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**The Political Economy of Human Insecurity
in Sub-Saharan Africa**

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Executive Summary

As a paradigm, human security was popularised by the UNDP report of 1994. In this report, the UNDP sought to shift attention from the state to people as the key referent of security. This shift comes against a background of the dominance of a security concept that was defined in relation to the territorial state. It saw threats to security as primarily external in source and, by implication, relied on military might to respond to such threats. The obsession to protect the borders of the state against external aggression overshadowed the vast array of threats – social, economic, political and environmental – facing people within the territorial state. The thrust of human security is thus to shift the focus from the state to people and to make the latter the main referent of security. Thus at the heart of the human security paradigm is the security of people. Consequently, the definition of human security as expanded by the UN Commission on Human security is simply “freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to take action on one’s own behalf”. Establishing human security, according to the report, requires overcoming economic, health, environmental, personal, community and political insecurities.

Human insecurity has attained high levels in Africa, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Over 40 percent of its 800 million people live below the poverty line and this percentage is predicted to rise. Also, Africa has high incidents of conflicts and instability. Currently, Ivory Coast, the Great lakes region, Somalia, Darfur (Sudan), and the Horn remain highly volatile. Africa currently has the largest contingent of UN peacekeepers – 17,000 strong in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In addition, Africa is ravaged by various diseases, and is currently the global epicentre of the dreaded HIV/AIDS. Food and nutritional inadequacies have reached monumental proportions. Over 28 percent of all children in SSA are underweight as a result of malnutrition. And, while the average percentage of under nourishment in the developing world is 17, that for SSA is 33 percent. Southern, Central and the Horn of Africa continually remain vulnerable to droughts, painting a bleak scenario for food security. At the same time, environmental degradation is on the increase, reflected in deforestation, desertification, soil erosion, pollution, and depleting fish and game stocks. The ecological problems in Africa are compounded by the inability of African governments to establish credible environmental regimes and their willingness to trade the environment for scarce foreign exchange. The combination of all these disconcerting developments presents SSA as an indisputable region of high human insecurity.

While there is a great deal of consensus on the pervasiveness of human insecurity there has been scant analysis on its fundamental causes. In the case of SSA, the tendency has been to adopt the usual neo-classical formula and point to factors that are predominantly internal to the region. I have argued that what is frequently regarded as internal causes of insecurity such as poverty, conflicts, environmental degradation, food, health and educational insecurities are,

in fact, manifestations of the crisis. In perspective, these are the product of more fundamental causes, including endemic structures and practices within the international system. Poverty is not natural; no child is born in Africa to be poor and destined to lead an insecure life. Neither does poverty descend from the skies like rain or hail; it is rather the consequence of a more fundamental cause. The same could be said of conflicts. No people in their right senses like to constantly live under conditions of violence and war that threaten their personal or community security. There are always deep-seated causes that spark or predispose people to violence. It is therefore not enough to point to human insecurity without identifying its root causes, especially when the problem is menacing. Identifying the causes of a problem is necessary for a fuller understanding of its implications. Above all, understanding and mastering the causes of a problem enhances opportunities for effectively addressing it. Thus, in order to prescribe an effective antidote to a problem, it is imperative to diagnose its root causes. A deviation from this standard practice leads to a diagnoses of the symptoms rather than the root causes.

In explaining the underlying causes of human insecurity in Africa, the study drew on the theoretical explanations outlined by Johan Galtung. According to Galtung, human insecurity is caused by violence, which can be direct or indirect. In the former the perpetrator of violence is visible. In the latter, variously referred to as “structural violence”, or “social injustice”, violence is built into structures in the form of unequal power relations and unequal life chances. This prognosis provides a good context for understanding human insecurity in SSA, given its relation with the industrial north. For example, an asymmetrical trade pattern was established between Africa and the west since colonialism, which disadvantages the former. SSA has been unable to alter this pattern largely due to the operations of global institutions, structures and regimes. The dominant Breton Woods institutions, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) have functioned to maintain the structural imbalance between the north and south, leading to vast inequalities between the two regions. The reality of north-south relations fit into the explanation of both direct and structural violence. Although some may argue that the structural violence argument is deficient in failing to explain environmental insecurity, the study demonstrated that ecological insecurity in SSA is part of the structural crisis generated by globalisation and the international economy.

The study emphasises that globalisation has become a dominant force in the global economy. It imparts consequences that are both positive and negative. In the case of SSA, the negative impacts of globalisation outweigh its positive outcomes. Among other things, globalisation integrates SSA economies into the bigger global economy; it opens up Africa’s economies to global competition in which the former are simply too fragile to successfully compete; Africa’s economies have been delivered to multinational companies who flout environmental laws with impunity, while regional and social inequalities have been deepened by the different abilities of people and regions to respond to the challenges posed by globalisation or tap the opportunities it creates. Thus, while grafting SSA in to the global

economy, the latter is simultaneously left at the margins, leaving Africa in a precariously ambivalent position. Globalisation has also inspired further sources of human insecurity through liberalisation, which came in the form of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) and which requires Africa to open up its markets; democratisation, which has resulted in stage-managed elections that have resulted in conflicts and other forms of contestations.

A further dimension of the globalisation trajectory is the escalation of SSA's debt burden, which has not only attenuated the ability of governments to deal with human insecurity, but also became a means of decapitalising Africa. The original purpose of SAP was to enhance Africa's ability to repay its external debts through the imposition of austerity measures. Under the SAP regime credit lines were opened to countries judged to be rigorously implementing adjustment reforms. In the 1980s, Ghana and Uganda received large volumes of aid on account of their impressive adjustment record. However, such credit lines were never acts of charity. Rather, they were loans to be repaid with interest. The ultimate effect was that as African countries adopted SAPs and accessed new lines of credit, their external debt grew concomitantly. Once the debt emerged, it became a self-generating phenomenon and, worse of all, causing a reverse transfer of funds from Africa to the west. For example, between 1970 and 2002 SSA received \$294 billion in disbursed loans. Despite paying out \$268 in debt service, it still had a debt of \$210 billion by the end of 2002. In total, during the 1970-2002 period Africa received some \$540 billion and still shouldered a debt of \$295 billion after paying back close to \$550 billion in principal and interest. Even by 1996 arrears on Africa's debt had reached a whopping \$64 billion, which was more than 25 percent of the total indebt.

The debt crisis had spin effects on human insecurity in SSA. Debt created the need for further external aid and this generated further indebtedness, imparting a funny scenario of digging a new pit to fill an old one. To be credit worthy and eligible for further loans, indebted countries needed to demonstrate an ability to service existing debts. This often required the commitment of large proportion of the national budget to debt service. In 1990, for example, Madagascar spent the equivalent of 7.2 percent of its GDP on debt service compared to just 2.1 percent and 1.2 percent on education and health respectively, while Congo spent nearly 4 times more on debt service than on education and over 12 times more than on health. Similarly, Zambia's debt service as a percentage of GDP in 2003 was three times and four times more than health and education respectively. Since the inception of the debt crisis, SSA countries have been devoting appreciable percentages of their national budgets to debt servicing. The pressure to repay debts thus diverts resources from infrastructure and services that are critical for alleviating poverty and human insecurity.

At the same time, foreign direct investments (FDI) and overseas development assistance (ODA), are on the decline. Although this has recently been increasing in certain countries (Angola, South Africa and Mozambique), and regionally in southern Africa, the flow of FDI to Africa has on the aggregate declined from \$8.1 billion in 1996 to \$6.1 billion in 2000. Although this rose to a high of \$13.8 billion in 2001, it fell again to \$7 billion in 2003.

Similarly, net ODA has plummeted from a high level of \$28 billion in 1990 to \$16.4 billion in 2000. In spite of numerous international trade agreements promising Africa with access to world markets, its share of world exports remained at just 1 percent at the turn of the century although this was 4 percent in 1960, while its share of world trade has plummeted from 2.7 percent 1990 to just 2 percent in 2002. Against this background, Africa remains the most marginalised continent in the contemporary global economy. Its role has been limited to serving as a marginal market for northern industries. The little investments trickling down to SSA are concentrated in the capital-intensive extractive industries. While shunning Africa, the west has been giving more “aid” to farm animals in the form of subsidies. In 2000, the European Union’s (EU) total aid to SSA amounted to \$8.00 per African, while its subsidies to cows averaged \$913 per cow. Japan’s case was even more absurd. In that year Japan’s total aid to SSA averaged \$1.47 per African, while its subsidy to cows averaged a colossal \$2,700. A moralist will argue from this evidence that industrialised countries price the value of cows above Africans.

Although terrorism is increasingly being recognised worldwide as a new source of human insecurity, this view is contested in Africa. Terrorism has historically not been an issue of concern to Africa although the continent displays conditions that should ideally inspire terror. Rather, what is emerging as a new source of human insecurity is the proliferation of anti-terror legislations, which are passed by African governments at the behest of the US. In the aftermath of 9/11 the US has evolved a policy of rewarding countries enlisting in the war on terror and punishing those apathetic or oppositional to the war. The dominance of the US in the post-cold war era, along with the associated benefits in the form of US aid, has presented involvement in the war on terror an irresistible offer for Africa. However, instead of securing citizens, anti-terror laws have rather provided leeway for the state to clump down on legitimate opposition, democratic forces and critical voices. In the process, these laws vitiate human rights, undermine human security and are rapidly reviving Africa’s old and discredited practice of “constitution without constitutionalism.” Thus, if anti-terror laws are becoming sources of human insecurity in Africa, they too are externally inspired.

The disconcerting development associated with terror and anti-terror legislation in Africa underscores the limits of the human security concept. This is particularly imperative in SSA where there is an ever increasing tendency for the concept to generate huge public expectations. Among other things, human security has so far not replaced the state as the dominant referent of security. There are still a number of intra- and inter-state conflicts whose resolution requires the active involvement of the state. Moreover, some of the internal conflicts, especially those involving rebels are targeted at the state. Also, the African state continues to be the author and the key determinant of security. All these mean the state’s centrality in the security discourse in Africa may remain protracted and unchallenged for a long time. It has also to be noted that human security is not synonymous with development. Human security is rather an auxiliary factor of development. Thus, even attaining the goals of

human security does not mean an improvement in the standard of living. These limitations, along with suspicion among some countries that human security is an ideological tool or a pretext for humanitarian intervention by powerful states raise concerns not only about the efficacy of the concept but also about its universal acceptability. Ultimately, this perception may limit the utility of the concept, both in theory and practice in Africa.

However, even if the theoretical pretensions of human security are set aside, the practical side still needs to be addressed. Conflict, poverty, diseases, bad governance and human right abuses and environmental degradation needs to be halted. It is argued that this should be the challenge not only of Africans but also of the western countries who, have by their policies, contributed to the crisis in Africa. Western countries have to be part of the solution, moreover because they will contend with the consequences of the problem in the form of increased African migration to the west, inability to repay debt and even in an inability of Africa to continue to serve as a marginal market for the west. For these reasons the west should abolish the policies that have tended to hurt Africa, such as agricultural subsidies and aid conditionalities. They should also move speedily to curtail carbon and other green house emissions which are causing floods and droughts in Africa. As well the west, while increasing aid to Africa, should help establish a strong global environmental regime capable of controlling the activities of MNC.

While welcoming the contribution of the west to alleviate human insecurity, Africa should consider itself an integral part of the solution. To this end, it should reserve policies that tend to create conditions for conflict such as bad governance, marginalisation and exclusion of constituencies. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), the initiative instituted under the New partnership for African Development (NEPAD) to promote better governance should be strengthened to make it more effective in achieving that objective. Civil society should be encouraged and strengthened as a partner both in governance and in development. While these progressive policies will not instantly transform the tattered character of Africa, they will doubtlessly be setting the region firmly on the path of human security and ultimately sustainable development.

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Abstract

Dramatised in deepening poverty; food and nutritional insufficiency; health and educational crisis; bad governance; violent and intractable conflicts; rising numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons; and environmental bankruptcy among other things, human insecurity has heightened in Africa in recent decades. While this fact is acknowledged, there is little discussion on the structural causes of the problem in the conventional literature. Importantly, there is little attribution of the problem to globalisation. While part of the causes of insecurity are admittedly internal, including bad governance, conflicts and self-destructive public policies, it is opined that external forces have played an unobtrusive, sometimes conspicuous, role in the escalation of the problem. Globalisation along with other external forces exerts pressures on Africa that attenuate the latter's capacity to alleviate human insecurity. Also, enmeshed in intrusive conditionalities, interventions by Africa's creditor community in the form of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) and aid aimed at mitigating poverty and other adversities have often aggravated human insecurity. Accordingly, ameliorating human insecurity in Africa should be the responsibility not just of Africans but also of western states.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACOTA	African Contingency Operations Training Assistance
ACP	Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific
ACRI	African Crisis Response Initiative
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANC	African National Congress
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ASF	African Standby Force
AU	African Union
BPD	Barrels per day
CCR	Centre for Conflict Resolution (Cape Town)
CGG	Commission on Global Governance
CHS	Commission on Human Security
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESS	European Security Strategy
EU	European Union
EWS	Early Warning System
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FDI	Foreign Direct Investments
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFC	Ghana Forestry Commission
GNP	Gross National Product
GPOI	Global Peace Operations Initiative
HIPCs	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HSAB	Human Security Advisory Board
HSF	Human Security Fund
HSRF	Human Security Response Force
ICJ	International Commission of Jurists
IDE	Institute of Developing Economies
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IGAD	Inter-governmental Authority on Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund

IOM	International Organisation for Migration
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LRA	Lord Resistance Army
MAI	Multilateral Agreement on Investments
MCA	Millennium Challenge Account
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MNCs	Multinational Corporations
MSOP	Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
NGOs	Non-governmental Organisations
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OSAA	UN Office of the Special Advisor on Africa
PHSD	Peace and Human Security Division
PKOs	Peacekeeping Operations
PSC	Peace and Security Council
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SIGSG	Stockholm Initiative on Global Security and Governance
SPLA	Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UIC	Union of Islamic Courts
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOSOM	United Nations Operations in Somalia
UNITA	Uniao Nacional para a Independencia Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola)
UN-NADAF	United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s
UN-PARRED	United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development
US	United States
WHO	World Health Organisation
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

WRM
WTO

World Rainforest Movement
World Trade Organisation

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John Akokpari

I Introduction

1.1 *Overview of the study*

Human insecurity remains a global problem. The upsurge in the spate of terrorism, international crime, the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and diseases such as HIV/AIDS, SARS, avian flu, etc, environmental degradation, the proliferation of conflicts cross the world all highlight the vulnerability of people both in the north and in the south. Moreover, over 1.3 billion of the 6.6 billion world population subsist on less than one dollar a day (Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006: 3). Yet, it is no exaggeration that human insecurity is most acute in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)¹, where a host of life-threatening developments persist and against which states have made little progress in averting, let alone reversing. Indeed, contrary to initial optimism about greater opportunities for human security and general development after the relaxation of East-West tensions, human insecurity has heightened in the post-cold war era for a number of reasons. Among others, Africa assumed an ambivalent posture in the international economy (Callaghy 1995). On the one hand, the continent was being marginalised in the global economy, while on the other hand it was increasingly being incorporated into the same economy through economic aid, structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), globalisation and recently through the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).

Marginalisation and incorporation have implications for SSA's external indebtedness, which has seen a dramatic escalation in the last two decades. Indebtedness and the pressures to repay in order to remain credit worthy have fed into the region's human insecurity dynamic. The abatement of the cold war has also been followed by a dramatic rise in the number and frequency of inter- but especially intra-state conflicts. Many of these conflicts reflect competition over the state and diminishing resources, making them seemingly intractable (Adedeji 1999; Laremont 2002). While undermining human security, conflicts also paralyse states and incapacitate them from addressing pressing human needs. In addition, conflicts have spawned refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and migration all of which heighten human insecurity. And, notwithstanding the liberalisation of many hitherto closed political systems and the adoption of liberal constitutions, good governance has been far from established in many SSA countries. Various forms of dictators and unaccountable regimes exist whose corruption, ineptitude and neo-patrimonial policies have compromised basic

¹ The primary focus of this study is on sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), but the term is occasionally used interchangeably with Africa. Geographically, SSA includes the whole of Africa minus the rich Arab oil producing countries of the north – Libya, Morocco, Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia. Some classifications also exclude the Republic of South Africa because of its relatively high per capita income. In this study, however, my conception of SSA includes South Africa. Also, the phrase “human insecurity” is preferred to human security in the discussion of SSA mainly because the latter is abstract and can only be described. By contrast, human insecurity is visible, practical and can be experienced.

human rights. Poverty has worsened in the region, pushing many more sub-Saharan Africans to the margins of survival. Together, conflicts, bad governance and poverty have combined to exacerbate the human insecurity dilemma in SSA.

The irreparable havoc caused by the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa has not helped the region's human security situation either. On the contrary, HIV/AIDS threatens not just affected populations, but in fact, the physical survival of countries where the epidemic has attained crisis proportions (World Bank 2000). In addition to being the global epicentre of HIV/AIDS, SSA is also ravaged by other communicable but relatively preventable diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, ebola, diarrhoea and typhoid. All these are compounded by environmental degradation, which is accelerating with globalisation. Pollution, deforestation, soil erosion, floods, droughts and food shortages – manifestations of human insecurity – have marked the political economy of SSA. As a large proportion of the population depends on subsistence agriculture, environmental degradation and poverty have become mutually reinforcing making it difficult to distinguish cause from effect (Timberlake 1991). A distinguished feature of these threats is that they are neither posed by states nor by non-state actors. Hence they require counter-actions that are non- military. However, while the wide array of human security threats is acknowledged, there has been cursory analytical discussion on their causes.

This paper explores the causes of human insecurity in SSA. It argues that pressures unleashed by global forces in the form of liberalisation, privatisation, debt and globalisation undermine Africa's development in general and human security in particular. In advancing this argument the paper interrogates conventional assumptions on human insecurity in Africa and surmises that a heavily dependent region, Africa's fortunes are intricately tied to developments in the wider global economy. As such, human security in Africa cannot be realistically analysed in isolation from developments in the international system. Thus, in problematising human security, the paper explores the role of external factors in the aggravation of SSA's human security crisis. While part of the causes of human insecurity in SSA is arguably internal, deriving from among other things, conflicts, corruption, inauspicious public policies, leading to mismanagement, and sometimes from environmental factors such as famine, deforestation, desertification, etc, this paper surmises that the international environment plays a seemingly inconspicuous role in aggravating these factors. This hypothesis strikes at the core of conventional analysis, which tends to place less emphasis on the causes of human insecurity and even much less emphasis on the role of the broader international economic environment. Lacking a causal analysis, the discourse on human insecurity in SSA is conventionally cast as something with ontological status and which is both explainable and resolvable in isolation of other global developments. This paper contends that on the contrary, SSA economic, political and security fortunes are inseparable from wider extra-African developments.

