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Massey, S.
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CONTEXTUALISING ALL-AFRICAN PEACEKEEPING: POLITICAL AND ETHICAL DIMENSIONS

S. M. Massey

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CHAPTER SIX

INTERVENTION BY THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY IN CHAD (1980-1982)

The first tangible response by Africa’s leaders to address the moral/political imperative to develop a capacity to intervene in conflicts on the continent came in Chad. However, the ineffectual peacekeeping operation in 1980 by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the more ambitious, but equally inadequate, Inter-African Force (IAF) that intervened in the Chadian civil war from November 1981 to June 1982 have been a source of profound, and partially debilitating, introspection for the continental organisation.¹ The IAF deployed, ostensibly in support of a legitimate government recognised by the OAU, yet was forced to withdraw ignominiously as rebel forces expelled that regime. Reasons for a failed intervention that set back a continent-wide design for conflict resolution for two decades range from financial and logistical shortfall through institutional mismanagement to intra-African and extra-African high politics. The then OAU Secretary-General, Edem Kodjo, commented that the Chad operation, ‘glaringly reveals the growing discrepancy between what is said and what is believed, between the absolute “will” and relative “ability”, between declared intentions and actual results’.²

The OAU’s experience of peacekeeping provides a useful case study. As the first venture into effective self-pacification it acts as a benchmark for subsequent interventions – in particular in the context of this research comparison with the sub-regional intervention in Guinea-Bissau in 1998-1999. The operations in Chad were tentative steps towards Chapter VIII regionalisation and subsidiarity as discussed in Chapter One. At the time, there was a belief within the OAU Secretariat that the organisation had evolved sufficiently to realise the logical conclusion of the principle to ‘try Africa first’. This


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aspiration was precipitate. The prospect of an all-African force preserving absolute autonomy was unrealistic. As the planned intervention moved from planning to performance, the crippling paucity of funds and logistical resources became apparent. Moreover, as the OAU succumbed to the inevitability of bilateral extra-continental funding for the troop-contributing states, so the likelihood of tacit conditionality increased. At a more fundamental level, the formation of the IAF implied a shift away from the basic tenets of OAU doctrine - sovereign equality of member states, non-interference in the internal affairs of other member states and respect for the territorial integrity of member states. Yet this shift proved premature. The attempt to execute an intervention for which there was no basis either in OAU law or ethos, resulted in the IAF following a disjointed mandate whose complexion altered as the operation progressed.

The chapter is divided into six sections and a conclusion. Section (a) places the civil war and the IAF’s intervention in historical context. The second section examines the mediation process and the abortive Nigerian-led intervention that led to the OAU asserting its role as the primary body for conflict resolution on the continent. Section (c) considers the reasons behind the OAU’s decision to move beyond the non-interventionist strictures of its Charter. Section (d) looks at the inherent difficulties in achieving the mandate under which the IAF deployed. Section (e) examines the manner in which financial and logistical shortfall compromised the ‘all-African’ character of the operation. Following on, a final section considers the role of external actors - African and non-African - on development of the conflict and the conduct of the OAU mission. A conclusion assesses the all-African interventions in Chad in the light of the hypothesis and the research questions outlined in Chapter Two.

(a) The historical context
For the most part, Chad’s post-colonial history has seen unremitting civil strife, interspersed with cyclical external interventions. Reasons for the conflict overlap in a complex web of ethnic, religious, economic and political motivation. On an elemental level, animosity between Muslim ethnic groups, such as the Goranes and Toubou, of

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northern Chad and the Christian/animist Sara people of the south was exacerbated and entrenched by negligent French colonial administration.

**Map 2: Map of Chad**

On 11 August 1960 Chad became an independent republic. The first President, François Ngarta Tombalbaye consolidated his rule using all possible means. In 1963, his *Parti progressiste tchadien* (PPT) was declared the country’s only permitted party. As the
character of Chad’s politics became increasingly personalised, repression by the security forces became the norm. Tombalbaye’s prime motivation was the retention of power. Politicians, civil servants, and eventually the military, whether from the north or south, became liable to arrest and imprisonment. However, after 1963 many in the north perceived themselves to be particular targets of a calculated strategy of domination by a southern elite. Tax excesses and ill-conceived economic and cultural policies ensured continued resentment.

In response to this growing hostility a rebellion coalesced behind the Front de Libération Nationale de Tchad (FROLINAT). A tripartite offensive in the northern prefectures of Borkou, Ennedi, Tibesti (BET) was launched. Even at this early stage encroachment by non-Chadian actors into the conflict that would inhibit the OAU’s peacekeeping effort was apparent. Of FROLINAT’s original three battalions, the Forces Armées du Nord (FAN) had Libyan support, whilst the Forces Armées Occidentales (FAO), later known as the Mouvement Populaire pour la Libération du Tchad (MPLT) had the tacit support of Nigeria. For his part, Tombalbaye increasingly relied on troops from the former colonial power for his survival.

From 1968 onwards, Chad came to epitomise the collapsed state. To paraphrase Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg, Chad’s juridical cart was now before its empirical horse. In April 1975 Tombalbaye was assassinated in a coup d’état by a man whom he had formally incarcerated, General Félix Malloum. The new administration, the Conseil Supérieure Militaire (CSM) accepted FROLINAT’s de facto jurisdiction over much of the country and pursued a policy of national reconciliation. However, by this juncture FROLINAT’s tenuous alliances were already beginning to unravel. The movement was ideologically multi-faceted - in Robert Buijtenhuijs’ terms more à la carte than a plat unique. Moreover, the sociology of the conflict had always extended beyond the crude dimensions of a north/south or Christian/Muslim dichotomy. Over a hundred distinct language groups, frequently split into several sub-groups, exist amongst a population of only 5 million people. Furthermore, intra-group relations, especially in the bellicose

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north, are highly prone to segmentation. The factionalism of the civil war underscored this inclination to find allies amongst neighbouring sub-groups, rather than amongst an inclusive ethnic, religious or linguistic group. In this respect the Chadian conflict fits the ‘warlord model’ with its stress on, ‘regional centres of power based on personalised rule and military force, and the consequent prevalence of a politics of conflict and war’. 

Internal pressures towards factionalism were intensified by Tombalbaye’s death. In the absence of an integrating ideology, FROLINAT relied on the battle against the oppressive regime for its cohesion. The period between 1976 and 1978 saw increased international concern over Libyan incursions into Chad from bases in the contested Aouzou Strip between the two countries. Despite substantial logistical aid, reversals suffered by the Chadian national army resulted in the deployment of French troops in 1978. At the same time, Qadafi’s continued penetration in the north and his meddling in factional politics led to a pivotal schism within FROLINAT. Anti-Libyan elements under Hissène Habré, retaining the name Forces Armées du Nord (FAN) joined a short-lived coalition government with Malloum’s CSM under a ‘fundamental charter’. However, the majority of FAN under Goukouni Oueddei, having regrouped as the Forces Armées Populaires (FAP) maintained a strong territorial and military position. As the Habré-Malloum coalition began to collapse, a process of recurring disintegration occurred. The result was a proliferation of factions of which two proved to be significant - the remnants of the national army and gendarmerie regrouped in the south under Colonel Wadal Kamagoué as the Forces Armées Tchadiennes (FAT). In the north and centre of the country Forces d’Actions Communes (FAC) or the New Vulcan Army came together under Ahmed Acyl. Together with FAN and FAP, these would be the actors whose prevarications and shifting alliances would frustrate the OAU’s efforts at mediation, and eventually, intervention.

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(b) The OAU asserts itself

The inviolability of state sovereignty as the basis of the OAU’s ethos is discussed in Chapter Three. Unwilling to breach its own interdiction on interference in the internal affairs of member states, the OAU remained passive in the face of civil conflict between 1965 and 1977. The OAU first addressed conflict in Chad, at Malloum’s invitation, prior to the OAU summit meeting in Libreville in July 1977. The request for mediation was restricted to the question of Libya’s occupation of the Aouzou strip in northern Chad. This area between Chad and Libya had been occupied by Qadafi’s troops since 1972. Libya’s claim was based on a colonial agreement, the Laval-Mussolini Accord of 1935, that was never ratified. There was also rumoured to be a secret agreement between Tombalbaye and Qadafi by which the former hoped to trade territory in return for a Libyan undertaking to withdraw its support for FROLINAT. OAU mediation efforts proved sincere, but ineffectual. A six member ad hoc committee managed to negotiate what was to become a series of ceasefires that seemed impressive on paper, but were ignored in practice.

Mediation of the civil war within Chad itself was even less effective. As noted in Chapter Three, the OAU was institutionally ill equipped to address conflict of any sort, but was almost helpless when confronted with intra-state strife. The Commission for the Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration created in 1963 was moribund, and the Defence Commission met rarely and had never intervened in a dispute. The organisation relied on ad hoc committees and the initiatives of statesmen and OAU officers to defuse conflicts. Although prior to 1977 the Presidents of Libya, Sudan and Nigeria had offered their services as peace emissaries to Chad, in each case their credentials as bona fide honest brokers in the conflict were intrinsically compromised by their proximity to the conflict.

Inhibited by its own Charter and confined by the decrepitude of its conflict resolution mechanisms, the OAU resorted to offering ancillary support to the diplomatic efforts of the assumptive regional hegemon - Nigeria. In response to an appeal from Sudan, the Nigerians called for a meeting of representatives from all warring factions at Kano on 11 March 1979. Only four attended – Goukouni’s FAP, Habré’s FAN, Kamagoué’s FAT and the Nigerian-sponsored MPLT. An agreement, usually referred to as Kano I, established a transitional government of national unity (GUNT) that was to
prepare for the election of a coalition government that would reflect the factional composition of the country. The accords were to be monitored by an independent commission chaired by Nigeria, whilst the ceasefire and a demilitarised zone around N'Djaména was to be secured by replacing the existing French garrison with a neutral force comprised of Nigerian troops.

The only part of the accords to be fulfilled, to little effect, was the deployment of the neutral force. Whilst some commentators commended Nigeria's initiative as timely, necessary and fraternal, most of the actors in the conflict, including France, treated the Nigerian approach with extreme scepticism. Indeed, Nigeria's short-lived experience in N'Djaména proved to be a portent of the OAU's peacekeeping efforts in Chad. Lacking any real mandate other than vague plans to police the ceasefire, the Nigerian troops, underfunded and undermanned, responded in a petty, heavy-handed fashion to the provocations of the factions in the capital. When Nigeria accepted a request to withdraw its troops in June 1979, N'Djaména remained highly militarised and ready for war.

Nigeria had learnt that it would take more than troops to unravel Chad's factional quagmire. Further meetings at Kano in April and Lagos in May sought to expand the basis of negotiations by including five factions absent from the March talks. However, Nigeria became increasingly exasperated at efforts by Habré and Goukouni from within the GUNT to entrench their relative positions at the expense of other factions, especially those of Acyl and Kamagoué, by ignoring the terms of Kano I. At this point the OAU decided to play a more direct part in the negotiation process. Nigeria's call for a punitive economic boycott against land-locked Chad to force the faction leaders to treat the accords seriously was taken up by the OAU at the annual summit meeting in Monrovia in July 1979. In keeping with its more robust stance the OAU denounced the current composition of the GUNT as unrepresentative denied it a seat at the summit. The conference supported the continuation of the Lagos process, whilst envisaging a wider role for Secretary-General Kodjo and, for the first time, discussing funding for a potential peacekeeping force to be established by, and under the control of, the OAU.

A second meeting at Lagos produced the Lagos II Accords. All major factions, including FAN, FAP, FAT and FAC, as well as the neighbouring states of Benin, Congo, Senegal and Liberia, attended the talks. A major feature of the conference was a shift in
the onus for instigating mediation towards the OAU. In an effort to ‘Africanise’ or ‘de-Gallicise’ the conflict, the OAU chose to place the abstraction of African unity over the pragmatic reality of Nigeria’s position as pre-eminent regional power. A rise in a particularist pan-Africanism, not seen since Nkrumah’s calls for an ‘African High Command’, was apparent. However, for Sam Nolutshungu, this move resulted in an obfuscation of where responsibility for mediation lay.\(^8\) A further, related, modification was the supersession of Nigeria by the OAU as the fulcrum for monitoring the ceasefire and as the organising body for a neutral force. In contrast to the unilateral intervention by the Nigerians, a Inter-African Force would comprise troops from states that were non-contiguous with Chad - Guinea, Benin, and Congo. Bypassing the regional power in favour of the participation of less contentious small states was a strategic decision that would prove naïve. It was *hubris* on the part of the OAU to assume that it had the salience or the practical wherewithal to circumvent Nigerian power in the region.

For its part, the GUNT was to be reconstituted with Goukouni as President, Kamagoué as Vice-President, Habré as Minister of Defence and Acyl as Minister of Foreign Affairs. However, these were to prove essentially fictitious positions in a government that existed in name only. The agreement also called for those French troops still in Chad to withdraw. Yet, events on the ground emphasised the gulf between rhetoric and reality. The goodwill upon which Lagos II depended was absent. The intended demilitarisation of N’Djaména secured only token compliance from the factions. Moreover, despite the commencement of the French withdrawal, the construction of the replacement all-African Force was becoming a slow process. The impotence of the OAU loomed larger in the designs of the factions than its exhortations to make peace or its stated support for the transitional government. For the GUNT, as well as for FAN, the OAU would be seen as just another external actor amongst many others that might be played according to expediency.

Although deriving its mandate from Lagos II, rather than directly from the OAU, the troops that eventually arrived in January 1980 were recognised as the OAU Neutral Force. The obstacles were the same as those facing the Nigerians a year before, writ

large. The only contingent to deploy was the Congolese detachment of 550 men. Funding, supposedly provided through a special fund collected from all OAU member states, amounted to less than $250,000. When Algeria was not recompensed by the OAU for airlifting the Congolese to N’Djaména, they invoiced Brazzaville.\(^9\) Once more, troops on the ground faced problems of logistics and manpower. A working command structure was never properly established. One element of the monitoring commission, the GUNT, was irreconcilably split and another, Ethiopian Force Commander Major Gebre-Egziabher Dawit, was absent during most of the operation. Most significantly, the inadequate Force was asked to fulfil an inflated mandate that required them to uphold the ceasefire, keep the roads open for civilian traffic, disarm the population, restore order and bring the factions together into an integrated national army.

Following the evacuation of the Force on 26 March 1980, Secretary-General Kodjo travelled to N’Djaména to conduct a secret post-mortem. His report stressed the negative impact of the absence of the Beninois and Guinean contingents. However, the exasperated tone of the document only serves to stress the OAU’s institutional and logistical inadequacies in the face of rapidly degenerating circumstances. Whilst acknowledging the organisation’s culpability in not pre-arranging a working budget for the operation, Kodjo placed most of the blame on the failure of the warring factions within the GUNT to fulfil the conditions of Lagos II. Kodjo’s reasoning tended to be circuitous. Given the shortage of manpower the Congolese troops were unwilling to leave barracks in order to help with the demilitarisation of N’Djaména. The contingents from Guinea and Benin remained disinclined to deploy whilst the capital remained militarised. N’Djaména remained militarised since Habré’s Ministry of Defence refused to convene the requisite committee charged with demilitarisation.\(^{10}\)

For their part, the Congolese felt stung to react to the withering criticism of the Force’s performance. Habré had accommodated the Force in deplorable conditions without running water or sanitation. They suffered casualties and lost a man in


crossfire. The Congolese delegate at the UN denounced the ‘slanderous campaign’ of ‘hate-filled and defamatory articles’ by the West’s ‘blinkered press’. Piqued, Congo and the would-be troop contributors, Benin and Guinea announced that they would be unwilling to provide troops for similar operations in the future, a decision that they would reverse.

For the rest of 1980 the OAU always seemed to be a step behind events on the ground or, in Massaquoi’s words, ‘forced to feebly follow the changing guards, and attempt to pick up the pieces afterwards’. Heavy fighting continued in the capital and the centre of the country between FAN and the GUNT, as well as between elements in the GUNT and Acyl’s Libyan-backed FAC. The OAU Secretary-General’s assessment was bleak and forthright: ‘Chad is in the process of being destroyed and the parties involved act as if they want this’. Togo’s General Gnassingbe Eyadéma convened two meetings of the ad hoc committee in Lomé in October and November during which he called for Congo, Benin and Guinea to set aside their previous refusal to supply troops and join Togo in reconstituting the abortive Lagos II Neutral Force.

However, once more, events on the ground caught up with the diplomacy. A Libyan incursion into Chad in mid-1980 in response to a request from Goukouni for support against Habré’s FAN, led to a joint communiqué suggesting a potential ‘merger’ of Libya and Chad. This concentrated minds at the OAU and created the strategic conditions for the IAF to deploy. After talk of merger abated, Goukouni requested the withdrawal of Libyan troops. Qadafi’s acceptance of Goukouni’s request in October 1981 left the OAU as the last, best repository of trust amongst the greatest number of actors in the conflict. If the financial and logistical obstacles could be surmounted, the geopolitical circumstances were conducive to another OAU intervention.

A meeting of the ad hoc committee in Lomé in January 1981, endorsed by the OAU summit in Nairobi in June, once more nominated Benin, Congo, Guinea and Togo as troop-contributing states. However, it became clear that if the Lagos II condition that

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11 Ibid., p.204.
12 See UN General Assembly Plenary Debate A/36/PV.20 (274).
14 Ngansop, op.cit., p.207.
troop-supplying states should not border Chad was maintained, then the Force would never deploy. Congo’s previous experience and Benin and Guinea’s non-appearance aside, these contributors were wholly ill equipped in terms of personnel, logistics, finance and training. Promises of future financial support were patently illusory given the state of the OAU’s resources and were belied by the experience of the first OAU Force in 1980. Even the initial cost of deployment was beyond the capacity of these countries. Thus, by the time of the formal establishment of the IAF in Paris on 14 November, the Lagos II stipulation on non-contiguity had been abandoned. Undermining the OAU’s previous strategy, influence within the operation shifted from the small states to US-sponsored Zaire, French-sponsored Senegal and Chad’s giant neighbour, Nigeria. A parallel meeting in Lagos of Foreign Ministers from the proposed troop contributing states, chaired by Kenya, set a modest target of 5000 troops with 2000 men coming from Nigeria and 600 men each from Benin, Guinea, Togo, Zaire and Senegal.

The usurpation of the IAF by the major regional players and their sponsors left few concrete incentives, beyond altruistic considerations, for the small states to further tax their exchequers. Togo had long been assumed to harbour pro-FAN sympathies. Certainly, Habré’s second-in-command, and future Foreign Minister, Idriss Miskine, was fulsome in his praise for the ‘sympathy expressed towards our cause...especially by the founding President of the Togolese People’s Assembly [Eyadéma].’ For Benin and Guinea, both of whose leaders nurtured anti-colonial, radical sentiments, the choice of Paris as venue for the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement that established the Force intimated an unsettling neocolonial dimension to the operation. Guinea’s Touré, who had delivered a characteristically robust advocacy of subsidiarity within regional conflict management to the UN General Assembly in October, stressed the need for the IAF to be strictly neutral whilst also condemning the presence of non-African forces on the continent. Thus, notwithstanding heavy financial constraints, unease about the ‘French factor’ added another compelling reason for Benin and Guinea to once more rescind their offer of troops.

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16 See UN General Assembly Plenary Debate A/27/PV.30 (16).
17 See UN General Assembly Plenary Debate A/36/PV.24 (104-107).
The final composition of the Force was determined at a meeting in Kinshasa on 27 November 1981. The size of the IAF had contracted to 3,275 troops, out of which 2000 were Nigerian. Nigeria supplied a Force Commander with experience in UN peacekeeping operations, Major General Geoffrey Ejiga. The Chief of Staff was to be Zairean, whilst Senegal was to control the air detachment and intelligence. At the top of the command structure on the ground was the OAU’s special representative, and leader of the first OAU operation, Gebre-Egziabher Dawit of Ethiopia. Finally, Kenya would lead an observer group including representatives from Algeria, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau and Zambia.

(c) Grasping the nettle
As previously noted, the right to national sovereignty and the concomitant principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of another sovereign state were twin issues lodged in the back of the minds of those involved in the Chadian peace process. Yet, these basic OAU tenets were rarely deliberated during the crisis and then only in terms of, ‘opaque distinctions between “internal” and “external” [sovereignty], “intervention” and “disinterested mediation”’. That such an apparent obstacle to intervention remained a marginal issue throughout the interventions is testament both to the level of state collapse in Chad resulting in uncertainty as to where sovereignty lay, as well as to a determination on the part of the Secretariat and the membership to avoid the dilemma in this case. Thus, Chad became a test case. The logic of Chapter VIII subsidiarity would be tried out. The OAU would seek to free itself from its juridical fetters and assume the role both of mediator and intervener.

