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### **African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI): The Case of Senegal**

By Bjorn Dressel

SAIS STUDIES ON SENEGAL  
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY  
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" Pax Africana asserts that the peace of Africa is be assured by the exertions of African themselves" (Ali Mazrani)

#### Introduction

The end of the cold war paved the way for political reforms and democratization in Africa. Several countries on the African Continent have undertaken significant political and economic reforms. Although the democratization process has advanced remarkably and economic cooperation has increased in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g. SADC, ECOWAS), we can also observe several regional crises of a new quality. Bad governance, failed states, ethnic tensions and persistent civil wars in many regions throw a dark light on the often proclaimed "African renaissance" (Thabo Mbeki) at the end of the 20th century.

The destabilizing effects of these crises emphasize the necessity of creating security regimes in Africa. The establishment of the OAU conflict management division as well as stronger cooperation in security issues on the regional level follows this aim. Despite these efforts many African countries still do not have the financial and logistic means to respond effectively to humanitarian crisis and peacekeeping challenges.

The P3 initiative of the United States, France and Great Britain for "African capacity building" intends to fill this gap. By providing selected African countries with peacekeeping related training, instruction and equipment, western states want to create "African ownership" in crisis management and thereby hope to obviate their need to intervene militarily on the African continent in the future. Western governments argue that this kind of multilateral cooperation between western donors and selected African states in the field of African peacekeeping is a proof for a revised interest in the region. It is part of a "burden sharing " between sub-Saharan Africa and developed nations in the field of security issues.

The aim of this essay is a critical assessment of the new cooperation in peacekeeping issues by means of the American African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI). The six week research trip to Senegal offered me the opportunity to talk to various actors from the civil and military side involved in the implementation of this training program in Senegal. The Republic of Senegal is an interesting case for research as it was not only the first African country to participate in the ACRI program but also decided to join at the same time the French RECAMP program. Assessing the situation in Senegal, therefore, does not only permit to gain insight about the implementation of ACRI but also about the cooperation among P3 countries in the case of Senegal. This special situation allows to draw conclusions about complementing or competing elements between the two initiatives.

In the first place, this work analyzes the current implementation of ACRI in Senegal. I consider the following questions as essential to address: What are the results and problems of the initiative? What are the changes the Senegalese army had to undertake in order to fulfill the program requirements? How can ACRI be linked to an institutional framework that permits African ownership in the future? The paper is structured along these questions.

In the first part, a short overview is given about the current efforts in Sub-Saharan Africa to create conflict prevention and conflict management mechanisms. The aim of this section is to show that changing patterns in these African efforts have led to stronger international cooperation with western states. As the P3 initiative tends to advance and complement the African efforts it is necessary to analyze the African efforts first and to ask how they can be combined.

A second part focuses on the external efforts to enhance African peacekeeping capacities.

The origin, conception and application of ACRI in the field is examined carefully and compared to alternative initiatives. This part is introduced by a short overview of changing patterns of American and French policy towards Africa. As it will be shown, the changing patterns are essential to understand the political will to launch these kinds of initiatives.

In addition, a third part examines in abstract terms ACRI. Its goals and inherent structural deficits are discussed as well as possible necessary adaptations of the program to future challenges. This passage has the function of outlining the main considerations that guided the interviews conducted.

The last section describes the different points of view of central actors within the program in Senegal. It presents the results and impressions of the six-week research trip to Senegal and therefore allows to break down the official discourse of the two initiatives in a concrete case of application.

#### History of Conflict Mechanism/Conflict Prevention in Africa

The End of the Cold War, the increasing number of civil wars and ethnical tensions on the African continent has given new impetus to conflict solution mechanism within existing African inter-governmental organizations. The Cairo Conference in 1993 is such a symbol of new thinking within the OAU. Despite these post Cold War efforts, it should not be forgotten that several mechanism were already in place before. The aim of the following passage is to give a short overview about the development of structures for conflict mechanism in Sub-Saharan Africa.

#### The OAU Charta

The OAU Charta, voted 1963 in Addis Abeba during the meeting of African Head of States, included several legal principles from International Public Law. Similar to the UN Charta the principle of peaceful dispute settlement became one of the core elements. In Art. III Nr. 4 of the OAU Charta, the "peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration" is recognized as a binding principle of politics among African States. In addition, Art. XIX of the Charta asks the member states to create by treaty the Commission of Mediation, Conciliation and Arbitration (CMCA). Located in Adis Abeba since 1964, this Commission was to be limited to conflicts among sovereign states. The Commission could only start working on request of all member states. Any preventive conflict solving measures were rigorously excluded. There are several reasons why the CMCA never started working in reality. Perhaps the most convincing point is the rigid interpretation of (state) sovereignty at that time. Many African States just came out of the struggle for decolonization and feared any foreign interference in their newly achieved, fragile independence. Conflict Solution Mechanisms always imply a transfer of sovereignty rights to a supra-national body; it therefore always implies the potentiality of interference.

Besides, the African debate in the 60s and 70s did not take into consideration the issue of intra-African conflicts. Nation Building, development and the struggle against remaining colonized regions (e.g. Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau etc.) were in the center of the African debate at that time.

However the poor result of the CMCA, the OAU can look back to several successful informal conflict resolution efforts. Especially the ad-hoc committees of African Head of States/Foreign Ministers played an increasingly important role in several conflicts (e.g. Algeria-Marocco 1963; Chad 1967, Tanzania-Uganda 1967). As a result of these efforts, the discussion about a pan-African military force never ended. The idea was brought up by the

delegation of Ghana during the second OAU meeting in 1964. Ghana's proposal included the idea to create a military force led by African states against any non-African threat. Although a further intention might have been to use this force against white settlers in Southern Africa, it already included the proposal of an African peacekeeping force that could replace the UN Force in Congo 1964 (see: Kühne 1999). The Defense Commission (Art. XX of the Charter) was the responsible body within the Charter to accelerate the planning in this direction. An analysis of the commission's work shows that many questions that came up again in the recent ACRI/RECAMP concept, like inter-operability or training and logistics, had already been discussed in the first meetings of that commission. However a continuing discussion within the OAU, the African reality never matched to the rhetorical discourse. Until 1994 twenty-two African states participated in UN peacekeeping operations. Apart from the Tschad intervention (1979-1981), none of them has been planned, executed or financed by the OAU or another African Organization.