The paper is broadly structured into five main parts with each, save the conclusion,

having sub-sections. The general introduction constitutes the first part and sets out the context of the study. This section outlines the central argument, the objectives and the methodology of the study and ends with a rough classification of the literature on human security. The second part is conceptual and deals with the notion of human security – its origins, development, challenges and criticisms. Section two ends with a discussion on the causes of human insecurity. The third part, empirical, focuses on Africa. It analyses the causes of human insecurity, in particular demonstrating the role of the international political economy and globalisation. The fourth part makes recommendations for minimising and averting human insecurity, focusing on the role of Africa and the international community. The fifth section concludes the study by briefly recapping the salient issues raised in the paper.

1.2 Objectives of the study

A study on human security is timely not only because of the pervasiveness of the problem, but also because existing analysis on the subject remain inadequate and problematic. Typically, analysis on human security in Africa tends to ignore the role of the international system in the region's development. The main objective of the study is therefore to broaden the analysis on human insecurity in SSA by introducing an international political economy dimension to the discourse. More specifically, the study aims:

- i. To review the literature and reconstruct the orthodox conceptions of security and human security in SSA with a primary objective of providing a deeper and holistic understanding of the nuances and trajectories of the phenomenon. The study dichotomises between the traditionally narrow and restricted notion of security of the cold war years on the one hand, and the broader and more generic view of security in the post-cold war era.
- ii. To unravel the present causes and potential sources of human insecurity in Africa. The underlying objective here is to expand the frontiers of conventional explanations of Africa's human security threats beyond internal to include external factors, especially globalisation and pressures from the wider international system;
- iii. Following from the above, to fill what is clearly a huge gap in the existing literature on the subject. External sources of insecurity are either unobtrusive or simply underemphasised. The significance of the study in this respect is its espousal of a holistic analysis of the sources and dynamics of human insecurity in SSA.
- iv. To make prognosis on the prospects and challenges of human security in Africa. As well, to make recommendations on promoting human security, thereby augmenting the already burgeoning literature on the subject in general and its relevance in Africa in particular; and
- v. As the study cannot conceivably deal with all aspects of human security, given its

multi-faceted nature, to lay the foundations for further research by identifying and mapping out new areas of interest on the subject.

1.3 Goals & anticipated impact

The study is expected to culminate into a research manuscript and later into a published peer-reviewed article, while the long-term goal is to develop it into a book. Exploring new dimensions and directions on the discourse on human security in Africa, such a publication is expected to receive wide readership among academics and policy makers. It is also expected to serve as a prescribed or recommended textbook in courses on African security and or development. Ultimately, it is expected to augment the growing body of literature on human security in Africa.

1.4 Research methodology

Focusing on the vast region of sub-Saharan Africa, the research did not lend itself to a detailed empirical study. Rather, it was predominantly library-based and relied on secondary sources – books, journals, monographs, reports and internet sources. These sources were supplemented by contacts with identified Japanese institutions, scholars and researchers who had interest and expertise on the broader subject of human security. A few interviews and discussions were held with some Japanese on the subject. These included Professor Mitsugi Endo, the director of the Human Security Programme at the University of Tokyo; Shinichi Takeuchi of IDE who was part of team that worked on a project on human security and Professor Yoichi Mine of Osaka University whose research interest focuses not only on human security and development, but also on Africa and the developing regions. As well, interviews were held with JICA officials involved with implementing the Japanese government's human security programme in Africa. My experiences with researching and teaching in Africa also helped in developing the new outlook on the subject.

1.5 Overview of literature

The body of literature on human security is huge, growing and often confusing. The confusion has been generated, and often deepened by the contested meaning, scope and utility of the concept (Oberleitner 2005: 186). For analytical purposes it is convenient, and indeed helpful, to classify the volume of literature on the subject into various dominant perspectives on the major elements of, and approaches to promoting human security. The classification is

arbitrary yet necessary to underscore the wide scope of issues falling within the broader human security framework. In no particular order, these perspectives include the human rights, feminist, developmentalist, globalist and Marxist approaches.

The human rights perspective argues that the protection of basic liberties is the entry point to understanding and promoting human security (Hayden 2004, Sen 1999). It sees the protection of basic rights both as a cause and effect of human security. Peace, which is vital for security, is a critical human right requirement. Shue (1996: 38-39) notes that “a demand for physical security is not normally a demand simply to be left alone, but a demand to be protected against harm... [it] is a demand for social guarantees against at least the standard threats.” The protection of human rights is not incompatible with human security. Rather, these are complimentary and mutually reinforcing. While acknowledging the various threats to human life, scholars writing from the human rights perspectives are concerned with the dangers posed to human security by recent developments in international relations, including the upsurge in humanitarian intervention and the war against terrorism (Robinson 2005). The imposition of economic sanctions on regimes has often worsened human insecurity of the larger population rather than the targeted regime. As well, overt military intervention in countries also often causes a sharp deterioration of human security as the examples of Afghanistan and Iraq clearly show. Similarly, the war on terror is causing great concerns for human rights across the world. This has prompted the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) to devote its August 2004 biennial conference in Berlin to calling for the upholding of Human Rights and the Rule of Law in combating terrorism. Exponents of the human rights approach argue that the respect for human rights should not be compromised either by the fight against terror, or by the quest to promote state security.

Another body of literature addresses human security from the perspective of feminist thought. This literature is critical of the traditional notions of security as espoused by classical realism. It sees the state and military-based notion of security as exceedingly masculine, male-biased and exclusionist to female participation in global security structures. Moreover, feminism sees notions of national security, and concepts associated with traditional state security as socially constructed to perpetuate the social advantages of men (Tickner 2004). This perspective notes, moreover, that women are more vulnerable to security threats than men as such the former has suffered more from poverty, diseases, displacement, conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction than men. The feminist-based literature thus projects feminist thought as part of the grand human security agenda. Removing and averting the various threats to women, including marginalisation and exclusion should be central to a holistic human security paradigm (Fukuda-Parr 2004, Basch 2004).

Yet, another set of literature proceeds from a “developmentalist” angle. Taking a holistic approach to human security, this literature more or less conflates human security with human development, although the UNDP Report (1994: 23) warned that notwithstanding the link between them the two are discrete. It sees human security as subsuming the key indices of

human development such as political and economic freedoms, education, poverty, incomes, conflicts, health, the environment and gender issues (Sen 1999, Gasper and Truong 2005, Mine 2007). This literature addresses a wide range of threats to decent human life. Unlike the human rights and feminist-based approaches, developmentalist literature does not disaggregate the components of human security; neither does it rank them in any order of importance. Rather, it treats all sources of threat to dignified individual and community life as important. Consequently, this scholarship recommends a holistic response to human security threats.

While, human right, feminists and developmentalist generally narrow the referent of security by shifting focus from the state to the individual, another set of literature expands it by focusing on the wider global system. This literature, which can conveniently be dubbed as “globalist” shifts from the traditional state-centred notion of security but argues that human security is inseparable from international security. Hence the former could not be pursued in isolation of the latter. Human security, globalists argue, could not be guaranteed in an insecure international environment. The absence of international security can potentially generate a “security dilemma”, which undermines human security. The link between human security at the national level on the one hand, and global security on the other, is informed by the common threats faced by the “global village”, including global warming, pollution, drugs, crime, viruses, and weapons of mass destruction. The globalist approach to human security thus proceeds from the truism that the traditional responsibilities of the state are changing and so are the sources of insecurity. Threats to state and people are no longer posed exclusively by its neighbours, but more generally from the international environment. Moreover, these threats are such that only through global efforts can they be averted. Globalists thus contend that human security is not just the responsibility of the state but also part of the broader agenda of global security. Thus, analysis of human security should focus on global security as well and not just on groups or individuals (Baylis 2005, Pettman 2005).

Marxist literature, however, differs radically from the above perspectives both on the causes of, and prescriptions for, human insecurity. Drawing on the analysis of Karl Marx, Marxists see the international system as polarised between two classes of people – the bourgeoisie who owns capital and other relevant means of material production on the one hand and the proletariat or workers who must sell their labour to make a wage. They contend that the relation between the two classes is one of exploitation of the latter by the former, which is facilitated by the state and its structures. Two key implications emerge from this dialectic: First, the proletariat remains insecure on account of its total dependence on the bourgeoisie and on wage labour; second, the dynamic of relation between the two classes, characterised by tension and conflict is a source of insecurity. Marxist literature generally highlights contradictions in class interests and sees this as a cause of human insecurity (Roth 2004). However, human security is achievable with the overthrow of capital and the bourgeoisie by a proletariat revolution. The revolution abolishes the oppressive state and its

associated structures, social classes and hence the exploitation of one class by another. Marxists hold that the bourgeoisie-proletariat contradictions are evident at both state and international levels.

It has to be emphasised that the above classifications are neither exhaustive nor rigid. It is possible to have other brand of literature meandering between two or more of the noted perspectives while there are still others that remain uncaptured. Some may argue that the protection of the environment or the abatement of conflicts should be the starting point for a discussion on human security. Depending on one's approach, the above cluster of literature can be sub-classified, re-classified or even de-classified. Thus, rather than serving to espouse arguments and counter-arguments, these classifications are simply to serve an analytical purpose and hold less importance for the analysis on Africa. The classification merely stresses particular causes of, and prescription for, human insecurity. In the discussion on Africa, human security is taken as the aggregate of all the above perspectives. The analysis on Africa proceeds on the assumption that human security means more or less the "absence of threats to core values." How this is achieved could be a subject of debate between exponents of the various perspectives. However, the current project considers Africa as more concerned with the ends than with the means of achieving human security. In the next section, we examine the concept of human security – its meaning, scope and development.

II Human Security- the paradigm of the moment

2.1 *Human security: scope and development*

In the last two decades, human security has been elevated as an alternative to the state-centred security of the cold war years. The pre-eminence of human security suggests a departure from the traditional meaning of security, which focused primarily on the state. Until the abatement of the cold war, security was largely linked to the state. “National security” became a catchphrase and was conceived in militarised and territorial terms. In the context of bipolarity, threats to the state were seen as largely external and required military responses. This notion was widely accepted by states and international organisations. For example, based on such principles as the preservation of territorial integrity, respect for the sovereignty of states, non-interference in the domestic affairs of states, and the sovereign equality of states, the UN Charter defines security primarily in regards to the state (Oberleitner 2005: 189). Similarly, the notion of collective security advanced by the UN was conceived in relation to state security. Chapter VII of the UN Charter calls for collective action among states to promote collective security. However, this purely realist conception now referred to as the “old” or “traditional” notion of security, was ethnocentric, parochial and too narrowly focused (Henk 2005). Since the attenuation of East-West ideological tensions, interest has shifted dramatically from traditional security concerned with external threats, use of military force, and the security of national borders to “any major security issues, including without limitations those of a political, strategic, economic, social, or ecological nature” (Vale 1992: 100).

In essence, the human security concept challenged the idea of state dominance in international relations and subsequently as the main referent of security. The international system is no longer thought to be characterised exclusively by states. There are a vast numbers of non-state actors in the international system, who are sometimes successful in influencing the actions of states. Moreover, the contemporary international system is being shaped by globalisation, which is increasingly de-emphasising the sanctity of national borders. This, along with growing interdependence among states, means that protection of territorial borders can no longer be the ultimate goal of security. As Lodgaard (2000: 4) argues, “the constraints on state sovereignty, the mobilisation of international civil society in defence of international norms, the sharing of power between state and non-state actors in a globalising world leave a clear message: the state is no longer able to monopolise the concept and practice of security.” In other words, these global developments have undermined the conventional assumptions of the Westphalia state system.

The ubiquity of poverty, the persistence of underdevelopment and general despondency in countries across the globe further highlight the state’s inability to adequately address the

vast number of issues posing threats to humanity. The 1994 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Report, the first official and multilateral articulation of the concept, outlined the limitations of the state-dominated security architecture and the justification for a broader, human-focused security paradigm:

The concept of security has so far too long been interpreted narrowly: as a security of territory from external aggression, or as protection of national interest in foreign policy or as global security from the threat of nuclear holocaust. It has been related more to nation-states than to people Forgotten were the legitimate concerns of ordinary people ... For many of them, security symbolized protection from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression, and environmental hazards (UNDP 1994: 22).

The new security paradigm de-emphasises the state and focuses on people as the main referent. The post-cold war era has seen the emergence and persistence of new security threats generated, among other things by economic adversities, poverty, viruses, environmental decadence, and terrorism. Mostly internal and emanating from non-state sources, these security threats have rendered the traditional concept of security anachronistic and necessitated the formulation of an expanded and more relevant paradigm. Thus, at the heart of the human security paradigm is the security and safety of people. Specifically, the UNDP Report (1994: 20-24) identifies human security to involve two main components – “freedom from fear and freedom from want.” These have been broadened into seven main areas, including:

- *Economic security* – this means access to employment and the earning of basic income on a sustained basis.
- *Food security* – this implies economic and physical access to food and balanced nutrition
- *Health security* – access to health facilities, medical care and basic drugs. It also means protection from all forms of communicable and non-communicable diseases.
- *Environmental security* – this means the protection of the environment and its natural resources upon which lives depend. Environmental security also means exploiting natural resources in such a way as not to compromise its use by future generations.
- *Personal security* – This means freedom from physical violence caused either by the state, groups or individuals. It also means freedom from threat to life, including suicide and drugs. Personal security is to be guaranteed both at home and at the work place.
- *Community security* – means the the freedom to belong to a community or communities, be they family, racial, religious, ethnic or others. Moreover, communities should be free from any forms of harassment, violence or intimidation.
- *Political security* – This includes the freedom of the individual to hold particular

political views, subscribe to ideologies, belong to political formations and freely express political views.

The UNDP argued that human security prevailed when people were safe from acute instability in their social and political environments. It understood human security to mean “safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression [and] protection from sudden and hurtful disruption in the patterns of daily life – whether in homes, in jobs or in communities” (UNDP 1994: 23). The essentials of human security have been captured in a poetic yet practical way by Pettman (2005: 140). Human security, he writes is

about the young child that did not die of neglect, the serious epidemic that did not break out, the job that was not cut, the gun that was not run, the ethnic prejudice that did not result in violence, the dissident voice that was not made silent, the landmine that was not sold and installed, the woman who was not trafficked across state borders and sexually abused, the agricultural product that was not dumped to the detriment of poor farmers, the short-term capital investment that was not allowed to wreck an infant industry, the addictive drug that was not produced and shipped, the refugee who was not forced to flee or remain abroad, and so on.

In short, human security is about eliminating threats to dignified life that characterise contemporary human society; it is about securing life free from threats.

Although articulated at the inter-governmental level in 1994, the notion of human security predated the abatement of the cold war and the UNDP Report. For example, in his State of the Union Address in 1944, American President Franklin Roosevelt argued that security “means not only physical security, which provides safety from attacks by aggressors” but also “economic security, social security [and] moral security”. He argued further that “freedom from fear is eternally linked with freedom from want.”² However, little is known of the extent to which US immediate post-war foreign policy addressed or became consistent with the pillars of human security. It was certain though that in the context of American concerns with the “communist threat” and the determination to contain Soviet influence from the mid-1940s, Washington’s human security pretensions, even if genuine, were quickly overshadowed by the practical demands of the cold war.

Two years after Roosevelt’s address, the post-war constitution of Japan also articulated the concept of human security. The preface to the 1946 Japanese constitution states among other things that “We recognise that all peoples of the world have the right to live in peace, free from fear and want”.³ The Japanese had just emerged from World War II in which their domination and colonisation of Asia had left a trail of destruction in Korea and China among other victims. The historic American bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, two Japanese

² President Franklin Roosevelt 1944 State of the Union address, available online at <http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=463> (Accessed: 14 /11/05).

³ <http://www.solon.org/Constitutions/Japan/English/english-Constitution.html> (Accessed 5/3/07)

cities during the war, further exposed the country to the horrors of war. In the post-war era therefore, the Japanese adopted a pacifist constitution under which they resolved that neither they nor any people on earth should live in fear and want. The Japanese determination to shun war and adversities was reinforced by Article 9 of the constitution, which explicitly prohibits the engagement in war of the Japanese armed forces – naval, infantry or air force. For the Japanese, human security is to serve as a foundation of the country’s post-war foreign policy. Although initially informed by war, the Japanese understanding of human security latter extended beyond conflict. In a speech at an international conference in December 1998, Keizo Obuchi, the Japanese Prime Minister, noted that human security “is the key, which comprehensively covers all measures that threaten human survival, daily life, and dignity – for example, environmental degradation, violations of human rights, transnational organised crime, illicit drugs, refugees, poverty, antipersonnel landmines and...infectious diseases such as AIDS – and strengthens efforts to confront these threats.”⁴ The Japanese conception of human security thus covers all contemporary threats to human safety; i.e. both “freedom from fear and freedom from want”.

Subsequently, human security began to feature as a theme of intellectual discussion towards the terminal stages of the cold war. In 1983 Barry Buzan produced a classic work, which added a human dimension to the predominantly cold war-informed meaning of security. Advocating a link with peoples’ lives and survival experiences, Buzan focuses on the peace and security of people. He outlines a wider conception of security that transcends the narrow confines of the state to encompass the political, economic, societal and environmental threats to social well-being. The key point of departure of what was becoming a “new” concept from the traditional notion of security is the former’s emphasis on the people rather than the state. Human insecurity defines critical threats to peoples’ lives – what Buzan terms “social threats”, that is, threats “arising from the fact that people find themselves embedded in a human environment with unavoidable social, economic and political consequences” (Buzan 1983: 19). Busan’s work injected some momentum into the rise to prominence of a concept that was already establishing itself as a credible alternative paradigm in security studies. By the beginning of the 1990s, the concept had gained further grounds and was influencing international policy making. For example, *Common Responsibility in the 1990s*, the report of the Stockholm Initiative on Global Security and Governance (SIGSG), published in 1991 acknowledged the emergence of new security threats other than political (SIGSG 1991: 17-18). The report thus called for a new security paradigm that recognises threats from non-conventional sources such as environmental degradation, population growth and bad governance among others. Thus, before the celebrated UNDP report, human security had already become a familiar concept, featuring as a paradigm in academic circles and serving as a pillar of foreign policy for regional bodies.

