

# AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE OF THE REFORM OF THE SECURITY SECTOR SINCE THE 1990s

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## Introduction

Notions of arms control and disarmament ideologically inform the concept of Security Sector Reform (SSR), as currently popularised.<sup>1</sup> In practice, however, the initiative's implementation in the targeted countries, mainly in the developed world, has resulted in different responses. In the former East European states acceptance has been positive, partly because many of those states are desirous to be fully incorporated into the Western political and economic realms. Meanwhile in Africa, the SSR initiative since the 1990s has received mixed reaction, with a significant number spurning the overtures. Again part of the explanation lies in its initial impact that tended to weaken states and ignored the realities of genuine insecurity, leading in extreme cases to some countries collapsing as political entities. Somalia, Burundi, Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) are concrete examples of this phenomenon.

The challenge facing practitioners and policy makers on this question is: How can we come up with policies and strategies that will forge common ground between the two poles? In our view, Africa does not necessarily wish to challenge the status quo in the international security system but states on the continent are not about to support their own deconstruction through the template of the existing SSR mechanism. Given the differences in the reception of the SSR initiative as evidenced above, there is a need to come up with an alternative that is acceptable to the former. On the African continent, the alternative clearly needs to address the major failing of spawning insecurity both of the state and individuals. This must lie in an appropriately structured force that is adequately resourced to support emerging political democracies. Stated differently, there is a need for an SSR initiative that is unique and specific to African conditions, whose *raison d'être* arises from different motivations in comparison with that of the West.

Two conferences both focusing on the theme of SSR in the developing world were held during the first quarter of 2003. In retrospect it is now evident that both conferences represented the re-launch of the *third phase* of the SSR

initiative, focused exclusively on the developing world. The first conference, entitled 'Security Sector Reform (SSR) – Moving the agenda forward: Global facilitation network for SSR', was held in London from 24–25 March 2003 and was funded by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID). Dominant among the audience and presenters were colleagues from the defence and security community among whom were military practitioners, defence analysts as well as policy makers directly responsible for the executive function as well as the civilian oversight of the armed forces.<sup>2</sup>

The second meeting was held the following month (11–12 April 2003) in Oslo and was entitled 'Coherence, cooperation and comparative strength: Conference on justice and SSR'. This was hosted by the Governance Office<sup>3</sup> based in New York, falling under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The majority of the participants in Norway were UNDP country representatives drawn from the 166 countries in which the organisation is represented. Academics from the development field made up the rest, with the odd defence and security practitioner and policy maker. Although both conferences dealt with SSR, the emphasis in London was on 'moving the agenda forward' while in Oslo, the focus was on maximising the 'comparative strength' of the widely dispersed UNDP offices that, as a matter of procedure, work closely with governments generally in the developed world. The different emphases being expressed in London and Oslo also revealed frustration at the admitted failure of previous attempts; hence the upfront declarations of 'moving the agenda forward' or 'relying on comparative advantage to make a more significant impact'. More importantly, however, this was not to be through joining the DFID and UNDP's forces but operating as different entities. In practice, where their efforts converged this would merely be incidental.

It is also important to assess the significance of the composition of the audience dominant at each conference. On the one hand, in the realm of SSR, the defence and security community that gathered in London had traditionally held the monopoly on doctrine, policy and strategic influence on the subject but had begun to concede space to other 'civilian' input as well as restructuring aspects of the security sector to fit in with the emerging democratic dispensation. It can be argued that the defence and security community is likely to surrender only the barest minimum as it seeks to retain cherished control of the defence and security apparatus.

Meanwhile the development community – long immersed in socio-economic issues – recently realised that their efforts have been wasted through internecine and protracted conflict and that the time had come to delve into the murky world of conflict resolution as a precondition for development initiatives. For the latter congregation, the discovery that it is imperative to achieve sustainable cease-fires and peace before any meaningful development

can take root, is a recent phenomenon but one which is likely to continue and expand in the immediate future. As a consequence of this realisation the development community, through the conference in Oslo, is seriously investigating the possibilities of how it can intervene and engage conflict players around the issues related to SSR.