Why did events in Chad provoke an effective, albeit temporary, sea change in OAU methodology? Former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has expressed the view that ethnic, secessionist conflict and concomitant state fragmentation present the most immediate dangers to security in Africa. Ethnic conflict spreads within a state and also directly, or by contagion, into neighbouring states with potential for regional conflict. However, prior to intervention in Chad the OAU had assiduously avoided any

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interference in the long-running civil wars in Burundi and Sudan, or the secessionist struggle in Ethiopia.\textsuperscript{21} In lieu of distinguishing factors in the Chadian case, a general absence of serious objections by the member states, and a temporary unity created by the Qadafi-factor, might be advanced as reasons allowing intervention. Certainly, from the OAU Secretariat's standpoint, there was a sense that Chad was placing the organisation's limitations in stark perspective. Kodjo recognised that the credibility of the OAU was threatened. As he told the Assembly of Heads of State and Government (AHG) – 'Chad dictates a change of conception of our machinery, a renovation of principles and action'.\textsuperscript{22}

In terms of the international environment the civil war occurred during a time of UN impotence and when the dictates of Cold War politics applied. There was no chance of disinterested extra-African intervention. Indeed, French politicking provided a further stimulus for allowing dilution of the OAU's non-interference principle. There were concerns amongst powerful members of the OAU that France was promoting a parallel security framework on the continent. Although opposed to radical calls for an African High Command at time of the OAU's inception, by the 1970s states such as Houpouhet-Boigny's Côte d'Ivoire, as well as other conservative francophone states had accepted French overtures to act in concert as an all-African proxy for French interests in certain sensitive cases.\textsuperscript{23} Within this context, a five-country force was assembled to fill the security vacuum in the Shaba province of Southern Zaire in 1978.\textsuperscript{24} Two previous interventions, one by Moroccan troops with extensive French support and a second by French and Belgian troops with US logistical support, had countered rebel activity and restored stability to the province. Despite their interests in the mineral wealth of the province, France, Belgium and the US were unwilling to maintain a permanent military presence.\textsuperscript{25} The Shaba force was formed outside the aegis of the OAU, although at the time it secured tacit support from the OAU Secretariat. Whilst the relative success of the operation served to convince sceptics that an inter-African Force was viable, the negative

\textsuperscript{22} Quoted in Legum, op.cit., p.A38.
\textsuperscript{24} The Shaba force comprised troops from Morocco, Togo, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon.
political and logistical factors were precursors of problems that would stymie the IAF in Chad. Henry Wiseman asks whether the OAU itself could have mounted a peacekeeping, or rather peace-enforcement, operation instead of the French-supported Moroccan intervention.\textsuperscript{26} He concludes that the operation in Shaba, involving the large-scale transport of troops, was ‘well beyond the resources and logistical capacity of the OAU, whatever may have been its political mandate’.\textsuperscript{27}

Beyond the conservative francophone bloc, there was a well of opinion strongly opposed both to direct extra-African intervention and the type of neocolonial intervention practiced at Shaba. The rhetoric was pan-African.\textsuperscript{28} Nigeria took the lead. African peacekeepers should intervene in internal conflicts in order to deter vulnerable states from being driven, in Olesegun Obasanjo’s words, ‘into the laps of extra-African powers for defence and security’.\textsuperscript{29} Clearly, Nigeria was being disingenuous. Its objective was more to replace French influence in the region than to check it. Yet, it is worth reiterating that Nigeria’s failure to assert effectively its hegemonic status has undermined regional peacekeeping from the crisis in Chad to the Liberian and Sierra Leonean civil wars.\textsuperscript{30}

Did the OAU establish a moral justification for intervention? Applying ‘just war tradition’ criteria to the intervention raises several caveats. Although foreseen and advocated by Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, the concept of a peace operation conducted by a regional organisation was innovative at the time and as such the principle of right authority is pertinent. The fact that the IAF retained a distinct Chapter VI posture allowed this issue to be played down. The principle of just cause is also relevant. Walzer’s evocation of the UN Declaration of Human Rights – acts that ‘shock the conscience of mankind’ – is germane.\textsuperscript{31} Although the scale of suffering in Chad was significant, it did not approach the numbers killed, injured or displaced during the civil conflicts in Biafra.


\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., pp.141-142.


\textsuperscript{29} Quoted in Pecovits, op.cit., p.265.


(1967-1970), Rwanda (1963) and Burundi (1972). It was Walzer's politicians and bureaucrats, rather than ordinary people, calling for intervention in Chad. Indeed, given the divergent agenda of those calling for intervention, African and non-African, the just war criterion of *right intention* is also applicable.

Thus, the ethical bases for the intervention were moot. Success or failure of the operation would also help determine the legal scope for the OAU to mandate its own interventions. The creation of international legal precedent aside, if the legality of the intervention was questioned by any of the parties, then the OAU could always claim that the IAF had been requested and point to a Memorandum of Agreement between the GUNT and the Chairman of the OAU Daniel Arap Moi and Secretary-General Kodjo. However, any relief that the vexed issue of sovereignty had been avoided was soon dissipated. The most critical failing of the intervention would be contradictory interpretation of the IAF's mandate and the issue of impartiality. If the GUNT represented the sovereign government of Chad, and, in signing the Memorandum of Agreement with him, the OAU implicitly supported Goukouni as its leader, what was the role of the IAF in the conflict?

**(d) A questionable mandate**

Writing in 1996, and referring to proposals for a peacekeeping force to intervene in the crisis in the Great Lakes, a senior British diplomat commented that, 'any intervention force must have a realistic mandate, clear goals, a firm strategy and a timescale for withdrawal'. At the start of the OAU operation all four elements were ill-defined. The document signed by the GUNT and the OAU in Paris on 14 November established the conditions under which the IAF was supposed to operate. However, despite the IAF having already deployed, a further meeting was held in Nairobi in February 1982. This meeting failed to rectify some of the key ambiguities in the Paris document. The ‘Nairobi Accords’ state that

- The OAU, ‘reaffirms its support to the GUNT and requests that all member states of the OAU support this Government in its efforts to maintain peace and security in the country and abstain from interfering in the internal affairs of the country’.

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32 *Guardian* [London], 14 November 1996.
• The peacekeeping force ‘will ensure the defence and security of the country whilst awaiting the integration of Government Forces’.
• ‘The OAU decides to provide the GUNT with financial and material means to enable it to train quickly a National Integrated Army for the gradual replacement of foreign troops in their national territory’.33

Thus, the OAU tried to reconcile two conflicting goals by simultaneously endorsing the government and remaining neutral in the conflict. Moreover, whilst the underlying thrust of the mandate assumed that the IAF would act as an orthodox Chapter VI peacekeeping force, the possibility for Chapter VII enforcement was not discounted. The mandate begged two questions. Would the OAU support the GUNT as the sole authority in Chad? If so, to what extent would the IAF act to uphold that authority?

During the period between the Paris and Nairobi negotiations and the IAF’s deployment there was an assumption, based on the Lagos II Accords, that the GUNT constituted the legitimate government of Chad. One compelling reason for the establishment of the Force had been a shared objective amongst OAU members to see Libya out of Chad. Goukouni and Qadafi had obliged. Goukouni admitted frankly that ‘in view of the attitude of my African brothers and due to extra-African pressure, we were forced to demand the withdrawal of Libyan forces from our soil, to enable those countries which are fearful about Chad because of the presence of Libyan forces to have confidence in us’.34 However, from Goukouni’s perspective, there was an expectation that in return OAU recognition of the GUNT would become entrenched and irrevocable. This expectation proved misplaced.

The positions taken by key actors within the OAU and IAF were at variance. Early in the operation, Dawit as the OAU representative discounted any repetition of ONUC’s robust rules of engagement in Congo which he interpreted as being collaboration by an international organisation with a government to crush internal rebellion.35 Conversely, communiqués from IAF Commander Ejiga struck a more

33 OAU Resolution AHG/Res 102/103 (XVIII).
34 Quoted in Ajibewa, Aderemi I., ‘Regional Organisation and Conflict Resolution in West Africa: Learning Lessons from the Chadian and Liberian Conflicts’.
muscular note against the rebels. As late as February 1982, he spoke of ‘crushing any attempt at infiltration by FAN into the zones occupied by his forces’.36

This led to the question of stated aims and partiality/neutrality. The Nairobi Accords required all member states, including those contributing to the IAF, to support the GUNT in its efforts to ‘maintain peace and security’. Nonetheless, aware of the vicissitudes of the Chadian conflict, some leaders were unwilling abandon neutrality. Senegal’s Abdou Diouf stated that the Force was not there to ‘wage war against any of Chad’s factions, but to restore peace and maintain security there’.37 West Africa magazine posed a rhetorical question. If the GUNT was the repository for the rule of law, and the IAF was bound to support the GUNT, how do the peacekeepers react to an attack on the legitimate authority?38 The nuances between self-defence and offensive action in a conflictual cauldron such as Chad were slight and precarious. Even so, as late as December the OAU Secretariat, acting in opposition to their representative Dawit, was apparently willing to countenance a compromise scheme by which IAF units would substitute for GUNT forces in non-combat roles thereby freeing government troops for front-line action.39 Yet, even this fell short of Goukouni’s expectations – ‘we do not need troops massing here increasing our difficulties, if they are not going to ensure the defence and security of the country...they should fight, otherwise their presence makes no sense’.40

With hindsight the IAF was clearly expected by most of those involved in its planning to act as an orthodox interposition force based on Chapter VI principles. However, the possibility of ‘mission creep’ towards Chapter VII was not discounted by all actors, and could indeed have been considered a logical step given the Force’s ambiguous mandate. Certainly Goukouni saw the IAF in terms of peace-enforcement. He could point out with justification that the bases for orthodox peacekeeping - consent, a ceasefire to maintain and impartiality - were absent. The IAF deployed without the express agreement of Habré. Even Goukouni’s consent was grudging. For FAN’s part, Idriss Miskine outlined his conception of the ground rules, with just a hint of menace, at

36 Quoted in Nolutshungu, op.cit., p.164.
38 Ibid., p.2757.
39 Nolutshungu, op.cit., p.164.
the start of the operation – 'we belong to the OAU...we recognise its judicial and moral role...we expect the force will stay strictly neutral, but we will fight it if we are attacked.\(^{41}\) There was no authentic ceasefire. Moreover, despite the fact that the position of its member states, including states contributing to the IAF, remained equivocal concerning the relative status of Goukouni and Habré, and regardless of concerns over mission creep within the Secretariat, the OAU was required by its Charter to support the GUNT and had stated expressly that it did so.

However, the meeting of the OAU Standing Committee on Chad in Nairobi on 11 February 1982 shattered any abiding illusion that the IAF might defend the government.\(^{42}\) Until that date the most charitable interpretation of the OAU’s strategy was impotent procrastination. Resolution AHG/Cttee/Chad/Res.1(III) redefined OAU intent and cleared any ambiguity by stating that ‘the Inter-African Force is a neutral force whose role is to maintain peace and ensure the formation of an integrated Chadian Army without favouring any political faction whatsoever’. The Resolution went on to call for a series of wholly unattainable political objectives - a ceasefire by midnight 28 February, national reconstruction talks in March, the drafting of a new constitution and elections for May. It also set the deadline for the withdrawal of the IAF at 30 June 1982.

The Standing Committee’s political demands took the abrogation of the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of a member state a step further. The call for elections was egregiously hypocritical coming from a committee few of whose members had an untarnished democratic record. It was also specious. Calls for an instant democratic solution to a profoundly undemocratic fratricidal conflict that had endured for thirteen years went beyond wishful thinking. The response of the major protagonists was predictable. Goukouni quit Nairobi describing the meeting as an ‘absurd scenario’ and denouncing OAU treachery.\(^{43}\) For his part, Habré saw the \textit{volte-face} as, ‘an enormous

\(^{41}\) Quoted in \textit{Guardian [Manchester]}, 20 November 1981.  
\(^{42}\) The Standing Committee comprised Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Guinea, Libya, Niger, Republic of Central Africa, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Sudan, Chad and Togo - plus troop or observer-contributors Nigeria, Zaire, Algeria, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau and Zambia.  
victory for the Chadian people and the OAU’, by which he presumably meant an enormous victory for himself and FAN.  

The inadequacy of inter-African and extra-African funding for the IAF was cited as the reason for the curtailment of the operation. However, it was clear that the underlying reason for a reappraisal of the aims of the intervention was that the members of the Standing Committee, the Secretariat, the field commanders and governments of troop contributing states and their foreign sponsors recognised that they had underestimated Habré and overestimated Goukouni. In contrast to Goukouni’s increasingly ineffectual histrionics, Habré’s forces had consolidated their positions in the north and east, whilst adopting the tone of a government-in-waiting. The Standing Committee’s decision had a devastating effect on Goukouni’s legitimacy as President. With the GUNT relegated to the position of a faction in the conflict, the coalition collapsed. Recognising a fait accompli, and moving to reposition in anticipation of a realignment of forces in the country, Kamagoué and Acyl declared their forces neutral. By the end of May only Goukouni’s FAP was left to defend N’Djaména from FAN. However, the capital was spared further destruction with the rout of Goukouni’s troops at Massaguet. Habré took N’Djaména in less than three hours on 7 June 1982.

The Standing Committee’s claim that it had merely recognised the increasing financial obstacles to continued intervention was an exercise in revisionism. There had always been a political/military aspect to the OAU’s intervention. FAN had only been prevented from taking the capital through the intervention of Libya. Prior to the OAU intervention, Ahmed Acyl had pointed out acerbically that without the Libyans, the GUNT would not last ten days and that ‘it wasn’t us [the anti-Habré coalition] that chased Habré out of N’Djaména’.  

With the Libyans gone the OAU intervention was clearly an over ambitious attempt to redress the balance of military strength in an effort to maintain the status quo. In the event, if the OAU’s priority was supporting the GUNT as the legitimate government, diplomatic initiatives could have been made without Libya’s withdrawal.

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44 Ibid., p.6336.  
Few outside the GUNT expected the IAF to take the battle to FAN. However, the
total ineffectuality of the Force, evidenced by Ejiga's unwillingness to employ a creative
definition of what constituted self-defence, far from advancing a political solution,
doomed the GUNT to defeat. The IAF, with limited size and combat readiness was forced
to tailor the mandate to fit its capabilities, although whatever construction was placed on
the mandate seemed doomed to failure. If the mandate was construed as a Chapter VI
intervention then consent and a ceasefire were lacking. If it was to be construed as a
peace-enforcement intervention, with a presumption of support for the government, then
it lacked the practical capacity to deliver.

Would a stronger force have acted differently? In the face of adverse criticism of
the IAF, Ejiga together with many of the Nigerian commanders sounded a wounded note.
Most blame was placed on the lack of funding and poor executive/political leadership
from the OAU Secretariat and Heads of State and Government. However, Ejiga claimed
that the IAF had fulfilled the limited aims of the mandate to 'pacify, make appeals and
persuade'. These limitations were not stressed when the GUNT was being asked to accept
an OAU intervention as a replacement for the Libyans. Having taken the step of setting
aside the principle of non-interference did the OAU have the moral right when the
intractability of the operation became apparent to insist on its neutrality? Moreover, Ejiga
in his post-mortem for the IAF seems to perceive the mandate as not entirely passive –
'the Force also had a mandate to put an end to hostilities and to force the parties in
conflict to confine themselves to their respective positions to permit negotiations if the
OAU resolutions had been accepted by the parties in their entirety'.

(e) Under funding and logistical shortfall
The most basic, but most formidable, obstacles faced by the IAF were funding and
logistics. Of specific interest in the context of this research is the effect that chronic
underfunding and lack of logistics had on the political/ethical dimension of the

46 Quoted in Nolutshungu, op.cit., p.170.
intervention. By 1980, the OAU was already the most populous regional organisation in
the world and also the poorest. Plainly, the OAU’s parlous finances mirrored the
increasingly dire economic standing of the continent. The annual budget since 1963 has
never exceeded $30m per annum. In the fiscal year 1980/1981 only $3m out of $17m
was collected. Moreover, the OAU has no single state or group of states that has the
will or ability to underwrite initiatives in extraordinary circumstances. Furthermore, in
a case of poverty breeding contempt, the OAU’s cumulative financial plight brings the
organisation’s international salience into question. In Chad the simple arithmetic was
devastating. The OAU costed the operation at $163m per annum. In the first two
months following the deployment of the Zairean battalion, they collected £280,000 from
member states. This shortfall undermined all aspects of the operation and doomed the
Force to failure.

Primarily, OAU penury undermined its neutrality. Ideally, after the Paris and
Nairobi meetings, funding for the operation would have flowed directly from the OAU in
Addis Ababa to the IAF. In the event, the organisation was compelled from an early stage
to allow individual troop-contributing states to seek bilateral aid. This arrangement
proved fiscally inadequate, whilst having the political/ethical disadvantage of
conditionality. The foreign aid policies of both France and the US were being reassessed
following respective changes in government. Despite, the avowed anti-aid policy of the
Reagan administration veiled diplomacy at the North-South summit at Cancún resulted in
the US and France joining regional actors in a combined ‘aid for compliance’ strategy to
thwart Libyan ambitions. In fact, as Massaquoi argues, joint US-France interest in
funding peacekeeping troops waned considerably following Qadafi’s withdrawal in
November 1981.

51 Guardian [Manchester], 15 February 1982.
53 Massaquoi, op.cit., p121.
Nigeria used informal channels to indicate requirements for keeping its troops in Chad to the US, French, British and West German embassies in Lagos.\textsuperscript{54} For international consumption the Reagan administration obtained Congressional approval for $12m non-lethal aid for Nigeria. Following objections that the Nigerians proposed paying their troops too much, and a dispute over the apportionment of funds between Nigeria and Zaire only $6.6m was disbursed.\textsuperscript{55} American partiality over the distribution of its logistical largesse engendered further resentment. Whilst the IAF as an entity received a minor contribution of a Class 12 ferry and six small boats, US aircraft frequently resupplied the irresolute Zairean contingent.\textsuperscript{56} The widespread assumption that the US had the fall of the GUNT as its target was not disabused by the paucity of US assistance for the OAU operation.

The French concentrated their funds on the Senegalese contingent. However, the money spent on the Senegalese was partially offset by a diminution in subventions to balance the Chadian budget. Indeed, French aid to the GUNT fell significantly short of Goukouni's expectations. Nonetheless, French logistical support during the operation amounted to considerably more than that supplied by Britain - five Land Rovers and a consignment of berets for Nigeria.

Funds in place at the start of the operation were barely sufficient to deploy the Force. Initially, Senegal, Zaire and Nigeria, assumed that their commitment would be limited to supplying troops. However it became clear that the OAU and bilateral sponsors could not or would not contribute sufficient funding to enable the IAF to fulfil its mandate. The immediate effect was to dissuade Guinea, Benin and Togo from deploying. Of the three remaining troop-contributing states Nigeria was the most exposed. Unwilling to accept the conditions attached to US logistic support, the Nigerians soon realised that they would have to meet most of their own expenditure. The eventual cost of NICON would be $43m. It must be assumed that the issue of funding narrowed the political options open to Lagos. With exploitation of the intervention hardly an option, the Nigerians' prime concern was to effect a successful phased withdrawal from Chad.

\textsuperscript{54} Times [London], 7 December 1981.
\textsuperscript{55} Pittman, op.cit., p.316.
\textsuperscript{56} Kupolati, op.cit., p.152.
The possibility of UN financial support had been discussed at the OAU summit in Freetown.\textsuperscript{57} By mid-January 1982 there was increasing speculation that the OAU was preparing a request for funds from the UN.\textsuperscript{58} Several factors mitigated against such a rescue plan. The UN had never supplied funds for an intervention outside its own aegis. Although most OAU member states, an exception being Senegal, favoured the IAF setting a precedent of the UN underwriting all-African interventions, the then UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim was not ready to support those arrangements. More significantly there was no support for this step from the three Western members of the Security Council.\textsuperscript{59} The US in particular, having expended time and money in covert promotion of FAN, was unwilling to risk a resuscitation of the IAF. The OAU conspired to reach the worst solution. A voluntary fund organised by the UN was doomed to failure leaving both a large budget deficit and the image of the OAU as impotent and dependent.

Pressure from external actors, inexperience and a lack of interoperability stretched the mission’s tenuous logistical capacity and the viability of its command and control structure. Despite a protracted period of negotiation over the IAF’s deployment no troops arrived in N’Djaména before 14 November 1981. In the interim, FAN profited by securing its positions and moving into the strategic towns of Oum Hadjer and Abéché.

The first sign that command of the IAF would lack cohesion was the premature deployment of the Zairean troops. In response to this deployment Ejiga postponed a planning meeting set for Kinshasa on 19 November until 27 November. Thus, detailed analysis of the mandate and the military response in terms of operational tactics and rules of engagement during the initial deployment remained undiscussed. The early arrival of the Zaireans additionally meant that Ejiga’s original plan to assemble the full Force at the Nigerian base at Maiduguri and enter Chad as a body was stymied from the outset. Tactical confusion was further aggravated by the non-arrival at the Kinshasa meeting of representatives from Togo, Benin and Guinea imposing an immediate change in the proposed pattern of deployment.

The backbone of the Force, NICON, did not arrive until December. Ejiga set up his headquarters in N’Djaména on 2 December followed by the remains of his much

\textsuperscript{57} See AHG/Res.101 (XVII).
\textsuperscript{58} Guardian, 21 January 1981.
\textsuperscript{59} Nolutshungu, op.cit., p.163.
depleted Force. The result was a logistical impasse. The IAF was expected to cover an area of 500,000 square miles or 100,000 square miles per battalion. The country had been split into seven zones. The GUNT reserved control of the front line in the east covering the roads to Abéché and Bilitine as well as the Kanem region in the west. The other zones were to be occupied by the five battalions of the IAF by 16 December. Only the first battalion of NICON deployed on time. The second battalion of ZACON did not materialise at all. Mobutu’s paratroops refused to deploy to BET remaining in the capital until reluctantly moving to share Ati in central Chad with the second Nigerian battalion. The Senegalese contingent was deployed to a limited sector in the south. This left some of the south, much of the east and all of the north unsecured by the IAF.

Even so, the existing troop/territory ratios severely stretched supply lines and tested command and control capabilities. Indeed, harsh terrain, poor transport infrastructure, basic communication network and high temperatures would have taxed any intervention force. Yet the IAF entered Chad without any central supplies. Each contingent was dependent upon funding from its own government and any bilateral aid they could negotiate. Distances and terrain dictated a need for extensive air mobility. However, the senior air detachment officer only ranked Lieutenant Colonel. More significantly, he controlled no IAF aircraft. Each contingent relied on the relative capacities of their own air force and such bilateral support as they could muster. The Force lacked sophisticated communications. The radios and transmitters they possessed frequently broke down in the heat and dust. Fuel was scarce owing to the high consumption rate and evaporation. As a Nigerian officer serving in the IAF commented, ‘the OAU peacekeeping effort in Chad suffered all the disadvantages of an ill-planned, ill-equipped and under-funded venture while enjoying none of the known advantages of a multinational force of the UN’.  

