Confidence-Building Measures in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Confidence-building measures (CBMs) emerged in Africa in the 1990s to meet the multiple challenges spawned by the end of global bipolarity. They form part of broader institutional experiments creating continental and subregional organizations for security and development. Anchored in the infrastructure of integration, African CBMs consciously attempt to overcome the flaws in past institutions.

Moreover, the proliferation of CBMs has been spurred by increased internal threats to African states. Universally, CBMs flourish best when they are established among states that are politically and economically viable. Rooted in sturdy state structures, CBMs serve both as building-blocks for the external security of states and as guarantees against threats to internal order. In Africa, where the state faces enormous strains, CBMs are conceived as comprehensive institutional arrangements to contain the implosion of states and check the consequences of such implosion on neighboring states. Beyond their use in current conflicts, CBMs are prescribed as long term instruments to restore stable and predictable relations in subregional contexts.[1]

> *The most distinctive feature of CBMs in African institution-building is the convergence of Track One and Two diplomatic efforts as diverse state and non-state actors coalesce to find solutions to African conflicts.*

CBMs in Africa have proceeded in fits and starts, but there has been progress primarily at subregional levels. Since some subregions have been more successful than others in laying the foundations for durable CBMs, the key is to explain these differences. The most distinctive feature of CBMs in African institution-building is the convergence of Track One and Two diplomatic efforts as diverse state and non-state actors coalesce to find solutions to African conflicts. This convergence reinforces institution-building for security, even though in the long run it creates potential problems of autonomy for Track Two actors.

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[1]For preliminary discussions of CBMs in Africa along these lines see Ahmed S. Danfulani, "Confidence-Building and Regional Security Diplomacy in Africa," *International Social Science Journal* 45 (February 1993): 83–89; and Danfulani, "Inter-African Mutual Strategic Cooperation and the Fate of Security, Stability, and Democracy in the 1990s," *Strategic Analysis* 9 (1993): 821–844; and Stephen J. Stedman and Donald Rothchild, "Peace Operations: From Short-Term to Long-Term Commitment," *International Peacekeeping* 3, no. 2 (Fall 1996): 17–35.

This essay begins with a discussion of debates at the continental level about the extent and nature of CBMs since the early 1990s. It will examine the diverse patterns and practices of Track One diplomatic efforts in their subregional contexts during the 1990s, followed by a discussion of Track Two activities in the continental and subregional contexts. The conclusion draws lessons from contemporary trends to illuminate the possibilities and problems of African CBMs.

Framing an African CBM Process

One of the early institutional attempts to develop a collective African approach to internal and interstate conflict was made at a meeting of non-state actors in Kampala, Uganda in May 1991, sponsored by the African Leadership Forum (ALF) and its leader, former Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo. The Kampala Conference gave conceptual direction to African CBMs, and called for a Conference on Security, Stability, Development, and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA). The ALF, created in 1988 to encourage the search for solutions to African problems, incorporated non-state actors in framing the debate on Africa's future security. Composed of a wide spectrum of leaders from all sectors of African society, the ALF tried to articulate a new vision and a policy blueprint of security based on common African approaches to internal and interstate conflicts. The ALF's strategy reflected the intimate links between Track Two and Track One diplomacy: non-state actors held subregional, continental, and international conferences that tried to diagnose Africa's past failures and made recommendations which the ALF aggressively lobbied African states to adopt through the Organization of African Unity (OAU).[2]

The ALF became the prime mover in the initial phases of the CBM debate solely because continental institutions for security under the OAU had paid little attention to internal conflicts among member states. For almost three decades, the OAU had been relatively successful in creating structures that reduced conflicts at the interstate level, but it was reluctant to address the sources of internal conflicts because of concerns about infringing on the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of member states. In the past, these principles constrained meaningful OAU involvement in conflicts with wide-ranging consequences on subregional security such as the Nigerian civil war, the Eritrean war of self-determination against Ethiopia, and the ethnic pogroms in Burundi.

With the end of the Cold War and the upsurge of internal conflicts, the ALF sought to build an African consensus on how to address the proliferating problems of collapsing state authority and economic decay. The ALF's central plank, articulated in a meeting in

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[2]Adebayo Adedeji and Tariq Husain, *The Leadership Challenge for Improving the Economic and Social Situation in Africa: Discussions of the Inaugural Program of the Africa Leadership Forum* (Ota, Nigeria: African Leadership Forum, 1988).

Mogadishu, Somalia in April 1990, was to highlight the relationships between security, stability, development, and cooperation in Africa's future. According to Obasanjo, "We cannot have security in a situation of abject poverty, of abuse of human rights and injustice; where we do not accord minorities within our borders what is due to them. Stability under authoritarian rule will not be long lasting."[3] The OAU's Secretary General Salim A. Salim echoed this theme at a workshop in Arusha, Tanzania in May 1990:

> Perhaps the most serious threat to Africa comes from the poor relationship between the people and their governments. Many countries are still grappling with the problem of working out a model for such relationship—a *modus operandi* in politics. The tensions which have resulted from an inability of governments to respond in a satisfactory way to the needs of the people to participate democratically in governance has led to a de facto freeze on popular participation in the political process and agitation by the people for such participation. . . . In the process of containing dissent and ensuring self-preservation, certain elements within ruling establishments have committed excesses and violated human rights. A resulting vicious circle of agitation and containment has literally applied breaks to development. In more ways than one, the people's despair has given rise to an almost fatal sense of cynicism with regard to the future of the continent and to pessimism regarding the policies of government. This apathy has killed the initiative of the people and instilled in them a deep sense of self-doubt which poses a significant long-term threat to Africa's security.[4]

While conceding that the OAU had accorded little room to questions of democracy and popular participation, Salim nonetheless spoke to the need for internal stability as a prerequisite for external peace: "How is it possible to talk about the liberating qualities of democracy and its positive impact on developments in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and at the same time deny democracy to Africa?"[5] Furthermore, Salim explicitly called for African CBMs:

> Among the various methods of conflict resolution, management or prevention, it is confidence-building that holds the most promise. Through the building of a system of political accommodation by means of greater transparency in military procurement and deployment, neighboring countries can gradually retreat from confrontational relationships. For example, the exchange of information on military establishments, the initiation of joint-training programs, joint maneuvers, establishing joint research and development projects will promote peace at a much lower cost and will yield more political dividends. Weaving these confidence-building measures into the fabric of African defense doctrines and the perceptions of our defense establishments will create a more stable environment in which activities that open the way for greater peace can be initiated. I have in mind the importance

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[3]"Conflicts in Africa," *West Africa*, 17–23 March 1990: 938.

[4]Salim A. Salim, "Preventive Diplomacy among African States," *Disarmament* 13, no. 3 (1990), 181.

[5]Ibid., 182.

of mutual confidence leading to economic and regional integration with shared security concerns and a minimum reliance on armaments. Regional cooperation as a confidence-building measure can sustain cooperation, friendly relations and peace.[6]

The proposal of the CSSDCA at the ALF Kampala Conference gave concrete expression to the notion of African CBMs. Attended by five heads of state and a wide range of non-state actors, the Kampala conference designed a blueprint that would address Africa's complex problems within the context of unprecedented global change. The Kampala Document, later characterized as Africa's Helsinki, expressed this in its introductory sections:

> The security, stability and development of every African country is inseparably linked with those of other African countries. Consequently, instability in one African country reduces the stability of all other African countries. The erosion of security and stability in Africa is one of the major causes of the continuing crises and one of the principal impediments to the creation of a sound economy and effective intra-and inter-African cooperation. . . . A conference on Security, Stability, Development, and Cooperation in Africa should be launched to provide a comprehensive framework for Africa's security and stability and measures for accelerated continental economic integration for socio-economic transformation.[7]

To stem the tide of Africa's political and economic decline, the Kampala Document articulated two broad themes. The first theme emphasized the importance of deliberate efforts by individual African states to strengthen development and democracy. Thus, the Document called for the creation of internal structures that would enhance good governance, transparent decision-making, independent judiciaries, respect for basic human rights, and free and fair elections. Toward this goal, the Document broadened the conception of national security to embrace

> all aspects of society including economic, political, and social dimensions of individual, family, community, local, and national life. The security of a nation must be construed in terms of the security of the individual citizen to live in peace with access to basic necessities

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[6]Ibid., 186–87.

[7]Africa Leadership Forum, *The Kampala Document: Towards a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa* (Kampala: African Leadership Forum, May 1991), 7–8. For other discussions and critiques of the Kampala Document see Olusegun Obasanjo, "A Balance Sheet of the African Region and the Cold War," in Edmond Keller and Donald Rothchild, eds., *Africa in the New International Order: Rethinking State Sovereignty and Regional Security* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1996), 22–24; Laurie Nathan, "Toward a Conference on Security, Development, and Cooperation in Africa," *Africa Insight* 22, no. 3 (1992): 212–17; and Gilbert M. Khadiagala, "The Military in Africa's Democratic Transitions: The Regional Dimensions," *Africa Today* 42, nos.1–2 (1995): 61–74.

of life, while fully participating in the affairs of his\her own society in freedom and enjoying all fundamental human rights.[8]

Furthermore, it challenged the dominant notion of sovereignty, stating that while "every African state is sovereign, the security, stability, development of every African country is inseparably linked with those of other African countries. Consequently, instability in one African country reduces the stability of all other countries."[9]

The second theme underscored the need to rejuvenate continental and subregional structures of cooperation to meet the old and ongoing challenges to African security. For instance, the Document called for the activation and implementation of existing documents and charters such as the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development, and the Lagos Plan of Action for an African Economic Community. In addition, the Document urged African states to sign non-aggression treaties that would lead to demilitarization and collective reductions in military expenditure, manpower, and armaments.

