

GÖTEBORG UNIVERSITY
Department of Sociology

Armed Conflict Prevention
Cases from Africa

Author: Getahun Yacob Abraham
CD-thesis, 20 points
June, 2004
Supervisor: Bertil Nelhans

Abstract

Title: Armed conflict prevention-Cases from Africa

Author: Getahun Yacob Abraham

Supervisor: Bertil Nelhans

Department: Göteborg University, Department of Sociology

Type of work: CD-thesis, 20 points

Number of Pages: 62

Period of study: Mid-January, 2003 – May, 2004

Objectives and research questions: Africa as a continent experienced many armed conflicts that caused losses of lives, physical and psychological handicaps, hatred and property damage. The objectives of this study are to try investigate the root causes of armed conflicts in Africa, contributing to further awareness about the problems among different groups of people, hopefully adding some knowledge to the already existing ones on the subject and indicating some areas that need further research. The major investigatory theme revolves around and posed as a main question, whether it is possible to prevent armed conflicts in Africa. My sub questions were: on what are the causes of armed conflicts in 1990s? who are the main actors in armed conflicts? and what measures are needed to prevent or at least minimize future armed conflicts in the continent?

Data and method: The data used in the paper is collected through literature survey and supplementary interviews conducted with Africans living in Sweden and Swedes familiar with Africa. I also conversed with a large number of informants by e-mail and/or telephone. Qualitative data collecting method has been used. Grounded theory is considered as a tool for identifying concepts and categories relevant for the study.

Theory/Theories: Sociological theories of social conflict and modern theories of conflict prevention used within peace and conflict research are considered

Empirical findings: The study focused upon the intra state and inter state conflicts. In the intra state conflicts political, ethnic, resource and religious factors are found to be main causes of armed conflicts. The inter state conflicts are mainly caused by politically motivated factors, border and territorial claims. Actors of conflicts can be both internal and external. The state, the army, ethnic groups, local leaders and religious leaders are some of the internal actors. External actors can be neighbouring states, big powers supporting armed opposition groups, arms dealers and mercenaries. There are also internal and external actors for armed conflict prevention. Internal actors are the state, civic organisations, religious and other traditional organisations while external actors could be the UN, the regional and sub-regional organisations, NGOs, big powers and states of other countries. These actors can take proactive or reactive measures of armed conflict prevention in a short term and long term bases.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
List of Illustrations.....	3
List of Abbreviations.....	3
Map of Africa	4
Acknowledgements.....	5
Part One.....	6
Chapter 1. Introduction.....	6
Chapter 2. How the study has been carried out.	8
2.1 Objectives of the study	8
2.2 Core questions of the study	8
2.3 Methodology	9
2.4. Structures of the thesis	9
2.5 Scope and limitations.....	10
Chapter 3. Discussion of theories	11
3.1 Background articles	11
3.2 Conflict prevention theories.....	16
3.2.1 Social conflict theories.....	16
3.2.2 Modern conflict theories	18
3.3 Summary of conflict theories	20
Part Two	22
Chapter 4. Armed Conflicts.....	22
4.1 Background to Armed Conflicts in Africa.....	22
4.1.1 Conflicts under colonialism	22
4.1.2 The colonial heritage	23
4.2 Types of Armed Conflicts in 1990s.....	25
4.2.1 Intra state conflicts.....	26
4.2.1.1 Power Conflicts	26
4.2.1.2 Ethnic conflicts	27
4.2.1.3 Resource conflicts.....	29
4.2.1.4 Religious conflicts (On Islamic revolutionary thinking).	30
4.2.2 Inter state conflicts.....	34
4.2.2.1 Politically motivated conflicts.....	34
4.2.2.2 Border conflicts	34
4.2.2.3 Territorial conflicts	35

Chapter 5. Lessons of the Rwandan Massacre for Armed Conflict Prevention.....	36
5.1 Background to the conflict.....	36
5.2 The 1994 Genocide.....	37
5.3 Could it have been possible to prevent the Genocide?	37
Chapter 6. Views of Diaspora Africans and Swedes familiar with Africa. .	40
6.1 Causes of armed conflicts in 1990s	40
6.2 Main actors in armed conflicts of 1990s.....	41
6.3 Possibilities to foresee armed conflicts.....	42
6.3.1 Observable indications	42
6.3.2 Expressed indications	43
6.4 Measures to avert foreseeable armed conflicts	43
6.5 Avoiding relapse to armed conflicts.....	44
6.6 Long-term and short-term measures for preventing armed conflicts	45
6.6.1 Short-term measures	45
6.6.2 Long-term measures	45
6.7 Actors for preventing future armed conflicts.....	46
6.7.1 Internal Actors	46
6.7.2 External Actors.....	47
Part Three.....	48
Chapter 7. Discussion.....	48
7.1 Results.....	49
7.2 Theoretical and historical implications.....	51
7.3 Previous and future researches.....	52
Chapter 8. Conclusion.....	54
References.....	57
Appendix 1 Interview Questionnaire	
Appendix 2 Interview population	

List of Illustrations

1. Bloomfield-Leiss Dynamic Phase of Conflict Model	19
2. Types of ethnic relations (Hettne/Rothschild)	27
3. The march of a continent through time	49
4. Understanding armed conflict prevention	50
5. Thoughts around armed conflict prevention	52

List of Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
AU	African Union
CDR	Coalition pour la Défence de la République
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FIS	Front Islamic du Salut
GAI	Group Armé Islamique
GP	Göteborgs-Posten (Swedish News Paper)
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IPEP	International Panel of Eminent Personalities
KANU	Kenyan African Union
LRA	Lord's Resistant Army
MLEC	Mouvement pour la Libération de l'Enclave de Cabinda
MPLA	Movimento Popular Liberatcao de Angola
NGO	Non Governmental Organisations
NIF	National Islamic Front
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SADC	Southern African Development Cooperation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Authority
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SPLA	Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army
UD	Utrikesdepartementet (Swedish Foreign Ministry)
UI	Utrikespolitiska Institutet (The Swedish Institute of International Affairs)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNITA	Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
UNU	United Nations University

Map of Africa

AFRICA



Produced by the Cartographic Research Lab
University of Alabama

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge my supervisor Bertil Nelhans, for following this work from idea to a full-fledged thesis. With his experience and knowledge of Africa, he keenly followed up the development of the thesis.

My wife Margareta provided me with whatever support I needed and encouraged me through out during the writing process. She has been a “victim” to my raw fantasies and to my happiness when coming across new ideas or knowledge. Thank you for your continuous encouragement.

Getachew Metafari (Associate professor, Morgan State University) and Girma Berhanu (PhD, Göteborg University, Department of Special Education) read the thesis and commented on it. I thank them for devoting a lot of their time and coming up with some valuable comments. My special thanks goes to Girma for his unlimited generosity, encouragement and dialogue partnership for the last two decades. Tarkege Adebo (PhD, Life & Peace Institute) deserves to be mentioned for his comments on the draft.

Paul Oburu who was a PhD candidate in Göteborg University Department of Psychology, gave me constructive comments in the beginning of my work. Gebre Egziabher Bekele, who is presently working for the UN in Sierra Leone, gave me insight on the armed conflict in that country. Johan Forslund, Marianne and Hans Eriksson, and Fanaye Terefe offered me accommodation during my 10 days’ stay in Uppsala and Stockholm to gather material for this work. I am grateful to all of them. Even if I am not listing you, I also would like to thank you African and Swedish interviewees as well as some other friends and relatives who provided me with information through direct contacts, telephone conversation and e-mail. Without your support, this work would have lost a very valuable dimension, your experiences.

Part One

Chapter 1. Introduction

As Africa is the original home of human beings and as human beings survived through a long struggle and fighting, it will not be surprising to imagine the first armed conflicts are fought in the continent. These armed conflicts could have been caused for the purpose of satisfying different needs that existed during hunting, gathering, territory marking and other reasons.

The first armed conflicts in the continent *must have* used crude weapons like stones, bones, knives, spears, etc. After thousands of years, people gradually started to get access to advanced weapons produced in other parts of the world. However there are still societies with access to old and traditional weapons only.

During the last 500 years after the arrival of colonialism, the weapons for fighting started to be sophisticated, so did the causes of conflicts. Today, excluding nuclear weapons African states own all kinds of weapons from handguns to sophisticated fighter planes.

Causes of conflicts became abundant, fighters started getting better training compared to traditional warriors and refined weapons are available. So, these situations makes armed conflicts in the continent more devastating than ever before. Even when crude weapons are used, the modern propaganda machines and knowledge of better organisation can facilitate huge mobilisation of troops or crowd and can end in catastrophic scenario like the one that was observed in Rwanda in 1994.

The decade before we entered the new millennium was one of the bloody periods after the Second World War. The Genocide in Rwanda and the Balkan conflicts are the two main bloody events. These wars are known for the damage they caused to human life and property. Tremendous numbers of the population in these areas are also physically handicapped and psychologically affected. The hatred the wars left in the memory of people needs a lot of effort and resources to create future mutual understanding and trust.

The mass media information in the 1990s, my own visits in some countries in Balkan after the war and later on my visit to Angola gave me the picture of the damage of war. I have seen and appreciated efforts by UN, local and international organisations to normalise the life of war victims.

If the armed conflicts were prevented it would have in the first place, saved the life and property of victims. Secondly, the physical and psychological handicaps for the survivors of war would have been avoided. Thirdly, the UN and the international community also would have escaped the moral shame the wars left behind. Fourthly, victims would not have needed to be relegated to being aid receivers, and finally the large amount of money poured into these countries for rehabilitation could have been channelled to development efforts.

Armed conflict prevention is one option of conflict resolution. It is an earlier resolution, a peaceful resolution and a cheaper resolution. It is a solution that is needed in any conflict threatening to lead to parties taking arms. Due to its positive short term and long term effects for individual human beings and the society, we need to understand our conflicts and to try to resolve them by other means than taking arms. We must prevent using arms for resolving our differences.

Chapter 2. How the study has been carried out.

2.1 Objectives of the study

Tremendous wars were fought in different parts of the world through the years; it is difficult to mention a country in the world immune to war throughout its history. At present there are many countries that are involved in armed conflict but there are also many that are facing repetitive wars. If we consider the recent past decade the Rwanda and the Balkan genocides are in our fresh memories. In 1990s many wars were fought in different continents of the world, but according to many researchers most of these wars were fought in Africa.

Conflicts in general and their development in Africa have been vital areas of focus for me. To be able to understand the phenomena underlying these conflicts, my objectives are: first, to investigate the root causes of armed conflicts in Africa, second, to contribute to further awareness about the problems among different groups of people, third, to add to the existing knowledge of practical solutions that could be used in the future, fourth to indicate areas that need further research on the subject.

2.2 Core questions of the study

Armed conflicts that people are experiencing in different parts of the world need solutions, to end the evils of war. Conflict resolution plays a vital role in the process of finding a solution to already existing conflicts. But successful armed conflict prevention would have, maybe given possibilities of hindering further wars.

Many countries in different regions of the world experienced armed conflicts through time, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) statistics on major armed conflict in 1990s show that Asia was the region with most major armed conflicts until the last three years of the decade. In those last three years Africa experienced more major armed conflict than any other continent (SIPRI, 2001, p.54). The African continent and some specific countries within Africa will be considered as cases to closely scrutinize armed conflicts. Timewise I found 1990s interesting for this study, because it was the end of the cold war era. This is recognized by the disintegration of the Soviet Union which was the main actor in the East block against the West led by another super power the United States.

Armed conflict prevention is my area of focus. My main research question is:

Is it possible to prevent armed conflicts in Africa?

The following sub questions are posed in order to be able to address the main question.

What are the causes of armed conflicts in 1990s?

Who are the main actors in armed conflicts?

What measures are needed to prevent or at least minimize future-armed conflicts in Africa?

2.3 Methodology

The phenomenon I am studying is not direct under my nose. Due to shortage of time and lack of finance, I have had limited possibilities to gather first hand information in the countries that experienced or are experiencing armed conflicts. But through consulting documents and interviewing persons, I have been able to get sufficient data on the subject.

In the document part I have referred to books, articles, journals, UN materials, publications of institutions studying the continent and/or phenomena of armed conflict, internet home pages, etc. Individuals of African origin living in Sweden and Swedes familiar with African problem were interviewed. An attempt has been made to combine individuals who recently have been in Africa and persons monitoring the situation of the continent very closely.

Based on my area of focus, *armed conflict prevention*, I used Grounded Theory as a methodological tool for the purpose of coding and sampling. Grounded theory is used first to identify concepts, and then categories for focus in the study and in the process of relating and differentiating the categories.

In this method the major focus is on the information or data that is to be collected or already collected. There is less emphasis on how to choose the sources of information (Corbin and Strauss 1990, p.177; 1998, p.206).

For the identification of concepts and categories, I read articles from different sources on armed conflict prevention (see separate reference list for the articles). I noted some of the concepts are vital due to the fact that "...they are repeatedly present or notably absent..." (Corbin and Strauss 1990, p.117). The concepts on the causes of armed conflicts, actors of armed conflicts, actors for armed conflict prevention, early warning, etc., were emphasised in the articles I read. So, because of their relevance, I isolated them and used them as concepts and categories in my data collection.

The interviewees were chosen by using non-probability sample and were considered with *purpose* because of their origins, experiences or knowledge related to the theme of the study. As time and resources did not allow conducting a field research, I considered it to be *convenient* to interview these persons who reside in Sweden. As one interviewee can lead to another knowledgeable person the *snowball* sample has been considered. A combination of purposive, convenience and snowball sampling methods are consequently used for collecting empirical data (Cohen and Manion 1994, pp.86-91; Neuman 1997, pp.204-208; Bowen, Krosnick and Weisberg, 1996, pp.38-43).

2.4. Structures of the thesis

The thesis is divided into three parts and eight chapters. Part one includes introduction, objectives of the study, methodology, background articles and conflict theories. Part two focuses on the empirical part of the data. Results of a document survey on armed conflicts, a case study about the Rwandan Genocide and interviews on armed conflict in Africa are included in this part of the paper. Part three focuses on discussion and conclusion.

2.5 Scope and limitations

I am aware the phenomena of armed conflict prevention can be dealt with on different levels; macro, meso and micro system levels. To be able to get a broader perspective of the phenomenon these levels, except the micro level, are considered. Thus focus on intra state conflicts and inter state conflicts could be recognised on those levels.

In addition to the scope of the study, limitations need to be mentioned. The study is an one-man project and the time given for undertaking the work is less than five months. Due to the time limit and lack of financing, fieldwork was not considered.

Chapter 3. Discussion of theories

3.1 Background articles

I indicated in the methodology discussion in Chapter 2, as an introduction to theoretical and conceptual thinking I used 14 articles from different sources. After I scanned a number of articles on the subject, I decided to consider these articles because of their relevance for the subject. The sources of the articles are UN, UN associations, researchers, mass media and different organisations. All the articles directly and indirectly focus on armed conflicts.

From the articles some concepts are taken as they are and others are modified in a way that they can suit for the purpose of this study. Some considered concepts are root causes of conflicts and/or disputes, diagnosing conflicts, proliferation of arms, hangovers of colonialism, actors, African powers, early warning, relapse, proactive and reactive prevention, short term and long term measures, capacity building, constructive pluralism and sustainable peace. I will summarize these articles with basic information such as title, author or agency that gave it out, number of pages, if available dates and other important information. I will also provide short summaries of the contents.

3.1.1 Prevention of armed conflict, report of the UN Secretary General

By Secretary General, UN, June 2001, 32 pages.

