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**Roundtable on Strengthening Regional Capacity for Conflict Resolution in
West Africa: A Response to NEPAD**

Conference Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Roundtable on Strengthening Regional Capacity for Conflict Resolution in West Africa was jointly organized by the African Security Dialogue and Research, (ASDR), Accra, Ghana; the Liu Centre for the Study of Global Issues, UBC and the Center for Security and Defence Studies at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University.

Following the June 2002 G8 meeting, the conference debated a wide range of security related issues within the context of the Africa Action Plan (AAP) presented in response to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The conference had three key objectives: (a) to deepen the responsiveness of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Parliament and other areas of 'democratic' deficit in the organization's operations; (b) to strengthen the interface between the UN West Africa office and ECOWAS; and (c) to coordinate efforts in strengthening ECOWAS' capacity for early warning and conflict prevention with respect to the sub-region as a whole.

The conference coincided with the unfortunate incidents unfolding in Cote d'Ivoire, suggesting that no country in West Africa (including relatively stable Ghana) is immune to the instability that is slowly engulfing the entire sub-region. The events brought to the fore the limited institutional capacity to respond to these sub-regional peace and security challenges.

Among the key conclusions of the deliberations:

- 1. The NEPAD process is primarily a top-down exercise with minimal input from ordinary Africans, yet it represents a realistic way forward in dealing with the challenges confronting Africa;**
- 2. There is a pressing need for the establishment of a civil society network in ECOWAS on Human Security;**

- 3. There is a need for harmonizing NEPAD activities in West Africa through an active civil society monitoring mechanism that seeks to ensure that the principles and codes of conduct agreed therein are adhered to; and**
- 4. The best long-term conflict prevention mechanism is good governance.**

THE CONFERENCE

The three-day conference took place at the Miklin Hotel, Accra, Ghana. The Executive Director of the host organization, the African Security Dialogue and Research (ASDR) – Professor Eboe Hutchful opened the conference. He welcomed all participants and recognized the various partner institutions – the Liu Center for Global Studies, University of British Columbia; the Center for Security and Defence Studies (CSDS) of the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University; and the University of Ghana, Legon.

Professor Hutchful informed participants that Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) officials – the Executive Secretary and his deputy who were supposed to be at the conference could not make it because of the situation in Cote d’Ivoire.

Professor Hutchful began his opening address by lamenting that the concept of Human Security, in spite of its importance, has not been seriously highlighted within the theme of the conference. He recognized the leading role that former Canadian Foreign Minister, Lloyd Axworthy played in putting Human Security at the world stage and the growing importance of the concept in international relations. Professor Hutchful noted that whilst he profoundly shares Axworthy’s ideals on Human Security, he does not agree with ethical framework on which the whole concept is premised. He called for the infusion of African values into the concept. In Ghana, according to Professor Hutchful, Human Security has not been taken up very seriously because Ghanaians are generally suspicious of new concepts. He suggested re-conceptualizing the title of the conference to include Human Security, thus: “Strengthening Regional Capacity for Conflict Resolution and Human Security in West Africa”.

Professor Hutchful concluded his opening remarks by lamenting the fact that conflict has become a deadly reality in the West African sub-region and there is a sense of complacency in

Ghana which is currently being challenged especially with the events in Cote d'Ivoire which was once hailed as a haven of peace. He therefore called on participants to be critical and forthright as possible during the course of their deliberations.

The Ghanaian Minister of Regional Integration – Dr. Paa Kwesi Nduom, who was the keynote speaker could not make it to the conference and was represented by the Chief Director of his Ministry – Mr. George Cann. In a speech read for the Minister, Mr. Cann noted that the government of Ghana was pleased with the conference and with its thematic issues. The Minister's message touched on a wide-range of issues within the realm of NEPAD, security and ECOWAS:

- 1. Consensus building is the best solution to conflict;**
- 2. NEPAD is a dream if there is no peace in Africa;**
- 3. The pervasive nature of conflicts in West Africa has propelled ECOWAS to act by establishing a Council of Elders, a Parliament and a Court of Justice all geared towards the harmonization of policies and programs with the aim of bringing about peace in the sub-region;**
- 4. It is important to sufficiently resource these institutions to make them permanent entities and shift away from the current ad hoc arrangements of dealing with crises in the sub-region;**
- 5. Also important are building and sustaining the capacity for conflict resolution in the sub-region. This is a daunting task and even more so in a sub-region where root causes are pervasive;**
- 6. It is important to recognize the crisis of economics and environmental degradation which are important for addressing insecurity;**

- 7. It is necessary to re-examine the current regional mechanisms for addressing conflict. Formal institutions alone cannot do the job. Civil Society groups need to be brought in;**
- 8. Good governance is the most important ingredient for preventing conflict;**
- 9. All mechanisms must be geared towards creating a viable and sustainable environment within the sub-region;**
- 10. Peace and security is not the absence of war within borders. Institutions have to move beyond the narrow objective for which they were set up, to include innovative ways of conflict resolution, the Minister concluded.**

The second speaker was the Canadian High Commissioner to Ghana, Jean Pierre Bolduc whose address was on NEPAD and security. This topic is understandable given the important role that Canada has played in the process leading up to the G8 Summit in Kananaskis, Alberta in June 2002.