To promote subregional cooperation, the Kampala Document explicitly called upon states to formulate CBMs that would include exchanges of information on troop movements, the establishment of a continental peacekeeping machinery, collective military training, and joint seminars on subregional security. A related proposal established a council of distinguished personalities and African elder statesmen who would work within the OAU framework to "effect a measure of intervention in national security problems of member states, be they mediation or the deployment of peacekeeping operations."[10]

The framers of the Kampala Document envisaged a subsequent phase of continental deliberations and consultations that would lead to the formal adoption of a convention which would be politically binding. This process was launched at the June 1991 OAU summit in Abuja, Nigeria when OAU chairman Yoweri Museveni submitted the Kampala Document to African leaders. More important, former African presidents created a formal Council of Elders in March 1992 to advocate and disseminate the ALF's initiatives of building peace, security, and democracy across Africa.[11]

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[8]Africa Leadership Forum, *The Kampala Document*, 9.

[9]Ibid., 32.

[10]Ibid., 13.

[11]Salim A. Salim, "Searching for Solutions to Internal Conflicts: The Role of the OAU," in Dent Ocaya-Lakidi, ed., *Africa's Internal Conflicts: The Search for Response, An International Peace Academy Report* (New York: IPA, 1992), 5.

The OAU moved decisively toward the adoption of the Kampala Document when the Secretary General presented "Proposals for an OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention and Resolution" to the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in Dakar, Senegal in June 1992. The Secretary General reiterated that their goal: "The image of a continent in which conflicts seem to be endemic and in which human suffering seems to be callously taken for granted, must be effaced without further delay."[12] Central to the proposed mechanism was to strengthen the OAU's role in the anticipation and containment of intra- and inter-state conflicts and to provide for political and military organs of peacemaking. Although a small group of countries resented this proposal, invoking the dangerous image of a supranational peacemaking body imposing its diktat on national decision-making entities, the ministerial meeting endorsed the mechanism in principle.

The ministerial endorsement in Dakar paved the way for the formal adoption by the Heads of State and Government of the OAU Mechanism of Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution in June 1993, concluding the two-year process that the Kampala Document had initiated. The Cairo mechanism sought to provide institutional contours to the conceptual framework of the Kampala Document in framing African CBMs. In the preamble to the OAU Mechanism—also known as the Cairo Mechanism—African leaders acknowledged that they took this step

> against the background of the history of many prolonged and destructive conflicts on our continent and of our limited success at finding lasting solutions to them, notwithstanding the many efforts we and our predecessors had expended. In so doing, we were also guided by our determination to ensure that Africa through the Organization of Unity plays a central role in bringing about the peace and stability on the continent. We saw in the establishment of such a Mechanism the opportunity to bring to the processes of dealing with conflicts on our continent a new institutional dynamism, enabling speedy action to prevent or manage and ultimately to resolve conflicts when and where they occur.[13]

The key objectives of the Mechanism are the anticipation and prevention of conflicts:

> In circumstances where conflicts have occurred, it will be [the OAU's] responsibility to undertake peace-making and peace-building functions in order to facilitate the resolution of these conflicts. In this respect, civilian and military missions of observations and monitoring of limited scope and duration may be mounted and deployed. In setting these objectives, we are fully convinced that prompt and decisive action in these spheres will, in the first instance, prevent the emergence of conflicts, and where they do inevitably occur, stop them from degenerating into intense or generalized conflicts. Emphasis on anticipatory

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[12]Peter da Costa, "OAU to Create Conflict Mechanism," *Africa Report* 37, no. 3 (September–October 1992): 22.

[13]Organization of African Unity, *Declaration of the Heads of State and Government on the Establishment within the OAU of a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution* (Cairo, Egypt: OAU, 1993), 7.

and preventive measures, and concerted action in peacemaking and peace-building will obviate the need to resort to the complex and resource-demanding peacekeeping operations, which our countries will find difficult to finance.[14]

If conflicts degenerated to the extent of requiring collective international intervention and policing, the Mechanism would seek "the assistance of the United Nations under the general terms of its Charter. In this instance, our respective countries will examine ways and modalities through which they can make practical contribution to such United Nations undertaking and participate effectively in the peacekeeping operations in Africa."[15]

Consistent with the goal of enhancing the secretariat's role in conflict management and resolution, the OAU built the Mechanism around a Central Organ under the leadership of the Secretary General. Unlike in previous OAU arrangements where the Secretary General lacked authority in critical areas, the Mechanism endowed the office with the operational tasks of conflict prevention, peacemaking, and peace building. In addition to the Secretary General, the Central Organ of the Mechanism comprises seventeen member states of the Bureau of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government elected annually and the outgoing and incoming OAU chairmen. The Secretary General was also empowered to consult eminent African personalities with experience in resolving conflicts, and to coordinate the Mechanism's activities with subregional organizations and with neighboring countries. A final provision of the Mechanism is the establishment of a special OAU Peace Fund to provide financial resources on a regular and continuous basis to support the OAU operational activities relating to conflict management and resolution.[16]

The objectives of the Mechanism fell short of most of the security and development components envisaged in the Kampala Document, but its adoption marked a new era in African thinking about security. When African leaders put an organizational structure to concepts developed largely by the continent's civil society, they signaled a renewed determination to assume greater responsibility for dealing with their conflicts. As Secretary General Salim stated:

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[14]Ibid., 8.

[15]Ibid., 9.

[16]Ibid., 9–13. See also Chris Bakwesegha, *The Role of the Organization of African Unity in Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution* (Addis Ababa: The Organization of African Unity, 1994), 5–8; Ian Johnstone and Tandeka Nkiwane, *The Organization of African Unity and Conflict Management in Africa: An International Peace Academy Report* (New York: International Peace Academy, 1993); and International Peace Academy, *The OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution: Report of the Cairo Consultation* (New York: International Peace Academy, 1994).

The Mechanism is a manifestation of Africa's new resolve to take the mantle of leadership by situating itself, through the OAU, at the center of efforts at conflict resolution on the continent. The countries of Africa are now prepared to get out of the limiting traditional political considerations, such as those of sovereignty and misplaced notions of non-interference, and to embrace each other in a partnership to bring peace and stability on the continent.[17]

Since its existence, the Mechanism's operational arm, the Central Organ, has devoted considerable efforts to secure funding and gradually build a capacity for its objectives. The Secretary General has exploited the wider latitude the Mechanism grants him to act speedily when conflicts o ccur by sending OAU missions to a series of trouble spots, among them Burundi, Rwanda, Liberia, and Somalia. In both Burundi and Rwanda, the OAU, with mixed results, bolstered the mediation efforts of subregional states by deploying military and civilian observers to facilitate confidence-building. To assume more responsibility for Africa's peacekeeping, the June 1995 meeting of the OAU Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia requested member states to voluntarily earmark contingents from their national armies that could be trained and deployed for peacekeeping duties under the United Nations, the OAU, or subregional arrangements. The OAU anticipates that decisions about such peacekeeping forces would facilitate regular consultations and sharing of information among African military leaders. This, in the long run, might widen the opportunities for coordination of policies in peace and security.[18]

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Despite these continental initiatives, the real challenge of constructing concrete CBMs lies on states in various subregions. African subregions became the logical vehicles for experiments with CBMs for three reasons. First, subregions form natural geographical demarcations that provide closer interaction among neighbors. Subregions often are theaters for the incubation of conflicts that require explicit rules to manage them. Second, the distinctiveness of subregions makes verification of CBMs feasible and manageable. Third, in a resource-constrained environment, parceling collective responsibilities at subregional

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[17]Organization of African Unity, *Keynote Address by the Secretary General, Salim Ahmed Salim to the White House Conference on Africa* (New York: OAU Secretariat, Press Release No. 85/94, 26 June 1994), 13. See also the interim analysis of the Mechanism in Douglas Anglin, *Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1993-1994*, The Arusha Working Papers Series on Southern African Security (Dar es Salaam, January 1995).

[18] Salim A. Salim, *Building Peace in Africa: The Commitment of the OAU* (New York: OAU Secretariat, November 1996).

levels decreases the financial burdens on the OAU and outside bodies. The picture of subregional CBMs so far reveals that, at the minimum, CBMs are solidified primarily by economic interaction and shared political values across states. In these geographical contexts, they overcome both the narrowness of bilateralism and the ineffectiveness of continentalism.

Southern African Subregion

Post-apartheid southern Africa demonstrates the close link between CBMs and economic integration. The internal changes in South Africa since the early 1990s stimulated discussions on using the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as the backbone for subregional peace building. Policy makers proceeded in the spirit of the Kampala Document's CSSDCA by suggesting a Conference for Security and Cooperation in Southern Africa (CSCSA) which would be the centerpiece for coordinating security on issues such as subregional disarmament, joint military exercises, and coping with new threats stemming from the proliferation of small arms, cross-border trafficking in drugs, and refugees. SADC's creation of an Interstate Committee for Defense and Security in 1993 and a sector on Politics, Diplomacy, International Relations, Defense and Security in 1994 constituted the beginning of visible steps toward CBMs in the southern African subregion.[19] South Africa, working in concert with Botswana and Zimbabwe, has provided the leadership for SADC's security initiatives which now constitute the most comprehensive CBMs in Africa.