The IAF suffered from a severe credibility deficit. Given its intrinsic limitations, both practical and institutional, there was no possibility of the Force fulfilling the role vacated by the Libyans and/or maintaining the status quo. Clearly the IAF would have been hard pushed to engage any of the battle-hardened factions. For an operation that

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60 Kupolati, op.cit., p.148.
61 Ibid., p.151.
sought to demonstrate unanimity of purpose on the part of the continental organisation there was a propensity for each element of the mission to act as an independent entity. Insofar as individual members of the various contingents and observer groups had cause to interact there appears to have been a harmonious working relationship. The real problem lay with Ejiga's inability to maintain a common purpose and strategy against interference from the contingents' governments and their external sponsors. As Nolutshungu points out, 'the operation belonged to the OAU in name only; in reality it was a Nigerian, Zairean and Senegalese operation'.

(f) The role of external actors

The OAU's lack of salience left it as just another actor in its own operation. The extra-continental protagonists, France and the US, treated the OAU as a necessary evil, or as an entity to be manipulated, rather than as the instigator of the mission. Likewise, regional actors, including troop-contributing countries, worked to their own agenda. Layers of confusion and intrigue multiplied as the OAU acted as a conduit for dubious foreign policy machinations played out on the Chadian stage.

France in Africa has always been a *quid pro quo*. As Roy May and Roger Charlton remark, 'both the extensiveness and the intensity of the ties of “sentiment” and “interest” - cultural, economic, strategic and geopolitical - that continue to tie France to Africa ensure that the concept of dependence increasingly cut two ways'. By 1979, French economic interest in Chad was subordinate to French prestige. France perceived Africa as the cornerstone of its claim to be a great power. Moreover, as Nolutshungu comments, 'a kind of domino theory seemed to apply'. France was increasingly concerned that if it could not preserve leverage in one state then its credibility in the others would be diminished.

France's policy in Chad following the fall of Tombalbaye has been described as weak and vacillating. Indeed, any *légionnaire* based in N'Djaména would have been well advised to reserve his copy of *Le Monde* to see which faction he might be fighting next

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62 ibid., p.153.
63 Nolutshungu, op.cit., p.169.
week. However, France had always pursued a cautious policy in Chad. Whilst it did not create the internecine factionalism that pervades the country, it was culpable for entrenching existing antagonisms. Paris was wary of arbitrating in quarrels between clans or attempting to exert control beyond the southern Tchad utile and northern garrison towns. This policy survived Chad’s independence. The barren north and east of the country escaped the covert manoeuvring of France’s ‘Monsieur Afrique’ Jacques Foccart.

Throughout the 1970s, the concern was not really about who ruled in N’Djaména, but how to stem Libyan ambitions in Chad. To this end, direct armed intervention was a blunt weapon that France did not hesitated to use. However, in 1981 circumstances dictated otherwise. The transition from a Gaullist to a Socialist administration occupied the minds of the diplomats at the Quai d’Orsay. Mitterrand’s election manifesto, Projet Socialiste, had promised an end to French militarism in Africa and specifically called for Chadian ‘independence’. Moreover, the new government was unwilling to tempt international hostility by embarking on an uninvited unilateral intervention. A further complication was the growing trade portfolio in oil and arms between France and Libya.

French troops were already disengaging as part the Lagos II Accords. In the absence of its accustomed military presence, the prospect of an OAU-sponsored intervention, potentially open to manipulation, offered an opportunity to maintain an interest in events. Certain officers based in Chad and elements within the French intelligence services opposed this policy. At one juncture rogue elements attempted to force the hand of the new government in Paris by fabricating a coup against the GUNT and feeding misinformation that the Libyans intended to reinvade.

The delicate relationship between Nigeria and France was key to the establishment of the IAF. The sincerity, or otherwise, of the apparent rapprochement between the two regional rivals was hidden beneath the usual veils of diplomatic camouflage. Nolutshungu hints at collaboration between the two states in an effort to secure US support for the IAF during the North-South summit at Cancún in October

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55 Nolutshungu, op.cit., p.11.
56 May and Charlton, op.cit., p.8.
58 Guardian [Manchester], 19 November 1981.
However, some Nigerians appeared less enthused by the French role in negotiations. Commenting on the choice of Paris as the venue for the agreement establishing the Force, Vice-President Alex Ekwueme charged that ‘the OAU has sold itself cheaply to France and degraded the true meaning of African unity’. Even so, French diplomatic pressure was central to the IAF’s metamorphosis from possible to probable. For Sesay, the Paris meeting was final proof that France was ‘indeed the brain behind its formation’.

France’s performance during the Force’s deployment fell far short of its promise. Early expansive guarantees to underwrite the majority of the operation’s costs vanished with Qadafi’s surprise departure. The bulk of French assistance to the IAF was channelled through logistical supplies and support for the Senegalese battalion. A commitment to financially bolster Goukouni’s GUNT made at the Franco-African summit in Paris also failed to live up to expectations. The dispatch of 25 tonnes of Kalashnikov rifles and ammunition seized during previous French operations in Chad and the Central African Republic was a poor replacement for Goukouni’s former shield of 14,000 Libyan soldiers. A week after Libya’s withdrawal, GUNT representatives met French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson with an invoice for £110m, including £43m to rebuild the Chadian army. At the time the French ‘cast an anxious eye over the Chadians’ shopping list’. Aid increased, but only by a ‘trickle’. Michael Kelley notes that, whilst France remained Chad’s single largest donor of ODA, when French ODA to Chad is compared with total French ODA there was a decrease between 1980 and 1982. This serves to emphasise that France’s open, but ultimately pragmatic, policy in Chad was always liable to forsake Goukouni’s GUNT as being ‘too divided, too weak and too incompetent’.

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74 Guardian [Manchester], 14 November 1981.  
77 Nolutshungu, op.cit., p.306.
The interest of the US government in the Chadian civil war had deleterious effects on the chances of the IAF succeeding. Unlike France, the US sought not so much to manipulate the OAU intervention as to undermine it. It was historical coincidence that Libyan involvement in the escalation of the civil war coincided with the accession to the presidency of Ronald Reagan. Convinced that Libya was a surrogate for Soviet policy, Reagan targeted the Qadafi regime. When the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) isolated Libyan overextension in Chad as its Achilles’ heel the civil war became a focal point of Reagan’s offensive.

The US State Department developed a two-pronged strategy. The intention was, in Nolutshungu’s words, ‘to give a positive and constructive rationality to a White House attitude without subtlety in its emotional character and one-sidedness’. In public the US supported the OAU and the French strategy with warm words. There was to be logistic support for the IAF and non-lethal aid for the GUNT. In its execution this policy was more honoured in the breach than the observance. The $12m passed by Congress to finance the Nigerian contingent (NICON) was loaded with conditions. ODA for the GUNT was conditional on the withdrawal of the Libyan troops. Indeed, prior to the departure of the Libyans the State Department had intervened to prevent the UN from distributing US-donated soya milk. In 1981, the sum total of American ODA to Chad amounted to just $160,000. Aid increased following the Libyan withdrawal, but in a piecemeal fashion with a heavy concentration on emergency food relief.

The Zairean contingent (ZACON) received consistent support from the US throughout the mission. The Zairean battalion became the subject of much adverse speculation within the IAF. The new Director of the CIA, William Casey, had been an old friend of Zairean President Mobuto Sesi Seko since the CIA’s involvement in the assassination of former Congolese President Patrice Lumumba. There was a widespread assumption that ZACON was acting as a proxy force for US interests. The Zairean troops proved remarkably ineffective and uncooperative. Their premature deployment and

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78 Ibid., p.309.
79 Guardian [Manchester], 14 November 1981.
unwillingness to leave N'Djaména seemed suspect. Kupolati recalls ZACON receiving a disproportionate share of US food and logistic supplies.\textsuperscript{81} The Zaireans provided one facet of an American fail-safe strategy. ZACON acted as a passive unit that could be counted upon to stymie any unforeseen demands for the IAF to physically defend the GUNT.

Goukouni saw Langley’s dead hand in all aspects of the conflict and intervention. Following his ousting, he accused the US of coordinating both the Zaireans and, more significantly, the Nigerians in a grand strategy to ‘gain the confidence of the GUNT and then to betray it’\textsuperscript{82} Prior to the third meeting in Nairobi, dubbed Nairobi III, the Nigerians’ demeanour had suggested positive support for the GUNT and an apparent determination to resist any FAN aggression. According to Goukouni, this was a bluff. Following the OAU’s demand at Nairobi III that the GUNT negotiate with FAN, both the Nigerians based in Mao and Moussoro and the Zaireans in Ati demanded that the GUNT forces retreat from jointly occupied positions. Once yielded, these zones were then ceded to FAN without any opposition.

There is little evidence available to assess the veracity or otherwise of Goukouni’s accusations. Better documentation exists for the US secondary strategy. CIA files show that President Numeiri of Sudan had urged the CIA to support Habré. Covert supplies were sent to FAN camps in Sudan with Secretary of State Alexander Haig’s stated purpose being to ‘bloody Qadafi’s nose’ and ‘increase the flow of pine boxes back to Libya’.\textsuperscript{83}

There were some qualms about this strategy in Washington. With an eye on possible human rights questions in Congressional oversight committees, the Directorate of Operations questioned whether Habré was a suitable proxy for US interests. Director Casey’s response was forthright – ‘God damn...did they want a note from Habré’s mother? Habré was a brutal, calculating survivor. Didn’t they read their own reports. Where was the realism?’\textsuperscript{84} The US expended about $10m on Habré. This relatively small

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\textsuperscript{82} See Nolutshungu, op.cit., p.171.
\textsuperscript{83} Woodward, op.cit., p.94.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid., p.157.
amount, however, was sufficient to sustain the FAN at a time of crisis. It cost $10m to finance FAN’s push to N'Djaména and in the process undermine, ‘the one test that the French, Libyans, the OAU and Goukouni’s government had agreed upon, the establishment of an OAU peacekeeping force’.85

Nigeria had no vital economic interests in Chad. The rationale for Nigeria’s central role in the mediation and peacekeeping effort was based on geopolitical, strategic and humanitarian concerns. The Nigerian Director-General for African Affairs at the time offers a variety of motives for Nigeria’s prominent role in the IAF.86 Hegemony lies at the core. Nigeria needed to show other regional actors, plus Libya and France, as well as leaders of potential secessionist states within its own federation that it was capable of decisive action. Beyond this there existed a vested security interest in ensuring a stable and friendly government in Chad. Finally, a sympathetic reading of events might promote a certain Nigerian humanitarianism.

A sharp rivalry existed between Nigeria and its African and non-African competitors for regional hegemony. Libya had been implicated in fostering internal unrest in Nigeria’s Borno and Kano states.87 Moreover, Tripoli’s expansionism was a clear challenge to Nigeria. The prospect of an indefinite Libyan presence in Chad, still less the proposed merger of the two countries, was unacceptable to Lagos. The ubiquitous extra-continental competitor in the region was France. As an anglophone state surrounded by francophone states, Nigeria had always felt compelled to fight its corner against French influence. If IAF troops, with Nigeria in the vanguard, could succeed in bringing stability to Chad it would be a huge boost to Nigerian prestige in the region.

Whilst these geopolitical considerations coloured the Nigerian outlook a settled national policy was never achieved. Strong anti-colonial elements within Nigeria were sympathetic to Qadafi’s anti-imperialistic stance. However, at the same time, the growing audacity of Libya’s policy in Chad led others believe that Nigeria and France should seek to coordinate their respective policies regarding Chad. The lack of a ‘concrete national objective’ left Nigerian foreign policy open to what Nolutshungu has called ‘a certain

vagueness and whimsicality'.\(^8\) Lacking perspicacity, Presidents Olesegun and Shagari embarked upon a policy in which hope triumphed over expectation. Nigerian involvement in the IAF lent the OAU’s operation a credibility political, military and financial - that the original 1980 intervention by Congolese troops had lacked. However, its commitment depended on a clear and quick solution to the conflict for which it could take credit. It was neither wedded to the GUNT nor to any of the OAU’s stated goals for the mission. As soon as the IAF’s shortcomings became apparent Nigeria began the process of pulling out. Nigeria’s mediocre performance during both the mediation to address the Chadian civil war and the OAU intervention prefigured a failure to assume sub-regional hegemony that would undermine future all-African peace operations.

A major problem for the operation was the extent to which so many regional actors saw the civil war as an opportunity to exercise a varying measure of regional policy, whether at their own behest or as surrogates for external powers. Chad’s size and position has dictated that its ‘region’ has been defined broadly. Clearly for many contiguous states security considerations prevailed. There was anxiety over the exportation of violence and instability by contagion. Moreover, many regional leaders were aware that persistent institutional chaos in Chad subverted the tacit compact based on *de jure* sovereignty that maintained the international legitimacy of their own states.

Given the extent to which its material resources were stretched the OAU was reliant on unity of political purpose from its members if the IAF was to succeed. However, two strategically vital states, Sudan and Egypt, far from supporting the operation, actively subverted it. It was an open secret that FAN had camps along the Sudan/Chad border and equipment was transported to Habré’s men along the ‘Sadat trail’.\(^8\) Indeed, Sudan and Egypt’s support for Habré against Goukouni was a central plank in their joint anti-Qaddafi strategy.

On 22 April 1981, the GUNT’s representative at the UN delivered a letter charging that ‘Egypt and the Sudan were threatening Chad with armed aggression’\(^9\). The *Guardian* stated in November 1981 that Sudan’s President Numeiri was, ‘doing nothing

\(^8\) Kelley, op.cit., p.72.  
\(^8\) Nolutshungu, op.cit, p.121.  
\(^8\) *Guardian* [Manchester], 30 November 1981.
in practical terms to discourage Habré’s remorseless drive to regain the eastern part of Chad'.

This underestimated the position. Without the direct assistance of Sudan and Egypt, and in particular the US assistance channelled through the two countries, Habré would probably never have managed to regroup and launch his assault on N’Djaména. For Sudan and Egypt the financial burden of sponsoring FAN was significantly eased by massive increases in US military aid, in the case of Sudan from $30m to $100m and in the case of Egypt from $550m to $900m. Throughout the peace process OAU demands that member states refuse the use of their territories as sanctuaries for ‘dissident Chadian groups’ remained unequivocal. The willingness of Egypt and Sudan to arm and accommodate FAN subverted the OAU’s salience as a body capable of preserving unity of purpose amongst its own members in the midst of a peacekeeping intervention undertaken under its auspices.

Whilst Senegal acted as a proxy for French interests in the operation, Zaire played the same role for the US. However, at the same time as currying favour with the new US President, Mobuto took the opportunity to increase Zaire’s visibility in the region. The intervention also offered the opportunity for Mobuto to make use of a favoured ploy - deflecting international criticism of domestic policies by promoting Zaire as a valuable strategic asset. The surprise deployment of its elite, French-trained, Paratroop Brigade contained more than a hint of vainglory. However, the shine was taken off this coup de théâtre when the much-vaunted contingent showed a tendency to merely shadow the Nigerian troops.

Conclusion

The OAU’s attempt to move beyond the proscriptions of its Charter was a bold but flawed endeavour. The IAF suffered from the gamut of problems peculiar to

90 Letter from GUNT to UN Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council, 22 April 1981, UN Document S/14455.
91 Guardian [Manchester], 30 November 1981.

'[The undersigned] CALL UPON all member countries especially those with common borders with the Republic of Chad, to refuse their territories to be used by extra-African powers and dissident Chadian groups as sanctuaries or bases for mounting armed attacks against the Republic of Chad'.
peacekeeping intervention — mandate, institutional incapacity, funding, logistics, as well as intra-African and extra-African pressure.

The hypothesis asserts that African leaders are under a moral/political imperative to summon the will to develop a capacity to intervene in conflicts. The OAU operation in Chad was fundamental to the evolution of African self-pacification through its innovation in terms of Chapter VIII subsidiarity, albeit at a continental rather than sub-regional level. The operation signalled a newfound willingness by the members of the continental body to intervene in the internal affairs of one of their fellow member states.

The civil war erupted when the Cold War’s effects on Africa were at a height. Security on the continent was invariably dictated by the vagaries of superpower rivalry. The cosmopolitan ambitions of the advocates of a universal approach to conflict management remained in abeyance. The UN had deployed just two medium-sized interposition forces during the 1990s. In this environment discourse amongst African leaders preceding the decision to send an all-African force recalled, to a degree, the pan-African particularism of Nkrumah. Whilst the OAU member states were not resuscitating the notion of an African High Command there was a genuine belief, especially within the OAU Secretariat, that the concept to ‘try Africa first’ was valid. Yet, the ambition proved premature. Influence asserted by non-Chad actors during the intervention was marked. The role of the hegemon was one issue brought into relief by the operation. Nigeria failed to provide effective leadership on either a political or military level. This was not helped by the OAU’s original decision to dispatch a disparate force of ineffective contingents from small non-contiguous states. The eventual IAF, although more credible in military terms, was nonetheless subverted by the various relationships between the individual contingents and their extra-continental sponsors. Unity of purpose amongst the African actors was further weakened by regional, and even extra-regional rivalry. Conflicting agendas betokened the sub-regional, regional and continental rivalries that would hinder future all-African peace operations.

The hypothesis further states that all-African operations should be conducted, possibly with external assistance, but without direct extra-continental intervention. The experience of the IAF in this respect was also inauspicious. The Western powers, in particular France and the US, were not ready or willing to abandon direct influence on the
continent. That France and the US officially supported the OAU initiative was not a sign
that they were advocating communitarianism as an approach to conflict in Africa.
The new Socialist government in France felt compelled by its own supposedly non-
interventionist manifesto to offer a measure of support to an all-African operation that it
assumed would amount to little. It would revert to direct intervention in Chad a year later.
The US invariably preferred covert backing for its preferred ally in any African conflict.
Unconvincing support for the aims of IAF was belied by the decisive assistance given
semi-secretly by the Reagan administration to Habré and FAN. The actions of these
Western powers during the Chadian intervention might be distinguished by the
geopolitical circumstances of the Cold War. Whether manipulation of all-African peace
operations and the use of proxies continue will be discussed in the next chapter.

Given the precocity of the intervention specific issues of sovereignty and non-
intervention in the affairs of OAU member states, as well as clear impediments to
intervention in terms of international law and the ‘just war tradition’ applied to peace
operations, were glossed over. These issues frequently reoccur as underlying problems of
peace operations, and not just in Africa. The mandate for the IAF was a more problematic
matter. Although Force Commander Ejiga implied that he could conceive of the
operation adopting a peace-enforcement posture, most of the actors considered the
intervention to be a Chapter VI interposition force. As such it was doomed to failure in
that the prerequisites for orthodox peacekeeping as envisaged by the Hammerskjold-
Pearson principles outlined in Chapter One were not in place. In particular the consent of
all parties was not obtained and an authentic ceasefire was not in place. The OAU also
approached the intervention from a position of distinct partiality in that it had given
explicit support to Goukouni’s GUNT. This partiality proved tenuous and did not extend
to a sustained effort to prevent the GUNT’s overthrow.

The deployment of an all-African peace force would not be attempted again for
another decade. When the self-pacification project resumed it was in a different
international climate and at the sub-regional level. Even so many of the issues that had
affected the IAF remained. The next chapter considers that extent to which lessons had
been learned.
Seventeen years separated the deployment of the Inter-African Force in Chad and the intervention by the Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG) in the Guinea-Bissau civil war. The intervening period saw the continental body step back from intervention under its own auspices, as well as ineffective international response to the crises in Somalia and Rwanda. In the shadow of these failures there was an extension of the logic of Chapter VIII subsidiarity. African sub-regional organisations (SROs) accepted first responsibility in the field of regional conflict resolution. At the same time Western powers promoted sub-regional primacy for conflict management and resolution by establishing several and joint peacekeeping capacity enhancement programmes as discussed in Chapter Five.

At the time of the outbreak of hostilities in Guinea-Bissau the communitarian position was dominant, at least as far as conflict in Africa was concerned. One issue was the degree of subsidiarity. Guinea-Bissau would see two interventions. The first was fundamental – a dual intervention by Guinea-Bissau’s neighbours, Senegal and Guinea. This intervention was of dubious legitimacy and questionable motivation. The failure of this operation led to competition between two ‘communities’ to which Guinea-Bissau belonged – the linguistic Communidade de Países de Lingua Franca Português (CPLP) and the regional ECOWAS. The latter intervened, albeit with expedient assistance from the French peacekeeping capacity enhancement programme - the Renforcement des capacités africaines de maintien de la paix (RECAMP).

ECOMOG’s intervention in Guinea-Bissau was of a different scale and quality to its previous operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Nonetheless, from the perspective of this research, the intervention allows comparison with the original all-African interventions in Chad in 1980-1982. Both operations were relatively small and deployed under an ostensibly limited Chapter VI mandate. The perseverance of similar obstacles to successful intervention faced by the IAF in Chad and ECOMOG in Guinea-Bissau is
marked. There were problems framing a workable mandate. Funding and logistics remained persistent impediments. Rivalry between African states, notably suspicion between anglophone and francophone members of ECOWAS, was again a factor in the Guinea-Bissau operation. The role of extra-African powers was also important. As noted the operation was only possible because of French financial and logistical support. However, this involvement was effectively self-serving. French assistance to ECOMOG via RECAMP was used to manipulate the operation with a view to diminishing Portuguese influence in Guinea-Bissau.

The chapter is divided into eight sections and a conclusion. The first section sets the conflict and interventions in historical context. Section (b) looks at the dual intervention by Senegal and Guinea at the start of the war. The next section considers a peace process notable for the proliferation of aspiring mediators. Section (d) assesses whether the ECOMOG operation was justified, in particular the implications of the recurring issues of sovereignty and mandate. Section (e) covers the construction of the intervening Force concentrating on the role of France and the French peacekeeping capacity enhancement initiative. Section (f) looks at the performance of the Force – the manner in which one troop contributing state – Togo – sought to act as a proxy for French interests, and the ineffective nature of the intervention in terms of fulfilling its mandate. A final section examines the continued influence of state actors external to the conflict – African and non-African – and their effects on peace intervention and the functioning of the Force deployed. A conclusion sets these all-African interventions, especially the ECOMOG operation, in the context of the hypothesis and the research questions outlined in Chapter Two.