However, we need to be reminded that their participation is only a precondition or a stepping stone to their traditionally cherished goal – development initiatives. Stated differently, the UNDP views SSR as a hindrance and not as a priority *vis-à-vis* their main mission. It is therefore clear that each interest group is conceding or expanding its interests, as the case may be, while still retaining their core functions. Based on these perceived intellectual concessions from both the defence and security *versus* development colleagues, further areas of synergy need to be identified as well as a more serious move made towards collaboration when it comes to SSR and what (should) work on the African continent.

Finally, yet another difference lay in the UNDP conference title that sought to broaden SSR beyond the traditional security sector and to include the restructuring of the jurisdiction as well as the penal system. This may have been implicit (but was certainly not explicit) in the DFID theme.

The above assessment of differences in themes, audiences, expectations as well as *separate* main motivators presents us with a common denominator perspective that should guide our expectations of the involvement of both the DFID and the UNDP in SSR. In other words, the DFID programme is a New Labour Party interest initiative that may or may not survive the change of government in the UK. On the other hand, the UNDP does not have resources of its own and depends on convincing those countries with resources to commit their own funds in order to support nations requiring assistance. Aspects of SSR, for example demobilisation, are expensive and require huge amounts of financial and other support that is generally beyond the capacity of most developing nations.

Lacking in both conferences was the intellectual history and motivation by the West for SSR targeted at the developing world. In the case of Africa, the Oslo papers did make a low-key connection between renewed SSR and arms control as well as disarmament, although even here the literature failed to highlight that this is the centerpiece for Western involvement.<sup>4</sup>

Given these ongoing efforts and the appearance of a blissful African audience at both conferences, it is imperative that the underlying dynamics and seeming intellectual sleight of hand shrouding the current SSR initiative be sufficiently contextualised and highlighted. In other words, we need to establish whether there is an African perspective on the global initiative requiring developing nations to reform their security sectors. If such a perspective exists (as this paper argues), why is this so and, more significantly, what are the implications for SSR on the African continent? Before proceeding

with attempts to address the above questions, we need to define what security sector reform means?

### **Definition of SSR as presently constructed**

The Western idea of SSR emanates from the liberal democratic philosophy that champions market economies and related social arrangements. When it is suggested for implementation in the developing nations, it bears the hallmarks of post-1945 ideas of arms control and disarmament. The idea at present is therefore an attempt to fit developing nations within the hierarchy of a world dominated by the 'victorious' West. More generally, reforming the security sector is basically part of a process designed to fit the bureaucracy within states, especially those structures that have/had the role of exercising monopoly of violence on behalf of 'one-party states' or such like, in line with the new liberal democratic dispensation – and subordinated to the existing international security system.

While there is no standard definition that exists to define the special nature of reforming the category of government departments responsible for intelligence, policing, military activity, paramilitary functions and upholding the customs and penal systems, the very act of targeting these entities challenges the sensitive questions of national security, sovereignty, state-regime security as well as the human security of political entities.<sup>5</sup> The reform initiative is designed to alter power relations amongst competing elements for the control of the armed forces, between nationals located in the executive, the legislature, institutions and civil society groups. This can also manifest itself at yet another level of regional alliances and coalitions in the international security system. In effecting SSR, there are losers and winners, making it obvious that those affected are likely to resist change while others acquiesce only in order to maximise their own positions. As a result, the SSR initiative is perceived as 'violating' hitherto hallowed ground.

In practice, a useful definition of the present trend of SSR can best be gleaned through an analogy relating to similar events between the Allies and the defeated Axis powers soon after the end of the Second World War in 1945. At that time, the 'victorious West' was conscious of lost opportunities when it had failed as a group to follow through on the triumph of the First World War, epitomised by the 1923 Treaty of Versailles. Soon after tipping the balance of forces in favour of the Allies in Europe in 1917, America after the end of the war in 1918 went into political isolationism. This left a power vacuum in war-weary and devastated Europe in which belligerent European countries failed to find accommodation.

