



International Peace Academy

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Economic Community of West African States

Operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security

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ABOUT IPA'S AFRICA PROGRAM

A task force meeting on the conflict management role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), organized jointly by the International Peace Academy (IPA) and ECOWAS, took place in Dakar, Senegal, on 12-13 August 2002. The meeting involved about forty diplomats, soldiers, academics, and civil society actors, drawn largely from West Africa, and was the second in a series of policy task forces established to address ways in which Africa's sub-regional organizations can increase their capacity to manage local conflicts. The task force was also part of the IPA Africa program's current three-year project (2000-2003) on developing regional and sub-regional security mechanisms in Africa. This work follows seven years of collaboration between IPA and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) between 1992 and 1998. In a bid to enhance efforts at developing regional and sub-regional security mechanisms in Africa, IPA is working with partner institutions on the continent to:

- Assess major challenges faced by sub-regional organizations in Africa in their efforts to prevent and manage conflicts, operationalize their security mechanisms, and complement the new African Union's (AU) conflict management efforts;
- Provide a forum for civil society actors to contribute to efforts at developing security mechanisms in their sub-regions;
- Provide training for the staff and accredited officials to sub-regional secretariats;
- Raise awareness of, and increase international support for, sub-regional security mechanisms in Africa;
- Enhance networking and sharing of information among a variety of African actors;
- Publish and disseminate policy-relevant research that will be useful to decision-makers, academics, and the NGO community.

ABOUT THE RAPORTEURS

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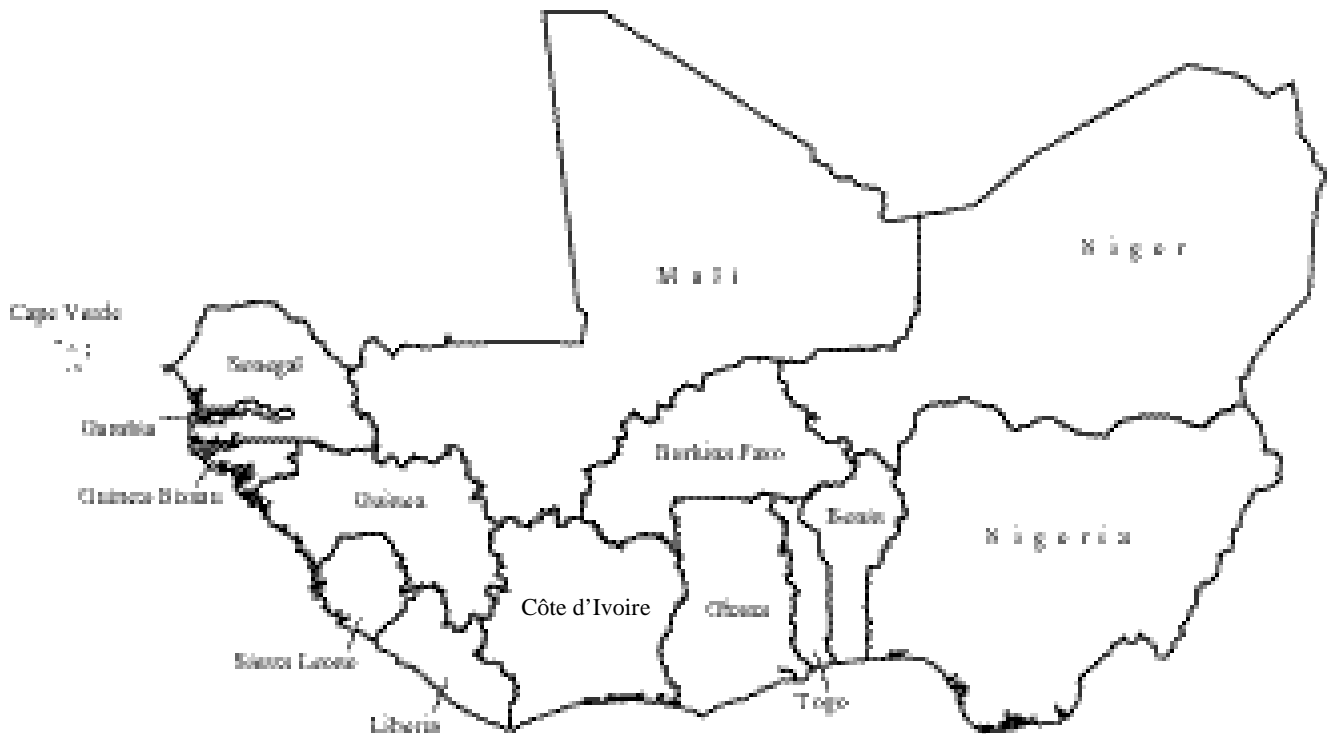
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Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

ECOWAS is a sub-regional grouping of West African states established on 28 May 1975. Its fifteen current members are: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Togo, Senegal, and Sierra Leone.



Executive Summary

A task force meeting, organized jointly by the International Peace Academy (IPA) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), took place in Dakar, Senegal, on 12 -13 August 2002. The meeting built on the second of IPA's three policy seminars in the current phase of its work (July 2000 – June 2003), which took place in September 2001 in Abuja, Nigeria, and was also organized in partnership with ECOWAS. The Dakar task force meeting brought together about forty diplomats, parliamentarians, soldiers, academics, and civil society actors (see Annex III), drawn largely from West Africa, to develop recommendations on operationalizing and institutionalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security (hereafter referred to as the ECOWAS Mechanism).

Against the background of insecurity in Liberia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone, participants assessed and provided recommendations for improving the ECOWAS Mechanism's operational and institutional structures. While many task force members highlighted some positive developments in the sub-region, such as the successful elections in Sierra Leone in May 2002, most members also expressed concern that Liberia's continued instability could destabilize the entire sub-region and possibly reverse the enormous gains in neighboring Sierra Leone. Of immediate concern, participants highlighted the destabilizing effects of refugee flows across borders; the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons; the failures of economic development and regional integration; and poor governance and economic mismanagement. In light of West Africa's instability, IPA/ECOWAS task force members considered the role of African leaders and other eminent personalities in mediating conflicts; the ways in which sub-regional civil society actors can contribute to the ECOWAS Mechanism; and the potential of increased collaboration among the United Nations (UN), ECOWAS, and civil society actors through the newly-established United Nations Office in West Africa (UNOWA) in Dakar.

While ECOWAS has taken significant steps, in the last three years, to institutionalize and operationalize the

ECOWAS Mechanism, stronger relationships must still be built with sub-regional and external actors to implement it effectively. The three peacekeeping experiences of the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau offer potentially valuable lessons for managing the continuing conflicts in West Africa. First and perhaps most importantly, partnerships between ECOMOG and civil society organizations in advancing peacekeeping goals and engendering acceptance by domestic populations are critical to these efforts. ECOMOG can foster good relations with war-affected populations through relatively inexpensive programs, such as Quick Impact Projects, which can bring visible and rapid relief to societies recovering from war. Strengthening partnerships with sub-regional and external partners is vital for the successful institutionalization of the ECOWAS Mechanism, which is still evolving and has not yet been effective in stemming West Africa's current conflicts. IPA/ECOWAS task force members identified the lack of financial resources, inadequate training of peacekeepers, and the slow progress in establishing an effective early warning system as obstacles to the operationalization of the ECOWAS Mechanism. They called on international organizations and donor countries to support cost-sharing and capacity-building for African-led peacekeeping interventions. The UN mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), which had a core of West African peacekeepers, was cited as a good example of such collaboration. Finally, several task force members stressed the need to promote economic development and integration as a means of increasing sub-regional security. They urged ECOWAS to focus on peacebuilding issues, specifically drawing attention to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a potential vehicle for promoting goals of "good governance," development, and integration.

Policy Recommendations: The Way Forward

As ECOWAS strives to operationalize and institutionalize its security mechanism, task force members stressed the need to prioritize the following three issues: first, security sector reform; second, a renewed focus on peacebuilding and development policies; and third, increasing the involvement of the UN and West African civil society groups in managing conflicts. We

will assess these three issues in turn, as well as recommendations offered for improving the work of the IPA/ECOWAS task force.

1. Reform of the Security Sector

Several task force members noted that a key to stability in West Africa lies in the reform of security sectors. They felt that efforts to reform security sectors have been inadequate and that governments in West Africa have rarely prioritized security sector reform. Pointing repeatedly to the example of Liberia after elections in July 1997, several former ECOMOG commanders, who are members of the IPA/ECOWAS task force, noted that incomplete disarmament and demobilization, as well as Liberian leader Charles Taylor's transformation of his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) militia into the national army, greatly contributed to the current instability in Liberia. It was argued that Sierra Leone could also face a similar fate as Liberia, if its security sector is not urgently reformed. Equally important, ECOWAS was also urged to assist its member states to undertake security sector reform and not wait until conflicts erupt.

Many participants stressed that security sector reform should not only encompass military issues. ECOWAS should also consider human and economic security issues. In this regard, ECOWAS' moratorium on small arms and light weapons, which was adopted by sub-regional heads of state on 31 October 1998, could be made more effective. The moratorium should also be expanded to include the regulation of external weapons suppliers.

2. Peacebuilding and Development

Several task force members argued that focusing on peacebuilding and development could improve ECOWAS' efforts at conflict management, and stressed the link between security and development. They advised that ECOWAS should primarily concern itself with improving the standard of living of its 200 million inhabitants and, in particular, ensure the success of NEPAD. In addition, task force members urged the rapid development of agricultural sectors in which 80 percent of West Africans are typically employed, and encouraged donors to redirect efforts at regional

poverty-alleviation projects. Task force members further recommended that ECOWAS examine the lessons of UN peacebuilding offices in Liberia and Guinea-Bissau, and assess the potential peacebuilding role of the new UN Office in West Africa. They also suggested that ECOWAS begin to consider seriously the establishment of a political confederation, building on the creation of the ECOWAS parliament, in order to reap the full benefits of regionalism.

3. Civil Society and External Actors

Civil society actors in West Africa and the UN must cooperate more closely with ECOWAS in the implementation of its Mechanism. Task force members offered three suggestions for improved collaboration. First, some organs of the ECOWAS Mechanism, such as the Council of Elders, have not yet been used effectively for conflict management and could potentially contribute to mediation efforts and to providing advice to the ECOWAS Executive Secretary; second, the role of civil society actors within the ECOWAS Mechanism must be better defined before they can contribute effectively to mediation efforts and to developing ECOWAS' early warning system; third, collaboration between ECOWAS and the UN remains *ad hoc* and sporadic, but the establishment of a UN office in West Africa provides an opportunity to institutionalize this cooperation.

One strategy for increasing cooperation between ECOWAS and civil society groups may be to decentralize the ECOWAS Mechanism. One participant recommended that ECOWAS establish offices in each of its member states in order to take better advantage of advice from civil society actors. By establishing offices in each member state, ECOWAS could develop a quick response to conflict situations and ensure faster implementation of its decisions. At present, ECOWAS would need to open eight more offices in West Africa. In addition to the four early warning observatories in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), Banjul (Gambia), Monrovia (Liberia), and Cotonou (Benin), ECOWAS also has ties to peacekeeping training centers in Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria.

IPA/ECOWAS task force members urged member states to muster the political will to implement ECOWAS'

protocols. The fact that only three states (out of fifteen) had ratified the 1999 security protocol establishing the ECOWAS Mechanism by August 2002, demonstrated a lack of political will among ECOWAS leaders. Without all ECOWAS states ratifying the security protocol, it will be extremely difficult to operationalize the ECOWAS Mechanism. Reversing the impression of a lack of political will requires that ECOWAS leaders implement decisions taken at sub-regional summits. ECOWAS must build the necessary constituency to ensure that its heads of state and secretariat implement its decisions quickly.

4. Improving the Efficiency of the Task Force

The IPA/ECOWAS task force offered three proposals for future meetings of the group: first, reducing the size of the task force; second, organizing some meetings in New York; and third, collaborating more closely in its work with other sub-regional organizations and the African Union (AU). In order to increase the effectiveness of its work, it was suggested that the task force be reduced in size from about forty to twenty members. Additionally, participants recommended that the task force interact with

ECOWAS' Defense and Security Commission and its Mediation and Security Council, as well as increase its interaction with the ECOWAS Parliament.

In the spirit of greater collaboration with the UN, and taking advantage of IPA's location and close ties with the global body, it was proposed that some task force meetings be held in New York, so as to raise the awareness of key members of the UN community of the work, challenges, and accomplishments of the ECOWAS Mechanism and to strengthen collaboration between ECOWAS and the UN. Through these meetings in New York, both organizations could start to define a proper division of responsibility between them in the area of conflict management.

Finally, task force members suggested that representatives of other sub-regional organizations, the AU, and civil society actors from outside West Africa be included as members of the task force in order to draw comparative lessons from other sub-regions for improving ECOWAS' work, and to ensure the effective coordination of Africa's evolving sub-regional organizations, the AU, the UN, and African civil society actors.

1. Introduction

A task force meeting, organized jointly by the International Peace Academy (IPA) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS),¹ took place in Dakar, Senegal, on 12-13 August 2002. The meeting was a follow-up to the second of IPA's three policy seminars on security issues in West, Southern and Eastern Africa. Like the policy seminar on security issues in West Africa which took place in September 2001 in Abuja, Nigeria, the Dakar task force was organized in partnership with ECOWAS.² The meeting brought together about forty diplomats, parliamentarians, soldiers, academics, and civil society actors, drawn largely from West Africa, to develop recommendations on operationalizing and institutionalizing ECOWAS' Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security (referred to hereafter as the ECOWAS Mechanism).