Southern Africa's CBMs have been underwritten by what SADC's Executive Secretary Kaire Mbuende, described as a new "common value system in politics and economics."[20] The August 1992 treaty that established SADC emphasized the need to work out "common economic, political, social values, and systems enhancing democracy and good governance, respect for the rule of law and the guarantee for human rights."[21] A major facet of this era has been regular consultations on a wide range of domestic and subregional security questions conducted within an evolving rubric of economic integration and democracy building. In the formative stages of this process, internal strife in Lesotho helped to define the parameters of

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[19]For initial discussions of the concept of CSCSA see Herman C. Lupogo, "Southern Africa: Confidence-and Security-Building in the Military Area," in United Nations, Department of Political Affairs, *Disarmament: Topical Papers 14: Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in Southern Africa* (New York: United Nations, 1993), 112–13; and Bernhard Weimer and Olaf Claus, "A Changing Southern Africa: What Role for Botswana?" in Stephen J. Stedman, ed., *Botswana: The Political Economy of Democratic Development* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993): 185–202; and Laurie Nathan and Joao Honwana, *After the Storm: Common Security and Conflict Resolution in Southern Africa*, The Arusha Papers, A Working Series on Southern African Security (Dar es Salaam, February 1995).

[20]Margaret A. Novicki, "Interview with SADC's Executive Secretary General, Kaire Mbuende," *Africa Report* 39, no. 4 (July–August 1994), 45.

[21]Ibid., 45.

subregional CBMs. The crisis in Lesotho began in January 1994 when the elected government faced a mutiny from a faction of the military allied to the constitutional monarchy. As the conflict escalated, the beleaguered prime minister requested South African military intervention to neutralize the army. Instead of intervening militarily, however, South Africa, Botswana, and Zimbabwe created a task force to mediate the conflict.[22]

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From the outset, the mediators saw the Lesotho crisis as a danger to subregional stability. This perception stemmed from the emerging consensus that virtually all the major threats to the security of African states derived from internal rather than external factors, and that domestic crises in some states would undermine the stability of neighboring states. They thus saw the mediation effort as an opportunity to establish the norm of concerted subregional action to preempt the forcible seizure of power. Zimbabwe's foreign minister, Nathan Shamuyarira, said, the task force was the "beginning of subregional security cooperation to ensure peace and stability. It was an arrangement to defend democratic trends in our region and to ward off the dictatorship and militarism present in other parts of the world."[23]

The conflict escalated in August 1994 when the monarchy deposed the prime minister and replaced his government with a provisional ruling council. To reverse this course, the mediators interspersed diplomatic measures with subtle military and economic pressures, including threats of an economic blockade on a landlocked Lesotho. A 1993 SADC Program of Action had contemplated the development of rules for the mutual use of force in resolving internal conflicts:

> There is a sense in which military force is an acceptable form of foreign policy. The region would have to agree on conditions under which this is acceptable. The region would also need to consider conditions under which military intervention in a fellow Member State might be acceptable. Humanitarian considerations, peacekeeping and the restoration of constitutional order would be grounds.[24]

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[22]"Lesotho: Call for Peace Conference," *Africa Research Bulletin* (1–30 June 1994): 11480.

[23]Ibid., 11480.

[24]*Southern Africa: A Framework and Strategy for Building the Community* (Harare: SADC, 1993), 26. See also Nathan and Honwana, *After the Storm*, 9.

In opting for more forceful action in Lesotho, Zimbabwe's president, Robert Mugabe warned that the subregion would not settle for anything less than the reinstatement of the prime minister: "What we want is for the people of Lesotho to find a solution to this problem of unconstitutionality. If they are not able to find that solution, then we will find it for them and that might mean imposing sanctions. . . ."[25] Facing growing internal pressure and possible crippling sanctions by powerful neighbors, the monarchy restored constitutional order in September 1994.[26]

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In the Lesotho conflict, South Africa and its neighbors made judicious use of carrots and sticks for the benefit of conflict resolution. But even more important for subregional norm building was South Africa's moral leadership furnished by its own formula of national reconciliation and democratization. As a major contribution to subregional stability and preventive diplomacy, South Africa's successful internal transformation has forced its neighbors into behavioral patterns that seemed alien a few years ago. As pressures for political reforms and democratization have gained momentum throughout the subregion, various groups and countries have looked up to the South African model. It is also testimony to the new norms of security collaboration that the subregion has elevated a host of domestic events such as national strikes, army mutinies, and the detention of opposition leaders to the status of threats to regional peace and stability. For instance, at the fifth summit of SADC in Blantyre, Malawi, in September 1997, South African president Nelson Mandela admonished some member states for stifling democracy and thus undermining the credibility of the economic grouping: "We collectively, cannot remain silent when political or civil movements are harassed and suppressed through harsh state action. Can we continue to give comfort to member states whose actions go so diametrically against the values and principles we hold so dear and for which we struggled so long and so hard?"[27]

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[25]Quoted in "Lesotho–Mugabe," *South African Press Association*, 13 September 1994.

[26]Philip 'Neko, "Lesotho-Politics: Cold-Shouldered by the Region," *InterPress Service Feature* 29 August 1994. Quoted in *Africa Research Bulletin* (1–30 June 1994): 11463, 11480; and "Lesotho: Frontline Warns of Military Action," *Southscan*, 10 June 1994.

[27]"Mandela Denounces Political Exclusion," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 8 September 1997. Similarly, when sections of Zambia's military attempted a coup against the elected government in November 1997, SADC's Inter-State Defense and Security Committee condemned this action and "reaffirmed its resolve never to tolerate similar illegal

The broad consensus about common security and defense arrangements in southern Africa was enshrined in the Organ on Politics, Defense, and Security which was drafted by the Inter-State Defense and Security Commission and formally ratified by SADC's twelve members in June 1996 in Gaborone, Botswana. Its objectives are:

- to protect the people and safeguard the development of the subregion against instability arising from the breakdown of law and order, interstate conflict, and external aggression;
- to promote political cooperation between member states and the evolution of common political value systems and institutions;
- to develop a common foreign policy in areas of mutual concern and interest, and to lobby as a subregion, on issues of common interest at international fora;
- to cooperate fully in subregional security and defense through conflict prevention, management and resolution;
- to mediate inter-state and intra-state disputes and conflicts;
- to use preventive diplomacy to preempt conflict in the subregion, both within and between states, through an early warning system;
- to promote and enhance the development of democratic institutions and practices within member states, and to encourage the observance of universal human rights;
- to develop a collective security capacity and conclude a Mutual Defense Pact for responding to external threats, and a subregional peacekeeping capacity within national armies that could be called upon within the subregion, or elsewhere on the continent;
- to develop close cooperation between the police and security services of the subregion, with a view to addressing cross border crime, as well as promoting a community-based approach on matters of security; and,
- to address extra-regional conflicts which impact on peace and security in Southern Africa.[28]

Institutionally, the Organ operates at the summit level, with the chairmanships rotating among the heads of state on an annual basis. The Inter-State Defense and Security Committee, backed by ministerial and technical committees, retains a central role in overseeing the functions of the Organ. To accord it a level of autonomy, the Organ functions independently of other SADC structures.

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actions within the region." See Mildred Mulenga, "SADC Commends Congo for Instituting Democracy," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 14 November 1997.

[28]"Inter-African: SADC Issues Communique on New Security Organ," *FBIS-Afr-96-127*, 1 July 1996, 1–4.

In the first year of its operation under Zimbabwe's chairmanship, the Organ has, through regular consultations, sought to identify areas of security cooperation. For instance, a meeting of SADC Inter-State Defense and Security Committee in February 1997 drafted a common strategy on the management of natural disasters and relief operations. Central to this strategy was an agreement on Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to cover all aspects of disaster management, including prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery, and disaster related development. The need for these mechanisms came out of the realization that the subregion lacks comprehensive rescue procedures, safety precautions, and quick response mechanisms. The meeting coincided with the collaboration of Zimbabwean and South African air forces in assisting with the evacuation of flood victims in Zimbabwe and Mozambique.[29]

More significant were SADC's joint peacekeeping military exercises in Zimbabwe in April 1997, which contribute to the OAU's continental initiatives to enhance African peacekeeping capacity. Eight SADC countries, with the exception of Angola, Mauritius and Zambia, sent a total of 1,000 troops to participate in these exercises, the first of their kind in Africa. Their main objective was to "enhance regional liaison, cooperation, military skills and inter-operability by means of a multinational joint field training exercise in the tactics and techniques of international peacekeeping."[30] The Zimbabwean supervisor of the exercises, Major General Mike Nyambuya, saw the launching of the operation as a response to the post-Cold War reluctance of outsiders to get involved in Africa: "It is part of a drive to find African solutions to African problems."[31]

Coinciding with these military exercises was a training workshop of seventy commanders from the SADC states at the Zimbabwe Staff College in Harare. The commanders were trained in United Nations peacekeeping doctrines, procedures, negotiation skills, planning logistics, and strategies. The workshop was designed to equip them with control procedures for multinational operations, learning from Zimbabwe's vast experience in peacekeeping operations in Somalia and Angola.[32] These peacekeeping exercises were also important in light of heightened debates about the capacity of African militaries to intervene in local conflicts. Some observers have suggested that SADC's military framework might be

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[29]"Southern Africa—Defense: SADC Defense Forces Discuss Relief Operations," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 24 February 1997.

[30]"SADC Armed Forces To Conduct Joint Exercises," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 6 March 1997.