The result was inter-war rivalry between the former Allied European powers in a process that provided an opportunity for the rise of the German Social Nationalist Party (Nazi) under Adolf Hitler during the late 1920s and early

1930s. This laid the foundations for the Second World War. After August 1945 the Allies moved with speed, battering down the hatches of managing the post-war peace environment through Arms Control and Disarmament. This culminated in the systematic political deconstruction of the German *Furher* and Japanese Emperor's offices, as well as the physical occupation of the two territories. This practice has continued to this day, representing the most successful case studies of the reform of the security sector the world has ever seen.

Given the 'victory against communism' in December 1991 a similar SSR, as briefly reviewed above, was launched. This was now aimed at removing the residual armaments capacity still located in the developing world. The ultimate purpose was to subordinate the former Eastern bloc and developing nations' militaries within the hierarchy of the international security system through the regimes of Arms Control and Disarmament, which is dominated by the West.

Owing to the underlying objectives of arms control and disarmament, the initiative has received mixed reaction in the targeted client states. In this discussion, the former Eastern Europe and Africa have each responded differently to the challenge. More generally, in former Eastern Europe where communist political structures collapsed, the new political elites and their majority peoples, anxious to become part of the European Union, appear to have embraced with little inquiry, far-reaching reforms of the security sector.

In Africa, however, Cold War alliances were based on strong nationalistic undercurrents that have now sought to reassert themselves as independent and sovereign governments. As independent entities, many African governments balked at the prospect of arms control and disarmament by the West through the notion of 'reforming the security sector and enjoying the peace dividend' during the initial suggestion made in 1989, as we shall see.

The history of African militaries and political elites has, however, not necessarily endeared itself with its citizenry. At the precise period of the end of the Cold War, ethnic and protracted conflict ravaged African states. The Robert Gersony Report commissioned by the US State Department documented horrendous atrocities in Mozambique, and the plight of ordinary people in Somalia reached epidemic proportions at the hands of armed factions. In 1991, the US launched an innovative UN International Task Force to try and reign in marauding rebel groups and warlords as a precondition for the deployment of a full UN Peacekeeping Mission. However, by 1993, after more than 14 US Special Forces were killed and their bodies unceremoniously dragged through the streets of Mogadishu, the US and other influential UN Security Council members lost the appetite to keep the peace on the African continent. Protracted civil strife also ravaged Angola in 1992 and 1994 even after the withdrawal of Cold War warriors that had helped to prop up both sides in the conflict. A similar fashion of unremitting conflict engulfed Burundi in 1993 and later reached genocide proportions in which over 800,000 people lost their lives

in Rwanda in 1994. As the massacres broke out, a limited UN contingent was instructed to withdraw, overwhelmed by the intensity of the unfolding drama. Conflict also engulfed the then Zaire (now DRC) in 1996, 1998 and 1999 resulting in casualties of over three million people, largely from the effects of the war. Finally, protracted conflict destroyed the shaky political edifices in Liberia and Sierra Leone at this time.

Against the deteriorating security situation on the African continent and the general withdrawal of the North led by the US, models of force restructuring were suggested. These were the now infamous African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) by the US; the Reinforcement of African Military Capacity (RECAMP) by France; and the more mundane Wider Peacekeeping by the UK. Again these did not find ready reception and also struggled against former colonial regional influence.

The important point to take away here, was the acknowledgement by the international community of the desperate security plight of African people and the lack of capacity of the continent's armies.

The end of the Cold War had resulted in the increased vulnerability of African regimes and peoples. As discussed below, this is precisely the point at which the Bretton Woods institutions suggested an across-the-board, prescriptive reform of the security sector whose emphasis was on downsizing and speedy demobilisation, as witnessed in Uganda and Mozambique.

On the one hand, the desperate situation reflected the need to have properly and adequately equipped forces to provide state and individual security of citizens. On the other hand, however, large and unproductive militaries acting as predators on the hapless population resulted in calls for disarmament and force reduction. Clearly, some sort of middle of the road equilibrium was/is required for an SSR process that will enjoy the support of locals given the conflict conditions on the African continent. Despite the failure of the secondary security intervention mechanism by the reluctant North, which also constitutes the permanent members of the UN Security Council, the plight of Africans has continued to be of major concern. Herein lies the challenge of coming up with an adequate rationale that resonates with and responds to the subjective and objective African conditions and that will result in the implementation of SSR that enjoys majority support.