Summary: The Secretary General emphasises the need to move “...from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention.” He remarks that prevention can be expensive today but it will pay in the future. The report highlights the support for national states need to develop their capacity of armed conflict prevention; responsibility of UN member states, business world, NGOs, civil societies and others; conflict prevention and sustainable development’s close relations and preventive measures need to address socio-economic, cultural, environmental, institutional and structural causes of conflict.

He mentions in the report:

“An effective preventive strategy requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses both short term and long term political, diplomatic, humanitarian, human rights, developmental, institutional and other measures taken by the international community, in cooperation with the national and regional actors.” (p.2).

3.1.2 The prevention of armed conflict

By Sir Jeremy Greenstock, 20 July, 2000 (UK mission to UN), 4 pages.

Summary: The article focuses on early warning, early and effective measures against potential threats to peace and the need for coordination of efforts between different UN organs, other international bodies, regional organisations and countries.

Addressing needs of ordinary people and tackling economic, social, structural, and political roots of conflicts are emphasised and multidimensional measures are recommended.

3.1.3 Building skills for conflict resolution and peace

By UNHCR (PTTS/MS/96/0563), 1996, 3 pages.

Summary: The paper focuses on refugees in East Africa. The plan indicated in the paper is starting education on conflict prevention in 1997 in Kenya.

The refugees who will be trained were supposed to get skills useful for their own conflicts with others and to mediate between others. The document explains its focus on skills required for conflict resolution as follows:

“...communication and listening skills, respect for others and avoidance of stereotyping, emotional awareness and control, cooperation in groups, and ways of mapping conflicts, negotiating and reaching solutions.” (p.2)

3.1.4 The UK and the UN

By Alexander Ramsbotham, UN Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, July 2001, 3 pages.

Summary: The article discusses the importance of giving close attention to economic disparities, social injustice and political oppressions to prevent relapse into armed conflict. It also raises the use of preventive diplomacy to stop disputes before they take violent forms.

Early warning, negotiation and preventive deployment of forces are mentioned. Peace building through de-militarisation, economic development, democratisation and other measures are emphasised. The article also considers conflict prevention as cost-effective.

3.1.5 World Bank urges international action to prevent civil war

By World Bank (News release, No:2003/325/S), May 2003, 3 pages.

Summary: The news release is introducing a World Bank study, “Breaking the conflict trap: Civil war and development policy” by Paul Collier. The study emphasises on par amount importance of three actions to prevent civil war, better targeted aid for countries at risk; increasing transparency and better timed post conflict peace keeping.

By giving an example of Democratic Republic of Congo (former Zaire), the author argues that ethnic diversity, religion or income inequality were not primary factors of civil war. According to him it was rather the economic decline and dependency on income from natural resources that were main factors for conflict in the country.

The news release indicates that, if necessary measures are not taken on time in a country after a war ended the country can face a risk of falling back into war again. It also raises an issue that developing countries, donors, international organisations and private firms are interested to end civil war. To reduce civil wars, more and better aid, improved governance of natural resources, reduction on military expenditures and intervention with aid and reforms are recommended in the study mentioned in the news release.

3.1.6 Conflict resolution and the retreat from humanitarian values

By SIDA, 13 January 1998, 14 pages.

Summary: The paper is prepared in the form of speaking notes and gives key points on development and conflict questions. Its long list on causes of a conflict can be classified as lack of democracy, ignorance, economic collapses, population growth, environmental decline, and rapid urbanization.

Violence is considered as “virus or disease.” To prevent further conflicts, the paper recommends such measures as sustainable economic development, social integration, capacity building and plural civil institutions.

3.1.7 Project: Conflict prevention: From rhetoric to policy

By UNU, 1999, 5 pages.

Summary: The article is about a project by United Nations University which aimed at bringing scholars from developed and developing countries as well as scholars and practitioners from regional organisations and the UN. The focus of the project was production of theoretical materials and guideline manuals for training; dissemination of knowledge on conflict prevention and building capacity of organisations and actors dealing with conflict prevention on different levels. Through increasing actors’ knowledge and capacity, it aims at providing an early warning, preventing escalation of tensions to violence, and early involvement of facilitators from outside.

3.1.8 Proactive conflict prevention: Impact assessment?

By Luc Reyhler (in *The International Journal of Peace Studies*, vol.3, no.2, 1998), 9 pages.

Summary: The writer discusses proactive and reactive conflict prevention in the beginning of the article and defines them as, “proactive conflict prevention refers to measures taken before the conflict has escalated; reactive conflict prevention refers to measures taken after conflict has escalated...” (p.1).

In his discussion of early warning he mentions the problem of focusing only on observable situations while dealing with conflict prevention. He criticises not considering perceptions, expectations and other factors; focus on threats than on possibilities; in the assessment of cost-benefit using rudimentary methods that exclude many cost factors compared to a comprehensive method; and giving less attention to impacts of measures of conflict prevention.

The writer considers the different costs of war. He classifies them to be humanitarian, spiritual, psychological, cultural, social, ecological, material and political. He explains the levels of action, types of measures, time frame and layers of action to build sustainable peace.

3.1.9 The evils of ethnic politics

By: John Stremlau, University of the Witwatersrand, in Mail & Guardian, 26 March, 1999, 2 pages.

Summary: The author discusses the need for respect of people's rights and the difficulty of ethnic nationalism. He also raises the lack of interest for conflicts in Africa; the West is recommending "regional solution" which is not always functioning. He recommends measures by Southern African Development Cooperation (SADC) and the Western powers to dry the possible economic resources of some dictators in southern Africa.

3.1.10 How to abolish war

By: Michael Renner, July 1999, 8 pages.

Summary: The author criticises that governments show less enthusiasm, spend less energy and resources in conflict prevention than they spend on preparation for war and making war.

He presents poverty, social inequality, ethnic tensions, population growth and environmental degradation as causes of conflict. On the other hand he recommends a policy for developing peace and security to be based on disarmament, constraint on arms and war prevention. According to him, other countries should abolish their standing army following the examples of Costa Rica, Haiti and Panama.

Conflict warning network, permanent dispute arbitration network in every region, having skilled and experienced mediators groups that act on behalf of the international community are recommended. The article forwards, when preventive approaches are not working, involving peace keeping force that can intervene before conflict as option. As a long term solution he also recommends governments to work on eradication of poverty, promote full employment and reduce social inequality.

3.1.11 Africa and the prospects of war

By: Yed Anikpo, City of geopolitics, daily Egyptian, 2004, 2 pages.

Summary: The article focuses on the French-African summit taking place before the invasion of Iraq by the US and its allies. The summit was calling for "broad multilateralism" to deal with the problem. The writer thought this emphasis by Africans is based on a fear of future similar action in their continent. The African countries were also concerned about the economic consequences that might follow after the war, because the continent had suffered more than others during the oil crisis of the 1970s after the war in the Middle East.

The article mentions two African powers, Nigeria and South Africa playing a frontline role on advocacy for peace. By this they maybe are showing interest for having a sit in the Security Council.

3.1.12 Africa to step up war against proliferation of arms

By: Biniam Tekele, Pan African News Agency, 9 Nov. 2000, 2 pages.

Summary: This is news from a meeting of eight countries of the Great Lakes region and Horn of Africa gathered to discuss an issue about firearms. The countries were Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. They discussed how to combat firearms menace to the region and agreed upon on how to control, collect, seizure and destroy firearms.

3.1.13 Europe seeks cure for chronic war crippling Africa

By Douglas Hamilton, Somalia Watch, 9 Dec. 2000, 3 pages.

Summary: The focus for the article was the forth-coming EU-Africa summit in Cairo. The article discusses different problems the continent is facing. Among them is what is called “endless fighting.”

One interesting point in this article is the different views of EU and African leaders on the problems of the continent. The views are expressed as follows:

“The EU advocates remedies of good governance, respect for human rights and active conflict prevention. But African leaders say economic unfairness and other lingering hangovers of colonialism are the evils that first be cured.” p.1

One report to UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan is mentioned in the article. The report recognises good progress in the economic and political sector in the continent. But it also emphasises that this progress is threatened by conflicts and Africans should take responsibility to improve this situation. It also mentions some countries who started to see beyond their colonial past and dealing with their problem.

The article also raised a point in which some Europeans feel responsibility for helping Africa to improve its situation. This can be explained by the following paragraphs of the article.

“ At a conference of European bishops in Brussels on Friday, Bishop of Rotterdam Adrianus van Luyn recalled a 50-years old pledge by Europe as a set out to create today’s Union.

“The Schuman Declaration of 9 May, 1950 says: ‘Europe, with growing prosperity, will be able to fulfil one of its most essential responsibilities: the development of the African continent,’” the bishop said.” p.2

3.1.14 The genesis of conflict around Africa

By: Ali A. Mazrui, Somalia Watch, 28 Jan., 2001, 5 pages.

Summary: The author indicates the destruction of old methods of conflict resolution and most of Africa’s border conflicts are creations of colonialism. He mentions that in Arab Africa religious conflicts are dominant while in Black Africa ethnic conflicts (sub-ethnic or clan conflicts) dominate and in Black-White conflicts resources are in the centre.

He mentions in the article dual and plural societies. In dual societies two groups of people account for over 80% of the population of a country while plural societies contain a larger mixture of different ethnic groups. He gives emphasis to the need for tolerance and constructive pluralism in Africa. He says:

“Conflict prevention requires greater and greater sophistication in diagnosing conflict-prone solutions. Unfortunately Africa is full of contradictions-conflict generated by too much government versus conflict generated by too little; conflict generated by too many ethnic groups, as distinct from conflict ignited by too few ethnic groups. It is dark outside. Africa is waiting for her real dawn. It is to be hoped that the wait is not too long.” p.3

3.2 Conflict prevention theories.

To be able to understand conflict as a phenomenon it will be helpful to understand how different theoreticians explained it through time. Even if the theories are developed in the West based on successive realities of Western societies, some very important universal characteristics of the theories could be applicable to explain conflict phenomena in general. These theories can also be used for understanding the conflict phenomenon in Africa.

This part is divided into two, social conflict theories and modern conflict theories. Armed conflict prevention will be considered within the second category for discussions.

3.2.1 Social conflict theories

Through the years many sociologists had extensively researched the phenomenon conflict. The work of George Simmel in the beginning of 20th century and its review by Coser half a century later were considered as a landmark for modern conflict theory (Collins, 1988, p.119). The theoreticians before and after them reflected their perspectives on the causes, functions and ways of dealing with it. Some considered conflict as negative phenomena, others considered it positive and there were some others who could see both the negative and positive aspects of it.

Some earlier American sociologists equated social conflict with maladjustment or malfunctioning of individuals. As they wanted to keep consensus in the society, conflict was considered as a threat to this consensus (Coser, 1956, p.20).

Sociologists such as George Simmel, considered a conflict as a unifying factor in-group relations. For Simmel when there is a conflict between different groups, it strengthens the internal unity of the group to fight against the common enemy. He also suggests that group conflicts will keep groups together as small units which contributes to the stability of the whole social system (Coser, 1956, p.34; Wolff, 1950, p.95). Coser, in his book, *The Functions of Social Conflict*, agrees with Simmel on the positive functions of a conflict but he also emphasised the need to understand the negative or destructive function of it to group unity. Another dimension that he attributes to conflict is its “productive” function that leads to reconsidering the existing or legislating a new law to improve relations as well as development of new institutional structures to implement these new laws (Coser 1956, p.126).

D. Lockwood divided a conflict into two, “system” conflict and “social” conflict. According to him system conflicts occur when the political and social sub-systems are not in agreement. Social conflicts are products of interpersonal relations and occur within social interactions (Lockwood, 1992, pp. 372-412).

Coser defines social conflict as follows:

“Social conflict has been defined in various ways. For the purpose of this study, it will provisionally be taken to mean a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals...” (Coser, 1956, p.8).

Different sociologists view the causes of a conflict and how to resolve it, in different ways. For Marx, the position of different classes in the ownership of means of production and the positions they occupy in the production relations put them in the conflicting position. To get out of its subjugation the oppressed should revolt and break the power of the ones who control the economy and as a result the political power. Ralf Dahrendorf, in his book, *Class and Class conflict in Industrial Society*, disagrees with Marx’s idea that classes and class conflicts are based on property ownership. He rather emphasises, that a certain type of social relation gives rise to classes, not economic relation, and the power and authority one occupies give opportunity for “social reward” to one class and denies it to another. This forms different strata in the society (Dahrendorf, 1959, pp.136-141; Collins, 1988, p.125).

For Weber, there are different classes than what Marx considers. The property owners, the educated, the “lower middle” class and the working class (Parsons, 1947, p.427) are considered as the main ones by Weber. Their advantage over each other is also based on the economic possibilities and social status they hold. Their positions and their possibilities create conflicts among them. Instead of the use of physical violence he recommended competition.

Weber’s preferred form of solving conflicts, is clarified below by Parsons.

“... The term “peaceful” conflict will be applied to cases in which actual physical violence is not employed. A peaceful conflict is “competition” in so far as it consists in a formally peaceful attempt to attain control over opportunities and advantages, which are also desired by others. A competitive process is “regulated” competition to the extent that its ends and means are oriented to an order...” (Parsons, 1947:132-133).

Many theoreticians even if they respect or accept the economic importance in the creation of conflict, unlike Marx, they emphasised the vital importance of norms, values, beliefs, customs as causes of a conflict. Instead of basic change in the society, they can see “... a new formative consensus” as a way out of conflicts (Ritzer and Smart, 2001, p.147).

It is true the consensus and conflict theories (Giddens, 1993, p. 718) of western sociologists, as Lockwood indicates could not be adequate to explain societies with ethnic, territorial and language differences (Lockwood, 1992, p.377). Even if we cannot claim every conflict in Africa can be explained with these theories, one can clearly recognize some realities match theoretical explanations given about conflicts. Some theoretical explanations on causes of conflicts, functions of conflicts, effects of conflicts, on how conflicts should be handled, etc. can be considered from these theories.

During conflicts an ethnic group, through its propaganda, creates a picture of its rival ethnic group as a demon. The propaganda work that is calling upon the ethnic group to stand as one, strengthens the internal unity of the ethnic group. The Hutus of Rwanda strengthened “their internal unity” because of their common goal of eliminating their “enemies” the Tutsis.

In Weber’s division of class, the educated are one class by themselves. In Africa one can clearly recognise this class. This class is given power, authority and social status due to its education. As an extension of the position it is also getting an economic reward and other opportunities that makes it different from the society at large.

Many countries in Africa also experience conflicts caused by what Lockwood called between “political and social sub-systems.” The incompatibility between the two systems can lead to conflict between the will of the people and government imposed policies that sometimes end with bloody conflicts.

There are also cases in many African countries where incompatibilities started to be resolved by peaceful means. As indicated by some of the theoreticians, the incompatibilities or conflicts were dealt with reforming legislature, coming up with new laws, creating better democratic structures, opening opportunities for taking political office through “competition.”

3.2.2 Modern conflict theories

Since World War II, many researchers have been engaged in studying and developing theories of conflict. I considered these theories that are used to explain the phenomenon of conflict and how to deal with it as modern because of the period of their evolution.

Even today, half a century later, Coser’s ideas of positive and negative consequences of conflict are applicable. When two actors are interested in achieving the same goal, it can lead to a dispute that could be either constructive or destructive. Conflict possesses both components. Galtung describes the situation with the following quotation.

“...the classical Chinese double-character definition of ‘crisis’, a concept in the neighbourhood of ‘conflict’, as ‘danger’ + ‘opportunity’. ‘Danger’ is close to ‘violence’, and ‘opportunity’ reasonably close to ‘challenge’, the root of creation...” (Galtung, 1996, p.70).