[31] Lionel Williams, "African Peacekeeping Force Exercise Launched," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 5 April 1997.

[32]Mildred Mulenga, "SADC Command Battalion Officers Meet," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 7 April 1997; "Southern Africa Military Exercise Continues," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 8 April 1997.

the blueprint for an African crisis reaction force that would be on permanent call to deal with explosive situations.

SADC's recent expansion to include the Seychelles and the Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire) is partly a reflection of its ability to offer tangible economic benefits to its members as well as provide a larger political infrastructure for subregional collaboration on security. During the fifth summit of heads of state in September 1997, issues on the agenda included the development of a SADC gender program, the banning of anti-personnel mines, and the development of common policing practices and training programs. Speaking at a meeting of SADC's Organ on Politics, Defense and Security in August 1997, Zimbabwe's foreign minister, Stan Mudenge, observed:

> The operation of the SADC Organ is part of the process to deepen the bonds of brotherhood and enhance the sense of togetherness in Southern Africa. It has been said by the Europeans that the formation of the European Union has made interstate wars unthinkable in Western Europe because the enmeshment of their economies and other interests make a losing proposition for all. That is what we too must aim at in this region. What unites us has always been more than what appears to divide us.[33]

West African Subregion

Unlike southern Africa where CBMs have evolved on the basis of a discernible pattern of economic subregionalism, institution-building for security in West Africa has been stymied by competing subregional arrangements. In addition, the persistence of the primary sources of post-colonial conflicts—such as border disputes, arms races, subversion by neighbors, and military intervention in politics—has conspired to reduce the momentum for subregion-wide CBMs.[34]

The dominant pattern of CBMs in West Africa remains negotiated bilateral and quadripartite security arrangements targeted toward specific issue-areas rather than the overarching one found in southern Africa. This functional approach to conflict prevention and reduction precludes comprehensive schemes, but it is primarily an outcome of a host of unresolved questions, in particular, contests over leadership and legitimacy across the subregion and in individual states.

West Africa's most comprehensive subregional organization, the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) was formed in 1975 to promote economic integration. Under Nigerian leadership, the sixteen-member ECOWAS also emphasized the

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[33]"Zimbabwe Urges SADC To Strive For Peace," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 15 August 1997.

[34]For a history of these conflicts see Baffour Agyeman-Duah, "Military Coups, Regime Change, and Interstate Conflicts in West Africa," *Armed Forces and Society* 16, no. 4 (Summer 1990): 547–70.

gradual reduction of the gulf between the former French and British colonies. But ECOWAS overlapped and competed with other economic forums, notably the francophone Communuate Economique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (CEAO).

ECOWAS and CEAO experimented with security cooperation in the 1980s by signing separate defense agreements. For example, the ECOWAS Defense Protocol of 1981 proposed a collective system in which member states pledged to give mutual assistance against attacks from a nonmember, and envisaged the creation of a peacekeeping force that would restore order in cases of conflicts between members. Similarly, the CEAO's protocol enjoined member states to reinforce collective defense and alert each other of potential threats to their security.[35]

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These defense agreements were important beginnings in elaborating subregional CBMs. By the early 1990s, however, they had neither insulated West Africa from the disintegrative forces of interstate conflicts, nor had they contained new threats to domestic security. Some of the most serious inter-state conflicts have involved Nigeria and Cameroon over the sovereignty of the energy-rich Bakassi Peninsula; Senegal and Guinea Bissau following the latter's support for separatists in Senegal's Casmance region; the Niger and Mali border conflict; and a three-party conflict along the Malian, Mauritanian, and Senegalese borders.[36]

Although most of these conflicts persist, there have been diverse diplomatic efforts at bilateral and multilateral levels to solve them. For instance, through a series of tripartite meetings, Senegal, Mali, and Mauritania have worked to reduce border tensions. In January 1995, they agreed to establish a mechanism for consultation among border authorities that would involve information-gathering, border administration, and demarcation. The signatories also agreed on a permanent ministerial committee to review collective measures to eliminate insecurity along the common borders, check the upsurge of religious fundamentalism, combat

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[35]Guy Martin, "Francophone Africa in the Context of Franco-American Relations," in John W. Haberson and Donald Rothchild, eds., *Africa in World Politics: Post-Cold War Challenges* (Boulder: Westview, 1995), 177–81.

[36]For reports of these and other conflicts see "Nigeria–Cameroon: Bakassi Dispute Flares," *Africa Research Bulletin* (1–28 February 1996): 12148; "Guinea Bissau: Government Threatens Reprisals Against Senegal," *FBIS-Afr-95-042*, 3 March 1995, 14; "Mali–Niger Military Clash in Tahoua," *FBIS-Afr-93-027*, 11 February 1993, 27–28.

drugs and arms trafficking, and facilitate the movement of goods and services.[37] Likewise, Senegal and Guinea Bissau have tried to strengthen defense and security cooperation, including joint military exercises to ease the conflict over the Casmance region.[38]

Despite the lack of explicitly subregion-wide CBMs, West Africa first initiated security cooperation among African states to deal with the civil war in Liberia. Faced with the disintegration of state authority, ECOWAS invoked the 1981 mutual self-defense protocol in April 1990 and formed a five-member Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) that would seek national reconciliation among the warring Liberian parties. Nigeria's president, Ibrahim Babangida, led the ECOWAS initiative, legitimizing the intervention as a move to preempt the costs of increased refugee flows on Liberia's neighbors. With the United Nations and the OAU hardly paying attention to the Liberian conflict, the ECOWAS initiative inaugurated an important phase in subregional security collaboration.

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For almost three months, the Committee labored without results as the Liberian parties failed to agree on a cease-fire that would lead to elections. In light of this failure and the escalation in the level of violence, ECOWAS established a Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in August 1990 with a broad mandate of peacekeeping and peace enforcement. It was to "conduct military operations for the purpose of monitoring the cease-fire, restoring law and order, and to create the necessary conditions for free and fair elections," and to assist in the "release of all political prisoners and prisoners of war."[39]

Over the course of the conflict, ECOMOG's enhanced mandate of peace enforcement severely tested the structures and spirit of subregional cooperation. With meager resources and no previous history of military cooperation, ECOMOG labored under powerful internal strains. Among these were political disunity between francophone and anglophone states, fueled in part by widespread fears of Nigeria's military dominance in ECOMOG; disagreements

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[37]"Senegal–Mali–Mauritania Meeting Ends in Dakar," *FBIS-Afr-95-015*, 24 January 1995, 1.

[38]"Senegal–Guinea Bissau: Military Cooperation," *Africa Research Bulletin* (1–30 September 1995): 11975.

[39]Funmi Olonisakin, "UN Cooperation with Regional Organizations in Peacekeeping: The Experience of ECOMOG and UNOMIL in Liberia," *International Peacekeeping* 3, no. 3 (Autumn 1996): 33–51; David Wippman, "Enforcing the Peace: ECOWAS and the Liberian Civil War," in Lori Fisler Damrosch, ed., *Enforcing Restraint: Collective Intervention in Internal Conflicts* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1993): 157–204.

about how to synchronize military and political objectives; and funding of the operation. ECOMOG eased some of the military tensions by diversifying its command structure, even though Nigeria provided about seventy percent of the soldiers. To reduce financial problems, ECOMOG established a Special Emergency Fund to which African and international donors would contribute.[40]

After countless cease-fires and power-sharing agreements, ECOMOG supervised Liberia's elections in July 1997. Prior to the elections, ECOMOG forces reestablished order in the capital and countryside by disarming civilians and armed factions and creating a secure environment for humanitarian assistance. The overwhelming triumph of Charles Taylor in the elections widely described as free and fair was a mixed blessing for ECOMOG. On one hand, Taylor had borne the brunt of ECOMOG's military efforts, which sought to prevent his

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faction from taking power by force. Yet, on the other hand, since the entire subregional initiative had culminated in a democratic transfer of power, ECOMOG's strategy was vindicated. In the aftermath of the elections, Taylor has tried to reestablish a working relationship with ECOWAS by allowing ECOMOG to remain in the country for an interim period.[41]

ECOMOG's protracted role in Liberia's civil war continues to evoke wide debate about the efficacy and wisdom of collective subregional security mechanisms. Despite this contested record, there is no doubt that ECOMOG's intervention has established a pattern of norm-building that informs policy discussions about Africa's ability to manage conflicts in its own backyard. Of particular significance is that the ECOMOG intervention has given legitimacy and serves as a benchmark to the possibility of concerted action by neighbors where national

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[40]For a broader discussion of this question see Herbert Howe, "Lessons of Liberia: ECOMOG and Peacekeeping," *International Security* 21, no. 3 (Winter 1996–97): 145–78.

[41]OAU Secretary General Salim, has, for instance, noted that the extreme difficulties that ECOWAS faced in Liberia paid off: "In spite of all we have been complaining about logistics, funding and all the other problems that have constrained African peacekeeping, we have all joined in to celebrate the rebirth of that great country." See *Address by Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary General of the OAU at the Second Meeting of the Chiefs of Defense Staff of Member States of the OAU Central Organ 24–25 October 1997* (Addis Ababa: OAU Secretariat, 1997). For discussions of the Liberian elections and ECOMOG's role see Stephen Ellis, "From Ballot Box to Gangster State?" *Mail and Guardian*, 25 July 1997; "ECOWAS Security," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 25 March 1997; and Terrence Lyons, "The July 1997 Liberian Elections," Brookings Institution Working Paper, (Washington, D.C., September 1997).

actors are unable to reconcile the claims of sovereignty with responsibility. It is in this respect that ECOMOG's peace enforcement experiment might in the long run help build institutions to address conflict prevention and early warning.