This paper argues that SSR as presently constructed by the North fails to take into account sufficiently the concerns of African peoples. The current SSR initiative is preoccupied with fitting developing nations into the hierarchy of the existing international security system. In practice, this has been, we think quite rightly, resisted by the majority of African governments. The challenge for both the North and Africa is in coming up with a SSR process that allows African democratic states to strengthen national, regime and human security, without necessarily challenging the West in the highly contested international security system.<sup>6</sup>

## **The evolution of post-Cold War SSR in Africa**

### *Phase One: 1989–95*

As the defeat of communism appeared imminent during the late 1980s, considerations regarding the management of post-Cold War relations dominated. Washington and its allies sought an entry point aimed at effecting Arms Control and Disarmament within the developing world now that Moscow was in full retreat. Security interests were at the forefront of Washington's thinking in 1986 when it manoeuvred for the Bretton Woods institutions; the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) pipped the UNDP in the struggle for the global agency to lead the post-Cold War economic management and restructuring. Both were also already instrumental in providing significant financial support to the developing world and needed to retain influence with their clients.

In a report entitled 'Voices of the poor', the World Bank provided the 'factual' underpinnings to this argument portraying military expenditure in the developing world as "excessive, unproductive and wasteful". In coming to this conclusion, the report had interviewed 20,000 sampled representative individuals from 200 communities in 23 countries. The majority of the respondents had "expressed the desire that security was top of their priority list", in a sense demonstrating the widespread insecurity that followed the departure of the Cold War. "Bloated security sectors were seen as impeding development and [were] cast as blights to achieving poverty reduction".<sup>7</sup> Within two days in September 1989, World Bank President Barber B. Conable and IMF Director Michel Camdessus addressed press conferences where they put forward the case for a radical "capping of military expenditure in the developing nations".<sup>8</sup>

In their presentations, both argued that military expenditure had reached alarming levels (over 800% by 1997) and needed curbing. In parallel with the withdrawal of financial support from the Banks, it was argued that they needed to target decision-making nodes within the political systems of client states in a comprehensive reform of the security sector. This political act or challenge by the international financial institutions was to constitute the thin edge of the wedge that would create tension and suspicion with governments in the developing world.

The suggested unilateral capping was pegged at the previous year's (1998) military expenditure that stood at 4.5% of gross domestic product (GDP). The UNDP – marginalised in the role of post-Cold War global economic management – suggested an even more radical capping of only 4%. Much later, in the case of Africa, the UN secretary-general suggested no more than 1.5%, followed by a 10-year moratorium.<sup>9</sup>

Taking this 'global leadership role' of the IMF, World Bank and the UNDP in criticising the developing world and especially African governments' military

expenditure, the donor community took its cue and started demanding reductions as a precondition for bilateral and multilateral funding. Consequently, reform of the security sector under this notion has been characterised by blanket downsizing. But what was the African response to this initiative emanating from the North?

Most African states were caught between a rock and a hard place. Over 30 countries on the African continent had economies qualifying them as amongst the poorest in the world and therefore needed budgetary and development financial support from the donor community led by the IMF and the World Bank. The option of openly challenging the SSR initiative therefore appeared suicidal, notwithstanding the deep disagreement that the African governments had with the prescriptive suggestions. The responses were therefore muted or shown by the failure of the programmes; despite a deceptive decline of expenditure of about 25%, later discovered to be attributable to the withdrawal and end of conflicts in South Africa, Mozambique and partly in Angola.<sup>10</sup>

A tabulation of the factors reflecting this situation after the launch of the first phase included the following:

- It was clear that the World Bank and IMF's series of demobilisation exercises were designed only for the short-term and did not take into account the long-term nature of successfully reintegrating combatants into civil society. The limited resources allocated were also a point of concern. Furthermore, the rushed demobilisation and integration of former factions that had been at each other's throats failed to take into account the realities of raising armed factions, characterised by regional and ethnic as well as personalised leaderships – a phenomenon that needed to be weeded out in time before armed groups could attain 'the national status and ethos'.
- The SSR initiative was prescriptive and its 'one-size-fits-all' approach soon revealed serious flaws in understanding genuine security demands of states and peoples. In practice, several communities were left without a central government.
- In Mozambique (following implementation of the 1992 Rome Treaty) and elsewhere, private security emerged as better equipped compared to central government, raising the idea of the privatisation of security and the increased vulnerability of incumbent regimes.
- African governments, desirous of keeping lines of financial aid flowing from the West, reacted by removing military expenditure figures from public scrutiny.
- Finally, a rapid and unforeseen escalation of protracted conflict, violence and genocide characterised by severely weakened or collapsed states – measured in more than 19 major conflicts – presented a difficult environment on the African landscape for successful SSR.

Available evidence reveals that by the mid-1990s, the North was convinced that

the SSR initiative on the African continent had failed and required a new push. The nature of this new push, which constituted the second phase, was, however, to differ in approach between the US and its European counterparts.

### *Phase Two: 1999–2003*

Aware of the reluctance of African governments to conform, the US adopted the route of legislation in Congress that had implications for officials in the World Bank and IMF to 'enforce' in the developing nations that which would result in SSR by default.<sup>11</sup> According to this reasoning, the US Congress in 1996 began debating a bill whose provisions would require developing nations seeking support from the World Bank and IMF to submit their defence expenditure figures. This came into effect in 1999. In the interim period, officials from these institutions had been positioning themselves to implement the bill's provisions once it became law. In 1999, given the involvement of Zimbabwe and other Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries in the conflict in the DRC, Bretton Woods officials demanded that Harare submit its defence expenditure figures in the Congo. Not surprisingly, the government in Harare was amazed at this request and initially refused to entertain the demands. Later, it appeared that the Zimbabwean government had been persuaded to provide some answers and submitted that its military expenditure was being paid for by Angola. This was, of course, received with some scepticism but was not too dissimilar to what other African governments had done under the same penetrating questioning by international organisations representing the North. On this score, it is safe to conclude that the US now relies on the leverage of its domestic laws as they relate to the work of the Bretton Woods institutions – in which the World Bank is always under the directorship of a US national and Europe appoints the head of the IMF.

Meanwhile, Europe, with many of its members linked to Africa as a result of former imperial connections, decided to continue engaging with the continent but with a similar objective as the US – namely, SSR aimed at fitting the continent within the nuanced international security system. In the search for an alternative to the failed first phase, several meetings were held in The Hague, Tokyo, Berlin and Paris, at which the theme was 'Military expenditure in the developing world', and how to deal with this dominated the discussions. It was at this time that amongst the Europeans, the British government, under New Labour, decided to launch a separate but more dedicated initiative. This was designed to encourage developing nations' growth and stability with the programme supervised by the DFID, led by Clare Short. With the new British initiative on board, it was again decided to launch a second phase of SSR especially in Africa that would focus on public sector management training, including the security sector.

The second phase began with a conference held in Ottawa in 1997, organised

by the European Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), now emphasising “sound financial management principles” and focusing on civil service retraining. This development was almost a replaying of the McNamara Systems Analysis and Public Sector – especially defence sector – restructuring seen in the US during the late 1960s. A secondary factor and criterion of ‘good governance’ was added to the ‘technical’ approach suggested by OECD.

Three years after the launch of the second phase in 1999, available military expenditure figures reflected that the initiative had also failed. Military expenditure in Africa had initially dipped during the early 1990s as a result of the withdrawal of the big spenders – South Africa and Angola. However, after the failed elections of 1992 in Angola and the increase in conflicts, military expenditure by 1996 stood at a high 22%.<sup>12</sup>

While in our view the programme still held on to the same objectives expressed in 1989–90, the slight difference was to depart from the ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach and to seek to work closely with the different governments on the continent.