(a) The historical background

An exchange of gunfire in Bissau city between soldiers loyal to President João Bernardo ‘Nino’ Vieira and mutinous troops supporting the recently dismissed army Chief of Staff Brigadier Ansumane Mané in the early morning of 7 June 1998 heralded the start of 11 months of civil conflict.1 ‘It was not a huge war’, the Economist noted, ‘but for the 1m

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people of Guinea-Bissau, it was devastating...hundreds of people were killed, the city
was destroyed and hundreds of thousands fled into the countryside'. The primary reason
for the fighting - irrevocable splits within the government and the leading party, the
Partido Africano da Independencia da Guiné-Bissau e Cabo Verde (PAIGC), sat amidst
a web of geopolitical machinations and posturing. These causes had been a long time in
gestation.

The motor of the independence struggle, the PAIGC, was formed in 1956. An
armed rebellion against colonial rule in ‘Portuguese’ Guinea and the islands of Cape
Verde was conducted between 1962 and 1974. Portuguese control over the territory
embracing the present-day state of Guinea-Bissau had been fully established only just
prior to the designation of ‘Portuguese’ Guinea as a colony in 1927. From the late
sixteenth century the French and British had squeezed Portuguese interests in the region.
During the ‘scramble for Africa’ Lisbon conceded a part of the territory under its tenuous
influence, notably in Casamance in southern Senegal and along the Rio Nunez, to France.
What remained was a littoral dominated by wide estuaries ‘where it is difficult to
distinguish mud, mangrove and water from dry land’.3

The settled borders contain a wide ethnic mix. In 1996 there were 23 linguistic
groups out of an estimated population of 1.2m.4 The main indigenous groups are the
Balanta (about 30% of the population), Fula (20%), Mandyak (14%), Mandinka (12%)
and Papel (7%).5 Ethnic populations spread over Guinea-Bissau’s permeable borders with
Guinea-Conakry and, particularly, the Casamance region of southern Senegal. During the
struggle for independence Upper Guinea Crioulo became a lingua franca throughout the
country.

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Islamicised Fula from
modern Guinea-Conakry conquered the Mandinka Kingdom of Gabu. If defeat
marginalised the Mandinka, an abiding memory of Gabu lives on in recurrent calls for the

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4 Grimes, Barbara F. (ed.), Ethnologue (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1996); World Bank,
September 1999; Webster’s New Geographical Dictionary (Springfield: G. and C. Merriam Company,
1972, p.972.
5 Grimes, op.cit.
recreation of the Mandinka state across the modern borders of northern Guinea-Bissau, Casamance and Gambia.

Map 3: Map of Guinea-Bissau

Portuguese colonialism generated, in Basil Davidson’s words, ‘a double and extremely deep provincialism; the provincialism of Portuguese culture but also, below that, the
provincialism of peoples despised even by the Portuguese culture'.

Portugal structured the colony through a graded racial hierarchy incorporating the majority ‘noncivilised’ African indígena and a tiny minority categorised as civilizados. The majority of this elite was Cape Verdean or people of Cape Verdean descent. Thus, the population ‘consisted of a very small minority of persons who were treated as such, even with many reservations, and a very large majority of ‘natives’ who were in all important ways (whether by colonial law or usage) the mere objects of exploitation’.

Carlos Lopes concedes that in Guinea-Bissau ‘there is no national legitimacy and territorial continuity except that imposed by the colonial presence’. Yet, for Lopes, the degree of interaction achieved during the liberation struggle constituted ‘Guinea’s finest hour’. Davidson notes that ‘hitherto divided and often mutually hostile communities now stood on the same political ground...more and more clearly they saw these objectives in terms of their unity as a nation of peoples’. Whilst accepting the importance of the national liberation movement as a force for national unity, Joshua Forrest is less sanguine in his post-independence analysis. He emphasises that ‘colonial machinations...did exacerbate already serious divisions and tensions in Guinea [Bissau] – tensions that would revive and would constitute one of the more pernicious legacies bequeathed to the postcolonial leadership by their lusophone predecessors’.

The PAIGC was formed in 1956 in order to fight for independence in ‘Portuguese’ Guinea and Cape Verde. Its leader Amílcar Cabral and the five other founding members were all Cape Verdean. Cabral developed a complex composite political revolutionary nationalist ideology. Yet, even at the height of its international popularity in the 1960s, the PAIGC manifested authoritarian tendencies that would lead to assassination, coups and civil war. By the early 1970s, Rosemary Galli and Jocelyn

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9 Ibid., p.43.
10 Davidson, op.cit., p.43.
11 Forrest, op.cit., p.23.
Jones discovered a 'peasant experience...of increasing controls and sometimes punitive constraints and a decreasing opportunity to be involved in discussions of policy'.\textsuperscript{13} The immediate consequence of distrust, ethnic tension and democratic deficit was the assassination of Cabral on 20 January 1973 in Conakry by disaffected PAIGC militants, although the motives behind the assassination would also resurface as causal factors behind the civil war twenty-four years later.

Final victory over Portugal in September 1974 brought independence, but no solution to increasingly entrenched ethnic, political and economic problems. Independence compounded factionalism in the PAIGC, government and army. Political ambition in the context of a one-party state relied on the development of strong clientelist bonds. Christopher Clapham comments, 'clientelist systems lack the capacity to create any sense of moral community amongst those who participate in them, let alone among those who are excluded'.\textsuperscript{14}

A central issue was the future relationship between Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. Although Cape Verde achieved independence following elections in June 1975 there was no settled plan for unification. Non-Cape Verdeans remained very much in the minority in the upper echelons of the party, the government and the armed forces compounding Balanta rancour. As the PAIGC demobilised, the ministries manifested an impulse toward continued 'clientelismo', 'amiguismo', 'clubismo' and 'tribalismo'.\textsuperscript{15} Electoral exercises had been conducted in 1972 and 1976, although neither was authentic. PAIGC policy of operating a state monopoly of the import-export trade further antagonised peasant rice farmers, whilst reorganisation of the army caused further discontent. The Balanta provided a majority of between 70 and 80 per cent of both of army personnel and rice growers - discontent in the at village level re-enforced discontent in the barracks.

The level of disaffection throughout the country was unsustainable. Change came through the actions of Prime Minister and Army Commander Nino Vieira. The most

successful military leader on either side during the liberation struggle, Vieira merited an undisputed reputation amongst much of the army and peasantry. As a Papel, he benefited from the long-standing anti-colonial alliance between his ethnic group and the Balanta. When Vieira was removed as Army Commander in November 1984 he ordered a coup. Forrest’s analysis of the 1984 coup reflects the underlying causes of the later civil war.

It is important to emphasise that the coup resulted from an amalgamation of institutional, ethnic, and interpersonal power struggles, all of which were informed by historical legacies and symbolisms, and intensified by the growing political and economic alienation of the peasantry from the party and the government, but not from the army.16

The coup ended the possibility of a merger between Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. Within a year all top-level government officials of Cape Verdean origin had been dismissed or demoted. Already strained relations between Praia and Bissau were severed in January 1981, although the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau maintained its original title.

Vieira’s ousting of Cabral ‘did not lessen the climate of political instability’.17 Coup attempts, or rumours of coup attempts, the arrest of alleged conspirators and their rehabilitation, execution or imprisonment, would become a recurrent cycle during the Vieira era. Moreover, the perception that insufficient of their number were receiving senior posts in the army and government led to Balanta disaffection. Factionalism endured. Vieira’s retention of power was based on the recasting of the PAIGC as a hierarchical, vanguard party. Even so, the containment of factional insfighting required a deft political touch. Individuals were removed and resuscitated as Vieira attempted to countercheck each faction.

Moreover, Vieira was increasingly ‘challenged by a popular demand for democratic and accountable government’.18 However, parliamentary elections held in 1984 elections proved fraudulent. Polls in 1989 saw voter numbers drop to 53.2 percent of the registered electorate. Writing in 1992, Forrest noted that ‘the government continues

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to be perceived by many rural people as a foreign and infrequent element in their lives'.

Mass organisations created at independence provided no real voice for their various constituencies, whilst the National Assembly was a tool of the party, its debates ignored by the leadership.

Pressure for democratisation increased with the end of the Cold War. Economic liberalisation, initiated in 1983, led to a structural adjustment programme financed by external aid totalling $46.4m. In a climate of political conditionality, émigré opposition groups grasped the opportunity to agitate for pluralism in Bissau. Following an extraordinary conference of the PAIGC in January 1991, Guinea-Bissau embarked on a constitutional transition process. Defunct and exiled parties were revived and new parties formed. After a series of postponements legislative and presidential elections were held over two rounds in July and August 1994. The PAIGC won a clear majority in the National Assembly. Although endorsed by all opposition parties Koumba Yalla of the Partido da Renovação Social (PRS) was narrowly defeated by Vieira for the presidency. Yalla objected citing fraud and intimidation. Forrest’s conclusion at the time was that ‘Vieira intends, by one means or another, to hold on to the presidency and to insure the PAIGC’s continuation as the country’s ruling political party’. Even so, ‘Vieira emerged as a weakened leader of a fractious PAIGC’.22

Election victory provided scant respite for Vieira. The long awaited entry into the Franc Zone in 1997 resulted in a sharp rise in food prices and a lowering of purchasing power causing widespread unrest. Young men in the villages were forthright.

Where in our part of the country has the government helped us drill a well? Nowhere. If the PAIGC does not do anything concrete for us, we will not vote for them. If no concrete improvements take place we will withdraw.

By 1998, Guinea-Bissau had moved far away from the original revolutionary vision of Amilcar Cabral. A disparate population had disengaged from a dependent state. Raúl

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Mendes Fernandes notes that the state had ‘become dependent on the Bretton Woods institutions, the population had atomised with a multiplication of trade unions, associations, parties and NGOs seeking a new legitimacy’.  

Guinea-Bissau’s foreign relations add a final causal factor underlying the civil war. Conditional aid from multilateral donors instigated economic and, latterly, political liberalisation. Both sets of conditions adversely affected Vieira’s security of tenure. Stringent fiscal policy deepened deprivation, whilst democratisation seemed to offer, then thwart, opportunity for change. Under Vieira relations with Portugal were strained. Vieira’s use of French overtures to join the Franc Zone as a lever against Portuguese influence led to a temporary suspension of technical-military cooperation in 1993. Franco-Portuguese rivalry would be a factor during the civil war and the conflict resolution efforts. A further notable feature of the mediation process during the civil war was the number of international organisations eager to play a role. Since independence Guinea-Bissau has been an active member of the UN, the OAU, and ECOWAS, as well as the global lusophone organisation, the CPLP, and the organisation for lusophone African countries, the Países Africanos de Lingua Oficial Português (PALOP).

From a regional perspective the troubled relationship between Guinea-Bissau and Senegal is key. One source of suspicion has been a territorial dispute sparked by the discovery of oil in contested waters between the two countries. In May 1990 these border tensions erupted in a brief, but violent, conflict in which a Senegalese incursion was repulsed by Bissauan forces with loss of life on both sides.  

Dakar’s mistrust of Bissau intensified following the outbreak of secessionist violence in the Casamance region of southern Senegal in 1982. The affinity between Guinea-Bissau and the Casamance stemmed from Casamançais support for the PAIGC during the war of liberation. Following independence Bissau sought to reassure Dakar that it was not supporting the rebel Mouvement des forces démocratiques de la Casamance (MFDC). Nonetheless, the accumulation of circumstantial evidence for Bissauan assistance for the rebels ensured

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25 In November 1991 the ICJ ruled that the 1960 agreement between France and Portugal remained valid. In November 1995 Guinea-Bissau dropped all legal action against Senegal.
continued suspicion between the two capitals. Guinea-Bissau and Casamance are conjoined on various planes. The geography is the same with mangrove swamps and rice cultivation predominating. Many amongst the two populations speak Jola and share an animist/Christian faith. Social structures are similar. Finally, the two populations share a past, notably in the aforementioned quasi-mythic history of the Mandinka Kingdom of Gabu. Referring to Gabu, Jean-Claude Marut conjures the spectre of the ‘union of the “three Bs”’, meaning the territorial axis of Bissau [Guinea-Bissau] – Bignona [Casamance] – Banjul [Gambia], as a preoccupation in Dakar. More prosaically, the Casamance conflict has been an opportunity for impoverished Bissauan army officers and government officials to benefit financially through extensive smuggling of arms to the rebels.

During the 1990s Senegal launched several air and ground offensives against MFDC rear bases in Guinea-Bissau. In 1995 the Senegalese Air Force bombed the border village of Ponta Rosa, whilst artillery shelled the village of Ignore. In the aftermath, French leverage led to Vieira accepting a politico-military accord with Senegal. Bissau moved closer to Paris with Vieira signalling Guinea-Bissau’s willingness to enter the Franc Zone. The price of the agreement was the acceptance of a ‘frontière élastique’. An agreed zone of ‘hot pursuit’ was created giving Senegalese troops access to a strip of Bissauan territory, seven kilometres wide, along the border. The result of the new politico-military rapprochement was the militarisation of the border area and a small-scale refugee crisis as displaced civilians moved into the Casamance and Guinea-Bissau hinterlands. By January 1998 the MFDC was accusing Vieira of lending military support to the Senegalese. At the same time, Senegal voiced suspicions that arms continued to flow from the Guinea-Bissau army to the rebels.

Since 1990 the MFDC has significantly upgraded its arsenal. In late January 1998 a shipment of weapons from the Bissauan army was seized en route to Casamance. Vieira and Prime Minister Carlos Correia were abroad when the scandal broke. The government denied responsibility. The immediate response was the arrest of about twenty low ranking

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28 Ibid., p.84.
soldiers, and the suspension of army Chief of Staff Brigadier-General Ansumane Mané from his post for dereliction of duty. Jean-François Bayart cites arms trafficking in the region as part of the wider criminalisation of the state in Africa.\textsuperscript{31} For Bayart the motivation of financial gain outweighs any sentimental factors such as the supposed sense of solidarity between the Balanta in the army and the Casamance secessionists. The same applies in Senegal. He relates the case of the wife of a senior Senegalese civil servant using the Senegalese military to trade arms for valuable timber in Casamance.

Opposition parties in Bissau made political capital from the Mané affair and parliamentarians encouraged the establishment of a committee of enquiry. Although due to report in June 1998 the findings would not be disclosed until 13 April 1999. However, the tenor of the report became common knowledge in Bissau. Far from endorsing the suspension of Mané, the report blames other high ranking officers in the security forces and implies that the President was aware of the trade, but was unable, or unwilling, to intervene.

Mané’s response to suspension was to pre-empt the report’s findings and publicly accuse the President of disregarding arms trafficking. Vieira felt compelled to confront Mané. In so doing he was challenging a former protégé, comrade in arms, and friend. Mané was a Mandinka from Gambia. He moved to Guinea-Bissau when he was seventeen to serve under Vieira in the liberation struggle. Self-taught, Mané was always considered more soldier than politician. Throughout the crisis he stated that he did not harbour political ambitions, only a desire to clear his name.\textsuperscript{32} On 6 June 1998 Brigadier-General Humbert Gomes replaced him as Chief of Staff. The next day about 400 Bissauan soldiers loyal to Mané attacked the Bra barracks and Bissau airport. A stalemate developed. Vieira blamed opposition parties for fomenting the revolt and predicted imminent defeat for the rebels. Mané proclaimed himself head of an interim military

\textsuperscript{30} Marut, op.cit., p.86.
\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Afrique Express}, 13 May 1999, p.3.
council, the Junta Militar, called for free and transparent elections and counter-claimed that only the risk of heavy civilian casualties prevented him taking the capital.33

(b) Opération Gabou: intervention by Senegal and Guinea

After three days of fighting between soldiers loyal to Vieira and those loyal to Mané a dual intervention took place from neighbouring Senegal and Guinea. Senegal's immediate diplomatic justification, circulated to regional governments, was based on a supposed humanitarian imperative. This rationale was superseded by the explanation that Vieira had invoked 'secret' mutual defence pacts signed in 1965 with Senegal and 1997 with Senegal, Guinea and Gambia. From the Gambian perspective the 1997 accord was not applicable to intervention in the internal affairs of a cosignatory.34 Indeed, when the pacts were made public in the wake of the conflict it was clear that far from legitimising the kind of intervention undertaken by Senegal and Guinea, the co-signatories were required to ensure that their troops remained within their own borders.35 Thus, both justifications were spurious. Nonetheless, the Senegalese/Guinean intervention enjoyed the support of ECOWAS, as well as the central extra-African actor in France. Indeed, it is arguable that until events on the ground made their continued presence untenable the Senegalese and Guinean troops constituted a de facto ECOWAS intervention force.

Senegal and Guinea dispatched 1,300 and 500 troops respectively as part of an intervention that the Senegalese dubbed, apparently without irony, Opération Gabou. The arrival of foreign forces inflamed the conflict. Within ten days the 300,000 residents of Bissau had nearly all left the city. Most of Bissau was destroyed. Foreign diplomatic missions were evacuated and the American Embassy demolished.36 The conflict expanded. After nearly a month of fighting international agencies were predicting a humanitarian cataclysm. Fighting intensified in Mansoa, whilst the rebels took the towns of Ignore, Bula, and Bigene on the Casamance border.

34 Interview with Dr Sadat Jobe (Minister for External Affairs, Gambia) and Ansumana Ceesay (Director of Political Affairs) Banjul, 27-28 January 2000.
Senegalese soldiers of the Forces expéditionnaire sénégalaise en Guinée-Bissau (FOREX) under the command of Colonel Abdoulaye Fall landed on 10 June. Fall saw his objectives as a consolidation of a bridgehead at the new port, control of approach roads to Bissau and the Bra barracks and to secure the airport.\textsuperscript{37} Fiercest fighting was at Bra. On 13 June, following heavy artillery bombardment, the central magazine exploded. Reports that the rebel offensive in Bissau was at the point of collapse proved premature. Two days later a Dakar daily journal described a counter-offensive by rebel forces. \textit{Le Soleil} speculated that troops loyal to the \textit{Junta} received an injection of logistical supplies from an Antonov transport aircraft that landed at the rebel-controlled airport in the early hours of 15 June. The newspaper reported unsubstantiated FOREX claims that fighters from \textit{Atika}, the armed wing of the MFDC, had been seen fighting with \textit{Junta} forces.\textsuperscript{38} Most significantly, it was becoming clear that, the Presidential Guard apart, most Bissauan troops were siding with the rebels. Out of an army whose strength was assessed as 6,800 troops only a few hundred remained loyal. At the start of the conflict Vieira requested external help to replace the uniforms of loyalist troops in order to distinguish them on the battlefield.\textsuperscript{39} This problem was short-lived since within weeks most troops fighting on the loyalist side wore Senegalese or Guinean uniforms. One refugee remarked that ‘we do not see national troops on the government side’.\textsuperscript{40} Many veteran troops from the liberation era chose to return to arms to fight for the \textit{Junta}. The size of the Bra complex made it difficult to reach definitive assessments of its status. Nonetheless, by 18 June FOREX announced that the rebels had been forced to retreat to the airport.

The intervention developed into a military disaster for Senegal. By the end of June Senegalese forces were split with reinforcements landed at Buba unable to join the exhausted expeditionary force in Bissau. Moreover, the reinforcements comprised young trainee conscripts. The large majority of the Bissauan population saw Senegalese forces as ‘nothing but an invasion’, and ‘the biggest impediment to peace negotiations’.\textsuperscript{41} In Dakar opposition leaders loudly complained at the manner in which the intervention was being conducted. One opposition leader, Iba Der Thiam, accused the Senegalese

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} IRIN-WA, Weekly Roundup, 56, 10 July 1998.
government of Abdou Diouf of acting without recourse to parliament. However, although Thiam referred to the conduct of the intervention as ‘totally unacceptable’, few Senegalese politicians were willing to condemn the underlying goal – to create conditions for a direct assault on MFDC rear bases in Guinea-Bissau.

Suffering amongst the civilian population and the number of refugees fleeing the Bissau area developed into a serious humanitarian emergency. Artillery exchanges between the rival armies did not target the civilian population, but were marked by a high proportion of stray ordnance. Most of the capital’s 250,000 inhabitants escaped to the east and north of the country. Senegal initially attempted to close the border into Casamance, but 13,000 Bissauans crossed into Guinea. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, issued an emergency statement warning that, ‘immediate consequences could be famine, refugee outflow into neighbouring countries and threats to the safety of the 5,000 Senegalese refugees who have been living in Guinea-Bissau since 1992’. Launching an appeal for aid a group of Bissauan political exiles summarised the fears of humanitarian organisations – ‘the unexpected arrival of this human mass has increased the demographic pressure on the weak infrastructure in these areas as well as on the environment and the food stocks...emerging information speaks of many people dying of hunger, thirst or sickness’. The UN issued an interim interagency appeal.

Despite Senegalese reluctance to assist, UNHCR convoys from Senegal eventually began arriving in Bafata and Gabu after the border was opened for the delivery of humanitarian aid on 14 July. The operation proved belated and inadequate. At the end of the year UNHCR recognised 202,200 people as being refugees or of concern. The large majority of these, 195,600 people, were internally displaced persons.

