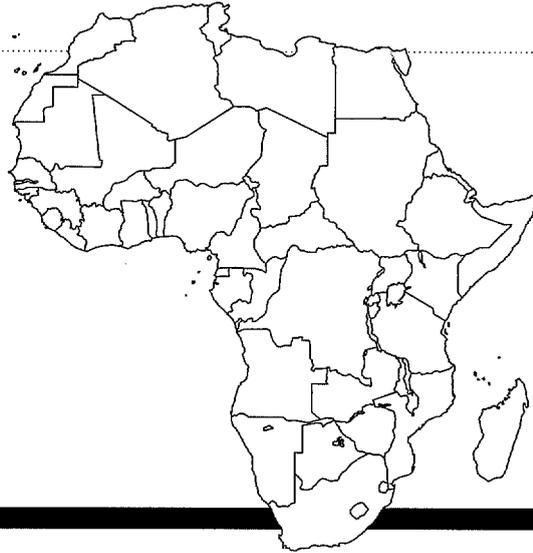
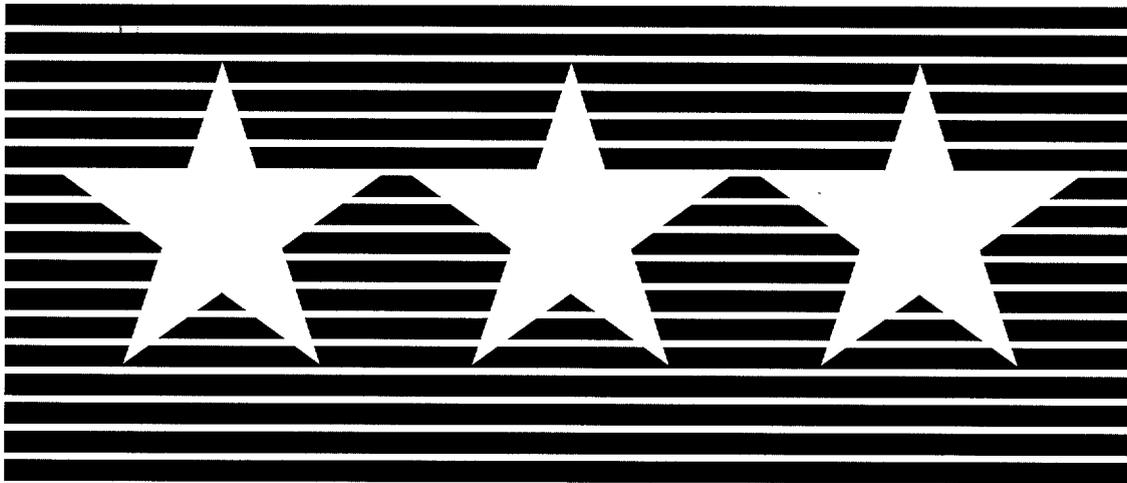


PN-ABZ-041



Democratization in Africa: The Role of the Military

**Report on the Second Regional Conference
The African-American Institute
Cotonou, Benin**



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DESIGN AND PRODUCTION: DREWS & ROW, INC., WASHINGTON, DC
TRANSLATIONS: LANGUAGE LEARNING ENTERPRISES

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INTRODUCTION

STEVE McDONALD
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN INSTITUTE

What role should the army play in an African democracy? When this question was posed in February 1993 at an African-American Institute (AAI) conference in Bujumbura, it seemed to some to be based on two wildly optimistic premises:

- that there would be democracies in Africa; and,
- that there were supportive roles for the military to play.

Indeed, the tragic events of the next years in Burundi, when an abortive coup d'état derailed the transition to a democratically elected regime, partly validate that pessimistic view.

Even so, two years later, the military and civilian leaders from eight West African nations who assembled for the Cotonou conference that AAI organized as a follow-up to Bujumbura, had no doubt that democracy was at the center of their nations' political agendas. A very few openly regretted the prominence of the democratic issue. Many more worried about its implication for their homelands, their militaries and themselves. But virtually all adopted the language of democracy. Whatever the imperfections and departures from democratic reality - whatever the violations committed in democracy's name - neither single-party rule nor military government were put forward as a legitimate or desirable political end-state.