⁴ <http://home.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/heiwa/pub/E19/Chap1.pdf> (Accessed 20/02/07)

In the post-1994 era, a series of unilateral and multilateral initiatives to articulate the concept of human security took place. In 1999 the Human Security Network (HSN), an intergovernmental movement dedicated to promoting human security, was launched in Oslo, by a group of countries, including Canada, Norway and Japan. The HSN, which by mid-2005 had included no fewer than 13 countries drawn from Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, North America and Latin America, was initially concerned with drawing global attention to the dangers of landmines. Yet, as an advocacy group, the HSN campaigned not just against landmines and the proliferation of small arms, but it was also concerned with promoting democratic governance; sustainable human development through the alleviation of absolute poverty; raising global awareness about HIV/AIDS; and promoting people-centred development, among other things, all of which it believed were critical prerequisites “for building human security.”⁵ The 1995 report of the Commission on Global Governance (CGG), *Our Global Neighbourhood* also stressed the need to broaden the concept of security from its territorial-based meaning “to include the security of people and the planet” (CGG 1995: 78).

By 2000 a number of industrialised countries who were members of the HSN including Canada, Switzerland and Austria had joined Japan in making human security a cornerstone of their foreign policies while some countries in the South, such as South Africa had incorporated the notion into mainstream domestic policy (Henk 2005: 94). At the highest multilateral level Kofi Annan, the Secretary General of the UN, was setting human security as a key objective of the world body. In a statement to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference in 1998 Annan maintained that “the prevention of conflict begins and ends with the protection of human life and the promotion of human development. Ensuring human security is, in the broadest sense, the United Nations’ cardinal mission.”⁶ Annan, however, later cautioned that human security transcended the abatement of conflicts: “human security, in its broadest sense, embraces far more than the absence of violent conflicts. It encompasses human rights, good governance, access to education and health care and ensuring that each individual has opportunities and choices to fulfil his or her potential.”⁷

The launching of the Commission on Human Security (CHS) at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000 was a further milestone in the promotion of human security. The CHS was tasked with, among other things, exploring the dimensions and trends of the new security threats to people and make necessary recommendations for averting those threats. The Commission was eventually established in 2001. Composed of eminent practitioners, the 12-member commission was co-chaired by Sadako Ogata and Amartya Sen and was referred to

⁵ <http://www.humansecuritynetwork.org/participate-e.php> (Accessed 20/02/07)

⁶ United Nations *Chronicle* online 35(1), available at <http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/1998/issue1/0198p3.html> (Accessed 20/3/07)

⁷ Kofi Annan “Secretary General Salutes International Workshop on Human Security in Mongolia.” Two-Day Session in Ulaanbaatar, 8-10 May 2000. Press Release SG/SM/7382. On line at <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2000/20000508.sgs7382.doc.html> (Accessed 20/4/07).

as the Ogata-Sen Commission. The CHS presented its report titled *Human Security Now* in May 2003 in which it outlined a comprehensive scope of human security and in many ways restated the calls of the 1994 UNDP Report. This ranged from basic freedoms of individuals and communities to social and economic empowerment – what the Commission called “the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity” (CHS 2003: 4). On this note the Commission called for the need to focus on security both at the macro (state) and micro (community and individual) levels. The Commission also noted that violent conflicts, poverty, ill-health, illiteracy and other socio-economic adversities are sources of human insecurity and therefore calls for the broadening of the security paradigm to include these non-conventional threats.

Unlike the 1994 UNDP Report, the CHS slightly expanded the components of human security to include “empowerment”. Thus, it underscores the notion that human security involves “freedom from fear, freedom from want and the freedom to take action on one’s own behalf.” Protection and empowerment are two critical strategies identified by the report for ensuring people’s freedom from want, fear and freedom to take action on one’s behalf. Other highlights of the Commission’s report include ways of stemming human insecurity. These, the report identified as protecting people from violent conflicts; the proliferation of arms; protecting people on the move such as refugees, IDPs and migrants; establishing a fund to cater for post-conflict situations; encouraging the establishment of fair trade among countries; ensuring minimum living standards everywhere; ensuring universal access to basic healthcare and education; establishing an equitable global system for patent rights; and recognizing the freedom of individuals to have identities and affiliations.⁸ Finally, the CHS recommended the establishment of a Human Security Advisory Board (HSAB) to among other things follow up on the recommendations made in the report. The HSAB was subsequently established in 2003.

Alongside the specific initiatives undertaken by some of its members, the EU incorporated human security into official regional policy in 2004. In its 36-page report, the *Human Security Doctrine for Europe* also referred to as the Barcelona Report, the EU acknowledged the numerous, yet new security threats facing people across the world. In particular, the report identified the scourge of conflicts and the devastating impact these have on human security. The Report was thus concerned with making recommendations on how best to implement the European Security Strategy (ESS), a multilateral preventive mechanism agreed upon by the European Council in December 2003. Alluding to the growing threat to humans posed by conflicts, failed states, organised crime, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the report recommended, among other things, the establishment of a “Human Security Response Force” (HSRF) composed of no fewer than 15,000 men and women to rapidly respond to conflicts and other forms of social disruptions

⁸ Commission on Human Security Report (on line) pp 1-3. Available at <http://www.humansecurity-chs.org/finalreport/outlines/outline.pdf> (Accessed 7/3/07)

in Europe.⁹ By 2003, therefore the concept of human security had been firmly established as a paradigm, shaping national, regional and international policy.

The contribution of Japan and Canada to the global promotion of human security deserves further discussion, not just because these countries are among the leading contemporary advocates of the concept, but also because both countries later focused on specific components of human security. As indicated already, Japan's initial conception of human security covered both "freedom from fear and freedom from want". Freedom from fear deals with threats to life such as conflicts, terrorism, etc, while freedom from want is concerned with deprivations caused by poverty, diseases, environmental degradation, etc. Consistent with its desire to promote human security, the Japan's Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori proposed the establishment of a human security fund (HSF) at the UN to finance human security-related programmes. The establishment of the HSF became one of the many recommendations of the Commission on Human Security (CHS). By March 2006, Tokyo had contributed 31.5 billion Yen to the HSF. In addition, Japan devoted 14 billion yen to the promotion of grassroots projects (Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2006: 7). Japan's ODA regime was also reformed in 2003 with the incorporation of a human security focus. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) was given a new mandate in 2004 to serve as a key institution for implementing the country's human security agenda. JICA's activities, however, have focused mainly on empowering communities and alleviating poverty. In this wise, Japan focuses more on "freedom from want" than on "freedom from fear".

Similarly, Canada's initial holistic approach to human security has somewhat changed. In his address to the 51st United Nations General Assembly in September 1996, Lloyd Axworthy, the Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister, maintained that,

Human security is much more than the absence of military threat. It includes security against economic privation, an acceptable quality of life, and a guarantee of fundamental human rights....it recognises the complexity of the human environment and accepts that the forces influencing human security are related and mutually reinforcing. At a minimum, human security requires that basic needs are met, but it also acknowledges that sustained economic development, human rights and fundamental freedoms, the rule of law, good governance, sustained development and social equity are as important to global peace as arms control and disarmament. It recognises the links between environmental degradation, population growth, ethnic conflicts and migration. Finally, it concludes that lasting stability cannot be achieved until human security is guaranteed" (Axworthy 1997: 184).

Axworthy became well known for his advocacy for human security. He devoted considerable amounts of his time to advancing human security as a paradigm after leaving the Canadian Foreign Service. Consequently, the Canadian government invested enormous

⁹ http://www.centrodiritiumani.unipd.it/a_materiali/esami/ppsuenu/HSDoctrineEurope.pdf (Accessed 9/3/07).

resources and energy into advancing its human security agenda. However, following the increasing spate of political conflicts, religious contestations and ethnic violence across the world, the Canadians customised the concept of human security into a more circumscribed version, focusing on the protection of “individuals and communities from any form of political violence.”¹⁰ In this wise, Ottawa defined human security succinctly as “freedom from pervasive threats to people’s rights, safety and lives” (Dorn 2001: 1). This, Ottawa believes involves the protection of people and communities from conflicts and wars. In promoting this particular human security agenda, five principal themes dominated Canadian foreign policy – protection of civilians; peace support operations; governance and accountability; public safety; and conflict prevention. To facilitate the implementation of these themes, a Peace and Human Security Division (PHSD) was created in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (Dorn 2001). The PHSD has produced several documents, setting out Canada’s vision of a world free of fear and want.¹¹

2.2 Criticisms against the human security concept

In spite of the wide acceptance of human security as an alternative to the state-based paradigm, and in spite of capturing the vast array of threats to human life, the concept and practice of human security has not been immune from controversy and criticisms. A great deal of the concern with the concept centres on its meaning, scope and methodological construct. Basing on the definition of the 1994 UNDP Report, Paris (2001, 2005) argues that the definition of the concept sets it to subsume every threat to human life. He contends that the concept is too expansive and includes “virtually any kind of unexpected or irregular discomfort” (Paris 2001: 89). For lacking a precise definition, the term is accused of being too inclusive to serve as a useful analytical tool. This charge is, however, rejected by another school of thought, which argues rather for broadening the concept. Pettman (2005: 140) contends that focusing exclusively on humans as the referent of security is inadequate and problematic. He thus calls for a comprehensive account of human security to cater for “traditional” ways of living. The concept of human security is thus in a limbo; while one view denounces it as too broad and inclusive, another deplors it as too narrow and restrictive.

Other concerns relate to methodology and question the feasibility of practically establishing human security. While acknowledging the desirability of a shift away from the state as the key referent of security, there is scepticism about the feasibility of truly meeting the goals of human security. The two related questions posed by sceptics are: (i) Is human security practically achievable? (ii) Can human security supplant state security as a new

¹⁰ <http://www.humansecurityreport.info/content/view/24/59/> (Accessed 7/3/07).

¹¹ <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/foreignp/humansecurity/HumanSecurityBooklet-e.asp> (Accessed 14/3/07)

dominant paradigm? In spite of the enormous amounts of funds and energy dissipated by states and statesmen towards promoting human security over the last ten years, there is no tangible evidence to suggest that a particular region or country has become humanly secured or is moving towards attaining human security. Sceptics doubt the practicality of meaningfully achieving human security (Henk 2005: 99-100, Tomuschat 2003: 56). Moreover, despite coming into vogue for more than a decade, the human security concept has not established itself as an alternative to the state-based security. Human security has so far neither displaced nor replaced the state as the referent of security in practice. This reality confirms the argument that human security is not a substitute for national security (Oberleitner 2005: 191). There are still inter-state conflicts, terrorism and armed rebellions, which by their very nature, legitimately fall under the old state-centred security paradigm. The persistence of these threats means that the state will continue to be a referent of security. This is particularly so in Africa where intra- and inter-state conflicts remain a permanent feature of the region's politics. Moreover, in the African context, human security is arguably inseparable from state security as it is the state and its "institutions that ensure the physical protection and safety of their citizens, their equal access to law and protection from abuse" (Cilliers 2004: 11-12). Having also remained at the centre of development, the state may resist efforts to dislodge it from this enviable position.

Again, the very nature of the human security paradigm and the manner in which it is being advanced sets it against the national interests of states. This, some argue, limits the foreign policy choices of states and in the process undermines national sovereignty. It is even feared that it could easily be used as a pretext by powerful states for humanitarian intervention or to subvert regimes considered unsympathetic with policy preferences of stronger states (Dorn 2001). Such concerns are held by a good number of "rogue" states in Africa. The Sudanese government's reluctance to accept a UN peacekeeping force, preferring rather an African Union force, to protect defenceless civilians in Darfur against government-backed militias, is largely motivated by fears that the US could use the mission to subvert it. This is against a background of US repeated accusation of Sudan of harbouring international terrorists. Similarly, the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC), the militia group that took control over Somalia in July 2006 after years of chaos, resisted proposals for the deployment of an African Union force in the country on grounds that the US could help install a western-inclined regime. However, the Islamic Courts was forcibly ejected by Ethiopian forces in mid-December 2006. The growing African scepticism over western/American paradigms and solutions for the continent's problems are not helping either. American and western dominance in global affairs in the aftermath of the cold war, along with their known desire to spread western values raise fears that human security could easily become an ideological policy instrument (Acharya 2001). Generally, the suspicion that the pursuit of human security goals could be used to further the foreign policy agenda of states could potentially lead to resistance by weaker states.

It is equally important to pose the question, especially in the case of Africa: who polices human security? Notwithstanding popular rhetoric, the state still remains dominant both as an architect and referent of security (Henk 2005: 100). By and large the state is at the centre of efforts to promote human security. The state informs, guides, and sometimes directs human security initiatives. Even initiatives towards human security regarded as non-state require the tacit approval and active cooperation of the state. The contemporary experiences in various parts of the world, especially Africa, suggests that while states are authors of human security, they can also engineer human insecurity (Oberleitner 2005: 196). The state can engage in domicile – the systematic intentional killing of its own citizens – either slowly but surely as in contemporary Zimbabwe, or speedily and violently as in Darfur. In undermining human security the state can as well thwart efforts of the international community or non-state actors to alleviate human suffering by obstructing their entry into the country as the Sudanese government is doing with Darfur. The state can also indirectly contribute to human insecurity in cases where it responds too slowly to assist victims of environmental catastrophes as, for example, was the case in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina in the American state of New Orleans in 2005 (Mine 2007). The African state in particular thus can severely erode citizens' freedom from fear and freedom from want. Similarly, non-state actors can also both promote and undermine human security. Just as humanitarian NGOs are dedicated to the course of human security so do armed groups, rebels and terrorists organisations endanger human security.

Further, given the euphoria about the concept and what it can achieve, it is imperative to signal caution about the limits of human security. Human security should not be projected to incite unreasonable expectations. It must be stressed that human security is not the ultimate panacea to all societal ills. Current discussions, especially at the international level, tend to create an impression that human security is synonymous with development. Often times, it is also depicted as though improved standard of living will follow inexorably with the attainment of human security goals. Nothing can be further from the truth. Human security is neither development nor can it spawn better living conditions by itself. As the UNDP (1994: 23) notes, development is about creating choices, while human security is about exercising those choices. Thus, the attainment of human security should be seen simply as a means to achieving broader developmental objectives. Human security ensures the prevalence of a serene environment within which citizens can peacefully and meaningfully exercise the choices available to them in furthering development. This involves attaining the necessary human instrumentalities to engage in agriculture, commerce, education and other critical industries of development. As a result of this difference, human security should be trumpeted with caution for it could easily usher in another era of disappointed hopes as did SAP and multiparty democracy in the 1980s and 1990s respectively, which generated optimism yet brought only vain promises of better living conditions to Africa. Some observers, in fact, caution that the very idea of securitising human beings creates false hopes for victims rather

than addressing their genuine concerns (Khong 2001: 231-236).

Feminist scholars are also critical of the human security concept. They are, for example concerned that the 1994 human security report did not treat women as a special disadvantaged category. This, they argue could mask the specific issues that predominantly affect women. Moreover, like the previous state-based security paradigm, feminists fear that the definition and content of human security still remains a largely male enterprise. What constitutes insecurity or violence against women is determined by men and not women. Thus, feminist literature is on the whole highly pessimistic on the prospects of human security and its constituents becoming a genuinely transforming paradigm (Basch 2004).

In spite of these criticisms, human security remains popular in theory and a seemingly unassailable global paradigm. It seems poised to guide the actions of national governments, NGOs and the international community at large. For Africa, it may well prove to be the path to genuine development that has remained elusive. This is more so because in contrast to previous paradigms such as structural adjustment (SAPs), democratisation and the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiatives¹², which focused on particular aspects of Africa's problems as the starting point for addressing underdevelopment, human security is holistic dealing with the political, social, economic and environmental aspects of human life. As such, it is worth experimenting. Yet, a comprehensive appreciation of human security requires a holistic understanding of the concept, including its structural causes and sources. In the next section we analyse the causes of human insecurity.

2.3 Human security threats – causes and controversies

The overwhelming literature on human insecurity is muted on its causes. Not even the much celebrated 1994 UNDP Report or the 2003 UN Commission Report on Human Security came close to discussing the underlying causes of the problem beyond its symptoms. In the main, discussions on human insecurity have been limited to an acknowledgement of its existence and production of a chronology of its symptoms. Conditions such as poverty, health and food insecurity, conflicts and population displacements noted in the UNDP report, are symptoms of much more fundamental causes. Poverty is not natural; no child is born in Africa to be poor and destined to lead an insecure life. Neither does poverty descend from the skies like rain or hail; it is rather the consequence of a more fundamental cause. The same could be said of conflicts. No people in their right senses like to constantly live under conditions of violence and war that threaten their personal or community security. There are always deep-

¹² HIPC was an initiative instituted by the G8 in 1996 under which 41 countries across the world were identified as poor, heavily indebted and needing debt remission. Of the 41 countries identified, 33 were in sub-Saharan Africa. The dominant objective of the initiative was to relieve the debt of these countries to enable them re-plough funds that would have gone into debt repayment into development. For a discussion on the HIPC and its dismal overall impact, see Akokpari (2001).

seated causes that spark or predispose people to violence. It is therefore not enough to point to human insecurity without identifying its root causes, especially when the problem is menacing. Identifying the causes of a problem is necessary for a fuller understanding of its implications. Above all, understanding and mastering the causes of a problem enhances opportunities for effectively addressing it. Thus, for the purpose of addressing human insecurity, it is helpful to explore the root causes of poverty, conflicts, environmental degradation, among others, which tend to exacerbate human insecurity in SSA.

