Development and security in Africa: a challenge for the new millennium

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Introduction

The African continent is facing a security and development crisis of immense proportions. Over 300 million people live on less than $1 a day, average life expectancy is 48 and falling, more than a third of all children are malnourished and over 100 million peoples' lives are adversely affected by conflict (Oxfam 2002). The stubborn connection between poverty and conflict in Africa has encouraged a convergence in the development and security policies of the international community.

Current security and development thinking focusses on the way in which conflicts impinge upon development. This has resulted in a strong emphasis on 'security first' policies designed to reform the security sector in conflict-prone countries. This chapter adopts a contrasting viewpoint, namely that Africa's development crisis determines the continent's security predicament. More significantly, the paper argues that the general failure of neo-liberal economic policies to deliver basic needs and more equitable patterns of development has undermined the human security of growing numbers of people on the African continent. Responses to the erosion of basic human insecurity are varied and complex. In many situations, however, where the inclusion in formal economic activity has been closed off by economic collapse, debt, economic marginalisation or more general social disarticulation, new patterns of primitive accumulation embedded in cultures of violence have arisen that are highly resistant to international attempts at conflict resolution and peacemaking.

In elaborating upon these themes, this paper first examines the causes and consequences of Africa's development crisis. This is followed by an overview of the relationship between poverty, human insecurity and conflict in Africa. The third section looks at the nature and motivation for Africa's 'new wars'. The fourth part provides a critique of the security first policies currently pursued by international donors. The final section assesses the potential of the refocusing of development onto poverty alleviation as a means to tackle conflict.

Africa's development crisis

The indices of Africa's development crises are reflected in the poor rates of economic growth, declining per capita incomes, growing inequalities, high levels of indebtedness and poor human development indicators. According to the UNDP's *Human Development Report 2001*, sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) is the only region in the developing world where human development is in decline. Forty-six percent of the population live on less than a dollar a day. Thirty-three out of a total of forty three SSA economies shrank during the 1990s and in sixteen countries per capita incomes were lower in real terms in 1999 than in 1975. Life expectancy is deteriorating, largely as a result of the HIV / AIDS pandemic (UNDP 2001, p. 5-6).

To break out of the vicious cycle of underdevelopment and insecurity and establish a virtuous circle of development and security, an objective understanding of what has gone wrong in Africa's development process is required. The incompetence, corruption and misplaced policies of African leaders are well documented but for far too long there has been a collective amnesia within the donor community about its own role in Africa's demise. From colonialism through to the Cold War and on to the present, external powers have shaped the fate of African states and wrought havoc on the daily lives of ordinary African people.

The bi-polar rivalry of the Cold War era served to militarise many societal tensions in Africa in its early post independence phase. Unprecedented levels of military aid and weapons transfers were allocated to authoritarian regimes. Such transfers helped to fuel highly destructive wars by proxy and have left a legacy of militarism, debt, environmental damage, instability and small arms proliferation across the continent. The withdrawal of super-power support for military regimes in Africa following the end of the Cold War has not, however, meant an improvement in the standard of life for most Africans. Free market policies and the strict conditionalities of structural adjustment programmes have been imposed by multilateral and bilateral donors with little concern or conscience about their impact on the poor and vulnerable in African societies. Strict adherence to neo-liberal ideology has blinkered the institutions of global economic governance, either to the failure of their policies, or to their social and political consequences (Thomas 2000; Willett 2001). The following section briefly examines some of the details of Africa's economic decline.

Historical decline

During the nineteenth century, European colonialists captured Africa's best arable lands and mineral resources, exported the output and repatriated the profits. Little, if any, of the gains from these lucrative exploits were invested in the countries of origin. The subsequent structuring of Africa economies around the export of primary commodities created a dependency on the colonial powers for imported manufactured goods, and set the basis for the 'unequal exchange' in trading relations that has come to represent Africa's comparative disadvantage in an era of high tech globalisation.

During the 1960s and 1970s, while commodity prices remained high, reliance on primary commodity production appeared to reinforce orthodox development theories that Africa's comparative advantage lay with agricultural production. For most of this period, modest growth rates were achieved, allowing newly independent African governments to make some headway in socio-economic development. Schools were built, primary health care facilities were established and human development indicators showed signs of progress, albeit of a modest nature compared to other developing regions.