The High Commissioner noted that the conference was unfortunately both timely and relevant because of the events unfolding in Cote d'Ivoire. Cote d'Ivoire underlies the importance of conflict prevention in the sub-region. Mr. Bolduc noted that regional leaders were meeting in Abidjan at the time, to deal with the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire.

According to him, pessimists will think that because of what was happening in Cote d'Ivoire and the pervasive nature of conflicts in Africa, both NEPAD and the African Union are a charade. But optimists will argue that NEPAD is "doable" and should be supported especially because of its local component and its partnership aspects. He was of the view that many think NEPAD is an economic and a neo-liberal document. He disagrees. This is mainly because the initiative calls for a partnership and the development of the private sector. He noted that FDI

currently surpasses ODA flows into Africa; thanks to NEPAD. He lamented however that FDI and world trade declined from 3% in 1990 to about 1% currently because of conflicts in Africa. This makes Africa the lowest recipient of FDI.

While highlighting the impact of conflict on the environment, women and children, Mr. Bolduc noted that the framers of NEPAD were right to have given considerable attention to peace and security. He urged Africans and international donors to support the building of institutions that are capable of early warning and conflict prevention. He noted that two important issues in conflict prevention are: (a) understanding local issues; and (b) the rule of law. A country must have a law-based system if economic activities are to thrive.

Mr. Bolduc summed up his address by reiterating the Canadian government's determination to support NEPAD and make it a success especially in the area of ODA, which falls within the mandate of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). He noted that a lot of activity on NEPAD was focused in Ghana to sensitize the population and Canada is happy to do its small share in making sure that NEPAD is realized. After the High Commissioner's address, participants entered into a discussion of the core themes of the conference.

DAY ONE: WEST AFRICAN REGIONAL SECURITY, ECOWAS AND STATE SOVEREIGNTY

The first day was devoted to examining two key issues related to the theme of the conference.

These were:

- 1. The security situation in West Africa;**
- 2. The issue of sovereignty and intervention.**

On the security situation in West Africa, three papers were presented. The first was by Rasheed Draman of Carleton University on the findings of the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy (CIFP) project on the Mano River Union and Senegambia (www.carleton.ca/cifp). CIFP is a research initiative at Carleton University under the direction of Professor David Carment, Director of the Center for Security and Defence Studies (CSDS) and a Professor of International Affairs at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs. In general, the CIFP project assesses country risk by means of an overall country “risk index.” The higher the risk index, the greater the assessed risk of conflict development, escalation, or continuation that country faces. The risk index consists of the weighed average of nine composite indicators: History of armed conflict; governance and political instability; militarization; population heterogeneity; demographic stress; economic performance; human development; environmental stress, and international linkages.

Based on these indicators, an assessment of five countries – Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Senegal, and Sierra Leone, paints a very bleak outlook for the region.¹ One important implication of such a bleak assessment for policy makers is that if structural and root causes of conflict in the region are not addressed in a consistent, coordinated and prompt manner, the few stable countries in the region are going to descend into chaos. The current situation in Cote

d'Ivoire and the continuing instability in the Mano River region both attest to this. For example in a related report for all of Sub Sahara African countries, Cote d'Ivoire had six of nine risk factors ranked as very high risk. Sierra Leone and Liberia both received a very high risk overall ranking.

The second paper by Osman Gbla, Fourah Bay College, Freetown, Sierra Leone, examined the security situation in the Mano River Region with specific reference to Sierra Leone. Mr. Gbla noted that Sierra Leone offers an appropriate case study for critical reflections on the security situation in the Mano River Region. After a decade-old brutal war, the country is confronted with the challenges of reintegrating former combatants, reestablishing government authority and combating the flow of small arms.

One of the key arguments of the paper is that the sustainability of peace and stability in post-conflict Sierra Leone hinges greatly on the capacity of the state to reintegrate former fighters, on the availability of a proactive Sierra Leonean security sector and on the security situation in the Mano River region in general. The paper concluded by arguing that a number of issues will be crucial in enhancing the security of post-conflict Sierra Leone and the Mano River region in general. Among them:

- 1. Funding logistics to enhance and speed up the process of reintegrating ex-fighters into civil society;**
- 2. Addressing in a diplomatic and timely manner, the grievance of the army;**
- 3. Strengthening collective security in the Mano River region; and**
- 4. Addressing the issue of transition justice in the region.**

¹ For the West Africa Risk Assessment report as well as an entire Sub-Saharan Africa Risk Assessment and the Great Lakes Risk Assessment, see [www. carleton.ca/cifp](http://www.carleton.ca/cifp).

The third paper by Commander Seth Appiah-Mensah, of the Ghanaian Navy focused on the security situation in Sierra Leone. Commander Appiah-Mensah noted that in the largest operation in the world, the United Nations deployed over 17,000 troops from 31 countries to bring peace to Sierra Leone. This effort was in addition to the hard work by many western countries, the OAU, ECOWAS, NGOs, individual interest groups, former warring factions, civil society, and the government and people of Sierra Leone.

