir, a man of great insight and courage,

assassinated in Beirut in 2005 by a car bomb, lucidly analysed the state of the Arab world at the beginning of the 21st century.

'The Arab misfortune,' he wrote, 'is partly due to its unfortunate geographical positioning, rather than the essence of the Arabo-Islamic culture, as the dominant thinking of the neo-liberal West would lead us to believe through its media, its political experts, and especially since the World Trade Centre attacks in 2001.

'What marks the particularity of this region is its submission to the eagerness of foreign powers to exploit its oil wealth and secondly all the problems created by the presence of Israel in its midst.'

**By chasing away the two dictators Ben Ali in Tunisia and Mubarak in Egypt, Tunisians and Egyptians have sent a strong message to their geographical neighbours: victory is possible**

The uprisings we saw in 2011 have revealed the identity of the main victims of this terrible abuse that took place on a symbolic, economic, political and physical level: the silent majority of the Arab world.

## MILITARY INTERVENTION

However, these uprisings have not changed the world. By chasing away, with a sense of great achievement and pride, the two dictators Zine al Abedine Ben Ali in Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, Tunisians and Egyptians have sent a strong message to their geographical neighbours: victory is possible.

If the fall of these dictators has plunged the Arab world into an exhilarating euphoria, the slaughter of Muammar Gaddafi in Libya unfortunately tempers that hope. It sheds a different light on the fall of the first two dictators, reminding us to what extent the US was omnipresent in the shameful departure of Ben Ali and Mubarak ... a part of history still to be written.

The political and military intervention of the US and Europe in the 'liberation' of Libyans reminds us to what extent the Arab

world is still the victim of the geostrategic interests of capitalism and of the US, which wants to defend its place as superpower against China and to a lesser extent against other emerging countries while hiding behind a humanitarian and democratic discourse.

## GEO-STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

In this economic battle, at a stage where neo-liberalism is in crisis, the geo-strategic position of the Arab world and its oil wealth, which opens up so many avenues for China, is more than ever at stake. These factors will determine the future of the region, from the Gulf to the Atlantic.

Also, many calamities may still befall this region, and with it all of Africa, before the men and women who've made history will truly find freedom and justice ... if the rest of the world doesn't change.

Today the thesis of the 'clash of civilisations', so dear to the American neo-conservatives who had imposed this image on us at the time of the bloody wars of Iraq and Afghanistan, has lost its appeal. In fact, the Arab world has never been divorced from the debate around globalisation – it was at the heart of it these past two decades. This is probably why, for the first time in our recent history, the Arab uprisings were the precursors to the wave of protests that has swept the Western world.

Even immolation, this gesture of despair that we had thought reserved to the wretched of the earth, has become a way for those in Western countries to protest. From Athens to New York to Andalusia, it is the same anger that asks for a new world; one that is not subject to the dictates of volatile markets or to banks and the obscure rules of international finance, a world less barbaric and where the barbarians are not those we had thought.

The outcome of these movements, now taking place at the birthplace of capitalism, will also be determined by what happens in the Arab world. As an old Arab proverb says: one hand can't applaud. **E**

*Ghania Mouffok is an independent journalist based in Algiers*

# The threat of religious extremism is still lurking



**THE REPRESSION** of moderate political Islam by regimes in North Africa was partly responsible for the formation of extremist terror groups. Though, after the Arab Spring, their future is still uncertain.



The threat of Islamic extremism has for years been used by totalitarian regimes in North Africa to garner international support. Now that the dictators have gone, asks **Anneli Botha**, what's next?



**T**he dismantling of the regimes of presidents Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, as well as Colonel Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, has raised much debate about the future of Islamic fundamentalism and extremism.

On the one hand, since extremism is said to be stimulated by political marginalisation and limited political freedoms, many believe that with the removal of these repressive regimes the threat of radicalism could dissipate.

However, others see the totalitarian regimes and their security services as having kept extremism in check, giving rise to the fear that their absence will provide more opportunities for extremists to act.

A closer look at this debate reveals a complex set of variables. The fact that the governments have been overthrown by ordinary people, without open allegiance to extremists, is a victory in itself. In other words, ordinary people managed to do in a few months what Osama bin Laden spent 20 years trying to achieve.

Without detracting from this remarkable achievement, it is worth noting that extremism can only be prevented through the building of new transparent governments and institutions to address the remaining challenges. In the meantime, other political and religious forces open to political manipulation remain in play. For example, since the revolution in Egypt, there has been an increase in attacks on the Coptic church and its followers, leading to protest marches and popular unrest.

There is also the problem of the marginalisation of Bedouin communities in the Sinai desert, whom many accuse of being responsible for the 2004-2006 attacks in

Sharm Al Sheikh, Taba and Dahab.

And, since the fall of Mubarak, there has been a marked increase in attacks on the oil pipelines into Israel. This sabotage is an indicator of a widespread frustration with that state that could easily be manipulated by politically motivated individuals.

Nation building is therefore an important next step, not least to include both the Coptic and Bedouin communities into broader Egyptian society. And, of course, pre-existing socioeconomic challenges still need to be addressed in all the affected countries.

**The history of extremism in democratic countries serves as a reminder that freedoms of speech, expression and association can be manipulated to provide a favourable environment from which to operate and to recruit new members**

#### **TOO MUCH FREEDOM OF SPEECH?**

Although it can be seen as a positive countermeasure against radicalisation, the overthrowing of repressive regimes results in a sudden opening up of the political space.

The history of extremism in democratic countries serves as a reminder that freedoms of speech, expression and association can be manipulated to provide a favourable environment from which to operate and to recruit new members.

In many cases, sudden and unfamiliar freedoms provide previously controlled movements and organisations with the freedom to structure their activities and spread their messages. In trying to establish

their own version of what the new political system should represent, extremists can therefore use existing political uncertainty to enhance their foothold.

Earlier revolutions provide a valuable lesson in this regard. The original value aspired for by the leaders and supporters of a revolution tends to be at its most vulnerable immediately after the revolution has succeeded.

This is particularly the case in popular uprisings driven by no specific political objective other than overthrowing the existing regime. Once the initial objective has been achieved, charismatic individuals can step in to introduce their own version of the future. For example, in Egypt, fingers were pointed at the Muslim Brotherhood, which, although it went through a period of violent resistance to the regime, in fact changed its strategy away from violence in 1981. In this regard the real threat comes from politically motivated individuals rather than from organisations that have been kept under control.

### JIHAD IN LIBYA?

Having been repressed by the authoritarian regimes in the region, there are increasing fears that al Qaeda's African offshoot al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) could adapt to use the successes of the revolution in Libya to its advantage.

**The original value aspired for by the leaders and supporters of a revolution tends to be at its most vulnerable immediately after the revolution has succeeded**

Although jihadist websites initially refrained from comment, as the crisis continued an increasing amount of messages on these sites referred to the conflict with Gaddafi as a 'jihad' and to anti-Gaddafi forces as 'mujahideen'.

Using rhetoric reminiscent of that used during the Afghan/Soviet war, the

Allied attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq after 9/11, and even the current Somali situation, al Qaeda attempted to broaden the conflict by attracting the participation of foreign fighters.

Abu Yahya Al Libi, a high-ranking Libyan member of al Qaeda, was prominently involved in urging on the rebellion against Gaddafi. While the rebel leaders might not always have completely agreed with AQIM, the nature of their struggle possibly meant turning a blind eye to the implications of this allegiance. It is therefore not surprising that known extremists within and beyond the region rejoiced when Gaddafi was killed.

### WEAPONS PROLIFERATION A DANGER

Further cause for concern is the fact that the instability in Libya has resulted in AQIM having unprecedented access to weaponry.

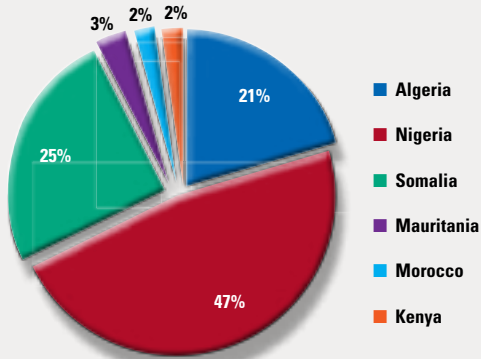


**A SOCIETY OF CONTRASTS.** Tunisia has always been tolerant of religious difference, but some fear the rights of women are in danger following the electoral victory of fundamentalists.

AP PHOTO/FRANCOIS MONT



## COUNTRIES MOST TARGETED IN 2011



The countries most frequently targeted by terrorism and other forms of asymmetric warfare this year have been Nigeria, Somalia and Algeria, followed by Mauritania, Morocco and Kenya.

In addition to the raids on facilities, the eastern part of Libya is littered with unexploded ordnance, abandoned and unsecured weapons and munitions and recently laid landmines, all of which could be used in the manufacturing of improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

## BOKO HARAM EXPANDING

It is important to note that the Nigerian Islamist group Boko Haram, the Somali Al Shabaab and AQIM have continued their terror attacks independent of the events in North Africa.

Boko Haram gradually enhanced its interaction with AQIM, which resulted in the 16 June suicide bombing of the police headquarters in Abuja. Most of the organisation's previous violent activities had been directed against Nigerian security forces and the Christian community, especially through attacks on churches. However, an attack on 26 August targeted the United Nations building, completely changing the organisation's target group. This might serve as an example of al Qaeda's ability to make use of domestic circumstances or frustrations to enhance its reach.

The multiple attacks in Damaru in northern Nigeria on Friday 4 November, that left at least 65 people dead, was the worst attack yet by Boko Haram.

## AQIM'S SUMMER CAMPAIGN

During what has been described as its 'summer campaign', AQIM executed more

attacks this summer than it did during the same period in 2010. In its first suicide attack of the year, on 16 July 2011, two suicide bombers killed four people (including three policemen) when they targeted a police station in Algeria's Bordj Menaïel. The first bomber detonated a car packed with explosives outside the building, and the second, on a motorcycle, targeted the first responders.

On 14 August, also in Algeria, another suicide bomb targeted a police station in Tizi Ouzou, wounding more than 30 people, including two Chinese nationals. Then, on 28 August, there was a suicide attack on a military academy in Cherrhell that killed 18 people and wounded at least 20. This bombing also involved a secondary attacker on a motorcycle who detonated his explosives as soldiers injured in the first bombing were rushed to hospital.

## A NEED FOR REPRESSIVE REGIMES?

It is still too soon to fully understand the impact of the revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya on countering terrorism in the long term. However, it seems clear that the 'liberation' of these countries has not put an end to the threat of terrorism. Instead, it may have opened up the space for al Qaeda and its associated organisations to operate and expand.

Could the Arab Spring lead to a new phase of extremist terrorism because only totalitarian regimes can keep extremists under wraps in a volatile region?

It is true that these regimes often used terror attacks and conspiracy theories as a convenient scapegoat to highlight the effectiveness of their own repressive measures. It is also no secret that in the past these regimes were themselves implicated in terrorist attacks with the aim of justifying strict countermeasures.

All too often, countering the threat of terrorism can infringe on basic human rights and essential freedoms. It is vital, therefore, for the new regimes to counter terrorist activities through the introduction and implementation of instruments and policies that are grounded in the common good and with clearly defined limits, if they are to guard against abuse, repression and even future radicalisation.

Navi Pillay



## PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS

'The significance of these events is that people rose, people with aspirations that you and I share like democracy and an end to decades of dictatorship.