In the 1980s, however, SSA economies deteriorated rapidly as commodity prices, set in Northern markets, began to collapse. Primary commodity prices declined by between one-third and two-thirds relative to other tradable commodities over the last three decades (World Bank 2000, p. 22). A World Bank study has estimated that between 1970 and 1997 the cumulative terms of trade losses for non-oil exporting SSA countries amounted to 119 percent of the regional GDP in 1997, and 52 and 58 percent of the cumulative net resources flows and net resource transfers to the region respectively. Restricted access to Northern markets and protective measures imposed by OECD governments also contributed to Africa's deteriorating terms of trade and subsequent economic decline.

With declining domestic incomes, African governments were unable to generate the domestic savings and investment needed to diversify away from dependence on primary commodities. In the absence of internally generated resources for development, African economies had to rely on foreign sources of finance. During the 1970s and 1980s, overseas development assistance (ODA) was an important external source of finance for development, but doubts about its effectiveness and concerns that it was being siphoned off by corrupt leaders led the US and EU to dramatically reduce aid contributions to Africa in the post-Cold War era.

The decision to reduce ODA was primarily influenced by a paradigm shift in development thinking. The 'triumphalism' that accompanied the end of the Cold War reinforced the international financial institutions' adherence to neo-liberal policies – the Washington Consensus – and led to the outright rejection of earlier development models in which the state was encouraged to play a central role. Neo-liberal policies, in promoting the minimalist state, rejected the idea of using ODA for state-led development in favour of advancing the role of foreign direct investment (FDI) for private sector development. While ODA to SSA declined dramatically during the 1990s, FDI has failed to replace it. Moreover, those inflows of FDI that have occurred have largely gone to a handful of oil and mineral rich countries. Without adequate financial flow from the rich countries to Africa, there were very few development gains in the 1990s.

Poor decisions and economic mismanagement by African leaders exacerbated Africa's growing economic crisis. In contrast to the East Asian model of development – with its focus on fiscal and monetary discipline, promotion of entrepreneurship, investment in export orientated industries and in human capital – most African governments pursued policies of national self-reliance with a strong emphasis on protectionism and state control. State bureaucracies burgeoned, associated more with patronage than efficient economic management or effective social administration. Bloated and costly bureaucracies contributed to debilitating budgetary deficits and compounded the burgeoning debt problem.

Structural adjustment

The protracted deterioration in terms of trade experienced by the majority of African countries led to high levels of indebtedness. The international community responded to the mounting debt crisis by promoting stabilisation and structural adjustment programmes supported by concessional loans from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. The IMF's structural adjustment programmes are based on orthodox macro-economic strategies and focus on trade liberalisation, the opening up of domestic markets to foreign investment and competition, the privatisation of state assets and the deregulation of markets. In addition, new forms of political conditionality were introduced in the 1990s to encourage democratisation, good governance and greater transparency and accountability.

For some time, structural adjustment programmes have drawn criticism for their high social and environmental costs. In the most debt-burdened parts of Africa the impact of structural adjustment programmes have been particularly punishing for the poorest of the populations. They have exacerbated poverty both directly, as servicing obligations divert resources from social spending, and indirectly, as their deflationary effects have constrained economies' ability to grow. The results are painfully apparent across the highly-indebted nations in the form of persistent poverty, endemic disease, malnutrition, rising

infant mortality, and illiteracy. Some 38 SSA countries have been subjected to IMF structural adjustment programmes, but the overall economic performance of these countries remains remarkably poor. After two decades, the IMF can claim only two countries, Uganda and Mozambique, which have achieved notable rates of economic growth during the 1990s. This is a poor performance record by any standard of measurement.

UNCTAD notes that 'while structural adjustment programmes have been applied more intensely and frequently in Africa than in any other developing region, barely any African country has exited from such programmes with success, establishing conditions for rapid, sustained economic growth. This is true not only for those countries which are said to have slipped in the implementation and stabilisation and adjustment programmes (the so-called non-adjusters or bad adjusters), but also most of the core-and good-adjusters' (UNCTAD 2001, p.5). The short term stabilisation policies designed to reduce inflation, restore currency convertibility and renew debt service all involve deep expenditure cuts as well as a sharp tightening of fiscal, credit and monetary policies. These measures have the effect of eroding public institutions and weakening the states' capacity to provide social safety nets, fund health and education programmes and even to secure law and order.