The 2001 Abuja policy seminar and the 2002 Dakar task force meeting are part of IPA's three-year (July 2000 – June 2003) project on *Developing Regional and Sub-Regional Security Mechanisms*. The first seminar took place in Gaborone, Botswana, in December 2000 and assessed security issues in Southern Africa.³ This event was followed by a smaller task force meeting of independent experts who met in Johannesburg, South Africa, in March 2002 to make more specific recommendations on ways of improving the conflict management capacity of the Southern African Development Community (SADC).⁴ In December 2002, IPA held a seminar in Entebbe, Uganda, to focus on security issues in Eastern Africa.

The IPA/ECOWAS task force meeting in Dakar discussed ways through which the ECOWAS

Mechanism can be effectively operationalized. The meeting examined West Africa's conflict dynamics, with particular reference to Liberia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone; the role of civil society in enhancing the ECOWAS Mechanism; and the prospects for the recently-established United Nations Office in West Africa (UNOWA), located in Senegal, to collaborate with ECOWAS and civil society actors in the sub-region to promote democratization and development. The president of Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade, attended the IPA/ECOWAS task force meeting in his capacity as ECOWAS chairman and delivered an address on "ECOWAS, NEPAD, and Peacemaking in Africa." The presence of Mohammed Ibn Chambas, Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, and his senior officials throughout the task force meeting, afforded IPA a unique and direct opportunity to offer policymakers concrete recommendations for the management and resolution of conflicts in West Africa. In addition, five former force commanders of the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) were in attendance – Generals Arnold Quainoo, Rufus Kupolati, Victor Malu, Adetunji Olurin, and Timothy Shelpidi – and provided practical advice to meet the challenges of peacekeeping in West Africa.

1.1 Overview of ECOWAS' Evolving Security Role

ECOWAS was established in 1975 as an economic rather than a security organization. However, in the wake of the outbreak of the civil war in Liberia in December 1989, and the accompanying humanitarian tragedy, several ECOWAS leaders felt that drastic measures had to be taken to institutionalize collective security in West Africa and to avoid *ad hoc* responses to future conflicts. Accordingly, ECOWAS established a Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) in 1990. This

¹ ECOWAS is comprised of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. Mauritania withdrew from the organization in December 2000.

² See the report of the seminar by the International Peace Academy and ECOWAS, *Toward a Pax West Africana: Building Peace in a Troubled Sub-region*, September 2001, Abuja.

³ International Peace Academy in partnership with the African Renaissance Institute, the Southern African Regional Institute for Policy Studies, and the University of the Witwatersrand, *Southern Africa's Evolving Security Architecture: Problems and Prospects*, December 2000, Gaborone; and Christopher Landsberg and Mwesiga Baregu (eds.) *From Cape to Congo: Southern Africa's Evolving Security Challenges*, (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2003).

⁴ International Peace Academy, *Peacemaking in Southern Africa: The Role and Potential of the Southern African Development Community (SADC)*, March 2002, Johannesburg.

Committee in turn established ECOMOG, which undertook peacekeeping in Liberia and, subsequently, in the conflicts that arose in Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau.⁵ The interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone were controversial and initially did not enjoy universal support within ECOWAS. ECOMOG's experiences in these three cases however, prompted discussions within ECOWAS on the need to institutionalize a mechanism for managing future sub-regional conflicts. For over twelve years, in a bid to manage the conflicts within the Mano River Union (MRU) states of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, ECOWAS had to channel scarce resources and attention away from development programs into conflict management efforts, with the realization that it could not achieve its economic integration goals without sub-regional peace and stability. On 10 December 1999, the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, meeting in Lomé, Togo, adopted the *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security* (hereafter referred to as the *1999 Protocol*), as a way of building the organization's institutional capacity to manage sub-regional conflicts.⁶

Three years after its creation, the ECOWAS Mechanism remains very much a work-in-progress. Although ECOWAS is undertaking efforts to increase its conflict management staff, it still needs enormous support to operationalize its Mechanism and to deepen its institutionalization. The Mechanism must also involve civil society more in its work and closely define a role for itself in implementing the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).⁷ ECOWAS must work with the African Union (AU) and other sub-regional organizations like the Southern African Development Community, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the East African Community (EAC), and the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), to



Left to right, Dr. Adekeye Adebajo, Director, Africa Program, IPA, Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, ECOWAS Executive Secretary, His Excellency, President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal, and Ambassador John Hirsch, Senior Fellow, IPA

determine their complementary roles within Africa's evolving security architecture.

This report presents the discussions, concerns, and recommendations of the IPA/ECOWAS task force in efforts to operationalize and deepen the institutionalization of the ECOWAS Mechanism. Following a brief overview of ECOWAS' organizational role in peacekeeping and development, the report will address three main issues: first, an assessment of the fragile security environment in West Africa, with specific reference to Liberia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone; second, the obstacles to, and opportunities for, ECOWAS to play a peacekeeping and peacebuilding role in West Africa; and third, the factors that are likely to determine the successful operationalization and institutionalization of the ECOWAS Mechanism. The report concludes by offering several policy recommendations on ways of strengthening the ECOWAS Mechanism's political and military institutions.

⁵ Adekeye Adebajo, *Building Peace in West Africa: Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 2002). For other work on ECOMOG see, also: Festus Aboagye, *ECOMOG: A Sub-regional Experience in Conflict Resolution, Management, and Peacekeeping in Liberia* (Accra: Sedco, 1999); Funmi Olonisakin, *Reinventing Peacekeeping in Africa: Conceptual and Legal Issues in ECOMOG Operations* (The Hague and Boston: Kluwer Law International, 2000); and Margaret A. Vogt (ed.), *The Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG: A Bold Attempt at Regional Peacekeeping* (Lagos, Nigeria: Gabumo Pub, 1992).

⁶ Economic Community of West African States, *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security*, December 1999.

⁷ Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas "The Role of ECOWAS," paper presented at the joint IPA/ECOWAS Task Force meeting on Operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, Dakar, 12-13 August 2002.

2. The Security Environment in West Africa

Several sub-regional security initiatives have been undertaken in West Africa over the last two decades, none of which have been institutionalized. In 1978, ECOWAS adopted the Protocol on Non-Aggression, which bound its members to the peaceful resolution of disputes and called on them to refrain from supporting subversion or aggression on their territories. The Protocol on Non-Aggression was followed in 1981 by the ECOWAS Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defense (MAD), which urged ECOWAS member states to provide assistance to endangered members in cases of externally instigated or sponsored attacks. The Protocol also called for the creation of a regional security force, the Allied Armed Forces of the Community (AAFC). Neither of these protocols explicitly called for intervention by member states in each other's civil conflicts.

The ECOWAS security protocol of 1999 reflected a qualitative change in the approach that African leaders were taking to manage conflicts in the post-Cold War era. Unlike in the past, a growing number of African leaders seem determined to change the non-interventionist status quo of the Cold War era. This strategic change was reflected in the creation of an OAU security mechanism in 1993⁸, followed by the establishment of the ECOWAS Mechanism in 1999. Both mechanisms permit intervention in countries experiencing instability due to internal as well as external factors.⁹ The establishment of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence, and Security in 1996, IGAD's decision to play a conflict management role from 1996, and the recently-established African Union's efforts to establish a peace and security council, all reflect ambitions of developing institutions to manage conflicts and adopting criteria for intervening in the internal affairs of member states.

Underscoring the importance of regional security, Senegal's President Abdoulaye Wade, in his opening address to the IPA/ECOWAS task force, related ECOWAS' security initiatives to the work of NEPAD's Peace and Security Initiative, which, like Africa's regional organizations, aims to promote durable peace through developing regional and sub-regional early warning systems and strengthening the continent's conflict management institutions.¹⁰ Ibrahima Fall, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for the Great Lakes region and Senegal's former foreign minister, in his personal reflections on peacemaking in Africa, also cited several efforts by Africa's regional and sub-regional organizations and actors to manage conflicts in Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia/Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia, and the Comoros. Despite these peacemaking efforts, Fall noted that continued instability in parts of Africa, compounded by such complex issues as the proliferation of small arms and large refugee flows, are constant reminders of the limitations of such efforts. Among the obstacles to the effectiveness of security initiatives in Africa, the Senegalese scholar-diplomat cited the lack of financial resources, the denial or minimization of the effect of conflicts by regional leaders, the exclusion of important actors from peace negotiations, and the *ad hoc* nature of most conflict management initiatives. Fall referred to the wait-and-see attitude of many African leaders in situations of crisis and the lack of coordination among the AU, sub-regional organizations, the UN, and other external actors. Although there have been encouraging examples of cooperation between African organizations and external actors, such cooperation still remains very limited and haphazard.

The security situation in West Africa offers both cautious optimism and widespread concern. While there has been some commendable progress – the ending of Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war and the holding of successful elections in that country in May 2002, as

⁸ See Monde Muyangwa and Margaret A. Vogt, *An Assessment of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, 1993-2000* (New York: International Peace Academy, November 2000).

⁹ Economic Community of West African States, *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security*, December 1999, Article 25.

¹⁰ See the International Peace Academy report, "NEPAD: African Initiative, New Partnership?" 16 July 2002, New York.

well as in Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal – continuing instability in other parts of West Africa threatens this progress. The spillover effects of instability in Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, and Côte d'Ivoire could destabilize neighboring countries through the flow of refugees, rebels, and arms across borders. Of particular concern in this regard is the instability in Liberia. Many task force members noted that the key to bringing stability to the Mano River area, the epicenter of conflict in West Africa, lies in resolving the Liberian conflict. We next assess the security environment in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, and Guinea. Particular attention is paid to ECOWAS' potential conflict management role in each country.

2.1 Liberia

Many task force members argued that the instability in Liberia poses the greatest threat to peace in West Africa.¹¹ In particular, many participants expressed concerns about the spillover effect of refugee flows and the Liberian government's alleged support of rebels in Sierra Leone and Guinea. Concerns were also expressed about continued fighting between the government of Charles Taylor and the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), a rebel group said to consist of former members of the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO) faction, which has reportedly been supported by Guinea.¹² Many task force members also expressed doubts about the possibility of holding a credible election in Liberia in October 2003.

Relations between Liberia and its neighbors have been poor. Lofa county, on Liberia's northwest border, has served as an entry point for dissident factions between



Left to right, Professor Adebayo Adedeji, Executive Director, African Centre for Development and Strategic Studies, and Professor Ibrahima Fall, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region.

Liberia and Guinea. In April and August 1999, Liberian dissidents, reportedly based in Guinea, invaded towns in Lofa county.¹³ These events followed attacks by Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels, reportedly backed by Taylor, on refugee camps in Guinea hosting Sierra Leonean citizens in May 1999, destroying property and lives.¹⁴ In September 1999, Guinean rebels, allegedly backed by Taylor, attacked two Guinean villages on the border with Liberia. The attacks by LURD rebels have spread to other parts of Liberia and forced thousands of refugees to flee their homes. These attacks are believed to be part of the acrimonious personal relationship between Charles Taylor and Guinea's president, Lansana Conté. Some task force members expressed concerns that tensions between both countries and the war with the LURD could delay the holding of elections in Liberia in October 2003.

¹¹ The summary of the Liberian situation draws primarily from the presentation by Ms. Etweda Cooper on "Current developments in Liberia," paper presented at the joint IPA/ECOWAS task force meeting on "Operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security," Dakar, 12-13 August 2002.

¹² For a background on the LURD, see the report by Human Rights Watch, *Back to the Brink: War Crimes by Liberian Government and Rebels – A Call for Greater International Attention to Liberia and the Sub Region*, vol. 14, No.4 (A), May 2002 (available from <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/liberia/Liberia0402.pdf>).

¹³ Human Rights Watch, *Guinea. Refugees Still at Risk: Continuing Refugee Protection Concerns in Guinea*, vol. 13, No. 5 (A), July 2001, p. 7 (available from <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/guinea/guinea0701.pdf>).

¹⁴ For more information on these incidents, see the report by Human Rights Watch, *Refugees in Guinea Must Be Protected*, 31 May 1999 (available from <http://www.hrw.org/press/1999/may/guinea530.htm>).

The emergence of the LURD has led to the eruption of Liberia's second civil war in a decade. According to several task force members, one factor that contributed greatly to renewed hostilities was Taylor's failure to restructure his army and security forces at the end of the civil war in 1997. Rather than creating an ethnically balanced army, Taylor was accused of staffing the army and security forces with members of his former faction, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). Concerns were also expressed by a task force member about increasing incidents of attacks on Mandingos in Liberia as a result of the reported presence of many members of this ethnic group among the ranks of LURD rebels. Responding to political instability in Liberia, the eighth ministerial meeting of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council in Dakar imposed a travel ban on LURD officials in March 2002.¹⁵ This followed the imposition of a travel ban and a ban on diamond exports and arms imports on the Liberian government by the UN Security Council in May 2001 in response to what was described as Taylor's assistance to the RUF. A task force member noted that the Liberian government has been very effective in blaming the suffering from sanctions on the international community rather than on any domestic failings of the government.