Even if there were classical theoreticians who considered either the damaging effect of conflict to a society or the uniting effect of conflict for groups, the common understanding of modern conflict theoreticians is that they possess both effects of conflict. Conflicts, handled in creative and systematic ways can lead to change. On the other hand, if parts want to resolve it in a violent way it can lead to destruction of life, property, system, etc.

A destructive conflict, which I refer to as an armed conflict, is a type of conflict resolution used in many countries. Many countries in Africa experienced such conflicts with enormous human massacre and damage to property and nature.

According to Uppsala University conflict data project, an armed conflict is classified as an armed conflict if more than 25 persons lost their lives in the conflict (Wallensteen, 1994,

pp.18-19). A relatively recent definition by the same project provides further insight on armed conflict.

“The Uppsala Conflict Data Project defines a major armed conflict as a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory over which the use of armed force between the military forces of the two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, has resulted in at least 1000 battle-related deaths in any single year.” (SIPRI, 2001, p.66).

As we are discussing armed conflict we can also raise different causes for armed conflicts. Different situations can cause armed conflicts, such as problems of border, territory, ethnic, race, religion, ideology, and legitimacy of rulers. (Bloomfield and Multon, 1997, p.99).

Conflicts develop through different phases. According to Bloomfield-Leiss, it starts with dispute, followed by a conflict, hostilities, post-hostilities and dispute settlement. Attempts are usually undertaken to prevent a dispute to develop to hostility. To avoid unnecessary damages, there is a need to interfere as early as possible. “...preventive measures are best applied before a disease develops...” (p.30).

The authors elaborate the phases in the development of a conflict in the table given below (p.102).

Illustration 1. Bloomfield-Leiss Dynamic Phase Conflict Model

Phase1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Settlement
Dispute	Conflict	Hostilities	Post-Hostilities	Post-Hostilities	
Quarrel about Issue	Military Option Develops	Fighting between Organized Unites	Conflict Remains	Dispute Remains Unsettled	Dispute Settled
Factors ← →	Factors ← →	Factors ← →	Factors ← →	Factors ← →	

Movement of the arrow from phase 1 to the right shows escalation from dispute to conflict, hostilities, post hostilities and settlement. The movement from post-hostilities in phase 4 to the left to hostilities in phase 3 also shows escalation. Movement of the arrow to the left in phase 1 indicates the movement towards settlement of dispute. It is possible to move from whatever phase to settlement of a dispute. It is very important to work on hindering movement from phase 1 or phase 2 to phase 3. It is equally important if hostility already took place and ended to work against relapsing, from post-hostilities back to hostilities; movement from phase 4 or phase 5 to phase 3.

In a seminar that discussed the efforts of the international community to prevent armed conflict, one participant, Annika Björkdahl presented measures that need to be taken in three different stages; outbreak prevention, escalation prevention and relapse prevention. She also discusses direct prevention and structural prevention, which include political, diplomatic, economic, social, legal and military measures (SIPRI, 2000, pp.17-22). A Swedish foreign ministry document on plan of action for preventing violent conflicts discusses the same subject, direct prevention and structural prevention as “long term and short term initiatives” (UD, 1999, p.22). The direct prevention is a short term measure while structural prevention is a long term measure.

Möller and Wallensteen in a research paper on conflict prevention use Michael Lund’s preventive diplomacy toolbox and Jan Eliasson’s ladder of conflict prevention. Lund’s preventive diplomacy toolbox considers three approaches for armed conflict prevention, military approaches, non-military approaches and development and governance approaches. The first two approaches focus on using and not using armed forces while the third one is emphasising on developments, respect for human rights, democracy and peaceful conflict resolution. On the other hand Eliasson’s ladder is a seven steps measure based on the 1945 founding charter of the UN. His steps move vertically upwards from early warning to fact-finding missions by UN & regional organizations, stimulating the use of the eight measures in the UN charter, using peace keeping operation, using peaceful coercive measures such as sanctions, threat to use military force and finally using military force on the basis of UN charter (Möller and Wallensteen, 2003, p.12).

3.3 Summary of conflict theories

Conflicts are viewed in different ways by different theoreticians. Those who viewed it as negative considered it as maladjustment and malfunction of individuals in the society. On the other hand theoreticians such as George Simmel emphasised the positive impact of conflict in strengthening the internal unity of a group that is fighting against another group. Lewis Coser, considered both the positive and negative role of conflicts. For another theoretician Johan Galtung, conflict contains both constructive and destructive components.

Lockwood divides conflict into two types. Conflicts between sub-systems are considered as system conflicts. While on the other hand conflicts that arise from interpersonal and social interactions are considered as social conflicts.

Marx viewed conflicts as the result of economic relations. But for Weber in addition to economic relations the social status people occupy in the society causes conflicts. As to dealing with resolving conflicts Marx recommends class struggle and fundamental change of a system, while Weber emphasised on regulated competition to reform the existing system.

Armed conflicts can be caused due to factors related to ideology, ethnic relations, resources, religion, race, territory and other various factors. As we can see from Bloomfield and Leiss illustrations, there are dynamic phases of development in a conflict situation. Development occurs from dispute to conflict and then further to hostilities. But this development can be hindered.

It is important to prevent the development from dispute to conflict and then to hostilities. If hostilities started, an attempt should be made to stop it and if settlement is reached relapse to hostilities must be hindered. Outbreak prevention, escalation prevention and relapse prevention can be applied by using different instruments such as Lund's preventive diplomacy and/or Eliasson's ladder of prevention.

Part Two

Chapter 4. Armed Conflicts

4.1 Background to Armed Conflicts in Africa

4.1.1 Conflicts under colonialism

African hosts welcomed European merchants, travellers, and missionaries as their guests, without asking the reason for their visit. Before the event of colonialism King Afonso of Kongo and King Mutesa I of Buganda were among those who welcomed Europeans. Cecil Rhodes, Henry Stanley, David Livingstone and Vasco da Gama were some of the known guests (Nangoli, 1990, pp. 13-14, 56-57 & 64-65). In some cases they were welcomed as allies against local and distant enemies but their permanent stay and their challenge to the local chiefs started to create conflicts between them and their hosts (see, Okoth, 1988). As the Europeans started the ambition of occupying resources, using divide and rule system to create conflicts among people in order to use it for their advantage and started using weapons, people started to rise up for strong resistance.

Belgium, France, Germany, Great Britain, The Netherlands, Italy, Portugal and Spain were the European countries that shared the continent under colonialism from 18th century onwards. The lion's share of the colonies in Africa, were divided between Great Britain and France.

The two big colonial powers used different methods to administer their colonies. The British used indirect rule by using existing traditional authority. Kings, chiefs or elders who were leading their people were given a junior partner position under the colonial authorities. The French on the other hand used assimilation as a method of administration. In most cases they removed traditional leaders and replaced them by others who were helpful for their assimilative programme.

Most of the colonizers were known for, first for approaching systematically, then challenging and gradually putting under their control the traditional leadership of the country they were colonizing.

Second, for appropriation of land for providing it to European settlers and to keep it as colonial state property. The purposes of making the local population landless were to make them economically weak not to pose a challenge to the colonial power and to create accessible forced or cheap labour for the colonial rulers (Okoth, 1988). Prior to 19th century wide colonization, around 11 and half million people were forced to leave the continent in the trans Atlantic slave trade (Chazan et al., 1999, p.252).

Third, for stopping the traditional bartering system and putting local trade routes and valuable raw material sources under colonial administration. An example for trade control is given below.

“...The Shona of central and eastern Mashonaland (in present Zimbabwe, my remark) had been carrying on a trade in gold and ivory with the Portuguese in return for guns and a

wide variety of goods at low prices. But the Company¹ was only interested in European gold mining and attempted to stop the sale of gold dust by African's to the Portuguese..." (Okoth, 1988, p.181).

The local people were also supposed to buy finished products of their colonizing country, rather than another country.

Fourth, for considering African traditional beliefs as evil and preaching through missionaries their own Christian belief. The preaching was not only to accept Christianity but their traditional names were also supposed to change to Christian ones. "...The Portuguese ensured all African names were changed to Portuguese..." (Muriithi, 1996, p.17)

Because of the colonial control over the political power, the material resources, labour power, the social life of the local people, etc. there were strong conflicts between colonizers and the colonized. In some of the conflicts the local people some times won the war temporarily, in other cases they challenged their enemies for as long as a year or two to be finally defeated because of sophisticated weapons and a trained army of the enemy (see, Muriithi, 1996; Nangoli, 1990; Odhimbo, 1988 and Okoth, 1988).

4.1.2 The colonial heritage

Most conflicts that appeared in postcolonial time had its roots in colonial era. All African countries, except Ethiopia and Liberia, were under colonial rule, from 1890s to 1960s and of independence most of them experienced similar problems. Out of several problems these countries encountered the political and economic challenges were the major ones.

At independence when the European colonialists left, there were few elites to take over the administration and this created a continuous dependence on Europeans for managerial activities. Among the elites who took over, some could not stand the temptation of the material wealth they could gain through the authority they were endowed with. The ones who tried to oppose property accumulation, individual despotism, corruption, etc were forced to exile, imprisoned or murdered (Thompson, 2000).

Many leaders attempted to create a national feeling among their people but many showed more loyalty to their ethnic groups than to the state. As a result ethnic groups were standing against each other in question of a power conflict. The Ugandan situation can be a good example for this, "...In Uganda, tribal jealousies led to the exile of the Kabaka² of Buganda by president Obote, and then to Obote's own deposition by a representative of a rival tribe, Colonel Idi Amin." (Campling, 1980, p.61).

Some of the ruling African elites were attempted to follow a local model to find solutions to problems their countries were facing. Nyerere's "African Socialism," Kaunda's "Humanism," Moboutu's authenticity campaign during 1970s to 1980s and Gaddafi's "Islamic State" were some examples of efforts of Africanization (p.67). In addition to that changing the name of the capital of Democratic Republic of Congo from Leopoldville to Kinshasa, the name Rhodesia to Zimbabwe and even change of the name of the then Zaire's

¹ British South African Company.

² Kabaka means King in Luganda, language used by Buganda people.

president from his Christian name of Joseph-Desire to an African name of Sese Seko is a part of the Africanization effort (p.67).

When some African elites were in power for some years, following people's complaints or due to their own demands for more benefit or a genuine concern for their countries, soldiers started taking power by coups.

“...by 1974, the following countries had experienced at least one military coup: Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Libya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Uganda, and Zaire....” (Harris, 1998, p.295).

The cold war was also a phenomenon that played an important ideological role for some countries. Even if some countries considered socialism as their ideology for development, many considered themselves as non-aligned. Many countries received aid both from the West and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Some countries were in good relation with China, which was not neither with West nor USSR (pp.299-300).

In the political front one remnant of colonialism is the arbitrary demarcating of borders. Many borders did not consider the local reality of the people living around. Somalia, which was divided into five territories, is one example. It was divided into Djibouti (French colony), British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, Ogaden in Ethiopia and some area in Northern Kenya.

The Borana Oromo are divided between Kenya and Ethiopia, the Masai between Kenya and Tanzania, etc. These people are divided by the border system they never knew or understood. The ones who decided were also equally ignorant of what they were doing. Lord Salisbury describes the situation as follows:

“...As British Prime Minister of the day, Lord Salisbury, quipped at a 1890 Anglo-French Conference: “We have been engaged in drawing lines upon maps where no white man's foot ever trod; we have been giving away mountains and rivers and lakes to each other, only hindered by the small impediment that we never knew exactly where the mountains and rivers and lakes were.”...” (Thomson, 2000, p.12).

On the other hand there were cases where boundary lines were drawn or countries were formed, in the interest of the colonial rulers. The same author gives an example of such situations:

“...Why was German South West Africa (Namibia) for example, awarded a narrow tract of land (the Caprivi Strip) to its north-east; and why does West Africa host the tiny state of The Gambia? In the first instance, Namibia's odd shape was created by the strategic requirements of Germany's foreign minister, Count von Caprivi. He insisted that this territory have access to Zambezi River, in order to deploy a gunboat. The second case arose because British commercial interests had established a trading post at the mouth of the River Gambia. Despite French cajoling, the British government refused to give up this territory. Consequently, The Gambia, is a micro-state, no more than fifty kilometres wide at any one point, and entirely engulfed by Senegal (except for its short coast line)....” (p.12).

Another colonial heritage was the economy. The economy was based on extraction of raw material, investing in some sectors that benefit the colonial economy and sending the profit to the mother country. The colonial powers, when they invested it were on primary products that they could export to Europe to be used by processing factories.

At independence as well as today many countries' economies are based on a mono product of raw materials, such as coffee, cocoa, copper, etc. for receiving foreign exchange. As the buyers are determining the prices, many of these countries get low prices for their products.

The high oil price of the 1970s and the low prices of raw products in the world market made many countries fall to economic crisis for a long time. There were countries doing better than others, but in general African economies were/are very weak. Due to lack of communication and economic cooperation most African countries are not trading with each other. They are rather trading with their formal colonisers.

Despite many criticisms, there are academicians like Bill Warren, who will emphasis on positive contribution of colonialism. According to him colonialism contributed for the development of capitalism in third world countries. He also argues despite hardships, colonialism brought to Africa, "improved economic techniques", "better health" and "wider experience of education..." (pp.18-19). But Thomson puts the following as inheritance of colonialism:

"...Six elements within this colonial inheritance of particular importance are: the incorporation of Africa into the international modern state structure; the imposition of arbitrary boundaries; the failure to develop links between the state and society; the promotion of African state elite; the building of specialist export economies; and the absence of strong political institutions..." (p.10).

4.2 Types of Armed Conflicts in 1990s.

There are different views on types of conflicts in Africa. Ted Robert Gurr (in a chapter of a book on conflict resolution in Africa) suggests, class interest, political, ethnic and institutionally based conflicts (Deng & Zartman, 1991, pp.153-189). Other writers are dividing the conflicts in Africa into elite, factional, communal, mass and popular conflicts (Chazan, 1999, pp.198-216). The two mentioned writers mainly focus on political conflicts. These authors and other research based knowledge give support to the conclusion that conflicts in Africa often have multi factors.

To be able to better understand armed conflicts in Africa in the 1990s, I reviewed some materials discussing this topic. To see typologies presented under intra state and inter state conflicts and extents of conflicts, I used SIPRI Year book for 2001 and CIA Year book for 2003 which covers all countries of the world.

4.2.1 Intra state conflicts

By revising the background of some conflicts, I came across several causes for internal conflicts in the countries within the continent. Most of the conflicts were caused due to *claim for power and respect for human rights*. *Ethnic conflicts* were among the dominant types of conflicts. An extension of this was the *clan (inter-ethnic) conflict* in Somalia. The *racial conflict* in South Africa also needs to be mentioned.

Poverty in a country and competition for controlling *resources* led in many countries to the creation of antagonistic groups and severe fighting among them. The attempt to establish a *religious fundamentalist* state in some countries as well as a *conflict between two religions* led some countries into an armed conflict. A claim for *secession* by one group of people caused in some countries armed conflicts of wider span.

From the materials I surveyed, most of the conflicts in the 1990s are intra state conflicts. To be able to understand the reality of the intra state conflicts and their underlying causes, I would like to discuss in brief cases of some countries. To be able to do this I preferred to choose five countries. The countries I chose are from five different geographical regions of Africa; Algeria from the north, Angola from the south, Rwanda from the central, Sierra Leone from the west and The Sudan from eastern Africa. But I will not be refrained from taking relevant examples from other African countries to illustrate the case in point.

