An Anatomy of Conflict Resolution in Africa's Civil Conflicts

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Keywords: *Africa's civil conflicts, Bretton Woods institutions, conflict resolution, durable peace, neo-colonial state, post-colonial state, post-conflict societies, systems of governance, war termination*

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The crises of the post-colonial state in Africa have led to civil wars in various African states. In several of these war affected countries, the state has disintegrated and occasioned myriad adverse consequences, including deaths, injuries, the mass displacement of people, and the collapse of the systems of governance. Against this background, this article examines the methods that have been used to terminate civil wars in Africa, and to set into motion the processes of peacebuilding. The article argues that in order to build durable peace in Africa's post-conflict societies, the post-colonial state needs to be democratically reconstituted.

Introduction

The euphoria that greeted the dawn of independence in Africa was quickly turned into nightmare in various states, as the contradictions and crises generated by the neo-colonial state plunged these states into civil wars. As the post-independence era unfolded, more African states became engulfed in civil wars. By the end of the 20th century, the continent had experienced 27 civil wars and their associated negative effects, including the death of thousands of innocent civilians, mass displacements both in terms of the refugee crisis and the internal displacement conundrum, the breakdown of political governance, and serious social and economic costs (Nyanduga 2004; Bariagaber 2006; Arnold 2007).

Although most of the civil wars that engulfed various states across the continent have ended, the one in Somalia, which began in 1988, continues to rage. Also, the high hopes for peace that greeted the Nairobi Peace Accord that ended the Sudanese civil war, the longest in Africa, in 2005, were dampened by the eruption of a genocidal civil war in the country's Darfur region (de Waal 2006; Natsios 2008). In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, despite the end of the country's third civil war since independence in 1960, post-conflict peacebuilding efforts are experiencing serious stress as, for example, the eastern portion of the country remains under the control of various warlordist militias (Thom 1999; Paddon 2010).

What methods have been, and are being used to help resolve Africa's civil wars, and what have been the attendant outcomes? What steps have been, and are being pursued to resolve the underlying conflicts and to build durable peace in post-conflict states? And how can durable peace be established in Africa? This article seeks to address these three interrelated questions.

Conceptual Framework

The study employs two major terms—*conflict resolution* and its attendant derivative *peace*—as the centerpieces of its conceptual framework. By conflict resolution, I am referring to the use of a broad array of "problem solving" approaches that seeks to identify the causal factors behind a conflict, and then search for ways of dealing with them. It entails addressing such issues as the institutional structure of society; the making of significant socioeconomic, political and other changes that would restructure society in a more just and inclusive way (Spangler 2005, 1).

Drawing from the works of Cortright (2008, 6-7) and Howard (1971, 225), peace is conceptualized as "the desirable end product of the conflict resolution process that attempts to establish and maintain an orderly and just society protective against violence, and the

exploitation of less powerful groups by more powerful ones, and seeks to transcend the conditions that limit human potential." In essence, "peace is more than the absence of war" (Cortright, 6).

Resolving Africa's Civil Wars

Background

Conflict resolution involves two major stages: war termination (Licklider 1993; Hegre 2004) and peacebuilding (Call and Cook 2003; Francis 2010). The former is designed to end violent conflict, while the latter is intended to address the causes of the underlying conflict that gave rise to the armed violence (Boutros-Ghali 1995). As twin processes, each is dependent upon the other. For example, peace cannot be established without the cessation of war; and the establishment of durable peace is the *sine qua non* for preventing the recurrence of war or armed violence.

Against this background, this section of the article will examine the general modalities that have been used to terminate civil wars on the continent, assess their efficacy, and decipher the efforts that have been, and are being made to build durable peace in the continent's post-conflict states. Clearly, the quality of the war termination efforts is a critical determinant of the texture of the post-conflict environment in which the construction of peace takes place. That is, if the post-conflict environment that is created by the termination of the war is not conducive, then it would in turn adversely affect the peacebuilding project.

War Termination

Generally, the template for the termination of civil wars in Africa has consisted of three interlocking elements: peace-making, peacekeeping (in the majority of the cases), and peace settlement.