### The Kampala Process

The end of the Cold War implied several severe changes for many African leaders. The period of East West Confrontation had given the possibility for many African Heads of States to receive military, economic and political attention from one ideological side. However, the end of it led to a further geopolitical marginalization of the whole continent. On the other hand, the End of the Cold War also meant a "second wave of liberation" in which human rights and democracy issues were brought on the political agenda as well as economic liberalization. The fruit of this inter-African discussion was the Kampala document "Towards a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa". It was accepted for examination by the OAU Meeting in Abuja (Nigeria) in 1991. The document shows several new approaches to future key issues such as security, democracy, development and regional cooperation. Especially the above mentioned term of "sovereignty" has been profoundly revised and updated to current developments in International Public Law. How far the change concerning "non interference" and "sovereignty" has gone, can be shown by the speech of Ugandan President Museveni, in which he argued:

"If the European countries can surrender some of their sovereignty, African states can similarly surrender some of their sovereignty for greater security both at the intra- and inter state level."

The changing perception concerning this central term was essential for an enhanced future security cooperation. It paved the way for the important Cairo Mechanism in 1993.

### The Cairo Mechanism

The Cairo Mechanism is certainly the most complex mechanism for conflict prevention and management so far achieved on the African continent as a whole. Its initial stadium goes back to the declaration of African Heads of States "On the Political and Socio-Economic Situation in Africa and the Fundamental Changes taking place in the World" in July 1990, in which the signatories agreed "to work together towards the peaceful and speedy resolution of all conflicts". Under the guideline of the Secretary General of the OAU Salim Ahmed Salim an "in-depth study" was undertaken that ended in the finally approved "Report of the Secretary-General on the Establishment, with the OAU, of a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution" in Cairo 1993. The complex structure can only be described briefly: the OAU mechanism consists of the Central Organ (CO), the OAU General-Secretary and his Secretariat with its division of Conflict Management. The two organs are supported by the Defense Commission and the Chiefs of staff. It is mainly the OAU General-Secretary that covers the issues of early warning and conflict prevention. He can furthermore nominate and send out special envoys, eminent persons, fact-finding missions or observers. The Conflict Management Center is located in Addis Abeba and should also host the Early Warning Network (EWARNET) and the OAU Conflict Management Network (COMANET). Funding is assured by the Special Fund/Peace Fund of OAU Member States as well as foreign donors. The importance of the Cairo Mechanism stems from the fact that African Actors are increasingly willing to deal with conflicts in their African context. However, concerning the establishment of African peacekeeping units, the OAU conference did not advance that much. Although the General Secretary Salim Ahmed Salim insisted on the necessity to create peacekeeping capacities under the organization of the OAU, the member states refused to give their approval for this proposal.

## Towards regional security regimes: the case of ECOWAS

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is an interesting case to illustrate, how enhanced regional cooperation can become the fundament for regional security structures. In April 1978, only five years after the creation of ECOWAS, sixteen West African states came together to sign a non aggression and defense agreement, called "L'Accord de Non-Agression et d'Assistance en matière de Défense" (ANAD). Although this treaty did not have a great impact, it can be seen as a basis for the "Mécanisme de prévention, de gestion, de règlement des conflits, de maintien de la paix et de la sécurité" which was presented at the fourth extraordinary summit of ECOWAS in Lomé 1997. It took two more years until this document received the approval by all member states in December 1999. This agreement can be seen as the most advanced structure for conflict prevention and management in Western Africa. Therefore, it may be worth having a closer look at its innovative structures.

The central organ, the "Conseil de médiation et sécurité", consists of nine heads of states and meets under normal circumstances twice a year. This organ has the power to consider all questions of peace and security in the region. In case of conflict intervention it can nominate a special representative as well as the commander of a potential ECOWAS military peace force. The executive secretary of this council is assisted by a "Secrétaire chargé des Affaires politique de Défense et de la Sécurité" as well as a "Commission de la Défense et de la Sécurité" that has the function to make proposals for the council and to examine the reports of the observer mission. The "conseil de sages" is another interesting organ that intends to refer to the African tradition of inner tribal conflict management through elders in the village. It is a collection of important personalities from the member states and has the function to be a neutral and objective institution.

The treaty also proposes the creation of four West African zones, each containing a local ECOWAS monitoring/observation office. Concerning possible peacekeeping, observation or police missions under the name of ECOMOG, the treaty refers to a logistic and financial responsibility of all member states. Countries sending troops into the field may finance the mission up to 3 month in advance until they are reimbursed by the other member states for their contribution.

Although it is doubtful if the ECOWAS community can finance military interventions in the future on its own, the treaty shows a fundamental change of the regional "opinio juris" towards conflict resolution. Internal conflicts and humanitarian missions, explicitly excluded by the previous treaties, are now part of the conflict resolution mechanism. It underlines the potential that regional security regimes can play in the future.

### A new tendency: International Cooperation (P3-initiative)

Besides enhanced regional cooperation there are several new tendencies in the African efforts towards conflict management that focus on better international cooperation with western nations.

The Cairo Process, for example, was from its beginning oriented towards a stronger international cooperation. It was planned to build up "strategic alliances" with the UN and international governmental and non-governmental Organizations. From today's perspective, the results of this cooperation are, however, quite poor. Although scholars (see: Kühne 1997:28; Baghat 1998:2) underlined that there would be several linking issues to already existing UN departments and units, such as the DPKO or the DPA, that would help to create an efficient structure, the cooperation between the OAU and the UN has never gone very far. In addition, the experience with the ECOWAS intervention in Liberia under the leadership of Nigeria has clearly shown the limits of regional security cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa.

A new chapter of cooperation was opened with the P3 initiative of France, the US and Great Britain with several African States. The interest of Western European Countries and the US to cooperate more closely with the OAU and its prevention mechanism come up with the obvious difficulties of the UN operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II). Torn between domestic demands for a further engagement in case of humanitarian catastrophes on the African continent and diminishing will to supply own troops, the idea of "African capacities" for conflict solution under "African

Ownership" became central in the intercontinental dialogue. As it will be shown in detail the US/European support did not only include financial support for the Cairo mechanism but also led to several bilateral/multilateral training initiatives in the new field of African Peacekeeping. The already mentioned P3 initiative is the most manifest example of such an effort. In May 1997, the US, France and Great Britain agreed upon a common capacity-building program designed to strengthen and coordinate their respective policies and provide a forum for other interested countries to participate.