'A forty-year-old in countries like Egypt, Tunisia and Libya has never enjoyed freedom. Having listened to the protest of people on the street who are asking for fundamental freedoms and for bread and for employment – civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights – I believe we all have to help to ensure that those people, who sacrificed their lives to ask for that which is very legitimate, should not lose this struggle. There are many challenges in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia. All round human rights have to be protected.

'For example, women's organisations from Libya and Egypt came to see me. They are very concerned that women's rights may get subsumed by certain religious extremists and we are going to be working closely on these matters.'

*South African-born UN High Commissioner of Human Rights Navi Pillay spoke at the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation conference on non-racialism in Johannesburg in October.*

One can only hope that new democracies will lead to effective nation building, and that security sector reform will limit the influence of extremists. The reality, however, is that achieving these objectives takes time, while domestically the situation is still fragile and open to manipulation. ■

# DURBAN: the great balancing act

**Trusha Reddy** reports on the progress made in negotiations ahead of the all-important COP17 meeting in Durban.

**A**s the 17th conference of parties (COP17) on climate change meets on 28 November in Durban, there is still no clarity on the precise deal being sought by its South African presidency.

Following a range of meetings, both local and international, we have become accustomed to hearing a rhetoric that both lowers ambitions about finalising an international treaty on global warming and simultaneously tries to remain upbeat about hosting the global climate change summit. There is much talk of a 'credible' or 'balanced' outcome and 'a step towards a comprehensive agreement'. But is this all just a public relations exercise, or is there some credibility to performing the 'great balancing act'?

What is clear is that there is unlikely to be any deal or legal agreement in Durban. Since the COP15 in Copenhagen, Denmark, it has become obvious that the multilateral process is failing. This is because political and economic interests are pitted against each other in a vacuum divorced from the science that stresses the urgency of the climate crisis facing the planet, trying instead to reduce ambitions from binding commitments to voluntary national actions.

## WHAT IS BEING BALANCED?

It seems that the nature of the desired 'balanced outcome' should be apparent from the detailed process set out, but this is not the case. There are many possible interpretations of balance, the guiding process of achieving equally represented voices and consensus being just one of them.

There also needs to be a balance between the politics and the science, but here the comments of Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, SA minister of international relations and cooperation, are instructive: 'Many developed parties argue that with the current state of play, the politics cannot deliver on what the science requires, namely a reduction of emissions to keep the global temperature rise below 2°C.'

Developing countries argue that it is difficult for them to find a balance between meeting climate change targets and developing their economies, for which they need to use dirty energy.

Reporting on the negotiation intersession earlier this year in Bonn, Germany, Meena Raman of Third World Network said: 'While all Parties stressed the need for a balanced outcome, there were divergences among developed and developing countries on what the meaning of balance was and on how to address the issue of

mitigation under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol [KP] tracks.

'Developing countries want to see developed countries commit to targets for emissions reductions in the second commitment period under the KP, with some stressing this as an essential pre-condition for outcomes under the Convention, while most developed countries predicate their commitments under the KP on there being a new legally-binding agreement for all "major emitters" under the Convention process, in an apparent reference to the United States and China as well as other "advanced developing countries".'

And what of the balance between different regional bloc interests? South







REUTERS/JORGE SILVA

**WILL IT HELP?** World Wildlife Fund (WWF) activists demonstrated on the sidelines of the previous COP16 in Cancun, Mexico.

Africa is part of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) and the BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, China) economic groups, both of which are newly industrial and have interests quite different from those of other developing countries, particularly those of least developed countries (LDCs).

Both LDCs and small island states are pushing for higher emissions targets and lower global temperature increase limits of 1-1.5°C, because they stand to be most severely impacted by climate change. But some of these countries also belong to bigger blocs such as the G-77 and China.

In an unexpected move at a preparatory meeting, South Africa tipped the BASIC and developing country balance by going

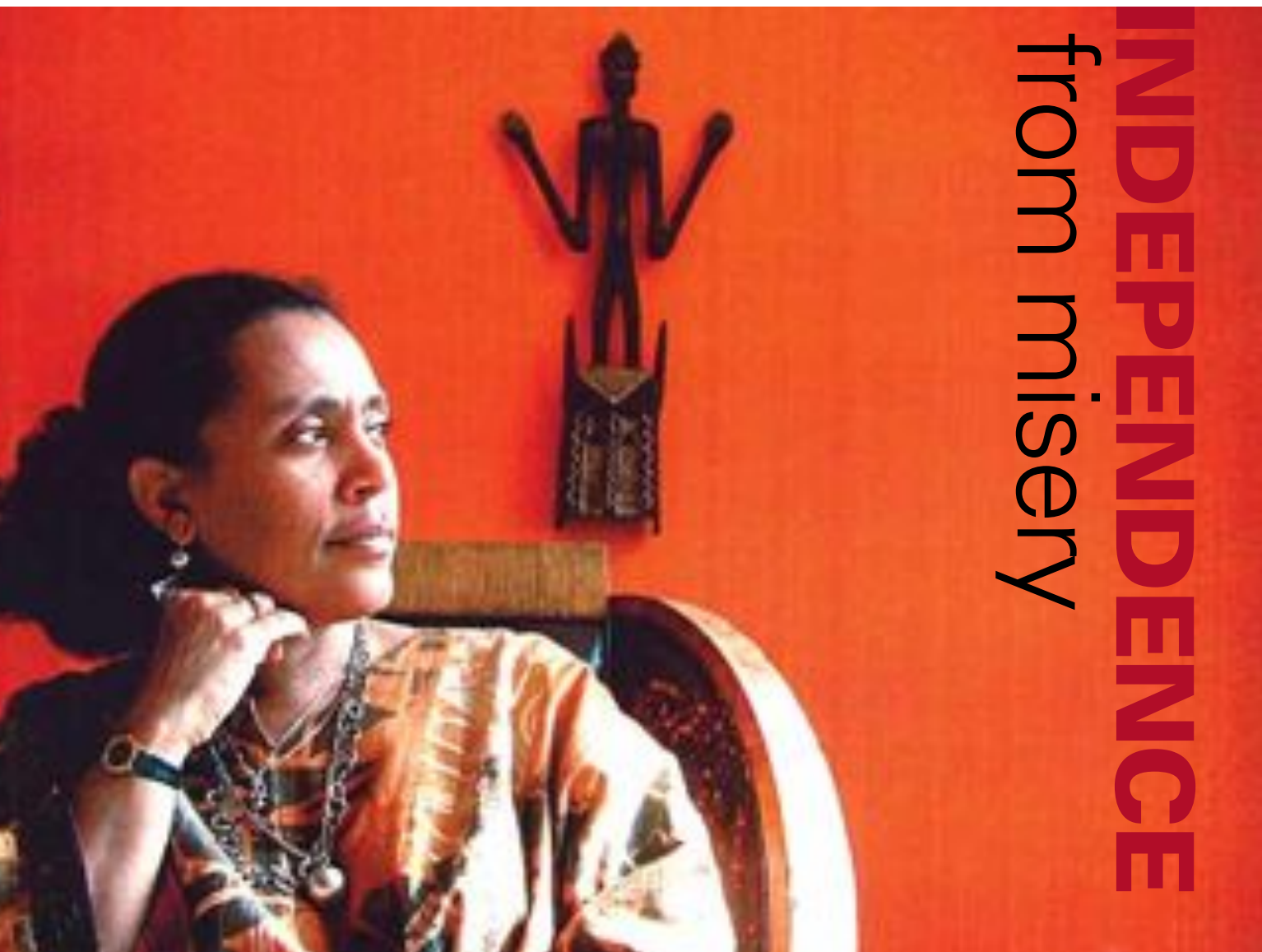
against India and supporting the richer countries instead. South Africa said it was willing to link the Kyoto Protocol with a legal agreement covering all countries, which would effectively shatter the 'common but differentiated responsibilities' principle that underlies the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The statement was welcomed by rich countries such as the US and Australia as a way to clinch a deal in Durban.

South Africa also belongs to the Africa Group. As a hegemonic player in both the negotiations and regional geopolitics, as well as being the highest carbon emitter in Africa by far, South Africa faces tough choices on its stance in negotiations.

Some have interpreted the desired 'balanced outcome' as being a package of the various elements that need to be decided upon in Durban. These include finance, technology, adaptation and forests, as well as the more general operationalisation of the Cancun Agreements and the Bali Action Plan. At best, it seems that Durban can achieve a further political framework (which may or may not result in a legally binding treaty at some point further down the line). At worst, it will result in deadlock.

Cancun was viewed in the mainstream as a success because nothing much happened. With so much hanging in the balance, perhaps a successful COP17 will be regarded in this way too. **E**



BY VÉRONIQUE TADJO

The *Probo Koala* had dropped anchor in the port of Abidjan in the same way that, long ago, slave ships came to our shores to take people away into slavery

What I fear most – as if our miseries were only just beginning – is the great waste of our natural resources and the impoverishment of the air that we breathe into our lungs.

It is time to think beyond the mere present and remember that today is the only foundation for tomorrow. We need to look ahead carefully: what are the disasters we bring onto ourselves because of greed or negligence and those which rain down on us with merciless might from above?

All too often, it is our own actions that

bring about disasters. We waste our chances; we plunder our reserves and we sell our lands.

At this rate, unless we pull ourselves together quickly, we will be eating plants by their roots. Except if by some miracle, we change our ways; change the parameters of our existence and finally change the rules of our world. There is so much we need to do.

If not, one day, our children will say, pointing a finger at us: 'You've handed us the future on a pile of rubbish!' And these will certainly be harsh words coming from the young generations. They will



look back and see how little we've done to preserve the generosity of our continent.

## THE PROBO KOALA

Here it is for example:

In September 2006, a ship, *The Probo Koala*, entered the port of Abidjan in Côte d'Ivoire. A few hours later, it poured 581 tonnes of toxic waste in several tankers. Suddenly, a foul odour – like faeces or rotten eggs – filled the air. It was hydrogen sulphide, a liquefied, compressed, discoloured gas. Shrouding everything in its unbearable smell. And then there were other caustic chemicals which damaged people's skin, eyes, respiratory tracts and insides. They poisoned the soil and the underground water, harming animals, plants and minerals alike.

*The Probo Koala* was a versatile ship that could transport anything, from oil products to foodstuffs (coffee, cocoa, etc.). But that day, it needed to dispose of some harmful toxic waste. Where? In the town of Abidjan! Poison making its secretive way through the streets, in the middle of the night, in tanks from which a nauseating stench emanated.

And the earth wasn't able to prevent the disaster. It couldn't absorb such potent poison. It could do nothing against this scandalous man-made ecological catastrophe: ten people killed, including some children, 100 people hospitalised and six to seven thousand poisoned.

*The Probo Koala* had dropped anchor in the port of Abidjan, in the same way, long ago, that slave ships came to our shores to take people away into slavery, far from their lands to become human livestock; faceless, nameless, less-than-nothing people. Destroying their past, their present and their future. Yes, kidnapped, but sold by us. Sold by us, we should remember.

From deep within the poisonous tanks escaped a vapour that seeped into the town's air. It floated and then, over the course of days, turned into harmful and stinking clouds causing painful migraines. When coming into contact with these noxious clouds, inhabitants would immediately start itching all over. There would be nausea and vomiting. In the months that followed, a number of children were born with deformities.

The minister in charge of urban sanitation declared: 'All those responsible will be punished!'

But how can we begin to eradicate the greed that devours our elites? How can we put an end to the corruption of those who profit from the weakness of a system they have built with their own hands?

## WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Impunity will always be unacceptable. It is a most terrible sin that will cost us more and more dearly.