Amnesty International documented a series of human rights abuses, including arbitrary arrests, torture, and extrajudicial executions, by Senegalese troops and loyal Guinea-Bissau forces. Likewise, the US Department of State Bureau of Democracy,
Human Rights and Labour reported that troops loyal to Vieira ‘killed an unknown number of civilians’, whilst ‘Senegalese troops reportedly killed and beat a number of civilians’. Guinean troops were accused of the arbitrary beating of civilians. Junta forces were also accused of extrajudicial killings and human rights abuse. However, given that the civil war in Guinea-Bissau was essentially a conventional war between relatively disciplined armed forces, extant human rights abuse, egregious in itself, did not approach the scale of atrocity of the contemporaneous civil conflict in Sierra Leone.

(c) Rival mediation

Despite apparent popular support, and the marshalling of the vast majority of the armed forces behind the rebellion, the international community condemned the revolt. The OAU, ECOWAS, EU and CPLP each demanded a return to constitutional government. At the time of the attempted coup the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU was in session in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. As an immediate response, the Assembly issued a statement denouncing the mutiny and urging ‘respect for the country’s democratically established institutions’, whilst calling ‘on the people of Guinea-Bissau to rally behind the government of President Vieira’. Whilst the communitarian position was in the ascendancy it was clear that the onus for conflict resolution did not lie with the continental body. The OAU assumed a secondary role behind ECOWAS in conflict resolution efforts. The OAU Special Envoy to Guinea-Bissau, Alexandre Zandamela, would prove a peripheral personality even during the mediation process. When the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution met on 13 July, stress was placed on endorsing the ECOWAS position in general, and the intervention by Senegal and Guinea in particular. In calling for the UN Security Council to reinforce this stance, the Central Organ warned ‘the international community at large, to desist from according support, in whatever form, to the mutineers’.

First efforts at mediation were made by disparate African and extra-continental actors. The Ambassadors of Portugal and Angola, as well as the Swedish chargé d'affaires were central figures in the first efforts at mediation. On 14 June, Libya's Muammar Qadafi sent a high level delegation to Bissau. The single most active individual involved in mediation on the ground was the Catholic Bishop of Bissau, Settimio Ferazzeta. He met with members of the Junta Militar in the early days of the conflict. Whilst he expressed himself ‘hopeful’, he felt that the government would find it hard to meet the Junta's terms. Despite claiming to be entirely neutral, as the conflict intensified, Ferazzeta’s public statements betrayed greater understanding for the rebel position. On 6 July he gave a radio interview accusing the Senegalese forces of widespread looting in the capital, and stated that people in Bissau were calling for the withdrawal of the intervention force. Bishop Ferazzeta continued to risk his life to mediate the conflict until his death in January 1999.

On 16 June, President Yahya Jammeh of Gambia visited Cape Verde, Mauritania, Guinea and Senegal in order to canvass regional opinion on the crisis. At the same time, Gambian Foreign Minister, Lamine Sadat Jobe, met Mané in a fruitless effort to arrange a ceasefire and mediation talks between the two sides in Banjul. These twin initiatives heralded a sustained drive by Gambia to find a solution to the crisis. Historical, ethnic and personal links, as well as humanitarian concern, prompted Gambia’s diplomatic intervention. However, the prime motivation was concern for regional security. The outbreak of conflict in Guinea-Bissau was a worrying escalation in violence only a short distance from Gambia’s southern border. Banjul recognised a firm link between the secessionist campaign in Casamance and the war in Bissau. Given the proximity, the potential for cross-border contagion, and the possibility of serious refugee flows Gambia clearly had a stake in ensuring a swift resolution to the conflict. Gambian civil servants stress that the main motivation for Gambia taking a leading role in mediating both crises was the need for a ‘comprehensive peace strategy’.

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52 IRIN-WA, Update, 246, 8 July 1998.
53 Interview with Essan Khan (Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Defence) 24 June 2000.
On 3 July ECOWAS Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence met in Abidjan to discuss the crisis.\(^{54}\) Vieira requested that ECOMOG, which was still deployed in a peace-enforcement operation in Sierra Leone, should now intervene in Guinea-Bissau. Claiming that the mutineers showed ‘a fierce determination’, he maintained that the army mutiny ‘threatens peace, security and stability’ in the country.\(^{55}\) ECOWAS ministers agreed. The meeting endorsed the interventions by Senegal and Guinea. Further, it condemned the mutiny, called for a cessation of hostilities and reaffirmed support for Vieira’s government and the democratic process. Whilst stressing the need for negotiation, the ministers accepted that interventionist measures, including the imposition of sanctions and the use of force, should not be precluded. At the time, a senior Western diplomat was reported as describing military intervention as ‘secondary’, adding that ECOMOG could only realistically intervene following a negotiated settlement and doubting the willingness of Western donors to fund or provide logistical support for a peace operation.\(^{56}\) Nonetheless, an implementing mechanism was constituted. A Committee of Seven comprising Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Senegal with representatives from the Secretariats of the OAU and ECOWAS was established.\(^{57}\) The meeting concluded by calling on the Committee of Seven to seek support for ECOWAS’ position from the UN Security Council.

Conflict in Guinea-Bissau gave Portugal the opportunity to revive the dormant CPLP.\(^{58}\) At the time of the attempted coup the lusofonia offered support to Angola and Portugal in their informal efforts to use their good offices to encourage a negotiated settlement. The organisation took a central role in the mediation effort during the second summit of the CPLP held in Cape Verde on 13-17 July 1998. A Contact Group, chaired by the Foreign Minister of Cape Verde, was established. The other members were the Foreign Ministers of Mozambique, Portugal and São Tomé and Príncipe, together with senior officials from Brazil and Angola.

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\(^{54}\) First joint meeting of ECOWAS ministers of foreign affairs and defence on Guinea-Bissau, Abidjan, 3 July 1998.


\(^{57}\) This became the Committee of Nine when Togo and Cape Verde joined in October.

A climate of mutual suspicion enveloped these respective diplomatic initiatives described by one participant as ‘sheer rivalry’. Franco-Portuguese regional competition formed the basis for mistrust. Portugal argued that with Nigeria distracted by domestic concerns and the intervention in Sierra Leone, Senegal and Guinea were in a position to push the francophone position within ECOWAS. The Portuguese line was taken up by the CPLP. Whilst expressing a need for ‘an urgent return to constitutional legality’, CPLP spokesmen emphasised that ‘the Praia meeting must come up with a resolution which will set up a mediation mechanism in Guinea-Bissau…we have to be realistic’. ECOWAS Executive Secretary Lansana Kouyate responded to the CPLP statement by alluding to Portugal’s ‘neo-colonial behaviour’. Whilst briefing the UN Security Council in mid-July, ECOWAS Ambassadors ‘appealed to Council members to stop Portugal from ‘undermining regional efforts in resolving the conflict as well as to avoid supplying arms to the rebels’, given that, ‘reports from the Guinea-Bissau indicated that Portugal had already supplied sophisticated satellite communications technology to the rebels’. ECOWAS argued that with Senegalese and Guinean troops on the ground, the focus for mediation should remain in the region. After five weeks of fighting, a senior Western diplomatic source stated his belief that efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict had ‘stalled’ contending that rival mediation by ECOWAS and CPLP was the cause. It was clear that ECOWAS, or at least the francophone lobby within ECOWAS, had resolved to defeat the rebels by force. Portuguese Foreign Minister Jaime Gama complained that ‘it is simply not possible to get a ceasefire in Guinea-Bissau right now because the logic of war has not yet ceded to the logic of peace’.

In the event, the first of a series of fragile truces was only two weeks away. A military stalemate obtained in the capital. Losses were increasing on both sides and opposition to the intervention was growing in Dakar. A renewed effort by the CPLP following the Cape Verde summit produced results. The CPLP’s success somewhat weakens the premise of the regionalisation of conflict management, in particular the

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59 Interview with William Joof (Permanent Secretary to the Office of the President, Gambia), Banjul, 24 January 2000.
supposed advantages of proximity. The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) considered the main benefits of the CPLP mediation to be ‘traditional linguistic, cultural and political ties between the [CPLP’s] Contact Group and the warring parties’. Following a meeting on the Portuguese warship *Corte Real* docked in Bissau port, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed called for ‘formal negotiations to start within eight days, a demilitarised zone around the strategically located town of Mansoa, the deployment of peacekeeping troops from Portuguese-speaking countries and the opening of corridors of humanitarian aid’. To this end, Portuguese Defence Minister Jose Penedos offered to send troops to serve in the intended peacekeeping force, but only under the auspices of a CPLP peacekeeping initiative. An appendix to the Memorandum foresaw the rival forces maintaining their relative positions at the start of the ceasefire. The most contentious issue, the withdrawal of Senegalese and Guinean forces was not explicitly mentioned. Hostilities never fully ceased. The evening after the signing of the truce, the Senegalese Defence Minister Samba Lamine Mané announced on television that the rebels had already broken the truce. For their part the Junta accused government troops of destroying a bridge outside Bafata. However, neither side rescinded the agreement.

CPLP success in mediation caused ECOWAS to review its own strategy. On 4 August the ECOWAS Committee of Seven met in Accra. The meeting once more reaffirmed support for the Senegalese and Guinean intervention. However, the tenor of discourse towards the Junta and the CPLP was more conciliatory. After preliminary meetings between the Committee and the warring parties, and between ministers from the two communities, a joint ECOWAS/CPLP Consultative Meeting was held on 25 August at Praia under the joint chairmanship of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Côte d’Ivoire on behalf of ECOWAS and Cape Verde on behalf of the CPLP. As a result the truce of 25 July became a formal ceasefire. A Ceasefire Agreement was drafted providing for ‘the reopening of the airport to allow in humanitarian assistance, an international observer force and a buffer zone along the border with Senegal’.

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A further round of inconclusive talks was held in Abidjan on 16 September. Proposals for a large-scale interposition force were stymied by the position of Senegalese and Guinean governments. Dakar envisaged a continuing military presence along the Casamance border, insisting that it would only withdraw its forces if requested by the Vieira government. The Junta flatly refused the demand. The meeting only managed agreement on the deployment of a small ECOWAS/CPLP observer force.

Although the ceasefire held, tension between the two parties remained high. After reaching Banjul en route to Bissau, the Junta negotiating team found itself stranded for three weeks as Senegal refused permission for them to overfly its territory. The delegation only reached Bissau after the French, Portuguese and Swedish Ambassadors agreed to fly them to Bissau city in a French helicopter under the auspices of the ICRC. Meanwhile, Senegal had sought to justify its intervention on an international stage at the 53rd Session of the UN General Assembly. Jacques Baudin, Senegal’s Foreign Minister, reconfirmed Senegal’s adherence to the dubious bilateral defence pact with Guinea-Bissau. He added that Senegal’s aim was to secure peace and end ‘the threat to public security and to foreigners, and contribute to reinforcing stability and security in the sub-region and in Africa’. On 14 October fierce fighting resumed in Bafata, and then in Bissau and Gabu.

Within days Junta forces had taken Bafata and Gabu, inflicting serious casualties on loyalist troops, as well as the Senegalese and Guineans. Rebel forces fought to within 500 yards of the Presidential Palace in Bissau. As the fighting intensified the capital city emptied once more, with over 50,000 people fleeing to Safim, Nhacra, and Bissora to the north and Prabis to the west, as well as leaving in boats for the Bijagos Islands. Smaller numbers of refugees crossed into Guinea. The UN World Food programme (WFP) announced that renewed fighting would halt the ongoing delivery of rice to the scattered displaced persons from the initial exodus. On 21 October Vieira declared a unilateral ceasefire. Two days later, with the whole country except central Bissau in their hands, the Junta accepted a truce.

Once more Gambia led mediation efforts, albeit within the wider framework of the existing, imperfect, ECOWAS conflict management structure. The Treaty of

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ECOWAS signed in Cotonou in July 1993, requires member states ‘to employ where appropriate, good offices, conciliation, mediation and other methods of peaceful settlement of disputes’, as well as establishing ‘a regional peace and security observation system and peacekeeping forces where appropriate’. Between 25 October and 30 October a series of meetings were held in Banjul between Vieira and Mané, during which, according to a senior Gambian official, there was much ‘tough talking’ by the hosts. The key obstacles remained Senegalese fears over the security of its southern border, and the Junta’s determination that foreign troops leave Guinea-Bissau. With an agreement pending, the Gambian mediators arranged for the two sides to be flown to Abuja where a summit meeting of ECOWAS Foreign Ministers was being held. Henceforward, the CPLP would take a nominal role. Following the closure of the summit on 31 October, talks continued between the warring parties together with Presidents Jammeh of Gambia and Abdulsalam Abubakar of Nigeria, and Foreign Ministers from Ghana, Niger, Senegal and Togo. Thus, all the eventual troop-contributing states to the intervention force, except Benin, were present at this stage of the negotiations.

On 1 November 1998, Vieira and Mané signed an agreement, the ‘Abuja Accords’. A peace plan was framed reaffirming the terms of the 26 August agreement in Praia. Senegalese and Guinean troops would be replaced by ECOMOG troops. The Accords required the formation of a government of national unity to include members of the Junta Militar to be followed in March 1999 by legislative and presidential elections to be monitored by ECOWAS, the CPLP and the international community. Shortly after the signing of the Accords Foreign Ministers from the Committee of Nine went to New York to brief the UN Security Council on the proposed intervention. 

(d) Justifying intervention: questions of sovereignty and mandate(s)

Outlining a legal framework for the operation in Guinea-Bissau lent heavily on lessons learnt from the two previous ECOMOG interventions. In both those cases support from the UN was tacit rather than explicit. However, a pre-existing, albeit weak, ceasefire

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71 Treaty of ECOWAS, Chapter X, Article 58, Para. 2, Sub-paras. e and f, Cotonou, 24 July 1993.
72 Interview with William Joof (Permanent Secretary to the Office of the President, Gambia), Banjul, 24 January 2000.
made the framing of a Security Council resolution for the Guinea-Bissau operation more
determinate. There was also, to a degree, consent on both sides. The UN Security Council
adopted Resolution 1216 (1998) on 21 December. In so doing, issues of international
legality that had placed ECOMOG’s interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone in question
were effectively settled. After commending the efforts of ECOWAS and the CPLP the
Security Council approved ‘the implementation by the ECOMOG interposition force of
its mandate …in a neutral and impartial way and in conformity with UN peacekeeping
standards…to achieve its objective to facilitate the return to peace and security by
monitoring the implementation of the Abuja Agreement’. The resolution also called for
the establishment of a fund to assist in providing logistical support for the ECOMOG
force and requested UN member states to offer help.

The decision by ECOWAS to embark on a third intervention, especially as the
difficult operation in Sierra Leone was still in progress, implies a continued willingness
to reassess the boundaries of state sovereignty. Writing a few months after ECOMOG
withdrew from Guinea-Bissau Richard Jackson commented that,

[O]ld principles of international behaviour are changing rapidly, and as a
consequence, Africa’s leaders now appear increasingly inclined to allow regional
and global multilateral organisations wider scope in intervening in threatening
internal conflicts. That is, the once sacrosanct concept of state sovereignty that
hamstrung conflict management effort in Africa for 30 years is now being
reconsidered, and an effort is under way to clearly articulate new norms of
external intervention where severe internal insecurity exists.75

However, Jackson enters a caveat. He points out that all ECOMOG interventions have
been conducted essentially as attempts to preserve sitting governments – ‘states of
dubious legitimacy fighting to preserve other regimes of dubious legitimacy’. Thus,
states might surrender a measure of sovereignty to an interventionist SRO as ‘a necessary

73 At the time the Security Council comprised several parties interested in the conflict. Aside from France
as a permanent member, Portugal and Gambia had seats as non-permanent members.
for Urgent Establishment of Government of National Unity in Guinea-Bissau’, SC/6614, 21 December
1998.
75 Jackson, Richard, ‘African Solutions to African Problems’, paper presented to the AFSAAP conference,
76 Ibid.
survival strategy in the post-Cold War world. As superpower patronage dissolves, such sub-regional economic and political strategies emerge ‘to preserve the position of ruling African elites in an era of increasing external and internal pressures’. This mutual self-preservation role underpinned much of the anti-interventionist discourse during the Guinea-Bissau mediation. Clearly, Mané would not willingly allow a robust ECOMOG force to undermine his position on the ground and allow Vieira to shore up his tenuous grip on power. Likewise, the civilian opposition leader Kumba Yalla voiced opposition to the intervention. ‘To be frank’, he commented, ‘I do not believe in ECOWAS because it has never succeeded in settling any problem... ECOWAS cannot become a defence union for Presidents in the sub-region’.

The scale and composition of the Guinea-Bissau operation suggests that an assumption that ECOWAS is willing to countenance a dilution of the principles of state sovereignty and non-intervention, albeit in defence of sitting governments, is nonetheless mitigated by the dictates of realpolitik and the practicalities of intervention. As noted in Chapter One the role of the assumptive regional hegemon is key. At the time of the Guinea-Bissau conflict Nigeria was reappraising its regional strategy. In the wake of its traumatic peace-enforcement experiences in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and at a time of democratic transition, Nigeria signalled a reluctance to take on a further commitment. Without Nigeria, ECOWAS’ capacity to intervene was severely circumscribed. That just one battalion deployed in Guinea-Bissau shows the both the limits of the French capacity building project and the extent to which ECOWAS ultimately relies on Nigerian muscle. In the case of Guinea-Bissau the dilution of the sovereignty principle failed to save Vieira.

Whilst the Abuja Accords and Resolution 1216 framed a comprehensive, potentially extensive, mandate for ECOMOG, the proposed Force did not replicate the peace-enforcement role adopted by ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone. The mandate agreed at Abuja established three tasks for the Force.

- To guarantee the border between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau.

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77 Ibid.
78 Ibid.
• To maintain peace between rebel troops and troops loyal to the Vieira government.
• To allow humanitarian organisations safe access to the civilian population. To this end Bissau international airport would be reopened.

Each of these stated aims presented potential difficulties for the Force. Securing Guinea-Bissau’s northern border would require engagement in a zone of long-standing conflict. Acting as a buffer between the warring parties might involve conflict in terrain, and against troops, that had defeated the Portuguese and inflicted serious casualties on the Senegalese and Guinean armed forces. The need to prevent leakage in the distribution of humanitarian aid might compromise ECOMOG’s supposed impartiality given that from the rebels’ perspective ECOWAS was inherently partial.

Furthermore, the parties involved in the conflict each harboured a different interpretation of the mandate. For Vieira, the Abuja Accords provided a hiatus during which he could attempt to regroup his forces. Beyond this respite, Vieira looked to the intervention force to add a physical dimension to the diplomatic support that his government had already received from much of the international community. Given his overwhelming superiority on the ground, but aware of the increasing number of Bissauan casualties and destruction of infrastructure, Mané perceived the suspension of fighting as a necessary diplomatic step that would be unlikely to harm his overall position. However, in light of the line taken by ECOWAS throughout the conflict, especially its support for Vieira and the Senegalese and Guinean intervention, he was acutely suspicious of the proposed Force, insisting that ECOMOG’s impartiality should be transparent and emphasising the humanitarian aspect of the mandate.

The UN Security Council’s requirement that ECOMOG should act in a ‘neutral and impartial way’ was incorporated in the enabling resolution for the sake of form.80 The UN had, however tacitly, supported ECOMOG’s pro-government position in Liberia and Sierra Leone. ‘The effect of this’, in Jackson’s words, ‘was to compromise the perceived neutrality of the world body’.81 The UN clearly wanted the intervention to preserve the status quo until elections could be held. As previously discussed, there was an intrinsic partiality from ECOWAS’ standpoint towards maintaining an existing regime

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with the restitution of democratic institutions as a secondary consideration. Given the thrust of discourse throughout the mediation process, the ECOWAS Secretariat and the majority of member states, with the exceptions of Burkina Faso who objected to the intervention, and Gambia whose geographical and cultural proximity dictated cautious diplomacy, clearly wanted to preserve Vieira if at all possible.82

However, as the practicalities of mounting the operation were elaborated, it became clear that the military difficulties presented by the mandate could not be effectively addressed. Indeed, the modest composition envisaged for the Force ensured that the type of ‘mission creep’ encountered during ECOMOG’s previous interventions could not happen in Guinea-Bissau. Whilst the wording of the Abuja Accords and Resolution 1216 was open to a degree of interpretation, the thrust of both documents implied a standard Chapter VI peacekeeping intervention. With the exception of Vieira, the parties to the agreement, especially the troop contributing states, did not expect or intend the intervention to develop into a peace-enforcement operation of the sort in which ECOWAS had twice been embroiled. Even so, some leeway remained. A CPLP proposal, made during negotiations in July, for an unarmed intervention had been rejected. In the event, the Force deployed with narrow, constricted rules of engagement. ECOMOG troops finally entered Guinea-Bissau with their own light weaponry and with orders to engage other troops only if directly under threat themselves. Regardless of the size of the mission such limited rules of engagement meant that there was no possibility of ECOMOG maintaining the status quo by force. In the main, the possession of a Security Council resolution justified the operation from an ethical position. However, the sum of the limitations of size and posture set against an ambitious mandate begs questions of the morality of intervention seen in the light of the ‘just war’ criterion of reasonable hope.

The Force’s ability to support Vieira in power was highly limited. One possible way in which ECOMOG’s military capacity could have reoriented the position on the ground would have involved forging an alliance with the Senegalese and Guinean troops already in the country and then actively defending Vieira. Given the Junta’s commanding presence in Bissau and throughout the country this would have been calamitous. Instead,

81 Jackson, op.cit.
82 L’Humanité, 28 July 1998; Interview with William Joof (Permanent Secretary to the Office of the President, Gambia), Banjul, 24 January 2000.
ECOWAS sought to use the intervention as a physical expression of the Abuja Accords intended to reassure both sides during a period of political realignment, during which it was hoped, somewhat optimistically, that some accommodation might be found between the protagonists. Even so, one troop contributing state — Togo — attempted to use its contingent to provide aid to troops loyal to Vieira.