Structural adjustment has also widened income inequalities, thereby undermining economic security and aggravating societal tensions (Adekanye 1995). Large and abrupt shifts in income and wealth distribution brought about by IMF-orchestrated adjustments have distributed the costs of adjustment onto the poor and the benefits onto the rich. Some NGOs such as Jubilee Plus strongly argue that all too often the cost of adjustment for the poor has been so great as to threaten their right to life. The effects of structural adjustment go much deeper than the erosion of basic human rights, however. As Richard Falk (1997) has argued, IMF policies have rolled back the role of the state in ways which have reduced its capacity to control and protect its citizens. The failure of governments to provide social welfare, health, education and security has, in no small measure contributed to the loss of legitimacy of the state in Africa. And Jeffrey Sachs has noted that 'when states malfunction in the sense that they fail to provide basic public goods for their populations, their societies are likely to experience steeply escalating problems that spill over to the rest of the world. Failed states are seedbeds of violence, terrorism, international criminality, mass migration and refugee movements, drug trafficking and disease' (Sachs 2001, p.187)

The debt crisis

After almost two decades of IMF structural adjustment programmes, indebtedness in most SSA countries remains at unsustainable levels. In 2000, SSA's total external debt stood at $206 billion. Although there has been some reduction in total debt in the last four years as a result of debt write-off, twenty-three countries in Africa still have a debt burden greater than their GNP. The mounting debt crisis within Africa is one of the major factors inhibiting sustainable human development. High levels of debt servicing have meant cuts in health, education and welfare expenditures. Moreover, in their efforts to service debt, governments have plundered natural resources with consequences which will affect the environmental and economic security of present and future generations.

The unsustainability of Africa's debt situation had reached such unmanageable proportions by the mid-1990s that the IMF and World Bank took ameliorative action in the form of the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) initiative. Ostensibly, the HIPC initiative is designed to provide sufficient debt relief to impoverished economies to allow them to return to a path of sustainable development. Of the total number of countries selected for the HIPC initiative, 29 are in Africa, of which 18 are currently undergoing the draconian reforms required under the HIPC initiative to qualify for 'completion point' – when debt relief on the stock of debt is provided. Only two African countries, Uganda and Mozambique, have reached completion point after six years of arduous reforms.

The HIPC initiative has been subject to much criticism due to its excessive conditionality, under-funding, restrictions over eligibility and inadequate levels of debt relief (e.g. United Nations 2000). According to Jubilee Plus (2002), the HIPC initiative's objective 'is not debt sustainability for poor countries, but rather to limit losses for rich countries'. The programme has been an abject failure in providing the relief required to allow countries to return to a path of sustainable development.

Poverty, human insecurity and conflict

The UN Secretary General has observed that 'Poor economic performance or inequitable development have resulted in a near-permanent economic crisis for some states, greatly exacerbating internal tensions and greatly diminishing their capacity to respond to those tensions' (Annan 1998, section 78). An examination of the development statistics of SSA countries engaged in conflict or recently emerged from armed conflict (Table 5) reveals a startling pattern of

Table 5: Social and economic indicators of SSA countries involved in armed conflict, 1997

Country	GNP per capita US$	Life expectancy	FDI US$m	ODA US$m	External debt as % GDP	Debt service as % exports
Angola	270	46	412	436	91	13
Burundi	140	44	0.5	119	120	33
CAR	320	48	4.3	92	90	7
Chad	230	46	37.4	225	65	11
DRC	110	52	-7.4	168	149	12
Eritrea	230	49	na	123	11	Na
Ethiopia	110	47	67.9	637	152	10
Guinea Bissau	230	42	10	126	304	22
Liberia	na	39	291	95	-	Na
Mali	260	46	39.4	455	129	14
Mozambique	140	46	64.4	963	208	25
Niger	200	46	-7.1	341	104	17
Rwanda	210	22	2.6	592	61	17
Sierra Leone	160	34	9.6	103	122	22
Somalia	na	47	0.1	104	na	Na
Sudan	290	51	97.9	187	91	9
Uganda	330	41	175	840	53	24

Source: UNCTAD (2000).

low per capita income, low life expectancy, low levels of FDI, low levels of ODA and high levels of indebtedness.

It is tempting to argue, as many donors do, that the statistics in the table above reveal the effects of conflict on development, but for the majority of these countries economic crises and state collapse *preceded* the outbreak of violence. Economic and state collapse pose a serious threat to basic human security as basic needs – food, shelter and protection – go unmet. It also creates the conditions for conflict and violence to proliferate, as groups compete for access to scarce and diminishing resources.