According to Commander Appiah-Mensah, though the war of destruction was over, Sierra Leone watchers admit that a new war has begun – the war against poverty, corruption, widespread social dislocation, reconciliation, re-uniting families and re-integration of ex-combatants. For this presenter, the question was “how long can the *flames of peace* be sustained in this new kind of war”? He concluded by arguing that given that the whole international community represented by the UN and other individual organizations and institutions worked together with Sierra Leone to achieve the “fragile” peace, it is entirely reasonable to expect these same stakeholders to assist the country to move from a **fragile peace to a consolidated peace**.

In his presentation on sovereignty and intervention, Dr. Francis Abiew, Post-Doctoral Fellow, CSDS, Carleton University, highlighted two prominent features of international relations in the 1990s: the growing prevalence of intrastate conflicts and the emphasis on human rights and human security.

Dr Abiew noted that the last decade of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century have brought about notable changes in dealing with new security challenges. By the mid-1990s, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) intimated that the human costs of conflicts and complex emergencies were overwhelming the international community’s ability to respond. There were at least 56 conflicts in progress at the time reflecting movement away from inter-

state disputes to civil conflicts. He noted that while the exact toll in human life and suffering is not known, the consequences of these developments have put several millions of people at serious risk.

The emphasis on individual human rights and human security, along with various declarations and charters, has led to a considerable increase in the number, variety, scope, and prominence of interventions for allegedly humanitarian purposes.

Those who support intervention argue that state sovereignty connotes responsibility and thus states that engage in egregious human rights violations open themselves up for outside intervention; intervention whenever necessary, should be a multilateral or collective undertaking rather than unilateral to prevent the danger of abuse. Human rights violations with transboundary effects constitute a threat to international peace and security and thus can be an appropriate subject matter for intervention. However, on many occasions only the most powerful states in the international system undertake interventions and there is the danger of abuse of the practice of humanitarian intervention. Intervention is a slippery slope – it is easier to “get in than get out”, and sometimes outside involvement exacerbates rather than ameliorates conditions. The UN Security Council’s definition of “international peace and security” is an all purpose parachute that covers virtually any theme.

The key question is whether Africa is ready for a new thinking and new norms regarding issues of sovereignty and legitimacy of interventions to protect human rights, and promote human security. Abiew noted that given current movements in Africa – the African Union (AU), NEPAD, etc. there is some indication that a change of attitudes is underway.

Dr. Abiew summed up by examining the role of extra-regional actors. The most important objective is the need to recognize that there are many tasks that outsiders simply cannot do.

Citing a Cree medicine woman, Ruby Plenty Chiefs, he noted that 'Great evil has been done on earth by people who think they have all the answers.' He cautioned that peacebuilding and reconciliation must be viewed increasingly as internal matters in which the primary role of outside agents should be directed, first and foremost, at not impeding local activities and toward supporting processes and institutions that emerge within societies.

DAY TWO: COTE D'IVOIRE, EARLY WARNING, COLLECTIVE SECURITY AND CIVIL SOCIETY

On the second day of the conference, the key themes that ran through all the papers presented were:

- 1. The crisis in Cote d'Ivoire;**
- 2. Strengthening the capacity of ECOWAS for early warning and collective security; and**
- 3. Including civil society in creating sub-regional security.**

The day begun with a discussion on the developing crisis in Cote d'Ivoire. The first presenter, Conmaney Wesseh, Centre for Democratic Empowerment, Cote d'Ivoire, noted that in examining the situation in Cote d'Ivoire, there is the need for a very frank discussion. He was of the view that what is currently happening in Cote d'Ivoire is a flashpoint of the West African crisis manifesting itself. Sharing his personal experiences about the beginning of the crisis, he said the city of Abidjan was awakened to the deafening sound of bombings on the day the crisis began. Those involved, he said, cannot be Ivorians because they are destroying such a beautiful country.

Mr. Wesseh noted that the crisis revolves around the issues of the military and the politicization of military institutions. In addition, there are related problems of governance, justice, impunity, and the failure of genuine national reconciliation. Coupled with all these is the ongoing proliferation of arms from the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Mr. Wesseh fell short of arguing that it was payback time for Cote d'Ivoire. He recounted how the country played host to the rebel leaders from Liberia at the beginning of the crisis in Liberia. He said the war in Liberia was fought from Cote d'Ivoire and the Ivorian government

showed a lot of sympathy to the Liberian rebels. It was also the only neighboring country that refused to send troops to Liberia during the intervention by ECOMOG.

The solution to the crisis, according to Mr. Wesseh, is internal. He noted that the political elites need to stop denying the fact that what is happening is home grown and accept the fact that the country is going through a government generated crisis. He was of the view that it does not make any sense to ask foreigners to intervene if Ivorian leaders are doing little themselves. He concluded by saying that while he does not support military interference in politics, he also does not support civilian excesses. If there has to be peace, elected officials should govern through constitutional means.