In March 2002, the Liberian government and LURD rebels agreed to work toward a cease-fire, a guarantee of security for all Liberians, the establishment of the "rule of law," and the holding of free and fair elections in 2003.¹⁶ Subsequently, the "Liberian Leadership Forum" (consisting of opposition politicians and civil society leaders) and the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia called for an immediate cease-fire and disarmament. In July 2002, ECOWAS organized a meeting between LURD rebels and the Liberian government in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

Although ECOWAS has taken concrete steps to address instability in Liberia, the IPA/ECOWAS task force urged

the international community in general, and ECOWAS in particular, to bring additional pressure on both the Liberian and Guinean presidents to reach agreement in ending military support for armed factions from each other's country. Some task force members accused ECOWAS of timidity and of suffering from peacekeeping fatigue. Many task force members also expressed uncertainty about the possibility of holding credible elections in Liberia in 2003. Some Liberians have argued that the 2003 elections could act as a catalyst for transforming Liberia's politics, opening up political space, and putting Liberia back on the path to democracy and development. Indeed, some suggested that one factor constraining LURD's bid to gain popular support for its armed struggle is civil society which, following a decade of war, has developed a consensus that political change must now occur through the ballot box and not through the bullet. Several task force members urged ECOWAS to begin to play a more pro-active role in Liberia by ensuring adequate security, assisting with voter registration, and providing election observers. In contrast, others questioned if elections should take place at all, noting that holding elections in Liberia under present circumstances would only legitimize what they described as Taylor's human rights abuses and political censorship. They also noted that continued instability in a third of the country would make holding elections in these areas very difficult. Several members argued that ECOWAS must develop a close partnership with civil society actors in Liberia who can provide early warnings of impending instability and build popular support for ECOWAS' peacemaking efforts. The Inter-Religious Council of Liberia continues to play an active role in negotiations to end Liberia's civil war.

2.2 Sierra Leone

The year 2002 was a potential turning point in Sierra Leone's history,¹⁷ marking the end of a brutal, decade-

¹⁵ Economic Community of West African States, *Press Release*, No. 13/2002, Dakar, 29 March 2002; (available from <http://www.ecowas.int/sitecedeo/english/pub-4-13-2002.htm>). The Mediation and Security Council is charged with responding to political insecurity in the sub-region (Economic Community of West African States, *Protocol on the Mechanism*, Article 10).

¹⁶ "Liberian Meeting Proposes Conditions for Durable Reconciliation," Economic Community of West African States, *Press Release* No.8/2002, 18 March 2002 (available from: <http://www.sec.ecowas.int/sitecedeo/english/pub-4-8-2002.htm>).

¹⁷ The summary in this section relies on the presentation by Ismail Rashid "Current developments in Sierra Leone," paper presented at the joint IPA/ECOWAS Task Force meeting on Operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution Peacekeeping and Security, Dakar, 12-13 August 2002.

long civil war which has resulted in 70,000 deaths, the displacement of 2.5 million people, and the maiming of 10,000 Sierra Leoneans.¹⁸ Three key events stand out: the formal end of the war and the completion of the disarmament and demobilization of 55,000 ex-combatants by January 2002;¹⁹ the lifting of the state of emergency on 1 March 2002;²⁰ and the successful staging of legislative and presidential elections in May 2002. In post-conflict Sierra Leone, the government must focus on security sector reform as well as the efforts of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the Special Court to engender national reconciliation and ensure an end to criminal impunity. Concerns also remain about an economy which is based largely on income generated by the presence of the UN.

The 2002 elections returned the incumbent, President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah and his Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) to power with 70 percent of the vote. Moreover, the elections showed, according to one task force member, that the RUF, with fewer than 2 percent of the vote, had no popular political base and was essentially a brutal and opportunistic armed movement in search of political power.²¹ The electoral outcome served as an important step in the re-legitimization of government structures and provided a crucial opportunity for reconstituting shattered state structures across the country. At the same time, the 2002 election also exposed the potential disloyalty of the newly-trained Sierra Leone army, a majority of whose members

reportedly voted for the coup-making ex-Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) leader, Major Johnny Paul Koroma, who won a parliamentary seat.

Sierra Leone now faces the challenge of restructuring its armed forces, civilian defense, and police. Not only does the country lack resources for training, infrastructure rehabilitation, revitalizing civil society, and the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, but the continuing logistical and financial deficiencies of the police and military could present challenges to future stability. Thus, security sector reform must be prioritized in Sierra Leone before the UN reduces its peacekeepers from 16,000 to the proposed 5,000 by late 2004.

The second major challenge for post-war Sierra Leone – reconciliation and punishment – will depend on the success of the Special Court and the TRC. However, the different mandates of both bodies may have contradictory and destabilizing effects. The Special Court has been relatively well supported and funded by the international community. Financed solely through voluntary contributions, the Special Court had received pledges of \$14.8 million out of a requested \$40 million by January 2002.²² In stark contrast, out of the \$7 million the TRC requested, only \$1 million had been received by September 2002.²³ The TRC and the Special Court also differ in scope. The TRC has a one-year mandate and plans to interview thousands of witnesses. The Special Court, on the other hand, will

¹⁸ Mark Malan, Phenyo Rakate and Angela McIntyre, *Peacekeeping in Sierra Leone*, Institute for Security Studies Monograph, no. 68, January 2002, p.13.

¹⁹ UN Security Council, "Thirteenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone," (S/2002/267), 14 March 2002, paragraph 20 (available from <http://ods-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N02/285/18/IMG/N0228518.pdf?OpenElement>).

²⁰ *Ibid*, paragraph 28.

²¹ Election results are available from UN Security Council, "Fourteenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone," (S/2002/679), 19 June 2002, paragraph 3 (available from <http://ods-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N02/427/79/PDF/N0242779.pdf?OpenElement>).

²² "UN authorizes Sierra Leone war crimes court despite funding shortfall," *Agence France-Presse* 3 January 2002; available from <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/9ca65951ee22658ec125663300408599/dbec8d9dc5769e49c1256b36005a1000?OpenDocument>). The reliance on voluntary contributions differs significantly from the International Criminal Tribunal in the former Yugoslavia, where UN member states were assessed a levy to pay for the operation of the court. Equally important, the original estimate of the cost for the Special Court was \$114 million [see the report by Amnesty International, "Establishing a Special Court in Sierra Leone," (available from http://web.amnesty.org/web/web.nsf/pages/sierra_leone)].

²³ UN Security Council, "Fifteenth Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone," (S/2002/987), 5 September 2002, paragraph 44 (available from <http://ods-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N02/572/31/IMG/N0257231.pdf?OpenElement>).

focus on targeting between thirty and fifty people for trial over a three-year period. The Court aims to investigate all the factions in Sierra Leone's civil war including the RUF, the AFRC, *Kamajor* civil defense forces, as well as ECOMOG personnel. However, given the political positions held by members of former armed factions, there are fears that the trials of the Special Court might result in increased instability. Many Sierra Leoneans also believe that launching the TRC and the Special Court so soon after national elections could be destabilizing.

2.3 Guinea

According to one task force member, since Guinea declared independence from France in 1958, the governments of Ahmed Sékou Touré and General Lansana Conté²⁴ have been notorious for their political repression and mismanagement of the country's economy.²⁵ He noted that despite an abundance of natural resources such as bauxite, gold, diamonds and iron ore, Guinea remains one of the poorest countries in the world. According to this civil society activist, every election since Guinea's first poll in 1998 has been characterized by apathy, electoral manipulation, fraud, and the lack of a credible opposition. Guinea is also facing high unemployment partly as a result of a series of privatization schemes and a high crime rate. Furthermore, corruption, nepotism, ethnic bias, and political interference, are said to plague the country's legislative and judicial systems. According to this task force member, the absence of political checks and balances was typified by the Conté government's holding of a referendum in 2001 which extended the presidential term from five to seven years, scrapped the limit of two five-year terms, and eliminated the presidential age limit of 70.

Guinea has suffered from the spillover effects of the civil war in neighboring Liberia and Sierra Leone. At first, Guinea welcomed about 500,000 refugees from both

countries. Gradually, however, the government began to complain that rebels were infiltrating refugee camps on its territory and fomenting dissent. According to one task force member, the Guinean government increasingly maltreated refugees following a deterioration of relations between Guinea and Liberia in September 2001.

Civil society organizations have an important role to play in addressing the deteriorating political situation in Guinea. Under these difficult circumstances, ECOWAS' early warning observatories cannot operate effectively. It is imperative that ECOWAS and the international community support the development of Guinea's civil society organizations. With the exception of the Mano River Union Women Peace Network, civil society in Guinea is still nascent and, consequently, very underdeveloped. According to one task force member, many civil society actors tend to be perceived by the government as a hostile opposition force. Guinean civil society actors also complain that the government refuses to engage in dialogue with them as well as with opposition groups.

2.4 Guinea-Bissau

Civil war erupted in Guinea Bissau in June 1998 when General Ansumane Mané staged an attempted *coup d'état* after president João Bernardo Vieira ordered his arrest for allegedly providing arms to Casamance separatists in southern Senegal.²⁶ An investigation later cleared Mané of these charges. Mané's popularity within the army resulted in the defection of most of the army to his side, and he soon controlled three quarters of the country. To quell instability in Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Guinea intervened with about 2,400 troops in support of President Vieira. The signing of the Abuja accord on 2 November 1998 paved the way for a government of national unity in December 1998 and the arrival of 712 ECOMOG peacekeepers by March 1999. In addition, the United Nations created the

²⁴ President Lansana Conté seized power in Guinea in 1984 through a coup.

²⁵ This summary of the political situation in Guinea relies primarily on the presentation by Thierno Madjou Sow, "Current Developments in Guinea," paper presented at the joint IPA/ECOWAS task force meeting on Operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security, Dakar, 12-13 August 2002.

²⁶ Paper presented by Adekeye Adebajo, "Current Developments in Guinea-Bissau," at the joint IPA/ECOWAS task force meeting on Operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security, Dakar, 12-13 August 2002.

Peacebuilding Support Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS) in March 1999 and established a Trust Fund for Guinea-Bissau. Presidential elections in November 1999 brought Kumba Yala to power. However, fighting broke out in November 2000 between military supporters of President Yala and those of General Mané, after Mané declared himself the head of the armed forces and revoked military promotions that Yala had made. General Mané was subsequently killed.²⁷

Guinea-Bissau remains unstable three years after its eleven-month civil war between 1998 and 1999. Serious fighting has ended, but the disproportionate role of Balanta indigenes - who comprise about 30 percent of the population - in the country's military and political leadership has increased political instability. Furthermore, while tensions have been reduced between Guinea-Bissau and Senegal over the alleged support by elements of Guinea-Bissau's army of Senegalese rebels of the *Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance*, President Yala accused Gambia of supporting Bissau Guinean insurgent movements in June 2002.²⁸ Yala publicly stated that he would crush Gambia because of its alleged support of these insurgents. ECOWAS and the UN sent special envoys to calm tensions between both countries.

To date, UNOGBIS has sought to play a supporting role in the consolidation of democracy and mobilizing resources for reconstruction. But the UN's difficulties in Guinea-Bissau underscore the need for effective cooperation between the organization and ECOWAS. UNOGBIS has faced four main obstacles: ineffective coordination, political instability, lack of substantial donor funds for post-conflict peacebuilding, and a limited mandate and staff.²⁹ Guinea-Bissau provides a good opportunity for ECOWAS to use its Mechanism to overcome some of these shortcomings. Notably,

ECOWAS' Mediation and Security Council and members of its Council of Elders could begin to mediate between domestic political factions, as well as defuse tensions between Bissau and Banjul. In addition, the ECOWAS early warning observatories could gather information from Bissau Guinean civil society actors, who have played an important role in promoting peace and human rights in an attempt to stave off another civil conflict.

As the domestic governance and security situation in Guinea-Bissau has worsened, most of the external assistance pledged to the country at a donor conference in Geneva in 1999 has not been delivered. Furthermore, in June 2001, a parliamentary commission of inquiry started investigating the disappearance of \$17 million of World Bank funds from the national treasury. With government revenue of about \$300,000 a month, Guinea-Bissau will continue to depend heavily on donor funds to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate its 28,000 ex-combatants. A UNDP donor conference for Guinea-Bissau remains contingent on donors developing more confidence in the country's political stability and financial accountability.³⁰

Civil society groups in Guinea-Bissau have emerged as key actors in consolidating peace in the country and promoting human rights. The League of Human Rights (LHR) brought together 300 civil society representatives in August 1999 to pressure the government to account for war crimes, de-militarize politics, release political prisoners, and protect child soldiers from retaliation from local communities. The religious community, and particularly José Camnate, the archbishop of Bissau, has also played an important role in mediating disputes between political parties, as well as between politicians and soldiers.

²⁷ This summary of the civil war in Guinea-Bissau draws from Adekeye Adebajo, *Building Peace in West Africa: Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau*, pp.111-136.

²⁸ UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in that country," (S/2002/1367), paragraph 10, 13 December 2002, (available from <http://ods-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N02/726/81/PDF/N0272681.pdf?OpenElement>).

²⁹ For a background on UNOGBIS see, United Nations, "United Nations and Guinea-Bissau," (<http://www.un.org/peace/africa/pfd/GuineaBissau.pdf>).

³⁰ UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the activities of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in that country," (S/2002/312), 26 March 2002, paragraphs 18, 32, (available from <http://ods-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N02/300/07/PDF/N0230007.pdf?OpenElement>).