It is no coincidence therefore that SSA – the poorest region in the world – also has the highest concentration of conflicts. Of the 30 major conflicts recorded around the world in 2000, eleven occurred in Africa, viz. in Angola, Algeria, Burundi, Congo, DRC, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. Although not every country in Africa is at war, virtually every country on the continent is affected by conflict in some way. Some are involved in conflicts outside their own borders such as Nigeria through peacekeeping operations in West Africa (first in Liberia and later in Sierra Leone). Others, such as Guinea and Tanzania, are suffering from the impacts of conflict in neighbouring states. Others, including Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Burundi have been drawn into the conflict in the DRC. Yet another group of states have only recently emerged from conflict and remain vulnerable to the legacies of violence; these include Eritrea, Ethiopia, Niger, Chad, Liberia, Central African Republic and Mozambique. Many conflicts in Africa are of a prolonged nature. The Angolan conflict, which has hopefully come to an end, commenced in 1961. Protracted conflict is exceedingly costly in terms of human lives and resource utilisation, as the estimates in Table 6 indicate.

Africa's 'new wars'

In the early 1990s, war and violence in Africa were variously characterised by liberals as conflicts between 'erratic primitives of shifting allegiances, habituated to violence, with no stake in civil order' (Peters 1994), or alternatively as motivated by 'fanatical, ideologically-based loyalties' (van Creveld 1991). Conflicts are thus depicted as irrational and dysfunctional as they interrupt the benevolent processes of economic development and democratisation promoted by civilised powers in the North. In accordance with this view, conflict resolution takes place when the various parties are persuaded to see reason, to recognise the advantages of peace for all, and when the state is reconstituted and the *status quo ante* is resurrected.

It became increasingly apparent towards the end of the decade, however, that in many cases war was motivated by greed and predation, and as such

Table 6: Fatalities and costs of current SSA armed conflicts

	Year of commencement	Fatalities	Cost US$m 1995 prices
Angola	1961	1,555,000	3,350
Algeria	1992	82,000	7,500
Burundi	1993	208,000	126
Congo	1997	13,000	35
DRC	1996	100,000	735
Rwanda	1990	813,000	466
Senegal	1997	2,000	33
Sierra Leone	1991	43,000	226
Somalia	1991	375,000	280
Sudan	1983	52,000	940
Uganda	1993	4,000	354

Source: IISS 2000

were resistant to mediation and reconciliation. This interpretation is one currently favoured by the World Bank, which has identified 'greed' for diamonds and other lootable commodities as the overriding cause of conflict in the developing world. This argument has been contested by analysts such as Ero (2001), who maintains that grievance is still a major factor contributing to violence in many African countries. However, positing greed and grievance as opposing motivational forces creates a false dichotomy. Keen (1998) has noted that in many prolonged conflicts the motivational forces of armed groups have changed over time. Groups dominated by warlords, such as UNITA in Angola, have moved from a strong ideological agenda during the Cold War – motivated by grievance – to one dominated by economic aims – motivated by greed.

In the late 1990s, a body of work begun to challenge these singular explanations of the causes of conflict, by providing a far more complex understanding of the political economy of the new wars (e.g. Bayart et al (1999), Keen (2000), Duffield (1998), Brown (1996), Kaldor and Vashee (1997), King (1997) and van der Goor et al (1996)). Rather than seeking generalities, they have paid greater attention to the specific economic, political, sociological and cultural dynamics of each given conflict. They also have a greater appreciation of the ways in which these conflicts, often depicted as internal or civil wars, have a high degree of external influence and global linkage. This thinking has challenged many of the traditional assumptions about the nature and causes of war and has enormous significance for the way in which development and security should be approached.

Keen (2000), for instance, has challenged the common assumption that war is a contest about two sides trying to triumph over the other. Rather, he argues, war has become an alternative system of profit, power and protection, in which adversaries often co-operate in their pursuit of profit. Kaldor (1999), in distinguishing between 'new wars' and old, has observed that the current forms of violence have blurred the distinctions between war (usually defined as violence between states or organised political groups for political motives), organised crime (violence undertaken by privately organised groups for private gain) and large scale violations of human rights (violence undertaken by states or politically organised groups against individuals). Bayart et al (1999) refer to the 'logic of violence' in Africa's conflicts, and go on to observe that 'the radical form taken by practices of accumulation at or beyond the confines of the law…suggests that a new form of *la politique du ventre* may be emerging.' This form of accumulation has been facilitated and indeed encouraged by the globalisation of trade, the deregulation of markets and the growth of certain lucrative smuggling trades dependent on demand from the rich countries of the North.