Failure of the attempts in the second phase included some of the reasons elaborately cited in phase one, but the most important was the persistence of internecine strife, even in countries previously perceived as politically stable, such as the Ivory Coast. A return to the drawing board then culminated in the launch of the two conferences in London and Oslo at the beginning of 2003, referred to earlier. A further qualification during this period was declining interest in African affairs as a result of international attention being focused on the war on terrorism, in which the continent plays a peripheral and marginal role. A number of important elements also reflected the flaws of the SSR initiative during the second phase. These included:

- a general absence of a rationally thought-out defence policy among many African states;
- the absence of expertise for managing the defence sector outside the armed and uniformed forces;
- the absence of public dialogue in many of the states on the defence and security issues; and
- the impact of 9/11 and terrorism, which has diverted attention away from African issues.

### **African perspective of reforming the security sector**

The African perspective on the reform of the security sector since the 1990s has been shaped by bitter experience. The end of the Cold War raised expectations of a peace dividend throughout the world. However, events on the African continent in the 1990s provided a scenario of conflict never before experienced. The conflict in Somalia degenerated, smashing the remains of General Siad

Barre's government on the horns of competing warlords and religious differences. During 1991, the US launched the UN International Task Force on humanitarian grounds but was forced to abandon the operation in Africa two years later when troops from the elite airborne division were captured, executed and dragged through the dusty streets of Mogadishu for the entire world to see. With the operation initially timed as a preliminary phase to long-term UN peacekeeping involvement, these events drastically curbed the presence of this international body on the continent. The protracted conflicts in Angola, Mozambique and the Sudan acquired a new intensity despite the removal of the Cold War umbrella from 1992. In Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, ethnic-based conflicts erupted with such force that Africa witnessed a horrendous genocide in Kigali which left over 800,000 people dead with the UN unable to intervene.<sup>13</sup> In 1996, Africa's third largest country, the then Zaire (DRC) became host to the spill-over effects of civil wars being fought in neighbouring states. It was further destabilised by the competing mainly multinational mining companies whose operations had been disrupted in the chaos that ensued; and was subjected to intense conflict waged by armed factions within the country itself. Again the UN was unable to provide support to the mounting refugees, internally displaced peoples (IDPs) and millions of casualties made up of mainly women and children in the Congo. While the UN was conspicuous in its failure to have a presence on the African continent, the continental body, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), also demonstrated a serious lack of capacity.

During the last decade over 19 major conflicts took place on the African continent, with 21 of the UN's 24 missions being hosted there. Clearly, the removal of the Cold War umbrella had worked against the majority of peoples on the African continent who now needed strong central governments supported by appropriately raised, funded and legalised forces to provide minimum public safety.

It was against this background that the World Bank and the IMF launched the first phase of SSR in 1989–90, as discussed.

Security sector institutions established during the colonial era had been for the purposes of perpetuating imperialism and needed to be restructured philosophically and ideologically in order to "remove the noxious reputation of modern Africa – characterised by coercion and violence directed against subject populations".<sup>14</sup> During the contested period of the Cold War, some African political elites did not materially restructure these forces, continuing to depend on military aid from former colonial powers.

As Odoche correctly points out:

"[t]here is little to indicate that African leaders [in the newly independent states] attempted to understand or define security beyond what was bequeathed to them by the colonialists."<sup>15</sup>

Den Hank continues: “Not surprisingly, ordinary African citizens came to equate the term ‘security’ with purveyors of terror and coercion.”<sup>16</sup> This frame of mind in ordinary Africans regarding the security establishment needs to be factored in when we talk about reforming this sector. Rapacious militaries were most evident in West, Central and North Africa while Southern Africa tended to be split between nationalists and those electing to sign friendship treaties with Russia.