Reactions to the rich case studies, contained in the following text, by Moussa Okanla and former-President of Burundi, Pierre Buyoya, on how ethnicity affects the political role of the military similarly showed that the norm of an ethnically and regionally balanced military is generally accepted. Even those Togolese participants who vigorously defended the honor of their country's armed forces nonetheless found it necessary to excuse the army's regional and ethnic imbalance as a product of "historical circumstances" whose rationale no longer obtained. While other African participants received the Togolese arguments with varying degrees of skepticism, they welcomed the implication that, history aside, such imbalance can today only be viewed as an abnormality in need of correction.

In a similar vein, the presentation by James Jonah centered on the tenuous process to return Sierra Leone to civilian rule after 27 years of one-party and military governments, being orchestrated by an uncertain military seemingly committed to a return to multi-party democracy, a commitment since born out by events. Even in a case such as this, where a successful transition to popular democracy seems to have occurred, the military - the agent for change away from "an oppressive, corrupt, exploitative, tribalistic bunch of crooks" - was the first to recognize that power belongs to the people and that it should "return to barracks where we rightly belong". Dr. Jonah underlined the ethnic imbalance in the Sierra Leone forces as central to the problem of past military intervention.

Such normative consensus was made easier by the absence of significant regional bias in the armies of the majority of the states represented at the conference. The struggle for ethnic integration, like that for demobilization, requires seeing the military and its role in a broader framework, one that reexamines the totality of civil-military relations.

This, indeed is what occurred at the Cotonou conference in May, 1995. A second in a series of regional conferences meant to examine the military and democracy in Africa, it was a result of decades of work in human resource development by AAI that had often resulted in talented, skilled and professional individuals unable to return to societies devastated by conflict and ethnic strife, often subjected to military intervention. AAI had learned that sustainable development is dependent on stable and responsible governance. The propensity of the military in Africa to intervene in government had been a major factor in perpetuating unstable and exploitative governing elites around the continent.

But, the last ten years, coinciding with the demise of the Cold War, has seen a great deal of pressure, both from popular demand and the international donor community, to democratize in Africa. And this has swung the focus directly onto the military, sometimes as the ruling group or a prime source of social disorder, sometimes as a key agent of change toward a more democratic order, but always with the capacity to terminate any experiment with democracy. There were, therefore, democracies or a growing demand for them in Africa. And, it was obvious, for better or worse, that the military had a role to play. It became important for the appropriate role of the military to be understood, by civilian and military leaders alike, and for the problems of democratic transitions to be fully vetted.

AAI historically felt that the best learning mechanism was experience itself and therefore began the process of pulling together African militaries and civilian sector leaders to interact and share with each other the lessons of their respective countries. Aply aided by an international "faculty" of military officers and civilian students of African militaries, AAI organized the gathering of about 80 individuals, evenly divided between civilian and military backgrounds, from the countries of Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

The following papers are representative of the proceedings. Unlike the report of the earlier conference in Bujumbura, where the organizers tried to synthesize the proceedings and summarize the findings, we have decided to reproduce in their entirety several of the more pertinent presentations, along with the brief reports submitted by the discussion group rapporteurs at the end of the conference and the country papers presented by the participant delegations. The conference facilitator, Dr. William J. Foltz, then the Professor of African Studies and Political Science at Yale University and now the National Intelligence Officer for Africa, has also added a summary conclusion.

As indicated above, despite certain military delegations expressing rote loyalty to their military establishments and denying any real wrong-doing, there emerged a remarkable consensus on several points:

- armies must reflect the national demography;
- armies must be under civil authority and be part of a national development plan;
- armies must "professionalize" which often means downsizing and retraining;
- armies must respect the civil and human rights of the people.

As a way to achieve these lofty goals, delegate after delegate—as exemplified in the reports by the discussion group rapporteurs—cited the need to not only continue these high level civil/military dialogues, but to begin training on a country basis, right down to the local level, for civil and military personnel on all aspects of their relationships.