In these five countries the major and common conflict agenda was the political power. The claim for political power was expressed in different forms. Ethnic, resources, and religious conflicts are the other three significant conflict agendas in many African countries. The ethnic conflicts were closely related to clan and race questions. Resource conflicts can have a close tie to poverty.

As mentioned earlier the issues of conflict had a close relation to the question of political power. The fundamentalists think by establishing a religious government they will improve peoples' life, the ethnic groups would like to give power to their own ethnic kins-folk, the ones claiming resources would like to have their own share that was earlier denied to them by government that they want to overthrow and take away its power.

4.2.1.1 Power Conflicts

Many of the conflicts in Africa as in many cases in other parts of the world are between rival groups aspiring for political power and trying to achieve it in different ways. In many African countries power after colonialism was concentrated in the hands of few elites. Later on, mainly in the 1970s, many African countries had experienced military governments who used their organisations and weapons to take over power. Few of these took over power by peaceful means while many of them used bloody coups.

In countries like Kenya, political power was gained by election, but the ruling party KANU, was not opposition friendly from the start and later on when it allowed participation of opposition, still the chance of winning for the opposition was limited. KANU controlled power in Kenya for 40 years. The second president of the country, Daniel Arop Moi ruled the country for 24 years. At the end when he finished his term and would not compete again (due

to age), he wanted to see the son of the first Kenyan president (Jomo Kenyatta) in power. But the opposition, Rainbow coalition won over Kenyan African Union (KANU) and took power during the presidential election at the end of year 2002 (UN, 2004).

There are cases when some group of elites feel a sense of injustice in a country and feel they were denied legal floor for airing their grievances. This situation often including abuse of human rights, lack of due process of fair justice and unfair process of election usually leads to armed violence. Yoweri Museveni's government of Uganda and Meles Zenawi's government of Ethiopia are examples of those who took power by guerrilla insurgence.

4.2.1.2 Ethnic conflicts

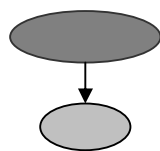
Ethnic conflicts are usually conflicts between two different ethnic groups with different languages, culture and geographical locations. There are cases of intra ethnic conflicts. The clan conflict in Somalia among compatriots with the same language, cultural, religious, and geographical backgrounds is an example of an intra ethnic conflicts.

In South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and other former colonies the question of independence and sovereignty under black rule attributed to racial antagonism that led to armed conflicts. Even if the racial conflicts and the clan conflicts mentioned earlier are important issues the focus of this sub title is ethnic conflicts prevalent in many countries.

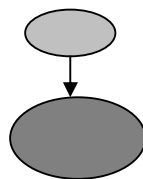
Björn Hettne, in his book "Internationella relationer" in referring to Rothschild, indicates that ethnic conflicts can be caused by ethnic power imbalance. The differences between groups can be caused as a result of their geographical location, resource bases, specialization in some sector and political power (Hettne, 1996, pp.107-114).³

Illustration 2. Types of ethnic relations (Hettne).

1. Dominating Majority.

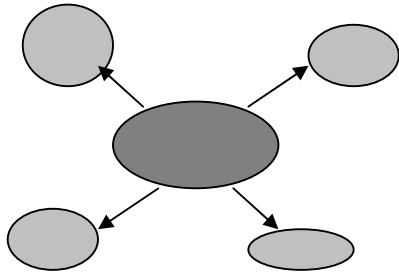


2. Dominating Minority.

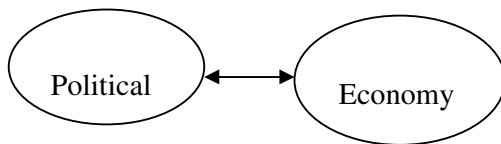


³ Pictorial expressions are taken from Hettne's book in Swedish. The English translations are mine.

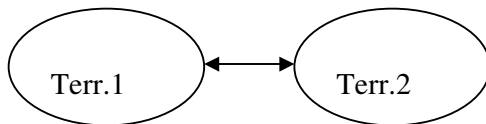
3. Power balance between groups.
(One major population and minor ethnic and population groups).



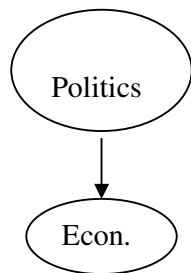
4. Division of power between political and economic sector.



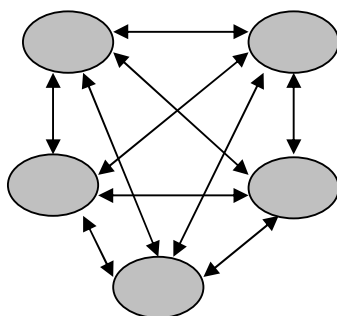
5. Division of power between territory and functionally different groups.



6. Dominated but economically strong minorities.



7. Many small groups in balance.



The forcing of the use of Arabic on the Berber people of Algeria and the monopoly of power and resources by a minority Tigray people of Ethiopia are examples of factors which contribute to ethnic conflicts.

In 1990s Rwanda was the focus of world news due to the 1994 ethnic massacre. The Tutsis and Hutus lived side by side for centuries, the Tutsis as cattle herders and the Hutus as agriculturalists. Even if the Tutsis had a strong position in administrative matters, the two ethnic groups lived together or side by side. There were also Hutu self administered pockets in the country (Ewald., Nilsson., Närman., & Stålgren, p. 90(185)).

It was first the Germans and then the Belgians who strengthened the power of the Tutsi as rulers of both ethnic groups and weakened the Hutu positions in the society. Later on Belgians changed side and encouraged Hutu majorities to take power and administer the country. As the result, the Hutus attacked the Tutsis and took over power. Taking political power also led to taking control over land, which is a very important resource for an agricultural country like Rwanda.

In 1994, when the Hutus massacred the Tutsis, the aim was to keep control of state power for their own ethnic group and to keep the scarce agricultural land for themselves (The Rwandan conflict will be brought up as a case study later).

4.2.1.3 Resource conflicts

Resource conflicts are one of the dominant bases of armed conflicts in Africa. The competition over the control of primary resources such as oil, diamond, gold, water, etc can expose different groups of people, different regions within one country or different countries to armed conflicts.

Since its independence in 1975, Angola was engaged in a continuous war between different rival groups. The fighting in the 1990s between Movimento Popular Libertacao de Angola (MPLA) state and the opposition guerrilla group of Uniao Nacional Para a Independencia Total de Angola (UNITA) was basically a question of political power. But to meet their ends both groups were having their struggle to control the natural resources of the country. UNITA had control over the diamond fields in the south and the government was controlling the oil fields in the Cabinda province in the north. They simultaneously financed the war with the income from these resources.

Even though it is not much familiar to the world media, there is a liberation movement, for the independence of the Cabinda enclave. The enclave is physically separate from the main land of Angola. Mouvement Pour la Libération de l'Enclave de Cabinda (MLEC) is a liberation movement fighting for the break away of the enclave from Angola. The secession is supposed to allow control over the oil resources of the enclave.

The Sierra Leone war was according to some sources (Berkeley, 2001, p.18) encouraged by the Liberian government, among other reasons due to an interest to exploit the diamond resources of Sierra Leone. For some time the diamond mining areas were controlled by the rebel movement Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and later on the government controlled the mines again by hiring private armies (mercenaries) that chased away RUF (Perez, 2000).

In Sudan there was strong fighting between the government, which was exploiting the oil from the south and the opposition Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) fighting to get control over the resources in the south. An attempt of the Sudanese government to control the flow of the Nile in the south was also challenged. The Sudanese government for its own as well as for the benefit of the Egyptian government attempted to build channels to gather the water and lead it to the north. As this was considered to harm the local agriculture in the south, it was disrupted by armed conflict between SPLA and the state (Utrikespolitiska Institutet (Sudan), 2000, p.29).

One widely publicised resource conflict in Africa was between the state and the Ogoni people in the oil rich Niger delta. People's representatives who demanded the share of revenue from the oil and protested against environmental pollution by Shell, were implicated on crimes that the government itself might have committed and claimed that it is them who were responsible. The Nigerian government despite international protest executed the writer, environmentalist and the leader of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People, Ken Saro-wawe and eight other persons in similar vein (Adabonu, 2001).

The resource conflicts in many African countries are not only about primary resources (natural resources) but also about secondary resources. These are resources, which I consider are converted to human use value such as buildings, vehicles, and services of different types.

In many countries in Africa, taking a political office means control over resources of the country. While the political elite, military dictators, monarchies or any other ruler are enjoying an extravagant life, the poor are in a severe shortage of means of survival. Such conditions can lead to violent appraisal or conflicts. One of the preconditions of the 1974 revolution in Ethiopia was luxurious life of the king, the feudal lords and the state elite while the majority of the population were victims of famine and poverty. The king was accused of accumulating a large sum of money in Swiss banks while the people in the Northeast of the country were dying of famine without the knowledge of either the population of the other parts of the country or the international community.

4.2.1.4 Religious conflicts (On Islamic revolutionary thinking).

To understand the Muslim fundamentalist movement, it is necessary to have an overview of the reformist teaching of two significant Muslim intellectuals of the end of nineteenth century, Muhammed Abduh and Jamal al Afghani. The two Egyptians based their philosophy on the French historian Francois Guizot's, *The History of Civilization in Europe*, which was translated into Arabic in 1876 (Brogan, 1998, pp.27-28). Guizot emphasised the importance of existence of a rational government for success of civilization and "scientific political practices were devised jointly by thinkers and politicians." (p. 28)

Abduh and Afghani, considered the “thinkers” as Muslim intellectuals. They emphasised the failure of Islamic civilization was caused by lack of “enlightened” governance and “the division between the religious thinkers and political leaders.” (p.28). They emphasised the role of the intellectuals to fight against this division.

Abduh, the most intellectual one of the two, emphasised Islam’s contribution to the Western civilization and considered this civilization as one of the “unacknowledged instances” of Islamic civilisation and that there are no contradictions between the two.

“Abduh, like so many western philosophers of his time-including the champion of rationalism, Herbert Spencer, whom Abduh admired - thought that was essential to be able to unite science and religion in order to reconstruct a better social order...” (p.29).

After the death of the two intellectuals, Abduh’s follower Rashid Rida came up with conservative reform idea of “Salafiyya (the way of the ancestors)” to refer to the way Islam functioned during the life time of the prophet (p.30). For him reforming Islam in the European way was considered not conducive.

Rida died in 1935 but “Salafiyya” was widely spread and received acceptance by using the organizational channels of the Muslim Brotherhood, which was already founded by Hossan al Banna in 1928.

Both Abduh and Rida favoured the interpretation of Islam by “religious scholars (ulama).” Rida emphasised the earlier Islamic tradition where there were no differences between religious and political leaders. This situation created unease among the leaders of the state, who lacked sufficient knowledge to interpret Islam. Understanding the dangerous trend of this movement, France in the mid 1930s, had forbidden independent Imams access to mosques, limited the number of Islamic schools and censored news papers written in Arabic to halt the expansion of this kind of Islamic reform in Algeria (p.31).

The rationalistic reform movement existed in Algeria in the 1920s under the leadership of Ben Badis, who in 1922 wrote in the movement’s news paper, “El-Muntaqid” that Algerians were “weak and insufficiently evolved,” and that they needed to be “under the protection of a strong and civilized nation that can help them to progress on the road to civilization and development.” (p. 30).

The “Salafiyya (the way of the ancestors)” movement was radicalised by an Egyptian teacher Sayyid Qutb, who became a member of Muslim Brotherhood in 1950, imprisoned in 1954 and was executed later on by Nasser’s administration. (pp. 32-33)

Qutb emphasised in addition to “preaching and persuasion” Islam must use force for “overthrowing ‘un-Islamic’ institutions.” All types of administration or state formations that are not based on Islam according to Qutb, are subjects to be put aside by radical Islamic groups (p.35). The root causes of violence by Muslim fundamentalists, have their roots from this philosophy of clearing a way for Islamic state that will lead to Islamic civilization.

Algeria

Algeria is one of the African countries where Muslim fundamentalism became deeply rooted. The 1990s' conflict in Algeria started when the fundamentalist organization, The Islamic Salvation Front (Front Islamique du Salut-FIS) won the democratic election for local council in 1990 and scored another victory by gaining 188 out of 430 seats in the first round of election for national legislature in 1991. Before the second round election of the national legislature was held the military intervened, forced president Benjedid to dissolve parliament and suspend constitution, and to resign. He was replaced by another temporary president Mohammed Boudiaf. FIS launched protest demonstrations in different parts of the country. Soon the "High Council of State" a new regime established and declared a state of emergency for one year (Brogan, 1998, p.10).

As the result of the rejection of power, the fundamentalists organised guerrilla groups and fought against the government and against the civilian population. The government also hunted and killed many of the fundamentalists. Later FIS was divided into two, "between extremists and ultra extremists." The ultra extremist group called itself, Group Armé Islamique (GAI). GAI is very aggressive in its attacks on civilians they consider enemies. Among these enemies are women not wearing shawl. The slaughtering of people, rape, assassination are common activities of the group. The organisation in addition to local atrocities attacked the French embassy, hijacked a French airplane and undertook terrorist acts in France (p.88).

The Sudan

The Sudan is another country where a strong fundamentalist movement has existed for a long time. Religious conflicts in the 1990s have their roots a long time back and have basically been between the Muslim North and the Christian South. But recent developments show there is another dimension of the conflict where the state Islam is in conflict with Muslims in the rebel controlled Nuba Mountains.

The Islamic fundamentalism in the Sudan has its roots in the leaders of 1870s Sudanese revolt against Anglo-Egyptian administration under the leadership of Mohammed Ahmed, who gave himself a title of "Mahdi" and Abdullah ibn Mohammed who entitled himself "Khalifa." During the Anglo-Egyptian administration the North and the South were administered separately. The North continued to exercise Islam and to speak Arabic and the South was taught English and preached Christianity. In addition to difference of language and religion, the northerner are dominantly Arab while the southerner are classified as Sudanic Nilo-Hamites and Nilotes (Ruay, 1994, p.16).

The Sudan got its independence in 1956 with civil administration but already in 1958 a military coup took place and General Ibrahim Abboud became president. He was hard handed against the South, he introduced Arabic as a national language, changed in decree the day of rest from Sunday to Friday, expelled Christian missionaries, and exiled many southerners. The exiled Sudanese in 1963 formed a resistance movement called Anya Nya (Snake Venom) (Brogan, 1998, p.107).

In another coup in 1969, General Jaafar Nimeiri took power and in 1972 he reached agreement with the southerners, by pardoning the rebels, integrating them in the army and putting three regions of the South together and creating autonomous regional assembly in Juba. But Nimeiri gradually became more conservative and religiously fanatic. Brogan summarised the situation as follows:

“Nimeiri became increasingly autocratic as the years passed. He also became an extreme Muslim fundamentalist, imposing the sharia, the Koranic law code, upon the country. Adulterers were stoned to death, thieves had their hands amputated, and the prohibition against alcohol was extended to medical alcohol in hospitals. In January 1985, Mahmoud Mohammed Taha, a leader of one of the secular parties, Republican Brotherhood, was publicly hanged in Khartoum for questioning the wisdom of Nimeiri’s religious fanaticism.” (p.107).

In 1983 a new organisation, the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Army (SPLA) took up arms under the leadership of Colonel John Garang. Since then the fighting continued with wide civil casualties of both sides.

In the South the Sudanese government continued imposing Arabic as a language and Islam as religion. Later on the invitation of National Islamic Front (NIF), lead by Hassan al Turabi in to the politics of the country strengthened the conservative elements of the regimes that cooperated with it. Recently Hassan al Turabi was arrested by the Sudanese government (GP, 1 April 2004, p.16).