Peace-making

Peace-making consists of a broad array of methods that are designed to end the war (Assefa 1996; Darby and MacGinty 2008). The two most widely used in Africa's civil wars have been mediation and negotiation. In mediation, a third party "guides the [conflicting parties] through a non-adversarial discussion process that has as its goal the settling of the [war]" (Isenhart and Spangle 2000, 72). Operationally, the mediation process in the various civil wars in Africa has entailed the intervention of the Organization of African Unity/African Union (AU), a sub-regional organization such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and the United Nations. In some cases, these international organizations have acted either singularly or in concert. For example, during the first Chadian civil war (1979-1982), the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was the primary mediator (Kieh 1993; May and Massey 1998). During the initial stages of the first Liberian civil war (1989-1997), ECOWAS was the sole mediator (Sessay 1996; Adebajo 2002). However, since the emergent post-Cold War global order, the practice has pointed toward a collaborative mediatory role involving a regional organization, the AU and the United Nations (Boulden 2003). For instance, ECOWAS, the AU and the United Nations served as joint mediators in the Ivorian civil war (2002-2008). In other cases, the ambit of mediation has been extended to include some of the major global powers such as the United States, Britain and France. During the second Liberian civil war (1999-2003),

ECOWAS, the AU, the UN and the United States served as joint mediators, although ECOWAS played the leading role.

As a practical matter, mediation has always been coupled with negotiation. This is because no peace-making effort can succeed without the willingness of the belligerents to end the conflict. Thus, negotiation provides the conflicting parties the opportunity to interact directly, especially to articulate their respective positions. Depending on the circumstances, as the various civil wars in Africa have demonstrated, negotiation may "create and fuel collaboration" (Isenhart and Spangle 2000, 45). However, such an outcome has been, and is dependent upon what Keltner (1987, 68) calls the "good faith and flexibility" of the conflicting parties.

Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping has been used as an instrument for helping to create a conducive environment for peace-making in the majority of the civil wars in Africa. Two major genres of peacekeeping operations have been used: peace observation (Kieh 2009) and the military interposition force (Malan 1998; Bellamy et al. 2004). Peace observation has involved either a regional organization, the Organization of African Unity/African Union or the United Nations intervening in a civil war with a team of military and civilian personnel. The intervention has been premised on the existence of a ceasefire agreement between or among the warring factions. The peace observers' major task has been to monitor compliance by all of the conflicting parties with the terms of the ceasefire. The observers were prohibited from using military force. This model was used by the United Nations during the first Liberian civil war, and during the initial stage of the Sierra Leonean civil war.

Two major models of the military interposition force have been employed in some of the civil wars in Africa: the traditional model (Mays 2002; Weiss et al. 2007; Bellamy et al. 2010;

Guldimann 2010) and the "new or robust" model (Ramsbotham et al. 2005; Curran and Woodhouse 2007; Lipson 2007; Nsia-Pepra 2009). The traditional model has been anchored on several elements: 1) either a regional organization or the Organization of African Unity intervened in various civil wars with a military force. The intervention required the consent of one or more of the parties involved in the conflict; 2) the existence of a ceasefire between or among the warring parties was a major precondition for the intervention; 3) the interventionist force served as a buffer between the belligerents; 4) the interventionist force created a security corridor for the transport and distribution of humanitarian assistance; 5) the force was required to be neutral by not aligning with any of the conflicting parties; and 6) the force was prohibited from using military force offensively. Instead, it could only use force in self-defense.

Since the emergence of the post-Cold War era, a "new or robust model" has been developed. This was occasioned by the changing dynamics of civil wars on the continent, including the limitations of the traditional model. The "new or robust model" is based on several tenets. First, the intervention is undertaken by either a regional organization, the African Union or the United Nations or jointly—a regional organization and the African Union; a regional organization and the UN; and the AU and the UN (African Recovery, 1998). Second, the consent of either one or all of the belligerents is not required for the intervention to take place. Third, a ceasefire does not need to exist prior to the intervention. If one exists, it is then enforced by the military force. Alternatively, if there is no ceasefire, then the force imposes and enforces one. For example, during the first Liberian civil war, ECOMOG, the ECOWAS peacekeeping force, established and enforced a ceasefire. Given the nature of the civil war, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), the major warlordist militia led by Charles Taylor, rejected the ceasefire and proceeded to attack the peacekeeping force. Fourth, the peacekeeping force serves

as a buffer between the warring factions, and creates a security zone for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to civilians. Fifth, the peacekeeping force can use military force offensively in peace enforcement operations. ECOMOG's peace enforcement operations during the first Liberian civil war and the Sierra Leonean civil war are good examples. However, the danger is that peace enforcement can undermine the peacekeeping force's neutrality by drawing it into the conflict. Sixth, the peacekeeping force may participate in what is generically referred to as "nation-building activities." These include a range of activities from helping to restructure and retrain the police to the primary assumption of security functions for the affected country during the transitional period.