3. The ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security

As the four cases of Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau demonstrate, the ECOWAS security mechanism has not been as engaged in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, and Sierra Leone as it has been in Liberia. These three countries present ECOWAS with an opportunity to be pro-active and to begin to employ its Mechanism more effectively in managing conflicts. Yet, a weak infrastructure – which hinders its operationalization – and insufficient involvement of key actors – which limits its institutionalization – continue to hamper the ECOWAS Mechanism's ability to intervene quickly and decisively in sub-regional disputes.

A major goal of the IPA/ECOWAS task force meeting was to assess how ECOWAS, through its Mechanism, can become effective in developing an institutional conflict management framework. The operationalization of the ECOWAS Mechanism will involve securing enough trained personnel and establishing logistical support structures, like the early warning observatories known as ECOWATCH. The institutionalization of the Mechanism will involve developing the capacity of its three main decision-making bodies: the Mediation and Security Council, the Defence and Security Commission, and the Council of Elders. Additionally, West African civil society actors, the UN, and other external actors must help reinforce the institutionalization of the ECOWAS Mechanism. The task force

meeting learned that while some progress has been made in operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism, much more remains to be done to institutionalize it.

3.1 The ECOWAS Mechanism: A Background

After two decades of limited success in promoting economic integration in West Africa and with conflicts erupting in Liberia and Sierra Leone, ECOWAS undertook a revision of its treaty in 1993.³¹ ECOWAS leaders approved an amendment that allowed member states to intervene in each other's countries in the event of a military takeover, a humanitarian disaster, or any other situation that threatened sub-regional security.³² ECOWAS' formal commitment to address security issues built on the 1978 Protocol on Non-Aggression, the 1981 Protocol on Mutual Assistance on Defence, and the *ad hoc* creation of ECOMOG by the five-member ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee in 1990.³³

The 1999 *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security* elaborated more clearly the criteria and objectives of ECOWAS' interventions into states experiencing civil conflicts in West Africa. The ECOWAS Mechanism has three key organs: the Mediation and Security Council, the Defence and Security Commission, and the Council of Elders.³⁴ The Mediation and Security Council is responsible for implementing the provisions of the Mechanism through the Defence and Security Commission, the Council of Elders, and ECOMOG.³⁵ Peacekeeping missions by ECOMOG are planned by the Defence and Security Commission, while the Council of Elders is used primarily for conflict mediation and electoral monitoring.³⁶

³¹ Economic Community of West African States, *Treaty Establishing the Economic Community of West African States*, 24 July 1993, Preamble.

³² *Ibid.* Article 58.

³³ Economic Community of West African States, "Regional Peace and Security" (available from <http://www.ecowas.int/sitecedea0/english/peace.htm>).

³⁴ Economic Community of West African States, *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism*, Article 4.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Articles 7, 17.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Articles 17, 19, 20.

To ensure adequate preparedness for action, ECOWAS member states agreed to the creation of stand-by units that would be ready for quick deployment to quell sub-regional crises.³⁷ The tasks of the stand-by units include military as well as observation missions in which ECOMOG will "supervise and monitor cease-fires, disarmament, demobilisation, elections, respect for human rights, [and] humanitarian activities" among other tasks.³⁸ Five conditions could trigger intervention by ECOWAS in a member state: first, incidents of external aggression; second, conflict between two or more member states; third, internal conflict that may lead to a humanitarian disaster or seriously threaten regional peace and security; fourth, incidents of serious violations of human rights and the rule of law; and fifth, removal or attempts to remove a democratically elected government. The Mediation and Security Council also reserves the right to apply the Mechanism, as it sees fit, to other situations not specified in the Protocol.³⁹

The ECOWAS Mechanism attempts to forestall crises through the creation of ECOWATCH, an early warning system. ECOWATCH aims to provide information to



Left to right, former ECOMOG Commanders, General Adetunji Olurin, General Arnold Quainoo, General Timothy Shelpidi, General Victor Malu, and General Rufus Kupolati

the ECOWAS secretariat in Abuja, Nigeria, on issues of governance, democratization, and economics.⁴⁰ To this end, ECOWAS has established four ECOWATCH centers in Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia and Liberia to gather and analyze political and economic conflict indicators.⁴¹

³⁷ Ibid, Article 30.

³⁸ Ibid, Articles 30-31.

³⁹ Ibid, Article 25.

⁴⁰ Economic Community of West African States, "About ECOWATCH," (available from <http://www.ecowas.int/ecowatch/about.htm>).

⁴¹ Economic Community of West African States, *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism*, Article 24.

4. The Operationalization of the ECOWAS Mechanism

According to several task force members, the weak operationalization of the ECOWAS Mechanism not only betrays the lack of political will among sub-regional heads of state and the limited involvement of civil society actors in its work, but also reveals the need for more creative financing, better training facilities, and more effective early warning observatories.

4.1 Financing the ECOWAS Mechanism

Financing a peacekeeping force remains prohibitive for most African states. While different schemes have been proposed to raise money within West Africa, external funding remains essential to effective sub-regional peacekeeping. The ECOWAS Mechanism has mandated a community levy to fund its conflict management activities.⁴² Yet, given the failure so far to implement the levy, as well as its limited amount – \$60 million – ECOWAS has been urged to explore other means for sustaining its peacekeeping activities. Rather than a community levy, task force members suggested that funds be collected through a reserve fund that would be available to the ECOWAS Executive Secretary for use in future peacekeeping operations. With the establishment of such a mechanism, when the need for a peacekeeping force arises, its implementation would not be delayed by a lack of funds. Another suggestion was that ECOWAS design quick impact projects in order to “win the hearts and minds” of local communities by providing humanitarian relief to war-weary populations. The UN should also be given primary responsibility for peacekeeping operations, as occurred in Sierra Leone. Hence, ECOWAS and the UN would complement each other’s efforts.

Until ECOWAS can generate its own resources, leveraging funds from the donor community will

remain essential in defraying the costs of peacekeeping missions in West Africa. Task force members noted that ECOWAS could benefit from the UN’s Stand-by High Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG), as well as from the US-sponsored Africa Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA) (formerly known as the Africa Crisis Response Initiative [ACRI]) and the French program, *Reinforcements des Capacités Africaines pour le Maintien de la Paix* (RECAMP).

SHIRBRIG provides an opportunity for African countries to share resources for peacekeeping. Conceived in 1996 to serve as a stand-by UN peacekeeping force, SHIRBRIG aims to reduce the time that it takes to deploy peacekeepers to a conflict zone. As a temporary force, SHIRBRIG remains in a conflict zone for a maximum of six months, after which time either a standard UN peacekeeping force replaces it or its mission ends.⁴³ The force had its first experience during the deployment of the UN force to Ethiopia/Eritrea in 2000. Thus, the SHIRBRIG model would offer the possibility of sharing the cost of peacekeeping with other states, as well as allowing ECOWAS and the UN sufficient time to deploy peacekeepers to conflict zones. Such collaboration between the UN and regional organizations is enshrined in Chapter 8 of the UN Charter, which explicitly allows for sub-regional organizations to undertake conflict management activities under the guidance of the UN Security Council.⁴⁴

ACOTA and RECAMP could also serve as cost-saving measures for African militaries. However, these programs have been widely criticized for being grossly under-funded and for emphasizing training rather than the more vital logistics and funding of African forces. At a cost of approximately \$20 million annually, ACRI aimed to train 12,000 African troops in peacekeeping techniques. Between 1997 and 2000, ACRI trained troops from Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Malawi, Mali, Senegal, and Uganda.⁴⁵ RECAMP provides similar

⁴² Economic Community of West African States, *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism*, Article 36.

⁴³ For a summary of the SHIRBRIG system, see *Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Operation, Funding, Administration and Status of the Multinational United Nations Stand-by Forces High Readiness Brigade*, 26 February 1998 (available from <http://www.shirbrig.dk>) and “Standard Briefing” (available from <http://www.shirbrig.dk>).

⁴⁴ United Nations, Charter of the United Nations, Chapter 8 [Regional Arrangements].

⁴⁵ US Department of State, *Summary of the African Crisis Response Initiative* (available from <http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/af/acri/acrisumm.htm>).

training to African militaries. In addition, the French government provided some of the resources for Côte d'Ivoire's Peacekeeping School in Zambakro.⁴⁶ While helpful, the collaboration between African armies, ACRI, and RECAMP was criticized as inadequate and poorly coordinated.

4.2 Training Personnel: Peacekeeping Schools

The level of training of ECOMOG peacekeepers could determine whether future missions succeed or fail. ECOWAS has designated three countries - Ghana, Nigeria, and Côte d'Ivoire - to specialize in the training of its peacekeepers.⁴⁷ Each country has a different specialization: the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center in Ghana concentrates on operational issues; the National War College in Nigeria offers training to officers on strategic issues; while the Zambakro Peacekeeping School in Côte d'Ivoire focuses on tactical issues. A task force member noted that despite the existence of these three training centers, they are unlikely to be able to meet the needs of ECOWAS peacekeepers due to a lack of adequate funding, personnel, and expertise. Besides inadequate training facilities, West African-sponsored peacekeeping missions also suffer from logistical shortcomings. At present, communication as well as command and control systems are not well coordinated. Several task force members stressed the need for an equitable distribution of command posts during future ECOMOG missions to avoid the Nigerian domination of the ECOMOG high command in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Additionally, the peacekeeping equipment of West African armies remains poor and often incompatible.

In light of these limitations, a suggestion was made for countries other than Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria, to participate in the training of African peacekeepers. For example, some task force members urged ECOMOG to explore the possibility of

benefiting from training by Nordic countries or even partnering with Nordic states or the UN on peacekeeping missions. However, not all participants agreed on the need for specialized training. Task force members disagreed on the amount of training a peacekeeping force needs, stressing that finance and logistics are the real issues, rather than training. Some members questioned whether peacekeeping and peace enforcement differed sufficiently from each other to warrant specialized training in both areas. Whereas some participants contended that the difference between keeping and enforcing peace required different training methods, others argued that there was no significant difference between the two tasks and that training programs therefore need not separate the two functions. One task force member also suggested that ECOWAS' peacekeeping doctrine be consistent with that of the UN.

4.3 The Early Warning Observatories

ECOWAS has already established early warning observatories, known collectively as ECOWATCH, in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), Banjul (Gambia), Monrovia (Liberia), and Cotonou (Benin).⁴⁸ The task of ECOWATCH will be, among other things, to gather statistics on the economic performance of states in conflict, compile information on the region's governance and democratization efforts, forecast crises, and provide logistical information in the event of humanitarian emergencies.⁴⁹ While all four of ECOWAS' early warning observatories are operational on paper, in reality, ECOWATCH still suffers from a lack of staff due to budgetary shortfalls at the ECOWAS secretariat. Furthermore, some task force members expressed concerns about the level of training of ECOWAS staff. A lack of publicity of its work and failure to coordinate closely with the work of the early warning systems of the AU and IGAD were also seen as potential obstacles to the effective functioning of ECOWATCH.

⁴⁶ Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations, "France and Peacekeeping" (available from http://www.un.int/france/frame_anglais/france_and_un/france_and_peacekeeping/individualpktraining_eng.htm).

⁴⁷ Economic Community of West African States, *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism*, Article 30.

⁴⁸ Economic Community of West African States, *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism*, Chapter 4.

⁴⁹ Economic Community of West African States, "About ECOWATCH," (available from <http://www.ecowas.int/ecowatch/about.htm>).

5. The Institutionalization of the ECOWAS Mechanism

Multilateral processes become institutionalized when potential stakeholders begin to have vested interests in supporting them. Once these actors buy into ideas and implement decisions, the rules of these processes begin to take shape and actions are taken in a less *ad hoc* manner.⁵⁰ The task force meeting in Dakar revealed that while some key actors within and outside of West Africa have begun to work more closely with ECOWAS in the security field, much work remains to be done to institutionalize the Mechanism. Stronger partnerships with civil society groups and external actors could strengthen the institutionalization of the ECOWAS Mechanism and ensure that decisions and their implementation take place in a more predictable manner.

ECOWAS' problems are mirrored in other sub-regional organizations in Africa. First, its member states have shown a great reluctance to intervene in politically sensitive situations. Second, they have ignored signs of trouble, instead adopting a wait-and-see attitude that avoids confrontation with sitting governments. However, ECOWAS differs in significant ways from other sub-regional organizations in Africa. Unlike other similar organizations, ECOWAS' actions have been more results-oriented. The organization has established a functioning but still evolving security mechanism and consults with the UN in managing sub-regional conflicts, as evidenced by the cases of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau. Additionally, ECOWAS is the only sub-regional organization in Africa with an established system of early warning centers, though IGAD is also developing its own system. The UN Office in West Africa (UNOWA) was the first to be established that adopts an explicit sub-regional approach to managing conflicts.

Still, as one participant noted, only three states out of ECOWAS' fifteen members have ratified the 1999

Security Protocol. This reflects the frequency with which promises have been made at ECOWAS summits by heads of states, only to remain unimplemented once they return home. This failure to implement decisions will make operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism more difficult. Equally damaging, these actions could signal to the rest of the international community that ECOWAS leaders do not have the political will to manage the sub-region's conflicts.