Attempts at understanding the causes of human insecurity often focus on the domestic politics of states. For example, in her analysis of human insecurity, Robinson (2005: 5) notes that the twin concepts of disempowerment and marginalisation of communities are at the heart of the problem. She contends that “the underlying causes of practically all human insecurity are an absence of the capacity to influence change at a personal or community level, exclusion from voting or participating in local and national decisionmaking, and economic or social marginalisation.” As a solution, therefore, she suggests the need to empower people and to include them in mainstream decision making. While this prognosis has some validity for Africa, it only provides partial insights into the larger human insecurity problematique. In the main, it adds to the growing voices that point to human insecurity as a phenomenon caused primarily by factors internal to states. Even so, it neither captures the causes of marginalisation nor exclusion, thus vitiating the usefulness of the argument. The utility of the analysis is limited, moreover, in its inability to explain human insecurity caused by environmental bankruptcy. As earlier noted, the Japanese and Canadian governments have been hailed for pioneering the incorporation of human security into their official foreign policies. They view human insecurity in terms of poverty and conflicts respectively. Accordingly, they advocate poverty alleviation and conflict-prevention measures as solutions to human insecurity. Yet, these approaches only partially explain the complex and deep-seated causes of human insecurity, especially in Africa. What, then, are the causes of human insecurity?

So far, the most influential causal explanation of human security relevant to the current study is the structural violence argument associated with Johan Galtung. According to Galtung, human insecurity is caused by violence, which is “.... harm done to human beings as a process, working slowly as the way misery in general and hunger in particular, erode and finally kill human beings” Galtung (1985: 145-146). In an earlier work Galtung argues that violence takes two main forms. First, there is personal or direct violence, i.e., “where there is an actor who commits the violence” (Galtung 1969: 170). In this wise, direct violence generates insecurity when, for example, a robber hijacks a car; a woman is abducted, smuggled or raped; in conflict situations civilians are injured, maimed or killed; an unscrupulous individual deliberately sets the forest on fire or when a rebel group poisons a river, which is a community’s source of water, etc. This part of Galtung’s explanation is similar to the “human agency” argument made by Bajpai (1985: 360), which traces human

insecurity directly to human or human-made factors.

The second form of violence is structural or indirect. Galtung also refers to this as “social injustice”. In this form, “the violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances” (Galtung 1969: 171). In distinguishing between personal and structural violence, Galtung notes that,

....if people are starving when this is objectively avoidable, then violence is committed, regardless of whether there is a clear subject-action-object relation, as during a siege yesterday or no such clear relation, as in the way world economic relations are organised today. Violence with a clear subject-object relation is manifest it is visible as *action*. It corresponds to our ideas of what *drama* is, and it is personal because there are persons committing the violence. Violence without this relation is structural, built into structure. Thus, when one husband beats his wife there is a clear case of personal violence, but when one million husbands keep one million wives in ignorance there is structural violence. Correspondingly, in a society where life expectancy is twice as high in the upper as in the lower classes, violence is exercised even if there are no concrete actors one can point to directly attacking others, as when one kills another” – italicized words in the original (Galtung 1969: 171).

Galtung thesis on both direct and structural violence provides a good context for understanding human insecurity in SSA given its relation with the industrial north. For example, an asymmetrical trade pattern was established between Africa and the west since colonialism, which disadvantages the former. Africa has been unable to change this pattern largely due to the operations of global institutions, structures and regimes. The dominant Breton Woods institutions, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) have functioned to maintain the structural imbalance between the north and south, leading to vast inequalities between the two regions. The reality of north-south relations fit into the explanation of both direct and structural violence. Although critics may argue that the structural violence argument is deficient in failing to explain environmental insecurity, it will be argued subsequently in the case of SSA that ecological insecurity is part of the structural crisis generated by globalisation and the international global economy.

To be sure, others have built on the structural violence thesis, linking it directly to the global economy. This school argues that structural oppression and violence are endemic in the global economic system (Booth 2005: 263). This view suggests that human security is in part determined by human inhabited structures, including political, social and ecological conditions. Pushing the argument further, Hampson (2004: 350) notes that human security at national levels have direct relationships with international security and that “international order cannot rest solely on the sovereignty and viability of states.” Similarly, Thakur (2005: 347) notes the presence of “structural coercion so severe as to turn human beings into

chattels....” The collective structuralist view reflects a notion that human insecurity is caused by oppressive structures. Hettne and Soderbaum (2002: 33) contend that the need for broadening the security discourse beyond the state was necessitated by the structural transformation in the international system, characterised by interdependence and the new global divisions of labour and power. Positioned at the periphery of the international economic system, the global division of labour and power has generated implications for human security in Africa. The international division of labour, along with pressures unleashed by globalisation adversely affects Africa’s ability to address the various human security threats identified by the UNDP Report. How globalisation and external factors promote human insecurity in SSA is analysed in the next section.

III Sources of human insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa

In July 2003, the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom organised an international seminar aimed at exploring the root causes of human insecurity.¹³ Although the overwhelming focus of the deliberations was on terrorism considered to be the main source of security threat to western countries, the seminar arrived at certain conclusions that are relevant for understanding the causes of human insecurity in other regions, including SSA. Among other things, the seminar identified four interrelated categories of causal factors of human insecurity:

- a) causes that are unobtrusive and hence not easily acknowledged and explained;
- b) causes that have historical origins;
- c) causes that are systematically reproduced through existing social, political and economic institutions; and
- d) causes that reflect the immediate consequences of existing institutional conditions.

These factors were further collapsed into two main headings – internationalized causes (factors emanating from the western-inspired state system and values, including the globalization of western democracy); and localized causes – those that are specific to local situations such as terrorism, inequalities, inauspicious state policies, conflicts, etc. Although the geographical focus of the conference was on Western societies, the typologies of causes have relevance in SSA, where many of the causes of human insecurity are unobtrusive and historical. Also, some of the causes of human insecurity are either directly or indirectly incited by the globalisation of western values. Thus, the typologies of causes are consistent with the structuralism argument in that most of the causes of human insecurity in Africa are externally-inspired. The question is how unobtrusive, historical and externally-inspired are the causes of human insecurity in SSA, and what role do states and existing social institutions play in the human insecurity dynamic in SSA? In addressing these critical questions, it is imperative to explain globalisation, even if cursorily, to identify some of its salient features and consequences as a gateway to understanding how it directly affects or indirectly provides the context for contemporary human insecurity in SSA.

3.1 Globalisation as a direct and proximate source of human insecurity

As a concept, globalisation remains contested, devoid of any intellectual consensus on its definition. It has therefore been variously defined based on its visible characteristics and

¹³ See the report of the Cambridge Security Seminar available online at http://www.umich.edu/~iinet/iisite/pdf/kennedy_new_security_paradigm.pdf (Accessed 20/3/07)

impact. For example, Hettne *et al* (1999: 7) define globalisation as “the vision of a borderless world in which territory has lost all importance and functionalism is predominant”. McGrew (1992) conceives of globalisation in two senses: first as “the multiplicity of linkages and interconnections that transcend nation-states and societies, which currently make up the modern world system” and second, as “a process through which events, decisions, and activities in one part of the world can come to have significant consequences for individuals and communities in quite distant parts of the globe.” Giddens (1990) puts this idea more succinctly as “the intensification of worldwide social relations, which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.” Others see globalisation in terms of the re-ordering of social relations at the global level. Thus, Held *et al* (1999: 16) perceive globalisation as a process (or set of processes), which embodies a transformation of the spatial organisation of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact-generating transcontinental or inter-regional flows and networks of activity, interaction and power.” A set of basic and incontrovertible attributes of globalisation can thus be discerned from the above definitions. These include internationalisation i.e., the intensification of cross border interaction between countries and economies; liberalisation, i.e., emphasis on deregulation of the political and economic spaces; universalisation, i.e., its capacity to spread experiences of one region to various parts of the globe; and deterritorialisation, i.e. the capacity to undermine state borders (Scholte 2001).

An equally visible feature of globalisation is the close connection between countries, economies and peoples, shrinking the world into what is now euphemistically described as a “global village” (McGrew 1992: 63). The linkage of economies and countries is being facilitated by the advances in technology seen in at least two ways: First, the processes of flow and dissemination of information has been revolutionarised by satellite television and radios, enabling people in one part of the world to watch events live in another part. In addition, communication has been improved by the internet and cellular phones. This information superhighway has ensured that residents of even the remotest part of the world where these facilities exist are able to communicate with other parts of the world several thousands of kilometres away. Secondly, the way people travel has seen a dramatic revolution. The use of jumbo and supersonic jets has considerably reduced the time required, for example, to cross the Atlantic from Europe. Moreover, the production of larger and more spacious aircrafts has made it possible for more people to be flown at a time. The faster mode of travel has facilitated interactions and the conduct of business several thousands of kilometres away. Thus, as Giddens (1990: 19) observes, globalisation has radically re-ordered our social and economic life in that “locales are thoroughly penetrated by and shaped in terms of social influences quite distant from them.” Consequently, it has become possible for “the decisions and actions of the powerful [to] readily acquire a transnational impact affecting the welfare and security of people across the globe” (Poku 2001: 17).

Similarly, the global financial system has been reshaped in such a way that capital can easily be invested across borders. In other words, the movement of capital is now faster than ever and multinational corporations (MNCs) have become the key agents of this process. A global trade regime such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which advocates for the removal of trade barriers, has provided fresh opportunities for capital to move and to find niches across the world. The rules of WTO are being reinforced by other multilateral pacts such as the multilateral agreement on investment (MAI). This agreement was originally negotiated among OECD beginning from 1995 but latter offered to developing countries. Essentially, MAI calls for the removal of trade barriers and empowers investors and MNCs to sue host governments deemed to be pursuing discriminatory policies against capital. In a sense, the power conferred on capital by MAI erodes the already tenuous sovereignty of host states in Africa. In turn, the loss of sovereignty to capital and markets means that globalisation impacts negatively on human security while at the same time truncating the ability of host states to redeem themselves.

A further disconcerting consequence of globalisation is the engendering and deepening of inequalities both at the international and national levels. Mainly due to the differing abilities of regions and states to confront its challenges or tap its associated advantages, globalisation has widened the already disturbing gap between the industrial north and the agricultural south. This gap is seen, among other things, in the disproportionate distribution of global infrastructure and wealth between the two poles. It was observed at the turn of the century that the bulk of the global communication infrastructure was concentrated in the north, which with only a fifth of the world's population had access to 74 percent of all the world's telephone lines while the poorest fifth of the world had access to a paltry 1.5 percent. Similarly, at the beginning of the 1990s, the North received over three-quarters of total global foreign direct investments (FDI), compared to a mere one percent by the South (Poku: 2001: 18). In his memorable Reith Lectures on globalisation at the turn of the century, Anthony Giddens (1999) noted that the share of the richest fifth of the world's population in global income rose from 70 percent to 85 percent, while that of the poorest fifth dropped from 2.3 percent to 1.4 percent over the preceding decade. The asymmetry in the distribution of the gains and pains of globalisation is also visible at the regional level. In SSA, the effects are overwhelmingly negative. In the same lecture, Giddens observed that the income per head in 20 SSA countries fell below what it was two decades ago. The pattern of the inequitable distribution of the benefits of globalisation is also perceptible at the national level, which in many cases has led to tensions and conflicts, thus undermining human security. Globalisation essentially reinforces liberal assumptions on development and the implementation of these assumptions has compounded the human security problematique in SSA. To understand how this happens, we need to carefully analyse some of the known sources of human insecurity in Africa, including conflicts, poverty, the debt crisis, political liberalization, environmental degradation, food insecurity and social inequalities.

3.1.1 Conflicts

There is absolutely no doubt that conflicts present one of the most daunting threats to human security in Africa. Africa's conflicts are, however, unique in the sense that they have become much frequent and intense. For example, a good proportion of the 80 conflicts recorded in SSA between 1960 and the 1990s occurred in the post cold war era (Adedeji 1999: 3). Also, majority of the conflicts are intra-state. Of the 16 wars occurring on the continent between 1990 and 1997, only two – the Chadian/Libyan and the Rwandan/Ugandan conflicts were interstate. So far, only few countries in the region have been spared of war. In 1994, no fewer than 12 of the 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa were at war; two countries were at the post-war phase while 14 had a previous or current experience with political violence (Adejumobi 2001: 149). To confirm its preeminence as a theatre of conflicts, Africa had the largest UN peacekeeping contingent –17,000 strong in the DRC – by the close of 2006; while there are calls for additional international peacekeepers in Darfur and Somalia, where conflicts have been raging unabated for the past 5 and 16 years respectively. Ivory Coast, once the epitome of economic development in Africa is now war-torn. Similarly, Zimbabwe which was until 1990 full of promise for political stability is now teetering dangerously on the brink of violent inter-party conflict.

Generally, these conflicts have devastating impact on human security. First, many of the conflicts have drafted children as combatants. This is especially the case in conflicts involving rebel and militia movements. In Uganda a good number of the forces of the Lord Resistance Army (LRA), fighting the government in Kampala are children, and so were the cases with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), once led by Foday Sankoh and the now captured Charles Taylor respectively. Yet, the most appalling part of Africa's child soldiering is the forced manner in which the children are abducted and incorporated into the fighting force. In Uganda, the LRA invades villages at night and abducts children, some as young as six. While the boys are immediately initiated and grafted into fighting, the girls are made "comfort women" and beast of burden. Moreover, during raids adults who resisted or showed signs of sympathy with government forces were maimed with an ear, the nose, arm or limb brutally cut off. This cruelty, meant to elicit maximum cooperation with rebels, heighten the human insecurity not just of children and women who are most often brutally abused and raped, but also among the populations among and around whom rebels operate.

Secondly, conflicts generate refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). The UNDP noted that by 1992 conflicts in various African countries had spawned large numbers of refugees, including 870,000 in Somalia, 850,000 in Ethiopia, 670,000 in Liberia, 400,000 in Angola and 270,000 in Sudan (UNDP 1994: 32). According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), the Norwegian-based international body monitoring conflict-induced internal displacement worldwide, Africa had more than 50 percent of the 23.5 million

IDPs worldwide and was home to 3.2 million of the 12 million refugees worldwide at the end of 2005.¹⁴ This figure includes some estimated 570,000 people internally displaced in Zimbabwe by the government's "clean up" operation, but excludes IDPs from less publicised inter-communal violence such as those flaring up intermittently in Nigeria. Human insecurity is manifested not only among the people on the move, but also in the regions and among the communities in which refugees and IDPs take temporal refuge.

Thirdly, conflicts induce human suffering with the more vulnerable – women, children and the elderly – the most affected. The vulnerability of these sections of the population, especially women is even more glaring in refugee and IDP camps. The absence of law and order provides salutary conditions for the unscrupulous to prey on the vulnerability of women. Moreover, the general adversity, scarcity and lack of proper sanitation expose IDP and refugee camps to epidemics. Aside of humans whose human security is evidently compromised, conflicts also induce infrastructural destruction – roads, hospitals, schools, water supply systems, etc, which should traditionally provide supportive conditions for human security. Similarly, conflicts undermine agriculture, commerce and industry. Even under normal conditions, food resources, medical, employment and educational facilities are barely adequate in SSA and conflicts only worsen the situation. Although difficult to adequately quantify in monetary terms, it has been estimated that a local civil war costs a low income country like Uganda about \$54 billion on the average (Collier *et al* 2003). Human rights violations are worse under conflict situations (UNDP 1994). Much more pressure is exerted on the environment under conditions of conflict. Ultimately, conflicts heighten food, health, community and personal insecurity.

The causes of conflicts in Africa have been well discussed in the literature. Some link conflicts to political and governance-related factors such as ethnicity, the fragility of the post-colonial state, and the struggle over the state (Adedeji 1999, Copson 1994), others locate it in environmental factors, pointing to competition for farming and grazing lands and other natural resources (Obi 1997), while others see conflicts as reflecting the artificiality of the African state (Laremont 2002). However, less perceptible are the conditions and pressures from the international system and the indirect, but also direct role of external actors that tend to either create, ripen or exacerbate conditions for conflict. It is common knowledge that economic crisis is a good recipe for conflict, and Africa's economic malaise is too familiar to be recounted here. One of the most visible highlights of Africa's economic crisis is the debt overhung, which has been known to be conflict-inducing. Smith (1992: 141-142) has noted that about 50 percent of the 25 most indebted Third World countries were at war in 1990 or early 1991. Similarly, Brown (1995: 101) notes that of the 33 highly indebted countries in SSA only four – Niger, Sao Tome, Senegal and Tanzania – have escaped destructive conflicts and wars of one form or another. The correlation between poverty and general economic

¹⁴ IDMC Report available online at <http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004CE90B> (Accessed 26/3/07)

despondency on the one hand and conflict on the other was most poignantly stated by Therese Paquet-Sevigny (1990), the former UN Under-Secretary General for Public Information:

Deepening poverty is already leading to mounting instability. The widespread unrest, turmoil and violence which is now afflicting an unprecedented number of countries is linked to one common thread of growing economic malaise, regardless of the ethnic and political guises it adopts. In Liberia, Rwanda, the Horn of Africa....poverty is the tinder which ignites the resentments and fears that all people and communities harbour.

The inescapable reality is that conflicts linked to distribution are often exacerbated by economic crisis typified by unemployment, inflation and prolonged periods of recession.

The role of external players in sparking or escalating conflicts in Africa is also well-known. During the cold war, proxy wars were fought on behalf of the US and the Soviets. As a proxy for the US, Apartheid South Africa, for example, destabilised neighbouring states in a bid to destroy African National Congress (ANC) bases, but also to check the spread of communism in the region. Similarly, Ethiopia and Somalia served as allies for the Soviets and the Americans respectively during the cold war and received military assistance from their respective patrons. The abatement of the cold war severed relations between patrons and clients but the weapons, missiles and tanks remained, which were used in post-cold war internal conflicts. The involvement of the US in post-cold war conflicts is, however, still provable. In 1998, the Clinton administration gave \$20 million in aid to the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and its supporters – Uganda, Eritrea and Ethiopia – to help overthrow the Islamic regime in Khartoum.¹⁵ And, as recently as December 2006, the US encouraged and aided the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia to dislodge the Union of Islamic Courts, a regime the former believes provides haven for international terrorists. The Ethiopian military campaign has heightened insecurity in the Somali capital of Mogadishu in particular and the country in general. The new friendship between the US and Ethiopia – previously implacable ideological enemies – and the aid the latter receives from Washington has helped it to prosecute its seemingly intractable border conflict with Eritrea.