The African-American Institute feels that these frank and insightful presentations will add much to the historiography concerning the militaries of Africa and their appropriate role in the transition to and realization of democracy on the continent. It would like to thank all the participants, whose open and enthusiastic commitment to the subject gave the conference its substance. Their dialogue and interaction across military/civilian and geographic lines fulfilled a deeper agenda to establish a network of shared experience and methodology on military/civilian relations specific to Africa. A special thanks to Dr. Foltz for his invaluable guidance, perseverance and good humor throughout. It is always dangerous to isolate a specific presenter when all of them are so good, but AAI would like to give special recognition to former President Buyoya and Dr. Jonah, Moussa Okanla and Benin President Nicophere Soglo for their contributions. Their papers are reproduced herein. On the administrative side, Sonjah Chin, the Executive Assistant to the Executive Vice President of AAI, and Eric Togbe-Olory, the AAI representative in Benin, were invaluable. Gratitude is offered to the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development, and the U.S. Information Agency for funding support. And finally, AAI thanks the government and people of Benin for graciously hosting this conference. That very act demonstrates their commitment to democracy and subsequent events have confirmed it even further. A warm thanks to Ambassador Ruth Davis and her staff for their invaluable assistance throughout the course of the conference.



SUMMATION BY FACILITATOR

WILLIAM J. FOLTZ

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE OFFICER FOR AFRICA
NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE COUNCIL

A few words in conclusion—my personal thoughts, not necessarily those of the AAI.

The questions that we have discussed are serious, difficult, and even painful. They are not of only academic interest, because they have real life and death consequences for entire populations. These questions cannot, therefore, be avoided. As I said at the beginning of this symposium, Africa—and all of us—are at a turning point in history.

The pressures on the African states to advance along the path of democracy come from outside, from the international community—but what is more important, from inside, from their own citizens. It is hardly likely that these pressures will cease. That is the reality, whether we wish it or not.

Are these pressures just? Deserved? Fair? That is not really important in the world in which we live. Any country that has a contented population and a high rate of economic growth, that has neither foreign debt nor a need for the good will of financial backers, can afford an army as large as it may wish, with any ethnic or regional composition, and can purchase any quantity of armaments. But that country does not exist in Africa—and perhaps nowhere in the world.

As Mr. Azefor of the World Bank has reminded us—brutally but correctly—the greater the public expenditure on the army, the weaker the national economy; the greater the ethnic or regional distortion in recruitment, the more unhappy the people; the more severe the insecurity, the more frequent the violations of Human Rights; the more frequent and bloody the demonstrations, disturbances, and repression, and then the bigger the army needs to be, and the more costly... and we find ourselves in a vicious circle. How can we get out of it?

There is no magic formula, but our discussions have revealed some essential—or at least useful—factors.

First, political leadership and direction—requiring courage and political ability—I salute President Buyoya—as well as President Soglo—who in different situations have demonstrated this quality to a splendid degree.

Next, a proud and disciplined army—committed to a well-defined military mission. An army which understands that only operations that are disciplined, and that respect the human rights of ordinary citizens, are capable of winning the battle, *and* the war, *and* the peace. The army must have its attention fixed on the mission, not on ethnic or other privileges. The army must be a national army: the defense of the nation must not be the concern of only a minority of its citizens.

The army is not like other organizations. It is too specialized, and too dangerous. That is why it cannot be either the plaything of a minority or the political tool of a faction—even a majority faction. The army cannot be part of a sharing of benefits in the way that other organizations can. We cannot say that such-and-such a region will have commerce, another the civil service, and another the army. It is too dangerous, and can lead to insanity. The army will be solicited by civilian political groups, even solicited to seize power. It must be able to say no!

The army, even with the most enlightened management, cannot promote democracy all by itself, nor can it create an area where democracy can flourish all by itself. A disciplined civil service, and especially disciplined and competent police and internal security forces, are needed. “If you want a competent army, spend the money to train the police.”

Men and women of the political sector have heavy responsibilities. They must avoid threats and extreme language directed at the military. We forget that the military can be afraid of reprisals by civilians—as in Burundi.

But the army can help the politicians to be responsible—by making the army and its budget more transparent, and by informing and even training lawmakers—and journalists. Every army has to be a school—sometimes even for civilians.