5.1 Partners in Peacemaking: The Council of Elders and Presidential Mediators

The ECOWAS Mechanism has not yet effectively employed its Council of Elders to prevent and manage conflicts in West Africa. According to the 1999 Protocol, the Council of Elders consists of eminent persons from various political, traditional, and religious spheres who will act as "mediators, conciliators and facilitators."⁵¹ While the Council of Elders held an inaugural meeting in 2001 in Niamey, Niger, to determine methods that could be used by the ECOWAS Executive Secretary for mediation, to date, the Council has not been called upon to mediate disputes, despite the continued existence of politically unstable situations in Liberia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal's Casamance region, which could benefit from such mediation. The strength of the Council of Elders lies in its reliance on the power of personal relationships to bring fighting parties to negotiate a peaceful end to conflicts. Recent accomplishments by individual African leaders include Algeria's Abdelaziz Bouteflika's peacemaking role in Ethiopia/Eritrea; South Africa's Thabo Mbeki's role in facilitating the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo's involvement in reducing tensions between Gambia and Guinea. Senegal's Abdoulaye Wade's involvement has been particularly notable in recent peacemaking efforts in Gabon, Madagascar, Côte d'Ivoire, and Niger, as well as in the past, between Senegal and Mauritania. Togo's Gnassingbé Eyadéma spearheaded peacemaking

⁵⁰ For more on institutions, see Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970); and Douglas C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

⁵¹ Economic Community of West African States, *Protocol Relating to the Mechanism*, Article 20.

efforts in Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, and Côte d'Ivoire.

5.2 Partners in Peacebuilding: ECOWAS, The UN, and Civil Society

The United Nations

Under its Mechanism, ECOWAS aims to promote cooperation in military and security matters among its members.⁵² Collaboration with the UN could take many forms. Three suggestions from the IPA/ECOWAS task force for better collaboration included: harnessing the efforts of the ECOWAS Mechanism with those of the UN; increasing the effectiveness of the UN's West Africa office in Dakar; and collaborating with the UN in curtailing the spread of small arms and light weapons in West Africa.

ECOWAS and the UN must work out a proper division of labor in the areas of peacemaking and peacekeeping. Through such burden-sharing, the ECOWAS Mechanism could attain the three goals of enhanced legitimacy, greater financial support, and avoiding intervention fatigue. Nigeria's disproportionate burden in staffing and funding peacekeeping efforts in Liberia and Sierra Leone in the last decade is driving some of these concerns and proposals.⁵³ As a result of these experiences, securing an ECOMOG force to re-intervene in Liberia's new crisis might prove difficult, since a democratically-elected government in Nigeria is unlikely to receive the domestic support to intervene in Liberia. To avoid similar outcomes in the future, it was suggested that a proper division of labor be established in which Nigeria shoulders less of the financial burden and reduces its disproportionate influence in political and military decision-making.

In 2002, the UN sought to establish a stronger and more permanent presence in the sub-region through the creation of a West Africa office in Dakar. This reflects the UN's adoption of a more regional approach

to conflict management. More concretely, it reflects the realization that conflicts in West Africa have negative spillover effects on other countries in the sub-region as a result of shared borders, regional rivalries, and weak economies. As one task force member noted, refugees in one country often cause domestic instability in neighboring countries as they move across borders. This occurred in both Sierra Leone and Guinea following the entry of Liberian refugees. Consequently, conflicts expand and increase in complexity, since one country's instability cannot be stemmed in isolation from its neighbors' problems. For example, continued instability in Liberia and Guinea could threaten the new-found peace in Sierra Leone.

The presence of UNOWA underscores the need for closer consultation between ECOWAS and the UN. ECOWATCH will be only as effective as the information it receives and the ability of regional and international entities to act on such information. An early opportunity to prevent violence could be Nigeria's upcoming elections in April 2003. Task force members urged ECOWAS and the UN to take concrete steps to prevent instability in Nigeria. Similarly, the two organizations, acting in concert, can more effectively address tensions between Guinea-Bissau and Gambia and mobilize funds for the post-war reconstruction of Guinea-Bissau. Many task force members noted that UNOWA in Dakar could support the mediation efforts of ECOWAS' Council of Elders and help to integrate the sub-region's civil society actors more effectively into conflict management processes.

Tackling the spread of small arms and light weapons in West Africa could also be facilitated by UNOWA. The current ECOWAS moratorium on the spread of these weapons has so far been ineffective in halting the illicit arms trade in West Africa. The ECOWAS moratorium, agreed in 1998, has not outlined policies against the suppliers of these weapons who are based largely in Eastern Europe and the West.⁵⁴ Imposing an arms embargo on all the countries of the Mano River Union

⁵² Ibid. Chapter 10.

⁵³ Nigeria bore at least 80 percent of the financial cost and contributed over 70 percent of the troops for the two ECOMOG missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

⁵⁴ UN General Assembly and Security Council, "Letter dated 17 December 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Togo to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General" (A/53/763-S/1998/1194), 18 December 1998, Annex (available from <http://www>).



Participants at the IPA/ECOWAS task force meeting on "Operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping, and Security" August 2002, Dakar, Senegal

– Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone – could help defuse the present insecurity in the area. In proposing a resolution for the crisis in Guinea-Bissau and Senegal's Casamance region, particular attention was drawn to the UN Secretary-General's April 1998 report, which recommended that African countries should expose the names of weapons dealers and complicit states.⁵⁵ ECOWAS was urged to use this approach and to work more closely with the UN's disarmament offices in Lomé (Togo) and Bamako (Mali).

Cooperation with the UN could also improve post-conflict peacebuilding efforts in West Africa, though ECOWAS member states were urged to avoid some past mistakes. The model used by the UN in the 1990s of establishing disarmament centers and cooperating with ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone, offers some lessons for the future. Several former ECOMOG force commanders who served as members of the

IPA/ECOWAS task force, recalled their warnings that incomplete demobilization and the direct conversion of Charles Taylor's NPFL faction into the national army would only incite further instability. Yet, these warnings went unheeded. The same mistakes must not be repeated in Sierra Leone, where security sector reform remains incomplete. Task force members also noted that sub-regional leaders should not wait for a conflict to arise before addressing security sector reform. Rather, they should assist member states in addressing issues of security sector reform even in times of peace.

Task force members disagreed on the role of the ECOWAS Mechanism in post-conflict peacebuilding. While some argued that ECOWAS should take the lead in post-war reconstruction efforts, others argued that ECOWAS lacked the resources and experience to undertake these tasks. Skeptics urged that ECOWAS should focus on peacekeeping and electoral monitoring and leave more expensive peacebuilding tasks largely to the UN and other international actors with more experience and resources. Others argued that the ECOWAS Mechanism cannot just be limited to peacekeeping activities. They noted that in Liberia, actors such as customs officials and an engineering corps also contributed to peacebuilding efforts.

Several task force members noted the economic stagnation of West Africa since the 1960s and cited economic decline as a root cause of sub-regional conflicts. Given the link between economic security and peace, several task force members emphasized that NEPAD must be a critical component of peacebuilding efforts in West Africa.⁵⁶ As Africa's proposed working document for development, greater efforts should be made to coordinate ECOWAS' activities with those of NEPAD. Among NEPAD's goals,

un.org/Depts/dda/CAB/let763.pdf). See also, Comfort Ero and Angela Ndinga-Muvumba, "Small Arms and Light Weapons in West Africa: Constraints and Options," paper presented at the IPA/ECOWAS seminar, Abuja, September 2001.

⁵⁵ UN General Assembly and Security Council, *The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa* (A/52/871-S/1998/318), 13 April 1998, paragraph 28 (available from <http://daccess-ods.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N98/102/17/PDF/N9810217.pdf?OpenElement>).

⁵⁶ For additional information on the positive link between economic security and peace, see Caroline A. Hartzell, Mathew Hoddie, and Donald Rothchild, "Stabilizing the Peace After Civil War: An Investigation of Some Key Variables," *International Organization*, vol.55 no.1, Winter 2001, pp. 183-208; and David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, "Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict," *International Security* vol. 21 no.2, Fall 1996, pp. 41-75.

Senegal's president, Abdoulaye Wade, highlighted three key priorities during the task force meeting: first, "good governance," which entails fair political representation, democratic changes in leadership, upholding the "rule of law," the separation of powers, and the independence of the judiciary; second, strengthening the private sector by offering *African* investors a stake in key public industries; and third, the adoption of a regional approach to economic integration in order to reap the full benefits of the efficiencies of economies of scale.

Civil Society

One task force member noted that because African conflicts have often challenged the legitimacy of the state, efforts to resolve such conflicts must secure a larger base of legitimacy by going beyond state actors to include civil society representatives. While participants generally agreed that governments must engage West Africa's civil society organizations and actors, it remained unclear the extent to which these groups could contribute effectively to sub-regional conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts. These concerns stemmed from the nature and history of civil society organizations in Africa. Generally, civil society in Africa is young, fragmented, and diverse. Furthermore,

because of the heavy dependence on the state in post-colonial Africa, at times, civil society has found itself dependent on governments for its existence. The relative fragility of civil society organizations in Africa have often made them dependent on external non-governmental organizations and governments for their financial viability. Under these conditions, civil society organizations face a credibility problem: it becomes difficult for the state and the rest of society to assess the degree of commitment of civil society actors to a particular cause and to disentangle the agenda of external donors from their own. As a result, civil society organizations run the risk of being dismissed by their critics as agents of foreign governments and NGOs.⁵⁷

ECOWAS has accepted a role for civil society in developing its Mechanism. In fact, civil society's potential to provide information on conflict trends played an important role in creating ECOWATCH. Yet, as much as ECOWATCH depends on civil society's involvement to increase its effectiveness, the capacity of civil society to remain involved in these efforts is uncertain. The financial weakness of most civil society groups in West Africa continues to limit their ability to contribute more effectively to ECOWAS' early warning system.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ See for example, Augustine Toure, *The Role of Civil Society in National Reconciliation and Peacebuilding in Liberia* (New York: International Peace Academy, April 2002).

⁵⁸ See the International Peace Academy report, *The Infrastructure of Peace in Africa: Assessing the Peacebuilding Capacity of African Institutions*, (New York: September 2002).

6. Policy Recommendations: The Way Forward

As ECOWAS strives to operationalize and institutionalize its security mechanism, task force members stressed the need to prioritize the following three issues: first, security sector reform; second, a renewed focus on peacebuilding and development policies; and third increasing the involvement of the UN and West African civil society groups in managing conflicts. We will assess these three issues in turn, as well as recommendations offered for improving the work of the IPA/ECOWAS task force.

6.1 Reform of the Security Sector

Several task force members noted that a key to stability in West Africa lies in the reform of security sectors. They felt that efforts to reform security sectors have been inadequate and that governments in West Africa have rarely prioritized security sector reform. Pointing repeatedly to the example of Liberia after elections in July 1997, several former ECOMOG commanders, who are members of the IPA/ECOWAS task force, noted that incomplete disarmament and demobilization, as well as Liberian leader Charles Taylor's transformation of his NPFL militia into the national army, greatly contributed to the current instability in Liberia. It was argued that Sierra Leone could also face a similar fate as Liberia, if its security sector is not urgently reformed. Equally important, ECOWAS was also urged to assist its member states to undertake security sector reform and not wait until conflicts erupt.

Many participants stressed that security sector reform should not only encompass military issues. ECOWAS should also consider human and economic security issues. In this regard, ECOWAS' moratorium on small arms and light weapons, which was adopted by sub-regional heads of state on 31 October 1998, could be made more effective. The moratorium should also be expanded to include the regulation of external weapons suppliers.

6.2 Peacebuilding and Development

Several task force members argued that focusing on peacebuilding and development could improve

ECOWAS' efforts at conflict management and stressed the link between security and development. They advised that ECOWAS should primarily concern itself with improving the standard of living of its 200 million inhabitants and, in particular, ensure the success of NEPAD. In addition, task force members urged the rapid development of agricultural sectors in which 80 percent of West Africans are typically employed, and encouraged donors to redirect efforts at regional poverty-alleviation projects. Task force members further recommended that ECOWAS examine the lessons of UN peacebuilding offices in Liberia and Guinea-Bissau, and assess the potential peacebuilding role of the new UN Office in West Africa. They also suggested that ECOWAS begin to consider seriously the establishment of a political confederation, building on the creation of the ECOWAS parliament, in order to reap the full benefits of regionalism.

6.3 Civil Society and External Actors

Civil society actors in West Africa and the UN must cooperate more closely with ECOWAS in the implementation of its Mechanism. Task force members offered three suggestions for improved collaboration. First, some organs of the ECOWAS Mechanism, such as the Council of Elders, have not yet been used effectively for conflict management and could potentially contribute to mediation efforts and to providing advice to the ECOWAS Executive Secretary; second, the role of civil society actors within the ECOWAS Mechanism must be better defined before they can contribute effectively to mediation efforts and to developing ECOWAS' early warning system; third, collaboration between ECOWAS and the UN remains *ad hoc* and sporadic, but the establishment of a UN office in West Africa provides an opportunity to institutionalize this cooperation.

One strategy for increasing cooperation between ECOWAS and civil society groups may be to decentralize the ECOWAS Mechanism. One participant recommended that ECOWAS establish offices in each of its member states in order to take better advantage of advice from civil society actors. By establishing offices in each member state, ECOWAS could develop a quick response to conflict situations and ensure faster implementation of its decisions. At present, ECOWAS

would need to open eight more offices in West Africa. In addition to the four early warning observatories in Ouagadougou, Banjul, Monrovia, and Cotonou, ECOWAS also has ties to peacekeeping training centers in Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria.