ECOMOG had a further unofficial mandate. Senegal and Guinea had suffered heavy casualties. Reliable accounts describe a series of routs. In early November, the Junta leader in Bambadinca reported forty-seven Guinean soldiers killed and several dozen wounded or captured. Senegal’s losses were greater still. An unidentified MFDC rebel fighting with Junta forces, referring to actions against the FOREX reinforcements commented – ‘we were just hosing them down, they were kids.’ The extrication of Senegal and Guinea from an intervention over which they had lost control became a prime concern not only in Dakar and Conakry, but also at ECOWAS headquarters in Abuja and amongst Africanist diplomats in Paris.

Senegal was the party most grateful for a break in hostilities. The renewal of the ceasefire allowed Dakar the chance to reassess its strategy. The priority was the withdrawal of its troops from Guinea-Bissau without any further significant losses. The abiding obligation to deal with the security dilemma in Casamance was now of secondary importance. If ECOMOG would not, or could not, secure the Guinea-Bissau/Casamance border, it might allow a relatively dignified Senegalese, and Guinean, withdrawal. Indeed, from the MFDC’s perspective the Abuja Accords were tantamount to surrender on Senegal’s part.

As the process of mustering, funding, equipping and transporting the Force continued, efforts to consolidate the wider provisions of the peace accords began in Guinea-Bissau. An Executive Joint Committee (EJC) with representatives from the warring parties was established to oversee the implementation of the accords. In early December, an advisor to Mané, Francisco Fadul, was named as a caretaker Prime Minister. Support continued to ebb away from Vieira. The National Assembly voted

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84 The Spectator [Banjul], 31 December-14 January 1999, p.18.
85 Afrique Express, 177, 12 November 1998, pp.3-4.
sixty-nine votes to zero, with thirty-one abstentions, for his immediate resignation. Vieira, Mané and Fadul were invited to Lomé by Togo’s President Gnassingbé Eyadéma, the recently appointed Chairman of ECOWAS, to discuss the composition of the new cabinet. The EJC finally approved a government of national unity on 12 January, although the Junta members refused to be sworn in until all foreign troops, with the exception of ECOMOG, had left Guinea-Bissau.

Tension between Junta troops and the pro-government alliance persisted. In mid-January a Western diplomat reported that ‘the atmosphere in Bissau was potentially dangerous because Senegalese and Junta forces were facing off not too far from each other’. On 31 January, with the first large-scale contingent of ECOMOG troops en route, heavy fighting erupted along this front line. Recriminations ensued. Loyalist troops and Junta forces blamed one another for reigniting the conflict. A further flux of refugees ensued. The ICRC reported at least one hundred dead civilians and an outflow of thirty thousand people from the capital between 31 January and 3 February. The Junta reportedly suffered heavy losses from land and sea artillery barrages during this round of fighting. Although both France and Portugal sent envoys in an attempt to resurrect the ceasefire a truce was only brokered following Togolese mediation.

(e) Constructing the Force: the French factor

The Junta did not want to see a sizeable ECOMOG force fulfilling the conditions of the Abuja Accords. Its leadership considered a force of 750 troops to be sufficient to carry out a mandate which it chose to see as an essentially humanitarian exercise. Lansana Kouyate on behalf of the ECOWAS Secretariat suggested a figure of 1,450 troops. Vieira and Senegal demanded a force of no less than 4,000 troops. The fact that the Junta’s unstated objective - the withdrawal of Senegalese and Guinean forces – was advantageous to all the main actors ensured some progress on troop numbers.

A provisional timetable had envisaged peacekeepers on the ground by the end of
November. This proved optimistic. Following a three-day reconnaissance mission to
Bissau in mid-November, ECOMOG's Force Commander in Sierra Leone, the Nigerian
General Timothy Shelpidi, announced that financial constraints meant that the Force was
far from ready to deploy.\(^2\) He added that ‘we are not like the US which can deploy
troops within twenty-four hours'.\(^3\) By early December the Speaker of the Guinea-Bissau
National Assembly, Malcam Bachai Sanha, was complaining that ‘practically nothing'
had been done to expedite matters. A spokesman responded by denying that there was no
deliberate ‘foot dragging' on the part of ECOWAS.\(^4\) Troop-contributing states had yet
to make their contingents available for transportation. Moreover, ECOWAS did not have
the resources available for transport and negotiations were continuing with external
donors for financial and logistical support.

The onus for constructing the Force had fallen on Togo as Chair of ECOWAS. An
appeal for troop-contributing states resulted in provisional agreement from Togo, Niger,
Benin and Gambia. Mali, whose armed forces were receiving training under the US-
sponsored African Crisis Response Initiative expressed an interest in contributing at a
later date. Togo would supply the Force Commander, Colonel Gnougede Berena. Firm
commitments were delayed. In the case of Gambia the official response of President
Jammeh was sent as late as 29 December.\(^5\)

From the start of the diplomatic process Nigeria had insisted that existing
commitments with the ECOMOG force in Sierra Leone, as well as the impending
transition to civilian rule, precluded it providing either funding, manpower or logistics.
This stance was reiterated in early February 1999 as the main ECOMOG force was
landing in Bissau. The definitive announcement came after talks in Dakar between the
Senegalese and Nigerian leaders. If Diouf had requested a strong Nigerian presence in the

\(^2\) Shelpidi's experience as force commander of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone led him to suggest a minimum
of 5,000 troops with 2,000 being sent initially to replace the Senegalese and Guineans.
\(^3\) IRIN-WA, Weekly Roundup, 75, 20 November 1998; EIU, Country Report: Guinea-Bissau, 2nd Quarter
1999, p.32.
\(^5\) Letter from HE President Yahya Jammeh to HE President Gnassingbey Yaddema, 29 December 1998.
intervention force, then he was to be disappointed. Abubakar restated Nigeria’s position – ‘its hands were full’.\footnote{BBC Online Network, ‘Nigeria not to send troops to Guinea-Bissau’ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/world/africa> posted 7 February 1999.}

France was quicker to react. Soon after the Abuja Accords were concluded, the French Deputy Chief of Staff, Jean-Paul Raffene, told Reuters that ‘talks were already underway for us to play a role in this force’.\footnote{IRIN-WA, Weekly Roundup, 76, 27 November 1998.} On 27 January the French Ambassador to Guinea-Bissau, François Chappellet, announced that the French government had arranged a package of logistical and financial aid with the troop-contributing states.\footnote{IRIN-WA, Update, 389, 27 January 1999.} The basis for the support was France’s ongoing peacekeeping capacity enhancement in Africa programme - the Renforcement des capacités africaines de maintien de la paix (RECAMP). Equipping the intervention force would be achieved using materiel prepositioned in Dakar. As discussed in Chapter Five these resources had already been partially utilised during the peacekeeping exercise Guidimakha in February 1998 and by the UN mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA). On 20 January Executive Secretary Kouyate sent a letter to the Heads of State of the four troop-contributing states assessing current preparedness and detailing the extent of French assistance.\footnote{Letter from Ecowas Executive Secretary Lansana Kouyate to President Yahya Jammeh, 20 January 1999.} ECOWAS had received pledges for an intervention force of 1,450 men. Niger and Togo offered 500 men, Benin offered 300 men and Gambia offered 150 men. However, France finally decided that it would transport a six-hundred-man battalion of the type envisaged by the RECAMP programme. This comprised 173 troops from Togo, 146 troops from Niger, 145 troops from Benin and 136 troops from Gambia. France also provided logistical support.\footnote{Including 40 vans, 10 4x4 vehicles, helicopter support, uniforms, relief materials, camp beds, signals equipment, materials for the repair of the health infrastructure, fuel and spare parts.} Furthermore, France agreed to pay an allowance of FFr100 per soldier per day of the intended six month duration of the operation - the same amount as was paid to troops serving in MINURCA.\footnote{‘Convention d’Aide Budgetaire’ between HE N’jogou Saer Bah (Gambian Ambassador to France) on behalf of HE Dr Sadat Jobe (Gambian Minister for External Affairs) and M. Charles Josselin (French Minister for Cooperation and the Francophonie), article 2, 18 March 1999.}
A further issue of funding and logistics concerns French and American assistance to the Senegalese military as part of their respective military assistance programmes, as well as through the P3 peacekeeping capacity initiative. In mid-1997 a Senegalese battalion became one of the first African units to participate in ACRI. During a visit by President Clinton to Dakar in April 1998, US General James Jamerson underlined the ‘significant vetting process’ that states undergo before being accepted on the programme. Continuing action by the Senegalese armed forces against the MFDC in Casamance did not forestall Senegal’s inclusion in ACRI. Senegal also received American military assistance under Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) programmes. Since independence Senegal has benefited from extensive French military assistance. The French and Senegalese military commands enjoy a close relationship. It is noteworthy that Dakar was chosen as the first base for prepositioned RECAMP equipment. Despite these advantages the Senegalese armed forces performed badly in Opération Gabou. Referring to the ‘significant assistance’ that the Senegalese military received from the US and France under ACRI and RECAMP, Jeffrey Herbst remarks that the Senegalese intervention ‘turned out exceptionally poorly’. He adds, ‘this was especially disappointing because the minimal goal of the ACRI and French training was probably for the Senegalese to at least have the capacity to intervene in Bissau’.

(f) The performance of the Force

On 28 January, the French Defence Ministry issued a communiqué outlining a timetable for the transport operation. Transportation of ECOMOG came under the operational control of the command of the Forces françaises du Cap Vert (FFCV). The original timetable envisaged the arrival of the French warship Sirocco in Dakar on 26 January. Between 30 January and 2 February troops and equipment from the four contingents

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103 As previously noted both of the first two ACRI participants – Senegal and Uganda – were engaged in counter-insurgency operations and would also be involved in external interventions within months of completing the first part of the ACRI programme.
would be transported by French military aircraft to Dakar. Between 31 January and 2 February the *Sirocco* would shuttle the men and equipment from Dakar via the short sea journey to the port of Bissau.\textsuperscript{106}

Although the *Sirocco* reached Guinea-Bissauan territorial waters on 31 January the renewal of fighting meant that the proposed landing could not take place. During four days of fighting eighty people were killed and 200 wounded, whilst 130,000 people were once more internally displaced. On 4 February, after the restoration of the ceasefire, three hundred troops from Niger and Benin disembarked. Finally, on 8 February, the remainder of the Force was shuttled to Bissau.

Yet, the troops that disembarked on 4 February were not the first ECOMOG soldiers to arrive in the country. On 26 December Togo had sent about eighty troops to Bissau. These were followed by a further thirty troops a few days later. *Radio France Internationale* reported that the Togolese troops had orders to reopen Bissau airport. These orders apparently did not come from ECOWAS. Senior officials in the Gambian government have stated that the deployment was not part of a prearranged joint strategy between the contributing nations or the ECOWAS Secretariat. Indeed, ECOMOG Commander Shelpidi in Freetown heard the news from the BBC’s Africa service. A meeting to discuss final plans for the main deployment did not take place until 19 January. Potentially, Eyadéma as Chairman of ECOWAS might have felt compelled to give impetus to a sluggish process. Moreover, in the light of a series of poor human rights reports, the premature dispatch of the contingent could be construed as part of an ongoing ‘charm offensive’ by Lomé to capture a modicum of favourable international attention.\textsuperscript{107}

However, viewed from a wider geopolitical perspective, the early deployment had advantages for the pro-Vieira lobby. Togo’s surprise election as Chair of ECOWAS placed Eyadéma in a pivotal position as negotiations continued. President Jacques Chirac met Eyadéma before the 20\textsuperscript{th} Franco-African summit in late November. The impetus for a predominantly francophone composition of the peacekeeping force came from this

\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., p.317.
meeting. Clearly, Junta fighters would not simply abandon their positions at such a key installation as the airport to troops about whom they had already expressed antipathy. Nonetheless, the early presence of a contingent with open channels to Paris, and hence Dakar and Conakry, offered some strategic leverage.

Togo’s determination to assert leadership of the Force in Bissau was underlined by its detached stance within the intervention force and its refusal to countenance a role for the existing Commander of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone, Shelpidi. At the start of the operation there was an assumption that overall command of both interventions would be reserved for Shelpidi in order to retain Nigerian support for the operation despite Abuja’s reluctance to commit troops or funds. That is, ECOMOG would exist as a single entity rather than as a series of individual missions. In fact the ECOWAS Secretariat never told Shelpidi to assume command in Bissau and Togolese Commander Berena insisted that the Force remain under Togolese command. In response Shelpidi demanded that the ECOMOG force in Bissau be renamed since ‘you cannot have two captains on one ship’. Togo’s premature deployment and apparent proxy status mirror the Zairean position during the operation in Chad. Similarly, Shelpidi, like Ejiga before him, found the hierarchy of command and control imprecise. As Adekeye Adebajo comments, ‘these tensions revealed the inter-state rivalries and the highly improvised and uncoordinated nature of yet another ECOMOG deployment’.

In order to fulfil its role as an interposition force, and thus enable the Senegalese and Guineans to withdraw, ECOMOG needed to construct a working relationship between itself and the warring parties. The second-in-command of the Gambian contingent, Captain Samba Baldeh, affirmed that, at least from the Gambian perspective, impartiality was observed. In fact, there was an assumption on the part of the Senegalese that Gambia was pro-MFDC and by extension pro-Mané. Questions would also be asked about the impartiality of the francophone contingents.

There was also the more practical dilemma of logistical shortfall. ECOMOG had insufficient vehicles and even these proved unreliable. Given the shortage of vehicles and

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110 Ibid., p.122.
the small number of troops available it was clear that ECOMOG would not be able to patrol the Guinea-Bissau/Senegal border. Indeed, owing to the lack of vehicles and communications equipment, ECOMOG soldiers could only travel beyond the capital during the day.

It is estimated that there were about 2,500 Senegalese and 500 Guinean soldiers in Guinea-Bissau when ECOMOG arrived. The eventual size of the Force remained a central issue. It became clear that far from the 4,000 ECOMOG troops demanded by Vieira, the Force would not exceed the 600 troops that France had agreed to support. As the deadline for the departure of Vieira’s Senegalese-Guinean shield approached the parties engaged in a round of accusation and counter-accusation. On 9 February, an EU diplomat from a delegation that met the Senegalese President reported that the withdrawal ‘would not take place soon’. Although Diouf needed to ensure that Senegalese forces suffered no more serious casualties, withdrawal on existing terms meant a serious setback to his Casamance strategy. For Vieira the withdrawal of foreign troops signified disaster. The few remaining loyalist forces would be highly vulnerable to attack. Vieira’s anxiety over his personal safety surfaced after a Swedish diplomat in Bissau was rebuked for disclosing that the President had asked Senegal to provide 200 troops for his personal protection. Fears persisted within the Junta of collusion between ECOWAS, President Vieira and Senegal over claims that the late deployment of ECOMOG troops was intended to give loyalist forces time to regroup. ECOWAS proposals to oversee subsequent elections and help to reintegrate the Guinea-Bissau armed forces caused further disquiet.

Nonetheless, on 10 February a joint military commission comprising government loyalists, the Junta and ECOMOG representatives agreed a calendar for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Guinea-Bissau. The first tranche of the agreement involved the withdrawal of 1,200 troops by 14 February. The final phase would see the remainder leave by 28 February. The meeting also agreed plans for the warring parties to pull back from their current positions and the deployment of ECOMOG to seven ‘sensitive points’

111 Interview with Captain Samba Baldeh, Guards Battalion Barracks, Bakau, 25 May 2001.
along the frontline in Bissau city.114 Such a security environment would then allow a phased disarmament and requartering of both sets of troops based on a schedule agreed between the two sides. The details of this schedule were decided at a meeting organised by the EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs, Emma Bonino, on 15 February. After a final extension of the deadline for withdrawal of foreign troops the last Senegalese and Guinean forces left Guinea-Bissau on 15 and 17 March.

As the ECOMOG contingents, together and separately, evaluated the implementation of the mandate, Bissauan domestic politics continued to undermine the scant trust that remained between the Junta and government. Although foreign troops were still on Guinea-Bissau soil, the Junta agreed to attend a swearing-in ceremony for the government of national unity. Prime Minister Fadul, in a diplomatic aside, praised Senegal and Guinea’s attempts to bring peace during the conflict. However, when Junta appointees tried to enter their offices they found their way barred by Senegalese soldiers.115

The parliamentary report into the Casamance arms scandal, postponed since fighting started in June 1998, was eventually published. Mané was exonerated. Vieira was found to be cognisant of arms trafficking. The National Assembly maintained pressure on the isolated Vieira. In mid-April an officially reconstituted parliament voted by a clear majority to indict the President and several senior officials on the basis of the parliamentary report. Opposition parties announced that they intended to press for Vieira to be charged with treason. Internal opposition to the President within the PAIGC grew more vocal with calls for Vieira’s disputed reelection to the presidency of the party ‘by acclamation’ to be declared void.116

From mid-March Vieira depended for his survival on 600 loyal troops surrounding the Presidential Palace. This force consisted of the remnants of the Presidential Guard together with about 300 aguenta soldiers, aged between fifteen and twenty, recruited and trained since the outbreak of the conflict. These troops from

Vieira’s Papel ethnic group received basic training in Conakry. The Junta assumed that there was a strong possibility a further injection of manpower from the same source. Those senior military officers who remained loyal were largely implicated in the arms-trafficking scandal. Vieira realised that, given the momentum in the country for his prosecution, his only chance of survival was to cling on to power by any means. These means were rapidly diminishing. In a vain attempt to deflect the clamour for legal proceedings, Vieira tried to appoint a new, and sympathetic, Attorney General against the will of the other members of the government of national unity. At the same time, the pro-Vieira Mayor of Bissau, Paulo Medina, refused to hand over power to his successor, the pro-Junta Francisca Vaz. The ensuing standoff was ECOMOG’s most challenging test of its ability as an interposition force to restore calm during their brief period in Bissau.

Nonetheless, the denouement could not be averted for long. On 6 May mortar and light weapons fire was heard in the streets approaching the Presidential Palace. An Agence France Presse (AFP) correspondent noted fierce resistance by loyalist troops who were well armed. After twenty-four hours of fighting a spokesman for the Army Commander, Brigadier Gomes, announced that government forces had surrendered to prevent further bloodshed. The final assault left at least eighty people dead and nearly three hundred wounded. The Senegalese Embassy was targeted by rockets and destroyed. Thirteen diplomats including the Senegalese Ambassador took shelter in the Portuguese Embassy prior to being airlifted to Cape Verde. Vieira and his aides sought refuge in the French Cultural Centre. Although the building was defended by a handful of French marines it was besieged and destroyed by an angry mob. Ironically, it was a Junta officer who escorted Vieira to the Portuguese Embassy and relative safety. The French diplomats were initially detained by Junta forces, but were delivered eventually, unhurt, to the protection of the Portuguese.

According to a report at the time ‘soldiers of the West African ECOMOG intervention force were attempting to position themselves between the warring

factions'. However, regardless of the predisposition of their respective capitals the various ECOMOG contingents were in no position to prevent a determined push by *Junta* troops. An attempt to prevent the push on the Presidential Palace might possibly have been justified under a strict reading of its mandate, but the military capacity to do so was wholly absent. ECOMOG's only resistance to Mané was a muddled encounter between *Junta* forces and the Beninois contingent. The Beninois troops had recently completed training under the ACRI programme and might be held to be more competent and/or committed than the other contingents in ECOMOG. A brief skirmish saw two rebel soldiers killed. Despite this brief exchange the EIU remarks that the *Junta*’s ‘fears of collusion between Vieira’s soldiers and ECOMOG were quickly dispelled as the peacekeepers...steered clear of the clashes’.

However, although ECOMOG proved impotent in the face of superior firepower and numbers, there is evidence to suggest that, even at the final juncture, at least one contingent tried to influence the outcome and in the process partially influenced the decision of the *Junta* to exercise the military option. The *Junta*’s official justification for launching their attack was the refusal of loyalist troops to abide by the schedule for disarmament agreed on 15 February. Blame was placed mainly on the desperate intransigence of the loyalist forces, but the *Junta* was reported ‘to have been angered by the failure of ECOMOG to disarm the Presidential Guard’. In particular suspicion fell on the conduct of the Togolese contingent and the Togolese Force Commander Berena. The *Junta* was not the only party to harbour doubts over Togo’s neutrality and intentions. Senior sources connected to the Gambian contingent questioned the manner in which the Togolese stored and protected weapons taken from both sides by ECOMOG. Strong rumours circulated that loyalist forces had been allowed access to crates of impounded armaments or that the Togolese had been perceptibly negligent in protecting the weapons. Reports that the remaining loyalist troops were well armed at the time of Mané’s final assault on the Presidential Palace lend credence to these claims.

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119 Interview with Captain Samba Baldeh, Guards Battalion Barracks, Bakau, 25 May 2001. Capt. Baldeh commented that although the engagement was fierce it had probably been provoked by accident.
Mané’s decision to oust Vieira was a calculated risk. Although he claimed to have no personal ambitions he clearly had an interest in ensuring the continued support of his assumed constituency – the army, veterans of the independence struggle and the internal opposition within the PAIGC. Mané realised that the overthrow of an elected President would have repercussions in the international community. Moreover, in light of the wider political climate in Guinea-Bissau it was hard to judge the extent to which the Junta could influence events after the end of the conflict. However, Mané continued to enjoy the support of key regional and extra-continental actors. It was Nigeria’s Abubakar who had reportedly counselled Mané to curtail the standoff and make a decisive push on loyalist positions. Both Portugal and Sweden could be expected to counter French agitation within the EU. Ulla Andrén, Sweden’s representative in Guinea-Bissau during the war, concludes that Mané’s coup was ultimately justified.

The final military unravelling of this eleven month drama for the Guinean people dismayed a large part of the international community who only saw a democratically elected President being overthrown by the military. However, those who realised that the Guinean people were sick and tired of the President’s regime and had seen the President’s continuous obstruction of the peace process regarded the military end of the epoch of João Bernardo Vieira as logical. In the final analysis the military, the ruling party, the parliament and the people had all turned their back on the President.