Africa's conflicts are now known to be fuelled by "conflict" or "blood" diamonds, defined by the UN as "...diamonds that originate from areas controlled by forces or factions opposed to legitimate and internationally recognized governments, and are used to fund military action in opposition to those governments, or in contravention of the decisions of the Security Council."¹⁶ Proceeds from the sale of conflict diamonds have been known to have sustained the conflicts in Angola, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Congo, and to a limited degree, in Ivory Coast. For example, between 1992 and 1998, UNITA, the Angolan rebel group, earned

¹⁵ See the Minutes of Evidence of the UK House of Commons' Select Committee on International Development, July 1998, available on line at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199798/cmselect/cmintdev/872/8071607.htm> (Accessed 20/3/07)

¹⁶ <http://www.diamondfacts.org/conflict/index.html> (Accessed 20/3/07)

over \$4 billion from the illegal sale of diamonds. The UN also estimates that by 1999, the RUF of Sierra Leone had sold about \$125 million worth of rough diamonds to the diamond industry in Europe alone.¹⁷ And, Charles Taylor is believed to have sustained his war and regime for long because of proceeds from diamond sales. Access to diamond mines helped sustain brutal conflicts. The question often sidelined, however, is who buys the blood diamond? Although some of the diamond does find market on the African continent, it has been estimated that the bulk of the so-called conflict diamonds find its way into the store house of the diamond cartel, De Beers in the US. The cartel, however, insists that it is nearly impossible to determine the origin of diamonds.¹⁸ On the whole, about 40 percent of the world's diamonds, all of them believed to come from Africa, is sourced by De Beers.¹⁹ The point is no one trades in merchandise that has no ready market. As long as there is a diamond market in London, New York and Tokyo, the illicit trade will persist to the detriment of Africa. The sale of illegal diamonds persists because there is a market with high demand for them and sadly, that market is located in western countries.

3.1.2 Poverty

The preponderance of poverty in SSA is beyond question. Over 40 percent of the 800 million people in SSA live below the poverty line – earning less than 2 dollars a day (UNDP 1999). Africa is the only region in which absolute poverty is expected to increase over the current level (UNDP 2000). The gravity of poverty is exemplified in nearly all the indicators of human development. For example, as of 2002 the percentages of sub-Saharan Africans with access to improved sanitation, water sources and literate were 36 percent, 58 percent and 61.3 percent respectively. These figures were just slight improvements over those recorded in 1990 (UNDP 2005: 243). Moreover, SSA is the only region where overall human development index (HDI), a composite indicator that covers three dimensions of welfare – income, education and health – has been declining since the 1990s UNDP (2005: 21). These have spin implications for human security, especially on the ability of people to influence their own lives. Poverty can be cyclical and may be passed on to one's children or even the next generation once unbroken. Poverty also increases the vulnerability of people to abuses and violations. In many countries in SSA, including South Africa poverty has driven the youth into various social vices such as prostitution, drugs, gangsterism and crime.

¹⁷ <http://www.articlestree.com/social-issues/sierra-leone-conflict-diamonds-tx365310.html> (20/3/07)

¹⁸ <http://www.commondreams.org/views/061200-102.htm> (Accessed 20/3/07). Concerns by the international community that diamond sales by rebels have been responsible for the sustenance of conflicts led to the establishment of the Kimberly Process in May 2000. The Kimberly process is an initiative taken by governments, NGOs and the international diamond industry to prevent the flow of diamonds controlled and sold by rebel movements (in Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Sierra Leone) to finance wars against legitimate governments. The Kimberley Process led in 2002 to the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, which requires all participants in the Kimberley Process (now numbering 50) to certify international shipments of diamonds to ensure these are not from rebel held territories. See http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/kimb/intro/ (Accessed 8/1/07).

¹⁹ http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/fortune_archive/2006/12/11/8395442/index.htm (Accessed 20/3/07)

Additionally, poverty limits access to health and nutrition where these are available and thus increases the susceptibility of people to diseases. While acknowledging the various mode of transmission, the South African government has maintained that poverty is a proximate cause of the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS that is rocking the country. A virus like avian flu may spreads rapidly in SSA as poverty disinclines people to report cases fearing the curling of birds. The lack of adequate equipments further limits the ability of poor countries to quickly detect and track down such a disease.

The adverse implications of poverty for human security, however, transcend the vulnerability of people. To be sure, poverty limits access to the new information highway. Such innovations as satellite television, the internet, cellular phones, among the key features of the global village, remain beyond the reach of the majority of the population in Africa. As of the mid-1990s, there were more telephones in the Japanese capital of Tokyo alone than in the whole of the SSA African region (*The Financial Times* 7 June 1996: 3). Similarly, the UNDP notes that, as of 2003, only 9 out of every 1000 and 54 out of every 1000 sub-Saharan Africans had telephone mainlines and cellular phone subscription respectively compared to 567 of every 1000 and 705 of every 1000 in high income OECD countries (UNDP 2005: 265). Access to the internet is still limited in SSA even in many universities, which are supposed to be institutions of knowledge production. And, because of its prohibitive cost many more Africans lack access to satellite television. Information is a source of power under the current global dispensation and drives development. Globalisation has shifted the basis of a country's comparative advantage from tangible natural resources to access to knowledge and information. Missing out on the information super highway is thus not only a mark of disempowerment in the globalised world, but it is also just as detrimental as the lack of access to food.

Political corruption and abuse of human rights by governments are high under conditions of poverty as people become more preoccupied with basic survival. Under such conditions impoverished people see human rights as a luxury. The quest to survive leads to intense, often violent, competition among communities over diminishing resources such as farming and grazing lands and may result in conflicts, which as noted already, is a major source of human insecurity. Also, because of the uneven urban-rural terms of trade the former has been the more active in national politics partly because many urban workers are educated and are relatively better off economically than their rural counterparts. By contrast, many rural dwellers are illiterate and unable to analyse national issues. The ignorance of the poor is often exploited by the predatory state, which misinforms them and compounds their vulnerability to insecurity. Thus, in general poverty is not only a symptom but also a catalyst of human insecurity.

On the whole, poverty is on the increase in SSA, the determination of states to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) notwithstanding. The causes of poverty, however, remain debatable. Too often, fingers have been pointed to conflicts as a factor creating

impoverished conditions, or undermining opportunities for poverty alleviation. Often, too, inauspicious and self-destructive public policies have been blamed. In its 1981 Report, which set the stage for the introduction of the ubiquitous SAP, for example, the World Bank blamed SSA escalated poverty and general underdevelopment on the adoption of statist and patronage policies (World Bank 1981). Such neo-classical explanations, pointing to mainly internal factors as causes of poverty and underdevelopment, have remained dominant and continue to inform western aid packages to the region. SAPs, and their fleet of conditionalities were meant to undermine that state's dominance in economic activities by transferring its central role in the distribution of resources to the market.

While the responsibility of internal factors in causing underdevelopment and human insecurity is undeniable, it can be argued that external factors have been partly responsible for their exacerbation although this is often hidden and not easily observable. Although poverty in SSA predated the introduction of SAPs, the implementation of these IMF and World Bank-styled neo-liberal economic policies from the late 1970s exacerbated, rather than ameliorated, the problem and consequently heightened human insecurity. Everywhere, the hallmarks of SAPs included desubsidisation, deregulation, devaluation, decontrolling and privatisation. These policies deepened poverty and human insecurity. Desubsidisation, for example, placed the prices of basic food, health and education beyond the reach of the majority of the population. Devaluations also eroded purchasing power and pushed people down below the poverty line, while privatisation and liberalisation hastened the demise of nascent industries with the textile and leather industries being the hardest hit. Moreover, liberalisation brought in cheaply produced western rice and maize, which drove many rural farmers out of job. Together, liberalisation and privatisation aggravated the already worse unemployment situation in the region, worsening human insecurity.

While unemployment is increasing, FDI and overseas development assistance (ODA), which would have injected some life into SSA economies and help alleviate unemployment, are on the decline. Although this has recently been increasing in certain countries (Angola, South Africa and Mozambique), and regionally in southern Africa, the flow of FDI to Africa has on the aggregate declined from \$8.1 billion in 1996 to \$6.1 billion in 2000. Although this rose to a high of \$13.8 billion in 2001, it fell again to \$7 billion in 2003 (Harsch 2003: 16). Similarly, net overseas development assistance (ODA) has plummeted from a high level of \$28 billion in 1990 to \$16.4 billion in 2000 (Asante 2003:16). In spite of numerous international trade agreements promising Africa with access to world markets, its share of world exports remained at just 1 percent at the turn of the century although this was 4 percent in 1960, while its share of world trade has plummeted from 2.7 percent 1990 to just 2 percent in 2002 (UNCTAD 2004). Against this background, Africa remains the most marginalised continent in the contemporary global economy. Its role has been limited to serving as a marginal market for northern industries. The little investments trickling down to SSA are concentrated in the capital-intensive extractive industries. Consequently, the rate of job

creation has remained negligible.

The intrusive and strict austerity conditions imposed on adjusting countries caused a massive erosion of the already tenuous economic sovereignty even in making domestic policy choices. Under adjustment, even a country's annual budget had to be approved by creditors in the latter's bid to ensure the judicious use of aid money. The effect of such scrutiny and surveillance has been to undermine the state's ability to determine and implement priority programmes that seek to address human insecurity. The drive to cut down on public expenditure, for example, has necessitated a reduction in state's budget for education and health which are thought to make only long-term returns. Ultimately, a pool of illiterate and unhealthy population is created whose safety and security is far from assured. Indeed, the Cambridge seminar on security warily noted that the plethora of conditionalities imposed on developing countries by the dominant international financial institutions (IFIs) have become a source of human insecurity, fuelling conflicts and defeating the original intention to alleviate poverty.²⁰

Moreover, as it is with every public policy, SAPs produced winners and losers but in a much disproportionate way. While a minority, mainly the capital owning class, benefited from the liberalised market and financial environment, the majority were losers who suffered increased economic adversities. A consequence of this development was to widen further the disconcerting gap between social classes. The widening disparity was also visible even within particular industries. The agricultural sector was a typical example. A study in Ghana found that that the gap between large and small scale cocoa farmers widened dramatically under SAP. The former, constituting 32 percent of cocoa farmers, received 94 percent of total cocoa revenue, while the losing majority of 68 percent received a meagre 6 percent (US Government 1989: 8). In nearly every SSA country, SAPs left a trail of social inequality between a small minority of winners and the vast losing and exasperated population. Such grotesque inequality, aggravated by the maldistribution of the costs and benefits of adjustment undermined human security. As the Cambridge seminar on security noted, inequalities have a potential to generate disaffection especially in situations where the losers are the more numerous.²¹

One of the predictable responses to the adversities generated by austerity is migration, which has both short- and long-term impact on human security. Migration follows two patterns. First, there is the massive movement of destitute youth from the rural areas to the urban centres in desperate search for employment, which is often non-existent. The ultimate effect of this is the swelling of cities' population and the exertion of additional strains on the already over-stretched urban infrastructure. Pushed further by desperation, many of the youth enter into the informal sector, characterised by legal and illegal activities. The latter includes

²⁰ See the report of the Cambridge Security Seminar available online at http://www.umich.edu/~iinet/iisite/pdf/kennedy_new_security_paradigm.pdf (Accessed 20/3/07)

²¹ See the report of the Cambridge Security Seminar available online at http://www.umich.edu/~iinet/iisite/pdf/kennedy_new_security_paradigm.pdf (Accessed 20/3/07)

drugs, prostitution, money laundering and other vices inconsistent with human security. Second, economic adversities serve as “push” factors, instigating international migration especially among professionals. While some professionals migrate to relatively affluent African countries such as South Africa, Botswana and Namibia, the majority head for western countries, causing a massive brain drain on the continent (Akopari 2006). Although international migration of professionals is historical, it intensified with the introduction of SAPs in the 1980s. For example, while it was estimated that 27,000 skilled Africans left the continent for industrialised countries between 1960 and 1975, the figure rose to 40,000 between 1975 and 1984. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) estimate that at least 20,000 skilled Africans left the continent each year since 1990 (Mutume 2003: 1). According to the international NGO, Doctors without Borders, Malawi produced 44 nurses in 2005. That year 86 nurses left the country causing a shortfall. The NGO laments further about the ratio of doctors to patients. In Malawi, Mozambique and Lesotho, for example, the ratios are 2, 2.6 and 5 respectively compared to the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) standard ratio of 20 doctors to 100,000 patients.²² The exodus of nurses and other health professionals leaves hospitals and clinics without the requisite manpower and worsening an already serious problem. Freedom from want is undermined where medicines are available in hospitals but without doctors or nurses to dispense them. In recent years young unskilled Africans also risk their lives in dangerous journeys across the Sahara and on the Atlantic to reach Europe in a desperate attempt to escape economic adversities in their home countries.

3.1.3 Debt - a source of health and educational insecurity

A further consequence of SAP is the escalation of Africa’s debt crisis. While the region’s debt crisis is mounting, it has never been formally linked to SAP or external actors. Hence, the debt crisis remains hidden as a cause of human insecurity. Whereas SSA debt is partly blameable on self-destructive internal policies, such as massive investments in unprofitable public enterprises, subsidies, corruption and mismanagement, etc, external factors have contributed to its escalation. Majority of SSA countries rely on primary agricultural exports, whose prices are controlled by external market forces. Collapsing world prices (usually during periods of increased production) create balance of payment problems, which in turn spawns a need for external borrowing to finance budget deficits. At the same time the supply of these agricultural products are inelastic such that producers cannot immediately take advantage of rising world prices. Cocoa, for example, takes five years from nursery to yield fruits. And when producers eventually increase production, the prices fall, creating further need for borrowing and ultimately indebtedness. Africa’s loss of its comparative advantage in the

²² See “Lack of nurses killing Africans” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/6689255.stm> (25/5/07)

supply of raw materials, following the emergence of biotechnology, the production of cheaper genetically modified and synthetic substitutes, has worsened its situation.

Globalisation and the skewed international trade regime offer little opportunities for SSA to reverse its declining economic fortunes. Under the current free trade regime, SSA is to liberalise its markets, exposing its nascent industries to destructive global competition. At the same time, Northern governments continue to subsidise their farmers, giving them a competitive edge over their SSA counterparts. From Cancun, Mexico in 2003 to Doha, Qatar in 2006, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) has consistently failed to resolve the impasse between the North and South over agricultural subsidies. Northern subsidies mean that talks about granting Africa access to northern markets would yield practically nothing, given the former's ill-placed position to compete. Africa is not an exporter of computers, digital cameras, TVs or cars; its competitiveness lies not in industrial products, but in agricultural goods. Subsidies on agricultural commodities by western countries mean the global market is effectively closed to Africa. The refusal of western governments to compromise on subsidies reveals a fundamental contradiction in their policies. While they hide under globalisation to preach free trade, they simultaneously subject Africa to conditions of unfair trade. The collapse of the recent WTO negotiations in Doha means that the question of establishing fair trade among countries is no longer an issue on the agenda of the industrialised countries. Indeed, in its report, the UN Commission on Human Security recommended the institution of fair trade practices among countries and regions as a way of helping weaker and vulnerable countries to better cope with the challenges of human security.

To be sure, the original purpose of SAP was to enhance Africa's ability to repay its external debts. It was thought that this could be achieved by imposing austerity measures on African countries under which the state would be prevented from subsidising or engaging in patronage politics. Under the latter, the state used scarce public funds as reward for political loyalty. Under the SAP regime, therefore, credit lines were opened to countries judged to be rigorously implementing adjustment reforms. In the 1980s, Ghana and Uganda received large volumes of aid on account of their impressive adjustment record (Herbst 1993). However, such credit lines were never acts of charity. Rather, they were loans to be repaid with interest. The ultimate effect was that as African countries adopted SAPs and accessed new lines of credit, their external debt grew concomitantly. Once the debt emerged, it became a self-generating phenomenon and, worse of all, causing a reverse transfer of capital from Africa to the west. For example, SSA received \$294 billion in disbursed loans between 1970 and 2002. Despite paying out \$268 in debt service, it still had a debt of \$210 billion by the end of 2002. In total, during the 1970-2002 period Africa received some \$540 billion and still shouldered a debt of \$295 billion after paying back close to \$550 billion in principal and interest.²³ Even by

²³ See "New UNCTAD study makes case for African debt write-off" Press release, 30 September 2004. Online at <http://www.unctad.org> (Accessed 30/5/07).

1996, arrears on Africa's debt had reached a whopping \$64 billion, which was more than 25 percent of the total indebtedness.²⁴

Debt created the need for further external aid and this generated further indebtedness, imparting a funny scenario of digging a new pit to fill an old one. To be credit worthy and eligible for further loans, indebted countries needed to demonstrate an ability to service existing debts. This often required the commitment of large proportion of the national budget to debt service. In 1990, for example, Madagascar spent the equivalent of 7.2 percent of its GDP on debt service compared to 2.1 percent and 1.2 percent on education and health respectively, while Congo spent nearly 4 times more on debt service than on education and over 12 times more than on health. Similarly, Zambia's debt service as a percentage of GDP in 2003 was three times and four times more than health and education respectively (UNDP 2005: 286-287). Since the inception of the debt crisis, SSA countries have been devoting appreciable percentages of their national budgets to debt servicing. The pressure to repay debts thus diverts resources from infrastructure and services that are critical for alleviating poverty and human insecurity.

The current initiatives to ease Africa's debt under the highly indebted poor countries' programme (HIPC) have proved illusory. Almost all SSA countries are still indebted over 10 years after the introduction of the programme. In 2006 Ghana, along with 16 other developing countries, was granted access to the US-managed Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) valued at US \$547 million. The MCA is a credit facility reserved for developing countries judged to "rule justly, invest in their people, and encourage economic freedom" – literally promoting good governance.²⁵ Other SSA states are striving to gain access to the MCA as well. But, here again, nothing could be further from the truth. The MCA is not a gift and countries accessing it know that it is a loan that is repayable in the future with interest. As such, it compounds their external indebtedness and attenuates their ability to address human insecurity. Overall, SSA foreign debt has played a role, even if indirect, in aggravating human insecurity.

3.1.4 Political liberalisation and democratisation

The process of democratisation, accompanying globalisation has generated mixed results in SSA. On the one hand, democratisation helped to liberalise many of Africa's hitherto closed political systems by sweeping away one-man and one-party dictatorships. On the other hand, however, it has tended to create conditions for human insecurity. In retrospect, the importance of democracy for development cannot be overemphasized. The World Bank Report of 1981 blamed Africa's lingering crisis on bad governance. This view was shared by

²⁴ <http://www.unctad.org/TEMPLATES/webflyer.asp?docid=3175&intItemID=2024&lang=1> (Accessed 30/5/07).