IPA/ECOWAS task force members urged member states to muster the political will to implement ECOWAS' protocols. They felt the fact that only three states (out of fifteen) had ratified the 1999 security protocol establishing the ECOWAS Mechanism by August 2002, demonstrated a lack of political will among ECOWAS leaders. Without all ECOWAS states ratifying the security protocol, it will be extremely difficult to operationalize the ECOWAS Mechanism. Reversing the impression of a lack of political will requires that ECOWAS leaders implement decisions taken at sub-regional summits. ECOWAS must build the necessary constituency to ensure that its heads of state and secretariat implement its decisions quickly.

6.4 Improving the Efficiency of the Task Force

The IPA/ECOWAS task force offered three proposals for future meetings of the group: first, reducing the size of the task force; second, organizing some meetings in New York; and third, collaborating more closely in its work with other sub-regional organizations and the African Union. In order to increase the effectiveness of

its work, it was suggested that the task force be reduced in size from about forty to twenty members. Additionally, participants recommended that the task force interact with ECOWAS' Defense and Security Commission and its Mediation and Security Council, as well as increase its interaction with the ECOWAS Parliament.

In the spirit of greater collaboration with the UN, and taking advantage of IPA's location and close ties with the global body, it was proposed that some task force meetings be held in New York, so as to raise the awareness of key members of the UN community of the work, challenges, and accomplishments of the ECOWAS Mechanism and to strengthen collaboration between ECOWAS and the UN. Through these meetings in New York, both organizations could start to define a proper division of responsibility between them in the area of conflict management.

Finally, task force members suggested that representatives of other sub-regional organizations, the AU, and civil society actors from outside West Africa be included as members of the task force in order to draw comparative lessons from other sub-regions for improving ECOWAS' work, and to ensure the effective coordination of Africa's evolving sub-regional organizations, the AU, the UN, and African civil society actors.

7. Postscript

Since the IPA/ECOWAS Task Force meeting in August 2002, a number of events have occurred that have contributed to insecurity in the West African sub-region. Most significantly, a civil war erupted on 19 September 2002 in Côte d'Ivoire. The situation in Côte d'Ivoire could contribute to the already volatile situation in Liberia and Guinea, and even reverse the gains from the end of Sierra Leone's decade-long conflict. Unconfirmed reports suggest that fighters from Liberia and Sierra Leone are involved in Côte d'Ivoire's conflict, even as other reports suggest that some former fighters from Sierra Leone's civil war are being recruited to fight in Liberia.

7.1 Côte d'Ivoire

On 19 September 2002, 750 soldiers calling themselves the *Mouvement Patriotique de Côte d'Ivoire (MPCI)*, attempted to stage a *coup d'état* in response to their planned dismissal from the Ivorian armed forces. The mutiny quickly split the country into two regions: the government retained control of Abidjan and the South, while the rebel factions controlled Bouaké in the center and Korhogo in the north.⁵⁹ On the first day of the coup, General Robert Guei, Côte d'Ivoire's former military leader, and Interior Minister, Emile Boga Doudou, were killed. Two additional factions have since joined the fray: the *Mouvement pour la Justice et la Paix (MJP)* and the *Mouvement Populaire Ivoirien du Grand Ouest (MPIGO)*.

At the crux of this civil war is the policy of *ivoirité* pursued by President Laurent Gbagbo. *Ivoirité* is at

odds with the liberal policy towards foreigners that former president Félix Houphouët-Boigny had pursued for the thirty-three years he ruled Côte d'Ivoire between 1960 and 1993. General Guei, who came to power in a December 1999 coup, inherited the policy from ousted President Henri Konan Bédié and formalized *ivoirité* in a referendum that stipulated that only those with native-born parents could hold public office. *Ivoirité* also took on a religious and regional dimension when it blocked the presidential candidacy of Alassane Ouattara, a northern Muslim and former prime minister, following questions about his parents' nationality. Significantly, many members of Ouattara's *Rassemblement des Républicains (RDR)*, which is massively supported by Muslims from Côte d'Ivoire's north and shares common languages with groups in Burkina Faso and Mali,⁶⁰ were believed to have joined the MPCI movement.⁶¹

Almost immediately after the outbreak of the conflict, the Ivorian government alleged that Burkina Faso's government was supporting the rebels. Burkina Faso denied the allegations. Still, Burkinabè workers in Côte d'Ivoire, who number about 2.3 million, have reportedly been victims of human rights abuses.⁶² There have also been reports of rebels from Liberia and Sierra Leone becoming involved in the fighting.⁶³ The Ivorian crisis could destabilize an already volatile sub-region. So far, 60,000 Burkinabè citizens living in Côte d'Ivoire have been forced to return home. It is estimated that as many as 125,000 Burkinabès could eventually return home.⁶⁴ Neighboring countries, already hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees from civil wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau, must brace themselves for more people seeking sanctuary from

⁵⁹ Human Rights Watch, *Government Abuses in Response to Army Revolt*, vol 14, no. 9 (A), November 2002, pp 4-5 (available from <http://www.hrw.org>).

⁶⁰ "Cote d'Ivoire: Crisis bodes ill for country, region," *IRIN News.org* 21 November 2002 (available from http://www.irinnews.org/webspecials/ci_crisis/default.asp).

⁶¹ Fabienne Hara and Comfort Ero, "Ivory Coast on the Brink," 15 December 2002 (available from <http://www.crisisweb.org/projects/showreport.cfm?reportid=853>).

⁶² Human Rights Watch, *Government Abuses in Response to Army Revolt*.

⁶³ "The Melting-Pot Cracks – Foreigners targeted as Côte d'Ivoire Fights," *The Economist*, 5 October 2002, p.42.

⁶⁴ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "Crisis in Côte d'Ivoire Situation Report No. 03," 11 Feb 2003 (available from <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/069fd6a1ac64ae63c125671c002f7289/79f90d940f656ac4c1256ccb00589955?OpenDocument>).

conflict. By December 2002, 124,312 refugees from Côte d'Ivoire had entered Liberia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and Burkina Faso. Liberia, a country still embroiled in conflict, has received almost 47,500 of these refugees. These new refugee camps could serve as breeding grounds for future insurgent movements, as occurred during Liberia's civil war.

The first sub-regional effort to end Côte d'Ivoire's conflict took place in Lomé, Togo, on 30 October 2002, under the leadership of Togo's president, Gnassingbé Eyadéma. The Lomé meeting called for a cease-fire and the reintegration of rebel forces into the national army. Nonetheless, the fighting continued. In January 2003, an ECOWAS force, known as ECOFORCE, with contingents from Benin, Ghana, Niger, Senegal and Togo, started to deploy into Côte d'Ivoire. The force was fully deployed at a strength of 1,288 by mid-March 2003.⁶⁵

About 3,000 French troops are monitoring the cease-fire agreement and protecting French citizens in Côte d'Ivoire. France has also taken the lead in peacemaking efforts. After meeting in Paris for several weeks in January 2003, ten Ivorian parties signed the *Accord de Linas-Marcoussis* on 24 January 2003. The accord has three important provisions: First, the establishment of a government of national unity that will be led by a neutral prime minister and comprise delegates nominated by all parties to the conflict; second, the modification of laws governing nationality requirements; third, the disarmament of rebel forces, monitored by French and ECOWAS forces.⁶⁶

In March 2003, the Ivorian army refused to share power with the rebels, who in turn demanded control of the defense and interior ministries⁶⁷ which they said the government had promised to them during peace

talks in Paris. Violent clashes and anti-French demonstrations erupted in Abidjan. At the time of writing in April 2003, the rebels had appointed their nominees to the defense and interior ministries, and Seydou Diarra, a Muslim northerner, had become Côte d'Ivoire's prime minister. It remained unclear, however, whether this fragile accord would be fully implemented. On 7 February 2003, Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, appointed Albert Tevoedjre as his Special Representative for Côte d'Ivoire.

7.2 Liberia

In addition to LURD rebels, the government of Charles Taylor must now also address the influx of both refugees from Côte d'Ivoire and repatriated Liberian refugees fleeing the Ivorian conflict. An estimated 180,000 Liberians are still internally displaced. The LURD remains a threat to the government of Charles Taylor. Previously repelled to Lofa county, in February 2003, LURD rebels were reported to be within 24 miles of Monrovia in the town of Gba. The renewed fighting in Liberia resulted in a reported 30,000 people abandoning their homes and seeking refuge in Monrovia, while 6,000 people fled to Sierra Leone.⁶⁸ By February 2003, 88,000 Liberians, Ivorians, and other nationals escaping Côte d'Ivoire had entered Liberia.⁶⁹ Further fueling sub-regional tensions, the Ivorian government accused the Liberian government of assisting rebels in Côte d'Ivoire,⁷⁰ amidst continuing press reports of former RUF Sierra Leonean soldiers fighting in Liberia. In September 2002, an International Contact Group was established in a bid to end Liberia's conflict. Its members include representatives of ECOWAS states, the US, the UK, France, Morocco, and representatives of the UN and the AU. The Contact Group met as recently as February 2003 in New York.

⁶⁵ See UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on Côte d'Ivoire," S/2003/374, 26 March 2003; UN Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "Côte d'Ivoire: ECOFORCE continues deployment," 8 April 2003 (available at www.irinnews.org).

⁶⁶ *Accord de Linas-Marcoussis*, 24 January 2003 (available from: http://www.usip.org/library/pa/cote_divoire/cote_divoire_01242003.html).

⁶⁷ Somini Sengupta, "Ivory Coast Army Rejects Power-Sharing Deal With Rebels," *The New York Times*, 29 January 2003, A3.

⁶⁸ Alphonso Toweh, "Liberian Minister Says Fighting on Four Fronts," *Reuters*, 18 February 2003 (available from <http://www.reliefweb.int>).

⁶⁹ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Thousands Flee Liberian Conflict; UNHCR tries to repatriate Sierra Leoneans," 17 February 2003 (available from <http://www.reliefweb.org>).

⁷⁰ Hara and Ero, "Ivory Coast on the Brink."

Though 18 political parties have now registered to contest elections in Liberia in October 2003 and some opposition politicians have returned to the country, the UN recently cited several obstacles that could still negatively affect the process: continued instability resulting from the civil conflict; the unresolved dispute surrounding the reconstitution of the Elections Commission; and the need for an international stabilization force before, during, and after the electoral process.⁷¹

7.3 Sierra Leone

The gradual reduction of UN peacekeepers in Sierra Leone, the establishment of the Special Court and Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the holding of a donor's meeting in November 2002 in Paris, all point to progress in the consolidation of peace in Sierra Leone. The UN mission in Sierra Leone began its drawdown in November 2002. In the first phase, 600 UNAMSIL troops departed; the schedule calls for 3,900 of the 17,500 troops to leave by May 2003. In accordance with earlier recommendations, UNAMSIL has worked with the Sierra Leonean government to ensure that its departure does not leave a security vacuum. To that end, the Sierra Leonean government, assisted by a British-led international team, plans to train 1,000 new police officers in 2003. Other security sector reforms include the demobilization of 3,500 out of 14,000 Sierra Leonean government troops.⁷² However, the reintegration of former combatants has been slow: 17,900 out of about 55,000 ex-combatants had yet to participate in any reintegration projects by December 2002.⁷³ On 13 and 14 November 2002, a Consultative Group meeting, organized by the World Bank and the UNDP, brought together the government of Sierra Leone and various humanitarian and development actors in Paris to devise a plan for Sierra Leone's

economic recovery. The Special Court and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission have started their work. The Special Court's judges were sworn in on 2 December 2002, and the TRC has begun the process of collecting statements that will be used in its proceedings. In March 2003, seven individuals were indicted by the Special Court for war crimes, namely, former RUF leader Foday Sankoh, former AFRC junta leader Johnny Paul Koroma, former RUF battlefield commander Sam "Mosquito" Bockarie, RUF interim leader Issa Sesay, former AFRC member, Alex Tamba Brima, former RUF commander Morris Kallon, and former Deputy Defense Minister, Sam Hinga Norman.

7.4 Guinea

Guinea continues to suffer from the inflow of refugees from West Africa's conflicts. Having hosted about 500,000 of Liberia and Sierra Leone's refugees, Guinea must now contend with a new inflow of refugees from Côte d'Ivoire. Between September 2002 and January 2003, 52,000 Guineans fleeing the outbreak of the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire returned home.⁷⁴ Additionally, about 16,500 Liberians, Ivorians, and other African nationals fled fighting in Côte d'Ivoire and entered Guinea.⁷⁵ With instability on its borders, questions have also been raised about domestic stability. In October 2002, Hans Dalghren, the EU's Special Representative to the Mano River area, was reported to have questioned the legitimacy of Guinea's 2001 referendum and 2002 legislative election, and called for greater political and press freedom.⁷⁶

7.5 Guinea-Bissau

Guinea-Bissau continues to experience political and military uncertainty. In November 2002, President Kumba Yala replaced Prime Minister Alhamara

⁷¹ UN Security Council, "Report of the UN Secretary-General on the situation in Liberia," S/2003/227, 26 February 2003, p.4.

⁷² UN Security Council, Sixteenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, (S/2002/1417), 24 December 2002, paragraphs 2, 3, 9-10,13.

⁷³ *Ibid.* paragraph 19.

⁷⁴ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "Guinea: Focus on population influx from Côte d'Ivoire," 20 February 2003 (available from <http://www.irinnews.org/print.asp?ReportID=32156>).