Peace Settlement

When the belligerents agree to terminate the war, a peace settlement is then crafted (Walter 2001; Stedman et al. 2002). Its terms are embodied in a peace accord or agreement, which the belligerents sign. Drawing from the lessons of the various civil wars in Africa, peace agreements usually have three major components: the procedural, substantive and the organizational. The procedural component generally consists of the processes for the establishment and maintenance of peace such as the establishment and monitoring of the ceasefire. On the other hand, the substantive component embodies what Yawanajah and Quellet (2003, 1) characterize as the "political, economic, and social structural changes that are needed to remedy past grievances and provide for a more fair and equitable future." The organizational dimension encompasses the institutions and mechanisms that are required to implement the terms of the settlement. The Comprehensive Agreement that ended the Sudanese civil war in 2005 is a good example of a peace settlement.

It is important to note that a peace settlement may not end a civil war. This is because since it is a process that spans an appreciable period of time, a peace settlement is vulnerable to being violated either at the onset or at some point in the process. Characteristically, either scenario usually causes the reversion to war. Two common trajectories from some of Africa's civil wars are instructive. Even after the terms of the settlement are formulated and enveloped in a peace agreement or accord, and signed by the warring factions, one or more parties may decide to violate a term or terms of the settlement at the onset without the "ink even having dried on the agreement." In turn, this then reignites the war. For example, during the first Chadian civil war, the various peace settlements collapsed moments after they were signed. Similarly, during the first Liberian civil war, the Taylor-led National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) recurrently violated a stipulation or stipulations of the various peace accords immediately after the signing ceremonies. The NPFL did this recurrently with sixteen peace accords.

Another trajectory is that one or more of the belligerents uncommitted to ending the war may initially agree to the peace settlement as a strategic move designed to "buy time"—the acquisition of weapons and materiel, the repositioning of forces, etc. Once the strategic objective is achieved, the "spoiler" (Newman and Richmond 2006; Stedman 2000) may then decide to violate a term or terms of the peace settlement at a juncture in the settlement process.

What have been the outcomes of the various efforts that have been designed to terminate civil wars in Africa both in the past and present? Generally, there have been three outcomes: successful war termination (Walter 2001; Lyons 2002; Hegre 2004), failed war termination (Walter 1999; Stedman et al. 2002; Binningsbo and Dupuy 2009), and mixed (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003; Kreutz 2010). Successful war termination has been characterized by the full compliance of the warring factions with the terms of the peace settlement. The most important

aspect is that there is no re-eruption of war. This then has created the environment for setting into motion the "Herculean" task of post-conflict peacebuilding (the building of durable peace). Several cases are instructive: The Mozambican peace settlement of 1992; the Angolan peace settlement of 2002; the Sierra Leonean peace settlement of 2002; and the Liberian peace settlement of 2003.

In contradistinction, failed war termination has been evidenced by the collapse of the peace settlement either at the onset or at some point in the settlement process. The resultant effects have been the reversion to war; and the impossibility of transitioning from war termination to peacebuilding. Several cases provide instructive lessons. As has been mentioned, the first Chadian civil war was the prototype of failed war termination on the continent. Another case was the Rwandan civil war. After the successful conclusion of a peace settlement embodied in the Arusha Peace Accord of 1993, the Rwandan military played the role of the "spoiler" by violating the terms of the accord. The consequence was renewed violence, and significantly, the commission of genocide by the military and its paramilitary collaborators.