²⁵ <http://www.mida.gov.gh/pages/?pid=2&sid=8> (Accessed 10/5/07)

several leading scholars on African development (Nyong'o 1987; Ake 1994, 1996; Mkandawire 2001). In a recent work, Guest (2004) also argues that Africa's economic crisis is mainly caused by bad leadership and bad governance. On their part Africans have acknowledged the importance of democracy in development reflected in their collective adoption of the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, in Arusha, Tanzania in 1990. The charter underscored the importance of popular participation and inclusivity in the development process.²⁶

However, the relevance of democratisation for the current discussion on human security in Africa stems from the manner in which the project was instituted and executed. With the exception of a few countries – Botswana, Senegal, Mauritius, South Africa and Zimbabwe – the majority of SSA liberalised their political systems in response to IMF/World Bank-imposed conditionalities. Often referred to as second generational conditionality, the demand for political liberalisation and democratisation was supported by Africa's leading bilateral creditors, who have made democratisation a cardinal condition for aid and investment. The emergent global disdain for undemocratic governance after the demise of the communism made it difficult for countries to circumvent the conditionality. In many respects, however, the process of democratisation has become a source of tension among competing constituencies as incumbents organised stage-managed elections to satisfy the creditor community. In many cases such practices have generated post-election tensions, which did not only deepen existing social fractures, but led to full scale conflicts. Recent post-election violence in Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, Togo, Lesotho, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), to name a few, have all cost human lives and destruction of property. In the same vein, the pressure to democratise has in many cases led to the emergence of truncated or election democracies variously described as “pseudo democracies” (Diamond 1997: 3), “virtual democracies” (Joseph 1999), or “incomplete metamorphic democracies” (Udogu 1997). These are systems, which hold elections but follow policies that are anything but democratic, thus creating conditions for violent contestations. To this extent, the imposition of democracy from above rather it developing organically from below has become a source of conflict and consequently human insecurity.

3.1.5 *Environmental insecurity*

There is little doubt about the escalation of environmental degradation in Africa. The threat to human security posed by this phenomenon is dire as over 70 percent of sub-Sahara Africans depend on the forest for livelihood. The extent of environmental decay in the region is too familiar to be recounted here. However, suffice it to mention that the region's ecology has been plagued by rapid deforestation, desertification, soil erosion, pollution, drought and famine. In addition, SSA is faced with an intractable population growth rate of about 3.1

²⁶ <http://www.afrimap.org/english/images/treaty/file4239ac8e921ed.pdf> (Accessed 9/5/07)

percent, the highest in the world, despite the prevalence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The pollution of land and rivers by multinational companies is on the increase, while drought and famine have repeatedly hit SSA in the last four decades. Fish stocks are rapidly being depleted from rivers as fishermen leave little time for stocks to replenish. With the destruction of forests for farming and grazing, the natural habitat of wild game is increasingly being encroached upon, while poverty compels the rural folk to poach animals for food, thus causing the extinction or near extinction of game species. Ultimately, the environment in SSA is unsustainable, imparting severe threats not only to the present but also to future generations.

The causes of such rapid environmental degradation can be broadly classified under two main headings – natural and human-induced. Natural occurrences such as earthquakes are beyond human control. These occur unceremoniously at the discretion of Mother Nature and what governments and aid agencies do is simply to provide assistance to victims. Luckily, earthquakes are infrequent in SSA. The second set of causes is human-made and includes deforestation, soil erosion, pollution, poaching and population growth. Deforestation leads to desertification and soil erosion; air and water pollution negatively affects public health and aquatic life; poaching threatens the survival of game; while population growth exerts additional pressures on over-stretched resources. At times, the responsibility for environmental collapse rests with the African states for failing to establish or enforce strong environmental regimes. Yet, while acknowledging the role of humans and the state in the decay of the environment, it is possible to identify the indirect, but also direct contribution of globalisation and other external pressures to the crisis. First, the role of poverty in inducing conflicts has already been noted. However, as argued earlier, poverty which is partly caused by external interventions, facilitates environmental degradation. The inability to access fertilizers, for example, drives rural farmers into shifting cultivation as a dominant agricultural practice. This systematically reduces the fertility of land within a short period of time, causing further impoverishment. Similarly, pastoralists herd cattle over large plains of land and when this is overgrazed, they are forced to cross borders, sparking skirmishes and sometimes violent conflict with rival pastoral communities. Poverty and environmental decline are thus mutually reinforcing.

Second, beyond community level, the state is often forced by external pressures to compromise environmental conservation. At the July 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, delegates were concerned with African states' vulnerability in trading the environment for scarce foreign exchange in a bid to revive their ailing economies and to repay external debts (George 1992). This concern was vindicated by the pursuit of environmentally-hostile policies in SSA. In a bid to increase foreign exchange earnings, Ghana increased its timber exports causing it to lose 25 percent of its tropical forest during the ten-year period between 1984 and 1994 (Nyang'oro 1995: 203). The Ghana Forestry Commission (GFC) estimates that the country currently loses 75,000 hectares of forest annually. The GFC is concerned that at this rate

Ghana's entire forest could disappear by 2010.²⁷ Similarly, encouraged by a spectacular revenue of over \$300 million from timber exports in the 1960s, Ivory Coast embarked on a logging spree that caused a 67 percent decline in its closed forest area in 20 years – from 12 million hectares in 1956 to just 4 million in 1977 (Timberlake 1991: 90-91). Also, desperate to earn foreign currency, Benin is on record to have accepted the dumping of toxic wastes into its oceans for compensatory payments of as little as \$2.50 per tonne when this would have cost the company \$400.00 per tonne in the US (UNEP 1995:15).

Moreover, the determination to attract fresh foreign investments and to dissuade existing investors from leaving has inclined the state towards capital vis-a-vis its domestic constituencies. The state has thus tended to relax environmental rules to encourage MNC operations. Thus, Shell and other oil companies can abuse the environment and impoverish surrounding communities in the Niger Delta while enjoying state support.²⁸ In Ghana, too, communities in the vicinity of gold mines are witnessing increased mercury pollution, land degradation, air and noise pollution, which together impart harmful consequences, including spreading inexplicable skin diseases (Hilson 2002).²⁹ Yet, no firm state measures have been instituted against the concerned mining companies. In Uganda, state police have shot and killed protesters opposing government plans to lease forest land to an Asian sugar plantation company in April 2006. While environmentalists argue that the plantation farm would endanger the existence of rare species of animals and birds, the government contends that it will bring in much needed revenue.³⁰ The pressure to liberalise national economies and create space for MNCs in response to the dictates of globalisation, along with the enhanced powers of capital to tame the state, has forced the latter to relax or even waive environmental laws. In following environmentally bankrupt policies, African states seem to be oblivious to the intricate connection between environmental protection, sustainable development and human security. Thus, although unobtrusive, external factors play a role in the escalation of environmental insecurity in SSA.

3.1.6 Food insecurity

Sub-Saharan Africa's food insecurity, reflected in growing hunger, famine, malnutrition, along with its implications for development is also a familiar story. A ministerial conference of the African Union (AU) in 2005 noted that over 11 million people in the Horn of Africa

²⁷ <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=125402> (Accessed 12/6/07)

²⁸ In 1995, the agitations of the impoverished Ogoni community in the Niger Delta culminated into a series of protests. This led to the arrest and detention of prominent leaders of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MSOP). These leaders, including the writer and poet, Ken Saro Wiwa, were subsequently executed despite international pleas for clemency.

²⁹ For details of the practical mining-related effects on the environment and the surrounding communities, see, for example, the report of the World Rainforest Movement on Ghana (WRM) Bulletin no. 41, December 2000. Available on line at <http://www.wrm.org.uy/bulletin/41/Ghana.html> (Accessed 10/3/07).

³⁰ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/6548107.stm?ls> (Accessed 13/4/07)

and 3.5 million in Kenya were hit by food crisis; 71 percent of the population in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) were undernourished, while the lives of 48 percent of children in Northern Uganda were threatened by chronic food insecurity (AU 2005). Similarly, a UNICEF report notes that 28 percent of all children in SSA are underweight (UNICEF 2006). A 2006 Oxfam briefing paper – *Causing Hunger: An Overview of the Food Crises in Africa*,³¹ – provides graphic details of the scale of the region’s food insecurity. The paper notes that while the average percentage of under nourishment in the developing world is 17, that for SSA is 33 percent. Southern Africa and the Horn are particularly prone to drought raising further concerns about food safety in these regions. Oxfam is on the whole pessimistic about the food situation in SSA and the prospects for the region meeting its Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of halving hunger by 2015.

The causes of Africa’s food insecurity are complex, but can generally be linked to a combination of internal, external and unpredictable environmental factors. Poverty is often identified as a cause of food insecurity. This argument stems from the fact that in most cases, food may be available but remains unaffordable. While, poverty is itself the product of other factors, the argument sounds plausible in a region where the percentage of the population living below \$1.00 a day has doubled since 1981. For example, in 2005 northeast Kenya was hit by a food crisis, which severely affected pastoralists while the country experienced a 15 percent increase in harvest and a 5 percent rise in GDP. By that year, the proportion of Kenyans living below \$1.00 a day had risen to 66 percent from 40 percent in 1990 (Mason 2006). Generally, the wealthy are least affected by food shortages as they are able to afford even under conditions of rising prices. In this sense, poverty is a noticeable cause of food insecurity. However, as noted earlier, poverty in SSA is often exacerbated by globalisation and other externally-inspired pressures.

Often, too, food insecurity results from inadequate investments in the agricultural sector. According to Oxfam (2006), while food aid to SSA has been increasing, there has been a 43 percent drop in aid for agricultural production in the periods between 1990-92 and 2000-02. Oxfam estimates that Africa requires \$18 billion a year in investments in rural infrastructure, including agriculture, to achieve the region’s MDG on hunger reduction. The lack of investment in the food sector has been worsened by the region’s heavy dependence on natural rain, which has become erratic in recent decades due to climatic changes. Unpredictable rainfall patterns, along with extremities of weather conditions have left Africa vulnerable to the effects of famine, drought and floods. Unlike Europe, and North America, Africa has a limited capacity to control its environment. As one observer warily notes, “when the rains fail [Africans] go hungry. And when the rains are too heavy....they lose their homes” (Guest 2004: 6). Irrigation in SSA is on a small scale and concentrated on large commercial estate

³¹ This report will subsequently be referred to as the “Oxfam report” or simply “Oxfam (2006)”

farms. Only 7 percent of Africa's arable land is irrigated compared to 38 percent in Asia.³² Sub-Sahara Africa is thus highly vulnerable to declines in food production during conditions of drought. It will be helpful to SSA agriculture and food security if external donors give equal attention to investments in irrigation as to food aid. The familiar oriental aphorism that teaching a child how to fish feeds him for his entire life than merely giving him fish, should guide agricultural aid policies to Africa.

Africa's incessant and intractable conflicts have also compounded its food insecurity. Agricultural activities, which require a serene environment, are undermined by conditions of violence, instability and uncertainty. In Sudan, prolonged conflict between the southern-based Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the Khartoum government has left the arable lands in the south to waste, leaving southern Sudanese to depend on food aid. Uncertainty about the future also disinclines farmers to invest in food production even after the ending of conflicts. Other times, conflicts divert public resources away from investments that avert food shortages and enhance poverty alleviation. A report of the Technical Cooperation Department of the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) noted in 1997 that the seven Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) countries – Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda – which are highly susceptible to drought and food shortages, allocated \$2 billion to military expenditure as a result of conflict and instability in the Horn. This, the report worried, could discourage donors whose aid aim at alleviating poverty.³³

An additional cause of food insecurity in SSA is the growing HIV/AIDS scourge. By 2005, SSA had over 26 million cases leading to 2.5 million deaths. HIV/AIDS and other diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis significantly undermine food production by reducing the man-hours available for agriculture. The negative effects of HIV/AIDS on agricultural production are already evident. Oxfam notes that the production of maize, the staple food of much of SSA, has seen a 54 percent decline between 1992 and 1997 as a result of HIV/AIDS. Studies also estimate that by 2020 HIV/AIDS will claim the lives of 20 percent or more of the population engaged in agriculture in many of the southern African countries, where the epidemic has assumed crisis proportions. One adult death is estimated to correspond to a 15 percent drop in food security (Fukuda-Parr 2004: 40). This scenario is certain to worsen the food situation as about 70 percent of the population in the worse HIV/AIDS-hit countries is engaged in agriculture (Rosegrant *et al* 2005). The devastating impact of HIV/AIDS is fed by poverty, which incapacitates affected families from accessing medication and the necessary nutritional food to supplement their diet. Similarly, the negative impact of malaria on development has now become palpable. It was estimated in 2000 that

³² See "Food insecurity hits Africa" <http://www.news24.com/News24/Africa/News/0,,2-11-1447_1900007,00.html (Accessed 19/4/07)

³³ See "The Elimination of Food Insecurity in the Horn of Africa – Summary". Available online at <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/003?X8530E?x8530e02.htm> (Accessed 20/4/07)

economic development in Africa would have been 32 percent higher had malaria been eradicated 35 years ago. It is also noted that the GDP per person in malaria-infected countries averaged 3 percent lower than malaria-free countries. Moreover, the learning abilities of children with cerebral malaria (a severe type of malaria) are reduced by 4.5 percent even after they have been cured.³⁴

Environmental factors such as drought and floods also compound the food crisis in SSA. In the main, however, such environmental catastrophes are related to global climate changes, especially global warming, which has altered the normal patterns of rainfall. Droughts and floods, which used to occur at approximately 50 years intervals, now occur much more frequently. Thus, while there were only 16 major disasters in the 1960s, there were 29 and 70 in the 1970s and 1980s respectively, caused by droughts, cyclones, earthquakes and floods (UNDP 2003: 29). As well, regions which normally receive rainfall crucial for planting and sowing no longer get this at the right time. These climatic changes have heightened uncertainty about food security. A research by the UK Department of International Development, cited by the *Independent* newspaper predicts that by 2050, the effects of climate change will severely affect southern Africa, the Sahel, the Great Lakes, the coastal strips of western and eastern Africa and would worsen agriculture in general and food production in particular.³⁵ Already, the Sahel and Southern Africa in particular have been devastated by recurring droughts and floods and this report could only bring more bad news. Further rises in global temperatures will put an estimated 60 million people in Africa at risk of hunger. In addition, such climatic changes would worsen the energy crisis of the many SSA countries depending on hydro-electricity and subsequently undermine industrial production.

While the causes of Africa's food insecurity appear overwhelmingly internal and ecological, a careful examination of the factors reveals the hidden responsibility of external interventions. The role of external factors in the accentuation of poverty and conflicts has already been noted. Besides, international NGOs like Oxfam, Jubilee 2000 and Christian Aid, attribute Africa's food crisis to a combination of inauspicious policies followed by industrialised countries towards the region. Oxfam bemoans that "inadequate debt cancellation, declining and poor quality development aid, flawed advice from donors, conditions attached to aid that forced [recipient] countries to adopt damaging agricultural policies, and unfair trade rules..." are fundamental to understanding of SSA's food insecurity. Oxfam is also critical of the slow manner in which the north has traditionally responded to Africa's food emergencies. As well, various reports link SSA's food problems to the north. It is, for example, worthy of note that much of the global warming giving rise to environmental calamities in SSA is caused by industrialised countries, which emit the bulk of the global

³⁴ See "Malaria obstructing economic growth in Africa – Experts" Report on an international workshop on malaria, Mombasa, Kenya and cited by Ghana News Agency, 25 April 2007. Available on line at: <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=123002> (Accessed 1/5/07)

³⁵ See "Global Warming will cancel out Western aid and devastate Africa" *The Independent*, 13 July 2006. Available online at: <http://news.independent.co.uk/environment/article1174080.ece> (Accessed 10/5/07).

carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. Although the north has only 20 percent of the world's population, it is responsible for 80 percent of the world's emissions. The US is particularly culpable. With a population of 300 million, the US alone produces carbon dioxide to the combined equivalent of 135 developing countries with a total population of 3 billion. In other words, 22 percent of the world's emission of greenhouse gases is accounted for by 4.5 percent of the world's population in the US, while India, for example, with 17 percent of the world's population emits 4.2 percent of the world's greenhouse gases (Christian Aid 2005). If climate changes are the major causes of droughts and floods, then it can be argued with little risk of error that external agents are partly responsible for food insecurity in Africa.

3.2 Terrorism and insecurity

Terrorism is a source of human insecurity for the simple fact that it breeds fear, uncertainty, destruction and death. As such, it has since 9/11 elicited international attention. International conferences have been organised to examine its root causes and to explore ways of averting it. One of the contentious issues, however, relates to its definition. While there is consensus that hijacking and crashing civilian aircrafts into soft targets, or turning oneself into a bomb and blowing up civilians at a crowded market place amounts to terrorism, there is by no means agreement on whether the term is applicable to methods used by subject people legitimately resisting foreign occupation. As Clapham (2003: 15) argues, terrorists are compelled "to operate within territory that is effectively controlled by their enemies." The familiar axiom that "one man's terrorist is another's liberation fighter" is an indication of how long away an intellectual consensus on the definition of the concept is. Since 9/11, however, there has emerged a tendency for any violent or non-conventional mode of grievance articulation to be branded as "terror". Beyond the unending controversy about who is a "terrorist", it is clear that the use of violence of any form leading to the spread of fear among people is a threat to human safety and security.