In analysing the nature of Africa's resource wars, Duffield (2000) has observed that they tend to have less to do with the political motivation of taking control of the state than controlling the extraction and trade in natural resources. In these resource wars, the state and state borders have become increasingly meaningless or irrelevant. The state has in effect been replaced by multiple centres of authority dominated by local elites or 'warlords' who do not have a particular interest in capturing the reigns of government, except perhaps as a means to extend their commercial activities.

This type of conflict is typified by the experience in the DRC in which the armies of at least five other African states are involved. Nonetheless, it would be wrong to describe the war in the DRC as an interstate war because for the majority of the military leaders involved the capture of territory is only important because it provides greater access to economic resources such as mines. The capture of the state is more of a liability than a gain. To describe such conflicts as intrastate or civil, as is so commonly done is misleading as the very phrase pre-supposes there is a 'state' over which and inside which, combatants are fighting. Duffield refers to these types of conflict as 'post-modern', a phrase which takes account of 'the emergence of long-term political and economic projects that no longer need to anchor political authority in conventional territorial, bureaucratic or consent based structures'.

For many actors in these new conflicts, war makes rational economic sense not only because it enhances their local status and wealth, but also because it is rooted in the power relations in the global *status quo ante*. War provides ample opportunities for elites to develop links with the global economy via the diamond trade, money laundering, drug and gun smuggling. War economies such as those that have evolved in Angola, Sierra Leone and the DRC are highly integrated into both legitimate and illegitimate global markets, reflecting a symbiotic relationship between current patterns of globalisation and conflict. This is most starkly illustrated in the relationship between global corporations and local military elites. During the Mozambique war, British Petroleum was obliged to pay what was effectively protection money to members of Frelimo, whilst Renamo obtained regular payments from a subsidiary of Lonhro for protecting the Beira oil pipeline (Keen 1998, p.16). Until the recent campaign to control the conflict diamonds trade, De Beers bought up the diamonds traded by UNITA to sell in the global market place. And in the DRC, Laurent Kabila reportedly received £30 million from a consortium of South African and Namibian businesses, as well as the Namibian government, to finance his military campaigns (Phythian and Duval Smith, 1998).

Duffield (2000) maintains that the proliferation of international criminal networks, shadow war economies and cultures of violence in the developing world are rational, calculated responses that maximise comparative advantage in the periphery of a deregulated and liberalised global political economy. Far from being the irrational response of primitives, these 'post-modern' forms of conflict are highly rational responses in a context of economic scarcity and exclusion. As such many conflicts in Africa are best seen as a product and a process of the evolving global order, not an aberration as is often assumed in liberal discourse. Collectively, these observations help to explain the durability of violence and conflict in the Africa and the general resistance they have displayed in the face of the international community's attempts at conflict resolution and international peace brokering.

Security first

All too often, conflict in Africa has interrupted donor-financed development programmes, forcing the donor community to somewhat reluctantly address security issues (OECD 1998, EU 1999, DFID 2000). The subsequent 'mainstreaming of security in development' has produced an agenda which is primarily concerned with re-establishing security in post conflict societies so that development can continue unabated. Under this rubric, 'security first' programmes have evolved that embrace a combination of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration and security sector reform. These policies are essentially concerned with re-establishing the security of the state and with restoring its monopoly of violence, in order to create a stable environment in which development can take place.

Security first programmes face a number of limitations, not least because they draw upon traditional discourse on security and development that are found wanting in a world where familiar boundaries, structures of authority and identity are breaking down. For far too long, the dominant concept of security has been tied to the idea of territorial security and the protection of states' national interests. Attempting to reconstruct the security of the state in Africa is often misplaced, because it assumes there is a state around which security can be re-established, when in fact the state in Africa has literally imploded under the combined effects of economic crisis, neo-liberal programmes of structural adjustment and the loss of legitimacy of political institutions. The basic capacity to administer, even in the most established of regimes, is dwindling. It is further eroded by the migration of the educated and skilled and by privatisation schemes of public institutions, including the organs of national security.