Will we ever know the identities of those who were responsible? Or the exact number of the victims? And what about the complex international network of business deals that led to this? *The Probo Koala* was registered in Panama, belonged to a Greek man, was chartered by a Dutch/Swiss company and had a Russian crew. It left Texas in June 2006, arrived in Amsterdam in July, continued on to Estonia in the same month, dropped its anchor in Lagos in August and finally arrived in Abidjan, some weeks later, to offload its dangerous cargo on the unsuspecting city dwellers.

We must voice our rage, rebel and face the collapse of public responsibility. Whatever its form. We must demand more and refuse more. We need to denounce this new transatlantic trade in which no one really has to own up.

Who is in charge of us? Who are these leaders who do not take pity on those they govern and who ignore the pain inflicted on them? All these new illnesses which the doctors call 'pathologies' are eating away at ordinary life. Who are these leaders who sell off the good health of entire populations, in exchange for cheap junk and dirty money?

## TRUE INDEPENDENCE

Already, in the overcrowded areas of our capitals, filth proliferates in an anarchic fashion: stagnant water; rotting leftovers and discarded plastic bags. Badly maintained cars, buses and taxis pump their grey fumes into the saturated air. Mopeds cough, spit and backfire while factories join in with gusto.

There is a deafening silence on the ecological future of our countries. We are


in danger. From the Sahel, the desert is encroaching. From the big cities, urbanisation is occurring violently. So we are left haunted by fears. What type of legacy will we leave to our children? Will wars break out over water? Water. So precious, so beautiful. We are prisoners of our own inadequacies. Our greatest struggle remains to win independence from misery.

Wind energy, water energy, electric cars and organic food. All these luxuries pass us by. We are still so very far from having the basic essentials, the contingencies of down-to-earth living. We should not allow ourselves to become colonies, mere reservoirs or producers of oxygen for rich and emerging powers.

**Already, in the over-crowded areas of our capitals, filth proliferates in an anarchic fashion: stagnant water; rotting leftovers and discarded plastic bags**

There can be no independence without the control of our food production and our underground resources, of the water we drink and the air we breathe. We must stop falling to our knees in front of economic speculation, like in 2008 when the price of wheat went up so high on the world market it sparked food riots across the African continent.

Everything needs re-thinking. Everything must be raised above ground level. We will no longer sleep at night if we let greed get the better of us.

Misery is not un-avoidable. The upheaval of life pushes us to rebuild on more solid foundations. We won't get by without making major changes; without inscribing our own destiny. 

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*Véronique Tadjou is a French-Ivorian novelist and artist who heads the French Department at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg*



Following the conference on climate change in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, **Daryl Balia** and **Debay Tadesse** spoke to **Professor Elfatih AB Eltahir**, professor of civil and environmental engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Massachusetts, US.

## Q&A

### **Q** WHAT ARE THE PREDICTIONS ABOUT THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON WATER AVAILABILITY IN AFRICA?

As reported by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2007, there is quite a bit of uncertainty about what will happen to rainfall across Africa. Though the predictions are quite robust across models that temperatures are going to rise, predictions on what is going to happen to precipitation are quite uncertain. That is not a cause for inaction, but prudent action should be taken to incorporate the uncertainty of these predictions.

### **Q** AFRICA IS HIGHLY DEPENDENT ON RAIN-FED AGRICULTURE. HOW CAN WATER RESOURCES BE MANAGED TO ENHANCE FOOD SECURITY AND AT THE SAME TIME CONSERVE THE ENVIRONMENT?

We must be conscious of the fact that there could be either less or more water as a result of climate change. So I suggest potential adaptation strategies on the regional river basin scale, where we should look at how to use water efficiently and reduce water losses. We should do this anyway, as it will help in the case that climate change produces less water. On the other hand, if climate change results in more water, I argue that the plans to increase storage capacity for irrigation purposes should be pursued with greater vigour, because we will be in a better position to manage the water.

### **Q** MANY CLIMATE MODELS PREDICT A VERY NEGATIVE

### **IMPACT ON AFRICAN AGRICULTURE. DO YOU AGREE?**

Climate change is not all bad news. Actually there is quite a big possibility that some parts of Africa will receive more water, which will help in development and reduce conflicts.

### **Q** MORE WATER CAN BE DEVASTATING IF IT MEANS FLOODS AND NATURAL DISASTERS.

Yes, but generally, if you think about the arid regions of Africa, more water is good news if you manage it properly. There are also other opportunities, created as a result of the Kyoto protocol, the Clean Development Mechanism process and other international resources, that can be generated with significant financial benefit for African countries.

### **Q** DO YOU AGREE WITH THE PRINCIPLE THAT POLLUTERS MUST PAY?

Africa contributes less than 4% of the emissions globally. The principle that the main polluters should pay is quite established and in the future, when the science of climate change becomes clear and cause and effect are firmly established, I expect that African countries would be justified to claim compensation for the effects of climate change.

### **Q** WHAT WILL BE THE ROLE OF EMERGING COUNTRIES LIKE INDIA AND CHINA?

Newly developing countries should be in-

cluded. It suffices to determine who are the main polluters. My recommendation is that Africans, although they are not the drivers, should also in good faith implement measures against pollution, for example looking at deforestation. Because if at some point in the future you'd like to stand up and point fingers at the polluters, it doesn't make sense morally if you are not careful about mitigation at this stage.

### **Q** SO YOU AGREE THAT ADAPTATION IS A PRIORITY OVER MITIGATION?

In the African context, yes. Adaptation has to be done carefully to recognise the uncertainty of predictions.

Given the level of development and the high rate of poverty in Africa, I think development is a very urgent need for African societies. I would also suggest that, at this stage, considerations about climate change should not pose significant constraints on the process of development in Africa. I'm very much in favour of conserving the environment and sustainable practices but this should be engaged carefully in Africa, where the low level of development needs to be tackled.

In the end, the root cause of climate change is the consumption patterns and lifestyles adopted by people in the West, which are now increasingly adopted by people in Asia as their countries develop. I hope that the global human community will recognise that this is not sustainable. However, before we get there, we have to deal with the urgent need for development in Africa. **E**



# Kenya puts boots on the ground

The military offensive by Kenya's army in Somalian territory has support in both Kenya and Somalia.

**Andrews Attah-Asamoah** asks whether it will really make Kenya a safer place.

**T**he military offensive against Al Shabaab, one of East Africa's most daring armed groups, marks a dramatic turning point in the history of Kenya. The operation, code-named 'Operation Linda Nchi' ('protect the nation' in Kiswahili), aims primarily at creating a buffer zone of about 100km on the Somali side of the Kenya-Somalia border so as to prevent incursions into Kenyan territory by armed groups such as Al Shabaab and Somali pirates from the other side of the border.

The military operation is complemented by extensive internal swoops on neighbourhoods suspected to contain Al Shabaab presence and sleeper cells, as well as extensive intelligence gathering and the beefing up of internal security across the country, especially in Nairobi.

Kenya is now also bracing itself to bear the consequences of involvement in such a fluid conflict. Reprisal attacks against Kenyan interests are already a reality. A grenade attack on a nightclub in Nairobi early on Monday 24 October, which injured over a dozen people, and a further attack on a bus station, killing one person, heightened fears that Al Shabaab is acting on its threats to Kenya.

There is no doubt that Al Shabaab has the capacity to strike, given its recent history in Somalia and Uganda. Despite the beefing up of security across Kenya

and particularly in Nairobi, the presence of sleeper cells and other regional Al Shabaab elements raises Kenya's vulnerability and puts pressure on its ability to maintain a consistent security presence on the streets until the threat is over.

**Kenya is now bracing itself to bear the consequences of involvement in such a fluid conflict**

Given that Al Shabaab may want to strike when Kenya least expects it, it goes without saying that the need to maintain security by beefing up operations on the streets may have to continue for a long time to come.

## PROTECTING TOURISTS

The most immediate trigger for Kenya's offensive against Somalia was the spate of kidnappings of foreigners near the Kenya-Somalia border, the most recent of which was the abduction of two Spanish aid workers from the Daadab refugee camp in Kenya's North-Eastern Province. This followed two other kidnappings of foreign nationals from along the Kenyan coast, sparking a negative ripple effect on Kenya's

economically crucial tourism industry.

Operation Linda Nchi is also informed by numerous incursions of belligerents operating from Somalia into Kenyan territories, as well as by the hitherto somewhat laid-back response of the political leadership, which led to a perception among some Kenyans that their leadership lacked the political will to utilise its military and economic might to defend their country's territorial integrity.

## NO MORE TALKING

Kenya has traditionally been noted for its preference for diplomacy and a non-military response to the Somali crisis. By putting boots on the ground, however, its characteristically pacifist approach is now history.

In the past, Kenya suffered from the activities of such belligerents as Al Shabaab by virtue of its hosting of Westerners and their foreign interests. With the launch of the operation, the country has effectively moved from being a victim to a target of belligerent activities – a situation that is likely to have severe long-term security implications.

On the Somali side, Operation Linda



Nchi was not one of the variables considered during the recent crafting of the roadmap of the political process. This new dynamic will impact greatly on the roadmap's achievability.

The impact will be positive only if the operation's limited goal of creating a stabilised buffer zone is achieved quickly, since that will help with the extension of security beyond Mogadishu. However, if the operation becomes protracted, the roadmap will have to be altered to include Kenya's presence as a new variable.

In recent times, Uganda has been instrumental in Somalia, as was made explicit with the signing of the Kampala accord between Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, president of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), and speaker of parliament Sharif Hassan Sheikh Aden.

The accord, facilitated by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, brought an end to about five months of political stalemate in the Transitional Federal Institutions (TFIs) and helped a great deal in charting the course for the transitional period. Kenya's new presence increases the external stakes in Somalia and stands the chance of further geo-politicising the issues if not well coordinated.

### SOMALI SUPPORT

Among Somalis, it is interesting that Kenya's incursion has not raised the ire of the masses, as was the case with Ethiopia's invasion in 2006. This is possibly because there is a sizeable population of Somalis in both Somalia and Kenya who view Kenya as having been hospitable to their families and as having genuine grievances in relation to the abductions.

There are also many Somalis who do not share Al Shabaab's philosophy and

activities. However, this situation could easily change should there be an increase in civilian casualties as a result of Kenya's military attacks, as Al Shabaab would capitalise on such cases to inflame Somali emotions and rally for support.

### THE COST OF WAR

Kenya will have to brace itself for combat casualties as the operation progresses. Al Shabaab is likely to exploit its characteristic guerrilla tactics of using sniper fire, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), roadside bombings and suicide bombings.

Then there is the financial cost of the war. This is likely to keep increasing with new advances and any protraction of the situation on the ground.

Against the backdrop of the rising cost of living and the depreciating Kenyan Shilling, the government will have to dip further into its coffers in order to sustain the cost of the military operation.

## Kenya has offered asylum to Somalia's refugees fleeing from the political turmoil in their motherland

Further critical questions remain, such as whether the operation was sufficiently well thought through. For example, the timing of the operation is questionable given the country's current economic hardships and the fact that it was launched during the rainy season. The latter is already hampering the advance of the Kenyan troops. To be successful, however, there is a crucial need for the operation to stay within the limits of the intended 100km buffer zone. Any attempt to chase Al Shabaab across the entire Somalia will be extremely challenging and may affect the success of the operation.



**KENYAN POLICE** guard the scene of a suspected grenade blast at a pub in downtown Nairobi, early Monday, Oct. 24, which a police official said wounded over a dozen people.