Some African states have been victims of terror. Countries with radical Islamists such as Algeria, Egypt and Morocco, have had to deal with terrorists acts, perpetuated by groups opposed to the state or its policies, on a regular basis. Although such violent acts are common, and indeed frequent in North Africa, they are by no means confined exclusively to that part of Africa. Some countries south of the Sahara, including Somalia, Ethiopia, and Nigeria have in recent decades witnessed various forms of terrorist acts. The most publicised terrorist acts in Africa were the near simultaneous attacks on the US embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania on 7 August 1998 that claimed 213 and 10 lives respectively. The casualties in the Nairobi attack were predominantly Kenyans, including 34 who were employed by the embassy and 167 who were either passing or working near the embassy at the time of the blast. As well, another 5,000 people received medical treatment while extensive damage to

buildings and other infrastructure were recorded. Similarly, in the Dar es Salaam attack, 70 additional people were injured.³⁶

It is, however, imperative to distinguish between domestic and international terror. The former is localised and targets the state and its institutions within specific state boundaries, while the latter refers to the perpetration of terror outside their countries. International terrorism targeting Africans or African targets in Africa is rare. It was apparent in both the Nairobi and Dar es Salaam attacks that the target was US interests and not Kenyans or Tanzanians, although regrettably more Africans than Americans were killed. Historically, terrorism has never been considered as a major security threat in Africa. It has been noted, for example, that Africa ranked fifth in the total international terrorist attacks by region after Latin America, Asia, Western Europe, and the Middle East between 1997 and 2002. Africa's casualties for that same period were comparatively insignificant to elevate terrorism as a major security threat (Maloka 2005). Also, while Africa displays extreme poverty, high levels of state failure and colonial control, factors generally known to breed terrorism, the phenomenon has remained foreign in its political traditions (Clapham 2003: 25). Thus, the global war on terror declared by the US as part of the pursuit of al Qaeda and its operatives should ideally have little appeal to Africa. Rather than terrorism, there are direr sources of human insecurity towards which energies should be dissipated. As Robinson (2004: 13) argues, for those afflicted by absolute poverty, "...insecurity is equated not with where a terrorist might strike next, but instead with where tomorrow's only meal will come from, or how a job will be found that provides enough income to ensure shelter for a family or purchase life-saving medicines for a dying child." In spite of this truism African states have joined the post-9/11 global war against terror.

In enlisting in the terror war, SSA countries have passed anti-terrorism legislation under the behest of the US. Such legislation is designed to give sweeping powers to the state to act swiftly and decisively against suspected terrorists. The broader rationale is to create a less permissive operating environment for terrorists within their borders. African countries have passed this legislation because American post-9/11 foreign policy has focused on increasing aid to and directly supporting countries that are committed to the war on terror. At the same time it cuts down, even cancels, assistance not only to countries apathetic to the war, but also those crippling Washington's freedom at pursuing terrorists. Thus, for supporting the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC), South Africa, a known regional ally of the US, was denied \$7.6 million in military aid.³⁷ Besides directly withholding its aid, the US also blocks, where possible, assistance from other western states destined for countries in Africa considered passive in the war against terror. Scandinavian aid agencies, which use US

³⁶ <http://canberra.usembassy.gov/hyper/2000/0811/epf503.htm> (Accessed 20/4/07).

³⁷ <http://www.commondreams.org/news2004/0716-08.htm> (Accessed 20/4/07). The reason for US opposition to the ICC is not far-fetched. The ICC is expected to try suspects on crimes against humanity and likely to include US military personnel committing atrocities across the globe in the name of fighting terror.

banks, have seen their funds destined for Liberia and other countries engaged in post-conflict reconstruction frozen apparently because those recipients are slow in passing anti-terrorism laws. The US, however, claims its action is to prevent such monies from financing terrorism (Anderssen 2007). The American argument seems implausible as it is unthinkable for a northern NGO to directly fund a southern organisation dedicated to perpetrating terror against western countries.

As it obstructs, even cuts, aid to non-supporters, Washington also rewards states which publicly demonstrate commitment to fight terror. Consistent with this policy, the US has recently provided Kenya, which has become one of its strongest regional allies, with \$14 million in training and equipment to enhance the capacity of the Nairobi regime to fight terror. Part of the funds is to be used in the construction of a Guantanamo Bay-styled detention facility to hold suspected terrorists. Kenya received this package against a background of its efforts at arresting and repatriating suspected Somali and Ethiopian terrorists to Mogadishu and Addis Ababa respectively.³⁸ Disturbing, however, is that such incentives and rewards are extended even to undemocratic and human rights and human security-threatening regimes. In 2003, for example, the US sold military weapons to 18 of the 25 countries it branded as “undemocratic”. The war on terror has provided a pretext for the US to establish friendship with previously despised Pakistani President, Pervez Musharraf, who ascended to power through a military coup in 1999 and who has since established an authoritarian regime in his country. The US provides military and financial assistance to Pakistan and is also currently the source of arms to Angola, Chad and Ethiopia – countries that are at war or have a recent history of war (Aslam 2005). It is a huge policy contradiction for the US to continually vilify Robert Mugabe who was elected into office and compliment Pervez Musharraf who came to power by forcibly dislodging a constitutionally elected government. In recent years, both Mugabe and Musharraf restrict human freedoms in their respective countries.

In context, the individual state initiative to pass anti-terror legislations was inspired by the AU’s collective stance on terrorism. Following from the Algiers convention of 1999, which obliged member states of the Organisation of African Unity to accede or rectify the protocol on preventing terror, African leaders specifically entrenched an anti-terror clause in the Constitutive Act of the successor organisation, the AU. According to Article 4(o), the AU shall be guided by certain principles, including “respect for the sanctity of human life, condemnation and rejection of impunity and political assassination, acts of terrorism and subversive activities.”³⁹ The US cannot be said to have influenced the insertion of this clause into the Constitutive Act since chronologically speaking the promulgation of the Act in 2000 predated 9/11. Rather, its inclusion in the Constitutive may have been inspired by the spate of terrorist acts in North Africa and in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam two years earlier. Nevertheless,

³⁸ See “Kenya gets US anti-terror funds” <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/6623635.stm> (Accessed 6/5/07).

³⁹ http://www.Africa-union.org/About_AU/abconstitutive_Act.htm#Article4 (Accessed 20/4/07).

an organisation in constant need of western financial assistance, the AU was happy to dance to American tunes on the war on terror. The ending of the cold war and the emergence of the US as the dominant global power made the argument even more logical. Largely as a result of the aid incentive, nearly all member states of the AU have passed or are in the process of passing anti-terrorism legislation.⁴⁰ However, this development has engendered critical implications for human rights in particular and human security in general in several African countries.

While the passing of anti-terror legislation was hailed in some countries as an assurance of the state's commitment to secure the personal security of people, there are concerns on the other hand about the sweeping powers being assumed by the state under those legislations. Such powers make it easier for governments to manipulate the rule of law to crush and annihilate legitimate opposition or people agitating for democratic reforms. In Uganda, opposition elements have criticized the country's anti-terror bill on grounds that it "seeks to lower the standard of proof on which one can be held and convicted on a terrorism charge"⁴¹ Uganda's anti-terror laws have enabled the state to arrest and detain Dr. Kizza Besinge, who poses the strongest challenge to the presidency of Yoweri Museveni. As part of the anti-terror drive, moreover, a controversial bill is currently being debated in the largely rubber-stamp parliament of Uganda to legalise the tapping of phone calls by security agents. This is ostensibly to "monitor communication between suspected terrorists" but in reality to suffocate opposition and critics of the increasingly authoritarian Museveni regime.⁴²

There are also fears in Nigeria that the revival of the anti-terror squad originally set up by former strongman, Sani Abacha, will be used to terrorise the media and pro-human rights activists; in Ethiopia, a number of anti-poverty activists, opposition politicians and journalists have been detained since December 2006 under the country's anti-terror laws; the Eritrean Movement for Democracy and Human Rights has appealed to the AU to intervene in the arbitrary arrests and systematic detention of individuals suspected of being critical of government under the pretext of clumping down on terrorists; in Zimbabwe opponents of the beleaguered Mugabe regime are simply branded either as agents of imperialist forces or "terrorists"⁴³; while in Kenya there is a growing feeling of vulnerability by the Muslim community under the country's anti-terror laws.⁴⁴ In an attempt to fight terror, anti-terror legislations have turned many African regimes into tyrants, making the solution part of the problem.

In addition to the human security threat posed by counter-terrorism legislations, there

⁴⁰ Although the OAU as early as 1999 had expressed concern about the dangers of terrorism, very few countries passed anti-terror legislation. The proliferation of such legislation in the aftermath of 9/11 substantiates the claim that African states passed it to endear themselves to the US.

⁴¹ See "Anti terror Legislation and Democracy in Africa" On line at <http://www.peace.ca/antiterrorlegislationafrica.htm>, p. 2 (Accessed 22/4/07)

⁴² <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/6709089.stm> (Assessed 1/6/07).

⁴³ <http://www.civicus.org/new/media/CSW-MBDecemberNo11.doc> (Accessed 24/4/07)

⁴⁴ <http://ejp.icj.org/press.php3> (Accessed 24/4/07).

have occurred a number of military strikes on suspected terrorists which have caused population displacements, deaths and fear. For example, in early January 2007, the US launched an aerial attack on “suspected Islamic terrorists” in Somalia. Although the strike killed a number of suspected terrorists, it also claimed the lives of no fewer than 20 civilians and wounded many more.⁴⁵ The occupying Ethiopian forces in Somalia have also caused severe civilian casualties in their efforts to eliminate terrorists. Somalia is still far from being secured. The threat from Islamic “terrorists” has not receded while the determination of the American and AU-backed Ethiopian forces to rid Somalia of terrorists remains as strong as ever. This scenario is set to prolong the conflict between “terrorists” and Ethiopian forces and also set to cause human insecurity especially as the former has in recent times adopted a tactic of using civilians as human shields. In general, it is getting increasingly clear that the mechanisms used to prosecute the war on terror in Africa are threatening human security, perhaps more seriously than terrorism itself. Importantly, Africa’s anti-terror legislations are externally-inspired.

In short, the scale of human insecurity in Africa is enormous, but the causes of the phenomenon are traceable not wholly to internal factors as is often hastily assumed, but also to external interventions. Poverty, debt, conflicts, food insecurity, educational and health insecurities as well as environmental degradation are all largely progenic of conditions inspired by forces external to Africa. Mitigating human insecurity in SSA should therefore be the collective task of Africa and the international community.

⁴⁵ http://www.keesings.com/breaking_history/africa/somalia_crisis (Accessed 10/5/07).

IV Mitigating human insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa

Clearly, the human security challenges facing Africa are enormous, ranging from conflicts, refugeeism, poverty, bad governance, food and health insecurity, to environmental degradation. The enormity of the human security challenges requires the collective effort of Africa, MNC, NGOs, Africa's creditor community and the international community at large if they are to be effectively addressed. The popular aphorism of "African solution to African problems", which came to vogue at the beginning of the century has limited relevance in the context of human insecurity. The axiom was evoked in the context of conflicts on the continent and was meant to galvanise African states to assume responsibility for preventing, containing and managing conflicts on the continent. However, given the sheer magnitude of the human security crisis, the international community has to be part of the solution. Thus, in analysing the specific responsibilities of constituencies, this section discusses two levels of response – Regional (Africa's response) and the role of the international community.

4.1 Regional initiatives – the role of the African Union (AU)

The AU is engaged in various fronts to mitigate human insecurity. One of these is through diplomatic protocols. A number of protocols have been signed since 1980, including the charter on Human and People's Rights (1981), Charter on Popular Participation (1990), Protocol of the Rights of Women (2003), the Charter on Youth and Development (2006). While they target particular constituencies, the protocols were in the main meant to promote freedoms and above all to empower people to be involved in decisions affecting their lives. There are also important sub-regional initiatives such the ECOWAS Declaration on political Principles (1991) and the ECOWAS principle on Democracy and Governance (2001). These principles are meant to improve upon the standard of governance, with a view of deepening democracy and popular participation and ultimately empowering citizens. In practice, however, many of these protocols have remained only on paper for many countries.

However, the dominant focus in promoting human security has been on mitigating and containing conflicts. In addition to being a source of insecurity, conflicts also feed and exacerbate other threats to human security. Once heightened, insecurity is a recipe for further conflicts, making the two complimentary and mutually reinforcing. Accordingly, international and regional attempts to address human security challenges in SSA have mostly focused first and foremost on conflicts prevention and resolution. The 2005 report of the UN Office of the Special Advisor on Africa (OSAA) noted that addressing Africa's conflicts is the key to

establishing human security.⁴⁶ The AU has therefore been exploring ways of dealing with conflicts. At the 2000 AU Summit in Sirte, Libya, the organisation discussed human security as part of the grand agenda to install comprehensive security architecture in the continent. The broader AU security plan includes crisis prevention, peacekeeping, programmes to curb the proliferation of small arms, and the recruiting of child soldiers. The climax of the initiatives towards security was the inauguration of Peace and Security Council (PSC) in 2004 as stipulated in the Constitutive Act of the AU. The establishment of the PSC was informed by Africa's need for more robust approach to conflict resolution. With more or less comparable powers with the UN Security Council, the PSC of the AU has a primary responsibility for maintaining peace and security. The PSC is also responsible for taking critical decisions regarding the raising and deployment of AU peacekeeping forces. In addition, the PSC is to perform mediatory and reconciliatory roles. The PSC is to be complemented by other conflict-preventing mechanisms such as an African Standby Force (ASF) and a continental Early Warning System (EWS). A critical requirement, meanwhile, is for the AU to strengthen its peacekeeping capacities. This requires, among other things, the commitment of troops towards peacekeeping efforts. This is particularly crucial because the response of African states to the call by the AU in early 2007 to send an 8,000-peace keeping force into Somalia has been paltry. As at mid-2007 only Uganda had contributed a small force of 1,500 troops.

As already noted, conflicts are not the only sources of human insecurity. Bad governance and poor human right cultures also lie at the heart of human insecurity in SSA. To this end, regional bodies and especially the AU should be doing more to promote transparency, empowerment and the active participation of citizens in the formulation and implementation of decisions that affect their lives. So far, official protocols, charters and declarations have done little to substantially improve upon these principles in practice. The AU should be bold to institute tougher action against recalcitrant states, including Zimbabwe, Sudan and Swaziland, which are known to be stifling liberties and democracy. Such action could include diplomatic isolation, exclusion from attending AU summits and participation in regional sports tournaments. In the meantime, the AU should shift radically from the traditional practice of fraternalising and empathising with fellow heads of state to a posture of openly criticising and denouncing those leaders whose regimes fall short of meeting the standards of good governance established by the AU.

Also, as part of the process of promoting good governance and democracy, the AU should seek to ensure the credibility of elections. This, it should do by, among other things, providing the necessary logistical and expert assistance to countries undertaking elections. While assisting countries, the organisation should be bold to condemn fraudulent elections that are becoming the norm, not the exception in many countries in Africa. In April 2003 the AU wasted no time in congratulating president Olusegun Obasanjo on his re-election in a

⁴⁶ <http://www.un.org/africa/osaa/reports/Overview%20African%20issues%20FINAL.pdf> (Accessed 20/4/07).

sham Nigerian election. Two years latter (May 2005) the AU showered congratulatory messages on Faure Gnassingbe, after emerging from a stage-managed poll in Togo that was anything but free and fair. Then, again, in April 2007, president John Kuffour of Ghana, the chair of the AU, together with President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, a leading architect of the AU, sent warm congratulatory messages to Mr. Umaru Musa Yar' Adua on his election as the new Nigerian president in a poll which both local and international observers dubbed as seriously flawed.⁴⁷ As a natural consequence, these polls spawned post-election conflicts, claimed scores of human lives, undermined confidence in the country's electoral process and, above all, vitiated the legitimacy of the "elected" regimes. The AU needs to move away from the largely ineffective secret diplomacy used to chastise leaders to openly condemning such elections and if not re-run to de-recognise leaders who emerge from such visibly flawed polls.

NEPAD remains Africa's current blueprint document for development. Adopted in 2001, it provides a framework within which Africa is to be aided by industrial countries to address its developmental challenges. Essentially, it aims at eradicating poverty as a precondition for sustained development; encourage employment creation; diversify production to increase Africa's international competitiveness; increase Africa's access to western markets; promote cooperation and integration in Africa; and accelerate the empowerment of women. In pursuing these objectives, NEPAD identifies three areas needing priority attention: peace and security through good governance; increased investments in agriculture, communication, tourism, health and education; and the mobilization of resources through resource transfer to Africa via ODA, FDI and debt reduction.⁴⁸ Theoretically, these are noble objectives that can potentially alleviate human insecurity but practically NEPAD may produce the opposite effect. This prognosis stems from its excessively neo-liberal posture and conformity with the dictates of economic globalisation. NEPAD calls for increased dependence on western aid and greater incorporation into the global capitalist economy, which are poised to cause an escalation of Africa's external indebtedness. As well, its emphasis on liberalisation and free markets are certain to open up Africa's economies to largely extra-African companies and consequently imperil the survival of nascent industries. This is a recipe for compounding the already bad unemployment situation in Africa. NEPAD therefore requires some re-formulation; it has to be re-cast as a counter-hegemonic policy framework truly dedicated to addressing Africa's development and human security challenges.

This said, Africa remains a vulnerable and dependent continent, with a vastly diminished ability to single-handedly reverse its declining economic and human security fortunes. It thus requires the assistance of western countries and the international community in general to deal with its current quagmires, not only on humanitarian grounds, but also on moral grounds. As noted earlier, the causes of human insecurity in Africa are partially, if not wholly externally-

⁴⁷ <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=123115> (Accessed 27/4/07)

⁴⁸ www.nepad.org (Accessed 8/5/07).

inspired, hence western countries, whose policies have caused the escalation of the crisis, have to feel morally obliged to assist Africa. The west should assist Africa, moreover, because the latter will likely bear the brunt of inaction in the form of increased African migration to the west, crime, drug peddling, money laundering, and terrorism if the deteriorating human security situation in Africa continues unabated. Thus, some of the various ways in which the international community can assist Africa are discussed in the next section.

4.2 The role of the international community

The west and the broader international community can assist in alleviating human insecurity through efforts in resolving conflicts, addressing health and educational insecurity; promoting good governance, resolving the asymmetry in international trade and helping Africans to protect the environment. This objective can be achieved in various ways:

4.2.1 Conflicts

The international community should seek to augment the efforts of the AU and regional organizations in SSA in conflict prevention, management and peacekeeping. Already, the US and the European Union (EU) have been providing financial and logistical assistance to regional organizations. British, French and the US assisted ECOWAS peacekeeping efforts in Liberia, Sierra Leone and recently in Ivory Coast. In 2002 the US helped to establish the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) to train approximately 9,000 African soldiers to speedily respond to peacekeeping demands on the continent. ACRI has been replaced by the African Contingency Operations Training Assistance – ACOTA (Hardy 2003). In the same year, it pledged training assistance to ECOMOG as well as setting up military bases for the deployment of troops to conflict spots. In June 2004, the US established a \$600 million Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) fund to support African peace operations (Malan 2004: 27). In the same way the EU has supported AU peacekeeping efforts in Darfur, the Central African Multinational Force and capacity-building for the AU Commission’s Peace and Security Department through its annual grant of €250 million Peace Facility for Africa (CCR 2005: 49). Japanese assistance to peacekeeping operations (PKOs) in Africa is also noted. In 2004 approximately 20 percent of the total operation cost of eight PKOs in Africa, amounting to \$550 million, was borne by Japan. As well, in April 2004 Tokyo pledged an aid package of \$100 million in the near term to the government of Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement following their signing in January of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Over \$10 million of this has already been disbursed.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/africa/policy.pdf> (Accessed 25/5/07).