In a large part of SSA, the capacity to execute any form of policy has virtually disappeared. In its place is a shadow state dependent on militias and other paramilitary organisations. Into this vacuum, the international donor community is attempting to reconstruct the security of the state and inculcate a normative security agenda that is derived from Western discourse and practice. On this process, Bayart et al (1999, p. 19-21) comment that

> It is by no means evident that the chancelleries of the donor governments fully understand that the Africa, with which they maintain relations, is often no more than a décor or *trompe-l'oeil* and that whole regions have now become virtually independent, probably for the foreseeable future, of all central control …. Discourse concerning 'good governance', 'civil society' and the virtues of 'the other path' represented by the informal economy, intended by donors as therapeutic remedies, are more surreal than real when considered in relation to what is happening in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Chad, and the Central African Republic, where the only effective law is frequently that of various armed bands whose political and moral codes, informal though they be, are certainly not those of the World Bank.

In his book *The Ends of the Earth. A Journey at the Dawn of the Twenty First Century*, Robert Kaplan provides a first hand account of the erosion of the state in West Africa. He records a state of total chaos and anarchy where the state

has no legitimacy, sovereignty or power. These observations force him to challenge the myopia of the state centric view of the world that dominates the international communities' responses to crises in Africa:

> What if there are really not fifty odd nations in Africa as the maps suggest – but only six, or seven, or eight real nations on the continent? Or, instead of nations several hundred tribal entities? What if territory held by guerrilla armies and urban mafias – territory that is never shown on a map – is more significant than the territory claimed by many recognised states? (Kaplan 1997, p.66).

Kaplan points out that the rules by which policy-making elites have ordered the world these past few hundred years apply less and less in the African context. Like Bayard et al (1999), he regards the current solutions proposed by Northern institutions as seriously misplaced. For Kaplan, solutions to Africa's security and development crises will have to come from within the affected societies themselves.

To some, Kaplan's conclusion may appear extreme. The enormous scale of SSA's humanitarian crises demands an international humanitarian response, but as Africa's security and development crisis has got worse, under international direction, the international community has sought to disengage. There is a growing consensus within Washington and elsewhere for the need for 'African solutions to African problems.' The irony of this demand is that in the absence of inclusive policies that ensure that Africans benefit from globalisation, they are finding innovative solutions to their problems – primitive accumulation through predation – but these solutions are not ones which conform with the liberal vision of the world which the international institutions promulgate.

Set against this context, security first programmes appear to be 'tinkering at the edges' of a profound structural problem that has its origins elsewhere. Identifying Africa's security problems as endogenous is a recipe for failure. A more structural approach to Africa's security crises recognizes that many of Africa's current problems originate within the contradictions and inequities of the global system itself.

A starting point for addressing Africa's security problems must be a shift in the way we think about security. The UNDP's *Human Development Report 1994*, written by the late Mahbub al Haq, argued that

> For too long, the concept of security has been shaped by the potential for conflict between states. For too long, security has been equated with threats to a country's borders. For too long, nations have sought arms to protect their security. For most people today, a feeling of insecurity arises more from the worries about daily life than

> from the dreads of a cataclysmic world event. Job insecurity, income emerging concerns of human security all over the world (UNDP 1994, p.3).

A change in the referent point of security from state to human-centred has implications both for understanding the sources of threat and also for formulating strategies to enhance security in conflict prone regions. For a start, state/society relations need to be viewed in a different way. The capacities required to enhance human security in Africa are quite different to those that focus almost exclusively on the security of the state, the security of a regime or military security. Of necessity, resources need to be apportioned in a different way, with far more allocated as a first priority to meeting basic needs such as health, education and infrastructural investment.

Notions of accountability about security provision also need to change. Emphasis on enhancing civil-military relations and military transparency remain important, particularly where the state and the military continue to monopolise a country's security agenda. But once human security becomes the main referent point, then sustainable development indicators become a more important gauge of a society's progress.

The shift in focus to human security also implies a need to transform global processes, particularly those that impact upon and adversely affect the human security of vulnerable communities. A growing body of work has been critical of the way in which the neo-liberal policies of the dominant global economic institutions have adversely impacted upon the poor and marginalized and how this in turn has contributed to societal tensions and conflict (e.g. Watkins 1997). Other authors have been at pains to point out that the global system has been instrumental in structuring and motivating Africa's new wars. In both cases the implication is that without major changes in the global system of governance, human insecurity will only increase.