The state in addition to expelling the missionaries, built Islamic schools, Islamic institutes and mosques intensively in the south. Local chiefs were forced to change their religion, merchants were told in order to succeed they needed to change religion and children were converted without their wish. On the situation of children Ruay writes:

“As to the Christian children, their foreheads were rubbed with sand, washed with soap and then told the sign of the cross having been erased they should now embrace Islam...” (Ruay, 1994, p.102).

When the SPLA activities later on were extended to the Nuba mountains, burning of churches and killing Christians in these areas started to take place. The population in the area is dominantly Muslim, and also the guerrilla group was lead by local Muslim commanders. The government in Khartoum however rejected in general the Muslims in the area. For the Sudanese government the Muslim who were not moving out of the rebel held areas could not be considered Muslims and their Mosques were burned down and their villages were plundered by soldiers.

One Imam in the Nuba mountains expressed the situation to a publication of African Rights by saying:

“...My feeling is that the government of Sudan forces are racists⁴ and not Muslims because I can’t imagine a Muslim burning a Mosque...I refuse their version of Islam of looting, burning and killing...” (Rakiya, 1995, p.287).

⁴ The Imam used the word maybe to indicate the attitude of the dominant Arab ruling class of the country towards the indigenous African population.

4.2.2 Inter state conflicts

Inter state conflicts as intra state conflicts could be caused due to political, economic, ethnic and religious factors. In some countries *an influence of a fighting in the neighbouring countries* can contribute to unrest in border areas, but there were cases where those kinds of conflicts led to a full-blown fighting. *Political, border and territorial conflicts* experienced in the 1990s are discussed below.

4.2.2.1 Politically motivated conflicts

Politically motivated conflicts could be caused because of the support of some inhabitants in the border area in one country to their ethnic brothers in the other country. When governments do perceive they are threats to each other, they can initiate and support an opposition group in their neighbouring Country. Keeping each others opposition groups in their own countries is a common phenomena for example Ethiopia keeps an Eritrean opposition group in its territory and Eritrea also takes similar action, Uganda is supporting the SPLA and Sudan is giving support to the Lord's Resistant Army (LRA) of Uganda.

These opposition groups are usually provided with a military base, arms, finance, other materials and strategic advice. In many cases, these opposition groups also receive support from different sources out of the region.

Many African countries with some problems with their neighbours usually run double diplomacy, one open diplomacy and another one in the back of a curtain. It is not unusual to see the leaders of the countries shaking hands with broad smiles in the newspapers or addressing one another as good neighbours or giving good remarks about their wonderful relations.

4.2.2.2 Border conflicts

Even if some border conflicts are latent, there are many of them existing between several African countries. Fèlix Nkundabagenzi, in a paper on conflict prevention, management and resolution, based on West African situations, claims that border conflicts can have three motives; economical, strategic and socio-political (Asiwaju, in Nkundabagenzi, 1998, p.5).

The first issue in the motivation is referring to minerals, fisheries and water. The second one is emphasising on the motives of destabilising the neighbouring country, for one's own advantage. The third motive is the "spill over effect," a conflict in one country can spread to another country (p.5).

An open border conflict was fought in the end of 1990s between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The conflict may have many motives behind, but it was caused by a lack of clear and commonly accepted border between the countries (Combined with the lack of clarity of border, both sides have a claim over a place called Bademe).

When the Eritrean forces crossed the Ethiopian border in 1998 and occupied small towns around the border, some days' later Ethiopian forces responded to the attack. Then the Eritrean air force bombed the major northern Ethiopian city of Mekele, which caused the Ethiopian air force to attack Asmara airport. These events finally lead to an open war fought by using conventional armies and claimed a lives of between 50,000 and 75,000 troops and displaced up to 600,000 civilians from both side (Negash & Tronvoll, 2000, pp.2-3). The war caused a large destruction to property and incurred a huge amount of financial expenses for both the poor countries.

A border conflict between Cameroon and Nigeria was caused because of claim of ownership of the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula. At the end the International Court of Justice decided the right owner of the area to be Cameroon. Both countries have accepted the decision and were on preparation to demarcate their border according to the decision (see, [africaonline](#)).

4.2.2.3 Territorial conflicts

Territorial claims exist between different countries. One example was the situation in Eastern Africa, where Somalia's irredentist policy led the country into a conflict with neighbouring countries.

Somalia wanted to reunite Djibouti,⁵ Somaliland (which was a British colony), Southern Somalia (which was an Italian colony), Ogaden from Ethiopia and the Frontier areas in Kenya. Since its independence from Italy in 1960, Somali had irredentist policy, which was strengthened by its dictatorial president Siad Barre who dreamed to create the greater Somalia and because of this dream and claim of territories fought with both Ethiopia and Kenya. (Somalia Net, 2001).

Latent territorial conflicts still exist between different countries, some of them not limited to African countries. Examples are Comoros Islands claiming the Mayotte Island from France (Abraham, 2001) and Morocco's conflict over the Leila islet with Spain. Spain is claiming to get it from Morocco (Short & smith, 2002).

⁵ Djibouti was French colony up to 1977. Half of its population are Somalis and half of them Issas.

Chapter 5. Lessons of the Rwandan Massacre for Armed Conflict Prevention

5.1 Background to the conflict

Rwanda is located in central Africa and inhabited by Twas, Tutsis and Hutus. The Twa are the original people of Rwanda, the Hutus came between 700-800 A.D and the Tutsis arrived around 1400 A.D (UI (Rwanda), 2003, p.4). According to the same source, the Hutus are 84%, the Tutsis 15% and the Twa 1% of the population (p.5). Kinyarwanda is a common language for the Hutus and Tutsis. Since the conversion of the country's Tutsi king in 1931 Christianity (Catholicism) was declared state religion. Traditionally the Twa are hunter-gatherers, the Tutsis herders and the Hutu farmers (McCullum, 1994).

Before colonialism, the Tutsis herders had a better position in the society because of ownership of cattle, a very important wealth at that time. The Hutus who owned cattle were promoted to a position of Tutsis and the Tutsis who lost their cattle were considered as Hutus. In 1926 the Belgians decided, the vertical movement between the Tutsi herders and the Hutu agriculturalists should be based instead of on the general ownership of cattle, on the number of cattle one owns. Those who owned more than 10 cows were considered as Tutsis while the remaining population was considered as Hutus (Ewald, Nilsson, Närman & Stålgren, 2004, p. 90(185)).

Even if the Tutsis had a dominant position in the Rwandan society, there was mobility of position as indicated by ownership of cattle and there were also self administered Hutu pockets in the country. During the German colonial occupation between 1899 to 1916 and then after the First World War when Rwanda was given as protectorate to Belgians by League of Nations, from 1916 to 1961, the Hutu positions in the society were degraded and the Tutsi dominance strengthened. The Tutsi king was made a Rwandan king (Prunier, 1998; Igwara, 1995).

The colonial powers used a race myth that classified the Tutsis closer to the Hamitic, claiming as evidence their physical appearance and administrative talent. At the same time the majority of the country's population the Hutus were considered Bantus who were both physically and intellectually inferior. This pseudo-scientific claim was strengthened by the Belgians' introduction of an ID system to differentiate between the two groups (Barnet, 2002; McCullum, 1994).

The colonial support to the Tutsi continued until the 1950s when the Tutsis started demanding independence from the Belgians. Then the Belgians gradually started giving their support to the Hutus with emphasis on the concept of majority democracy. The Hutu who were under-represented in the education and other sectors started their protest through their few intellectuals.

In 1959 the Hutus revolted against the Tutsis. The Hutus started occupying important positions and after the 1961 election, the Hutus took total control over government administration (Adelman and Suhrke, 1999). Between 1959 and 1967 20,000 Tutsis were killed and about 300,000 left the country (IPEP, 2000) to become refugees in different neighbouring countries, mainly Uganda.

The first Hutu president, Grégoire Kayibanda, administered the country between 1961 and 1973. During these years the Tutsis were harassed, excluded from military and administrative posts and exiled. Later on Minister of Defence, Juvénal Habyarimana, overthrew Kayibanda took power and administered the country until his death in April, 1994. Under Habyarimana until 1990, there was not much unrest in the country.

5.2 The 1994 Genocide

The children of the Tutsis who left their country as refugees in the beginning of 1960s, fought as soldiers in the Ugandan guerrilla led by Yoweri Museveni against the Ugandan government in the middle of 1980s. After Museveni took power in Uganda in 1986, the Rwandans who were in his army founded Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in 1987. These Tutsis wanted to take arms for claiming their right of returning back to Rwanda, which was denied by the government (Destexhe, 1995).

During the years of Juvénal Habyarimana, Rwandans experienced lesser ethnic conflicts. But the sudden attack by RPF in 1990 alerted the Hutu ruling class. The ruling elite even though unwilling to share power or any resources with Tutsis, was forced to negotiate with the rebel forces for peace. But at the same time a preparation and plan for the “final solution,” mass murder of the Tutsi population was going on.

The preparation started after the attack by RPF in 1990. Hate propaganda, formation of militia groups, training and arming of the youth militia, distribution of weapon to people, arrest and killing of Tutsis in different regions, etc were parts of the plan for what was to come. The shooting down of the presidential airplane in April 6, 1994 was the igniting factor for the Genocide that took a lives of about 800,000 people within 100 days.

5.3 Could it have been possible to prevent the Genocide?

As indicated above, the Rwandan genocide was not an overnight phenomenon. The plan for murdering of the Tutsis was undertaken for more than three years. The Hutu core group, Akazu, gathered around the president's wife as the leading person, was not at all ready to share power with the Tutsis. They were rather leading the preparation to eliminate the Tutsis since the 1990 attack by RPF.

The formation of an additional radical Hutu party, the creation of Hutu youth militia groups, the use of radio Mille Collines for propaganda against the Tutsis, and the intensive identification of the Tutsi were major indicators of the genocide to come.

Beyond the general indications, the UN peace keepers in Rwanda received an intelligence report from the inside Hutu core group about the planned genocide. Receiving this important information, the head of the peace keeping force, the Canadian general Roméo Dallaire informed the UN about the situation. He also requested his superiors in New York, if he could take action against the weapon depot of interhamawe militia group supported by the ruling party, but he was instructed not to engage but to inform the government of Rwanda about the situation. A report by International Panel of Eminent Personalities (a neutral body of

international personalities appointed by Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to investigate about the 1994 Rwanda genocide), describes the situation as follows:

“As the conspiracy thus widened and deepened, so did knowledge of conspirators’ intentions. Virtually every one in Rwanda associated with UN, the diplomatic community or human rights groups, knew about death lists, accelerating massacres, and threats to opposition politicians. International armed traders worked overtime behind the scenes. Rwanda’s capital, Kigali, resembled an arms bazaar, with modern weaponry easily available in the city’s markets. The UN military mission uncovered a high-level interahamwe informant, whose revelations led UN commander General Roméo Dallaire to send his famous fax of January 11, 1994 to the UN’s headquarters in New York. In his fax Dallaire reported that, “Jean-Pierre [the interahamwe informer] has been ordered to register all Tutsis in Kigali. He suspects it is for their extermination. Example he gave was that in 20 minutes his personnel could kill up to 1,000 Tutsis.” (IPEP, 2000: p.X).

The situation of involving into Rwanda’s conflict was raised by the UN Security Council. The Americans who had lost their 18 soldiers in Somalia in October 3 1993, could not see any interest of their country and were not ready to allow any budget or any kind of support for the idea. The French were not either considering the idea because of their good relation with the then existing government of Juvénal Habyarimana (Eriksson, 1996, pp.21-23).

UN was rather compelled to minimize its force, of only 2500 at the time. Because of the death of 10 Belgian soldiers, the UN forces were later withdrawn from the country. This situation gave rather a freehand for the Hutu extremists to do what ever they wanted without any third party interference.

The French army later arriving under the name “Operation Turquoise”, could protect further blood shade but it came late and mainly focused on giving a safe passage for the Hutu extremists and Hutu refugees to DRC.

If the UN forces, African troops and forces from other countries had acted in defence of the civilian population the genocide could have been averted. Even if total aversion would have been difficult, it would have been possible to minimize the casualties.

In general, if colonial powers had not exploited the differences between the Tutsis and Hutus, and if they would not have been favoured one against the other, the grounds for genocide would not have been laid. If churches had preached love instead of hatred many who sheltered themselves in the churches would have survived. On the other hand if the Hutu who controlled power in monopoly for some times would have been ready to share power with the Tutsis, allowed Tutsi refugees to return home when they needed, if they would have been ready to negotiate with RPF before it started its armed offensive, etc. they could have made it impossible for the genocide of 1994 to happen.

The International Panel of Eminent Personalities (IPEP) report mentioned above gave a short summary of information on what the world knew before the Genocide. The list included information from October 1990 to October 1993. Killings and harassments of Tutsis, the formation of an extremist party Coalition pour la Défense de la République (CDR), the requirement, training and arming of two militia group, the hate propaganda, the direct plan for

the Genocide, etc was known in different parties of the world before the Genocide (IPEP, 2000, pp. 58-60). The UN, big powers, international NGOs, the developed world, African countries, etc. together with a good plan of short term and long term armed conflict prevention could have avoided the killing of 800,000 people. Rwandan victims of the Genocide remain in the conscience of those who ignored it while it still was possible to prevent it.

Chapter 6. Views of Diaspora Africans and Swedes familiar with Africa.

This part of the paper is considered as a supplement to the literature survey. Totally 21 individuals accepted the request to be interviewed. Personal interviews were conducted with 14 individuals, while group interviews were made with two groups of two individuals and one group of three individuals. Some persons who were approached were not willing to be interviewed because either they thought they are ignorant about the subject, or they claimed they are engaged in this field of study and have therefore their own bias about the subject that could colour the study. I respected both opinions and left them out.

The interviewees are women and men, Muslims and Christians, younger and older, academicians and those working in other fields, Africans and Swedes. The 18 African interviewees are from Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria and Somalia. Three Swedes were interviewed but other seven preferred to discuss on the theme with me rather than to give a recorded interview.

As I have been using Grounded Theory as a method for this part of the thesis, less emphasis has been given to whom the interviewees or respondents are. The Africans I interviewed are not representatives to the large African Diaspora but they are part of it. Some of them lived in Africa during the time their countries experienced armed conflicts and others have an expert knowledge on the subject. My intention has been that the diversity of respondents can provide a variety of information.

The interview questions are structured but the interviewees were encouraged to come up with as much information as they wanted to share. Responses for each question will be presented separately. Some interviewees are quoted, but in general other responses are summarised.

6.1 Causes of armed conflicts in 1990s

Regarding the causes of armed conflicts in Africa in 1990s, different persons gave varied replies. Political, economic, ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic, border and end of cold war are major ones. The political and economic factors are considered to be the two main categories, which include various factors. One interviewee summarized it as:

“Post cold war identity driven intrastate conflicts are common in the continent...Alienation of some groups from the political process and the economic process by the state leads to armed conflict. As a state is involved in this process, to fight these alienations they have to fight the state.”

The political conflict can lead to armed violence due to various reasons. One major reason could be a struggle to take over the political power by competing groups. A second one can be a struggle to share power with those who occupied it in monopoly. When peaceful means are exhausted, the struggle can take a form of guerrilla warfare or military coup. A third cause can be a counter action against investment of resources and concentration of services in a particular region on the expense of others. The attempt to shape and create an ethnic identity, resistance to imposition of other languages, culture, and religion can be other political causes.

Economic causes also play a major role for armed conflicts. As a result of the control of political power, the political elite is living in abundance while the majority of the population lives in poverty. This unfair resource distribution, exclude the masses from economic benefit and leads to frustration and gradual violence.