However, given the general trend towards the withdrawal from Africa's conflicts by the west, in the aftermath of the cold war, some are critical of the motives behind such international assistance. With the exception of Japan whose pacifist post-war constitution prohibits the engagement of its military in combat operations, other western countries, in particular the US and the EU are being suspected of using their various assistances to exclude their troops from physically participating in PKOs on African soil (Francis 2001: 46). The previously strategic importance of Africa during the cold war has waned, leaving no compelling reasons for Americans and western soldiers to die in Africa in what is often considered as needless intra-state conflicts. This thinking was helped by America's terrible, perhaps humiliating, experience in Somalia under the United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM II) in 1993, during which international television screens featured a killed American soldier being dragged on the street of Mogadishu by Somali militiamen. The US eventually withdrew from the operation in March 1997. A key consideration here is for such international support to be dictated not by the strategic or ideological considerations of the west, but rather by the genuine commitment to enhance the conflict resolution capacity of the AU and its regional bodies.

A further contribution is for the west, and especially the US to cease clandestine arm sales and military support to conflict-prone countries such as Chad, Angola and Ethiopia. While doing this the international community should master courage to intervene in situations in which human right abuses and human suffering are glaring and grotesque. A case in point is the Darfur region of Sudan, where the international community seems to be procrastinating while civilians are brutalised and killed by government-backed militiamen. In a situation of this kind, an authorisation by the UN should be enough to warrant a humanitarian intervention. An approval from the Sudanese government should not be the deciding factor neither should sanctions be an option as these have almost always ended up hurting civilians more than sanctioned regimes.

Aside of the military dimension, which targets conflicts and post-conflict situations, the west can assist in forestalling conflicts. One way of achieving this is to help promote and strengthen good governance. Internal mechanisms such as the much heralded African Peer review Mechanism (APRM) instituted by the African Union offers little promise to promote good governance. This is not only because submission to the review process is voluntary, but also because the APRM lacks the instruments to compel recalcitrant regimes to meet standard governance practices (Akokpari 2004). Rather than relying on the APRM, the west could take tougher stance on stubborn regimes. Examples of these include Zimbabwe, Sudan, and Swaziland whose continued obstruction of democracy is a potential source of conflict. In this regard, even supposedly "friendly" regimes to the west such as Kenya and Ethiopia who display governance-related problems should not be let off the hook. Kenya and Ethiopia should be prevailed upon to curb rampant corruption and gross human rights abuses respectively. The US should not use its newly forged strategic friendship with these countries

over the war on terror to protect them as it did with Mobutu Sese Seko and Siad Barre of Zaire (Now Democratic Republic of Congo –DRC) and Somalia respectively during the cold war. The painful lesson has been learnt; when these regimes fell after the cold war, DRC and Somalia became theatres of intractable conflicts.

A disconcerting trend emerging in Africa is the phenomenon of stage-managed elections, which provide pretexts for armed conflicts. As indicated already, the AU has so far lacked the courage to condemn such feign elections, let alone isolate resultant leaders. The Nigerian presidential elections of 2003 and 2007, the Togolese election of 2005, and the Ugandan presidential election of 2006, for example, did not meet minimum electoral standards. Yet, in its characteristic style the AU warmly welcomed the new leaders into its fold, setting the stage for post-election contestations in these countries. The international community should openly denounce such elections and completely isolate leaders who emerge from such fraudulent elections. The resolution by the European Union (EU) parliament on 24 May 2007 to withhold aid to the federal government of Nigeria if the flawed elections of April 2007 were not re-run is a good step. Over the last five years the EU earmarked €500 million (US\$674.5 million) for various projects on governance, health, water and sanitation in Nigeria.⁵⁰ Aid withdrawal by other bilateral creditors such as Japan, Canada and the US will further exert the needed pressure on Nigeria to meet minimum electoral standards. Also, new threats by Nigeria's major investors to withdraw can help regenerate sanity in the electoral and general governance performance of the country. In other words, the international community should do what the AU is failing to do.

4.2.2 Health and education

Health and educational security can be significantly bolstered by the international community at large and in particular by Africa's major creditors through the easing of intrusive conditionalities attached to aid. While conditionalities are necessary in some cases, e.g. preventing aid towards poverty alleviation being diverted into military budgets, they should not be made universal. The fact is that conditionalities have attenuated the efforts at addressing poverty in general and health and education in particular that aided the development of Asia (Stein 1995). There is no doubt that the health and educational sectors require reforms to make them more efficient, but these should not be placed beyond the reach of citizens through privatisation. Other services such as the provision of water and sanitation should also be reformed and not privatized. These services and amenities provide foundations for human security and should therefore be both available and affordable. Alongside the above, African governments should begin to devote large percentages of the budgets to health and education. These can be achieved by scaling down the allocations for defense and the

⁵⁰ <http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/05/24/europe/EU-GEN-EU-Nigeria.php> (Accessed 25/5/07).

large number of cabinet ministers and special advisers to presidents.

Furthermore, creditor countries should move debt remission beyond rhetoric. Very little has been achieved by SSA by way of debt cancellation since the institution of the HIPC initiatives in 1996. The July 2005 G8 meeting in Gleneagles, Scotland from which Africa had hoped for massive concessions turned out to be a disappointment. At the conclusion of the meeting, the G8 only adjusted aid figures from the current \$25 billion a year to \$50 billion by 2010. Experts, however, estimate that Africa requires \$100 billion in development aid and a minimum annual growth rate of 7 percent (more than double the current growth rate of between 2 and 3%) if it is to meet the UN millennium goals (Short 2002). Moreover, of the 18 countries which received some debt cancellation only 14 were African in contrast to the AU's expectation of total and unconditional remission of the region's debt. While debt cancellation does not automatically or instantly translate into improvements in human security, it nonetheless enables the proportion of national budgets currently being devoted to debt service to be ploughed into other human security-enhancing areas such as education, health and infrastructure.

Debt remission should be accompanied by more aid. Here, again, it is disheartening to note that since the mid-1980s the north has consistently failed to deliver on aid promises to Africa. In 1986 the UN developed a four-year recovery programme, the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PARRED) 1986–1990. This programme embodied pledges by the international creditor community to provide assistance to Africa. However, the tepid response from the international community condemned UN-PARRED to a premature demise. Again, in 1991, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) was adopted under which the international creditor community was to commit 0.7 percent of its GNP as ODA to Africa. Only a few countries, including the Netherlands and the Scandinavian countries met this target by the end of the decade. Consequently, overall ODA to Africa plummeted from \$28.6 billion in 1990 to \$16.4 billion in 2000 (Bentsi-Enchill 1997; Asante 2003: 16). While shunning Africa, the west has been giving more “aid” to farm animals in the form of subsidies. In 2000, the EU's total aid to SSA amounted to \$8.00 per African, while its subsidies to cows averaged \$913 per cow. Japan's case was even more absurd. In that year Japan's total aid to SSA averaged \$1.47 per African, while its subsidy to cows averaged a colossal \$2,700 (UNDP 2003: 155). This morally disheartening reality means that the west has to do more in terms of aid if it is to be seen to be genuinely promoting human security in Africa. The war on terror should not eclipse aid towards poverty alleviation as it seeming to be the case with US aid policy.

4.2.3 International Trade

The Commission on Human Security identified trade imbalances between regions as a

worrying source of economic insecurity (CHS 2003). Trade imbalance with the north remains one of Africa's most daunting challenges to development. One reason is SSA's overwhelming dependence on primary agricultural exports. With the exception of the short-lived and ill-fated import substitution industrialisation (ISI) strategy of the 1960s, successive development strategies have done little to change the structure of SSA's production. Neither have Africa's post-colonial elite made any concerted efforts towards transforming or diversifying the inherited colonial economy (Ake 1996). In fact, by its emphasis on export agriculture, SAP, which dominated Africa's development landscape, helped to perpetuate the existing international division of labour and production. Another reason is that whereas the prices of SSA's primary products are determined by impersonal market forces, the prices of industrial goods are determined by producers, placing Africa at a disadvantage vis-à-vis its northern trading partners. The asymmetry in Africa-northern trade is compounded by the former's limited access to western markets and state subsidies to western farmers.

The 1975 Lome Convention gave African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries some limited access to EU markets.⁵¹ This has not been enough and some countries such as South Africa have had to negotiate separate trade agreements with the EU. The essential requirements of the west are first, to grant Africa greater access to its markets, and second to stop subsidies to its farmers. The perplexing paradox is that while Africa is being urged to desubsidise and liberalise under a plethora of conditionalities, western governments are increasingly subsidising and protecting agriculture. Desubsidisation of northern farmers must complement African access to western markets. To this end western countries need to be considerate in their negotiations at the WTO, as Africa and the developing world are the ultimate losers in a failure to compromise on agricultural subsidies. Fairer international trade among regions is a good starting point for reducing poverty and its associated insecurities.

4.2.4 Food

Although poverty limits access to food, one of the major causes of food insecurity is inadequate supply. Often, this is due to failures in rain. The international creditor community can help rectify this in the long term by assisting Africa to reduce dependence on rain through invests in irrigation. Large scale irrigation projects will not only create employment but will also ensure a fairly constant supply of food.

Moreover, timely interventions by the international community when food-related crisis erupt in Africa is required. According to Oxfam, food insecurity in Africa partly stems from the slow response of the international community. Citing the case of Niger, Oxfam notes that "although the earliest warnings came in late 2004, it was only when pictures of suffering children were shown on television in June 2005 that the international community was

⁵¹ Included in the items ACP countries could sell on the EU market are sugar, beef and minerals.

galvanized into action. By the time aid arrived, 3.6 million people were suffering from hunger” (Oxfam 2006: 6). Slow responses from the international community are frequently complimented by the paltry response to humanitarian appeals to help victims of food crisis in Africa. For example, an appeal by the UN for \$225 million emergency food aid for Kenya in February 2006 yielded only \$79 million during the first month in April 2006 (Oxfam 2006: 6). Such delays by the international community in meeting food aid targets have often caused and escalated preventable food shortages.

Moreover, concrete measures need to be put in place to curb the emission of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. It is now known that China will soon overtake the US in emissions as a result of the former’s rapid economic development. As such the curbing of emissions should not be seen as the sole responsibility of the US and western countries. China, India and indeed all countries in both north and south should consider themselves part of the anti-global warming campaign.

The attainment of food security may remain a mirage without concomitant assault on the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which both undermines production and access to food in many communities. The fight against HIV/AIDS should be intensified. The pace at rolling out anti-retrovirus drugs should be intensified with new commitments by the international community to donate funds. President George Bush announcement in early June 2007 to commit \$30 billion to fight HIV/AIDS over the next five years is encouraging.⁵² Critics argue that this is still inadequate. However, for Africa, this represents a step in the right direction. Similar commitment by other western countries could significantly boost the campaign against HIV/AIDS. Alongside this, the campaign to educate people especially rural dwellers on AIDS should remain relentless. A strategic partnership between the state, NGOs and the international community at large is necessary to mount a concerted effort against HIV/AIDS.

4.2.5 The Environment

It was noted that environmental insecurity in SSA is primarily caused by three main factors – natural disasters, poverty and international pressures. The frequent occurrences of natural disasters such as droughts and floods have been linked to the activities and policies of western countries. Similarly, the role of external factors in the exacerbation and mitigation of poverty was also noted. Thus, by and large a great deal of responsibility rests with external in addressing environmental insecurity in SSA. In this regard, industrialized countries have to do more to alleviate poverty as a way of easing pressure on the environment. As well, the north should assist SSA in establishing stronger environmental regimes that are capable of limiting, even controlling the exploitation of resources by MNCs. One way of achieving this is through the establishment of a new global environmental regime that holds MNCs accountable for

⁵² http://www.huffingtonpost.com/james-love/bushs-30-billion-for-gl_b_50412.html

ecological damages and obliging them to compensate affected communities. Since the north is culpable for some of the environmental catastrophes experienced in Africa, it should see it as a moral responsibility to speedily assist countries faced by such calamities.

MNCs, should assume responsibility for causing environmental damages. To this end, companies operating among communities should compensate communities for lost land and other resources. MNCs should engage in environmental and infrastructural development. Since African states are presiding over diminishing resources, companies should compliment the efforts of the state by investing in infrastructure such building schools, roads, hospitals and clinics, as well as the provision of sanitation and drinking water. In order words, MNC should endear themselves to communities by investing in the development of the latter. In doing this not only will MNCs be helping in addressing poverty, but also creating a non-violent environment conducive for their own operations. One observer lamented about the situation in the Niger delta, “down by the coastline, the Ogoni people live 500 thousand people. They sit right on top of the oil. When you go through this territory, you go through towns that have absolutely no electricity. There’s no hospital and no school. People [are] very frustrated [and] very angry.”⁵³ Such frustration and anger have been reflected in community protests and various attempts to sabotage the oil industry in the region through illegal perforation of oil pipelines and the kidnapping of foreign oil workers. Consequently, by early 2006, oil production has fallen by a fifth, i.e. by 450,000 barrels per day (bpd) out of about 2.5 million bpd (*New York Times* 21 February 2006). Oil companies in the Niger delta and MNCs in SSA in general could better secure their investments through corporate social responsibility in the countries and especially in the communities where they operate.

⁵³ <http://www.voanews.com/english/archive/2006-06/Nigera2006-06-02-voa50.cfm?CFID=152392875&CFTOKEN=89784240> (Accessed 18/5/07)

V Conclusion

Africa's insecurity crisis is enormous and visible. Its poverty levels are high and set to increase. Poverty feeds into the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which is rocking the region. In addition, intra-state conflicts have become frequent and protracted, while environmental degradation has become rapid. Together, these have both heightened human insecurity and stymied efforts at reversing these conditions. The emergence of the human security concept was aimed at shifting the hitherto overwhelming attention from the state to people who face silent, grave but largely ignored threats. The dominance of the state and the logic of the cold war marginalised people in the discourse on security. The thrust of the 1994 UNDP report is to highlight the risks and threats facing people that have remained uncaptured by public policy at state and international levels.

While there is global consensus on focusing on "human" as opposed to "state" security, there has been scant analysis on the fundamental sources of human insecurity. In the case of SSA, the tendency has been to adopt the usual neo-classical formula and point to factors that are predominantly internal to the region. It has been argued that what is frequently regarded as internal causes of insecurity such as poverty, conflicts, environmental degradation, food, health and educational insecurities, are in fact manifestations of the crisis. In perspective, these are the product of more fundamental causes, including endemic structures and practices within the international system. It is common knowledge that in order to prescribe an effective antidote to a problem, it is imperative to diagnose its root causes. A deviation from this standard practice leads to a diagnoses of the symptoms rather than the root causes.

The study emphasises that globalisation and other related global forces such liberalisation, democratisation and debt, among other things have been fundamental source of human insecurity in Africa. Not only do these external factors spawn human insecurity, but they also engineer fresh conditions, including conflicts, and environmental degradation that exacerbate the problem. Although terrorism is recognised worldwide as a new source of human insecurity, this view is contested in Africa. As argued, terrorism has historically not been an issue of concern to Africa although Africa displays conditions that should ideally inspire terror. Rather, what is emerging as a new source of human insecurity is the proliferation of anti-terror legislations, which are passed by African governments at the behest of the US. The US has evolved a policy of rewarding countries enlisting in the war on terror and punishing those apathetic or oppositional to the war. The dominance of the US in the post cold war era, along with the associated benefits in the form of US aid, has presented the war on terror an irresistible offer for Africa. However, instead of securing citizens, anti-terror laws have rather provided leeway for the state to clump down on opposition, democratic forces and critical voices. In the process, these laws vitiate human rights, undermine human security and are rapidly reviving Africa's old and discredited practice of "constitution without

constitutionalism.” Thus, if anti-terror laws are becoming sources of human insecurity in Africa, they too are externally inspired.

The disconcerting development associated with terror and anti-terror legislation in Africa underscores the limits of the human security concept. This is particularly imperative in SSA where there is an ever increasing tendency for the concept to generate huge public expectations. Among other things, human security has so far not replaced the state as the dominant referent of security. There are still a number of intra- and inter-state conflicts whose resolution requires the active involvement of the state. Moreover, some of the internal conflicts, especially those involving rebels are targeted at the state. Also, the African state continues to be the author and the key determinant of security. All these mean the state’s centrality in the security discourse in Africa may remain protracted and unchallenged for a long time. It has also to be noted that human security is not synonymous with development. Human security is rather an auxiliary factor of development. Thus, even attaining the goals of human security does not mean an improvement in the standard of living. These limitations, along with suspicion among some countries that human security is an ideological tool or a pretext for humanitarian intervention raise concerns not only about the efficacy of the concept but also about its universal acceptability. Ultimately, this perception may limit the utility of the concept, both in theory and practice in Africa.

However, even if the theoretical pretensions of human security are set aside, the practical side still needs to be addressed. Conflict, poverty, diseases, bad governance and human right abuses and environmental degradation needs to be halted. It is argued that this should be the challenge not only of Africans but also of the western countries who, have by their policies, contributed to the crisis in Africa. Western countries have to be part of the solution, moreover because they will contend with the consequences of the problem in the form of increased African migration to the west, inability to repay debt and even in an inability of Africa to continue to serve as a marginal market for the west. For these reasons the west should abolish the policies that have tended to hurt Africa, such as agricultural subsidies and aid conditionalities. They should also move speedily to curtail carbon and other green house emissions which are causing floods and droughts in Africa. As well the west, while increasing aid to Africa, should help establish a strong global environmental regime capable of controlling the activities of MNC.

While welcoming the contribution of the west to alleviate human insecurity, Africa should consider itself an integral part of the solution. To this end, it should reserve policies that tend to create conditions for conflict such as bad governance and marginalisation. The APRM should be strengthened to make it more effective in reversing practices of bad governance on states. Civil society should be encouraged and strengthened as a partner both in governance and in development. While these progressive policies will not instantly transform the tattered character of Africa, they will doubtlessly be setting the region firmly on the path of human security and ultimately sustainable development.

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