Col. Noutais of the Benin National Army—who did much to make this conference possible—asked me whether I haven't changed my mind about the speed with which we should move toward democracy; do I not recognize that there are many stages to pass through, and many differences in the situations of the various countries represented here? Certainly I have learned a great deal in these last few days, and I readily admit that the differences and difficulties are *at least* as great as I had previously thought. Democracy is something that must be built every day—and patience is necessary.

But there are things to be done at once. It is first of all necessary to face things squarely. We know, for example, that any army dominated by an ethnic group or a region is a danger to democracy and to the civilian society. The longer we delay in taking steps to rectify this situation, the more we risk disaster. Fortunate are the countries—like Benin—that do not have to deal with this problem.

I should close with my personal thanks: to the speakers, the rapporteurs, and the delegates, and to the government and people of Benin. And I especially want to express my sympathy and admiration for the military people among us. They have to confront these great questions on a daily basis. It is difficult to be a member of the military at this turning point in history; to reconcile military needs with democracy requires calling upon the fundamental military virtues: service to the nation, discipline, and courage.



RAPORTEURS ACCOUNTS

COMMANDANT MARCELLIN MELOMÉ
CONSEILLER TECHNIQUE AIR ETAT-MAJOR PARTICILIER
PRÉSIDENTE DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE
REPUBLIC OF BENIN

The Army, as an integral part of society, is an actor for peace whose objective is to defend the national integrity under civilian authority.

It is necessary, then, for the State to set a national defense policy in order for it to make use of the army as a participant in the development process. It is in this context that the group meeting in the Vivo room, the results of whose work I am reporting, has been asked to comment on the following questions.

What are the advantages and disadvantages of participation by the military in "civilian" work such as road construction, the running of medical clinics, etc.?

What should be the relationship of the military with the civilian judicial system?

And finally, what are the educational strategies that will prepare members of the military for their responsibility toward the civilian society?

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of participation by the military in civilian work such as road construction, the running of medical clinics, etc.?

Advantages

As a development force, the use of the Army in civilian tasks allows it to:

- avoid idleness and put into practice the knowledge acquired in training;
- be useful to the civilian society, with a resulting improvement of the army's image;
- contribute to economic and social development, with a minimal cost of involvement;
- allow the civilian society to learn that the Army is an integral part of the nation;
- make the Army productive and not simply a "budget-eater";
- use the men at the same cost for more important missions;
- assign to the army non-productive areas of employment, for example environmental projects;
- use military physicians in health centers, which are often shunned by civilians.

Disadvantages

- risk of increased unemployment within the civilian society;
- temptation on the part of some members of the military to leave the Army in order to devote themselves to more profitable civilian activity;
- education of purely military tasks, leading to a reduction in readiness;
- need to avoid letting defense units deteriorate throughout our armed forces.

2. What should be the relationship of the military with the civilian judicial system?

This problem is a delicate one, and difficult to resolve. In our countries, when a member of the military commits an offense, should he be tried under the nation's court system?

No one is above the law.

As citizens, members of the military are subject to the same laws as civilians. Consequently the commission of criminal offenses brings them before civilian general law courts:

- a) *For infractions of general law or murder*, the member of the military goes before a disciplinary board which first relieves him of his military duties and then turns him over to a civilian court.
- b) *For questions of custody* the situation is more delicate; it is often the gendarmerie that monitors and maintains custody of military personnel. The gendarmerie is incorporated into the civilian justice system.

In general, the type of offense is dictated by the constitution of each country.

It is therefore desirable to think about the training of judge advocates and the inclusion of law courses as part of military training.

3. What are the educational strategies that will prepare members of the military for their responsibility toward the civilian society?

As democracy flourishes, a strong current of freedom is established, giving rise to an acceptance of differences. We therefore need educational strategies that:

- include, in training programs, courses and introductions on the Geneva Conventions on humanitarian law,
- include also the United Nations conventions on torture and degrading and inhumane treatment;
- teach human rights, and hold seminars, conferences, and meetings to allow encounters between the military and civilian sectors.