There is as yet no clear pattern of how the ECOMOG precedent in Liberia could be transformed into long-term structures that would forestall conflicts. On the positive side, there have been visible steps towards expanding subregional collaboration into other security areas, notably policing and crime control. During a meeting of West African ministers in charge of police and security in Abuja, Nigeria in March 1997, participants proposed a legal scheme for the collective pursuit and prosecution of criminals in the subregion. Nigerian head of state, General Sani Abacha, saw the prospects of increased cross-border collaboration against criminals as a means to strengthen ECOWAS security roles: "We must aspire to achieve security integration that is as unique as our regional economic alliance. Our belief in the efficacy of internal solutions stems from the intrinsic characteristics and shared affinities among the people of the region."[42] The Abuja meeting adopted a wide range of subregional policing measures: criminal investigation; extradition treaties; joint judicial programs for the eradication of illegal circulation of firearms; drug trafficking; trafficking in stolen vehicles; armed robbery; and theft of works of art.[43]

Equally encouraging has been the ebbing of the francophone-anglophone divide with the end of the Cold War and the reduction of French subregional commitments. Starting with its effective disengagement from the common monetary union in January 1994, France has scaled down its political and strategic agreements in West Africa, lessening the need for subregional organizations of exclusively French-speaking countries. The rapprochement between Ghana and the Ivory Coast since the mid-1990s symbolizes attempts to overcome the ideological and linguistic differences that had long frustrated meaningful subregional interactions.[44]

Creative multilateral CBMs in West Africa, however, are complicated by fragile regimes and competing visions about the future. Unlike southern Africa, there is no common agreement on politics, human rights, and subregional security. Nigerian leadership in subregional security has been starkly compromised by the reversals in its transition to democracy and continuing human rights abuses. The return of the military to Nigeria politics

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[42]Nicholas Ibewuike, "Abacha for Collective ECOWAS Security," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 25 March 1997.

[43]Paul Ejime, "West African Police Chiefs Meet in Nigeria," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 25 March 1997.

[44]Howard W. French, "West Africa is Learning to be Neighborly," *New York Times*, 24 August 1997. See also Gilbert Khadiagala, *Europe and Africa: Fading Memories, Fraying Ties?* Lyman L. Lemnitzer Center for NATO and European Community Studies, Occasional Paper No. 5 (Kent, Ohio, 1996), 9–11.

in 1993 had a contagious effect on subsequent military coups in the Gambia, Niger, and Sierra Leone.

The credibility of Nigeria's subregional leadership was dramatized by the May 1997 military coup in Sierra Leone that overthrew a democratically elected government. Coinciding with ECOMOG's more successful role in the Liberian elections, the coup placed Nigeria in a dilemma. Following the coup, the Nigerian military, part of the West African peacekeeping force sent to restore the democratic government, launched a disastrous bombardment of military positions in Sierra Leone and, with ECOWAS, organized a military blockade. Nigeria's attempts to restore democracy in Sierra Leone contrasted sharply with Nigeria's practices at home, for which it is under international sanctions for its own abuse of democracy and human rights.[45]

During subregional negotiations between ECOWAS and Sierra Leone's leaders, the latter emulated Nigeria by postponing the return of civilian rule for at least four more years. Even though an ECOWAS committee recommended the imposition of stiffer sanctions to bolster the air, land, and sea blockade, sanctions have proved only marginally effective. Internal divisions in the subregion over the idea of military intervention in Sierra Leone have further diminished the chances of replicating ECOMOG's Liberian lesson.[46]

Adebayo Adedeji, a leading Nigerian policymaker provides a poignant summary of West Africa's malaise:

> If you take West Africa, Southern Africa, and East Africa, the contrast is unbelievable. We have had two or three military coups recently in West Africa when the world is moving toward more democratic systems. . . . [Of] the sixteen countries in West Africa, about five are governed by military juntas, and three or four have open civil conflicts. How on earth can you talk seriously of regional cooperation in such circumstances. . . . This is all due to a lack of direction on the part of West Africans. I do hope for a time when there will be a West African Congress to determine what has actually gone wrong. Why are the West Africans different from their brethren in East and Southern Africa?[47]

The Great Lakes Subregion

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[45]Claudia McLory, "Nigeria's Interventions Puzzle West Africans," *Mail and Guardian*, 2 July 1997.

[46]"ECOWAS Recommends Stiffer Sanctions Against Sierra Leone," *Mail and Guardian*, 16 August 1997.

[47]Adebayo Adedeji, "Africa Must Prepare for Next Century," *West Africa* (18–24 March 1996): 429. See also "Coups and Democracy," *West Africa* (5–11 February 1996): 168.

As a focus of regional cooperation and problem-solving, the Great Lakes subregion is of recent vintage, constituting the 'merger' of East and Central African states. In the post-colonial period, Kenya and Zaire, respectively, provided the economic leadership in the two subregions, fashioning institutions that built on colonial geopolitical and linguistic ties. Although some economic interaction flourished in the transport corridor linking Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, and Eastern Zaire, there was minimum formal interaction between the two subregions.

In its present conception, the countries of the Great Lakes subregion—Rwanda, Burundi, and Zaire—are linked through the perpetuation of inter-related domestic and cross-border conflicts.[48] Constructing CBMs in this subregion is, therefore, a formidable experiment not just in mitigating ongoing conflicts, but also in reconciling two forms of subregionalism nurtured in different traditions. Realistic security arrangements that might bridge these traditions depend on the emergence of new leadership from these conflicts.

Conflicts between the majority Hutu and minority Tutsi in Burundi and Rwanda are not new, but their virulence in the 1990s helped to redefine inter-state relations in the Great Lakes. At heart, these conflicts have been about power-sharing in the context of constrained resources, and the elite mobilization of ethnic identities and memories of subjugation. The civil war that began in Rwanda with the invasion of the Tutsi-led Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) in October 1990 culminated in the genocide of Tutsis and moderate Hutus in the summer of 1994. This war forced waves of Hutu refugees into Zaire and Tanzania following the RPF's triumph. The enormity of Rwanda's conflict, however, concealed the equally brutal civil war that began in Burundi in October 1993 after the Tutsi army assassinated the elected Hutu president. Subsequently, Burundi descended in the direction of anarchy and misery, with dire consequences for subregional stability.[49]

Diplomatic measures that cut across East and Central Africa attempted to address the twin problems of Rwanda and Burundi. Starting in late 1994, Kenya's Daniel Arap Moi became the prime mover of subregional diplomacy focused on the resettlement of Rwandan refugees. At one of these summits in Nairobi, Kenya, in January 1995, seven subregional states agreed on the following issues: to support the creation of an International Tribunal to try the perpetrators of Rwandese genocide; the separation of suspected perpetrators of genocide from innocent refugees; the establishment of safe corridors from the refugee camps

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[48] That is to say, the political description of the region reflects the upsurge of these domestic conflicts.

[49] For a good background to these conflicts see Judith Matloff, "Crisis in the Heart of Africa: Hutu-Tutsi War in Zaire," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 30 October 1996, 7; Gerard Prunier, "The Great Lakes Crisis," *Current History* 96, no. 610 (May 1997): 193–99; and Samuel Makinda, "Conflict and Reconciliation in Central Africa: A Possible Role for Australia," *Current Issue Brief* (Canberra) no. 18 (1996–97), 1–19.

to the Rwandan border; and the establishment of safe corridors and transit points inside Rwanda. They also appealed to the Rwandese government to hasten national reconciliation by establishing a broad-based government and to set up additional confidence-building measures to encourage the voluntary return of refugees.[50] Moi's initiatives began a diplomatic process, but they were insufficient in bringing all the major parties to the table: the conspicuous absence of Zaire's Mobutu Sese Seko from these summits became a major obstacle to repatriating the Rwandese and Burundian refugees.

The failure of Moi's efforts, and the increased threats of a humanitarian catastrophe, led extra-regional actors to attempt diplomatic initiatives. The international attention which the refugee crisis generated encouraged combined nongovernmental and governmental efforts to find solutions. Humanitarian crises, by definition, lend themselves easily to the convergence of Track One and Two diplomacy. As diverse actors scurry to address not just immediate questions of relief and refugees, they must consider long-run nation-building, economic development, and subregional security. Accordingly, Uganda, Tanzania, and Zaire invited former US president Jimmy Carter in October 1995 to jump-start Moi's stalled diplomacy.

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Carter sought to initiate a dialogue on critical issues as a way of establishing a foundation for peace and stability in the Great Lakes subregion. At two summits—Cairo, Egypt, in November 1995 and Tunis, Tunisia, in March 1996—Carter brought together the presidents of Zaire, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, and Tanzania, former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere, former president of Mali Amadou Toure, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa. The participation of Nyerere, Toure, and Tutu as eminent elders in advisory capacities continued the institutional overlap of Track One and Two activities laid down in the OAU's Cairo mechanism.