Mixed success in war termination is captured by the "tugs and pulls" associated with the implementation of a peace settlement. That is, the war termination efforts tend to oscillate between failure and success—the eruption of a cycle of successful war termination–failed war termination. In short, a peace settlement may either collapse at the onset or at some point in the process; then a new peace settlement is formulated; again, it either collapses at the onset or succeeds for some time, and then collapses again. The first Liberian civil war is the archetype of this genre of war termination efforts in Africa. Beginning with the Banjul Peace Accord, the Taylor-led NPFL violated every subsequent peace agreement at the onset over a six-year period. Interestingly, each violation was followed by the formulation of a new peace settlement

ostensibly designed to placate Taylor and his militia. Like failed war termination, the mixed variety can lead to the prolongation of a civil war, and therefore make the prospects for peacebuilding quite remote. This is because, as I have suggested, successful war termination is the essential pre-condition for setting into motion the process of building durable peace.

Building Peace in Africa's Post-Conflict Societies: A General Assessment

The Peacebuilding Efforts

With the end of civil wars in several African states, these countries have undertaken the long and arduous task of building durable peace. The vortex of the effort revolves around the trilogy of capacity building, reconciliation and societal transformation (Boutros-Ghali 1995). The liberal peacebuilding model has become the hegemonic framework for reconstituting Africa's post-conflict societies. The model was imposed on these post-conflict states by the United Nations and the dominant metropolitan powers led by the United States.

The model is hoisted on three pivotal pillars of the establishment of political democratization, the re-establishment of peripheral capitalism under neo-liberal orthodoxy, and reconciliation (Barnett 2006; Kurtenbach 2007; Sriram 2007). The political democratization dimension consists of the promotion of individual civil liberties and political rights, such as the freedoms of assembly, association and speech, and the right to vote; the establishment of the tradition of holding regular elections within a multiparty framework; the establishment of a systems of "checks and balances" within the government; the establishment of the sanctity of the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary; the promotion of accountability and transparency in the conduct of public affairs; and the establishment of a vibrant civil society that can serve as an autonomous sphere for checking on the powers of the government. The advocates

of the model posit that the success of its principles is contingent upon the undertaking of comprehensive institutional reforms within the public sector of these post-conflict African states. The generic reforms include: judicial reforms, political reforms, and security sector reforms. In other words, the contours of the liberal model are powered by an institutional tapestry.

On the economic front, post-conflict African states are instructed by the dominant metropolitan powers to either abandon their socialist economic system (Angola and Mozambique) or adopt the peripheral capitalist mode of production or reform their existing peripheral capitalist political economies under the ideological guidance of neo-liberalism. The basic neo-liberal prescriptions include: the removal of all trade barriers; the removal of all obstacles to foreign investment; the dismantling of existing "social safety nets;" the devaluation of currencies; the reduction of the labor force in the public sector; the freezing of employment and salaries in the public sector; and the increase of interest rates. The neo-liberal rationale is that the implementation of these policies would spur private investment, increase exports and save money for the state.

Reconciliation in post-conflict societies in Africa has been based on two major pathways: the restorative and the retributive. The former is based on the efforts to establish interrelationships between and among the offenders, the victims and the extant communities by restoring the harm that has been caused; the rights of the victims and the communities; and the responsibilities of the offenders. Bishop Desmond Tutu, who chaired the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, provides an excellent summation of the restorative justice model thus:

> The central concern is not retribution or punishment but, in the spirit of Ubuntu,
> the healing of breaches, the redressing of imbalances, the restoration of broken

relationships. This kind of justice seeks to rehabilitate both the victim and the

perpetrator, who should be given the opportunity to be reintegrated into the

community he or she injured by his or her offense (Bell 2002, 90).

 In short, the centerpiece of the restorative pathway is the search for "truth and reconciliation."

One way in which this is done is through the establishment of a truth and reconciliation

commission. Generally, the major functions of the truth and reconciliation commission are to

recreate memory about the war; and to encourage those with knowledge about the war, including

warlords and their militia men and women, to provide narratives about the war, especially their

roles. In keeping with the overarching framework, the commission's terms of reference do not

include the issuance of indictments, the holding of trials and the bringing to justice of those who

have committed war crimes and crimes against societies. Instead, the focus is on restorative

justice. Since the establishment of the truth and reconciliation commission after the end of the

South African civil war in 1994, the example has been followed in other African states, including

the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Sudan and Liberia.