The mainstreaming of development for security

World leaders increasingly make reference to the relationship between poverty and conflict. Michael Camdessus, managing director of the IMF, has observed that 'Poverty is the ultimate systematic threat facing humanity. The widening gaps between rich and poor nations are potentially socially explosive. If the poor are left hopeless, poverty will undermine societies through confrontation, violence and civil disorder' (Camdessus, 2000).

The need to simultaneously tackle the interrelated problem of poverty and conflict was highlighted by the events of September 11 2001, which brought home the fact that no country, no matter how powerful or geographically distant, can insulate itself from the crises and instabilities of the developing world. James Wolfenson, President of the World Bank, observed that:

> The horrifying events of September 11 have made this a time of reflection on how to make the world a better and safer place. …We must recognise that while there is social injustice on a global scale – both between states and within them; while the fight against poverty has barely begun in many parts of the world, while the line between progress in development and progress toward peace is not recognised – we may win a battle against terror, but we will not conclude a war that will yield enduring peace (Wolfenson 2002)

The perception that poverty and inequality feed instability and conflict have generated ambitious proposals to shift the patterns of development in favour of the poor. In addressing the United Nations Security Council on this issue, Wolfenson argued that in order 'to prevent violent conflict, we need a comprehensive, equitable, and inclusive approach to development.' Likewise in his Millenium Assembly speech, Kofi Annan (2000, p.45) observed that the best way to prevent conflict and promote security is to encourage healthy and balanced economic development, combined with human rights, minority rights and political arrangements in which all groups are fairly represented. Both these speeches reflect the realisation that development and security are intimately linked, yet it is clear from the experience of externally orchestrated development programmes in Africa that current approaches to development need to fundamentally change if they are to avoid contributing to growing levels of human insecurity. Is there hope for such a change?

At the beginning of the new millennium, the world's leaders met in the UN General Assembly to set out a new global vision for humanity. The delegates to the conference drew up a Millennium Declaration, in which they pledged to 'spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanising conditions of extreme poverty'. A set of development goals, that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), were agreed upon. These include a) the elimination of world poverty by the year 2015; b) universal primary education; c) the promotion of gender equality and female empowerment; d) a reduction in child mortality; e) an improvement in maternal health; and f) the eradication of the dehumanising conditions of extreme poverty.

Since the Millennium Assembly, the MDGs have been adopted by all the major donor agencies as guiding principles for their development strategies. The acceptance of these targets by the OECD, IMF and World Bank and the G7 donor agencies has been presented as a fundamental shift within development thinking – away from the narrow focus upon inputs towards a primary concern with outcomes for the poor of the world. Some would argue that the recent emphasis on poverty alleviation marks a radical departure from past practices and renewed hope or a more stable and secure world. The test, however, will be in the choice of policy mechanisms that the international donor community decides to adopt to achieve its poverty reduction targets.

The IMF has introduced Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) intended to strengthen local ownership and civil society inputs into public expenditure priorities in developing countries. But there are serious problems with PRSPs, not least that they have to take place against a background of traditional macro-economic reforms and tight fiscal and monetary policies, which provide little room for real development gains. One of the benefits of the PRSP for the IMF, however, is that if poverty alleviation targets are not met by 2015, the onus of blame can be conveniently apportioned to the governments and civil society organisations of the poor countries, rather than to the IMF.

Furthermore, poverty reduction cannot be achieved while so many Africa countries have such large debt overhangs. Total debt relief for 23 African under the HIPC initiative amounted to only $34 billion by mid 2001, and 15 countries that received relief on debt servicing still spend more than 10 per cent of government revenue on debt servicing. More than half the countries were spending more on debt servicing than on primary education, and two-thirds were spending more on debt than health services. The abject failure of the HIPC initiative to contribute to sustainable development and aid poverty and the mounting public pressure on the IMF and World Bank to abandon the initiative led them to relinquish the programme in April 2002. In its place they have accepted the Jubilee Framework – an independent system of arbitration for the resolution of the international debt crisis, put forward by the Jubilee Plus campaign. This initiative provides some hope that the highly indebted countries in Africa will finally receive some genuine debt relief. It is too early to judge what the outcome may be, but if substantial debt relief is achieved African governments will be able to regain some sort of sovereignty over their development trajectories. Nevertheless it is widely accepted that even with significant levels of debt relief, African growth rates will be far too low to enable a substantial reduction in poverty levels. A significant injection of ODA will still be needed, combined with an improvement in policies in order to jump start African economies.