The second presenter, Lazare Ki-Zerbo, of the Center for the Study of Africa Political Geography, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, examined the “Burkina Faso Factor” in the Ivorian crisis. Mr. Ki-Zerbo started by giving a brief history of Cote d’Ivoire, so that, as he put it, participants can make a sense of what is currently happening. He noted in particular the history of Burkinabe citizens in Cote d’Ivoire. According to him, when the cocoa industry was booming, the first president of Cote d’Ivoire, encouraged migrants to come and work on the plantations. This was how many Burkinabes came to Cote d’Ivoire.

Mr. Ki-Zerbo noted that the problem in Cote d’Ivoire started with the arrival of Konan Bedie and his policy of “Ivoirite” – which was basically designed to advance his personal political ambitions and to strip the main opposition leader, Alassane Ouattara and all the descendants of migrant workers, mainly from Burkina Faso, of their Ivorian citizenship. According to Ki-Zerbo there were many early warning signals on the Ivoirian crisis that were ignored. Human Rights Watch, for instance, did some important work on massacres in Cote d’Ivoire after the elections in 2000 but neither ECOWAS nor the international community acted on it.

Ki-Zerbo was of the view that Cote d'Ivoire is cosmopolitan so xenophobic policies can never thrive in that country. What she needs is a liberal law and not the current exclusionist laws. He summed up by arguing that the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire is a crisis for all of francophone Africa.

On a cautionary note, he said that Ghana has the same structures like Cote d'Ivoire so Ghana needs to be watched closely so that what is happening there does not spill over. A recent policy brief by the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and the West Africa Early Warning Network (WARN) supports this observation (www.fewer.org).

The brief, "Crisis in Cote d'Ivoire," stressed the likelihood of a full-fledged civil war in Cote d'Ivoire especially given the proliferation of two new rebellions in the West of the country, the delay in deploying an ECOWAS monitoring force and the government's recruitment-drive for 3,000 soldiers to shore up loyalist forces. According to the brief, two scenarios are possible: the very likely scenario is that of resumption of hostilities between the government and the various rebel groups; and the likely scenario is a peace deal between the government and the main rebel faction – the MPC. One of the key recommendations of this policy brief is the need for a comprehensive resolution of regional conflicts. The brief notes that "[t]he picture of a regional conflict system is becoming clearer and needs to be tackled. There must be a concerted effort to address all the conflicts in the region."²

The second theme of the day was strengthening the capacity of ECOWAS. The two key issues discussed, revolved around early warning systems and the new ECOWAS Parliament and the role it can play in peace and security.

On ECOWAS and early warning, Dr. Gani Yoroms of the Center for Peace Research and Conflict Resolution, National War College, Abuja, Nigeria noted the efforts being made on

streamlining the peace and security initiative within the sub-regional organization. According to him, the ECOWAS mechanism for Collective Security and Peace is made up of the Authority of Heads of State and Government and the Mediation and Security Council. Other supporting Organs of the institution are the Defence and Security Commission, the Council of Elders and ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group – ECOMOG. Chapter 4 of the mechanism focuses on Early Warning, known in the document as the sub regional Peace and Security Observation System. The system consists of two structures. The first is the Observation and Monitoring Centre (OMC) located in the Secretariat. The OMC is responsible for data collection and analyses and the preparation of reports for the use of the Executive Secretariat. The second organ is the Observation and Monitoring Zones located in four areas in the sub-region.

Dr. Yoroms noted that while a lot remains to be done in terms of strengthening the capacity of ECOWAS for managing conflicts, what is important is good governance that is based on human security. It is only through that, that a “reproductive peace” can be created.

The paper on the ECOWAS Parliament by Dr. Kwesi Aning of ASDR touched on the role of the parliament as well as the growing role of ECOWAS itself in peace and security. The central argument of the paper is that in its efforts to promote good governance and democracy – two factors that are becoming more and more fundamental in every discourse on security in West Africa, ECOWAS at the same time reinforces peace and stability in the sub-region. ECOWAS’ capacity in tackling issues of security, good governance and democratization continues to be undermined by the security dilemmas faced by member states. These dilemmas include:

- 1. The growing fragmentation of political authority in countries like Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone;**
- 2. The growing political influence of armed actors;**

² See WARN/WANEP Policy Brief (13 December, 2002), “Crisis in Cote d’Ivoire” at www.wanep.org

3. Fragmented allegiances of the military and security forces;

4. The incapacity of state institutions in general.

With regards the sub-regional parliament, Dr. Aning noted that it is one of the new institutions created since 1991. He observed that even though the parliament was created based on the stipulation of the revised ECOWAS treaty, the latter is silent as to the functioning of the legislative body. The *Protocol Relating to the Establishment of an ECOWAS Parliament* came into force in March 14, 2000 after having been promulgated and approved in August 1994.

The parliament is supposed to be made up of 120 members who are elected for a period of five years. ECOWAS is still working out the voting mechanisms for the entire sub-region. In the meantime, member states nominate their Members of Parliament to the transitional legislature.