(g) The role of external actors

Jeffrey Herbst notes that the first three decades of independence in Africa were marked by few conflicts intended to change borders and, hence, ‘within that environment, an assumption that intervention by African countries might be benign was at least plausible’. However, he continues, ‘now that at least some African countries appear to

122 Mané’s reputation as a soldier rather than a politician was well founded. Eighteen months after ousting Vieira, and following a political clash with the newly elected President Kumba Yalla, Mané was killed by his own previously loyal troops.
125 Herbst, op.cit., p.313.
be acting in a more traditional manner – whereby they project power to further their own parochial interests – an assumption that intervention can be benign is obviously much more problematic’. War in Guinea-Bissau was small-scale in comparison with other conflicts taking place in Africa in 1998 and 1999. Even so, the conflict and the peacekeeping operation were targets of regional, as well as extra-continental, engagement.

The line taken by France during the crisis and the ensuing peacekeeping operation was reckless given the scant rewards for success and the significant international embarrassment of defeat. Involvement in Guinea-Bissau demonstrated a continued willingness to intervene in the pré-carré, belying the recently stated policy of non-intervention in Africa. However, involvement in the conflict and the ECOMOG intervention ultimately failed to further French interests in the region, once more bringing into question the effectiveness of France’s current Africa policy.

France’s relations with Guinea-Bissau in the 1990s were crude and redolent of a nineteenth century colonial power struggle. Since Vieira’s first overtures to join the Franc Zone in 1987, Paris pursued a policy of usurping Portugal’s influence and incorporating Guinea-Bissau within its own extensive sphere of interest in West Africa. By April 1997 the deal was complete and the Banco Central da Guiné-Bissau had been replaced by the Banque Centrale des Etats de l’Afrique de l’Ouest in Dakar. The resulting severe inflation was a key factor in the collapse of support for the Vieira government. In geopolitical terms Paris saw closer ties with Guinea-Bissau as strengthening the hand of French-speaking states in the continuing francophone/anglophone rivalry within ECOWAS. Moreover, by undermining Portugal’s traditional influence in Bissau, France was seeking to emphasise that reappraisal of its African policy did not equate to disengagement from the continent. Finally, increased influence in Guinea-Bissau allowed France to support its regional proxy, Senegal, in its longstanding battle against the secessionists in Casamance.

126 Ibid., p.313.
The onset of violence in Guinea-Bissau brought the opportunity to demonstrate French resolve. France’s instinct was to support the Senegalese/Guinean intervention. However, official pronouncements maintained the stated position that ‘France holds to its policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of African countries’. France’s propensity for ‘creative ambiguity’ in African policy statements endures. In fact throughout the duration of the conflict there were substantiated reports of French troops supporting FOREX. When the conflict reignited in late January, Prime Minister Fadul used a broadcast on Portuguese radio to accuse France of using the warship carrying the ECOMOG troops, in concert with Senegalese warships, to bombard Junta positions. In response French navy officers claimed that the Sirocco had no guns capable of reaching Junta positions from its anchorage thirty miles off the Bissau coast. Further reports claimed that as many as three hundred white francophone soldiers were openly supporting FOREX troops. It is significant that this period marked the most serious reversals for rebel forces.

A Catholic priest, Father Marco Faccioli, was given an order to quit Bissau for reporting French military involvement in the fighting, although the order was later rescinded. Another priest who has lived in Suzana on the Casamance border since 1968, Father Guiseppe Fumagalli, reported sightings of French troops in a series of polemical letters.

What are the French doing with guns in their hands? What can explain this? Can we speak here of good intentions and altruism? It would suffice for France to tell Senegal to stop, so that this process can get back on track – they [the Senegalese] have always been attentive students. Instead, they [the French] do the contrary and give them [the Senegalese] ground support.

131 See, Gaillard, op.cit., p.49.
These accusations, reported in the Portuguese newspaper Público, caused international embarrassment to France, especially as they coincided with an official visit by President Chirac to Lisbon. Chirac redoubled the emphasis that French forces were not involved—'France - I’ll make it clear and official - has not intervened once nor in any fashion in this conflict...and I challenge anyone to contradict this.'¹³⁵ Future reports moderated this absolute denial. Writing on 22 February Hugo Sada noted that, whilst French policy had been non-interventionist, there was always ‘the exception of measures to ensure the security of French nationals.’¹³⁶ Thus, the significant French military presence in Guinea-Bissau was repackaged as a protective force for a few French diplomats and citizens. However, French efforts to support the Vieira cause were now compromised. Following a candid meeting between Chirac and his Portuguese counterpart Jorge Sampaio there were no further reports French troops directly involved in the fighting.

France failed to bolster the Senegalese/Guinean intervention. Henceforward, French policy depended on the influence that they could exert on the ECOMOG force. To a large extent France’s overt support for Senegal and Guinea had already exposed this secondary strategy. Given the largely francophone composition of the Force, it was unlikely that either the Junta or the Bissauan population at large would be well disposed to ECOMOG. In fact, the peacekeeping troops were met with studied indifference.

The operation was an opportunity to test the RECAMP programme. It was also an opportunity to gauge the extent to which participants, or at least some of the participants, in the programme might be used as proxies to further French interests in the region. However, French meddling in the composition and deployment of ECOMOG only served to reinforce the existing animosity between the anglophone and francophone members of ECOWAS. By manipulating policy in Dakar and Lomé, France managed to position itself behind two of the three groupings in the conflict. Paris supported the Vieira government through the connection with Senegal, whilst also underwriting the ECOWAS initiative, ensuring a majority francophone composition, and a compliant leading contingent in Togo. It is symptomatic of France’s unsettled African policy that the other grouping in the conflict, the Junta and its MFDC allies, proved victorious. Hugo Sada believes

French reversals during the conflict in Guinea-Bissau and ensuing peacekeeping intervention resulted from the inherent complexities of transforming both its defence and African policies. Sada seeks to accentuate the positive.

In this uncertain transition period between a physical presence and an interventionist position in the pré-carré and the ceding of self-policing in this type of delicate crisis where domestic issues are closely allied with regional and international elements to Africans themselves, Paris, in this first phase, has undoubtedly helped the African initiative with logistical support, but without direct intervention...and adopted throughout the region political and diplomatic positions reasonably balanced for a crisis which involves one of its closest allies.137

Sada’s analysis does not look beyond the ‘spin’ emanating from the Quai d’Orsay. French involvement in the conflict might have moved away from the former policy of overt direct intervention. Certainly Paris made every effort to avoid accusations of supporting the loyalist position with arms. Yet, the supposed diplomacy and support for the ECOMOG intervention was intended, but failed, to retain influence in the region by other means. Paris must decide. In future crises, France must either rely on diplomacy, with its limitations and frustrations, or revert to a more strenuous interventionist policy.

The defeat for French policy rankled. Paris maintained a hostile posture toward Bissau, suspending aid and cooperation until after elections were held. During a visit to Lomé, Chirac praised Togo’s leadership efforts within ECOMOG, whilst lamenting that these efforts did not meet the success since the accords which the intervention was intended to uphold were ‘brutally torn apart by the unacceptable and inadmissible strategy of a military coup’.138

Of all the states with an interest in the conflict and peacekeeping operation Senegal had the most at stake. Defeat in Bissau meant that Senegal needed to reconstruct a basis for relations with a new regime in a neighbouring country whose foreign policies were vital to its own.

The conflict in Casamance lay at the heart of the conflict. Even prior to the publication of the Guinea-Bissau parliamentary report on arms trafficking, the Diouf

137 Ibid., p.180.
government would have been aware that trade with the MFDC had been conducted by many individuals in the Bissau army, including those close to Vieira. There was little confidence in Dakar that Vicira had the will to effectively confront the Casamance rebels. Yet, whilst the schism in the Guinea-Bissau armed forces apparently furnished an opportunity to tackle the MFDC from behind its rear bases, the decision to confront Mané’s forces was ill-conceived and conducted on unfavourable terms. The extent of the mutiny was underestimated, whilst Senegal overestimated its capacity to defeat a veteran army on its own unique, harsh terrain. Ill-discipline, combined with its very presence, found FOREX perceived as an invading army. Defeat was comprehensive.

The renewal of fighting at the end of January was a final opportunity to turn events on the ground. However, from the perspective of the expeditionary force it was clear that Mané could not be defeated. The intervention had become increasingly unpopular. A year before national elections, the intervention had given opposition leaders, such as Iba der Thiam and Abdoulaye Wade, the opportunity to accuse the Diouf government of ignoring parliamentary process, as well as military failure. In March 2000, Wade defeated Diouf in the second round of the presidential election. A central plank in Wade’s electoral platform was to ‘bring home the boys from Casamance’ implying ‘a more diplomatic approach to Guinea-Bissau’.

For Diouf also, the essential function of ECOMOG was to provide a feasible pretext for the withdrawal of his troops from Guinea-Bissau. Most probably, Dakar supported Vieira’s calls for the augmentation of ECOMOG for the sake of form. Its own intervention having signally failed, Dakar surely realised that the possibility of ECOMOG altering the course of the war was negligible. The intervention had reawakened, in Jean-Claude Marut’s words, a ‘ressentiment antisénégalais’ amongst a large part of the Bissauan population. At the time of FOREX’ disengagement, the Senegalese Ministry of External Affairs was already preparing for the post-Vieira era. Following the ousting of Vieira, Dakar moved quickly to repair relations with Bissau.

Dakar recognised that the imminent victory of the Junta would shift the military advantage on the ground towards the MFDC. As Mané launched his final assault on the

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140 *Africa Confidential*, 41/7, 31 March 2000, p.3.
loyalist stronghold in Bissau, the MFDC shelled Ziguinchor airport as officials from the Senegalese Ministry of Tourism were landing. Although there were no injuries, the incident saw the introduction of 82mm Chinese manufactured shells not previously seen in Casamance.  

The ordnance was assumed to have come from the Junta’s stockpile. The implication was the Junta was both expressing thanks to the MFDC and issuing a warning to the Senegalese government. Senegal’s Foreign Minister, Jacques Baudin, refused to join international condemnation, including that of France, of Mané’s final assault on the Presidential Palace. Restricting himself to ‘regretting’ events in Bissau he asked a rhetorical question - ‘le problème est-il seulement de condamner’? Baudin stressed that with a vital interest in future relations with Bissau, Senegal could not afford the luxury of a trite, distanced condemnation of the coup.

Guinea shared the Senegalese need to extricate itself from Bissau. Motivation for its intervention was less apparent than was the case with Senegal and was an amalgam of the economic and strategic. Guinea and Guinea-Bissau shared a history of antagonism since the assassination of Amilcar Cabral in Conakry. Guinean President Lansana Conté opposed Mané over his links with the MFDC, and was suspicious of his Mandinka ethnicity. The Mandinka have been marginalised in Guinea’s government since the death of President Sékou Touré in 1984. A further factor was Guinean opposition to President Charles Taylor during the Liberian civil war. The MFDC reportedly obtain a proportion of their weaponry from Liberian sources.

Opposition leaders in Conakry were as troubled by events in Bissau as their counterparts in Dakar. The Codem opposition grouping publicly condemned the intervention as ‘an imperialist venture that Guinea can ill-afford’. The leader of the Union pour le progrès en Guinée (UPG), Jean-Marie Doré, complained that the government had deployed troops without a valid defence agreement with Guinea-Bissau and without informing the National Assembly.

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The Guinean armed forces have sought to project an ‘image of professionalism’ in recent years. Yet, it was reported that two hundred Guinean troops had deserted from their garrison in Bafata just prior to that town falling to the Junta in late October. These soldiers were seen in Conakry a few days later.

Portugal’s relations with the Vieira regime had been strained throughout the 1990s. Lisbon was aware of the attempt by Paris to poach influence in Guinea-Bissau. The impracticality of a proposed ‘Escudo Zone’ led to Vieira opting to join the Franc Zone. When fighting erupted in June 1998 Portugal saw an opportunity to reassert its influence. There were early reports of covert aid to Mané’s forces, although these were assumed to refer to the supply of satellite communications equipment ostensibly for use in the mediation process. Throughout the conflict all parties recognised that Portugal held a preference for the Junta.

The CPLP’s main function was to offer Lisbon a plausible entrée into the mediation process. By the time of the Abuja Accords, events on the ground convinced the Portuguese government that Vieira’s cause was lost prompting the CPLP to give sway to ECOWAS in the construction of the peacekeeping force. It is unlikely that either Portugal or the CPLP seriously contemplated attempting to establish a peacekeeping force. The notional possibility of intervention by the African lusophone body PALOP existed. However, the other lusophone African states – Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde and Sao Tomé and Principe – were either too small, too poor or too disorganised to consider intervention at the time. From the perspective of African self-pacification the idea of international linguistic communities engaging in peacekeeping or peace-enforcement operations, as oppose to small observer missions, could potentially muddle the ongoing development of the subsidiarity model. Nonetheless, the initial success of the CPLP in negotiating a ceasefire in a regional environment replete with competing agendas is noteworthy.

If Portugal felt it unnecessary to pursue a strident interest in the ECOMOG operation in circumstances that it felt were essentially decided, it remained vigilant against any efforts to reorient the direction of the conflict. The response to French

involvement in the renewed fighting at the end of January was swift and robust. Lisbon conducted a naval exercise off the Bissauan coast that was held to be the main factor in dissuading French and Senegalese ships from continuing to bombard Junta positions. On 10 February Vieira made a limited protest against Portugal's efforts to undermine his external support by suspending a long-standing technical-military cooperation programme. The move implied that Guinea-Bissau no longer needed military cooperation with Lisbon preferring support from Paris. Following a Portuguese communiqué expressing 'displeasure', a spokesman for Vieira stated that the move was intended to 'suspend' rather than end cooperation.

Gambia invested time, diplomatic effort and troops in the ECOMOG intervention. However, as it took the lead in mediation the Gambian government's impartiality came into question. President Jammeh shares Jola ethnicity with much of the MFDC. Moreover, Mané was born in Gambia. Vieira and Senegal suspected that Gambia was acting to further the cause of the rebels in both Casamance and Guinea-Bissau either by offering a sympathetic outlet during the mediations or by enabling convenient ceasefires. It is true that there is broad sympathy for the Casamançais cause in Gambia and, certainly, Mané's cultural affinity with Gambia - he was a regular visitor to the country - was no hindrance to Jammeh's initiatives during the conflict. Yet, such Gambian partiality as there was should not be overstated. Mané was Gambian only by birth - he had taken up Guinea-Bissauan nationality at independence. Having left to fight for the PAIGC against the Portuguese at the age of seventeen he was a hero of the liberation struggle and revered within the army. Furthermore, there is always a degree of tension between Gambia and Senegal, especially since the collapse of the short-lived Senegambia Confederation. Gambia is always wary about disturbing relations with its begirding neighbour. Any proven support for the MFDC would be immensely detrimental to Senegal/Gambia relations.

For Gambia the twin motives for pursuing a role in the mediation process and ECOMOG intervention were security and economics. Although the Casamance rebellion

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149 Agência Lusa, 'Guinea-Bissau: Vieira adviser says military cooperation with Portugal will be resumed', 12 February 1999.
has not impinged on Gambian territory, civil war in Guinea-Bissau widened the possibility of a serious regional escalation of the conflict with possible consequences including violent contagion and increased refugee flows. Jammeh sought to enhance his reputation with both Lagos and the ECOWAS Secretariat in order to further Gambia’s position as mediator. Jammeh’s determination to maintain a strong relationship with Nigeria is demonstrated by an incident during the assembly of the intervention force in which a senior Gambian officer was summarily dismissed following an altercation with a Nigerian officer in Banjul. The EIU reported that the ‘sacking was said to be evidence of Colonel Jammeh’s sycophantic attitude towards the Nigerian leadership’. Even so, Nigeria also had cause to be grateful for Gambia’s concerned approach to the conflict. An anglophone presence in the mediation process, and especially in the ECOMOG force, was a useful counterbalance to an otherwise francophone intervention. If France could count on privileged access to the Togolese, Beninois and Nigerien contingents, then Nigeria could depend on Gambia for intelligence as to the status of the conflict and the intervention.

The Gambian Daily Observer noted at the time that ‘Gambia cannot afford not to participate in any project designed to promote the return of stability in a neighbouring state’. Beyond the regional security dimensions, Gambia had developed significant economic interests in Bissau. The lorry park in Banjul was dubbed ‘Garage Bissau’ owing the size of the re-export trade with Guinea-Bissau. At the onset of the conflict three trucks en route to Bissau were stopped and the cargo impounded by Senegalese soldiers at the Tanaaf customs post. The convoy’s escort, a Guinea-Bissau citizen, was told that the goods and crew had been detained ‘because they [the Senegalese authorities] had got news that Yahya Jammeh is sending arms to Mané’. Business at ‘Garage Bissau’ was suspended for the duration of the conflict.

On 26 January the Gambian National Assembly met to approve participation in the ECOMOG force. Two senior opposition politicians, Hamat Bah and Sidia Jatta, raised objections. Jatta insisted that Gambian troops should not be expected to fight and

151 Ibid., p.27.
should withdraw as soon as new elections could be held in Bissau. He doubted that the intervention force could fulfil a constructive role, and expressed the belief that an ECOMOG intervention would undermine the ceasefire in place. Bah raised a highly controversial issue in Gambia – the conduct and comportment of soldiers returning from peacekeeping missions. Concern over the consequences of participation in peacekeeping was felt in all troop-contributing countries. However, it was acute in Gambia. Referring to the coup that brought Jammeh to power in July 1994, Bah pointed out that ‘the very people we sent to Liberia [as part of ECOMOG] are the ones who came back and flushed out a democratically elected government’.154

One motivation for Togo’s involvement in ECOMOG was a pressing need to rehabilitate a severely tarnished reputation. There were shades here of Mobuto’s use of the IAF in Chad as a means of deflecting attention from domestic deficiencies, whilst raising his own international profile. The two targets for this international public relations exercise, the EU and France, had divergent agenda of their own. The EU had frozen aid to Togo since government repression following rioting in 1992. Whilst the EU officially condemned the mutiny in Bissau, it supported the withdrawal of Senegalese and Guinean troops and their replacement by ECOMOG as a neutral interposition force until elections could be conducted.

France was more proactive. Eyadéma’s stock had fallen considerably during the Mitterrand presidency. However, relations between Lomé and Paris had improved under Chirac, although the Socialist side of the cohabitation government was markedly less enthusiastic. In November the EU Commission, in response to the Togolese failure to address its democratic deficit and human rights abuses, signalled that it intended to continue the policy of non-cooperation. At the same time Eyadéma was enjoying privileged access to Chirac during the Franco-African summit as the new Chairman of ECOWAS. Although Charles Josselin for the Socialist government made pro-democracy noises, Chirac used the presidential prerogative to dictate foreign policy to support Togo against the EU. The Togolese led the ECOMOG intervention, deployed in advance and without the knowledge of the other contingents, and engaged in dubious, and partial, activities during the operation. A lack of capacity, as well as a need to behave with

delicacy in the light of relations with the EU and ECOWAS, limited the extent to which
the Togolese contingent could act on behalf of France. Nonetheless, Togo acted as a
conduit for French policy within ECOMOG.

At the time of the intervention Eyadéma contributed a paper to the French journal
defense nationale on the subject of all-African peacekeeping. The article commended
the idea of a regional peacekeeping interposition force operating under a UN mandate
with extra-African funding. Eyadéma envisaged any proposed force operating under a
military and politico-legal command situated in a troop-contributing country. Individual
units would be set aside by each state in the region ready to collaborate in the case of
crisis. In essence the Eyadéma paper endorses the RECAMP initiative. However, the
accent placed by RECAMP doctrine on cooperation between the troop-contributing states
and other regional states was belied by Togo’s precipitous deployment in Guinea-Bissau.

The assassination of Nigerien President Ibrahim Baré Mainassara lent a deep
irony to the involvement of the Niger in the operation. The unpopular, authoritarian
Mainassara was shot by his own Presidential Guard on 9 April 1999 in, what was
described by the BBC’s correspondent, as ‘a copybook coup d’etat’. The coup was
condemned by Kouyate on behalf of ECOWAS leaving the regional organisation in the
bizarre position of denouncing events in a country presently contributing to an
intervention to manage conflict in a country undergoing similar political collapse. It is
uncertain whether the absence of Niger’s senior field officers from Niamey facilitated the
coup which was undertaken by junior officers led by Major Daouda Mallam Wanké.

Niger’s motive for participating in the intervention was most likely to curry
favour with Paris. Mainassara was desperate for support from France following the
refusal of Nigeria’s Abubakar to renew an agreement signed with his predecessor Sani
Abacha which involved Nigeria paying the salaries of the Nigerien Presidential Guard. Mainassara was in Paris just a month before his assassination. During an official banquet
at the Quai d’Orsay, Bernard Kouchner emphasised France’s intention to develop a

155 Eyadéma, Gnassingbé, 'La force d’interposition africaine', defense nationale, 2, February (1999),
pp.5-9.
published 9 April 1999.

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‘multi-faceted aid programme’ for Niamey, as well as French satisfaction at Niger’s decision to participate in the Guinea-Bissau operation.\textsuperscript{158}

Since his return to power in 1996 Benin’s President Mathieu Kérékou has sought to convince the international community that his government has abandoned the Marxist ideology that characterised his previous administration. In 1996, the French Gaullist Minister of Cooperation, Jacques Godfrain, commended Benin’s shift to market economics and financial rigour.\textsuperscript{159} Further underlining Kérékou’s international rehabilitation, a battalion of Beninois troops had just finished training under ACRI. Despite these two spurs to participation, Benin gave the impression that it was the least engaged of the troop-contributing states. Cotonou acted unilaterally to declare the withdrawal of its contingent following Mané’s final assault. Although there were calls in some quarters for ECOMOG to stay to help with the proposed elections, officials in Cotonou announced that ‘the situation and objective reasons for maintaining the Beninois contingent in Guinea-Bissau have radically changed and...rendered pointless the ECOMOG buffer force and security mission’.\textsuperscript{160}

\textbf{Conclusion}

The Guinea-Bissau civil war was short, but nasty. There was a significant humanitarian dimension to the conflict that impelled engagement. The ascendancy of the communitarian position in the field of conflict resolution dictated that any intervention would be all-African. Africa’s leaders, and in particular leaders from the members states of ECOWAS were once more called upon to summon the will to intervene. The war began at the same time as the ECOWAS Monitoring Group was engaged in a difficult peace-enforcement operation in Sierra Leone. That this sub-regional organisation, albeit with considerable outside help, managed to mediate between the combatants, establish a ceasefire and deploy a limited peacekeeping force to oversee the settlement was


\textsuperscript{160} Agence France Presse, ‘ECOWAS Credibility Dented in Guinea-Bissau’, 10 May 1999.
commendable. It also implies that the political/moral will for self-pacification at the sub-regional level has not been extinguished.