### COMMUNICATION AND THE MEDIA

Since the operation was announced, the media have been quick to label it a 'war', without considering the impact of such a tag in the minds of the masses, especially tourists. This threatens to defeat the primary goal of the operation – to assure citizens and visitors to Kenya that the security of the country is under control.

To avert the impact of media sensationalism and prevent speculative reporting, the government's communications machinery will have to continue providing regular and reliable updates to the media.

Regionally, the current visibility of Kenyan troops gives the East African Standby Force (EASF) an opportunity to consider 're-hatting' and using the Kenyans as the core of a multinational regional force, beefing up their numbers with additional troops raised from the region. This will lead to the creation of a multinational force representative of the collective regional will to deal with the threat of Al Shabaab, which can eventually be subsumed by the ongoing African Union mission. **E**





The Kenyan intervention against Al Shabaab has again put the spotlight on this dangerous terror group. **Andrews Attah-Asamoah** reports from Nairobi.

# Underestimate **AL SHABAAB** at your peril

**T**he withdrawal of Al Shabaab from the Somali capital of Mogadishu in August 2011 was seen as a victory for the African Union (AU) troops on the ground. However, it was also symptomatic of the numerous internal and operational challenges facing the al Qaeda-linked terror group.

These challenges include the loss of several key operational leaders such as Fazul Abdullah Mohammed; a gradual erosion of the hardcore commitment to jihadism by sections of the group's adherents due to their increasing accumulation of wealth; and corruption among members.

The high cost of direct combat with the relatively better-equipped AU troops and internal leadership wrangling between the international jihadi elements and the nationalists have, among other factors, contributed to weakening the organisation's status. Combined with Kenya's mid-October launch of 'Operation Linda Nchi', the codename for a coordinated military operation in Somali territory, Al Shabaab can be said to be struggling against a wave of insurmountable challenges.

The overall impact could break it back and ultimately alter Al Shabaab's influence in the insecurity matrix of Somalia and the entire Horn of Africa region.

However, premature celebrations over the ongoing military offensive and any attempt to disregard the influence and capabilities of Al Shabaab may prove extremely costly.



**AL SHABAAB'S** military spokesman Sheikh Abdul Asis Abu Muscab issues a statement south of capital Mogadishu October 19, shortly after the start of the Kenyan military offensive.

## LEADERSHIP STILL INTACT

Guerrilla groups such as Al Shabaab are usually only as strong as their operational leadership, and their success depends on their leaders' focus and ability to formulate commands to be followed through by adherents.

Despite losing about 50 key functionaries and commanders in 2011, including Comoros-born Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, Sheikh Abu Muslim (commander of

Mogadishu), and warlord Abdiwali Qanyare, the group's Shurah or governing council led by Ahmed Abdi Godane (aka Sheikh Muktar 'Abu Zubeir') is still operational. Additionally, Godane has created an aura around his personality, perpetuating myths about his alleged role in masterminding assassinations and only rarely appearing in public – an interestingly useful attractant to young jihadists. The command and control of the group is thus still effectively strong and operational, coordinating deadly activities such as the 4 October bombing in Mogadishu, which claimed about 70 lives and wounded more than 100 others.

The group also has 'coordinatable' foot

**50** The number of key functionaries and commanders lost by Al Shabaab in 2011

**70** The number of lives claimed in the 4 October bombing in Mogadishu

soldiers in Somalia and beyond. This is particularly the case with the existence of sleeper cells and recruits in states contiguous to Somalia, particularly Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. In Kenya, for example, the listing and subsequent criminalisation of Al Shabaab alongside other domestic criminal groups in the 2010 Prevention of Organised Crimes Act is an explicit admission by the political leadership that the group has operational presence in the country. This raises critical questions as to whether the regional efforts to uproot Al Shabaab, including Operation Linda Nchi, should begin from within or outside the territories of any given regional state or actor.

Al Shabaab has an estimated 200 Kenyan fighters, and the use of Kenyan nationalities grants Al Shabaab a certain camouflage, which is instrumental in guerrilla warfare. The Kampala bombing underlined this approach. Individuals in the sleeper cells, however, do not always strike on direct orders from the Al Shabaab leadership. This was the case with the masterminds of the two grenade attacks in Nairobi in mid-October, in which one person died and about two dozen were injured.

The readiness of the sleeper cells to take independent decisions has increased the deadliness of the group's operations in the region, not only because such attacks tend to be uncoordinated and isolated, but because their perpetration involves a small group of people whose communication and planning activities are extremely difficult to track and disrupt.

### AN ELUSIVE ENEMY

The problem is compounded by citizens' lack of awareness of the threat and of how to profile individuals with terrorist intent. In addition, the uneven distribution of security forces, especially in lower-end suburbs and high-density slums, as well as the



AP PHOTO

**KENYA SAID** its launch of military operations into southern Somalia against al-Shabaab militants was in response to the kidnappings of four Europeans.

visibility of vulnerable infrastructure and facilities, make the country all the more vulnerable to terror attacks.

On the battlefield, Al Shabaab enjoys a great deal of turf advantage. Apart from its members' extensive knowledge of the terrain, they also enjoy ease of camouflage due to their ability to merge with the civilian population.

### Kenya should be extremely tactical in how it engages Al Shabaab elements operating from civilian areas so as to prevent collateral damage

Without an AK-47 rifle, the average Al Shabaab fighter looks like any innocent young man walking the streets. This gives them the advantage of operating under the guise of day-to-day civilian activities. Already, the group has started using donkeys instead of vehicles to transport its weapons. The group is also clearly capable of using human shields or drawing Kenya's forces into combat operations that may lead to civilian casualties so as to increase international pressure on Kenya.

This was the case with the recent military airstrike in which civilians were reported to have died, in Jilib town in Middle

Juba. The international reports put a great deal of pressure on Kenya and unknowingly did the bidding for the group by feeding perfectly into its propaganda machinery.

Compounding all these dimensions is the fact that Al Shabaab has a history of striking beyond Somali territory. The Kampala bombing, which involved several coordinated operations, highlighted the danger of the sleeper cells. It is not widely known that the Kampala bombings were supposed to have been followed by a twin bombing in Kenya, which was foiled by the Kenyan security agencies.

In Somalia the group has wreaked havoc through its bombings, suicide bombings and use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), killing several innocent people including students, women and children, as well as troops of the AU mission AMISOM.

On the basis of the above, the danger of underestimating the group in any way should be clear. On the battlefield, Kenya's army should neither disregard the group nor forget to communicate with the media, since the battle is being fought on the information front as well.

Kenya should also be extremely careful and tactical in how it engages Al Shabaab elements operating from civilian areas so as to prevent collateral damage. Across the region and particularly in Kenya, security should be beefed up and sustained. Any temptation to relax security operations and surveillance in the country may prove very costly.

This is, after all, modern guerrilla warfare with an amorphous group. There should be no room for complacency. **E**



### AL SHABAAB IN NUMBERS

**Total estimated number:** 3 000

**Foreign fighters:** 200

**Nationalities:** Mainly Kenyan, Tanzanian and Ugandan, with other jihadists from around the world, including Western capitals

**Link with al Qaeda:** Facilitates global buy-in from non-Somali jihadists and helps with raising funds



# Will Zuma's inquiry end the arms deal secrecy?



The multi-billion dollar arms deal concluded shortly after the ANC came to power in South Africa has haunted the ruling party ever since. In their groundbreaking new book *The Devil in the Detail* **Paul Holden** and **Hennie van Vuuren** argue that an inquiry into the arms deal needs active civil society participation. The following is an edited extract from the book:

There may be one thing which this country's power elite fears more than an impatient 'rabble' that organises outside of the confines of political parties and between election periods: an independent inquiry into the arms deal. The political futures of many active players are intertwined with the crimes of the arms deal. To date, they have rested easy, quietly confident in the knowledge that calls for inquiries into the arms deal have emanated from courageous but politically isolated individuals. These campaigners, vital to any nascent civil society movement, can nevertheless be exhausted by extensive legal battles or hamstrung by a lack of broader co-operation.

On 15 September 2011, President Jacob Zuma sprang a surprise on his critics and allies with the announcement that he would appoint a commission of enquiry into the arms deal. This was an unexpected decision given that both Zuma and former Presidents Kgalema Motlanthe and Thabo Mbeki had previously refused public calls for an arms deal enquiry. Zuma's spokesperson Mac Maharaj, commenting on the president's decision, said that, 'what he has concluded is that there is a need for closure in the public interest. This matter needs to be dealt with properly.' There are probably two primary motives for this decision – the first legal and the second political.

On the legal front, Zuma was required

## THE ARMS DEAL VS OTHER PRIORITIES

Government spending

### Spending priorities

#### KEY

- 1 Dept. of Education 2000–2008
- 2 Dept. of Health 2000–2008
- 3 The Arms Deal 2000–2008
- 4 Dept. of Housing 2000–2008
- 5 Low-cost Housing 2000–2008
- 6 HIV/ Aids & STI Programme 2000–2008



to provide an answering affidavit by 15 September to a Constitutional Court application, brought by lone arms activist Terry Crawford-Browne, that he establish an independent commission of enquiry into the arms deal – the same day he announced this surprise decision. Zuma had probably received legal counsel that his case was not strong enough and he would lose in court against Crawford-Browne. Rather than face such embarrassment and the possibility of the Constitutional Court potentially dictating terms, Zuma appears to have taken charge of the process.

### POSTURING AHEAD OF MANGAUNG

Zuma has also faced mounting internal dissent within the ANC as the party readies itself for the ANC elective conference in Mangaung in December 2012. One of his chief detractors is his old ally, Julius Malema, president of the ANC Youth League.

Malema has become one of Zuma's key opponents in the battle between rival camps for the future leadership of the ANC. To the surprise of many, the ANC Youth League leadership in Limpopo (Malema's strongest support base) raised the need for a fresh probe into the arms deal in August 2011, at the time that Zuma was seeking to have Malema censured for alleged ill-discipline as an ANC member. Could this have been an attempt by Zuma to gain better control of the political process by arranging that allegations of cor-

**When we reflect on the arms deal in totality we realise that Malema is only a distraction, sometimes useful, sometimes provocative, but in essence his politics is not believable**

ruption that involve him and others are channelled through a commission that he will ensure is tightly managed?

This would, in the mind of many sceptics, ensure that the president can protect himself through the process, threaten his own rivals within ANC with exposure if

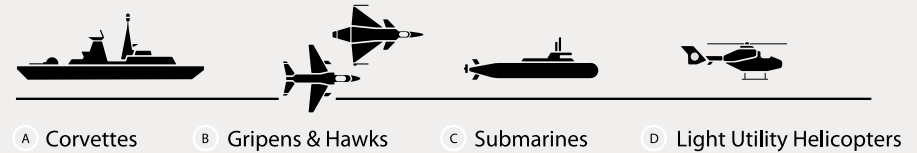
### WHAT THE ARMS DEAL COST

The cost of the arms deal has mushroomed since 1999 due to exchange rate fluctuations. Any true cost has to account for the unstated financing charges, the total cost of which we include here.

#### 01 STATED VS ACTUAL COST

1999–2011

● CAPITAL ● FINANCING



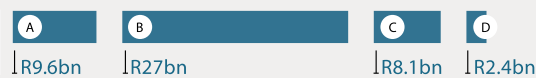
STATED COST 1999

R29bn



STATED COST 2008

R47bn



ACTUAL COST\* 2008

R70.6bn



\* Including hidden finance charges

needs be, and draw the process out well beyond the next ANC elective conference. Zuma would therefore manage the culture of uncertainty and yet appear the democrat, accountable to a public that has long clamoured for a public commission of enquiry or investigation with the power to finally lift the lid on the deal.