According to Dr. Aning, given that most member states of ECOWAS are democracies in transition, there are bound to be difficulties with the efforts of their nascent parliaments to take charge of organs of security mainly because of the discreet nature in which state officials treat security matters. Without doubt, similar difficulties exist at the sub-regional level. To resolve such difficulties, there is the need to have in place different actors to counter-balance the fear and suspicion within the various security organs on the one hand and the new political elites on the other.

The third paper, by Brigadier (Rtd.) Francis Agyemfra of ASDR, examined ways of strengthening collective security structures in the West African sub-region. Brigadier Agyemfra began on a positive note. He was of the view that the past decade has been a period of dramatic changes in West Africa. Democratic transitions have made tremendous progress in Benin, Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger and Nigeria. Most remarkable of all,

there were changes of governments in Senegal and Ghana in 2000 and 2001 respectively, in a democratic transition more peaceful and orderly than most people throughout the world thought possible. Further, in many cases, economic progress is creating conditions conducive to the long-term success of democratization, while multi-party politics has now become the rule rather than the exception across West Africa. He re-echoed the views of earlier presenters by strongly arguing that the best conflict prevention mechanism is good governance. Brigadier Agyemfra noted that unfortunately, rising conflicts in the sub-region threaten to eradicate some of the modest gains that have been made.

He noted that the need exists for the development of the capacity to respond rapidly and effectively to forestall crises in the sub-region and to restore peace and stability in conflict areas. He praised the ECOWAS initiative in Liberia and its success in stemming the devastating civil war. The initiative has gone a long way in raising public consciousness of the efficacy of collective security schemes. Brigadier Agyemfra also recognized the role that ECOWAS played in Sierra Leone. These initiatives, he argued, provide the premise for building effective collective security structures for conflict management and resolution.

According to Brigadier Agyemfra, the desire for sub-regional collective security schemes should be seen as an attempt to blunt neo-colonial tendencies in the management and resolution of African conflicts. Arguably, foreign interventions in conflicts do not serve the best interests of Africans, since the foreign powers tend to promote their own interests rather than those of the countries in which they intervene. Brigadier Agyemfra was quick to recognize however that finding the common ground for collective security is troublesome because of the historical legacies of colonialism, which to a large extent, continue to influence political behavior and actions in the West African sub-region. Colonialism has created cultural, political and linguistic

divides that can frustrate and undermine collective security. Against this background, he called on ECOWAS member states to unite their strength and pull their weight to manage, resolve and minimize conflicts, if the sub-region is to develop.

Brigadier Agyemfra summed up by arguing that with a strong commitment to collective security, ECOWAS member states, pulling together, can make a difference in responding rapidly and effectively to the immense and chronic security challenges facing the sub-region. By so doing, it would not be necessary to look outside West Africa to some former colonial powers to set right those problems, which are the duty of Africans to settle.

On the third theme of the second day – engaging civil society in security, Dr. Ebo Adedeji of the Nigerian Defence Academy/AFRSTRAG, Kaduna, Nigeria noted that in the current climate of uncertainty that pervades the African continent, it is becoming increasingly clear that the provision of security has exceeded the capacity of the state in Africa. As a result of structural adjustment programs and their own economic mismanagement, most African states had, by the late 1980s become incapacitated in the provision of basic essential services to their citizens. And as failed states became increasingly common, and the fragile state increasingly the norm, a security vacuum was created and “filled” by civil society.

According to Dr. Adedeji, given the theme of the conference, the key challenge is to explore ways of involving civil society in the NEPAD framework, particularly its Peace and Security cluster. In order for NEPAD not to reinvent the wheel, and in order for it to be relevant to local concerns, it must be located within, and contribute towards strengthening existing regional security structures. In order to create room for NEPAD within the regional security landscape, there is a need to identify the structures already on the ground, and to identify points of entry where linkages can then be made between NEPAD and these existing structures. In practically

all parts of the continent, there are visible efforts by both governments and civil society organizations to evolve a conflict management system. NEPAD should fit into that.

Dr. Adedeji summed up by arguing that the engagement of civil society in regional security structures should be only an aspect of greater involvement of non-state people-based structures in all aspects of governance in Africa. The fragility of the state in Africa, places responsibilities on civil society, which transcends putting out the flames of war. Civil society participation in sustaining the conditions of peace is crucial.

DAY THREE: UN, ECOWAS, ODA, NEPAD AND HUMAN SECURITY

The final day of the conference was devoted to three issues:

- 1. Strengthening the Interface between the UN West Africa Office and ECOWAS;**
- 2. The Role of Development Assistance in Regional Security;**
- 3. NEPAD and Africa's Millennium;**
- 4. Human Security Network for West Africa.**

The discussion started with the UN West Africa office. According to Mr. Alfred Salia Fawundu, the UN resident representative in Ghana, the office was created to support the efforts of ECOWAS. It emanated from the UN Secretary General's fact-finding mission to find out what the UN can do to support regional and sub-regional mechanisms in the area of peace and security issues. Located in Senegal, the focus of the office is broad but a lot of weight is given to peace and security. The office works the office works mainly with ECOWAS and the UN teams in the various countries.

The resident representative noted that the rationale for establishing the office was based on the urgent need for the UN to link up with national institutions for the purpose of analyzing data on early warning. According to him, the UN has mandated governments to do long term studies and it is only Ghana and Nigeria that have complied with this request.