⁷⁵ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), "Guinea humanitarian update 31 Jan 2003" (available from <http://www.reliefweb.int/w/rwb.nsf/069fd6a1ac64ae63c125671c002f7289/85819abaacb01f9985256cbf005a48c6?OpenDocument>).

⁷⁶ Economist Intelligence Unit, Country Report "Guinea", December 2002, p.15.

N'Tchia Nhasse with Mario Pires and dissolved the parliament, promising to hold early legislative elections by April 2003.⁷⁷ A major concern remains the slow pace of demobilizing Guinea-Bissau's ex-combatants. Out of about 16,000 combatants in the program, 11,500 have yet to be demobilized as a result of Guinea-Bissau's inability to muster the \$10.8 million - out of \$19.6 million - required for the demobilization program.⁷⁸ Unless these funds are

quickly provided by the donor community, instability could return to Guinea-Bissau. After a fact-finding mission to Guinea-Bissau between 9 and 16 November 2002, the United Nations Ad Hoc Advisory Group of the Economic and Social Council on Guinea-Bissau reported that the increased involvement of external donors is crucial to averting the country's relapse into war and to improving its deteriorating social and economic situation⁷⁹.



Participants at the IPA/ECOWAS task force meeting, Dakar, Senegal, August 2002

⁷⁷ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Developments in Guinea-Bissau and on the Activities of the United Nations Peace-Building Support Offices in that Country (S/2002/1367), 13 December 2002, paragraphs 6-8.

⁷⁸ Ibid. paragraphs 13-14.

⁷⁹ UN Economic and Social Council, Report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Guinea-Bissau (E/2003/8), 10 January 2003.

ANNEX I:

Address by Mohammed Chambas,
ECOWAS Executive Secretary

"Operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management,
Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security"

New York, 29 April 2002

The International Peace Academy (IPA) is one of our Community's collaborators in the area of peace and security. In September 2001, our organization jointly organized a seminar with IPA in Abuja, Nigeria, where discussions centered around the West African security architecture, the role of ECOWAS in the context of conflict management within our region, and the gains, if any, of our newly evolved mechanism on conflict prevention and management. Judging from the policy report and papers from this seminar, I consider the Abuja meeting a resounding success and must continue to thank IPA for its keen interest in the affairs of West Africa and ECOWAS, particularly in the area of peace and security. Providing me with yet another opportunity to interact with new collaborators over the security problems of our region and our organizations' efforts at keeping abreast with and managing these problems is yet another commendable demonstration of IPA's interest in West Africa.

What is generally known as the ECOWAS Mechanism on conflict prevention is to be found in the Protocol relating to the Mechanism on Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security adopted by our Heads of State on 10 December 1999. The adoption of this Protocol was preceded by several years of *ad hoc* conflict management interventions by some of our member states in parts of the sub-region, specifically Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau, where brutal fighting between governments and rebel forces resulted in the death of thousands of citizens, and the displacement of populations.

Thus, adopting this Mechanism was a bold attempt on the part of member governments to institutionalize conflict management and prevention efforts in West Africa, having recognized the inextricable link

between regional security and progressive regional economic development. Maintaining and consolidating peace, security and stability in the region therefore had to be rated high on the priority list of the Community.

This mechanism makes it imperative that member states promote and strengthen cooperation in the areas of preventive diplomacy, and sharing of information (of the early warning variety). All member states are mandatorily involved in peacekeeping and policing operations under a newly structured ECOMOG. The mechanism provides for joint control of trans-border crime, international terrorism, proliferation of small arms and anti-personnel mines.

As far as decision-making and operationalization of the Mechanism is concerned, the 1999 Protocol establishes institutions and organs that have different functions, and at the same time support each other in the task of implementing the Mechanism. The core institution of the Mechanism is what is known as the Mediation and Security Council operating at three levels: the Authority of Heads of State; the Ministers of Foreign Affairs; and ambassadors accredited to the ECOWAS headquarters in Abuja. ECOWAS foreign and defense ministers are empowered to take all major decisions except that relating to the deployment of ECOMOG. The Defense and Security Commission is an organ that comprises military and security technocrats that plan ECOMOG missions. The Council of Elders is the organ that engages in preventive diplomacy. ECOWAS' Executive Secretary is, of course, the chief implementer of decisions and tasks along with the Department of Political Affairs, Defense and Security established to formulate policies and directly supervise implementation of our security mandate. ECOMOG, as stated earlier, is now a multi-purpose body made up of stand-

by-forces that are permanently ready for immediate deployment. It has a multi-purpose function which includes observation, monitoring and peacekeeping. The force can also be deployed for humanitarian interventions or as an enforcer of sanctions.

As a necessary conflict prevention strategy, the Mechanism is in the process of setting up an early warning system in the form of a regional observation network spread over designated states in the region – Benin, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, and Liberia – with a central observatory located within the ECOWAS secretariat where economic, social, political and security-related data collected from member states are analyzed in a bid to detect or unearth warning signals that may indicate areas of potential conflict. Our Mechanism is also emphatic on the need for the Community to develop a capacity for post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding in order to assist in the restoration of political authority, social and economic rehabilitation, enthronement of the rule of law and respect for human rights in a post-conflict environment. Emphasis is also placed on the building of partnerships with the international community and engendering collaboration from actors within and without the sub-region in order to guarantee widespread support and success in the implementation of the Mechanism.

Implementation of the Mechanism

The importance that member states attach to the Mechanism is best demonstrated by the manner of its entry into force. In 1999, this Protocol was adopted with a unanimous agreement for a provisional entry into force upon signature, allowing immediate implementation. Barely three weeks after its adoption, the commitment of member states to the Mechanism was put to an early test when Côte d' Ivoire fell prey to a *coup d'état* on 24 December 1999. The newly established decision-making body, the Mediation and Security Council, met to propose a line of action, principally mediative in nature, that would help stem the tide of impending unrest in that country. The Council has subsequently held at least seven meetings over the past two years in response to the security situations in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Côte

d'Ivoire and the rebel attacks along the border areas of the three Mano River Union countries (Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea).

The Council's decisions have included:

- i. Entering into a collaborative relationship with the United Nations in Sierra Leone in 2000, the result of which was the birth of a Coordination Mechanism involving the UN, ECOWAS, and the government of Sierra Leone, an institution that has substantially advanced the peace process in Sierra Leone;
- ii. Establishing a regional commission of inquiry to investigate the illegal traffic ring involved in Sierra Leonean diamonds which was allegedly fueling the war in Sierra Leone. This initiative was never implemented due to a lack of resources. The UN however involved ECOWAS during similar investigations carried out by its own officials;
- iii. Investigating reports of border clashes between Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone following which a mission was dispatched to those countries and a report filed;
- iv. Deploying an ECOMOG mission along the border coastline areas of the Mano River Union countries to put a stop to the rebel incursions and attacks on the civilian population of the three states;
- v. At the beginning of the threat of sanctions by the UN Security Council against Liberia by the UN for its alleged involvement with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the Mediation and Security Council decided to send an ECOWAS delegation to the UN Security Council requesting deferment of the sanctions and the right to seek Liberia's consent to comply with certain conditions that were in fact similar to the terms contained in the proposed UN sanctions resolution. The delegation hoped thereby to render unnecessary the actual imposition of sanctions by the UN on Liberia and avert the consequences of such an international act against an ECOWAS member state.

The Mediation and Security Council, after the imposition of UN sanctions on Liberia in May 2001, however, decided that a monitoring mission would be periodically dispatched to Liberia to observe and report on Liberia's

compliance with the sanctions. Three reports have been filed to the UN Sanctions Committee in compliance with Resolution 1343 (2001) of 7 March 2001.

A recommendation by the Mediation and Security Council which gained the immediate approval of the Authority of Heads of State at their 25th session in Dakar, Senegal, relates to assistance from the Community that would strengthen and advance the national reconciliation process in Liberia. The recommendation was premised on the Community's view that the crisis in Liberia was precipitated by rebel incursions into Liberia with its attendant instability, loss of lives and property, and the displacement of its population, and is partially attributable to the incomplete processes of peacebuilding among stakeholders and post-conflict reconstruction and restructuring of the Liberian army which should have begun immediately after the Liberian war and the elections that took place in July 1997.

It is for these reasons that the Community hosted a preparatory forum on 15 and 16 March 2002 in Abuja, Nigeria, of all stakeholders in Liberia in anticipation of its National Reconciliation Conference which the government has been proposing to organize prior to Liberian elections scheduled for 2003.

The preparatory meeting in Abuja in March 2002, co-hosted by the Nigerian government, resulted in an unprecedented gathering of all stakeholders in Liberia, ranging from government representatives, heads of political parties, former heads of state, civil society actors, and NGOs who came to begin the process of evolving a plan that would enable them to iron out all existing differences with a view to engendering participatory democracy in their country.

I must note at this juncture, that in detailing some of the decisions adopted by our Mediation and Security Council, most of which are accompanied by concrete missions, I merely intended to demonstrate practical implementation of this Mechanism and its effectiveness or usefulness as the case may be.

A few other areas that demonstrate operationalization of the ECOWAS Mechanism can be seen in the status of

ECOMOG as well as in the evolution of an early warning system. ECOWAS member states, at the inaugural meeting of the Defense and Security Commission in July 2000, pledged troops for the establishment of the ECOMOG stand-by unit which now exists as a permanent force ready for immediate deployment. The Deputy Executive Secretary for Political Affairs, Defense and Security, General Cheick Diarra, the chief implementer of the security mechanism within the secretariat, has undertaken several tours of member states with a view to identifying the stand-by troops and determining their levels of preparedness. Training bases have been identified in Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, while plans for the setting up of a military planning cell within the ECOWAS secretariat are still evolving.

Donor assistance, especially from the European Union (EU) has facilitated the setting up of the Observation Center and the counterpart bureaux in the four designated zones (Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia and Liberia). Programmers and analysts have been employed, and basic equipment purchased for the offices. The secretariat is hopeful of obtaining a positive response from the United States European Command in Germany for a more elaborate equipping of the system with communication instruments.

The ECOWAS Council of Elders is on stand-by for future mediation missions. In the meantime, some of its members have undertaken election-monitoring assignments in the Gambia, and as far south as Zimbabwe, on the invitation of the Zimbabwean government. Members of the Council are getting ready for another election monitoring mission in Sierra Leone in May 2002.

Furthermore, our mandate for the maintenance and consolidation of sub-regional security is also geared towards ensuring collective human security. One of our principal aims is to control transborder criminality. At the 25th Summit of the ECOWAS heads of state in Dakar, held in December 2001, two sub-regional conventions were agreed to fight illegal trafficking in persons and corruption in member states based on regional studies on both phenomena within the region.

Also of note is the ECOWAS Moratorium on small arms and light weapons declared in October 1998 for an initial three-year period and recently renewed for another three years from November 2001 until October 2004. This Moratorium is intended to control the importation, exportation and manufacture of small arms within the region as a means of reducing the proliferation of such arms that usually end up in the hands of unauthorized persons. This is a United Nations Development Program (UNDP)-assisted project that calls for among other things, training at several levels within states (e.g. law enforcement agents, customs, border and security officers), in order to train these actors in more efficient methods of arms detection. ECOWAS member states have shown remarkable political commitment to the observance of the Moratorium.

Collaboration between ECOWAS and other international organizations has been vibrant. Following a UN Inter-Agency mission undertaken to West Africa last year, and the subsequent consultations that were carried on between our officials and those of the UN, a UN Office in West Africa (UNOWA) has been established in Dakar. It is expected that there will be joint identification of priority issues in West Africa between ECOWAS and this office, on collaboration between the UN and ECOWAS. Peace and security issues will definitely feature as one of such priority areas of collaboration.

ECOWAS has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as a first step to addressing humanitarian issues within the sub-region. A cooperation agreement will be signed with Interpol in the near future. Negotiations are underway with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the office of the Organization of Internally Displaced Persons and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in pursuance of our efforts to address the phenomenon of trafficking in persons, women and children in particular.

Addressing the root cause of conflicts, I am sure you must all agree, is one way of resolving these conflicts. Conflict resolution itself is one of the key objectives of our security mechanism. It is for this reason that the Community adopted, again, at the 25th summit of ECOWAS heads of state and government in Dakar in December 2001, a Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, supplementary to the 1999 Protocol on the Mechanism. The 2001 Protocol sets out guiding principles for intra-state relations that will hopefully help foster participatory democracy, good governance, the rule of law, respect for human rights and a balanced and equitable distribution of resources: all issues, among a host of others, the neglect of which often result in instability within states.

Our Community has thus adopted a two-pronged approach to its duty of consolidating stability and security in our region: a call for adherence to the principles enunciated in the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance as a means of averting conflicts, as well as establishing strategies that can be called upon to prevent or manage conflicts depending on the situation at hand.

Our strategies are not unique, nor do they provide all the answers needed to ensure sustainable peace in our region. What is certain is the fact that member states in the West African region are committed to the implementation of these initiatives. They are committed to providing a peaceful, secure, and stable environment that will be conducive to the implementation of the Community's economic program and its ultimate development objectives.

What we ask of the international community is support - physical, psychological, and financial - in ridding our region and all other African regions of conflicts and the causes of conflicts and ensuring that the African continent keeps pace with existing global development objectives. May I thank IPA once again for granting me this opportunity for interaction and I look forward to developing new partnerships with members of this august gathering.