In cases like the Sudan the presence of oil in the South and the attempt to control it has caused repeated violence. The Sudanese government would like to control it and exploit it, while SPLA on the other hand tries to stop this because the area is within the territory it claims to administer in the future.

Aspiration of resources control can also lead to external conflicts. The blood diamond in Sierra Leone – Liberia situation, the rich resources of Zaire that contributed to confrontation between many African countries, etc., is worth mentioning. There is also an emerging conflict between Egypt and other countries of the Nile basin because of the waters of the Nile. An 80 years old agreement with the British colonial power gave Egypt a right to be the main beneficiary of the Nile river. But the other countries would not like to abide by this old agreement that will end in 2009 (Christian Science Monitor, 16 March 2004). If not handled carefully and on time this can lead to an armed conflict between the neighbouring countries and Egypt.

6.2 Main actors in armed conflicts of 1990s

Different actors are considered to participate in armed conflicts in Africa. Replies given by some interviewee are in some cases similar but explained in different ways. An Ethiopian interviewee commented that,

“People who are excluded from sharing political power, excluded from decision making process and unfairly treated can be among the actors. An opposition group can take up arms after possibilities for political compromise are exhausted. Armed conflicts in some cases can be instigated by forces outside a country, means foreign interests that try to keep the state in power weak.”

The army because of its “patriotic thinking”, discipline, organization and as well as having access to weapon was mentioned to be among the actors in most armed conflicts in Africa.

The government with its different needs and structures is usually one of the main actors in armed conflicts. The government’s rejection and terrorising of some groups can lead the groups to taking arms and then the government chasing them as bandits, enemies, etc.

Traditional leaders and religious leaders can be actors in armed conflict. Traditional leaders usually have a wide social base in the society and religious leaders can as a result of their spiritual authority and the respect they secure from their congregations play a role of a leading actor.

Many of the respondents mentioned the educated elites, especially those with higher education as actors in armed conflicts. The educated elites participate as actors for various reasons. If they are controlling the economic or the political arena, they act on defending it from others intervention against their monopoly. When they are not in control of power they will fight for it by mobilizing a large group of followers. One interviewee mentioned, “the elites in many countries in Africa take up an ethnic or national question for fulfilling their political ambition with a support of their ethnic or national kin’s.”

The oppressed mass, opposition groups, armed rebellion, etc. were other mentioned actors in armed conflicts. When they cannot achieve their rights or claims by peaceful means they usually resort to armed conflicts.

There are also regional and international actors. The regional actors are usually neighbouring countries with border conflicts or territorial claims, countries that consider the state in the neighbouring country as a threat to their security. The state which consider its neighbours as a threat can interfere by supporting armed opposition to the neighbours by providing the opposition with military base, training their fighters, handing them with arms, financing their different activities, etc.

The interference of Tanzania in Uganda under Idi Amin’s rule is given as an example. The other example is the engagement of Uganda and Rwanda in the Zaire war by helping the Zairian rebel group of Bangamulungu. They did this because they were suspecting the Zairian government was supporting the Rwandan Hutu militia that was attacking Rwanda across the border. Charles Taylor’s Liberia was implicated for supporting Sierra Leone’s RUF guerilla group considering the Sierra Leone’s government help to Liberia’s rebels and for securing access to the “blood diamonds.” The population and resource rich Nigeria will work hard to have influence in some countries in the region.

In a global arena industrial countries producing arms are playing a role of an actor in armed conflicts by selling their weapons. An interviewee commented China was selling weapons to the Sudanese. Super powers such as France, England and USA are supporting undemocratic states because of their political and economic interests. The Arab world would also like to extend its influence in the African countries, who have Islam as their national religion.

6.3 Possibilities to foresee armed conflicts

The answer by all interviewees is, yes it is possible to foresee if an existing dispute/tension may lead to an armed conflict. The comments can be divided into observable and expressed phenomena that can indicate the possibility of dispute or tension leading to armed conflict.

6.3.1 Observable indications

The observable indications are, First, when power is accumulated in the hands of one ethnic group and the group is too authoritarian in its relation to the others. Second, when conflicting interests exist and these interests are not looked well after. Third, when a government is imposing policies that are not accepted by recipients. Fourth, based on a) extent and nature of oppression; b) strength of opposition group; c) if the oppressed consider armed confrontation

as a last resort and get resources for carrying it out. As an example of the last point one of the interviewee took up about the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa.

“ANC was founded in 1912 and had a long history of peaceful opposition against the apartheid system. But it was only in 1962 that it raised arms and started to fight against the apartheid regime. It has taken a long time, decades of peaceful demonstrations and non-violent opposition...”

Fifth, when negotiations between parties of conflict fail. An example was given about the Ethio-Eritrean war. As the negotiation failed, it was not difficult to predict what was to come. Sixth, due to political instability; for example political instability caused due to some groups' insistence to stay in power by using all means. Seventh, when a group is preparing through propaganda, militia training and other activities, like the Rwanda case. Eighth, when people are breaking rules and laws and are refusing to participate in government programmes; and Ninth when people are desperate due to recognition of some dictatorial regimes, by international community and big powers. Cameroon is given as an example to such a situation. Cameroon is both Francophone and Anglophone. The country is accepted as a member of the Commonwealth but it is represented by its Francophone leaders and they address meetings in French. The English-speaking minority feels their voice is suffocated.

6.3.2 Expressed indications

The expressed indications can take a form through different means and actions. One can first consider expressions through different means. In this category, first, the mass media, the newspaper, the radio, the tv, etc. can give indication of what is going on in a country. Second, people start criticising a government by expressing their grievances. Third, the international organizations such as UN, human rights organizations such as African Watch, different organizations within the country express what is going on; and Fourth, comments by international elections observer groups about election fraud.

The second category in the expressed indications are the following observable actions. First, when individuals from different groups stop greeting each other, talking to each other, stop drinking coffee together, stop socialising, etc. Second, when they talk at the back of each other. Third, when people show their dissatisfaction through strikes and demonstrations.

6.4 Measures to avert foreseeable armed conflicts

Different measures are recommended by different persons. In summary they circulate around measures that should be taken by the state, UN and other international actors are named.

The government in a country must work towards avoiding all kinds of discrimination against different groups. Any group should not be a victim of isolation from sharing political power and economic resources of a country. In South Africa the isolation of the black majority from the political, economic and social sectors was what lead to armed conflict.

To avoid armed conflict that could come as an effect of economic problems the state must invest on eradicating poverty. Creating employment opportunities for the young people who otherwise could easily be drawn to armed conflicts, is an important measure.

Democratisation is important for averting future-armed conflict. As this process is also allowing a room for the opposition in the political process it will minimize the choice of people taking arms. A Kenyan informant mentioned the situation in Kenya and Tanzania where the existence of a democratic system based on African reality avoided risk of armed conflicts. He said:

“ Take for example Kenya, where people were thinking there is going to be armed conflicts because of political instability. Because we have a sort of democracy, there are different ways of solving disputes, so that the rule of the law coming in. If you are having democracy within African context, it is one way to pre-empt the armed conflict...Take Tanzania as another example, there are many ethnic groups but ethnic difference is not a big deal.”

The UN and other international organizations such as the German based organisation, Transparency International, could assess issues and indicate situations. The UN could intervene and mediate conflicts in an early stage. Warnings and actual embargos through UN can help averting armed conflicts.

6.5 Avoiding relapse to armed conflicts

After the end of an armed conflict, it is important to disarm the groups in agreement with the peace accord reached. A talk should be prioritised over weapon.

Transitional administration representing the conflicting parties and other important societal forces must be established. The transitional administration, should undertake the reconstruction and reconciliation process. According to one interviewee for the reconciliation it is important:

“To bring the groups together to find out what has happened. To study what lead to the conflict that caused the loss of several human lives and property before and what can cause them in the future. Based on this knowledge develop a strategy not to repeat the same mistake.”

Many of the respondents emphasised the fulfilling of agreements reached and to keep all promises given. They also emphasised the need to introduce democracy, creating an atmosphere for free expression and making people feel there is a justice in the country. An Ugandan interviewee said:

“You know when Idi Amin overthrew a democratically elected government people supported him. Then when he was overthrown by an other government, people supported the new comer too. People support new comers some times it is not because they like them but they are afraid of being heart or killed.”

Avoiding discriminating structures, sharing political power and economic resources will protect a country from relapsing to armed conflict. An interviewee from Mozambique saw a trend he did not like, trend of greater emphasis on development around the capital Maputo after the end of armed conflicts, at the expense of the other regions.

Another important point raised by a respondent is the inclusion of different parties in the reconciliation and reconstruction process. According to him there are “spoilers” who will sabotage the peace to prevail, “ One should identify them and neutralise them.” Otherwise, according to him, the major stakeholders of the conflict need to be included in the reconciliation. He said,

“In the Ethiopian conflict some years back, the peace process did not include the unarmed opposition, the intellectual and public representatives. This is not a good measure for the future peace.”

An interviewee from Ivory Coast thought that in cross border conflicts, when borders are dividing the same ethnic groups, if borders could be opened for free movements of people and commodities it might strengthen the future peaceful relations between countries. This needs cooperation of neighbouring countries. Other countries in the region and outside the region, the UN and the international community at large must strengthen the reconciliation and peace process through aid, investment and other strengthening measures.

6.6 Long-term and short-term measures for preventing armed conflicts

6.6.1 Short-term measures

If the measures we are thinking of are for preventing an active armed conflict the first priority should be to stop the violence. Following the stopping of violence a dialogue should continue. To observe the respect for the agreement and disarmament process, a neutral non-combatant force can be allowed to intervene.

The provision of food, clothing, shelter, rehabilitation of different groups including child soldiers is very important. Refugees must return home and be helped to resettle in their communities. As a rehabilitation process for the affected people, they must as soon as possible be given some kind of work in order to return to normal routines of life.

In a peaceful situation it is important to assess the circumstances on the basis of different information from various sources such as UN, Transparency International, Amnesty International and other human rights watchdogs.

Giving sufficient attention to local political problems, allowing rights of expression, discouraging the use of and controlling the distribution of arms are among necessary short term measures. Using continental organisations such as the African Union (AU) and strengthening continental democracy in such processes such as New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD’s) “Peer Review” which is on its way to be implemented, are among short term measures.

6.6.2 Long-term measures

Various long term measures are proposed from the respondents. The proposals focus mainly on political and economic measures.

Creating an economic independence by creating possibilities for economic engagement, sharing of economic resources between different groups of the population and different regions are emphasised.

Concerning the political measures, an Ethiopian respondent took up the need for establishing a democratic structure for implementing democratic principles and ideals. He also mentioned the need for good vertical and horizontal relations. The vertical relations between the ruling state and the people should be legitimised by people electing their leaders. In the horizontal relation between people, the relation should be based on tolerance and respect for each other. The right of ethnic groups to expression their culture, language and religion must be respected. But government politics must be led by democratic and human rights principles.

An interviewee from Mozambique, problematised the question of provision of democratic rights for people. He discussed the point as follows:

“The long term solution is to empower the people not only giving rights to people because people are not able to exercise it. The measure of state intervention should be that the state must have been making those rights actualised. Otherwise the content of people’s rights are empty. That is a long term strategy for armed conflict prevention.

In a centralised system if a ministry is located in Maputo and infrastructures are not developed, how can a person on the opposite corner of the country be able to send a paper to complain to a ministry, if the post is not functioning and he is not able to write. You must have a state whose main role in the long term peace making process is to empower the people.”

6.7 Actors for preventing future armed conflicts

6.7.1 Internal Actors

Within one country the state should be a vanguard for future-armed conflict prevention. In addition to the state the opposition groups, religious organisations and educational institutions can play a vital role.

One Swedish informant emphasised the importance of the educational institutions in upbringing children with an understanding of how to peacefully resolve conflicts. The values and norms of respecting the life and property of other human beings should be focused upon. Depending on their age and level of understanding children need to be engaged in the process of armed conflict prevention through their education.

In addition to the school the role of women is very important. Women in Africa have a significant role in child upbringing. Raising their children includes informing them about culture, language, religion and other important aspects of life early in children’s lives. So, mothers can take a role of inculcating peaceful thinking on their children. A Kenyan woman interviewee suggested that women in addition to orienting their children, can struggle against future armed conflicts through their different associations and mass media.

The elderly in Africa play an important role in resolving conflicts of various nature. By tradition they wisely reside over conflicts between individuals, families, tribes, etc. They can be actors for preventing violent conflict in the future.

In general, the population in a country can engage on different levels in the process. Regional, urban, rural, village, household and individual level engagement in the armed conflict prevention is necessary.

6.7.2 External Actors

Different external actors can engage to prevent future-armed conflicts. As a peace in a country is related to a peace in neighbouring countries, neighbouring countries for their own sake must avoid an act of encouraging and supporting violence against their neighbours.

An interviewee raised a point that sub-regional organisations such as Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) have played and are playing roles in trying to minimize violence and solving problems between factions in Somalia. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWS) armed wing ECOMAG has been a significant actor in dealing with armed conflict prevention and peace keeping in West Africa.

OAU through its peace keeping force acted with a motive of armed conflict prevention in different countries on the continent (Abraham,2002). The establishment of AU and its conflict prevention organ and its early warning system can play an important role for the future armed conflict prevention in and between member states.⁶

The UN and its different bodies, the Security Councils, UNDP, UNESCO, etc can play a positive role. Other international organisations such as, Amnesty International, African Watch, Transparency International, etc through reporting a situation in a country can contribute to armed conflict prevention.

An interviewee from Mozambique said, "...The big powers act when they want and where they want to act; not when and where the need is obvious." He also explained that big powers act where they have an interest. In Africa also there should be the same kind of common interest the big powers and different countries share, that can be a carrot for the big powers to react and act. Acting for the sake of morality has no future.

The EU countries, other big powers and the world's industrial countries can contribute to armed conflict prevention in two major ways. The first is through the provision of aid for the needy people and investing in developing countries economy. The second measure they can take is strictly controlling the export of arms to vulnerable countries and restricting and bringing to justice their national who act as mercenaries to destabilise a country or a region in Africa.

⁶ For more information about the peace and security council see, <http://www.africa-union.org/home/welcome.htm> (OAU is evolved to AU since 2002).

Part Three

Chapter 7. Discussion

Each conflict has its own specific characters and specific causes that can lead to armed violence. This does not mean one conflict has nothing to do with conflicts in other countries on the continent. As we saw in Chapter 4 conflicts can be categorized as power-, ethnic-, resource-, religious-, politically motivated-, border-, and territorial conflicts. The conflicts between the different religious groups in the Sudan and among different Muslim groups in Algeria can be categorized as religious conflicts, keeping in mind their similarities and differences.

The questions I posed about armed conflicts, their actors and on ways of dealing with them are mainly based on findings from 14 articles⁷ I considered in the beginning. I have used Grounded Theory coding systems to identify concepts and categories. The articles led me to create categories on *causes* for armed conflict, on *actors* of armed conflicts and actors for armed conflict prevention, on *possibilities to foresee* the coming armed conflict, on how to *avert it* and if it already took place how to *work against its relapsing*. These categories will be discussed more later on.

In order to appreciate the complexities around a conflict situation, I used conflict theories by different sociologists and modern theoreticians of peace and conflict research. The bases laid by the previous theoreticians and followed up by the recent ones on group or societal conflicts are assessed.

For more understanding of the realities of conflicts in Africa, in addition to literature survey, interviews, face to face discussions with some individuals, I made telephone and e-mail contacts with some persons with knowledge or experience about armed conflicts. The study using these methods and different sources has given me many important ideas on the subject.