The following work will show in how far these initiatives can be an additional part to the already existing African Conflict Mechanism and how they can be integrated/linked to the existing structures. This linkage is essential if a sustainable African Ownership should be realized in the future.

## Conclusion

From the short overview it becomes clear that the American and French initiatives to create African capacities for peacekeeping have been preceded by an inter-African discussion about conflict prevention and management. Before the ACRI initiative was introduced by Warren Christopher in 1996, the OAU could look already back on a remarkable development of conflict management mechanisms. Several countries in Africa have UN peacekeeping experience and the ECOMOG intervention in Liberia showed also an increasing will to solve regional crisis under the regional organizational umbrella of ECOWAS. Although these efforts were an imminent step towards a deeper African engagement, they also showed the limits and problems of this kind of operations. Without the regional dominance of Nigeria the whole logistical and military framework of this peacekeeping intervention would not have been possible. Inter-operability among units and sufficient training in peacekeeping was not always assured and led finally to a very ambiguous result of the whole operation. Besides, it became clear that there is a raising demand for rapid reaction forces in case of a crisis on the African continent. Especially this kind of military operation demands a lot of logistical and military experience, an experience that the major part of African States does not have.

Background of the current external efforts to create African peacekeeping capacities

The starting point: Changing Patterns of U.S. and French Policy towards Africa

The end of the Cold War accelerated a major shift in the Africa policy of France and the US. Geo-strategic interest has lost importance whereas democracy issues and phenomena such as failed states and ethnicity appeared on the political agenda. Before looking at the concrete military initiatives it is necessary to look at the Africa policy of the two main external actors France and the US. Both countries have changed their Africa policies after the end of the East-West confrontation profoundly and thereby opened the way to new forms of cooperation.

### a) The United States

US policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa has shown deep changes since the end of the Cold War. Being aware of an altered international environment, the Clinton Administration announced in an early stage the necessity for a new Africa policy. In 1994 a White House Conference on "Building a Better Future in Africa" was organized in which three long term goals were identified:

to support African efforts to establish democratic institutions in government

to help bring an end to many conflicts and crisis on the continent

to encourage sustainable growth

As President Clinton underlined the American Policy should be based on the idea that "we should help the nations of Africa identify and solve problems before they erupt".

The quote underlines that the Clinton Administration realized that preventing crisis is an preliminary step before any form of sustainable development can take place. As a government report showed, the spending on peace keeping and disaster relief was twice as much as on development. Therefore, it is not astonishing that crisis prevention efforts became a key concept of the Clinton Administration policy towards Sub-Saharan Africa.

Although a Press release issued in 1995 of the Department of Defense argued that "the US has limited direct vital security interests in the region", the Clinton Administration underlined its commitment to empower African States and organizations to resolve conflict and achieve stability. Hence, stability, safety (a region free of weapons of mass destruction and trans-national threats) as well as sustained economic development are the categories that summarize best the current US interests.

The Clinton trip to six African States in 1998 and the recent discussions about the African Growth and Opportunity Act that finally passed the two legislative chambers in May 2000, show an increasing interest of the US government on African issues. Though these recent developments have put Africa back on the agenda of US foreign policy, the critique of Schraeder (1994:2) that " US policy makers have tended to ignore the African continent until some sort of politico-military crisis grabs their attention" and therefore "often becomes driven by events as opposed to the more desirable outcome of policy shaping events" is still valuable to a certain extent.

## France

Due to its long colonial history, France is probably the European country with the strongest ties to Africa. For the whole post war era, French Foreign Policy had shown a special focus on Africa, especially French speaking West Africa. As the former French Foreign Minister L. de Guiringaud argued:

„L’Afrique est le seul continent qui soit encore à la mesure de la France, à la portée de ses moyens. Le seul où elle peut, encore, avec ses hommes, changer le cours de l’ histoire.“

Built up on a clientelistic network between the French President and his „cellule africaine" on the one hand and his African counterparts on the other hand, the French government did consider Africa as its "domaine réservée". The French influence did build up on military, economic and cultural presence in the region. Therefore, France did not hesitate to intervene with military power when strategic aims were at risk. African security problems were considered to have a direct impact on France. As Michel (1978:20) wrote:

„ La sécurité de la France ne dépend pas, bien sûr, uniquement de la sécurité de l’Afrique, mais elle est, me semble-t-il, très fortement liée à celle-ci. Elle est, en premier lieu, parce que le territoire français est proche de l’Afrique en Méditerranée..[.] Elle est ensuite, parce que 260.000 ressortissant français vivent et travaillent en Afrique..[.] Elle l’est enfin parce que les routes maritimes qui entourent l’Afrique servent à acheminer la plus grande partie du pétrole et des matières premières dont nous avons besoin et sont donc vital pour notre pays.“ (Michel 1978:20)

Although this kind of geo-strategic thinking can still be found among the French elite, the official discourse changed profoundly in the last 10 years for several reasons:

First, the end of the Cold War did bring an end to many authoritarian regimes in the region. Several new actors appeared in the political arena and not all of them were closely linked to France, some even explicitly refused French interference. The case of the former Zaire is such an illustrating case.

Besides, the French government realized, in a painful process, that it does not have the financial and military resources anymore to be the major organizing force in Africa. The case of the French military intervention in Rwanda (Operation Turquoise) has been the last attempt so far to play a decisive role in an African Conflict. In fact, the French government has permanently reduced their military presence in the region over the last five years. Even France economic interests are eroding. Though Africa still accounts for 20 % of the French exports and therefore is the third market for France in the world counting for 87 billion FF. and channeling 15 % of French foreign investment

to Sub-Saharan Africa, the recent instability has led to diminishing interest among the French business community to invest in the region. Stronger engagement by US investors has furthermore put French firms in a more competitive environment. With the trend of the European Union to enlarge towards Eastern Europe, it can be expected that French efforts will shift to this region in the future, too.

Security issues became recently the dominant issue in French-African relations. The French-African Summit in Paris (1998) and the French-British Ambassador meeting in Abidjan (1999) dealt predominantly with security issues.. The French initiative "Renforcement des Capacites de la Maintien de la Paix" (RECAMP) and the support for the OAU Conflict Management Division are parts of the newly adapted Africa policy of the French government, that is described by official documents as "non ingérence, sans désengagement". About thirty percent of French military spending for Africa is re-channeled into peacekeeping related efforts. The RECAMP initiative is a result of this new policy.