Mr. Fawundu lamented the fact that there is always the desire to produce reports but most reports usually get buried in offices. While not disputing the importance of conducting vulnerability assessment on natural disasters and conflicts, he noted that there is always a gap between these assessments and the needed action. He put it nicely: "it is not the paper work that is lacking; it is action". Mr. Fawundu summed up by calling for an interface between academics and practitioners at the local, national and sub-regional levels.

The second theme of the third day was the role of development assistance in security. Ms. Rhonda Gossen of the Liu Center for Global Studies, University of British Columbia, noted that there is a vast amount of research available today on the distinct role of development assistance in security. Agreed policy recommendations coming from the OECD-DAC in 1997 and 2001 call for closer cooperation between development assistance, defence, diplomatic/political, trade and humanitarian assistance to ensure lasting conflict prevention and peacebuilding. According to Ms. Gossen, there are practical guidelines for programming in security for development planners at both the bilateral and multilateral levels.

While all these exist, the implementation of programs by development agencies in peace and security has not followed this conceptual work as quickly. One key difficulty is the fact that international principles governing development assistance, place restrictions on ODA eligibility toward the military, therefore development agencies need to draw on non-ODA sources to assist activities in this area and are still defining clearly what they can and cannot fund.

There are encouraging signs though. Based on recent research by the Liu Centre for Global Studies comparing innovative donor approaches in fragile societies, successful case study examples of government-wide coherent approaches in the security area have been found, in particular by the UK, Australia, and the EU. The conclusions from these case studies, according to the presenter, supported the DAC policy recommendations, showing that development was most effective in its impact on security by being part of an integrated approach of military, diplomatic/political, trade and humanitarian assistance.

Ms. Gossen wrapped up by emphasizing the fact that the direction has been defined and the conceptual framework laid out for the role of development cooperation in security. The time is right to move ahead and in a practical, open and frank manner. The Canadian-West Africa

Peace and Security Initiative, (PSI) which was represented at the conference, was an important example of a government not waiting for further policy definition but acting now.

On NEPAD and Africa's Millennium, Professor Kwame Boafo-Arthur, Head, Department of Political Science, University of Ghana began by taking issue with NEPAD, the "latest development paradigm for Africa." He noted that NEPAD was adopted by African leaders at the July 2001 Lusaka Summit. It provides an African initiated and driven framework for interaction with the rest of the world with a long-term vision of eradicating poverty. Like earlier development paradigms, NEPAD is also acclaimed to be an indigenous African initiated development strategy. The presenter raised a number of questions:

- 1. Can NEPAD succeed where earlier African initiated development paradigms failed to bail Africa out of the development quagmire?;**
- 2. Does NEPAD fully address the issues embedded in human security?;**
- 3. In what ways can NEPAD be strengthened to tackle the multiple developmental sclerosis of Africa?**

Professor Boafo-Arthur argued that though the vision of African leaders as embodied in NEPAD and the mechanisms are well intentioned, the ideological underpinnings of the resource mobilization approach and the economic governance initiative do not depart from the well known neo-liberal management of African economies since the 1980s. The neo-liberal approach, as implemented in Africa, has not conferred lasting developmental benefits. Rather, general human security took a downturn.

According to the Professor Boafo-Arthur unless African leaders tamper the neo-liberal approach with a modicum of state control of the processes of development, any form of

development may not assure Africa of the human security urgently needed. He summed up with Albert Einstein:

Not until the creation and maintenance of decent conditions of life for all people are recognized and accepted as a common obligation of all people and all countries – not until then shall we, with a certain degree of justification, be able to speak of humankind as civilized.

The last issue discussed during the conference was the establishment of a Human Security network for West Africa.

A member of the Canada-West Africa Peace and Security Initiative delegation, Geoff Gartshore of the Human Security division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, gave a brief overview of the Human Security Network. He noted that the network originally started with talks between Canada and Norway. Mr. Gartshore also gave an overview of the Canadian approach to Human Security, which places emphasis on freedom from fear and not freedom from want.

While all participants agreed that it is important to establish a Human Security Network for West Africa, what is even more important is streamlining the whole concept of Human Security. Members proposed an action plan for streamlining the concept and for the establishment of the network:

- 1. Human security is vast and needs to be focused;**
- 2. The raising of awareness on human security through seminars and foras;**
- 3. Human security is a living issue and a process rather than a program. It should therefore be based on a hierarchy of regional, state and sub-state actors;**
- 4. The emphasis within the concept on the individual is problematic especially in Africa where the emphasis is on family and community;**

5. There is the need for a matrix of who is doing what in the region on human security. This will be useful particularly for donors.

DISCUSSIONS

During the course of the three-day conference, there were open discussions that followed each session. Most of the discussions were centered on NEPAD and Human Security.

On NEPAD, participants noted that there is a serious gap between what has been proposed and what is on the ground. NEPAD in particular, participants argued, does not provide an analysis of what went wrong in the past and how to avoid recurring problems.