Following the end of the Cold War, when nationals in many countries were expecting at last to enjoy some relief from the militarism that had characterised international relations since 1945, African countries found themselves in the throes of fratricidal ethnic and inter-state conflicts. In the single decade of the 1990s, protracted wars and genocide occurred in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Burundi, the Sudan, Somalia, Angola, Mozambique and Zaire (DRC), with casualties estimated in the millions. Africa found herself with the highest refugee and IDP population in the world. The clear message was general insecurity. Instead of enjoying the much hoped for ‘peace dividend’, Africa experienced the unique phenomenon of collapsed states, weak states and was host to increasing UN peace missions. As a result of inadequate security, nationals were left at the mercy of warlords, armed factions and precariously positioned governments in the Congo, Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Mozambique, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Angola – to name but a few of the areas affected. Furthermore, following the peacekeeping debacle in Somalia in 1993 and the genocide in Rwanda in early 1994, the ‘victorious West’ and the UN Security Council decided to withdraw its robust engagement from Africa. Populations, as recently evidenced in Liberia, were left vulnerable to armed gangs and so-called rebel groups.

It is against this background that the sentiment has emerged that Africa needs adequately equipped and properly legalised armed forces to safeguard basic human security. Existing armed factions – raised by individuals and consequently owing their allegiance to these characters – are not representative of ‘national forces’.

The continent desperately needs the establishment of basic and standard security structures that are designed to foster confidence to nationals without necessarily threatening Western dominance of the international security system. This aspiration is not evident in the policy orientations viewed above in phases one and two of the evolution of SSR since 1989.

## **Conclusion**

SSR is a phenomenon that has different departure points for the West versus Africa. While the Western desire is to locate the continent within the nuanced international security system, African governments have opted to operate, as best they can, outside this regime. However, even as this by-play is evolving,

Africa needs serious SSR that provides its ordinary people and regimes with adequate security and stability. The challenge that faces us is how this intellectual gap can be overcome in order to arrive at a common objective without emasculating or empowering one side in the process.

## Notes

- 1 The concept of 'arms control' refers to the control or maintenance of armaments within agreed limits. This includes disarmament – also known as the reduction or abolition of certain lines of weaponry that may be unilateral or multilateral, general or local, comprehensive or partial, controlled or uncontrolled. Arms Control and Disarmament agencies have been established by the UN as mechanisms for the international management of agreed to restrictions.
- 2 The latter also included retired politicians and aspirants.
- 3 Prof. Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja, Director, Oslo Governance Centre, UNDP.
- 4 Security Council/6522/Rev.1: SC Establishes ad-hoc Working Group to Review Secretary-General's Recommendations on Maintenance of International Peace and Security in Africa, 28 May 1998 in collaboration or 'mindful' of the Organisation of African Unity, 1993 Cairo Declaration. The primary purpose of this declaration was conflict prevention, management and resolution of conflicts on the continent. This followed submissions of the Peace and Security Report, 1998, On Causes of Conflict and Promotion of Durable Peace, A/52/871-S/1998/318.
- 5 See comments by Timothy Edwards in Security Sector Reform – Concepts and Implementation: Report for the Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of Armed Forces, p 1.
- 6 Examples of Libya, Iran and Korea, hastening to subject themselves to 'complete and unfettered international military inspection' is a development that must sober-up and guide other aspiring African states in future.
- 7 At <<http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices>> (22 June 2003).
- 8 Both speeches made in Washington on 26 and 28 September, respectively.
- 9 See, *UN Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s*, (UN-NADAF), 46/151.
- 10 W Omitoogun, Military expenditure in Africa, in *SIPRI Yearbook 2000, Armaments, disarmament & international security*, p 291.
- 11 Protocols such as the Mine Ban Treaty of 1997 and the Terrorism Act that is doing the rounds are examples of the types of laws that have since emerged.
- 12 Omitoogun, op cit, Appendix 5D, p. 291.
- 13 See the extensive report, *Leave none to tell the story*, Human Rights Watch, March 1999, <<http://www/hrw.org/reports/1999/rwanda/>> (4 January 2004).
- 14 D Henk, Security: A new African paradigm, *Occasional Paper 1*, Centre for Defence Studies, University of Zimbabwe, p 5.
- 15 Cited in Henk, Ibid.
- 16 Henk, Ibid.