## ACRI

The African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) is a US Presidential training initiative, lanced by President Clinton in 1997 for selected African States. It is militarily coordinated by the US European Command (USEUCOM) and politically represented by ambassador Aubrey Hooks. ACRI intends to create effective, rapidly deployable peacekeeping units to perform Chapter VI peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations. It is planned that ACRI provides equipment and training for 10.000 – 12.000 African soldiers. These soldiers will be organized in companies and battalions, commanded by brigade staffs and supported by their own logistic units.

Although ACRI is also based on bilateral agreements, it differs profoundly from traditional bilateral military aid. ACRI's program is based on a common doctrine and equipment for all participant states with special emphasis on interoperable communications equipment enabling multinational units to work together more effectively. The program is based on battalion initial training that is subsequently completed by so called "follow-on training". Every six month within the next two and a half years, this follow-on training is seen as a progressive building block process focused on commanders and staff at all battalion levels. Special emphasis is put on the "train-the-trainer" concept which is expected to create multiplier effects among the host militaries. The training by US special forces combines classroom, field, and computer-assisted simulation training. To expose the host military to the full range of UN Chapter VI peacekeeping tasks, the field training includes convoy escorts, logistics, protection of refugees as well as negotiation, command and control. NGO's and private volunteer organizations are integrated into the training units (see appendix).

Depending on the experience of the selected states in peace keeping operations and their progress within the training blocks, ACRI training may end with brigade training. Until today only Senegal has been selected for this kind of training.

Besides Senegal, Uganda, Malawi, Mali, Ghana, Benin and Ivory Coast have received the initial battalion training. Ethiopia and the Ivory Coast are currently suspended from training until their political situation becomes more stable. For the same reason Nigeria is waiting to get included into the training initiative. In an interview ambassador Hooks stressed that the broad parameters for receiving ACRI training are a democratic civilian government, respect for human rights and an already existing military capacity. (see: Hooks 1999) This kind of argumentation underlines that ACRI is seen by the US government as a measure to stabilize and promote countries in their democratic efforts.

The Ethiopian/ Eritrean conflict, however, also shows the risk of training and equipment being used for military operations outside the intended peacekeeping scenario. ACRI tries to limit these risks by providing only training and delivery of non- lethal equipment. As the case of Uganda has shown abuse cannot be totally excluded.

It is worth noting that all ACRI trained nations take sovereign decisions to respond to a request of political entities such as the UN or OAU.

The budget for ACRI has expended \$ 15 million in FY 97, \$ 22 million in FY 98 and \$ 18 million in FY 99. For the year 2000 \$ 20 million are requested.

Although ACRI is a US initiative the US government sees it as an initiative open for stronger participation from other, especially European countries.

## RECAMP

The French initiative "Renforcement des Capacites Africaines de Maintien de la Paix" (RECAMP) was launched only shortly after the American initiative. Initiated by the P 3 initiative between the US, France and Great Britain in may 1997, the French government also intends to train and deliver equipment to selected countries for Chapter VI peacekeeping operation. The idea is to develop stand-by force modules that can be called upon to participate in UN- and OAU-authorized operations. This implies, however, that the French government guarantees the complete material and logistic support for a whole RECAMP battalion. Consequently the necessary material is stocked in Senegal and available for the multilateral RECAMP battalion in case of conducting a peacekeeping operation under guidance of the UN or a regional organization. Although the RECAMP battalion is not a "stand by force", the French government believes that the RECAMP initiative permits to intervene rapidly in any area of the African continent within 48 hours to 90 days.

France has organized several military exercises (Kompienga 98, Guidimakha 98, Gabon 2000) to train the RECAMP battalion for a number of contingencies and thus cover a broad range of topics. Guidimakha, for example, was divided into four separate phases. First, specialized personnel from participating countries gathered intelligence in the theatre of operations. Next, during the preliminary contingency operation phase, troops were tasked with securing strategic points. During the third phase, operations centered around taking control of a particular area and securing a humanitarian zone. The final phase was devoted to providing humanitarian assistance, such as regrouping and protecting refugees and displaced persons. The French government intends to support such sub-regional training exercises roughly every two years, in different locations (see map in appendix). These regular military exercises replace the training building blocks within ACRI concept. In addition to four already existing military schools in West Africa (centre de vocation regional) France also founded a peacekeeping school in Zambakro in Ivory Coast.

Similar to the US budget for ACRI, the French budget is about 180 million FF. With Ambassador Bellécier France also nominated a political representative who coordinates and represents the initiative.

Finally, France also supports African peacekeeping efforts such as the "Mission de Sécurité des Accords de Bangui" (MISAB) or MINURCA in Central Africa financially.

## Great Britain

The British Government is also a signatory of the agreement between France and the USA to support African efforts in peacekeeping. Unlike the above mentioned initiatives the UK Peacekeeping Training Support Program focuses primarily on training officers. Its efforts are therefore concentrated on so called "Centers of Excellence" in Zimbabwe and Ghana. These Centers provide classes on various military issues for the Chief of Staffs of several African Countries. A large part of the classes offered are organized around peacekeeping issues. Two African-based British Military Advisory and Training Teams (BMATTs) provide the training for officers from the host countries as well as other African States.

Furthermore, the British Government has co-hosted and financed the first multinational peacekeeping exercises in Southern sub-Saharan Africa known as "Blue Hungwe" in 1998 and "Blue Crane" in 1999. These exercises were organized under the supervision of the SADC and its member states, but also invited British, French and American Troops to participate.

International Organizations: UN (DKPO)/Europe Union (WEU)

Besides the above-mentioned countries the UN and the European Union also have shown some endeavor to support specific African peacekeeping efforts.

The Department of Peacekeeping operations of the United Nation (DKPO) for example organized UN "Train-the-Trainers Courses" in Italy and gave training assistance to the military exercises organized by France, the US and Great Britain. In 1998 it also initiated the first meeting of the African Peacekeeping Working Group which since then a variety of activities (see appendix). As a result of the discussion within the UN, especially within the Lessons Learned Unit, there are several new trends towards having capabilities of rapidly deployable peacekeeping forces (see Bhagat 1998:4). The Multinational Standby Forces High-Readiness Brigade (SHIRBRIG) or the Rapidly Deployable Mission Headquarters (RDMHQ) are such new concepts that will play certainly a greater role in the future.