ANNEX II:

Address by Mohammed Chambas,
ECOWAS Executive Secretary, at the high-level meeting on
"The Security Council and Regional Organizations: Facing the New Challenges
to Peace and Security"

"The Security Council and ECOWAS: Facing the Challenges of Peace and Security
in West Africa"

New York, 11 April 2003

Mr. President and Members of the Council,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Excellencies Ministers and Ambassadors,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Mr. President for your assumption of the Presidency of this august Council. We have every assurance that under Mexico's Presidency the Security Council will continue to play a central role in the maintenance of international peace and security for a troubled world.

I should also like to express our appreciation to you for the opportunity granted ECOWAS to participate in this all-important high-level meeting of the Security Council. We find the topic of this meeting "The Security Council and Regional Organizations: Facing the New Challenge to International Peace and Security" most *a propos*. For we believe, indeed, that the Security Council should be collaborating more and more, and closely with regional organizations in facing certain new challenges to international peace and security. Certainly, in the West African sub-region, we would very much welcome such a collaborative working relationship with the Security Council and, I might say, other organs of the United Nations. It is for this reason that we were pleased with the establishment last year of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for West Africa in Dakar, Senegal.

A major challenge facing the West African sub-region in the last decade or so, has been the spate of conflicts. These conflicts have weakened already fragile state

institutions, deteriorating human capacity, and caused the erosion of previous developmental gains. A notable common denominator in the conflict-prone situations is the increasing marginalization of a large part of the population – predominantly youthful, largely uneducated, and unemployed, – who then become readily available as recruits by unscrupulous warlords or leaders in a sub-region with an excessive supply of small arms.

The ECOWAS response to the spate of conflicts in our sub-region, the Mano River Union countries, Guinea-Bissau, and now regrettably, Côte d'Ivoire, which had hitherto been one of the more stable and prosperous countries in Africa, has been situated within the context of the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Resolution, Management, Peacekeeping and Security adopted in December 1999.

The Mechanism provides for preventive measures such as Observation Bureaux to provide early warning signals, a Council of Elders to engage in preventive diplomatic missions and monitoring of elections – which when poorly or fraudulently managed, often lead to crisis. ECOWAS has also adopted a Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance to encourage Member States to build up a culture of democracy, respect for human rights, the rule of law, and transparent governance as the basis for a stable polity.

It is in the area of conflict resolution and management that there is a clear and pressing need for collaboration between ECOWAS and the United Nations, particularly the Security Council. The case of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia are illustrative in this regard.

Since the outbreak of the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, ECOWAS and its member states have been actively engaged in seeking and supporting a peaceful resolution to this potent threat to the peace and stability of the region. ECOWAS' diplomatic efforts resulted in ceasefire agreements between the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the three rebel movements (the MPCJ, MPIGO and MJP) and paved the way for the Linas-Marcoussis roundtable negotiations and resulting accord. The accord was subsequently endorsed by ECOWAS Heads of State and also by this august body in your resolution 1464 of 4 February 2003, and provided the framework for returning Côte d'Ivoire to peace and stability.

To supplement and support ECOWAS' diplomatic efforts, its heads of state also agreed to deploy to Côte d'Ivoire a force of military observers to supervise the ceasefire and assist the peace process as required. Resolution 1464 also endorses the ECOWAS Force and authorized its mission in accordance with both Chapter VI and Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

By mid-March 2003, the ECOWAS Force was fully deployed at a strength of 1,288. This Force is working very closely with French troops in Côte d'Ivoire who have been a stabilizing factor since the outbreak of the crisis.

The formation of the Government of National Reconciliation with additional personal security requirements for its members, the imperative of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and border patrols with neighboring countries to interdict the flow of arms, now impose the need to expand the ECOWAS Force to 3,209.

Belgium, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States have provided essential material, logistical transportation and financial assistance to support the deployment of the ECOWAS Force. However, the pressing concern now is that the force will run out of funding even for its present composition and mission by the end of April 2003.

Indeed, this pressing and rather threatening issue was the primary concern for the tenth meeting of the

ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council of 7 April 2003 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. The Foreign Ministers decided at this meeting to send a delegation of five Ministers from Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Senegal to the United Nations headquarters to take this matter up with the Security Council and the Secretary-General.

ECOWAS would wish to work with the Security Council to maintain the Force in place to enable it support the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire which is evolving satisfactorily, albeit slowly.

ECOWAS member states will be unable to keep their troops in Côte d'Ivoire at their own expense given the precarious financial situation in contributing countries. Should troop-contributing states retain their troops in Côte d'Ivoire without adequate financial provision, the risk is high for problems to be fomented from a botched peacekeeping operation, as we have seen in a number of African countries in the past.

The ECOWAS peace mission has so far demonstrated that it can consolidate the peace already achieved on the political front and help return Côte d'Ivoire to its well-deserved position of stability and prosperity. A stable and prosperous Côte d'Ivoire has always been a catalyst for peace, stability and prosperity for all of West Africa.

The United Nations Security Council, working closely with ECOWAS, can and should provide the necessary funds to sustain the operations of the ECOWAS mission in Côte d'Ivoire, and thereby avoid the otherwise imminent collapse of the mission, with dire consequences for the peace and security of the entire sub-region.

Regarding Liberia, we simply state that continuing instability in that country poses threats to the neighboring countries of the Mano River Union, in particular Sierra Leone, and also to Côte d'Ivoire, as events in the western part of that country now demonstrate.

ECOWAS, working with the International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL), has embarked on a new initia-

tive to bring the Government of Liberia and the rebel Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) into direct talks for a ceasefire. The ECOWAS ministers of foreign affairs at their meeting of April 2003 in Abidjan also called for the immediate convening of an all-Liberian roundtable involving the government of Liberia, LURD, and all registered political parties, to agree a comprehensive framework for durable peace and to create conditions for credible, free and fair elections due later this year. ECOWAS would wish the Security Council to consider an

appropriate monitoring mechanism for the ceasefire. The sad saga of Liberia should now be brought to a close.

I trust the Council will help us to avoid a sad end to an otherwise happy story of the sub-regional effort to maintain peace and security in both Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia.

I thank you for your kind attention.

ANNEX III: Agenda

Sunday 11 August 2002

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm RECEPTION

Monday 12 August 2002

9:00 am – 10:30 am BACKGROUND: HISTORY AND GOALS

Chair: His Excellency, President Abdoulaye Wade, Senegal,
"ECOWAS, NEPAD and Peacemaking in Africa"

Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, Executive Secretary, ECOWAS, "The Role of ECOWAS"

Ambassador John Hirsch, International Peace Academy, "The Role of IPA"

Professor Ibrahima Fall, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General
for the Great Lakes region, "Personal Reflections on Peacemaking in Africa"

10:45 am – 2:00 pm CONTEXT: LIBERIA, SIERRA LEONE, GUINEA, AND GUINEA-BISSAU

Chair: Professor Adebayo Adedeji, Director, African Centre for Development
and Strategic Studies, Nigeria

Ms. Etweda Cooper, Liberia Women Initiative, Liberia,
"Current Developments in Liberia"

Dr. Ismail Rashid, Vassar College, New York, "Current Developments in Sierra Leone"

Dr. Thierno Majdou Sow, Organization for Human Rights (OGDH), Guinea,
"Current Developments in Guinea"

Dr. Adekeye Adebajo, International Peace Academy,
"Current Developments in Guinea-Bissau"

2:00 pm – 3:00 pm LUNCH ADDRESS

Chair: Honorable Abdoulaye Bathily, M.P., Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Senegal

Speaker: Major General Henry Anyidoho, Former UN Deputy Force Commander in
Rwanda, "The ECOWAS Security Mechanism: Lessons from UN Peacekeeping in Africa"

- 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS: THE ECOWAS SECURITY MECHANISM, THE UN AND WEST AFRICA'S CIVIL SOCIETY
- Chair: Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, Executive Secretary, ECOWAS
- General Cheick Oumar Diarra, ECOWAS Deputy Executive Secretary for Political Affairs, Defence, and Security, "The Role of the ECOWAS Security Mechanism in Conflict Management"
- Colonel Festus Aboagye, Former Military Expert, Conflict Management Centre, Organization of African Unity, Ethiopia, "Operationalizing the ECOMOG Standby Arrangements"
- 4:30 pm – 6:00 pm Honorable Abdoulaye Bathily, M.P., Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Senegal, "Civil Society's Role in Conflict Management in West Africa"
- Professor Margaret Vogt, Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, United Nations, "The UN Office in West Africa and ECOWAS"
- 8:00 pm – 10:30 pm DINNER SESSION: ECOWAS/UN Co-OPERATION
- Chair: Honorable Kwabena Adusa Okerchiri, Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee, Parliament of the Republic of Ghana
- General Victor Malu, Former ECOMOG Force Commander, "Recollections of an ECOMOG Force Commander"

Tuesday 13 August 2002

- 9:00 am – 12:00 pm WRAP-UP SESSION AND FOLLOW-ON ACTIVITIES
- Chair: Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, Executive Secretary, ECOWAS
- Dr. Adekeye Adebajo, International Peace Academy
- Professor Margaret Vogt, Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, United Nations

ANNEX IV: Task Force Participants

1. **Colonel Festus Aboagye**
Commanding Officer
The Ghana Military Academy
Accra, Ghana
2. **Professor Adebayo Adedeji**
Executive Director, African Centre for
Development and Strategic Studies
Ijebu Ode, Nigeria
3. **General Henry Anyidoho**
Former UN Deputy Force Commander in Rwanda
Accra, Ghana
4. **Professor S.K.B. Asante**
University of Ghana
Legon Centre for International Affairs (LECIA)
Legon, Ghana
5. **Mr. Babacar Ba**
Director of Cabinet
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad
Dakar, Senegal
6. **Brigadier Dick Baly**
Department for International Development
London, United Kingdom
7. **Honorable Abdoulaye Bathily**
M.P., Deputy Speaker of Parliament, Senegal
Dakar, Senegal
8. **Lt. Col. Jean Pierre Bayala**
Technical Advisor
Ministry of Defense
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
9. **Ms. Etweda Cooper**
Liberia Women Initiative
Monrovia, Liberia
10. **Mr. Robert Dossou**
Former Foreign Minister of Benin
Cotonou, Benin
11. **Professor Ibrahima Fall**
Special Representative of the UN Secretary-
General for the Great Lakes region,
Nairobi, Kenya
12. **Dr. Eboe Hutchful**
Wayne State University
Detroit, Michigan
13. **Ambassador Joshua O.B. Iroha**
Former ECOWAS Special Envoy to Liberia
Lagos, Nigeria
14. **General Rufus Kupolati**
Former ECOMOG Force Commander
Lagos, Nigeria
15. **Mr. Alan Latimer**
Chargé d' Affaires
Embassy of the United States of America
Dakar, Senegal
16. **Mr Ali B. Magashi**
Minister-Counselor
Embassy of Nigeria
Dakar, Senegal
17. **General Victor Malu**
Former ECOMOG Force Commander
Lagos, Nigeria
18. **Dr. Raufu Mustapha**
Oxford University
Oxford, United Kingdom

19. **Ambassador T.O. Odegbile**
Chargé d' Affaires/ Deputy Head of Mission
Embassy of Nigeria,
Dakar, Senegal
 20. **Honorable Kwabena Adusa Okerchiri**
Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee,
Parliament of the Republic of Ghana
Accra, Ghana
 21. **General Adetunji Olurin**
Former ECOMOG Commander
Lagos, Nigeria
 22. **Dr. Mohammed Osman**
Independent Scholar
London, United Kingdom
 23. **Mr. Domba Jean Marc Palm**
Director
Centre National de Recherche Scientifique et
Technologique (CNRST)
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
 24. **General Arnold Quainoo**
Executive Director
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 25. **Dr. Ismail Rashid**
Assistant Professor
Vassar College
Poughkeepsie, New York
 26. **Ms. Sarah Richards**
Department for International Development
London, United Kingdom
 27. **General Timothy Shelpidi**
Former ECOMOG Force Commander
Abuja, Nigeria
 28. **Mr. Abdou Aziz Sow**
Delegate-General to NEPAD
Dakar, Senegal
 29. **Dr. Thierno Majdou Sow**
Organization for Human Rights
Conakry, Guinea
 30. **General Brehima Sire Traore**
Former Special Envoy to Guinea-Bissau
Bamako, Mali
 31. **Dr. Martin Uhomoibhi**
Deputy Head of Mission
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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
 32. **Professor Margaret Vogt**
Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary-
General
United Nations Department of Political Affairs
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- ECOWAS Secretariat Representatives**
33. **Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas**
ECOWAS Executive Secretary
 34. **General Cheick Oumar Diarra**
ECOWAS Deputy Executive Secretary for Political
Affairs, Defense and Security
 35. **Mr. Roger Laloupo**
Director, ECOWAS Legal Department
 36. **Colonel M. Dixon Dikio**
Principal Program Officer,
Office of the ECOWAS Deputy Executive
Secretary for Political Affairs, Defense and
Security
 37. **Mr. William Awinador-Kanyirige**
Director, Office of the ECOWAS Executive
Secretary
 38. **Ms. Florence Itheme**
Program Manager, ECOWAS Observation and
Monitoring Center

International Peace Academy

39. Dr. Adekeye Adebajo
Director, Africa Program
40. Ambassador John Hirsch
Senior Fellow
41. Dr. Dorina Bekoe
Associate
42. Ms. Aida Mengistu
Senior Program Officer
43. Ms. Angela Ndinga Muvumba
Senior Program Officer
44. Ms. Wambui Waweru
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45. Ms. Vidya Diaité
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