Critically South Africa has seen a number of well-funded investigations that, due in large part to executive interference, have fallen short of a real attempt to ensure full disclosure and accountability in the arms deal. However the commission, which will be chaired by a panel of judges, has been provided with wide-ranging terms of reference that has surprised many critics of President Zuma. The commission will seek

to answer some key questions: Why were the weapons purchased?; How are the weapons being used if at all?; Have jobs been created by the arms deal and have the notoriously corrupted 'off-set' deals materialized?; Did anyone inside or outside government influence the deal improperly and what would the basis be for prosecution if they did? Are any of the contracts tainted by fraud or corruption and could it justify the cancellation of the contract?

### IMPERFECT EXAMPLES FROM ELSEWHERE

The only apparent missing element is the question why all previous probes have failed in the past.

When turning to other countries in the South for examples of where commissions of inquiry have worked, it is clear that most countries, such as Kenya, Peru and even India – which spent almost twenty years pursuing corruption in the

Swedish Bofors arms deal – present imperfect examples. In many countries authorities have lost the appetite for such investigations once the true extent of corruption is revealed and an understanding develops of how deep these networks extend into political parties and the State.

South Africa has much to learn from other countries in this regard if the commission is to be a success. This is precisely why we believe that civil society must be bold and convince this country's political class that it has no option but to pry open this treasure trove of secrets, intrigue and shame.

The devil in the detail of the arms deal consists of secrets to which all future reform efforts are tied. Crimes have been hidden under layer after layer of other crimes – none of which can be separated with ease. If new policies to tackle corruption are to prove genuine and lasting, they will require us to look back and understand how a cor-

**The devil in the detail of the arms deal consists of secrets to which all future reform efforts are tied. Crimes have been hidden under layer after layer of other crimes – none of which can be separated with ease**

rupt culture of practice under apartheid poisoned our politics; how this manifested itself in the arms deal, and finally how that holds a young democracy and an optimistic nation to ransom. The leisure classes and the lowly paid all spend much time discussing the meaning of Julius Malema and other so-called tenderpreneurs.

When we reflect on the arms deal in totality we realise that Malema is only a distraction, sometimes useful, sometimes provocative, but in essence his politics is not believable. His Breitling watch weighs down his calls for an economic revolution each time he raises a revolutionary clenched fist.

### A NATIONAL CONVERSATION

What we must demand now, before any other policy reform, is a lancing of the arms deal legacy, a national act which would inform future policy. It should also serve as inspiration to other developing countries that corrupt local elites and the large multinational corporations who grease this wheel can be held to account. This initiative should be the beginning of a serious national conversation to devolve power to where it belongs, arresting impunity, stopping the culture of secrecy and seriously discussing the sacrifice that will be required from those who own wealth to share it with those who have nothing. It should be a social contract that sets into motion a new process of national reconstruction to the benefit of all people who live in this country.

A probe into the arms deal could be the catalyst for this process. This tribunal will only succeed if our politicians are convinced that this country's people stand behind it and that any effort to undermine it will be met with protest on the streets and punishment at the ballot boxes.

It is not enough for us to hear the call by elders such as Desmond Tutu for such an inquiry. If this country is to move forward it must unshackle itself of the crimes of apartheid and the crimes of the arms deal. A new generation must demand that those involved in the arms deal corruption are exposed and prosecuted. These are not acts of revenge or retribution. This would be an act of renewal.

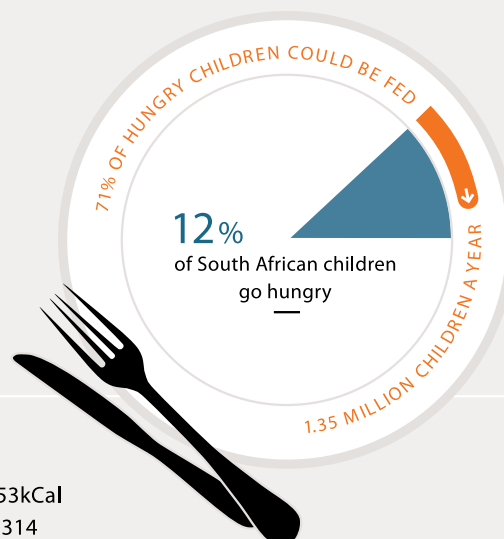
We must demand it. Not on the terms set by corrupted elites who have the most to lose, but rather on terms set by a people committed to a constitutional democracy that has everything to win. Its time has come. **E**

### WHAT WE COULD HAVE GOT Opportunity lost through the arms deal

05 FOOD SECURITY 11 YEARS

**R70.6bn \* could**

① PROVIDE DAILY FOOD BASKETS TO  
MILLIONS OF HUNGRY CHILDREN,  
EVERY YEAR FOR 11 YEARS



#### FOOD BASKETS

A	Calories Per Day	2053kCal
B	Cost Per Person, Per Year	R4 314
C	People Fed Per Year	1.3m

\*2011 figures

*The Devil in the Detail is an output of the ISS Corruption & Democratic Governance Programme. Published by Jonathan Ball Publishers, it is available at all good bookstores and can be purchased online or as an e-book. Please see [www.issafrica.org](http://www.issafrica.org) for more details.*



# Momentous interventions



**FESTUS K ABOAGYE**

The number of 34 traditional African troop-contributing countries, including the non-AU Morocco, has held constant for about the past five years

Peacekeeping has evolved as the tool of choice for the United Nations (UN) and the African Union (AU) to fix insecurity within a continent that aptly qualifies as a theatre for the deployment of large numbers of peace operations since the end of the Cold War.

In 2011, the continent saw an unprecedented number of interventions by external actors armed with a UN Security Council Protection of Civilians (POC) mandate, disproving any notion that Africa may be witnessing a decline in the number of violent armed conflicts necessitating UN and/or AU intervention.

The fact remains that even if there has been some decline in the number of violent armed conflicts, the factors that contribute to such conflicts are not in abeyance. Potentially, therefore, Africa remains prone to instability, post-conflict peacekeeping and other forms of intervention.

Seven of the total of 16 (about 44%) UN peace operations currently deployed in the world are deployed in Africa (see box).

The POC interventions in Libya and Côte d'Ivoire were undoubtedly two of the most defining aspects of peacekeeping in Africa in 2011.

Even with its robust Chapter VII mandate, the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) proved abysmally weak and under-resourced to deal with the imminent civil war. When Nigeria and other hawkish states failed to coerce the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) into using force, and in light of the AU's impotence, Nigeria and France co-sponsored UN Security Council Resolution 1975 (2011) that assigned the French a robust 'no-consent' Chapter VII (POC) mandate for joint action with the UN to arrest the slide towards civil war.

The Arab Awakening in Libya, perhaps more than anywhere else, tested AU diplomacy to the hilt before exposing it as

dysfunctional. Supporting the wave of popular protest for freedoms that had been denied for 42 years, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and other allied countries exploited yet another 'no-consent' Chapter VII UNSC resolution, Resolution 1973 (2011).

The traction in the imposition of a no-fly-zone and POC actions helped to oust and eventually eliminate former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi and, hopefully, to create new conditions for good governance in the country, while the AU remained fossilised in its emphasis on a ceasefire and negotiation.

## AFRICAN TROOPS BEAR THE BRUNT

African countries have continued to be major contributors to peacekeeping, surpassed only by Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan and India. Where Western countries surpass the contribution of Africans, these deployments have largely been in the Middle East, which is a region of greater relative strategic interest and concern to those countries.

As of September 2011, for instance, the number of 34 traditional African troop-contributing countries, including the non-AU Morocco, has held constant for about the past five years. These countries' contributions have made up about 29% of the 116 contributing countries' forces globally.

Worldwide, 34 830 African uniformed peacekeepers have made up about 35% of the total 99 961 uniformed personnel in the UN's missions. With regard to the seven UN missions deployed in Africa, African contributions will be even more significant.

Meanwhile, Western disengagement from direct participation in UN peace operations within Africa since the mid-1990s debacles in Somalia and Rwanda has continued unabated. This trend has induced two significant policy shifts in

# in a troubled continent

Africa within the context of an African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA).

First, as part of the transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the AU system has been compelled to undertake complex peace operations such as the AU Mission in Burundi (AMIB, 2003-05) that was led by South Africa, and the AU Mission in Sudan-Darfur (AMIS, 2004-07), historic due to its involvement of police in AU missions.

This factor also explains the deployment of the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), although AU member states failed to respond to the Kampala declaration in 2010 to augment the force to 20 000 uniformed personnel.

With an estimated strength of about 9 650 (Uganda; 5 210; Burundi; 4 400; and about 50 police, as well as the involvement of eight other countries), AMISOM is expected to support the Transitional Federal Government and Institutions (TFG/TFIs) in the implementation of a Somali national security plan for stabilising the country and ameliorating the humanitarian emergency exacerbated by the drought.

## UN STILL NOT IN SOMALIA

Even though one of Somalia's major protagonists, Al Shabaab, appears to have suffered recent reversals and been forced to relinquish its presence in Mogadishu, these efforts arguably have not been able to convince the UN and the international community to take over the peace operations mandate.

On the contrary, while Kenya's strategy of unilaterally establishing a buffer security zone on its border with south Somalia may hem in Al Shabaab, it may also antagonise and galvanise Somalis, who detest foreign forces on their territory.

Second, for the long term, the system has had to establish the APSA, devolving on the African Standby Force (ASF) as its operational implementing structure.

Simply put, the operationalisation of

the ASF has been so tedious that it could not materialise after the much-publicised Exercise AMANI AFRICA 2010. With new roadmap milestones on the drawing board, the ASF is likely to feature in peace operations in 2015.

While all these UN/AU efforts may be contributing towards stabilising the continent, including alleviating the human toll of its conflicts, they are yet to gain critical mass towards the implementation of the principles and objectives of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and its derivative POC mandates in Africa.

The AU's slowness to operationalise the APSA in a coherent manner is problematic. The system appears to be failing at finding African solutions to African problems. It remains unable either to ensure reasonable commitment to its espoused values or to hold to account leaders that fail to consolidate democracy, the rule of law and the promotion of human rights within their states. These deficits constitute conditions for 'avoidable' conflicts requiring the deployment of more peace operations or the extension of existing ones. They are grounds for the increasing role of the International Criminal Court in going after African leaders who, rather than protecting citizens, are party to gross violations of human rights within the continent.

For all the reasons outlined in this piece, peacekeeping by the UN and AU, and possibly regional economic communities, will continue to be an integral part of the security landscape of Africa. They will not be able to resolve Africa's complex conflicts, but they cannot be dispensed with in the absence of effective political alternatives. **E**

## UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS IN AFRICA

- UN Mission for the Referendum in **Western Sahara** (MINURSO), since April 1991
- UN Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the **DRC** (MONUSCO), since June 2010 (replacing MONUC, which operated from 1999-2010)
- UN Mission in **Liberia** (UNMIL), since September 2003
- UN Operation in **Côte d'Ivoire** (UNOCI), since April 2004
- AU-UN Hybrid Operation in **Darfur** (UNAMID), since July 2007
- UN Interim Security Force for **Abyei** (UNISFA), since June 2011
- UN Mission in the Republic of **South Sudan** (UNMISS), since July 2011, (after liquidation of UNMIS, which operated from 2005-2011)

These African missions are characterised largely by three denominators: the longevity of their duration, the enormous size of their uniformed military and police personnel, and/or their huge financial outlay.