The European Union initially has shown little inclination to become engaged in enhancing African peacekeeping capacities. Remarks of the former EU Commissioner of ACP-relations, Joao de Deus Pinheiro, can be interpreted as rising interest of the European Union for conflict prevention. Already in 1997 the EU has adopted a global strategy of conflict prevention and resolution for Africa based on five principles. In general, the EU efforts are concentrated on conflict prevention in Africa through preventive diplomacy and the support for peacekeeping missions led by the UN. Nevertheless, we can think of future engagement of the defense branch of the EU, the WEU, in the field of African peacekeeping. Especially for countries such as Germany, Sweden, Denmark or the Netherlands that have a lot of experience in the field but are reluctant to deeper unilateral military engagement, it may open new areas of cooperation. This is even more true after the profound experiences some of the above mentioned countries made in Bosnia Herzegovina or during the Kosovo crisis.

#### Abstract assessment of ACRI

The following passage will give a theoretical overview about the American training initiative. These reflections were the starting point for the discussions the author of this paper had with several actors in charge of the program in Senegal and the US.

#### 1. Goals

The African Crisis Response Initiative, but also every other training initiative mentioned above, intends to enhance the military capacities of African States to conduct peacekeeping operations under Chapter VI successfully on the African continent. By doing so it supports the UN peacekeeping enhancement in this area and recognizes the key role many African States have played in peacekeeping operations in the last years. In the long run the program initiators hope to strengthen the efforts of an advanced regional and sub-regional security system that permits to conduct peacekeeping operation in certain African areas. Many scholars in the field see the initiative as a "win-win" situation. African States get training and equipment to fulfill their international tasks and Western donor states will in turn promote stability, democratic governance and respect for human rights by giving training and improving civilian-military relations in selected African countries. For that reason the United States even created the African Center for Strategic Studies (ACSS), a Center that brings together various African actors from the military and the civilian side to talk about the future of civilian-military relations (see appendix for program details).

The recent training initiatives, thus, go further than traditional military aid. The critical question, though, is in how far these initiatives cover forms of military aid that are difficult to justify to the public. The answer to that depends mainly on the utilization of the received training and equipment for other military operations either within the country (e.g. counter-insurgency) or against another country. The fact that the training is conducted by American special forces, known for their counter-insurgency skills, has initiated many speculations. The case of the Ivory Coast also shows that even in countries who are considered to be stable, militaries may step back into the political arena.

#### 2. Problems

Besides the fact that ACRI should be closely analyzed under the question of an prolonged military aid, there are several intrinsic problems of this initiative that need to be considered.

First, it is already doubtful if the limitations to Chapter VI meet the "African reality". ACRI but also the French initiative RECAMP only refers to Chapter VI operations under the UN Charta. Current and past conflict dynamics in Africa, however, have shown that often a peace enforcement or "robust peacekeeping" is needed, especially in case of intra-state conflicts. These conflicts often accelerate and due to specific African particularities, such as ethnicity, proliferation of small arms and state failure, become increasingly violent, also for "neutral" third parties. Therefore, these conflict structures often do not leave space for consensual peacekeeping operations where the two opposing sides have agreed on a cease fire and external intervention. Hence, it is doubtful if ACRI limitations to Chapter VI correspond to the "complex emergencies" in possible areas of action (see: Cilliers 1999:2).

Furthermore, scholars in the field have pointed out that an international police force is as important for the conflict solution as military units may be. The case of CIVPOL in Bosnia is a supporting case for this argument. Until now, none of the Western initiatives have considered to bring in aspects of police operations. Although it may be true that a police force can only play a distinctive role after the military force has pacified the region, a possible sequential linkage needs to be studied.

The key question is nevertheless, in how far ACRI can be linked in the future to UN, OAU or other sub-regional political structures without creating parallel structures to the already existing "stand by agreements" of the UN (Chapter VII, Art. 43). As shown in the first part, African states have made several improvements in their conflict resolution efforts. Especially regional organization such as ECOWAS and SADC may be alternative political structures for guiding inter-African peacekeeping operations. None of the existing initiatives is very clear about how to link the current efforts to a political body that takes the judicial and political responsibility for future peacekeeping operations. This problem becomes even more serious in regard to the integration of dominant regional powers, such as Nigeria in West Africa and South Africa in the southern part of sub-Saharan Africa. The structures need to be open to integrate them but also not too flexible so that they can be misused by these powers. Delegating the peace keeping efforts to sub-regional units would also facilitate other nations to become part of the initiative as they have a direct interest to stabilize their region.

### 3. Possible Solutions

The above mentioned limitation of ACRI to Chapter VI operations is not easy to solve. It is not only doubtful whether the participating African states would accept an enlargement to Chapter VII as it could imply the use of force against a state in the region without his agreement if it fulfills the requirements of Article 42 of the UN Charta. But the program as it is in its current form would also have to be changed profoundly. Training and equipment needs to be adjusted for Chapter VII operations. For the US this would mean to deliver lethal weapons to states that participate in the ACRI program. Keeping the possibility of abuse in mind the only solution may be to stock such arms in special centers in the region which are under the control of a Western donor nation or an international Organization. In case of peacekeeping operations the weapons would be given to the respective state and returned after the end until the next operation requires its use. This approach would imply a stronger or even permanent engagement of the US in certain areas of Africa.

Concerning the integration of police aspects, a similar training program for police forces that starts after or parallel to ACRI's military training should be considered. Especially for such a program module we may think of a stronger engagement of those European countries that are reluctant to direct military aid. The already mentioned experiences with CIVPOL in Bosnia can certainly be used, making adaptations to the African context.

To prevent parallel structures to the UN peacekeeping system, it will be necessary, however, to locate the political unit that has the political will to conduct peacekeeping operations. Even if the UN Security Council will be the primarily responsible body for this sort of operations it can hand over the responsibility to regional units, according to Chapter VIII, Art. 52 of the UN Charta. In Africa, the first supranational institution that can take up these functions

would be the OAU. Due to the changes in the interpretation of the term of sovereignty the OAU should be considered for a stronger engagement in the future. The problem for a stronger engagement are currently the member states.