On the other hand, the retributive model's central premise is that "justice requires

punishment" (Fisher 2007, 16). That is, more often than not, for victims and bystanders alike to

feel that justice has been achieved, some form of punishment has to befall the offender.

Significantly, punishment is necessary because it serves as retribution, deterrence, some form of

moral education, incapacitation, society's expression of condemnation (Fisher).

In some of Africa's post-conflict societies, three major retributive mechanisms have been

used: war crime tribunal, special court, and the International Criminal Court (ICC). In the case of

the war crime tribunal, one was established for Rwanda in 1994 (United Nations Security

Council Resolution 955 1994, 1). Under the resolution, the International Criminal Court for

Rwanda (ICTR) is to "contribute to the process of national reconciliation in Rwanda and to the maintenance of peace in the region" (United Nations Security Council Resolution 955, 1). Since it commenced the trials, the tribunal has handed down 50 judgments (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda 2008, 1). In Sierra Leone, a special court was established through an agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations in 2002. The court is mandated to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for the commission of serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law (The Special Court for Sierra Leone 2008, 1). Since the establishment of the court, 13 people have been indicted, including Charles Taylor, the former President of Liberia. Eight of the indicted persons have been convicted and sentenced (Special Court for Sierra Leone).

Also, the International Criminal Court (ICC) is playing a pivotal role in bringing to justice those accused of violating various aspects of international humanitarian law in some of Africa's civil wars. For example, the ICC has indicted four Congolese for the commission of various violations of international humanitarian law during the "second civil war" in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) from 1998-2003(Human Rights Watch 2008, 1). Three of these defendants are already in ICC custody (Human Rights Watch). In the case of the Central African Republic's civil war (2003-2006), the ICC has indicted Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo, the former Vice President of the transitional government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (2003-2006), and runner-up in the DRC's presidential election in 2006, for atrocities committed by his militia during that country's civil war in 2002 (Human Rights Watch). As for the Ugandan civil war, the ICC indicted and subsequently issued arrest warrants against Joseph Kony, the leader of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), and four of his commanders for the commission of sundry crimes in contravention of international humanitarian law (McGreal,

2008, p.1). Interestingly, however, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni, who requested the ICC's intervention, has refused to effect the court's arrest warrants. This is because President Museveni used the court as leverage in dragooning the LRA leader into signing a peace agreement to end the country's 22-year-old civil war (McGreal).

A "Balance Sheet" on the Peacebuilding Efforts

Are Africa's post-conflict states on the path to building durable peace? On the positive side, the termination of most of the continent's civil wars is a major step forward in creating a conducive environment for ultimately addressing and resolving the underlying conflict that is at the root of these various wars. Based on this, some progress has been made in liberalizing the political space in these various states, including improvements in the areas of political rights and civil liberties and the establishment of political institutions, rules and processes.

Despite the progress that has been made in the political sector, the various peacebuilding projects on the continent are generally plagued by several major problems. First, the liberal model, which provides the compass for navigating the terrain of peacebuilding, is not the best framework for addressing the taproots of civil conflicts in Africa for several reasons. The framework's democratization plank is quite limited to the political domain. That is, it is exclusively concerned with the promotion of individual political rights and civil liberties and overall political procedures. While these are important, they only address one aspect of the puzzle; hence, they are not sufficient to address the undercurrents of civil conflicts on the continent. In other words, they lack the expansiveness that is exigent to address the multidimensional crises, the bedrocks of civil conflicts, which have been generated by the neo-colonial African state. This is the case because liberal democratization is not comprehensive. As well, liberal democratization does not seek to fundamentally alter the portrait of the neo-colonial

African state—nature, character, mission, values and policies—and its resultant political economy. Hence, for example, pivotal issues such as socio-economic inequities and disparities in power relations between and among classes and social justice are not addressed. In short, the democratization dimension of the liberal peacebuilding model is primarily concerned with the establishment of political procedures, and accords virtually no attention to the material well-being of the continent's subaltern classes.