At Cairo, the conferees made commitments to take preliminary actions to ameliorate the array of security problems related to refugees in the region. Among the measures they announced were: to remove impediments to the return of Rwandese and Burundian refugees;

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[50]"Summit Calls for 'Safe Corridors,'" *FBIS-Afr-95-005*, 9 January 1995, 2.

to curtail the activities of those in the refugee camps who were intimidating refugees wishing to return to their homes; to prevent military training and delivery of weapons to militia groups among the refugees; to deliver the perpetrators of genocide in Rwanda to the International Tribunal on Rwanda; to expedite the establishment of an early-warning mechanism to prevent destabilization and human rights violations, and to curtail the dissemination of ideologies of ethnic hatred, exclusion, and genocide; to prevent armed groups from using their territories as bases for incursions into neighboring countries; to share information on anticipated incursions or armed attacks against another country; and to mobilize financial resources from the international community so as to bring economic and social development to the subregion.[51]

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The Cairo meeting created the climate for security by fostering a dynamic consultative relationship among the states. However, many provisions were not met, particularly the return of 1.7 million Rwandan refugees and the curbing of a creeping civil war in Burundi. In March 1996, therefore, Carter organized the Tunis summit with the intent to address these problems, and to accelerate the momentum for collaboration. At Tunis, African leaders renewed their commitment to reduce insecurity and mistrust through regular and sustained dialogue among the heads of state. They acknowledged the persistence of insecurity but pledged to take more rigorous joint efforts that would significantly reduce tension, hostility, insecurity, and distrust in the area, encourage the return of refugees, stimulate economic rehabilitation and development, and advance efforts to fashion long-term government structures acceptable to their citizens.

Tunis also allowed the crisis-ridden states to pledge precise methods of resolving their internal problems. For instance, Rwanda reaffirmed its obligation to ensure the safety of refugees and to promote greater professionalism and discipline within its armed forces. It also promised to collaborate with the United Nations High Commission of Refugees (UNHCR), Tanzania, Zaire, and Burundi in preparing for the return of refugees. Burundi pledged to bring to an end the climate of insecurity by launching a national debate on constitutional structures for power-sharing so that no group would be excluded from the political process. Burundi also agreed to collaborate with its neighbors to find methods that would reestablish public

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[51]The Carter Center, *The Cairo Declaration on The Great Lakes Region, November 29, 1995* (Atlanta, 1995).

confidence in its security forces. Mobutu pledged to accelerate the democratic process that Zaire had launched in April 1990.[52]

The Carter initiatives used pressing humanitarian concerns to induce subregional actors to set up institutions for dialogue and conflict reduction. Carter's stature and imprimatur momentarily bridged the subregional political divisions, but the Cairo and Tunis agreements did not resolve the issues of Rwandan refugees and Burundi's political stalemate, nor did it significantly help to overcome regional insecurities. These initiatives failed partly because they predicated institution-building on the consultative relationship among heads of states, a majority of whom could not sit together for long. Furthermore, the central flaw of Carter's intervention was to give the illusion of movement on issues that were not readily amenable to subregional solutions. The larger lessons from these initiatives are that there are severe limits to the role of external actors in the construction of CBMs; supportive external action cannot substitute for local agreements anchored in shared norms and expectations.

The resurgence of the same crises in the Great Lakes subregion following the Tunis meeting was indicative of the shortcomings of the Carter initiatives. While the Tunis agreement empowered Nyerere to mediate the conflict in Burundi, by the summer 1996, the negotiating process had stalled largely because of the intransigence of Burundi's army. Nyerere organized two conferences on Burundi to force the parties to negotiate, with limited success. Burundi's conflict deteriorated when the army under Major Pierre Buyoya overthrew the civilian government in July 1996. Subsequent economic sanctions by Burundi's neighbors against Buyoya's government marked a critical step in the direction of establishing concerted norms of conduct, but the failure of sanctions to restart internal power-sharing negotiations showed their limitations to effecting change. It was this realization that led subregional actors to ease some of the sanctions in April 1997.[53]

Despite the Cairo and Tunis agreements, the stalemate surrounding the return of Rwandan refugees was broken by the forceful military action of Zaire's own Tutsi minority in collaboration with the anti-Mobutu rebels of Laurent Kabila's Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFLC). Zaire's harassment of Tutsis in eastern Zaire, and its unwillingness to disarm extremist Rwandan refugees, sparked the organized

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[52]The Carter Center, *The Great Lakes Heads of State Declaration in Tunis, March 18, 1996* (Atlanta, 1996).

[53]Hugh Nevill, "Burundi: Summit Lifts Many Sanctions Against Burundi,"*Agence France Press*, 16 April 1997.

insurrection against the Mobutu government in October 1996.[54] In the early phases of the tension along Zaire's border with Rwanda, Moi stepped in again, launching diplomatic endeavors to nudge the protagonists toward negotiations. After Moi's failure, South Africa, the OAU, the United Nations, and Western powers all tried to intervene to halt the fighting.

All these attempts have prescribed a negotiated solution that would entail a cease-fire, withdrawal of all outside forces, respect for the territorial integrity of Zaire, democratic elections, and the convening of an international conference to address subregional issues.[55] These diplomatic initiatives, however, did not reduce military pressures on the Mobutu government. The rebel alliance's capture of Kinshasa, the capital city, in May 1997 concluded the seven-month conflict. However, many humanitarian and security problems in the Great Lakes subregion have not yet been resolved by Kabila's accession to power in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Although the new government spoke of democracy, development, and accountability in its military campaign, widespread reports of atrocities against Rwandese refugees, and the regime's attitude toward domestic opponents have, to a large extent, cast doubts on its credibility. In light of the deteriorating relations between Kabila and the United Nations over the investigation of war atrocities, there are questions about the government's long-term commitment to human rights and democratic elections.[56]

The dominant theme in the post-Mobutu Great Lakes subregion is the possible realignment of subregional relations along more predictable lines. The alliance of countries that defeated Mobutu opens the way to closer economic and political cooperation among leaders who seem to share a similar vision about the future. The geopolitical texture of the Great Lakes has been remarkably altered with the alliance of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda. In addition, Congo's membership in SADC might serve as the Great Lake's bridge to Southern Africa.[57]

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[54]"Zaire: Kabila's Long March," *Africa Confidential* 38, no. 7 (28 March 1997): 2–4; and Gitau Warigi, "Bye, and Thanks for Nothing: Mobutu's Exit Looks Certain, and Zaire Can Only Do Better in His Absence," *Daily Nation* (Nairobi), 23 March 1997.

[55]For an overview of the diplomatic efforts see Alison Campbell, "Missing the Point in Zaire," *Mail and Guardian*, 23 April 1997; and The Carter Center, *Consultation on the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa with Ambassador Mohammed Sahnoun, 6–7 March 1997, New York* (Atlanta, 1997).

[56]Howard W. French, "Congo Standoff With the U.N. Imperils Its Aid," *New York Times*, 15 September 1997.

[57]For a possible alliance among Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zaire see "Neighboring States Backing Zaire Rebels, Rwandan Minister Admits," *Agence France Press*, 9 April 1997. Rwanda's defense minister Paul Kagame admitted for the first time that Zaire's neighbors are providing support for Eastern Zairian rebels, hailing the rebel's advance as "a good thing for the whole region."

The Horn of Africa Subregion

Long torn by interstate and secessionist conflicts involving the core actors, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia—the Horn of Africa—moved decisively toward subregional cooperation with the formation of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) in 1986. With a membership comprising Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda, IGADD was formed to handle a host of environmental challenges that are a constant feature of the subregion. As periodic meetings of IGADD became opportune moments for deliberating political issues, this body also embraced conflict resolution.[58]

IGADD's main contribution to conflict resolution was the establishment in 1993 of a collective framework to mediate the civil war in Sudan between the central government and various southern factions agitating for self-determination and autonomy. With the civil war causing famine and misery in the south and rising international isolation for the Islamic government in Khartoum, IGADD prevailed on the warring parties for a mediated settlement. This intervention was an experiment in the multilateral mediation of domestic conflicts that sought to facilitate communication and check the escalating war and its spill-over effects, particularly refugees and arms.[59]

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The vehicle for mediation was a four-nation committee composed of Moi, Eritrean president Afeworki, Ethiopian president Zenawi, and Uganda's Museveni. From the outset, the committee empowered Moi, the chairman, to take the initiative of consulting all parties, mediating the sessions, and reporting to committee members.[60] Despite IGADD's elaborate structures, its mediation was bedeviled by a combination of factors, most notably the military imbalance between the parties, the unwillingness of the central government to negotiate in earnest, and the fratricidal conflicts

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[58]Reidulf K. Molvaer, "Environmental Cooperation in the Horn of Africa: UNEP Perspective," *Bulletin of Peace Proposals* 21, no. 2 (1990): 140–42. For a history of the conflicts in the Horn see Terrence Lyons, "The Horn of Africa Regional Politics: A Hobbesian World," in W. Howard Wriggins, ed., *Dynamics of Regional Politics: Four Systems on the Indian Ocean Rim* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 158–64.

[59]Francis M. Deng, "Mediating the Sudanese Conflict: A Challenge for the IGADD," *CSIS Africa Notes*, no. 169 (February 1995): 1–7; "Regional Politics: IGADD Summit," *FBIS-Afr-93-181*, 21 September 1993, 1.

[60]"East Africa: Leaders Set Up Mediation Committee on Sudan," *Inter Press Service*, 7 September 1993.

among the southern parties. In July 1994 the IGADD committee adopted an agenda that upheld the separation of state and religion, multiparty democracy, respect for fundamental human rights, and advocated an interim confederation prior to a referendum by the south on self-determination. The Sudanese government, committed to Islam and territorial integrity, scuttled this agenda, blaming IGADD mediators for partiality toward the dominant southern groups. By the end of 1995, the mediating mechanisms had stagnated and its credibility was questioned. The repeated cease-fires, collapsed initiatives, and mutual recriminations gave IGADD little to show in the way of effective results. From January 1996, the Sudanese government further spurned IGADD and exploited political differences in the south by engaging some of the splinter groups in internal negotiations.[61]

The failure of IGADD in Sudan was also mirrored at the subregional level by the proliferation of rivalries that impeded collective action. Intra-IGADD conflicts had always lurked in the background, but many, particularly the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, were inseparable from the Sudanese conflict. Accusations that Sudan's Islamic government has intended to spread fundamentalism in the subregion have multiplied since IGADD's negotiations stalemated.