In 1997 the Secretary General of the OAU, Salim Ahmed Salim has stated:

"la nécessité pour l' Afrique de se préparer a la pire des éventualités et a donner a l'OAU des moyens de se préparer grâce, entre autres, à la mise à la disposition par les Etats membres [...] pour être éventuellement utilisées dans les opérations d'observation et de rétablissement de la paix, d'abord et avant tout par les Nations Unies et, à titre exceptionnel, par l'OAU"

As this citation shows the OAU only wants to take responsibility in exceptional cases. This reservation was further expressed in the same communiqué when the document mentioned the preoccupation by a number of OAU member states that:

"tels arrangements risquent d'exonérer les acteurs non africains de toute participation dans ce que certains d'entre eux appellent des conflits africains intraitable"

Making reference to RECAMP the OAU representative mentioned that this initiative :

"pourraient porter préjudice a la solidarité africaine et a l'harmonie des positions exprimées par les états membres de l'OAU. "

Taking these citations into consideration, it becomes clear that due to the diverse positions within the OAU, the most successful approach may come from a stronger linkage of ACRI to sub-regional Organizations such as ECOWAS and SADC. Especially the above described case of ECOWAS offers various possibilities for a linkage of the donor initiatives to the new regional conflict management structures in West Africa.

The following section will take Senegal as a case study to assess the recent status of ACRI in a country where the initiative has advanced the most. Taking the above developed consideration as starting point for the inquiry done in Senegal, we may turn in the last part to the perspective of the actors in the field.

#### IV. Case Study: Senegal

##### Introduction

Since its independence in April 1960 Senegal has been one of the most stable political regimes in West Africa. Several bilateral treaties of mutual military assistance with France have led to a close cooperation between both countries in military issues. Compared to France, the US military aid for Senegal in the last 40 years can be considered as minor. However, with the end of the cold war and the re-orientation of US foreign policy towards sub-Saharan Africa, Senegal and the US have enhanced their cooperation. In fact, when former US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, introduced the proposal of ACRI to African leaders in 1996 during his efforts to find a solution for the political crisis in Burundi, Senegal decided as one of the first African nations to participate in the US training. Already in 1997 (July-September) the first 60 day training was conducted at the former airbase Thiès for a Senegalese battalion.

The Senegalese Army has a strength of approx. 12,000 soldiers and looks back to an impressive record of peacekeeping missions worldwide (e.g. Libanon 1980; Liberia 1991; CAR 1998; Guinea Bissau 1999), which was an important aspect for the US when deciding to start the program in Senegal. The ACRI training for the battalion level consists of 4 subsequent phases, including basic combat rules (phase 1), refinement (phase 2), humanitarian aspects of peacekeeping (phase 3) and a combat exercise (phase 4). Depending on the addressee of the training, the lessons have covered topics such as basic rifle marksmanship, construction of a field expedient antenna and land navigation for individuals. The squad and platoon level is trained for tasks such as patrols, escort of relief convoys or the

reaction to civil disturbances. On the next level, the company, protection of non combatants and facilities as well as check-point operations with the employment of quick reaction forces. The training becomes more complex on the battalion level, which covers the interaction with media and dislocated civilians. This initial battalion training was planned for 60 days with 60 US trainers. After the first experiences it has been modified to 70 days of training with 70 US trainers.

The already mentioned Follow-on-Training (FT) concentrates on five blocks about "leader training" either in form of computer assisted exercises or in form of field training. As it can be seen in detail from the training matrixes (see appendix) the four weeks of Follow-on-Training are adapted for the needs of the trained officers. For the last stage, the Brigade level, the training includes the maintenance of a civil-military operations center. Logistics, engineering, medical care and force protection are also included on that level of training. This implies however, that the trained personnel from the host country stay the same over the FT training blocks. It is especially this idea of training blocks that distinguishes ACRI-training from the French RECAMP initiative.

Until today, Senegal is the only country in sub-Saharan Africa that has finished the first four stages of battalion training and will now enter into the brigade training.

#### American perspective

The fact that Senegal is the first country that received US brigade training is a clear sign for the progress Senegal has made since 1997 in the eyes of the US instructors.

As a US official in Senegal admitted, ACRI has to be seen in the broader context of the US army being confronted with a "burn-out" effect due to increasing conflicts worldwide. All interviewed American militaries agreed that the "Somalia experience" has initiated the idea of an African peacekeeping force. However, it became clear during the interviews that the choice of countries and militaries participating in ACRI is also influenced by US interests. The US instructors, for example, are interested in finding Senegalese militaries that have been already trained within the framework of IMET (International Military Training program). This training program is part of US military aid for developing countries and permits militaries to come to the US for further study and training. Especially in the case of Senegal, a country that is historically linked to France, the US has an interest to build up long term relationships with the Senegalese army. IMET but also ACRI shall serve as means to reach these goals. Although ACRI goes back to the P3-initiative with France, the contact in the field between the two countries is minimal. No regular exchange or coordination between the two countries concerning their efforts was reported by the US officials for Senegal.

Even within the responsible US personnel for ACRI in Senegal, the opinions about the success of this initiative in Senegal were mixed.

On the one side, Senegal has clearly progressed within the training blocks and shows together with Uganda and Malawi the strongest motivation for the program.

On the other side, US officials expressed a certain disappointment vis-a-vis the Senegalese efforts to support the initiative. The first Senegalese soldiers sent to the ACRI training showed to 65 % insufficient vision which is considered to be essential for the execution of simple military tasks. Moreover, there is no permanent "pool" of Senegalese soldiers trained by the US instructors. In each training block a certain amount of Senegalese militaries change.

Therefore the success of the whole follow-on-training concept becomes questionable as it is based on subsequent training blocks with the same "core group" of host militaries.

On a broader perspective, US officials mentioned the problems they were facing with corruption in African states. Some of these states simply "want to have material and profit from the training in diverse ways" as one US official argued.

The intervention of Uganda in the DRC with ACRI trained troops has led to certain anxieties among US officials that also Senegalese troops may be used in the southern Casamance against the MFDC rebels after they have received ACRI training.

Besides, ACRI training is conducted with countries from French and British colonial backgrounds. The observation that has been made by US trainers was that in joint exercises the countries with a British military history were doing much better than the French trained troops. The ACRI training is not taking that into consideration and therefore has its inherent structural problems.