Similarly, capitalism whether developed or peripheral is intrinsically an undemocratic economic system. This is because it is anchored on inequality and exploitation. Thus, it privileges the ruling class at the expense of the subaltern ones. Such an economic system cannot address the serious human needs deficit that is confronting the continent's post-conflict societies. Instead, capitalism in its peripheral form in Africa's post-conflict states is exacerbating the socio-economic problems that contributed to the various civil conflicts in the first place. For example, the privatization project is simply transferring wealth from the state to private capitalists principally from various metropolitan states such as the United States, without improving the material conditions of the subalterns.

As for the reconciliation efforts, they are driven by Western approaches that fail to accord the requisite attention to the specific cultural context of the various post-conflict societies on the continent. As Kotzo (2002, 73) appropriately warns, "Conflict resolution efforts must take cognizance of the cultural context."

Second and related, although traditional African methods are now being used in some cases, much still needs to be done. One helpful step could be to take cognizance of the historical and contemporary realities in a conflict-affected African state, prior to making the determination about the appropriate method or methods that could be helpful in resolving the conflict.

Accordingly, in those cases in which the use of traditional African methods is still deeply rooted in the society, it would then be useful to use those methods. However, this should not preclude the use of Western or other methods as supplements, if they have utility under the circumstances.

Third, the peacebuilding projects on the continent are driven and dominated by external actors, some of whom contributed to planting the seeds of civil conflict in the continent's various post-conflict societies. For example, the United States played a pivotal role in the germination of the civil conflict in Liberia that occasioned two civil wars. Specifically, the United States was a major participant in the creation of the peripheral capitalist Liberian state, and provided the economic, political and military support that Liberia's ruling class used to suppress, repress and exploit the subaltern classes. Similarly, Britain was the chief architect of the neo-colonial Sierra Leonean state, and thus contributed to the multidimensional crises that were germinated over time. Clearly, based on the history of the involvement of these external actors in these post-conflict societies in Africa and their broader imperialist agendas, there is no doubt that these metropolitan powers are not interested in peacebuilding projects that would fundamentally alter these societies, including the transformation of power relationships. Accordingly, as Gounden (2002, 3) observes, "[The imperialist powers'] cardinal goal is to attempt to influence the process of resolution to their interests sidelining and or worse ignoring local ideals." This is done through withholding support for initiatives that may result in undesired outcomes but that are supported by a majority of the polity in question.

Fourth, the various peacebuilding projects in progress on the continent have generally ignored the role of the Bretton Woods institutions—International Monetary Fund and World Bank—and the totality of the global capitalist system in planting and nurturing the seeds of civil conflict on the continent. For example, the Bretton Woods institutions' "structural adjustment

programs" have played pivotal roles in the facilitation of the continual plundering and pillaging of the resources of these post-conflict states by metropolitan-based multinational corporations, and the decimation of the "social safety nets" that have provided a modicum of the basic human needs of the members of the various subaltern classes. Broadly, the required attention has not been paid to the inequities inherent in the nature and dynamics of the global capitalist system. For example, the "international division of labor" still requires that these post-conflict states remain producers of raw materials and the consumers of comparatively expensive manufactured goods from the metropolitan states. The "system of unequal exchange" remains intact. Under this arrangement, the post-conflict states will continue to be paid less for their raw materials, while being required to pay more for the manufactured goods from the United States, Europe and Japan. The point is that the global capitalist system will continue to remain hostile to development of these post-conflict states; hence, these societies will not be able to generate the resources that are required for them to address the problems of inequities in wealth and income, mass and abject poverty, social malaise and the strangulating effects of the overall precariously low standards of living.

Rethinking Conflict Resolution in Africa: Some Suggestions

There is the need to rethink conflict resolution in Africa. This is because, as has been argued, the various conflict resolution projects on the continent are fraught with major problems that would undermine the abilities of Africa's post-conflict states to build durable peace. One of the major lacunas with the war termination efforts is the pervasive practice of rewarding warlordism. This is especially done by allotting various positions in the transitional administration to the various warlordist factions. A major resultant effect is that such a practice

has encouraged rather than deterred warlordism. This is because warlords are cognizant of the fact that if their respective militias do not win outright military victories, they will be rewarded with various positions in an interim administration. In turn, these positions are used to foster the practice of the accumulation of capital by the warlords and their coteries of top advisors. Alternatively, while it is important for the various warlordist militias to be involved in the peace process, they should not be rewarded with positions in the interim regime. Instead, the office holders in the interim regime should be people with the requisite skills, who are not affiliated with the warlordist militias. This approach will help to deter warlordism, because potential war-makers would be aware that they would not be rewarded with positions in the state bureaucracy simply because they establish militias and participate in raining violence and mayhem on innocent civilians.