Interstate border skirmishes between Sudan on one hand and Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, and Uganda on the other, are as common as mutual accusations of subversion and armed destabilization. As a sign of the deterioration of relations, Eritrea and Uganda broke diplomatic relations with Sudan in 1996 amid charges of support for rebel movements. Since 1995, Sudan has been perceived as the main obstacle to subregional stability, leading some states to mobilize international pressure to ostracize the Khartoum government.[62]

Discord within IGADD did not preclude its members from embarking on an ambitious plan to integrate the fields of development and security. At a March 1996 summit in Nairobi, IGADD heads of state amended its charter to extend its mandate formally into conflict prevention and resolution. Renamed the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the new organization was tasked with issues such as economic cooperation, infrastructure integration, and political, humanitarian, and security cooperation. Apart from expanding the authority's mandate, the amendments changed the structure of the secretariat,

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[61]Yahya Hassan, "Khartoum Signs Peace Pact with Six Rebel Factions," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 22 April 1997.

[62]See, for instance, "Sudan: The Countdown Begins," *Africa Confidential* 38, no. 3 (31 January 1997): 1–3; and "Sudan: The Frontline Grows Stronger," *Africa Confidential* 38, no. 8 (11 April 1997): 1–3.

the composition of the council of ministers, and adopted a more streamlined voting procedure.[63]

Since IGAD embarked on conflict resolution and security roles, armed conflicts in the Horn of Africa have not abated. In fact, the escalation of the Sudanese civil war, in addition to the continued inter-state hostility involving Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Uganda, have all but paralyzed an institution that held the potential to be the organizational tool for CBMs in the Horn of Africa. When IGAD-sponsored talks on Sudan collapsed in Kenya in August 1997, the Khartoum government sidestepped IGAD, inviting South African President Mandela to mediate not just the internal conflict, but also the related subregional conflicts with Uganda and Eritrea.[64]

The subregion continues to experience systemic instabilities not because of the lack of institutions, but rather, due to conflicts that frustrate the working of these institutions. Participants at a recent forum on economic integration in the Horn of Africa acknowledged correctly that the political will necessary to endow existing institutions with power and purpose for their effective operation was sorely lacking. Furthermore, they noted that IGAD's goal of becoming a viable economic grouping would remain unmet if questions of peace and stability in general, and in Sudan in particular, were not addressed as a priority.[65]

Track Two Diplomacy

Although the convergence of Tracks One and Two dominates African CBMs, there are two explanations for the increasing influence of nongovernmental groups. First, the marked weakening of the state in Africa has provided greater leeway for civil groups with abiding interests in peace and security to assert their influence. Thus true instances of Track Two diplomacy—sustained diplomatic efforts of and between individuals and groups outside formal governmental circles—are becoming more common across Africa. Second, the growing power of indigenous and external nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) reflects the receding role of states in the policy process, itself an outcome of conflicts that have rendered formal authority structures less meaningful to internal constituencies. More importantly, the

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[63]Hugh Nevill, "IGADD to Become Major Regional Body," *Agence France Presse*, 21 March 1996 and Moyiga Nduru, "East Africa-Politics: Anti-Drought Body Struggles to Keep Afloat," *Inter Press Service*, 28 February 1996.

[64]Richard Cornwell, "Sudan: Huge, Bewildering, and Scarred," *Mail and Guardian*, 12 September 1997; Moyiga Nduru, "Why Sudan's Rebels Snubbed Mandela," *InterPress Service*, 25 August 1997.

[65]Ghion Hagos, "IGAD Determined to Transform itself into Viable Economic Body," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 10 September 1997.

close collaboration between external and indigenous NGOs has nurtured Track Two activities by setting norms for conflict reduction through training and funding.

> *. . . the growing power of indigenous and external nongovernmental organizations reflects the receding role of states in the policy process, itself an outcome of conflicts that have rendered formal authority structures less meaningful to internal constituencies.*

In generating pressure for change at the continental level, Obasanjo's African Leadership Forum has inspired the development of subregional groups in similar supportive roles. Clearly prescribing the participation of eminent African personalities in conflict resolution, the OAU's conflict mechanism opened the door for nascent private diplomacy. External actors have also been critical in legitimizing the deployment of local notables in conflict resolution, as shown by former President Carter's co-sponsorship of the Great Lakes Initiatives with former African heads of state. These efforts subsequently gave rise to Nyerere's mediation in Burundi, and the Burundi Policy Forum, an informal organization of African and Western figures seeking solutions to the conflict.

In the Horn of Africa, the InterAfrica Group (IAG), made up of eminent subregional personalities was created in 1989 to advance humanitarian principles and development. Since it was founded, IAG has assisted policymakers in improving the provision of humanitarian assistance in crisis situations, served as a forum for debate on peace and development challenges, and encouraged cooperation between subregional governments and international parties. In addition to coordinating efforts to mediate clan warfare in Somalia, IAG has also worked with IGAD mediators since 1993 to reactivate the Sudanese peace process by framing negotiating positions and sensitizing international opinion to all aspects of the conflict.[66]

The Carter Center's role in Liberia's conflict demonstrates the importance of international leadership in NGO and private diplomacy. Through the International Negotiation Network (INN), a group of conflict resolution experts, Carter conducted private and public consultations to instill energy in the Liberian peace process. One project created a consortium of American- and Liberian-based NGOs that engaged a wide spectrum of political, religious, and civic groups in finding new methods for reducing tensions during the civil war. One of these NGOs, the Liberian Initiative for Peace and Conflict Resolution (LIPCORE) was at the

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[66]For a summary of these roles and, Sudan in particular, see InterAfrica Group, *IGADD Mediation of the Sudanese Conflict: Report by InterAfrica Group Resource Persons* (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: InterAfrica Group, July 1994).

forefront of reestablishing social trust in local communities and promoting post-conflict confidence-building.[67]

Global NGOs concerned with humanitarian relief, such as InterAction and the Institute of Multi-Track Diplomacy (IMTD), have worked closely with local African groups in conflict zones to establish CBMs at the grassroots level. Drawing on the resources of traditional organizations such as the International Red Cross and the UNHCR, these organizations have tried to help communities avoid ethnic and regional conflicts by creating dialogue and building cooperation. One strategy encourages local participation that would, in turn, shame feuding elites in conflict-torn societies. Where the primary functions discharged by governments have devolved onto international relief agencies—such as in Burundi, Liberia, southern Sudan, and Somalia—NGOs provide essential services and build institutions for conflict avoidance and mediation.

Functional groups forging alliances at the national and continental levels across issue-areas have been an important segment of Track Two diplomacy. For example, African women have led a campaign to articulate alternative visions about conflict reduction and peace building, and to participate as corporate actors in society. A meeting of women in Kigali in March 1997 organized by Rwandese women's groups focused on the crises facing Africa and identified ways to resolve them. Noting that African women ought to be at the forefront of developing new theories of peace, the conference decried the institutional barriers to women's participation in the search for peace.[68] In response to pleas for more participation, UN secretary general Kofi Annan pledged in a message on International Women's Day to involve more women in international peace and security questions. The Secretary General observed that in Africa, women are "absent from the peace table, despite evidence suggesting they bring a particular and positive perspective to preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping." Consequently, he encouraged states to "nominate women candidates to serve as representatives or special envoys in preventive diplomacy and peacemaking."[69]

To enhance the role of women in conflict resolution, Africa's first ladies held a conference on peace and humanitarian issues in Abuja in May 1997. In a fifteen-point declaration, the first ladies agreed to constitute a team of mediators to respond to crises and emergencies that threaten peace and stability in Africa. They resolved to assist in ongoing

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[67]Jim Fisher-Thompson, "Conflict Resolution Means Breaking Old Habits, Experts Say," *United States Information Agency*, 28 March 1996.

[68]Kenneth Blackman, "Southern Africa—Politics: Academics Want In on Peace Efforts," *Inter Press Service*, 25 September 1995.

[69]"Annan Pledges to Use More Women in Conflict Resolution," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 2 March 1997; and Paul Ejime, "Call For OAU Women's Committee On Peace," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 6 May 1997.

conflict prevention, management, and resolution efforts through the establishment of peace missions. Calling on parties to armed conflicts in Africa to end the recruitment of child soldiers, they also urged the international community to declare child-soldiering a war crime and to set up a tribunal to try recruiters.[70]

African NGOs and private diplomats operating independently to create CBMs are, for the most part, still constrained by governments sensitive about the motives for their intervention in weighty issues of security.