Finally, all American interview partner stressed their reservations concerning a limitation of ACRI to Chapter VI operations. Referring to cases such as Sierra Leone, Liberia or DRC they all concluded that Chapter VII training might be included in the future or as one US trainer said: "if you go into a country you always have to have something more".

On the whole, the interviews conducted with American militaries and diplomats, underlined certain skepticism about the success of ACRI after three years of existence. Although no one denied the necessity of such a program, everybody was doubtful if the program will have reached its goal after the five year period.

#### French perspective

The French perspective on ACRI must be analyzed in the light of the French "RECAMP" initiative and its historic ties to the region. As already mentioned, the focus of RECAMP is slightly different from the American initiative. France decided to equip and support logistically a multinational RECAMP battalion and assure training through military exercises such as Guidimakha (1998) or Gabon 2000. Peacekeeping training itself is concentrated now in the peacekeeping school in Zambakro (Ivory Coast). Although the official French discourse always underlines the complementing and not competing aspects of RECAMP to other peacekeeping efforts it became clear during the interviews that in reality RECAMP is in direct competition with ACRI and seen as an element to assure influence in the region.

The French militaries believe that RECAMP has several advantages compared to other initiatives. First, a RECAMP battalion is already equipped and can start working within 48 hours. Secondly, this initiative is not seen as an already finished training block but as a mutual "learning effort" for which France as it is more familiar with "African complexities" and the "African partners" than any other western country. Finally, a multinational RECAMP battalion has already proved its suitability when it was detached to Guinea Bissau in 1999.

As this argumentation shows, France still considers itself as the central foreign power in Senegal. Military exercises such as Guidimakha with costs of 35 Mio. FF. are first of all publicity events to underline the importance of the French role in the region. What makes this influence different from other powers is its informal nature. Many Senegalese officers have been trained in French military schools (e.g. Saint Cyr) and still keep the network and spirit of this school. In turn, French officers are permanently present in the general staff of the Senegalese Army as part of the military cooperation between the two countries.

All French actors seemed to be torn between the official discourse to cooperate with the US and the implicit order to maintain French influence in the region. The attitude was briefly summarized by a French intelligence officer, who remarked in an informal conversation:

"... nous sommes très vigilant sur le rôle des Etats Unis au Sénégal"

#### Senegalese perspectives

##### The Militaries

The official opinion within military circles vis-a-vis ACRI is best expressed by General Mohamadou Seck who argued after having visited an ACRI training side:

"Les Etats Unis d'Amerique sont un grand pays, la plus grande force militaire, avec des racines partout dans le monde. Nous pouvons certes apprendre beaucoup de cette grande nation qui, à son tour, peut s'inspirer de notre longue expérience en matière de maintien de la paix, car nos soldats, depuis 1960, on été partout pour aider au maintien de la paix là où elle est menacée"

Several formal and informal interviews with Senegalese militaries, however, have given interesting new insights about the status of ACRI in Senegal and the degree of cooperation between western donors and the Senegalese army.

All persons interviewed agreed that there is a certain degree of competition among western donors for new forms of military cooperation in the region. The RECAMP project, for example, was identified as a French reaction to the American initiative. Nevertheless, there was an agreement that the RECAMP structure has its advantages due to its proven operability. The American side was criticized for the fact that they come with already preconceived ideas of how the training should be designed. The Senegalese side is not involved in this process. The fact that Senegalese soldiers change within the ACRI training blocks was considered as a proof for missing communication between the US and the Senegalese side.

What became clear during the interviews was, however, that the Senegalese militaries are missing a more informal relationship with the Americans. It was interesting to observe how they complained about the fact that the US does not show any attempt to establish "special relations" with Senegal. France, in contrast, always treated Senegal with "special priority".

This kind of argumentation underlines to what extent the Senegalese side wants to transfer the historic patterns of behavior towards his former colonial power (France) to new partners such as the US.

In addition to that, the interviews disclosed the Senegalese attitude "to play" with the competition situation among donors. They participate in every training initiative as long it is financed by a foreign donor. This kind of behavior might be considered as a new self-confidence, it reminds, however, also of the behavior that African heads of states showed during the period of cold war.

An interesting discovery of the conducted interviewed was the debate within the Senegalese Army about these foreign sponsored training initiatives and future security regimes in Africa. Especially the army journal "Armee Nation" which collects articles from Senegalese officers shows several interesting and vivid debates among Senegalese officers. Dossiers, such as "Paix et Guerre en Afrique de l'Ouest" or "Guidimakha '98 in this army journal are documents of such an ongoing process. The question of how to create security structures in Sub-Saharan Africa is stressed by several authors (see: Cisse 1998:4, Tine 1999:8) The interest for ACRI or RECAMP is seen within this scope (see: Gatta Ba 1999).

#### The press

Besides the military circles it is the press which has carefully followed the recent American and French initiatives to train African peace-keepers. Especially the military exercises such as Guidamakha have led to an amount of articles describing the success of this French guided multinational exercise. Insofar it can be also seen as a success for the good press work of the French army.

The American ACRI initiative was mainly covered in the press during President Clinton's visit to Senegal. Perceived as being less spectacular than the French exercises, the articles focusing on ACRI, describe the training blocks and its new teaching methods. A special attraction seems to stem from the American Special Forces instructors. They are respectfully described as "rambos", which underlines somehow that the American army is considered as coming from a "different planet".

It was interesting to observe the critical attitude of journalists, even within pro-government newspapers, concerning the foreign training efforts. The impression was that both sides want to convince their African partners of their respective. Whereas the American side tries to reach this aim by showing its technological and financial superiority, France refers to its historic informal network among militaries of both sides.

Many journalists observed that the French material used during the military maneuvers was in very bad shape. Journalists reported that much of the technical equipment did not work properly during the military maneuver.

Besides, it was mentioned that these training initiatives are an excellent way for every foreign donor to get access to military circles in a variety of countries. Every western country has an interest in direct relations to the key actors within the army. The problem that arises within the Senegalese army is, however, that the officer corps becomes increasingly divided due to different training and education. Some journalists reported that American and French educated "officer circles" have established their own networks and compete increasingly within the Senegalese army for key positions.