CAPT. DE FREGATTE PROSPER KIANDO
COMMANDANT DES FORCES NAVALES
REPUBLIC OF BENIN

Does the military have a role to play in elections and in the protection and defense of democratic institutions?

If it is taken for granted that democracy is one of the conditions for the development of a country, and if it is also taken for granted that the army, in our developing countries, is and will remain an elite corps with a well developed internal organization, there is no reason why it should not make a contribution to the development process in African countries.

It would then appear necessary that in addition to its primary missions, the army should play a role in the defense and protection of democratic institutions.

But how should it do so?

•With regard to the organization of elections, the army can be called upon to assist the security forces in:

- overseeing elections
- transporting ballot boxes
- ensuring the security of persons and property
- ensuring the security of the vote counting.

In addition, in the case of a threat to democratic institutions the army should intervene to reestablish constitutional order.

•Under what conditions should such intervention by the army take place?

Intervention by the army should be considered only in the case of a real or potential threat to democratic institutions, verified by the authority which is invested by the constitution with that duty, and then only under clearly defined legal and regulatory conditions.

To successfully carry out this role, which requires strict neutrality, the army must be apolitical.

- What are the responsibilities of the military in the protection of human rights in a democracy?
- Is it possible to make protection of human rights compatible with effective military operations?

Human rights are universal values that each country must commit itself to maintaining, promoting, and protecting. That is why the African countries that have signed the various conventions on human rights should ratify them in order to permit the development and implementation of an effective mechanism for the protection of the human rights to which all components of the society, including the army, are entitled.

To this end the army, in its role as a technical and auxiliary arm of the political authority, should:

- Inform the political authority of confirmed or potential risks of violations of human rights.
- Guide the decision-making of the political authority in choosing solutions which allow human rights to be respected.
- Effectively carry out orders while respecting those rights.

But the army should not stop at that point. In practice, however precise and concise the army's orders of engagement, it always has a margin for maneuver in the theater of operations. This margin can be a source of attacks on human rights.

Therefore in order to reduce that risk the accent should be on:

- intellectual and ethical training of the military
- theoretical and practical training of the military regarding human rights
- implementation of a set of sanctions that are fair but sufficiently dissuasive information
- necessary collaboration between political institutions, the military, and the press, to condemn attacks on human rights.

Only under the conditions described above is it possible to make the protection of human rights compatible with military operations.



MR. OURO BANG-NA
JOURNALIST; DIRECTOR OF TOGO TV NEWS
REPUBLIC OF TOGO

The group's discussions, often prompted by the presentations made in the plenary sessions, centered around the following great questions:

1. Does the army participate or contribute in the search for solutions to the socioeconomic problems of our countries?
2. Are our armed forces ethnically based?
3. How do we draw the line between human rights and the use of force?
4. Army manpower and budgets: should they be reduced? If not, why? If so, how?

The conference requested that this report concentrate on the group's last discussion point, that is: "Army manpower and budgets: should they be reduced? If not, why? If so, how?"

In response to this question, [inspired by the presentations in plenary session by General Thomas Matthews of the U.S.A. and Mr. Michael Azefer, the resident representative of the World Bank at Cotonou,] the discussion group posed another question: "While the end of the cold war has brought about a reduction in military manpower in the West, can we say that there has been an end to tensions in Africa that justifies such reductions on the continent, or are those changes prompted only by the 'economic situation'?"

From the discussion that followed, it emerged that the answer lies with the political authority, which in each country must assume responsibility for redefining the army's mission.

In any case, the group suggests that if there is to be a reduction in manpower:

1. Recruitment of career military personnel should be reduced at the same time that combined natural departures (retirement, death, discharge) bring about a reduction or control of manpower numbers.
2. There should be assurance of accompanying measures to transform the army into a large training institution for civilian trades, as well as provisions for integration into administration or other sectors of activity.

As far as budgets are concerned, the group as a whole expressed its approval of their reduction, on condition—and only on condition—that the amounts saved and the resulting surpluses be reallocated to overall social development.