Yet, the operation was successful only in achieving its narrow, unofficial mandate of extricating Senegal and Guinea from their disastrous intervention. In so doing those responsible for establishing the mission finessed a solution to a failed intervention that had become an embarrassment not only to Senegal and Guinea, but also ECOWAS as an entity, as well as Senegal’s sponsor France. However, as the dynamics of the conflict tilted towards Mané and his Casamançais allies, it was clear to all those involved in the conflict— the protagonists, Guinea-Bissau’s neighbours, ECOWAS and the extra-continental actors— that the small, under-resourced intervention force was unable to uphold the aims outlined in the Abuja Accords.

ECOMOG’s intervention endorsed the current standing of the ‘peace pyramid’, whilst reaffirming its inadequacies. From a juridical standpoint the issue of non-intervention in a sovereign member state was overcome by Vieira’s invitations to intervene and eventually by UN Security Council Resolution 1216 that legitimised the Abuja Accords. The international legitimacy of the operation also mitigated the moral justification for intervention, although the meagre size and scope of the Force meant that the successful fulfilment of an overly ambitious mandate was highly unlikely. As such the operation stretched the ‘just war’ criterion of reasonable hope. In terms of military response ECOWAS furnished troops, as well as assuming command and control functions with logistical support from France through RECAMP. Neither the OAU nor the UN was involved in the military response. Despite a mediating interest from international organisations, in particular the CPLP, the current norm of Chapter VIII subsidiarity left the sub-regional organisation to dispatch a small intervention force encumbered by political and practical restraints.

The inherent problems of a communitarian approach to conflict resolution, discussed in Chapter Two were present in Guinea-Bissau. Rivalry arose not just within the sub-regional organisation, but also between competing ‘communities’ - ECOWAS and the CPLP. The worst consequences were averted in this case. Nonetheless, at one stage, this rivalry threatened to undermine the peace process by dissipating effort and resources, as well as widening and entrenching the conflict. The logic of subsidiarity -
finding the nexus for conflict management in the SRO - also presented problems. In Guinea-Bissau divergent agendas were stacked one on another. The anglophone-francophone rivalry persisted. Moreover, individual states promoted their ‘national interest’ to the detriment of the peace operation. Senegal’s priority was to address the longstanding secessionist instability on its border with Guinea-Bissau. Gambia sought to promote regional stability whilst betraying a partiality toward the Junta/MFDC position. The francophone states led by Togo were, to a greater or lesser extent, exercised by a desire to curry favour with France. The regional power, Nigeria, was once again notable for its inefficacy. Nigerian isolationism and anti-Nigerian antagonism from the francophone bloc threatens to debilitate fatally the capacity of ECOWAS effectively to address conflict in the sub-region.

A final feature of the intervention in the Guinea-Bissau civil war is the continued role of extra-African actors. The hypothesis states that all-African interventions should be conducted, possibly with external assistance, but without direct extra-continental intervention. The operation in Guinea-Bissau was a first opportunity for one element of the P3 initiative, considered in Chapter Five, to be tested. The RECAMP programme ultimately proved inadequate to fulfil the aims of either the Africans or indeed the French. The funding, supply of equipment and quality of RECAMP-trained troops were inappropriate for the aims of even this modest intervention. Moreover, the notion that RECAMP is a positive step toward African self-pacification – divorced from direct extra-continental involvement - was belied by the manner in which certain troop contributing countries were used as proxies for French policy interests. It is noteworthy that following tacit support for the failed Opération Gabou, French attempts to manipulate the ECOMOG intervention through RECAMP ultimately proved ineffective.
CONCLUSION

The hypothesis underlying this research is that Africa's leaders are under a moral/political imperative to summon the will to develop a capacity to intervene in conflicts, possibly with external assistance, but without direct extra-continental intervention. The research seeks to approach this question from the perspective of Africa and the international community. Thus the hypothesis begs two basic questions - is Africa right - politically and morally - to assume this task and should the rest of the world, particularly the traditional intervening powers, accept and/or promote and/or assist African self-pacification?

The argument begins with the premise that all-African intervention is the result of a process of regionalisation of conflict resolution that began in the mid-1990s. At this time the international community essentially disengaged from international peacekeeping on the continent. It is this disengagement by the traditional intervening powers that has provided the clearest rationale for African self-pacification. Following the Somalia debacle in 1993, the initiation of Presidential Decision Directive 25 by the Clinton administration redirected American policy concerning conflict resolution in Africa. The cosmopolitan position/paradigm typified by Bush's supposed 'new world order' was replaced by a strict communitarianism which prioritised African self-help. Whilst not as impelled as the US, and despite reservations, France and Britain lent their support to a cooperative initiative to enhance African peacekeeping capacity. To a large extent the UN followed, or was constrained through practical necessity to follow the US lead. Following UNOSOM, the UN ran down its commitments in Africa. It was apparent that there would not be any substantive extra-continental intervention in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho or the DRC. Within this environment of neglect African sub-regional organisations - notably ECOWAS and SADC - felt obliged to take the lead and act. However, although Chapter VIII of the UN Charter had prefigured subsidiarity in the field of conflict management and resolution, the timing of the shift towards regionalisation could not have been worse with an economically and politically marginalised Africa under-resourced for effective conflict resolution.
Some of the key ideas underpinning regionalisation of conflict resolution in Africa are examined in Chapter Two. The bulk of the chapter considers why and whether African leaders should embark on the self-pacification project. At the base lies the dichotomy between the universal and the particular and the related ‘paradigms’ of cosmopolitanism and communitarianism. These positions/paradigms have their adherents both inside and outside Africa. Advocates of the particular currently dominate those of the universal. The nature and seeming intractability of recent African civil wars has led to Western particularists such as Robert Kaplan and Samuel Huntington distinguishing Africa as a case apart and asserting that Africans are best fit to address conflict on their own continent. This argument is seductive. Even UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was reportedly ‘a hair’s breadth from disillusion and disgust’ at the cycle of violence in Africa in the mid-1990s.¹ The notion of a ‘particular’ African culture, extending to indigenous conflict management techniques, also retains its adherents in Africa. The decision taken at Lusaka in 2001 to dissolve the OAU and establish the African Union (AU) has reawakened calls for Kwame Nkrumah’s dream of an ‘African High Command’, or at the least some form of continent-wide rapid reaction force capable of addressing conflict or preventing its escalation. In this regard, the rhetoric of Muammar Qadafi, a leading advocate for the establishment of the AU has revived the idea of pan-African unity and the notion of self-help.

The ascendancy of particularism following Mogadishu underpinned the concretisation of the communitarian over the cosmopolitan position. The cosmopolitan position is more admitting of international intervention accepting the subversion of individual rights as a justification for intervention. Cosmopolitanism as a position/paradigm has not disappeared and retains advocates within international organisations and amongst human rights NGOs. The communitarian position finds value in community. As such it prioritises relevant ‘communities’ — usually geographical entities such as continental or sub-regional organisations — as the locus for political interaction including conflict management and resolution. Communitarianism is less admitting of wide international intervention. It finds justification for wide international

intervention not when the 'thin' morality of individual human rights is subverted, but rather when the demolition of 'thick' morality found within and amongst all communities occurs. Instances of genocide and large-scale massacres are examples. The post-Mogadishu world saw international actors, to a greater or lesser extent and following the US lead, drift towards the communitarian position regarding the regionalisation of the onus for intervention so that it became the default position, at least in the African context.

The second chapter also looks at the conduct of peace operations and the justification for initiating interventions through the prism of the 'just war' tradition. That is, how and when intervention should take place. Whilst the aims of war and the aims of peace interventions are distinguishable, the extension of the traditional 'just war' criteria into the field of peace operations to construct moral bases for intervention is valid. With robust peace-enforcement rather than consensual peacekeeping increasingly the norm, and impunity for intervening forces often claimed or assumed, the conduct of peace operations - or the *jus in bello* - has become a global issue. In Africa indiscipline and misconduct by intervening troops, notably in Liberia, Sierra Leone and the DRC, has undermined the legitimacy and hence effectiveness of these operations. Whilst looting by other ranks might be the result of frequently not being paid because of the drastic underfunding suffered by many all-African operations, the exploitation of resources by senior officers and politicians from the troop contributing states can only be put down to greed. The second set of 'just war' criteria concern the initiation of war or the *jus ad bellum*. The application of the seven *jus ad bellum* criteria to all-African peace operations – as in the large majority of peace operations – raises difficulties. Yet African leaders and opinion formers are surely right to argue that given the size and scope of conflict on the continent, coupled with neglect of the Western powers certain 'just war' criteria - *right intention, right authority* and *just cause* - should be applied in context. Indeed respected African analysts in this field such as Francis Deng and Solomon Gomes in Africa suggest that the majority of African *intra*-state conflicts morally warrant all-African solutions, although each case must be assessed on an individual basis. It is, for example, worrying that the criterion of *proportionality* has not been fulfilled in the large majority of sub-regional interventions. That is, the entrenchment of militarisation and the prolongation of the conflict have outweighed humanitarian goods achieved by intervention.
Chapter Two also examines the problems stemming from African leaders' adherence to *de jure* state sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of member states. The implications of this adherence for the OAU are discussed in Chapter Three. Although these principles carry the import of international law they hold disproportionate weight in Africa and since its inception have been held sacrosanct by the OAU. The debate over OAU Charter amendment opened by the interventions in Chad has now been running for two decades. The OAU Secretariat, progressive politicians such as Julius Nyerere and Olusegun Obasanjo, scholars and jurists have frequently called for changes aimed at diluting the principle of non-intervention. Obasanjo has asked, 'why does sovereignty confer absolute immunity on any government who commits genocide and monumental crimes of destruction?' Writing in the mid-1990s, Gomes, speaking for the OAU Secretariat cited the end of the Cold War as opening a ‘window of opportunity’. He detected a new dynamism within the organisation and an, ‘opportunity for the desensitization of governments long obsessed with sovereignty and noninterference.’ Yet, state sovereignty remained inviolable. Will the establishment of the AU provide the opportunity for African leaders to openly recognise that absolute sovereignty belongs to a past era with different priorities? The Constitutive Act of the African Union reaffirms sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of member states and prohibits individual member states from interference in the internal affairs of another member state. However, unlike the OAU Charter the Constitutive Act grants the AU the ‘right to intervene in a member state pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity’, as well as the ‘right of member states to request intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and security’. The test will come when circumstances require these principles to be defined and implemented. Optimism, however, would be misplaced. The possibility of the AU, or indeed sub-regional organisations setting aside unambiguously the issue of sovereignty in favour non-consensual intervention is unlikely.

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3 Ibid., p.43.
4 Ibid., p.43.
5 Constitutive Act of the African Union, Article 3, para. (b); Article 4 paras. (g), (h), and (j).
in the short to medium term. Continued support from individual states, the AU and SADC, albeit qualified by frustration, for Robert Mugabe’s regime in Zimbabwe is an example of the endurance of de jure sovereignty in Africa. Indeed, the research suggests that dilution of sovereignty and the non-intervention principle will be incremental. For example, as the Guinea-Bissau case demonstrates, the impulse within ECOWAS is still to support a sitting Head of State regardless of legitimacy. Yet, given the impetus of the conflict resolution/development nexus and in the absence of direct external intervention it seems self-interest and intervention are melding. Au fond, the convenient myth of state sovereignty is no longer tenable. When self-pacification becomes the norm, as is increasingly the case within ECOWAS, a state’s self-interest is best served by overt and covert manoeuvres to maximise influence over the aims and conduct of any peacekeeping mission rather than outright opposition to intervention. This trend was noticeable during the Guinea-Bissau operation.

Although the enduring poverty of the organisation has been a brake on the construction of viable all-African peace operations, the OAU’s inability to address Africa’s conflicts stems in large part from the fetters of its Charter commitment to absolute sovereignty and non-intervention. The ethos created by these restrictions has ensured that the construction of an effective African security framework – from the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution - has remained elusive. The frustrations of the interventions in Chad saw the OAU lower its ambitions in terms of deploying troops under its auspices into conflicts on the continent – further OAU interventions would not rise above the size of observer missions.

As a result of the OAU’s stasis the logic of Chapter VIII subsidiarity found responsibility for the construction of all-African peace operations devolving to sub-regional organisations. The two organisations that have most advanced this trend are ECOWAS and SADC. These organisations are economic constructs that moved into the security field through necessity and on the assumption that viable economic development depends on a secure political environment. Both found the adoption of a security structure problematic. An interventionist role entrenched pre-existing rivalries within the organisations – a francophone/anglophone split in the case of ECOWAS and South
Africa/Zimbabwe competition in SADC. Rivalry hindered the effectiveness of intervention in both cases. This was exacerbated by the failure of the assumptive hegemons to give a decisive lead in conflict resolution. Nigeria might be held an ineffective hegemon, whilst South Africa proved to be an unwilling hegemon. Both organisations, mirroring the OAU, found developing an operational security framework problematic. As such the majority of sub-regional interventions have been of dubious legitimacy either under international law or seen from the moral perspective of the ‘just war’ tradition. Operations are typically under funded and suffer from inadequate logistics. It should be noted that ECOWAS involvement in conflict resolution is more sophisticated and advanced than that of SADC whose intervention in DRC was wholly illegal and undertaken with no other purpose than to further the strategic and economic interests of several of its member states. However, in terms of effective intervention, the record of both SROs has been mediocre.

The hypothesis states that all-African peace operations might require external assistance, but not direct extra-continental intervention. The US-led drift towards a communitarian stance toward intervention, notably in the African context, led to the development of the P3 initiative intended to enhance peacekeeping capacity on the continent. As a project to underwrite self-pacification in Africa it has proved woefully inadequate. The various American, French and British constituent programmes are under funded and, in general, ill suited to the requirements of African militaries. Moreover, the three sponsors remain economic and strategic rivals on the continent. The overall initiative does not cohere since the constituent programmes often mask national interests. The US, France and Britain invariably skew their respective programmes to established allies and proxies. A serious drawback for the initiative has been the inability or unwillingness to effect the participation of the assumptive hegemons Nigeria and South Africa. These two states have consistently questioned the validity of the initiative. As a result the programmes have relied on the participation of small and middle ranking militaries that have often taken part for the general, and not peacekeeping specific, benefits of membership such as high quality training, equipment provision and the ability to curry favour with the Western powers.
The final two chapters examine two case studies - the all-African peacekeeping operations in Chad in 1980-1982 and Guinea-Bissau in 1998-1999. How do these case studies elucidate the underlying themes of the research? The two missions were most notable for the extent of regional, extra-regional and extra-continental interference. The West African regional power, Nigeria, was central to both interventions. In Chad, Nigerian influence was present throughout the process from the mediation phase to the deployment of the IAF. In the Guinea-Bissau case Nigerian disinterest crucially limited the scope of the operation and ensured a biased francophone composition for the intervening force that undermined the operation’s salience. Indeed the enduring rivalry between Nigeria and France in the region is marked in both operations. The failure of the IAF allowed France to reassert its influence in Chad for more than a decade, whilst the French role in the Guinea-Bissau operation belies a stated policy of non-interference in the pré-carré. Both operations once more demonstrate the extent to which proxies are used in an attempt to reorient the direction of intervention. Senegal represented French interests within the IAF, whilst the US manipulated the Zaireans. France exerted influence over three of the four troop-contributing countries in the Guinea-Bissau mission, albeit ultimately to no effect, whilst Nigeria maintained a restrained interest in events through the Gambians.

Although the issues of sovereignty and non-intervention were largely finessed in both cases, the two operations shed some light on whether there has been an attitudinal shift amongst African leaders on these key principles. Comparison between positions adopted at the time of the Chad intervention and those adopted during the ECOMOG intervention in Guinea-Bissau suggest a qualified adaptation. The fundamental rationale for change – that development is impossible if the continent remains hostage to failed states and sequent endemic conflict - is the same in the two cases. There is, however, a qualitative distinction between the ethoses of the two operations. There was a sense, at least within the OAU Secretariat that the Inter-African Force in Chad signalled an African security structure coming of age and addressing its own problems, whereas the Guinea-Bissau case was based on necessity – a recognition that if ECOWAS did not react than nobody else would. Whilst the IAF initiated a slow, but cumulative, trend towards African self-pacification it is the stimulus of necessity that currently drives the process.
Despite the slow pace of change, it seems that the IAF’s failure gave pause for thought rather than total denial – all-African peacekeeping need not be doomed, but a wider consensus for action, as well as a greater practical capacity for intervention, needs to be constructed. ECOWAS’ intervention in Guinea-Bissau was the third by that organisation within a decade. Despite its shortcomings - financial, political and military - ECOMOG demonstrates growing consistency of purpose on the part of the SRO coupled with acquiescence regarding extra-continental assistance in peacekeeping capacity building. If sub-regional intervention has not become a settled norm - UNAMSIL and the unilateral British intervention being notable exceptions - it is still invariably given precedence at international and regional/continental level. That the OAU chose to defer to ECOWAS during the mediation stage of the Guinea-Bissau mission implies an acceptance of the ultimate logic of subsidiarity within the peace pyramid, at least during the final phase of the OAU’s existence. Recent suggestions that the AU should use its inception as an opportunity to construct a standing rapid reaction force are misplaced. The OAU’s place in the peace pyramid as mediator and facilitator has been established via an organic process.

The operations in Chad and Guinea-Bissau were hobbled by under funding and logistical shortfall that contributed to a perception of impotence and, more fundamentally, limited the interventions, regardless of their respective mandates, to orthodox Chapter VI interposition missions. British intervention in Sierra Leone and French intervention in Côte d’Ivoire notwithstanding, it is probable that any Western reengagement with conflict resolution on the continent will be limited. If self-pacification is to continue to be the basis for addressing conflicts in Africa then existing peacekeeping capacity enhancement programmes must be reassessed. Michael O’Hanlon makes the argument that ‘African militaries should ultimately receive hundreds of millions of dollars a year in aid and training, not only for simple peacekeeping, but also to prepare for more difficult, dangerous and lethal operations’.6 As it stands the P3 initiative is hamstrung by its limitations in terms of funding and scope. In a recent speech the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Walter Kansteiner III, outlined current

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US policy priorities in Africa – attracting private investment, addressing HIV/AIDS, democratisation and the environment. He accepted that all these priorities depended on the containment of conflict ensuring a stable and secure environment. In this respect, according to Kansteiner, ‘regional peacekeepers are the way to go’ and ‘ECOWAS is stepping up to the plate’.7 Yet, the African Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA) programme that replaced ACRI receives less funding than its already impoverished predecessor. Funding should increase along the lines envisaged by O’Hanlon. Training needs to be extended to the regional powers – the US recognised as much with the establishment of emergency training for Nigerian troops under Operation Focus Relief. Limited cooperation between the American, French and British programmes has yielded some returns for both donors and recipients. Further cooperation should concentrate on extending successful elements of the initiative such as RECAMP’s prepositioning of equipment for use in all-African operations. There should also be a shift from bilateral assistance toward providing joint P3 support for the relevant SRO. Finally there needs to be an acceptance that few conflicts in Africa are soluble through orthodox peacekeeping. Whilst Chapter VI skills need to be retained, peace-enforcement training must also be extended. However, in providing such training the often difficult distinction between Chapter VII and war fighting must be stressed.

Were African leaders right to summon the will to develop the capacity for intervention? The disengagement of the traditional intervening powers from conflict resolution in Africa created a security vacuum on the continent. The heightened levels of conflict following the end of the Cold War - with concomitant humanitarian catastrophe and regional insecurity - required action. It was clear from the OAU’s experience in Chad that all-African intervention would present institutional, as well as practical problems. The performance of all-African operations to date has been mixed. A subsidiarity model has developed and SROs have established institutional mechanisms to address conflict. However, despite a few military/humanitarian successes the structural and infra-structural bases of the OAU and SROs remain underdeveloped.

African conflicts need a flexible and realistic response from all actors. As Stanley Hoffman notes, ‘since ‘ought implies can’, a deontological ethic in which the definition

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7 Kansteiner, Walter, address given to the Royal African Society, University of London, 30 April 2003.

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of what is right is not derived from a calculation of what is possible condemns itself to irrelevance if its commands cannot be carried out in the world as it is. The right or even duty of African leaders to develop an all-African capacity to address conflict is hobbled by a climate of political impediments, as well as practical and financial constraints. In these circumstances is there, or should there be, a future for all-African intervention? One response — a resurgent universalism evidenced by a strong UN interventionism supported by the US, France and Britain — would be welcome but unlikely considering the continued ascendancy of the communitarian position in the US. Despite the recent direct interventions in Sierra Leone and Côte d’Ivoire — in themselves indictments of the P3 initiative’s insufficiency — it is improbable that Britain and France have the practical resources for regular or large-scale intervention. These two countries might, however, play an advocacy role. An escalation of the P3 programme of the magnitude envisaged by O’Hanlon would most probably yield effective results in the medium term, as well as add a moral dimension to an initiative that is currently unethical. The alternative is the status quo — continental and sub-regional disorganisation, ad hoc arrangements, widespread conflict and sporadic genocide and slaughter.

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