Academics, lawyers, and religious organizations are increasingly creating alliances throughout Africa to stimulate thinking about security and CBMs. Since its beginning in southern Africa in the early 1990s, the engagement of academics in international public diplomacy to support peace efforts has spread to the rest of Africa. At one of the seminars in Harare in 1995, southern African academics warned that without the involvement of civil society, there would be no real peace. They proposed that as the "organic base of peace,"

academics could help peace building by fighting against the glorification of war found in textbooks used in the subregion. The efforts of academics have led to the formation of the Southern African Human Rights Network (SAHRNGON), an organization devoted to lobbying on human rights issues. SAHRNGON has put pressure on the SADC Organ on Politics, Defense and Security to investigate serious human rights violations and adopt common standards and training programs between law enforcement and security services.[71]

Similar initiatives have led to seminars, conferences, workshops, and research on the causes and consequences of conflicts. The broad mandates of some private subregional and continental organizations seek the means to resolve interpersonal, intergroup, and interstate conflicts.[72] The African Center for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) and the Conference of African Jurists (CAJ) are just examples of a widening trend in which existing national institutions mobilize beyond state boundaries to raise consciousness about conflict reduction.[73]

[70]Paul Ejime, "Africa First Ladies Summit Ends," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 7 May 1997.

[71]Blackman, "Southern Africa—Politics;" "SADC Challenged on Human Rights," *Mail and Guardian*, 8 September 1997.

[72]See, for instance, Center for Conflict Resolution, *Toward a Comprehensive Approach to Peace in Eastern Africa: Center for Conflict Resolution Report* (Kampala: CECORE, August 1996); "Lawyers, Academics Form Conflict Resolution Body," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 21 April 1997.

[73]Ghion Hagos, "African Humanitarian Law Seminar Opens," *PanAfrican News Agency*, 29 April 1997.

African NGOs and private diplomats operating independently to create CBMs are, for the most part, still constrained by governments sensitive about the motives for their intervention in weighty issues of security. Thus, there are risks to groups seeking to carve out a sphere of autonomy from existing channels of power. At a meeting of African Commonwealth leaders in March 1997, for example, Presidents Moi, Mugabe, and Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania expressed concern about the "role of NGOs which, with foreign funding, were promoting activities detrimental to stable democratic processes."[74] Ironically, as part of early warning and conflict prevention mechanisms, NGOs work better in situations without conflicts where they are needed least, but are severely hampered in conflict situations where they are needed most. In contexts where Track Two diplomacy is not clearly supportive of Track One efforts, the limits established by governments compromise the search for autonomy. And when Track Two diplomacy is dependent on, or hostage to, Track One efforts, the division of labor necessary to the development of both tracks is hampered. Ultimately the ideal balance between Track One and Two diplomacy in CBMs exhibits an institutional accommodation of their different, but complementary, functions.

Conclusion: Lessons from Africa's CBMs

The structures established within the OAU have played a central role in stabilizing African statehood and nationhood. These structures developed interstate rules addressing territorial sovereignty, respect for borders, good neighborliness, and the renunciation of the use of force. As the OAU assumed the primary responsibility for political and diplomatic aspects of conflicts, its diverse methods became the larger institutional umbrella for African CBMs. By the early 1990s, with the exception of a few open hostilities, most of the traditional sources of inter-state conflict such as border disputes, military build-ups, ideological polarization, and political subversion had ebbed considerably. Internal conflicts, long ignored by the OAU, however, came to the fore as the new basis for thinking about CBMs.

The new phase of institution-building was elaborated conceptually in the Kampala Document and enshrined in the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution. This analysis has shown that the OAU Mechanism merely provides the architectural framework for subregional experiments with cooperation across a wide spectrum of issues. Consequently, the broader lesson that emerges from these experiments is that subregional consciousness, anchored primarily in economic interaction, is the solid basis for African CBMs.

As the only subregion to explicitly replicate the spirit of the Kampala Document and the structures of the OAU Mechanism, southern Africa has implemented CBMs as

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[74]Derek Ingram, "A Bumpy Ride on the Road to Democracy," *Gemini News Service*, 27 March 1997.

comprehensive instruments for peace building rooted in pre-existing political and economic infrastructures. SADC's Organ on Defense, Security, and Politics, the institutional expression of subregional CBMs, extends SADC's economic activities and encourages collective responsibility.

> *Through joint military exercises, southern Africa has shown the way for creative collaboration to reduce mutual suspicion and build an indigenous peacekeeping capacity.*

Southern Africa also reveals that a regular pattern of interactions, not just by heads of state but at all levels of government, provides the means to reduce misunderstandings and build trust. One of the results of the annual economic summits under SADC is the creation of a culture of consultations and debate which has fostered elite consensus on most issues. Where elites have been socialized to think subregionally, communication channels for mutual confidence have evolved as a matter of course. Elites now in power in the Great Lakes subregion share a leadership style and sense of mission radically different from most of the post-colonial leaders, making realignments possible.

Leadership is a key variable in African CBMs in other respects. Fundamentally, subregions are the natural arenas for any conceivable security mechanisms. Subregional actors look to states with significant economic and military capabilities for leadership, expecting them to set the rules for these mechanisms. This is the context in which, despite the power asymmetry, South Africa, in partnership with its neighbors, has been engaged in formulating the norms of national reconciliation and human rights as the antidotes to state collapse. Hegemonic vestiges that might accrue from leadership are whittled down in the southern African context as SADC expands in membership and as South Africa's commitments become more inextricably tied to the organization.

Nigeria's role in West Africa provides another lesson on leadership. Assuming the main burden of restoring order and democracy in Liberia, Nigeria's credibility has been undercut by its inability to foster subregional norms within its own borders. West Africa, therefore, represents two contrasting lessons about African CBMs. On one hand, the first successful African military collaboration to reverse internal collapse required the leadership of the subregional military and economic power. On the other hand, sustaining the democratic values bolstered by the military intervention in Liberia further requires that all subregional actors share these values. Nigeria, powerful enough to lead another military intervention in Sierra Leone to restore the democratic government, is constrained by the absence of democratic institutions and good governance. In this case, subregional leadership, despite

good intentions, is widely construed as hegemonic aggrandizement devoid of strategic purpose.

It would be hard for other African subregions to emulate the example of ECOMOG's sustained military collaboration and intervention. Increased pressures from foreign donors on African governments to reduce their defense budgets militates against expending meager resources on subregional military ventures. Through joint military exercises, southern Africa has shown the way for creative collaboration to reduce mutual suspicion and build an indigenous peacekeeping capacity. Other more manageable forms of military collaboration might be joint border controls to reduce smuggling, as some West African states have begun to do.

The proliferation of small-scale bilateral, trilateral, and quadrilateral agreements in West Africa that address limited areas of cooperation—such as control of arms trafficking and locusts—points to an equally important practice in African CBMs: multilateral and comprehensive security measures need not be the dominant mode of confidence-building and conflict reduction. In fact, in subregions comprising multiple states with varied interests and limited interaction, much smaller forms of security cooperation might become the ideal modes of institution-building. This is more so in subregions where smaller states perceive broad-based institutions as the province of larger powers.

Southern Africa has benefitted from incremental steps toward new areas of interaction. But even here, while multilateral institutions have assured and improved subregional security, they have not succeeded in addressing some of the intractable internal conflicts such as the Angolan civil war. The persistence of internal conflicts defying multilateral approaches is the larger lesson of the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes subregions. Multilateral CBMs of the economic and military variety are unlikely to have an impact where internal conflicts have not abated. The examples of Somalia, Sierra Leone, and the former Zaire show that disintegrating states cannot enter into agreements with their neighbors without first reconstituting internal authority and leadership structures. However, multilateral approaches to security issues that assist national actors in searching for consensus on divisive issues of identity and power are more desirable than the grand subregional schemes that elites mobilize to delay domestic conflict resolution.

Nongovernmental actors will remain major players in African CBMs as they champion values such as human rights and demilitarization, and as they pressure states slow to respond to these values. NGOs help to frame wider debates about conflict reduction, serve as critical means of communication in the incipient process of building CBMs, and embarrass states reluctant to honor agreements they signed. These multiple roles will ensure that they will continue to be friends and foes of states as they build and consolidate CBMs.

The Council of Elders, comprised of eminent persons and former heads of state, offers a model for striking a balance between the roles of state and non-state actors. As the discussions within the ALF show, former heads of state are new and important players in security issues. Although widely posited as a resurrection of the African tradition of deference to elders, the mobilization of former heads of state to shape the contours of future security merely seeks to combine their insulation from the burdens of office with the legitimacy and credibility acquired from previous institutional settings. Elder statesmen will continue to lead on significant issues of security, but they face a number of constraints. First, as Julius Nyerere's mediation of Burundi's civil war reveals, elder statesmen are most effective when the legitimacy of their mediation efforts are underwritten by the power of the state rather than the alleged currency of their social, political, and cultural status in the region. Second, the continued incarceration of Obasanjo by the Nigeria military demonstrates that elder statesmen are not immune to the draconian actions of states they helped to construct. By the same token, the pool of Africa's elders is, in turn, dependent on open electoral processes that allow office holders to lose power and join the club of elder statesmen.

On a continent torn by violent conflicts, the institutional mechanisms for conflict reduction should be appraised gradually, as small experiments evolve into substantive institutions. Where subregional frameworks end violent conflicts, restore interstate relations, and foster new links of interdependence, they create the long-term infrastructure for CBMs. In the interim, we can assess the performance of African CBMs by their capacity to insulate conflicts from outside intervention. This is one of the central justifications for African attempts at security and peace building. When local CBMs fulfill their designated roles as vehicles for self-management, they preclude the endless debates at the United Nations and other circles about what to do with African conflicts. IGAD, SADC, and ECOWAS have, thus far, contested records in this regard. The success of indigenous solutions hinges on managing the contingencies of escalating conflicts with limited resources. Given this context, the persistent calls for Africa to find solutions to its own problems cannot compete with pressures from outside interests seeking to be part of these solutions.