The literature survey and information from individuals have a lot of similarities concerning causes of conflicts. There are instances that individuals can come with views that are not common, for example one interviewee mentioned UN as actor in armed conflict. According to him when UN is not acting to prevent armed conflicts it is indirectly cooperating with parties of conflict.

I saw a difference between interviewees based in the amount of information, depth and complexity of their reply depending on their experience and knowledge of the subject. A literature can usually cover diverse areas of armed conflicts compared to what I received from individuals, but when results of different interviews and responses are put together I can see they have a weight of a good literature.

Neither *all* literature nor *all* interviewees or informants can give “good “ information or fact. I needed to choose what I considered relevant for this work. The advantages I saw with a dialogue with individuals is that I could get first hand information from them, and pose a question directly when things are not clear enough.

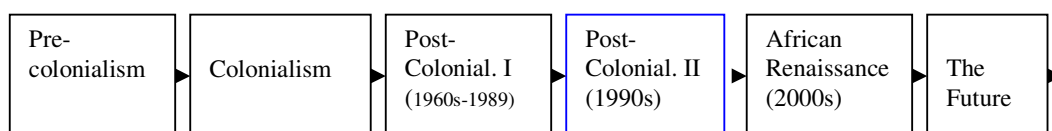
⁷ The articles are summarized in Chapter 3 and they are included in the litterateur list separately.

The review of historical reality of the continent with focus on the causes of conflicts, types of conflicts, and how they were expressed was a foundation for understanding the periods that followed. The reality of the colonial era, helps to see the situation of post colonial time.

For the purpose of this study post colonial period is divided into two uneven periods. The long time between mass independence of the 1960s up to the end of 1980s was followed by decade, that started in 1990 through to the new millennium.

The period after independence was dominated by political and economic corruption, dependence on former colonizing countries economy, power struggle within countries, and influence of the cold war. The 1990s, which is a focus for this study, was dominated by internal armed conflicts due to various reasons, vicious circles of poverty, human rights abuse, ethnic and religious based problems, environmental degradation, etc.

Illustration 3. The march of a continent through time.



I used the “African Renaissance” for the year 2000 and beyond. The term was first used by president Thabo Mbeki of South Africa. He used the term for challenging the wrong picture of Africa’s past as uncivilized and barbaric while there are many examples of civilizations in Egypt, Ethiopia, The Sudan, Zimbabwe, Mali, etc. He also points out Africa’s problems in the recent past and calls for Renaissance or new beginning through the use of democracy and economic development in the different sectors.⁸

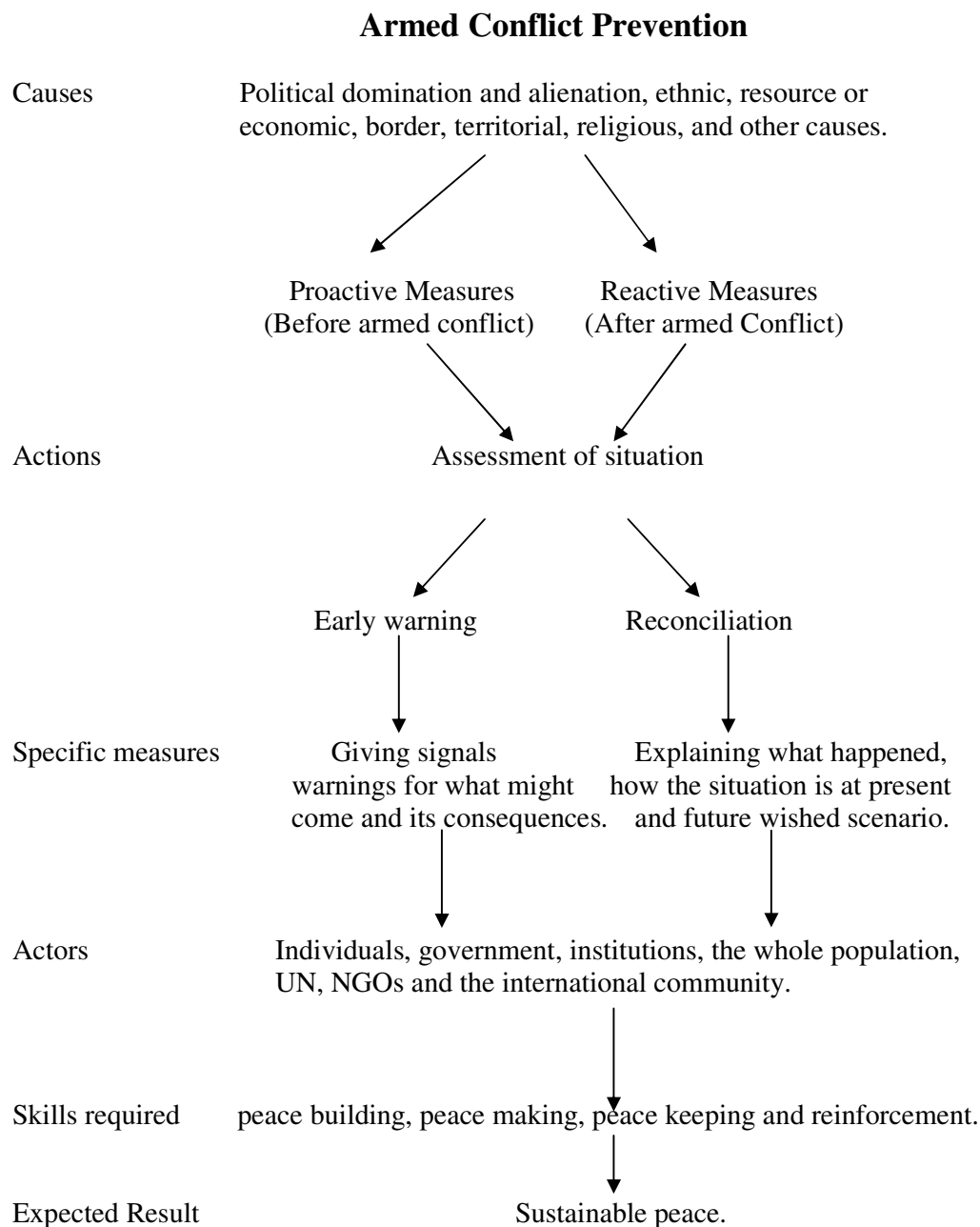
Even if it might be possible to see individual cases of armed conflicts, it lacks completeness if they are not attached to realities of the past. The realities of the colonial era have still its footprints in the life of African countries. The political misadministration and the economic mismanagement and manipulation under colonialism for one’s own benefit are among the factors that remained to be shackles for Africa’s possibility of development by its own to the better or to the worst.

7.1 Results

As mentioned earlier, before I started a wider literature survey and later on empirical data collection, I have chosen 14 articles on armed conflict prevention from different relevant sources. By identifying important concepts and considering the vital categories, I sketched the following paradigm to guide me on what I could search in the literature and what kind of questions I could pose for my informants.

⁸ See Mbeki’s speech at United nations university in Tokyo in 1998 and a book by Mulemfo in 2000.

Illustration 4. Understanding armed conflict prevention



The outcome of my study shows armed conflicts in the 1990s are results of first, political domination which can express itself through human rights abuse and alienation of some groups from sharing political power. A second issue related to the first one is ethnic conflicts based on the question of identity and respect for their culture, language, religion, etc. or a demand for control over power and resources. A third important issue is demand for sharing

economic and other resources of a country. A fourth important issue is conflict between different countries due to political motives, border and territorial claim. A fifth important issue is religiously based conflicts.

Beyond the main categories of conflicts mentioned above, there are more specific causes of conflicts. As I tried to emphasize earlier a conflict can be categorized with other conflicts but this does not mean it loses its specific character. For example the racial conflict in the Sudan can have its own specific characteristics that we may not find in the less known racial discrimination by Arabs against the indigenous people in Mauritania (For more information see Human Right watch report on Mauritania from 1994).

Participants or actors in armed conflicts in 1990s are numerous. In most cases, governments are the central actors in armed conflicts, they are attacked or they are attackers. Within a country the elite, opposition groups, traditional or religious leaders, oppressed masses or armed rebellions take part. Neighboring countries directly or indirectly participate in armed conflicts.

Industrial countries or developed countries are playing a big role by supporting dictators sitting in power or opposition groups or guerrilla groups. Some states ignore destabilizing activities and coup d'état in African countries by mercenaries from their countries. Weapon industries of these countries participate in the process by selling weapons to different groups.

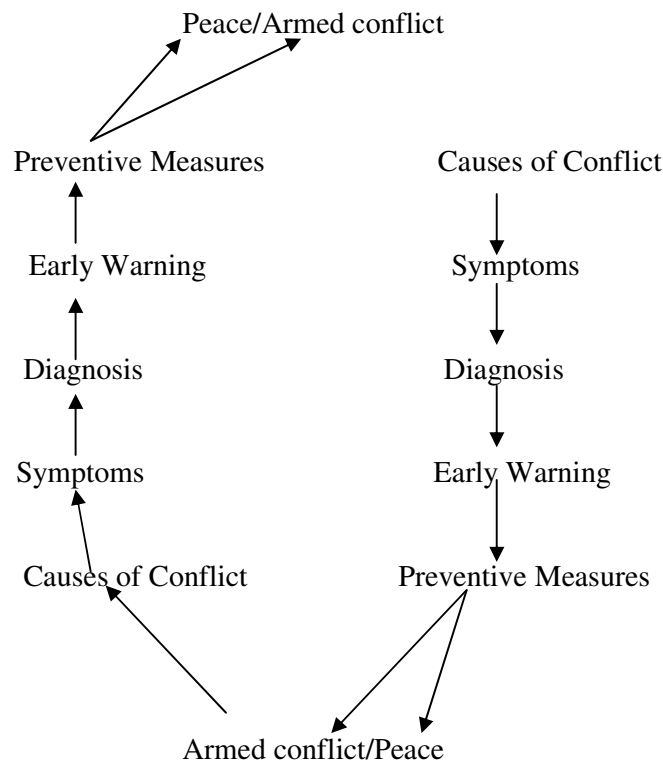
Preventing armed conflicts needs a lot of input from different actors. Creating participatory system, improving nations economies and a better share of resources is vital. Neighboring countries for the sake of their own security and development must avoid destabilizing other countries. The industrial countries must also take legal measures against arms sellers and mercenaries in order to hinder human catastrophe and advance peace in Africa and in the world at large.

7.2 Theoretical and historical implications

As indicated by different theoreticians, needs, motives and different goals are leading to a large extent into conflicts. Conflicts of ideas, if peacefully handled can contribute to creativity and development. For this reason peaceful conflicts are welcomed. But armed conflicts are phenomena to be fought against. People must learn to resolve their problems around a round table (or a shade of a tree). Peacefully resolved conflicts can be followed up peacefully. The use of violence in most cases gives birth to another violence.

To be able to resolve conflicts peacefully and politically, there is a need to know their development. To aim at armed conflict prevention, there is a need to find out about it as early as possible and work against it, to be able to spare both human life and property destruction.

Illustration 5. Thoughts around armed conflict prevention.



In every society there should be a system to see how the society “is feeling”. There could be causes of conflicts, which are indigenous or coming from outside. Gradually one can see the symptoms in the societies. If symptoms are diagnosed to be dangerous, there should be an early warning on what is to come. Active armed conflict prevention measures must be taken and different programs must be implemented. Based on the situation of the parties in conflict, the suitable or difficult existing realities, etc, the prevention measures can lead to peace. In some cases an armed conflict can be unavoidable. In such a situation an effort to minimize damage to life and property is important. After the end of an armed conflict the same process of identifying dangers needs to be considered, early warning and active conflict prevention measures need to be taken.

7.3 Previous and future researches

Many different studies on armed conflict prevention have been undertaken. Most of these studies are based on conflicts in different parts of the world. Based on the results of these studies international bodies like UN and continental organizations like EU have their policies on the subject.

Different countries show in their foreign policy their support for armed conflict prevention. The Swedish ministry of foreign affairs (UD) has a clear policy documents on armed conflict prevention and also helped the EU to develop a policy on the subject.⁹

For many decades Africa was a continent with the most armed conflicts. In the 1990s the Rwandan genocide made Africa a continent that experienced the most severe trauma since the Holocausts. Africa suffered in the 1990s the Ethio-Eritrean border conflict, and the Algerian, Angolan, Liberian, Sierra Leone, the Sudanese, etc internal fighting.

Studies made about these conflicts by both Africans and western researchers are mainly empirical. Based on the realities or the empirical studies already undertaken, I could not come across significant theoretical studies.

In the long run to produce applicable theories on armed conflict prevention based on African experiences many areas need attention. For this purpose assessment of different aspects of realities of the continent is vital.

One major area of focus for future study must be identification on applicable methods of democratization in Africa. Applied on ethnic bases, majority democracy has been a tool of operation used by Hutus against the Tutsis in Rwanda. Democracy as a system can not be compromised but how could it be applied in a country with less economic development? where the majority of the population is illiterate? where people are ethnically, culturally, linguistically and socially divided?

The second basic area that needs to be focused upon is within the existing reality and with the present limitation how could a political power and economic resources sharing can be maximized to prevent armed violence?

The third area can be how can religious beliefs co-exist without one group claiming to be “the right one” and trying to take power and force itself over the others?

The fourth area is how ethnic, culture and language identities can be respected without being factors for advantage or disadvantage?

The fifth area can be what role the systems of socializations at home, religious institutions, traditional associations and the schools can play to prepare the future generation of Africans to grow up with tolerance and respect for others? Today as many children across the continent are attending schools, a research can be worthwhile to be conducted on how schools can be used to prepare a future peaceful generation?

The sixth area to be considered is a study of traditional means of conflict resolution and on how to use them in developing modern violent conflict prevention mechanisms?

The seventh area to be considered is, with all respect for the community spirit in Africa and the structural works in different levels, there is a need to consider the individual. As war begins in the mind of the individual (UNESCO, in Karlsson, 1997,p.85) and people are not pulling a trigger of a gun together, it is rather the individual who does it. So, the future research should also examine the role an individual could play in preventing armed conflicts.

⁹ A conference to design the policy of armed conflict prevention for EU took place 29 to 30 August 2002 in Helsingborg (a city in south Sweden).

Chapter 8. Conclusion

This paper started through my wondering about causes of armed conflicts in 1990s in Africa, actors who participated in them and possibilities that could have prevented them. Conflicts are complex phenomena. In order to understand them, to try to get answers to my questions and to comment on possible ways of dealing with them I surveyed documents, reviewed theoretical explanations, discussed and conducted interviews with people.

To get data on the theme, I read articles from different sources about the actual armed conflicts in Africa. By using Grounded Theory, I isolated important concepts and categories. Books on African history and its colonial past gave me background information on armed conflicts during colonialism. Other books, reports and internet sources on post colonial period in general and the 1990s in particular gave me a holistic picture of armed conflicts in the continent. The 1990s, post cold war decade is the focus of this thesis. By using the non-probability sampling, I considered some respondents for my questions. The interviewees and persons I discussed with shared with me their valuable experiences.

The Conflicts in the continent could be further understood in the light of theoretical discussions raised earlier in the paper. Conflicts in Africa of various natures may be summarized by what Coser gives as causes for conflicts, the struggle over "...scarce status, power and resources..." The paths of struggle chosen to achieve the goals are as important as the goals themselves.

Another theoretician I used in the theory discussion, Max Weber, recommends, "regulated competition" as a means of resolving conflicts. In conflict resolution he also emphasizes the "ends and means are oriented to an order..." For him means of resolving a conflict as well as the end products should take a peaceful form and end with an "order". As in any democratic system in the world, Africans have the right to the "...scarce status, power and resources..." in their countries but it should be obtained by peaceful means, through "regulated competition" and its goals should be to create or keep "order" in a society or country. This should also include the obligation of leaving power when one loses through competition against a person who gains power by means of proper democratic election.