With the exception of MINURSO (228 uniformed personnel), Africa's large missions range between UNISFA's 4 250 (including 50 police) and UNAMID's 25 987 (including 6 432 police).

# LIBERIA: the Tsvangirai option



DAVID ZOUNMENOU

The prospect of tapping into newly discovered mineral wealth, including oil, while offering additional resources to the government, raises the stakes in the political contest

On October 11, Liberian citizens went to the first round of polls to choose a new leader or reassert their confidence in the only female president on the continent. However, the regional and domestic context, as well as the stakes of these elections, makes them particularly challenging.

In recent years, very few elections have taken place in Africa without violence, to the extent that elections are becoming an increasingly serious threat to peace and democratic survival. The problem is not the nature of elections per se, but the manipulation of the electoral process to favour a particular candidate at the expense of the will of the citizens. At the heart of this problem is the credibility of the electoral monitoring bodies and their commitment to delivering free, fair and transparent elections.

Liberia is emerging from 15 years of war, which has had devastating impact on the socioeconomic and political life of the country. Although the outcome was controversial, the 2006 presidential elections that brought Harvard graduate Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf to power paved the way for the transition from war to peace while providing the momentum to conceive and implement a coherent post-conflict reconstruction strategy.

Expectations are now high in terms of addressing the deteriorated living conditions of the people. However, Liberia lacks the resources required to effectively respond to its citizens' basic needs. The prospect of tapping into newly discovered mineral wealth, including oil, while offering additional resources to the government, raises the stakes in the political contest.

This is the second time that Liberia will go to the polls since the return of peace. However, this time around the

electoral process is monitored by the national authorities themselves through the National Electoral Commission (NEC).

Regular elections as means for power alternation form part of the national democratisation and post-conflict reconstruction processes. But Liberians are almost at a loss, having to choose between an incumbent who, in spite of some efforts, has not delivered sufficient public goods, and the untested Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) party.

The CDC's popularity can mainly be attributed to its leader, former football legend George Weah, who tends to overshadow its presidential candidate Winston Tubman. In spite of his popularity, however, Weah is haunted by his poor education and his alleged lack of political experience. It is feared that opportunistic politicians seeking to win power for their own interests might exploit Weah's popularity.

Weeks after the first round of the polls, the results continue to garner controversy, with allegations of fraud in favour of the ruling Unity Party (UP), which lead with 43.9% of the vote against 32.7% for the opposition. In addition to the 54 petitions pending before the Electoral Commission, a now retracted letter sent to the CDC declaring its outright victory by commission chairman James Fromayan contributed to raising concerns over the credibility of the electoral process.

Some argue that the international community already selected its preferred candidate when the Nobel peace prize was awarded to President Sirleaf-Johnson just a few days before the start of the electoral campaign. At the same time, the opposition party has not helped itself by not being able to agree on and present a single candidate.



Two kinds of dynamics took place in Liberia ahead of the runoff. On the one hand, alliances had been forged to support each candidate.

On the other hand, rising tensions and the threat of boycott by the opposition looked set to compromise the country's fragile stability. Some opposition leaders, including the National Union for Democratic Progress (NUDP) of the former warlord Prince Johnson, who came third during the first round with 11.6% of the vote, and the Liberty Party's Charles Brumskine, who scored 5.5%, have thrown their weight behind president Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson. Other small parties added their support, placing the incumbent in a relatively comfortable yet complex position.

While Prince Johnson hopes to avoid prosecution for crimes against humanity, Brumskine, a vocal critic of Sirleaf-Johnson's administration, has argued that she is "the better of two evils".

Sirleaf-Johnson has shown reluctance in implementing the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report, which call for a 30-year ban on political leaders who took part in the war. While the government believes that implementing these recommendations would threaten national cohesion and impede reconstruction, observers see this attitude as compromising any chance of genuine national reconciliation and fostering impunity.

Meanwhile, amidst allegations of vote rigging, serious doubts emerged before the 8 November runoff. The CDC subsequently withdrew from the race, saying that its claims were being ignored. Among other things, the CDC demanded 50/50 representation on the electoral commission, as well as the resignation of its chairman, a reconsideration of the invalidated 6.4% of votes allegedly favourable to the opposition, and a transparent recount of the national vote. These demands have not been met.


Given Liberia's history of protracted conflict, the uncertainty over the runoff has raised fears that the country could slide back into political anarchy. With its polarised political fault lines, it is quite possible that Liberia could experience an

outbreak of political violence, considering that there are some elements on both sides of the political divide willing to do more than just take to the streets. Thousands of demobilised former combatants and the recycled fighters returning from Côte d'Ivoire remain a major source of instability for both Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire.

Against this backdrop, regional and international actors such as the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations (UN) need to get involved quickly, possibly by providing observers, both civilian and military, to maintain security on the ground. Another option would have been to postpone the runoff, in the short term, until such a time as a conducive environment was created for a free and fair election.

Now that Tubman has pulled out of the process, the situation mirrors Zimbabwe's June 2008 runoff election in which the then opposition leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, pulled out and the incumbent, Robert Mugabe, proceeded to conduct the "one-man election" that was considered illegitimate. The ensuing negotiations resulted in the current power-sharing government of that country. There is a possibility that Johnson-Sirleaf could be stuck in a similarly difficult situation now that the main opposition party has boycotted the runoff. This could dent her legitimacy and further complicate the already unstable political situation.

When all is said and done, however, and with the support of some of the most strategic actors in Liberia's political landscape, Johnson-Sirleaf looks set to remain in power for another five-year term. It remains to be seen whether the coalition emerging around her will facilitate her task of addressing some of the long-standing challenges of underdevelopment and post-conflict reconstruction. As each of these emerging associations will its own price tag, the result is likely to be delicate and complex relationship that could hamper some reforms, including the fight against corruption and nepotism.

Liberia is at a crossroads. The elections were the key for continuity in the transition to peace, but it also presents the risk of a possible stagnation or relapse into war. 

Given Liberia's history of protracted conflict, uncertainty over the runoff has raised fears that the country could slide back into political anarchy



# CELLPHONE MARKET

## Not always a smooth ride

Possible partial nationalisation in Senegal, tax disputes in Algeria, business problems in the DRC. **Francois Conradie** looks at how the telecom multinationals are coping.

**T**he telecom companies dominating the market in Africa never thought they'd get this lucky, and there's even more to be had.

Analysts predict there is still massive potential for the cellphone business in Africa, where the overall penetration rate is about 41%, compared to a global average of about 76%. In Nigeria the rate reaches 55%, but it is very low indeed in the populous markets of the DRC (17.2%) and Ethiopia (7.9%).

However, filling the gaps is not going to be easy, as recent events on the telecoms

scene illustrate. In some African countries, governments are demanding a greater share of the profits from this lucrative industry. In others, disputes with local – and locally influential – partners have ended in disaster.

### DRC UP FOR GRABS?

South African behemoth Vodacom is involved in a dispute with its local partner in the DRC, Congolese Wireless Network (CWN).

Vodacom owns 51% of Vodacom Congo, the DRC's second biggest cellphone

company, and CWN owns the remainder.

The partnership has not been a happy one for some time: Vodacom and CWN are already in arbitration about funding and fees in the Congolese venture, with CWN accusing the South African firm of taking capital out of the company. The most recent bout of litigation stems from apparent efforts by Vodacom to sell its stake in the joint venture without sharing information with CWN and despite the Congolese firm's right of first refusal.

MTN is said to be lined up to buy Vodacom's stake but its spokespeople

declined to comment. For its part, Vodacom did not explicitly say that the sale was on the cards, telling journalists only that it had retained a merchant bank to 'explore options' for Vodacom Congo. It looks as though Vodacom's troubles in the DRC have sent it towards the exit, especially as deep-pocketed Orange is entering the market through a privatisation deal.

The DRC offers possibly the greatest telecom opportunity in Africa, with a population of 66 million people and a penetration rate of only 17%. The analysts' consensus seems to be that Vodacom would be better off patching up its relationship with CWN than leaving the country.

## **NATIONALISATION SCARE IN SENEGAL**

Telecom firms in Senegal were rattled by President Abdoulaye Wade's 20 October announcement that he planned to put forward a law in parliament in terms of which the state would gain a minimum 'incompressible' 35% share in all telecom companies operating in the country.

According to the president, the current system, where telecom companies pay the state a licensing fee and then keep all profits for themselves, is not working and needs to be changed. The leading telecom company in the country is Sonatel, of which 27% is currently owned by the state and 42% by France Telecom.

Some of France Telecom's peers in the region have been there before. Earlier this year MTN was involved in a dispute with the government of Guinea; one of a number of wrangles between new president Alpha Condé and foreign companies operating in that country.

MTN had merged with Investcom (operating in Guinea under the Areeba brand) in 2007 without notifying the government, which in return considered itself entitled to capital gains freed up by the deal. The four-month wrangle was ultimately resolved in May 2011: MTN paid the government €15 million, but it took a decree signed by the Guinean president stripping MTN of all its Guinean assets to persuade it to do so.

Similar to MTN's Guinea situation is the long-running saga between Orascom Telecom and the government of Algeria

over the sale of Orascom's Algerian subsidiary, Djazzy. The government is still trying to retrieve \$230 million that it claims is owed by Orascom in back taxes. MTN has made an offer for the unit, but the Algerian government is determined to exercise its right of first refusal.

## **ORASCOM VS THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT**

Orascom's exit is being delayed by its inability to agree with the government on a price for the company, the most profitable of all Orascom's subsidiaries. The Djazzy

drama became more complicated when Russo-Norwegian company Vimpelcom bought Orascom's Italian-registered parent earlier this year.

Vimpelcom wanted to persuade the Algerian government to abandon its nationalisation plans and let it retain Orascom's share of Djazzy, making its intentions clear through the enormous \$7.8 billion price tag it put on its stake in Djazzy after the breakdown in the relations between Orascom Telecom's chairman, Naguib Sawiris, and the Algerian government.


Sawiris was obviously happy to hand the whole hot potato over to the Russians, but the Algerian government quite rudely said, 'We will speak only to Egyptians'. Even Russia's president, Dimitri Medvedev, was unable to find a solution at a summit meeting.

It was around this time that the Banque d'Algérie, the nation's central bank, decided to slap Djazzy with a demand for compensation to the tune of \$193 million related to violations of capital controls.

As in Guinea, the dispute is partly a consequence of a government's general hostility to foreign operators, and Orascom Telecom is paying the price for an incident in which Orascom Construction (which belongs to Naguib Sawiris's brother Nassef) sold its cement subsidiary to Lafarge Ciments.

The cement company included a plant in Algeria that had been set up partly thanks to state subsidies, and the Algerian government felt it had spent taxpayers' money to increase the value of an asset that went to make Nassef Sawiris rich.


Mobile licences in Africa are becoming rarer, and established companies have enough lobbying clout with regulators to convince them to limit the number of operators. This means that telecom companies that are determined to grow have to make the most of their existing operations or buy out companies in 'easier' markets, usually paying a steep premium.


The telecom companies that will dominate Africa twenty years from now will be the ones that grit their teeth in the next decade and find a way to deal with interfering governments and difficult partners. 

## **A HANDFUL OF BIG TELECOM COMPANIES DOMINATE THE AFRICAN MARKET**

 Vivendi and France Telecom (usually trading under the Orange brand) from France are very active, especially in West Africa, with Vivendi performing acquisitions through its Moroccan cash cow, Maroc Telecom.