### 3. Evaluation

The interviews conducted in Senegal with different actors have shown that the official discourse about the success of the new initiatives to create African peacekeeping capacities often do not match with reality. The critical points are concentrated among the following dimensions:

#### Cooperation vs. Competition among western partners

As the interviews have clearly shown, the element of competition among the P3 states dominates the officially declared cooperation. Especially in the case of Senegal, the US and France compete for gaining influence within the officer circles of the Senegalese army. The training initiatives are excellent means to establish contacts, identify key figures within the army and to advertise for military products (see: Ulfkotte 1997:6). Apart from symbolic participation in military maneuvers of the other side, France and the US instructors do not cooperate in Senegal. The Senegalese side, on the other hand, has not much influence on this process and therefore tries to be as pragmatic as possible. Being aware of the competition among the western partners the Senegalese army hopes to get the most training and equipment by satisfying the demands of both sides. Though France is the historic partner and many officers still feel closer to the French approach, they realize that the US is an increasingly important player in the region and that it would be contra-productive not to establish good relations with the US. The problem of this approach is that it is not possible to satisfy the French and the US side at the same time. Besides, the combination of donor competition and the Senegalese approach has led to an increasing division within the Senegalese army. Insofar, it is doubtful if this kind of behavior among the principal actors will pay off in the long run.

#### Linkage of the P3 initiative to existing conflict management structures

A further critical point, revealed by the conducted interviews, was the extent of uncertainty among the responsible persons concerning the structural framework for the deployment of peacekeeping forces. All interviewed persons did permanently refer to the UN, OAU or sub-regional organizations (ECOWAS, SADC) as possible responsible political units for peacekeeping operations, but no one was capable of explaining how the training initiatives can be structurally linked to these entities. This question needs to be answered, however, if the African peacekeeping efforts should become institutionalized in the long run. Furthermore, the ambiguous role of regional powers (e.g. Nigeria, South Africa) and their engagement in future peacekeeping operations within regional security regimes underlines the importance of finding a clear structural framework for African peacekeeping operation in the future. The current question concerning integration of Nigeria into the ACRI needs to be analyzed under this dimension, too. It was interesting to observe that the Senegalese side was often much more concerned about this question than their American/French counterparts.

Finally, the already mentioned risk of parallel structures to the UN stand-by system is a further point that stresses the urgent necessity of a clear definition of the linkage between the P3 initiative efforts and the existing conflict management structures.

#### c) Structural deficits

In addition, the structural deficits of the peacekeeping initiatives were seen by all interviewed persons. As already mentioned is ACRI training conducted with the concept of consensual peacekeeping operations developed for interstate conflicts. The problem is that an increasing number of conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa are intrastate conflicts with very complex conflict dynamics in which the consensus principle does not apply. The history of peacekeeping operations in Africa shows only very few cases in which an agreement between the opposing sides led to a cease-fire with a subsequent call to the international community for intervention and assistance. Therefore, all military persons, involved in the program, considered a possible modification of the program towards Chapter VII operations as necessary. Only the political actors showed skepticism concerning this enlargement. They argued with the possibility of abuse by their African partners.

On the whole, it became clear that there is a tendency by the militaries to demand enhanced financial and political means in the future. We should keep in mind, however, that the more the program is expanded in the direction of Chapter VII operations, the more difficult it is to differentiate from forms of classical military aid.

#### 4. Outlook

The African Crisis Response Initiative will enter next year in its final 5th year and therefore questions will be raised about the success of this initiative and its immediate future. From the foregoing survey of ACRI in Senegal we may conclude that it will be difficult to justify that over a period of 5 years approx. \$ 100 Mio have been spent by the US government for this program. This is even more true whether we take into consideration that ACRI has not proven its operability so far. The question is if it would not be more fruitful to support the already mentioned efforts to establish regional security regimes in the future. As exemplary shown for ECOWAS these structures seem to have a potential for sustainability if they receive financial and political support from outside. Insofar the P3 initiative and its achievements shall be seen as a first step to enhanced security regimes in the region.

Furthermore, the P3 initiative should be revised under the question of an improved division of labor among the western donors. If the participant states could manage to leave their national interest aside, one can imagine a shared effort in which France is responsible for the equipment and its logistical delivery, the US for the training of troops and Britain for continued officer training. We could also think of a better regional division of the P3 nations. In any case, these examples should simply show that an improved cooperation among donors can enhance the quality of training and help to reduce costs. The same could be reached if the European side would be engaged stronger in the future.

#### V. Final Conclusion

In the light of the empirical results of the research trip to Senegal, the often proclaimed "success" of the African Crisis Response Initiative appears very ambiguous.

Certainly Senegal has progressed in the training blocks of this American initiative and is, therefore, one exemplary model of the program. Nevertheless, the interviews with US instructors have disclosed their disappointment about the way the Senegalese militaries participate in the program and their doubts about the sustainability of the program in the future. The case of Senegal demonstrates the difficulties of reaching "African ownership" through Western sponsored programs without permanent support.

Moreover, the aspect of "burden sharing" describes only insufficiently the intention by Western donors. Despite the protestation of the P3 states to develop African peacekeeping capabilities, it is clear that these programs are

motivated by the recognition that African security is not a prior concern so that direct involvement in African conflicts can be avoided. On the other hand, the involved donor nations want to maintain their influence in the region. As it has been shown in the case of US-France competition in Senegal, the new training concepts are strategies to keep linkages to the region and its actors with overall reduced costs. Insofar, Berman/Sams (1998) are correct when they describe this attitude as "constructive disengagement" of Western powers.

Nevertheless, Western efforts must not be casually dismissed as it is a fact that African states are often not in the position to respond effectively to crises without outside assistance. Therefore, African states must accelerate their efforts to create regional security regimes. The cases of SADC and ECOWAS are an encouraging beginning. Only if these structures advance the African states will be in a position to improve what is being offered by Western donor nations. Only real "burden sharing" will lead to a successful "African ownership". The already mentioned discourse within the Senegalese militaries and the new ECOWAS conflict management structures show a rising sensitivity for these questions and underline the will of African actors to realize these two goals. It is again the OAU General Secretary Salim Ahmed Salim who points in the right direction:

"...OAU Member States can no longer afford to stand aloof and expect the International Community to care more for our problems than we do, or indeed to find solutions to those problems which in many instances, have been our own making. The simple truth that we must confront today, is that the world does not owe us a living and we must remain in the forefront of efforts to act and act speedily, to prevent conflicts from getting out of control."