Estimating the external financing needed to meet Africa's development targets and reduce poverty is a complex process. Nevertheless, a number of credible attempts have been made. A recent UNCTAD (2000) study suggests that a combination of a doubling of official capital inflows into SSA with policies designed to raise efficiency in investment and encourage domestic savings could stimulate an accelerated growth process. If countries could sustain growth rates of 6 percent per annum over a number of years then the region's resource gap and the dependence on overseas aid could eventually be overcome. Similarly, estimates for external funding to reduce Africa's poverty by half in 2015 have recommended at least a doubling of external aid (e.g. Economic Commission for Africa 1999; Collier and Dollar 2000; Gotschalk 2001).

In 1970, the United Nations and the major donors agreed that 0.7% of their GNP should be spent on ODA. Few countries have ever achieved this target. Currently the ODA provided by the major donors averages at only 0.2 percent of their GNP, while the US only allocates 0.1 percent of its GNP to ODA. On present trends, the MDGs will be missed by a wide margin. Yet if all OECD governments were to increase their ODA to 0.7 percent of GNP, total aid flows would increase from their current level of $50 billion per annum to $114 billion, which would be sufficient to meet the poverty reduction targets. Oxfam (2002) estimates that Africa would require $40 billion of this total, which is equivalent to only six weeks agricultural subsidy payments to farmers and agri-business within the OECD.

In March 2002, a UN conference on Financing for Development was called by Kofi Annan to prod countries into providing the resources needed to meet the ambitious development goals set out at the Millennium Summit. UN estimates for meeting the MDG targets would require the wealthy donor nations to double their aid budget from $50 billion to $100 billion per annum. In a considerable breakthrough, US president George Bush agreed to increase foreign aid by $5 billion over three years, and the EU agreed to boost its aid contributions by $5 billion per annum by 2006. While these increases are to be welcomed, they clearly fall far short of the resources needed to reduce global poverty. Moreover, the US has announced that its new aid packages will be made conditional upon poor nations implementing far-reaching economic and political reforms. Such conditionality reflects a continuation of the Washington Consensus that has widened income disparities and contributed to the present development and security crisis in Africa.

Second, when compared to the huge outlays in US defence spending in its War Against Terrorism the new allocations to ODA are absolutely miniscule. In 2002, Bush asked Congress for a $38 billion increase for a defence budget that is already in excess of $320 billion per annum. This allocation of resources by the most wealthy and powerful country in the world says much about where its priorities lie. The US has clearly chosen the military option to fight the symptoms of the insecurities and instabilities that are spilling-over from the developing world, rather than attempt to deal with the problems at their source. This approach does not augur well for Africa's future.

Many NGOs attending the UN conference at Monterey regarded the outcome as a lost opportunity to develop an alternative vision for both development and security. The New Economics Foundation, reflecting on the failures of the UN Conference for Financing Development, commented that

> In the uncertain political climate of post-September 11, what could and should have been a real opportunity for a new vision of global security – one in which finance and markets are once again subordinated to the people they theoretically serve – has been lost. As with so many attempts before it, the noble goal of bringing finance back into line with the objectives of assuring basic human rights, national development and environmental sustainability is being undermined by the same hollow principles of maintaining open markets, drawing in unrestrained foreign direct investment and ignoring ecological debt. Like children chasing shadows the world's leaders are bent on reckless pursuit of ideologies that lack substance in the real world (New Economics Foundation 2002, p.2)

Despite the rhetorical shift towards poverty reduction and enhanced security, the central policy instruments of the neo-liberal agenda remain unchallenged. In responding to the global security crises in the aftermath of September 11, the international community has called for more liberalisation, deregulation and conditionality, not less. The mounting evidence that these policies have fostered the boom-bust cycles that create grave instability, increase poverty, environmental destruction and human insecurity in underdeveloped countries around the world, appear to have been ignored.

In the absence of a new paradigm for security and development, conflict and insecurity in Africa are likely to proliferate and with it the new forms of accumulation and violence predicated on various forms of predation, whether via criminal networks, warlordism, or banditry. This is, after all, a logical and innovative response to a global order which offers Africa neither security nor development.

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