 Britain's Vodafone has a stake in Kenya's Safaricom as well as a majority in South Africa's Vodacom, which has a number of subsidiaries north of the Limpopo.

 India's Bharti Airtel made its entry through the acquisition of all Kuwaiti company Zain's African assets and is now operating in 16 markets on the continent.

 Lastly, South Africa's MTN is also operating in 16 African countries and is the biggest mobile operator on the continent in terms of subscriber numbers.



# Spillover effects of a meltdown

As the slow meltdown of the Eurozone continues, Africans are again looking at the implications of international events for future growth in their own region, writes **Dianna Games**.

**T**he bounce-back of commodity prices in 2008, just months after they crashed on the back of the sharp downturn in Western economies that year, raised the issue of whether governments had been sufficiently shocked to make policy changes that would better position their countries for unexpected global crises in the future.

That crisis highlighted the flaws in African economies, notably the lack of export diversity in almost all of them. With the world facing the worrying scenario of a double-dip recession on the back of serious problems in several Eurozone economies and slow recovery in the US economy, African economies are again under scrutiny.

A 2011 World Bank report on the impact of depressed Western markets on African economies said that for every additional 1% of fiscal consolidation in the Eurozone and a 2.5 percentage point reduction in investment because of increased investor nervousness, global GDP would shrink by 0.6% and sub-Saharan Africa's GDP would fall by 0.1%.

Many analysts have posited a change in Africa's fortunes as a result of the new interest shown by the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) in African opportunities. While this provides a hedge against risk, the fact is that 37% of Africa's non-oil exports still go to European markets, while the US remains a major recipient of African oil production.



AP PHOTO/THANASSIS STAVRAKIS

**IT ALL STARTED HERE.** Greeks protesting against austerity measures in front of their parliament in Athens.

This means that any problems in those markets will have a major impact on Africa, primarily by reducing the demand for goods and services from the continent.

export earnings are from Europe. The 14 Francophone countries also have considerable exposure to Europe, notably France. According to the African Development

**Tourism has taken a hit with the contraction of demand from European markets, which remain the key source of visitors to Africa's tourist hot spots in East and Southern African countries and the island states**

## **REGIONS CLOSER TO EUROPE WILL SUFFER**

North African countries, most of which are either in the midst of political upheaval or recovering from it, have even stronger links to the Eurozone – about 60% of the region's

Bank (ADB), the CFA franc region sends about 37% of its exports to Europe.

The CFA franc has lost 17% of its value since 2008. The currency peg to the euro means that Francophone countries must have the bulk of their foreign reserves in

euros, leaving their import cover position badly exposed if the euro performs poorly. However, the ADB says the region may also reap the benefits of a weakened euro, which will make its exports more competitive in Western markets, particularly dollar-based exports such as oil, cocoa and coffee.

The ADB also reckons the Eurozone crisis, while in some cases not affecting countries as a whole, has potential sectoral implications, for example horticulture from Kenya and wine and cars from South Africa, a country which has also experienced significant currency volatility as a result of its strong exposure to Western markets.

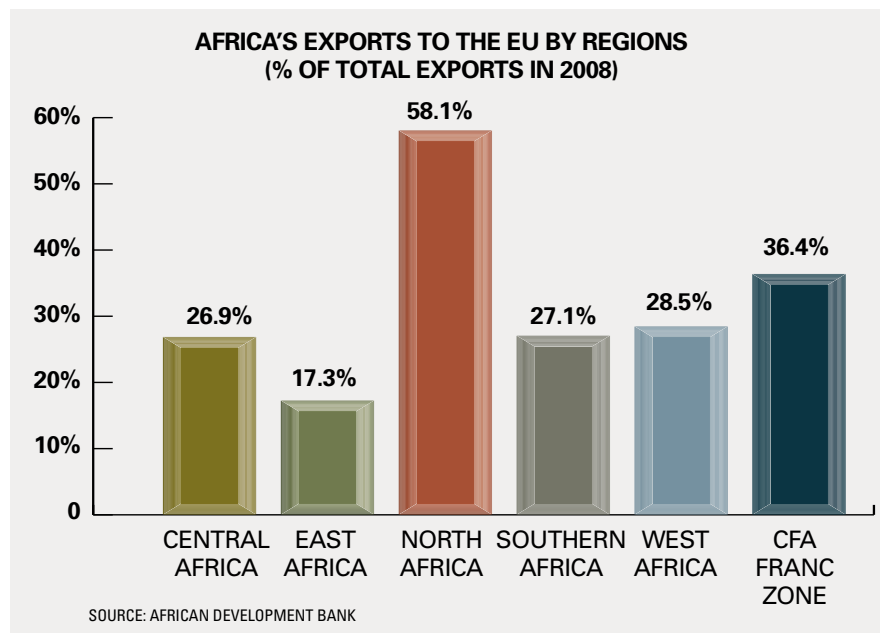
Many African countries have limited exposure to trade risk from Europe, including Zambia, Burkina Faso, Angola, Chad, Sudan, Djibouti, Guinea Bissau and Sudan, although a number of these are commodity-based economies that may be affected by any slowdown in other regions, notably China, which is already coming down from its heady double-digit growth figures.

### CAPITAL NOT DIVERTED

Although gold prices have risen sharply because the metal tends to be perceived as a safe haven in times of trouble, benefitting African gold producers, analysts have voiced caution about investing in gold, saying it may be vulnerable to a sharp sell-off if the global environment improves.

The view that capital flows to Africa may increase, given the relatively high price-earnings ratios compared to those in Western economies at present, has also not borne fruit, with investors remaining averse to risk. Market turnover on the Uganda exchange fell by 60% during the third quarter of 2008, the Nairobi bourse share index fell by 31%, and the Johannesburg Stock Exchange declined by 42% between May and October of that year. There has been some recovery, but not to pre-2008 highs. However, interest in African opportunities among private equity funds remains high, and the number of funds specifically targeted at the continent is mushrooming, bolstered by new interest from Asia and the Middle East.

Meanwhile, debt has become more expensive as available money in developed countries becomes harder to find and interest rates increase. This has a knock-on ef-



fect on the cost of infrastructure and other developments in Africa.

### TOURISM SUFFERS

Tourism has taken a hit with the contraction of demand from European markets, which remain the key source of visitors to Africa's tourist hot spots in East and Southern African countries and the island states. Although Asian markets are being tapped for new growth, they are still a long way from outstripping years of marketing in Europe and the US.

**Africa is still in a vulnerable position because of the failure of its countries and regions to build strong and sustainable economies and political systems**

Remittances, on which many African countries have become dependent as an external revenue stream, have dropped sharply since 2008. On the upside, however, the loss of opportunities in developed countries has resulted in skilled Africans bringing their skills home. This has correlated with an increase in good private sector jobs as African multinationals expand and foreign investors set up operations.

Although Africa, as a region, seems to have recovered more quickly from the 2008 downturn than other parts of the world,

there are many challenges to be tackled if growth is to be sustainable and qualitative. Not only do policymakers have a great deal of work to do, they also need to be more innovative and realistic than they have been in the past.

The international focus on climate change presents a complex challenge to African governments that have not yet found ways out of persistent energy crises and have not been able to diversify their economies sufficiently through greater industrialisation. Now they have to deal with the new level of complexity that is raised by 'going green'.

Rising food prices present a clear opportunity for Africa, but the constraints hampering the development of agriculture are as much about policy as they are about climate. The exogenous shocks of being part of the global system, however limited this exposure might be for many African states, will always be around.

Even though the continent may not be a catalyst for many of the world's problems, and countries may be experiencing high growth rates, Africa is still in a highly vulnerable position because of the failure of countries and regions to build strong and sustainable economies and political systems. **E**

Raising the level of school enrolment in Africa will have a profound influence on the continent's future. **Keith Gehring, Mohammed Irfan, Patrick McLennan, Jonathan D Moyer, Erin Torkelson** and **Hopolang Selebalo** look at the benefits of increased investment in education.

# What if everyone went to school?



If all African countries increased primary and secondary education enrolment rates to match best performing countries like Togo, Ethiopia and Ghana, then the continent would:

- Effectively meet the goal of universal primary education by 2030;
- Achieve 85% secondary enrolment by 2050; and
- Reduce the number of malnourished children by 3.5 million, the number of people living on less than US\$ 1.25 per day by 60 million, and the chance of state failure by nearly 8% by 2050.

This would require an increase in educational spending from 4% of Africa's GDP to 4.8%.

When comparing historical education rates in Africa with the rest of the world, it is clear that Africa still has a long way to go. UNESCO data from 2010 shows that Africa lags behind other global regions in educational enrolment and completion. Two-thirds of the countries in Africa have

primary completion rates below 80%, and of these, 43% have completion rates below 50%.

However, aggregated figures of this kind mask the very positive educational developments occurring in many African countries. Northern and Southern Africa have very high levels of primary and second-

**The good news is that rapid development is possible and we have examples from the continent to prove it**

dary enrolment. And, more than 20% of African countries have already attained primary completion rates of 95% or more. This begs the question, what can be done to bring all African countries to the same high standards?

The good news is that rapid development is possible and we have examples from the continent to prove it. For example,

from 2002 to 2010, Togo improved its primary completion rates by nearly 13 percentage points.

A recent study by the African Futures Project (AFP) reviewed top performers like Togo to ascertain the most favourable, yet plausible, growth rates for educational enrolment and completion rates. The AFP then applied these growth rates to all 52 countries in Africa. We wanted to see what would happen if all countries in Africa followed the positive examples of: Togo, Ghana, Ethiopia and Cape Verde, which improved primary completion rates by about 1.74% per year; Morocco, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Kenya, which improved lower secondary enrolment rates by about 1.87% per year; and Guinea, Benin and Nigeria, which improved upper secondary enrolments at about 1.15% per year.

From this analysis of historic data the African Futures Project developed two scenarios: a *Base Case*, or business-as-





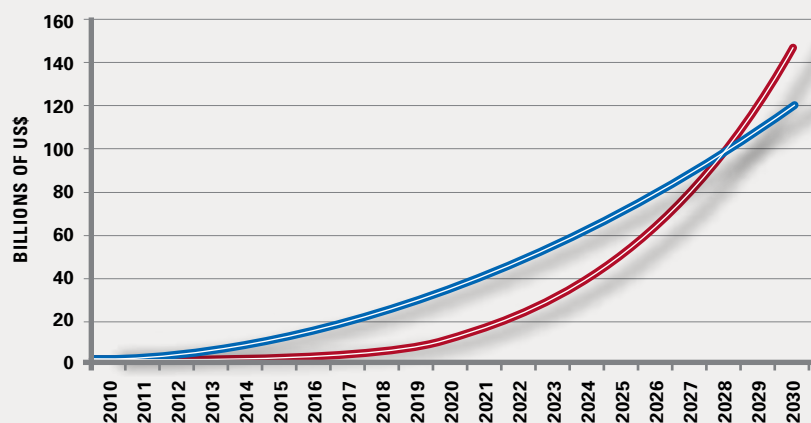
REUTERS/FINBARR O'REILLY (KENYA SOCIETY EDUCATION)

**MORE INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION** will have a profound effect on a range of key economic indicators, predict specialists from the ISS/Pardee Institute Africa Futures Project.

usual scenario, and an *Improved Case*, which is comprised of the favourable growth rates described above. We determined that the improved case could be achieved by increasing the percentage of GDP spent on education in Africa from 4% to 4.8%.