Some participants voiced their concern about the fact that they are uncomfortable with the critics of NEPAD. According to those who hold this view, NEPAD was not imposed on African leaders and it offers something different from other plans. One thing that all participants agreed on was the fact that NEPAD is still an open document so it should be criticized.

On Human Security, participants noted while the concept is not new to Africa, it has been placed on a very high academic pedestal. “Survival, safety and contentment” should be the basis of any discussion on Human Security. Another concern raised by most participants was the need to address human security not only from a perspective of “freedom from fear” but also “freedom from want”.

There were discussions on diverse issues as well. Among them:

- 1. The need, in every discussion on conflicts in Africa, to revisit the colonial history of Africa – boundaries, ethnic impact, economic interests of colonial powers as well as the impact of colonialism on politics in Africa. Where did colonialism leave African chiefs?;**
- 2. The importance of bringing chiefs and local traditional institutions into discussions on conflict management;**

- 3. Peace needs to be sustainable because experience has shown that there has never been complete disarmament in Africa;**
- 4. To what extent is intervention on the part of foreigners driven by their national interest?;**
- 5. Economic plunder of resources in most war zones in West Africa has not been adequately addressed;**
- 6. ECOWAS' over-reliance on donors is dangerous. The organization must try to do most of its work on its own;**
- 7. The need for an international division of labor in managing security where Africans "will supply the blood" and donors "supply the money";**
- 8. The need to bridge the gap between policy and academia;**
- 9. What is happening in Cote d'Ivoire can happen anywhere in West Africa and Ghana in particular needs to strengthen its borders; and**
- 10. All insecurity in the sub-region can be reduced to one variable – good governance; but the key question is "who defines good governance"?**

APPENDIX

CONFERENCE STATEMENT

Accra 2002 is a Conference jointly organized by the African Security Dialogue Research, the Department of Political Science of the University of Ghana, the Liu Centre for the Study of Global Issues at the University of British Columbia and the Centre for Security and Defence Studies (CSDS) of the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs (NPSIA) at Carleton University. The forum, to be held in **Accra, Ghana from 23-25 October 2002**, will bring together researchers and practitioners from these institutions and other organizations, including ECOWAS and the UN West Africa Office. In addition, the Canadian government inter-departmental working group for Canada-ECOWAS partnership for Community Security will participate in the discussions.

A response to NEPAD, the goal of the Conference is to foster dialogue between researchers and practitioners not only as a means of promoting the reflective sharing and renewal of scholarly expertise and knowledge, but also with a view to developing recommendations on how civil society organizations, communities and private individuals can contribute to peace building capacities in West Africa. The opportunities for using such capacities to enhance ECOWAS' capacity building for early warning, conflict prevention and human security would be investigated and developed. Specifically, the central concern of the conference would include:

- 1. Deepening the responsiveness of the ECOWAS parliament in particular and other areas of “democratic deficit” in ECOWAS’ operation;**
- 2. Efforts to strengthen the interface between the UN West Africa Office and ECOWAS; and**

3. Coordinating efforts on strengthening ECOWAS' capacity for early warning and conflict prevention with respect to the Mano River Union in particular and the West Africa sub-region as a whole.

In addition, the forum will provide an opportunity for the Canadian government to dialogue with a number of actors in the region on the link between 'hard security' and 'common security'. It is expected that the recommendations of the forum will help policy makers at ECOWAS in their efforts to prevent further instability in West Africa. It will also be useful to the governments and peoples of Canada, Ghana and Nigeria as they grapple with how to make NEPAD's peace and security objectives a reality.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Roundtable on Strengthening Regional Capacity for Conflict Resolution in West Africa: A Response to NEPAD

| | |
|---|--|
| Dates | 23-25 October 2002 |
| Venue: | Miklin Hotel, East Legon, Accra, Ghana |
| International Participants Arrival Date: | 22 October 2002 |
| Departure Date: | 26 October 2002 |
| Secretariat: | African Security Dialogue and Research |
| Organisers: | African Security Dialogue and Research/Liu Centre for the Study of Global Issues/Centre for Security and Defence Studies, NPSIA, Carleton University |

Day 1 **Wednesday, October 23, 2002**

1st Session

| | | |
|----------|---|--|
| 9.00 am | Introduction & Welcome | Professor Eboe Hutchful, ASDR |
| | Keynote Address | Hon. Dr. Kwesi Nduom, Minister for Regional Cooperation, Ghana |
| | The NEPAD Process & Security | H. E. Pierre Bolduc, Canadian High Commissioner to Ghana |
| 10.00 am | Cocoa Break | |
| 10.15 am | 2nd Session | |
| | Re-balancing ECOWAS: A Human Security Challenge in "New Africa | Amos Anyimadu, University of Ghana |
| | West Africa Risk Assessment: Findings & Implications | Rasheed Draman, CSDS, Carleton Univ. |
| 11.15 am | Discussions | |
| 12.30 pm | Lunch | |
| 2.00 pm | 3rd Session | |
| | Overview of the Security Situation in Sierra Leone with reference to the Mano River Union | Osman Gbla, Fourah Bay College Freetown, Sierra Leone |