Another problem is that the larger society is often marginalized in the war termination efforts. Instead, the focus is on the various warlordist militias and the government. Thus, the larger society, which represents the majority of the citizens, does not participate in the fashioning of the peace settlement, but is required to live and abide by the terms. Moreover, since it is usually a spectator in the peace process, the larger society has no basis for holding the interim regime, including the various office holders from the warlordist militias, accountable. Consequently, as has been demonstrated in post-conflict societies like Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the larger society is forced to suffer the consequences of the incompetence and poor policies of the interim administration without recourse. Clearly, this approach needs to be changed and replaced with one that emphasizes the inclusion of various citizen-based organizations representing various segments of the affected countries in the war termination efforts. Moreover, it should be clearly stipulated in the peace accord that the

transitional regime would be accountable to the people. In order to practicalize such a provision, the major citizen groups should have representation in the transitional legislature. The transitional legislature should have oversight responsibilities over the transitional regime, including the power to remove the officers in the transitional executive branch.

In the area of peacebuilding, Lederach's (1995, 65) "elicitive approach" would be a useful pathway for several reasons. It places a premium on the cultural context and the associated knowledge and views of the citizens of the society in conflict as the foundation of peacebuilding. Also, it values the indigenous participants in the peacebuilding process as resources rather than recipients of conflict resolution knowledge, especially from "external experts." In this regards, the methods for the establishment of a peaceful society based on constructive change—"the flow of human interaction in social conflict from cycles of destructive relational patterns toward cycles of relational dignity and respectful engagement" (Lederach 2005, 181)—are collectively established through the critical reflection.

Building on the aforementioned approach, the liberal peacebuilding model that has been imposed by the powerful forces in the international system as the template for post-conflict African societies needs to be transcended. The alternative model should be framed around changing the portrait of the neo-colonial African state, and addressing the deeper issues of class inequities and the associated asymmetries in power in various relationships, human well-being and social justice. In terms of the transformation of the African state, this is the paramount task, because the neo-colonial African state is the generator of the contradictions and crises that lead to civil conflict and war. Specifically, the nature of the African state needs to reflect the historical-cultural realities of each African state rather than external ones (the nature of the neo-

colonial African state is a continuation from the colonial era). This would enable the citizens to take ownership of the state.

The character of the state needs to be changed from being criminalized, exploitative, negligent, prebendal, and repressive to productive, protective, meritorious, supportive and responsive to the needs and aspirations of its citizens. This would have profound positive ramifications for improving state-society relations. Ultimately, the citizens would accept the state as their own, rather than as a construct that visits hardship on them.

Another important element of the state that requires transformation is the mission. In its current formulation, the central mission of the neo-colonial African state is to create propitious conditions for the owners of metropolitan-based multinational corporations and other businesses, and the members of the local ruling classes and their relations to accumulate wealth, to the detriment of the majority of the citizens. Alternatively, the new primary mission of the state should be attending to the welfare of the citizens—employment, education, health care, housing, food security, etc.

Moreover, the perennial problem of class inequities needs to be addressed. Two steps are instructive. Measures need to be taken to prevent the members of the local ruling class and their relations from illegally acquiring wealth through various corrupt means. This could be done through the establishment of an effective anti-corruption regime. As well, the transformed state would then formulate and implement various policies that are designed to address the issue of inequities in income and wealth.

Addressing the vexing problem of asymmetries in power in various relationships is another major dimension of deep peacebuilding. This would cover the cultural, economic, gender, political and social spheres. For example, steps would need to be taken to curtail the

expansion of presidential powers and its resultant "hegemonic presidency." Such a step would be important for ensuring a "balance of power" between and among the various branches of government.

Central to the establishment of a new "culture of social justice" is the imperative of empowering people at the grassroots level, especially economically and politically. The rationale is that empowered citizens can serve as effective bulwarks against injustice. This is because the citizens would be able to hold public officials and others accountable for their actions. Ultimately, this would serve as an effective deterrent against actions such as the abuse of power, a major source of injustice on the African continent.