In response to the other subjects for discussion, [namely "the army and solutions to socioeconomic problems," "the army and the ethnic question," and "the line between human rights and the use of force," because of the illustrations and examples put forward by various members,] the group made the following recommendations:

1. There should be implemented in our countries a dynamic of continuing Education, Information, and Training regarding development and on all civilian and military questions, which would open the way to greater awareness and create a climate of mutual confidence.
2. Particular emphasis should be placed on equipping 1st and 2nd tier forces, that is to say the Police and Gendarmerie, and on the decentralization of institutions.
3. The military justice system should be included among the institutions to be developed to show that the army is an institution that respects the rule of law.
4. An awareness campaign directed toward the political authority should encourage the creation of legal provisions that are consistent with the state of development of our countries, as well as respect for those provisions.
5. An awareness campaign should also be directed toward the leaders of the political parties, so that they do not turn human rights into an instrument that conveys a right to disorder.
6. An appeal should be made to the leaders of the institutions for the defense of human rights, that they let legal processes take their course in the atmosphere of calm necessary for the proper application of the law.

Lastly the group, while congratulating the organizers of the conference, hoped that the initiative would be continued, and that more civilians would be involved in order to achieve the climate of mutual confidence that is indispensable to the objectives sought by the conference.

To that end, the Study and Research Group for Democracy and Economic and Social Development (GERDDES) has offered to contribute to the search for a continuing framework for dialogue, at the sub-regional level, between civilians and the military.



LT. COL. YORO KONÉ
REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL

Responsibility of the military before the civilian authorities toward an army of development.

This is a very broad area because of the diversity of political regimes in Africa:

- Military regimes
- Regimes in democratic transition
- Democratic regimes

It is not convenient to take a typological approach, and it would be better to give an overall response to the question as posed.

We note first of all that in nearly every African country there exists either a constitution or a fundamental charter.

What we call it matters little; the essential thing is to clearly define the relationship between the Army and the civilian authorities, and therefore to avoid any legal vacuum.

And with this in mind, it is desirable to set the basic principles and general principles that underlie the intent of the legislature to organize the national defense, and thus to control the Army, because that is what is involved.

In this relationship, democratic tradition urges that the primacy of the civilian authorities over the military authorities be strongly affirmed.

This means that the President of the Republic, if such exists, is the supreme commander of the Armed Forces.

It also means that the constitutional authorities have sole and complete authority over the government's use of force and have, ipso facto, authority over military commanders, however highly placed.

Lastly, it means that the Army is not something outside the society; it is within the society, and in the modern concept of the State, it is a PUBLIC INSTITUTION.

More precisely, this subordination of the military apparatus to the civilian power implies a separation between the decision makers and the wielders of force; in other words, military commanders may not use force without an order or requisition from a separate authority.

The Constitution is not enough, however; an entire culture of legality is needed, which requires time and which has as prerequisites:

- Respect for members of the military, who are citizens in their own right;
- Training of civilian administrators who have frequent dealings with the military;
- Work within the Armed Forces to promote the military ethic and an awareness of the constraints that it carries: conferences, seminars, etc., the results of which should be disseminated.

In partial conclusion, it appears that the legislature should lay the foundation for civilian-military relationships; once that is done, an Army cognizant of its rights and duties can fully assume its responsibilities.

With that understanding, let us now ask what role the military should play in socioeconomic activities in general.

Reformulated and adapted at this conference, the question evolves and expands in the following terms: Does the Army have a purpose? Can we reconfigure it to better support development?

The problem of confidence arises again; the military must not feel isolated.

Experience shows that the Army, if used judiciously, can play a significant role in the socioeconomic development of African nations.

The cases of Benin, Niger, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal offer pertinent examples:

—Military prefects in Niger

—Missions of economic importance in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal:

In summary, the support of development is characterized, according to Dominique Bangoura, by the State's use of the Army for extra-military tasks, that is to say tasks which contribute to national production and to development in various sectors.

And the cases of the coastal African countries are interesting in many respects; with few exceptions, these countries have not put a premium on the navy.

The navy carries out essentially a mission of surveillance of territorial waters to a certain depth, often in cooperation with the Air Force.

To that must be added the supervision of Fisheries, the boarding of foreign violators, assistance to people in danger, and visits or friendship calls to neighboring countries.