When discrepancies are inevitable due to different ideas or ideologies, democratic procedures should be applied to resolve them. As some theoreticians suggest the creation of democratic structures, reforming the old ones and coming up with new laws to fulfill the needs and demands of a society can discourage armed conflicts. This way of dealing with conflict is "constructive" and creates an "opportunity" for co-existence.

Dealing with the problem through the above mentioned methods and translating empirical data through theory gave me some understanding on the issue. I learned the complexity, diversity and specificity of conflicts. In some cases I could also see some basic similarities between different conflicts. In general the study has provided me with opportunities to learn more about armed conflicts in Africa.

Even if this study touches some important aspects related to armed conflicts, it is far from being exhaustive. To understand how to tackle conditions facilitating armed conflicts, to identify positive potentials for prevention and to stimulate development of values that promote peace further studies are required.

In the articles referred and document surveyed as well as in interviews and discussions several specific causes of conflicts are mentioned. But the thesis focused on the major factors only. Isolation of people from political power, violating human rights, pushing people away from economic benefits, disregard for or manipulation of ethnic identities for different gains, border and territorial claims are among these major factors for armed conflicts.

Identification of the actors of war and peace is an important step for preventing armed conflicts. The actors of armed conflicts are both internal and external. Within a country the state, political opposition group leaders, ethnic and religious leaders are often main actors. Neighboring countries, mercenaries, weapon dealers and developed countries with special interest in the conflict are among the external actors. On the other hand some of these actors in cooperation with sub regional and regional organizations, the UN, NGOs and the international community can contribute towards preventive efforts.

As it is shown in the Bloomfield-Leiss model conflict is a process with different phases. There are possibilities to interfere in any phase to avert its negative development. Björkdahl's three stages model of outbreak prevention, escalation prevention and relapse prevention is applicable in different circumstances. Before the break out of an armed conflict, preventive measures are essential. During an ongoing-armed conflict, an urgent input to stop it is required. At the end of an armed conflict, working against relapsing to the conflict through building and strengthening permanent peace is important. Lund's preventive diplomacy and Eliasson's ladder of conflict prevention models are useful for the treatment of armed conflicts prevention.

Armed conflict prevention is a process that societies must work on and check continuously. Different types of societal needs and isolation from different societal processes must be checked continuously and get proper solutions. If they are ignored, there is a risk they can cause frustrations and tensions, which may lead to armed conflicts. Short and long term solutions must be considered for preventing armed conflicts. It is equally important to identify, coordinate and engage internal and external actors in the process. This way of dealing with conflicts will help prevention of blood shade and destruction of material property.

During my visits to Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo I could observe the destruction wars left behind in these countries. I heard about the losses of human lives and saw material destructions. I had also the possibility of talking to people and getting a picture of the hate they had developed against each other. The loss of human lives, psychological trauma for survivors and material destructions in these countries were tremendous. The only way to stop such damage is preventing armed conflicts.

In Africa there are ongoing conflicts that can escalate. There are charismatic persons who can take the lead in these conflicts, there are weapons, there are potentials for mass mobilizations, etc. This means there are also possibilities for catastrophic armed conflicts. There are also possibilities to defuse these potentials. As I mentioned it earlier creating democratic structures, respecting the rights of expression, giving attention to people's demands, increasing people's participation in the economic and political sectors, controlling illegal arms distribution, etc are some important measures for preventing armed conflicts.

As we have seen in the situation in Rwanda, not listening to the signals of danger, unwillingness to imagine the danger hovering around and negligence to act on time ended up with loss of the lives of 800, 000 people. If we are not ready to learn from our previous mistakes and handle the problems in a better way and work for preventing armed conflicts, we will face great risks of ending up in similar catastrophes in the future. We must keep in mind that, "Prevention is better than cure!"

References

1. General References

Adelman, H., & Suhrke, A. (1999). *The path of a Genocide: The Rwandan crisis from Uganda to Zaire*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transactions.

Barnett, Michael. (2002). *Eyewitness to a Genocide: United Nations and Rwanda*. New York, NY: Cornell University.

Berkeley, B. (2001). *The graves are not yet full: Race, tribe and power in the heart of Africa*. New York: Basic Books.

Bloomfield, L., & Moulton, A. (1997). *International conflict, from the theory to policy: A teaching tool using CASON*. New York, NY: St. Martin.

Bowen, B. D., Krosnick, J.A., & Weisberg, H.F. (1996). *An introduction to survey research, polling, and data analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Brogan, P. (1998). *World conflicts*. London: Bloombury.

Campling, E. (1980). *Africa in the twentieth century*. London: Batsford.

Chazan, N., Lewis, P., Mortimer, R.A., Rothchild, D., & Stedman, S.J (1999). *Politics and society in contemporary Africa*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1994). *Research method in education*. London: Routledge.

Collins, R. (1988). *Theoretical sociology*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Coser, L.A. (1956). *The functions of social conflict*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Dahrendorf, R. (1959). *Class and class conflict in industrial society*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Deng, F.M., & Zartman, I.W. (1991). *Conflict resolution in Africa*. Washington, DC: Brookings.

Destexhe, Alan. (1995). *Rwanda and Genocide; in the twentieth century*. London: Pluto.

- Galtung, J. (1996). *Peace by peaceful means: Peace and conflict, development and civilization*. London: Sage.
- Giddens, A. (1993). *Sociology* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Polity.
- Harris, J. E. (1998). *Africans and their history*. New York, NY: Penguin.
- Hettne, B.(1996). *Internationella relationer*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Igwara, O. (1995). *Ethnic Hatred: Genocide in Rwanda*. London: ASEN.
- Karlsson, S. (1997). *Freds-och konfliktkunskap*(3:e rev.uppl.). Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Lockwood, D. (1992). *Solidarity and schism: 'The problem of disorder' in Durkheimian and Marxist sociology*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Mbeki, T. (1998). *The African renaissance, South Africa and the world*. Tokyo: UNU
- McCullum, Hugh. (1995). *The angles have left us: The Rwandan tragedy and the churches*. Geneva: WCC.
- Mulemfo, M.M. (2000). *Thabo Mbeki and the African renaissance*. Pretoria: Actua.
- Muriithi, S. M. (1996). *African crisis, is there a hope?* Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Möller, F, & Wallenstein, P. (2003). *Conflict prevention: Methodology for knowing the unknown* (Uppsala Peace Research Papers,7). Uppsala: Department of Peace and Conflict research.
- Nangoli, M. (1990). *No more lies about Africa*. East Orange, NJ: African Heritage.
- Negash, T., & Tronvoll, K. (2000). *Brothers at war: Making sense of the Eritrean and Ethiopian war*. Oxford: James Currey.
- Neuman, W.L. (1997). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Odhiambo, T. R. (1988). *Hope born out of despair, Managing the African Crisis*. Nairobi: Heinemann.
- Okoth, A. (1988). *A history of Africa, 1855-1914*. Nairobi: Heinemann.
- Parsons, T (ed.). (1966[1947]). *Max Weber: The theory of social and economic organization*. New York: Free Press.
- Prunier, G. (1998). *The Rwandan crisis: History of a Genocide*. London: Hurst.

- Ritzer, G., & Smart, B. (2001). Handbook of social theory. London: Sage.
- Rothschild, J. (1981). Ethnopolitics: A conceptual framework. New York: Columbia University.
- Ruay, D.D.A. (1994). The politics of two Sudan: The south and north 1821-1969. Uppsala: The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies.
- Thomson, A. (2000). An introduction to African politics. London: Routledge.
- UI 2000:301. Sudan: Länder i fickformat. Stockholm: Utrikespolitiska Institutet.
- UI 2003:213. Rwanda – Burundi: Länder i fickformat. Stockholm: Utrikespolitiska Institutet.
- Wallensteen, P. (1994). Från Krig till: Om konfliktlösning i det globala systemet. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell.

2. Reports

Abraham, G. Y. (2002). OAU's conflict transformation Mechanism: Comparisons of 1970s and 1980s with 1990s. Göteborg: Museion.

Abraham, G.Y., Gustavsson, F., and Hasi, V. (2003). Aktuell teoridiskussion (CD-kursen): Folkmordet i Rwanda 1994. Göteborg: Sociologiska institutionen.

Adelman, H., & Suhrke, A. (1996). Early warning and conflict management in Rwanda: Study II of the joint evaluation of emergency assistance to Rwanda. Copenhagen: DANIDA.

Björkdahl, A. (2000). Developing a toolbox for conflict prevention. In SIPRI, Preventing violent conflict: The search for political will, strategies and effective tools (pp.17-22). Stockholm: SIPRI.

Eriksson, John. (1996). The international response to conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwandan experience, Joint evaluation of emergency assistance to Rwanda. Steering committee of the joint evaluation.

Ewald, J., Nilsson, A., Närman, A., & Stålgren, P. (2004). Conflict and development in the Great Lakes region: Structural violence reduction & cognitive reintegration, A strategic conflict analysis for Sida's regional strategy. Göteborg: Padrigu.

IPEP. (2000). Rwanda. The preventable Genocide. The report of "International Panel of Eminent Personalities" to investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda and the surrounding events. Addis Ababa: OAU (AU).

Nkundabagenzi, Félix. (1998). Conflict prevention, management and resolution: The role of sub-regional organizations and NGOs in sub-Saharan Africa. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Peace Research Institute.

Omaar, Rakiya. (1995). Facing Genocide: The Nuba of Sudan. London: African Rights.

SIPRI. (2001). Armaments, disarmament and international security. New York: Oxford University.

UD. (1999). Preventing violent conflict: A Swedish action plan. Stockholm: UD.

3. Internet Sources

- Adabanwi, W. (2001). Nigeria: Shell of a state.
www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Africa/Nigeria_shell_state.html (04-05-09)
- Africa online. (2004). Nigeria, Cameroon move to normalise relations.
<http://www.africaonline.com/site/Articles/1,3,55025.jsp> (04-05-07).
- AU. Peace and Security Directorate. <http://www.africa-union.org/home/Welcome.htm/> (04-04-20).
- CIA. (2003). The world fact book.<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publication/factbbok/index.html> (04-04-15).
- CSM. (2004). Ten countries makes waves over Nile waters.
<http://www.csmonitorservices.com/csmonitor/display.jhtml.jsessionid=1UFAL1UXOTCYLKGL4L25FEQ?requestid=134398> (04-03-16).
- GP. (2004). Islamistledaren al-Turabi gripen (2004, 1 april). Göteborgs-Posten, p.16.
<http://www.medicarkivet.se> (04-05-06).
- HRW. (1994). Mauritania's campaign of terror: State sponsored repression of black Africans.
<http://www.hrw.org/doc?t=africaq&c=maurit> (04-04-15).
- Perez, A. (2000). UN peacekeepers for rival gangsters: Sierra Leone's diamond wars.
<http://mondediplo.com/2000/06/02sierraleone> (04-05-08).
- Short, V., & Smith, B. (2002). Spain and Morocco clash over a rock. World Socialist Web site. <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2002/jul2002/parl-j23.shtml> (04-05-08).
- Somalia Net. (2001). Somalia: Irredentism and the changing balance of power.
<http://somalianet.com/library/somalia/?so=0109> (04-05-08).
- UN (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs). (2004). Kenya: Review of 2002 election results. <http://www.irinnews.org/print.asp?ReportID=31830> (04-05-08).

4. Background articles used for section 3.1

Unpublished documents

SIDA. (1998). Conflict resolution and the retreat from humanitarian values. Stockholm: SIDA

UNHCR. (1996). Building skills for conflict resolution and peace.

Internet sources

Anikpo, Y. (2000). Africa and the prospect of war. [WWW document]. URL [http://newshound.de.siu.edu/voices/stories/storyReader\\$1101/](http://newshound.de.siu.edu/voices/stories/storyReader$1101/) (2004-01-12).

Greenstock, Jeremy (Sir). (2000). The prevention of armed conflict. [WWW document]. URL http://www.ukun.org/xq/asp/SarticleType.17/Article_ID.138/qx/articles_show.htm/ (2003-10-01).

Hamilton, D. (2000). Europe seeks cure for chronic war crippling Africa. [WWW document]. URL <http://www.somaliawatch.org/archive/000402101.htm/> (2004-01-12).

Mazrui, A.A. (2001). The genesis of conflict around Africa. [WWW document]. URL <http://www.somaliawatch.org/archivedec00/010128201.htm/> (2004-01-21).

Ramsbotham, A. (2001). Conflict prevention: The UK and the UN. [WWW document]. URL <http://www.una-uk.org/UN&C/conflictprevention.html/> (2003-10-02).

Renner, M. (1999). How to abolish war. [WWW document]. URL http://findarticle.com/cf_0/m1374/4_59/55100714/print.jhtml/ (2004-01-12).

Reychler, L. (1998). Proactive conflict prevention: Impact assessment? [WWW document]. URL http://www.gmu.edu/academic/ijps/vol3_2/reychler.htm/ (2003-10-02).

Stremlau, J. (1999). The evils of ethnic politics. [WWW document]. URL http://www.archive.mg.co.za/nxt/gateway.dll/PrintEdition/MGP1999/31v02351/41v02352/51... (2004-01-12).

Tekle, B. (2000). Africa to step up war against proliferation of arms. [WWW document]. URL http://www.dehai.org/archives/dehai_news_archives/nov00/0085.html/ (2004-01-15).

UN. (2001). Prevention of armed conflict: Report of the General Secretary. [WWW document]. URL <http://www.reliefweb.int/library/documents/2001/un-conflprev-07jun.htm/> (2003-10-01).

UNU. (1999). Project: Conflict prevention: From rhetoric to policy. [WWW document]. URL <http://www.unu.edu/p&g/conflict-prevention.html/> (2004-10-02).

World Bank. (2003). World Bank urges international action to prevent civil war. [WWW document]. URL http://web.worldbank.org/WEBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:20111519~... (2004-01-12).

Appendix 1 Interview Questionnaire

Questionnaire Armed Conflict Prevention in Africa

Name.....

Age.....

Sex.....

Religion.....

Post address.....
.....

E-mail address.....

1. What do you think are the main causes of armed conflicts in Africa in 1990s?

1.1 List possible causes.

1.2 Which are the three most important ones?

1.3 Do you have examples of armed conflicts reflecting the above three causes?

2. Who do you think were the main actors? Can you explain with examples from an armed conflict?

3. Is it possible to foresee, if an existing dispute/tension may lead to an armed conflict?

3.1 If yes, how?

3.2 If no, why?

4. If it is possible to predict an armed conflict, what measures are needed to avert it?

5. In a situation where an armed conflict already took place, how could a relapse be avoided?

6. Are there general short term and long-term measures for preventing an armed conflict?

6.1 Short term measures

6.2 Long term measures

7. Which internal and external actors could engage to prevent a future-armed conflict?

7.1 Internal actors

7.2 External actors

Appendix 2 Interview population

Interview population by country of origin, sex and age.

Country of origin	Sex			Age				Total
	Male	Female	Total	24-35	36-45	46-55	55+	
Cameroon	2	-	2	1	1	-	-	2
Ethiopia	5	1	6	1	2	2	1	6
Ivory Coast	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	1
Kenya	1	1	2	1	1	-	-	2
Mozambique	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	1
Nigeria	-	4	4	2	2	-	-	4
Somalia	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	1
Sweden	1	2	3	1	1	-	1	3
Uganda	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	1
Total	13	8	21	7	9	3	2	21