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| 2.30 pm | Sovereignty, Intervention & Reconciliation: What Can Outsiders Do? | Dr. Francis Abiew, CSDS, Carleton Univ. |
| | Discussions | |
| 4.00 pm | Cocoa Break | |
| 4.15 pm | 4th Session | |
| | Working Together for Peace in Sierra Leone: Perspectives from a Military Observer | Commander Seth Appiah-Mensah |
| 4.35 pm | Discussions | |
| 5.30 pm | Close | |
| Day 2 | Thursday, 24 October, 2002 | |
| | 5th Session | |
| 9.00 am | Strengthening Collective Security Structures in the West Africa Sub-region | Brigadier Francis Agyemfra |
| 9.30 am | Enhancing ECOWAS Parliament's Oversight Capacities in Security Issues | Dr. Kwesi Aning, ASDR |
| 10.30 am | Coffee Break | |
| | 6th Session | |
| 10.45 am | ECOWAS and the Ivorian Crisis | Conmaney Wesseh, Centre for Democratic Empowerment, Cote d'Ivoire |
| | The Burkinabe Factor | Lazare Ki-Zerbo, AFRIPOG, Burkina Faso |
| 12.30 pm | Lunch | |
| 2.00 pm | Engaging Civil Society in Regional Security Structures | Ebo Adedeji, AFSTRAG |
| 2.30 pm | Strengthening ECOWAS Capacity for Early Warning | Gani Yoroms, Centre for Peace Research and Conflict Resolution, National War College, Abuja |
| 5.00 pm | Close | |

Day 3 Friday, 25th October 2002

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| 9.00 am | Strengthening the Interface between the UN West Africa Office and ECOWAS | Mr. Alfred Salia Fawundu, UN Resident Representative in Ghana |
| 9.30 am | Comment: A Role for Development Assistance in Regional Security? | Ms. Rhonda Gossen, Liu Centre |
| 10.00 am | NEPAD and Africa's Millennium | Professor Kwame Boafo-Arthur Head, Dept. of Political Science, Univ. of Ghana |
| 10.30 am | Cocoa Break | |
| 10.45 am | Establishing a Human Security Network for West Africa | Lead Discussants: General Carl Coleman Colonel Festus Aboagye, Phillipe Le Billion Osman Gbla, Lazare Ki-Zerbo and Adusah Okerchiri |
| 12.30 pm | Lunch | |
| 2.00 pm | Optional Session | Africa Talks Session with Osman Gbla, Conmaney Wesseh, Ebo Adedeji and Gani Yoroms |

PARTICIPANTS

Professor Eboe Hutchful, ASDR

Hon. Dr. Kwesi Nduom, Minister for Regional Cooperation, Ghana

H. E. Pierre Bolduc, Canadian High Commissioner to Ghana

Dr. Amos Anyimadu, University of Ghana

Rasheed Draman, Center for Security and Defence Studies (CSDS), Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University

Osman Gbla, Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone

Dr. Francis Abiew, CSDS, Carleton University

Commander Seth Appiah-Mensah, Ghana Navy

Brigadier (Rtd.) Francis Agyemfra

Dr. Kwesi Aning, ASDR

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Colonel Festus Aboagye

Dr. Phillipe Le Billion, Liu Centre for Global Studies

Hon. Adusah Okerchiri, Chair, Defence and International Relations Committee, Parliament of Ghana

Geoff Gartshore, Human Security Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), Canada/Africa Peace and Security Initiative (PSI)

Mark Berman, Policy Division, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and PSI

Lt.Col. Denis Thompson, Department of National Defence, Canada and PSI

Harriet Roos, Africa Fund, PSI and CIDA

Margaret Novicki, UN Information Centre

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Beatrice Duncan, Advocacy and Protection Officer, UNICEF – Ghana

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K. Bentum-Quantson

Ambassador K. B. Asante

General (Rtd.) Arnold Quainoo, Centre for Conflict Prevention, Accra

Hon. Nana Akufo-Addo, Minister of Justice and Attorney-General, Ghana

Bernice Baiden, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, British Council, Accra

Dr. Emmanuel Akwetey, Director, Institute of Democratic Governance, Accra

Members of the Defence and Interior Committee, Parliament of Ghana

Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Parliament of Ghana

Ambassadors and High Commissioners to Ghana

Mohammed Ayariga, Executive Director, Legal Resources Centre, Accra

Raymond Atuguba, Legal Resources Centre, Accra

The Centre for Security and Defence Studies (CSDS)

The Centre for Security and Defence Studies (CSDS) in The Norman Paterson School of International Affairs (NPSIA) at Carleton University is internationally recognized for its advanced research, conference, workshop and guest lecture programs, graduate and undergraduate education; and public outreach programs on security and defence issues. CSDS programs and activities embrace faculty from several disciplinary and interdisciplinary departments and schools at Carleton University, most notably NPSIA, the Department of Political Science, and Department of History. The CSDS is a member of the Security and Defence Forum (SDF) program of the Department of National Defence. The SDF program is designed to assist and support teaching and research in the fields of international security, conflict and defence at selected Canadian universities