By comparing the *Base Case* to the *Improved Case*, the AFP found:

- By 2050, the accelerated improvements in education, proposed here, require an investment of US\$ 480 billion, but lead to an increase in African GDP of US\$ 2.5 trillion over the base case.
- By 2030, the improved scenario enables all African countries to reach the MDG target of universal primary education (97%), 15 years faster than



The **blue line** is the cumulative investment needed in education above base case spending, and the **red line** is the cumulative increase in the size of the economy as a result of this investment. The graph shows the long time horizon necessary to realise the return on this type of investment. Only by 2028 would GDP begin to surpass the increased investment in education.

the base scenario. Also by 2030, lower secondary enrolment rates increase by over 24 percentage points and upper secondary by 22 percentage points, relative to the base case. And, by 2035,

the improved scenario shows that 97% of African children obtain basic education.

- There are also a number of positive benefits that accrue as a direct result of

increasing education. The improved scenario leads to 3,5 million fewer undernourished children in 2050.

- Similarly, the improved scenario leads to 60 million fewer people living on less than US\$ 1,25 per day by 2050.
- The improved scenario also leads to 28 million fewer years of life lost to poor health, relative to the base case 2050.
- In addition, the probability of state failure decreases, with a 1,3% reduction in 2030 and a 6% reduction by 2050 relative to the base case.

## Some countries shine

**W**hile starting from a very low base, Africa has made tremendous strides toward universal primary education in recent years, with a 76% net enrolment rate in primary education in 2008, up from 58% in 1999.

The rise in student enrolment rates has been attributed to various factors, but common among all well-performing countries has been the innovative use of state funding. A Millenium Development Goals Report illustrates that those countries that allocate at least 50% of their education budgets to primary schooling experience

the most rapid improvements in education. Another critical factor has been movement toward early-childhood education.

In sub-Saharan Africa, fewer than 5% of eligible children have access to formalized early-childhood education, even though such programmes have been shown to substantially increase student performance in primary school.

Additionally, the abolition of school fees has had a significant impact on student enrolment. Of course, the provision of a free education is not sufficient on its own, as there are additional costs involved in school attendance, including textbooks, supplies, uniforms and transportation.

Ghana was one of the first countries in Africa to eliminate both tuition costs and the additional, informal costs of attendance through the provision of 'capitation grants.' The implementation of this policy has resulted in more student enrolments. Over two academic years, enrolment in public schools in Ghana surged from 4,2 million to 5,4 million students. However, while these interventions increase the number of children enrolling at basic education levels, they do not directly address educational quality or even guarantee completion.

At a recent South African parliamen-

tary workshop focused on the MDGs, Trevor Manuel, the Minister of National Planning, noted that while there has been an increase in the number of children attending primary school, the quality of education provided continues to be inadequate, despite the fact that 6% of South Africa's GDP is spent on education.

**The rise in student enrolment rates has been attributed to various factors, but common among all well-performing countries has been the innovative use of state funding**

Of the 1,4 million pupils that started school in 1999, only 600 000 sat for their school-leaving exams in 2010, and while 68% of these students passed, only 15% of these students obtained marks higher than 40%.

South Africa's poor quality education has been attributed to various causes, including a lack of teacher education, an inadequate teacher/pupil ratio, poor access to learning materials, and poor school infrastructure. The example of South Africa points to a need for further investigation regarding the quality of education in Africa.

### THE PERFORMERS:

-  **Burundi, Mali, Swaziland:** increased share of GDP for primary education
-  **Seychelles:** 85% of pre-primary schooling is state-sponsored
-  **Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania:** abolished school fees
-  **Ghana:** abolished both tuition fees and associated costs

# Eyeing Africa's resources

**Pádraig Carmody, *The New Scramble for Africa***

**(Polity, 2010)**

**Reviewed by Timothy Walker**

Pádraig Carmody argues in his new book that a new scramble for African resources is underway.

In 1884, the Berlin Conference (known in German as the 'Congo Conference') was hosted with the aim of regulating European colonisation and trade in Africa. Often described as the 'Scramble for Africa', the conference gave rise to heightened European colonial activity on the continent while eliminating most existing forms of African autonomy and self-governance.

As recently as the beginning of this century, Africa was held by many to have been bypassed and marginalised as a continent. This attitude was exemplified by a cynical and patronising May 2000 cover of *The Economist* magazine that denounced Africa as 'The Hopeless Continent'. But now, and apparently without warning, Africa seems to have once again become a major playing field in the global contest for natural resources and power.

Carmody's research adds to an expanding body of literature that draws parallels between the Scramble for Africa and contemporary African international relations. However, his is a nuanced analysis that recognises the increased complexity of the situation – where once an assembly of states sought to carve the African continent into colonial empires regardless of the concerns of African people, relations are now contingent on the specific areas of activity. Whether these are natural resource extraction, service provision or manufacturing, they each require the involvement of a plethora of states, private companies and parastatals.

From this complicated mix, Carmody produces a clear and well-argued assessment that the continuation of power politics (or realpolitik) is cause for serious

concern among African governments and civil society, as it is likely to negatively affect development.

Carmody commences by examining the interests and strategies of traditional powers, reminding readers that, despite the expansion of Chinese trade, the 'old powers' (as Carmody refers to the US, France, Britain, Japan and South Africa) still possess great economic and political power.

Emerging powers, in particular China, India and Brazil, are the focus of the following chapters, along with an analysis of the interest in West African oil and its political, economic, environmental and social effects and on implications for the region. The high quality of West Africa's oil, as well as its proximity to Europe and the Americas, seems certain to make it into a key geopolitical area on the world stage.

A particularly informative chapter is the study, co-authored with Ian Taylor, of Chinese interests and strategies in Africa. The scholars make important contributions to contemporary thinking about China-Africa relations, seeking to conceptualise relations outside of the more usual dichotomous framing of 'friend or foe' literature that has dominated thus far.

Carmody shows how demand for resources such as coltan (columbite-tantalite, a dull metallic ore found in the eastern areas of Congo that is integral to the manufacture of electronic information products

such as mobile phones) has fuelled local conflict. He also provides important insight into the trade in living/renewable resources, such as fish and timber, as well as biofuels and food.

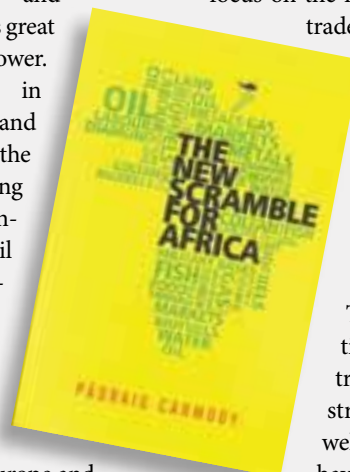
Although historically pleasing, however, the 'Scramble for Africa' framework requires further interrogation, as too much focus on the foreign actors scrambling to trade with African states obfus-

cates the African actors and capital that also form part of the trading and economic networks.

In this sense, in its focus on traditional partners and issues, the analysis remains orthodox. There is great deal of attention given to traditional trading partners, whose strategies and interests are well dealt with, but more could have been given to other emerging powers such as Russia, Turkey and Malaysia.

The tendency to refer to the continent of Africa as a singular actor in global politics also remains prevalent. This is also true for China and India, where the relationship between the state and the actors engaged in trade is evolving.

In conclusion, however, Carmody has produced a detailed analysis that is not weighed down by the empirical evidence he uses to support it, and contains enough conceptual and theoretical work to satisfy academics looking to develop fresh perspectives on African trade, development and international relations. **E**





South African journalist **René Del Carme** visited the war-torn Somali capital Mogadishu together with a group of doctors from the humanitarian organisation Gift of the Givers. The organisation brought medical help to thousands of Somalis fleeing drought and conflict in the city and surrounding areas.



**WAITING** for treatment at the Forlanini hospital.



**A 14-YEAR-OLD** Somali girl recovering in hospital after surgeons removed a bullet from her abdomen.



**A CAMP** with internally displaced people in the heart of Mogadishu.





**THE SCARS OF WAR:** a bullet-ridden shop in Somalia's capital.



**A VIEW** of the Abdi Aziz District, in northern Mogadishu, believed to have been one of the last strongholds of Al Shabaab.





# FINDING TRUTH IN FICTION IN THE CONGO

by Tanya Pampalone

I've been cramming for the Congo – the bigger one of the two.

I've read Philip Gourevitch's *We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With Our Families* and Adam Hochschild's *King Leopold's Ghost*. I am in the middle of Jason K Stearns's *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters* and have Michela Wrong's *In the Footsteps of Mr Kurtz* sitting on my bedside.

But non-fiction is never enough to begin to understand the soul of a place. To get to the layers – especially the seriously complex ones that come with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) – you need something more. Something, perhaps, that only fiction can offer. Of course, I was compelled to read Joseph Conrad's novella *Heart of Darkness*, mentioned in each of the above-named non-fiction books. I've yet to get to VS Naipaul's *A Bend in the River*. Fiction takes us to places non-fiction can't reach. It's why non-fiction writers, after poring over facts, figures, case studies, interviews and oh-so-many news reports, turn to fiction to unravel what's really going on, in the nuances that cut to the chase.

That's how *Viva Riva!* became part of my studies as I prepare to head to Kinshasa ahead of the 28 November elections. Released on the continent in October, the stick-em-up gangster sex-fuelled film – the first feature film to come out of the DRC for 25 years – is set on the streets of Kinshasa. It has already taken Best African Movie at the MTV awards, along with a slew of other kudos.

'Kinshasa the beautiful, Kinshasa the garbage,' the main gangster says as he steps through the streets of the city, which is choked in grit and mired in chaos and, luckily for our hero, Riva, starved for petrol – something he has an abundance of. Riva has relieved his ex-employer, an Angolan crime boss, of two boatloads of petrol, and in return has suitcases of cash coming his way – as long as he can avoid the crime boss's gang that are on his tail and violently determined to get their stash back.

Writer and director Djo Tunda Wa

Munga takes us to Riva's neighbourhood brothels and nightclubs and weaves along the roads of shanty towns and rundown suburbs, pulling us into Kinshasa with a hot beat that makes the city – in its corrupt, broken and totally raw but somehow working hustler state – completely irresistible.

Riva is a reflection of all of that. 'With Riva, I wanted to describe a character who's like how I see the people of Kinshasa,' Wa Munga told the *Mail & Guardian's* Shaun de Waal just before the film came out. 'When there is so much misery, everyone's in survival mode – you're hunted. At this level of desperation you just do what you have to do to survive. We live in troubled times.'

Indeed. That much is clearly embedded in all the literature coming out of the Congo – from the books that have attempted to understand how we got here from there, to the daily news reports from the conflict zone in the East, which is host to the largest UN peacekeeping force in the world, to the massive endemic corruption and the tattered or non-existent infrastructure. These are, indeed, troubled times.

By the time you read this, Congo might have a new president – or, more likely, it will have Joseph Kabila for another five years. Either way, the elections will not go down without violence; that much is certain. And no matter who takes the reins, troubled times will continue well into the future for most Congolese.

'*Taux du jour*,' one Congolese man said to me recently. He fled the conflict-ridden Kivus six months ago, leaving behind his wife and two small children, and made his way to Johannesburg to try and make some money to send home. 'We live for today. If you don't have, you don't have.'

It's why Riva, with his pocketful of cash, his inclination for prostitutes and his magnetic draw toward the gangster life, delivers exactly what Wa Munga wanted – a portrait – albeit the smash-'em-up American-style action kind – of his native city. Without facts and figures, Wa Munga tells us more about Kinshasa the beautiful, Kinshasa the garbage, than we could get from a thousand news bulletins. **E**



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