Importantly, the success of this alternative peacebuilding trajectory would be dependent upon the participation of a conscious and engaged citizenry and a visionary national leadership in a post-conflict African state. An important initial step would be to hold national conferences as an integral part of the peacebuilding process. That is, the peacebuilding in a post-conflict African society should be preceded by the holding of a national conference involving the representatives of all of the major stakeholders in the society. The major purpose would be to re-design the state and society through the peacebuilding process.

Within the framework of a democratically reconstituted state, traditional African approaches to conflict resolution should be valued. This is because as Zartman (1999, 3) suggests, "Traditional societies in Africa…are reputed to hold secrets of peacemaking locked in their ways, formed from centuries of custom before the disruption of colonization." For example, lessons can be drawn from the various traditional African approaches to conflict resolution such as the Mato Oput Justice clan-based model (Bangura 2008, 2). In turn, these lessons can be appropriately applied to various conflicts across the continent. On the other hand,

lessons from the conflict resolution approaches of other societies and cultures, including Western ones, can be applied to conflicts in various African states when the determination is made that they are relevant. This would represent a fundamental change from the current practice under which Western approaches are superimposed on African civil conflicts, without taking into consideration their cultural relevance and suitability to helping to resolve these conflicts.

Yet, another major consideration in rethinking conflict resolution in Africa's post-conflict states needs to be the formulation of strategies for addressing the conflict-inducing dynamics of the global capitalist system. That is, post-conflict states, other African states and Third World states would need to organize a united front and work collaboratively in struggling to make changes in the international capitalist system. For example, the "international division of labor" that requires African and other Third World states to be the producers of cheap raw materials needs to be changed so that these developing countries can develop industrial and technological bases. As well, the "system of unequal exchange" under which the dominant powers have determined that the raw materials from Africa and the rest of the Third World are sold at prices cheaper than the manufactured goods mainly from the industrialized capitalist states needs to be changed. This is because by accruing less for their primary products and paying more for manufactured goods, African states do not generate enough foreign exchange earnings to be able to address the multitude of domestic economic and social challenges such as education, health care, housing, and transportation. The resultant adverse impact on the well-being of the members of the subaltern classes has been a major contributor to planting the seeds of civil conflict in Africa.

Conclusion

The article has attempted to address three major interrelated issues relating to the resolution of civil conflicts in Africa. First, the article tackled the war termination conundrum by examining the various methods—peace-making, peacekeeping and peace settlement—that have been used to terminate civil wars in Africa. The results indicate that these efforts have produced three general outcomes: success, failure and mixed. Successful war termination is characterized by the complete cessation of armed violence. On the other hand, failed war termination is distinguishable by the reversion to war either at the onset of the peace settlement process or at a subsequent juncture. The mixed war termination genre is hoisted on a series of cycles of successes and failures.

Second, the issue of war termination was then linked to peacebuilding. Against this background, the article deciphered the nature and dynamics of the liberal peacebuilding model, the hegemonic pathway for reconstituting Africa's post-conflict states, and ultimately "building durable peace" in them. Specifically, the central tenets—political democratization, capitalist economy and national reconciliation—and their dynamics were examined within the context of the continent's post-civil conflict states. The central finding is that liberal peacebuilding, with its focus on political rights and freedoms, is inadequate for addressing the general undercurrents of civil conflict in the continent's various post-conflict societies.

Finally, the *sine qua non* for the building and maintenance of permanent peace in Africa's post-conflict states and its other polities is the establishment of substantive or deep democracy on the continent beyond the limits of political liberalization and its pathological fixation with procedures. In other words, Africa—both its post-conflict states and others—needs a new kind of state that is anchored on holistic democracy and its tenets of, among others, mass

empowerment, equality and social justice—what Ake (1996, 124) correctly refers to as "real democracy." Correspondingly, the new democratic African states would need to establish a united front among themselves, as well as with other democratic polities in the Third World to struggle for the fundamental restructuring of the structure and dynamics of the global capitalist system. One of the major outcomes of the restructuring must be what Muiu (2007, 55) calls "Africa's control over its own economic resources." That is, African and Third World states both post-conflict and otherwise must control their resources, if they are to build and maintain peaceful societies.

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