These are, then, missions of an economic, humanitarian, or ceremonial nature.

Certainly the Army is not specifically prepared for these functions, but it performs them because it has the necessary equipment and is a well organized, hierarchical organization.

In conclusion, the subordination of the military to the political power, if it is regulated in a positive way, becomes the source of fruitful relationships and gives the military a way to contribute to the development of the country within the framework of political, administrative, economic, and social institutions.



SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF BENIN, MR. NICEPHORE DIEUDONNE SOGLO
AT THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE
ON THE ROLE OF THE ARMY IN A DEMOCRACY
COTONOU, MAY 10, 1995**

My first words will be for the delegates who have come from Africa, America, and Europe. In the name of the Government and the people of Benin, I would like to welcome you to Cotonou and express to you our joy at being able to share with people of such stature a few days of reflection on a subject of the greatest importance for Africa in the 90s.

The topic of this international conference, "Democratization in Africa: the Role of the Military" is truly one of great currency, and is a central preoccupation of most of the countries represented here.

That is why the government of Benin agreed with pleasure to the choice of Cotonou as the site for these meetings.

A conference of the same type was held two years ago in Bujumbura, Burundi, at a time when the army was still in power in that country. Very shortly afterward the army stepped aside in favor of a democratically elected civilian government. This is the place to honor General Buyoya, who is here, and who as Head of State at the time officially opened that conference and was able, a few months later, to withdraw gracefully in order to transfer power to a Government elected by the people of Burundi.

Before sharing with you how we see this in Benin, I would like to pose a crucial question:

What has the record been since Bujumbura? The 1993 Conference, after vigorous discussion, did reach consensus on a number of points, among which we may cite the following:

- the army should in all circumstances adopt a position of political neutrality;
- the army should be a "national institution" and draw its troops and its officers from all strata of the society;
- the army should be under effective civilian control and supervision, even if it must have a degree of "professional autonomy" in order to function adequately;
- within the framework of its professional obligations and powers, the army should respect the human rights of its fellow citizens;
- most African armies are too big and too costly. It is appropriate to carry out a reduction in troop strength for economic and political reasons.

It seems to me important that in the course of your reflections you also ask yourselves about the actions, between 1993 and today, of the armies in the countries which took part in that first conference.

My interest in that question can be explained very simply: this conference should be useful; it should not end with recommendations that are of only academic interest. It is therefore necessary that the countries represented here derive practical benefit from these four days of work.

In Benin since 1990, the year of the Conférence Nationale des Forces Vives [National Conference of Dynamic Forces], the role of the army in the country's development has been redefined, and in paying tribute to that truly national army I would like to publicly emphasize that for five years its actions have been remarkable.

As you know, from 1963 until 1990—that is, for 27 years—the army of Benin was very much present on the political scene. Yet the political, economic, and social evolution of the country led it to acknowledge, in a solemn declaration at the National Conference, that its specific mission was, and I quote:

"The defense of national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the security and protection of the people of Benin and their property."

"That is why, in order to avoid any anachronism with regard to (its) mission in that period of Democratic Renewal, and to achieve a new ethic, it wished to return to the barracks, and thus affirmed its political neutrality."

That commitment undertaken by the representatives of the army was confirmed by the Constitution, which, in its Article 63, provides that the particular functions of the army are the defense of territorial integrity, and that the President of the Republic may require its cooperation in the Nation's economic development and in all other tasks of public interest under conditions established by law.

It is in that spirit that the army has been involved in the life of the nation for the last five years, and the Government has made an effort to involve the Beninese military in the development of the country. Thus for example, thanks to the help of friendly countries, units of the Military Engineers have been equipped and carry out more and more public works, to the benefit of the entire population. Better still, this army is very proud of the services that it renders, and is ready to play an even larger role in building the nation, provided that it is given the means.

I would not want to conduct the discussion on the role of the army in democratization for you, which is why I shall limit myself to this evocation of the role of the Beninese army in the Benin of Renewal.



THE ROLE OF THE ARMY IN DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION: THE CASE OF BURUNDI FORMER PRESIDENT PIERRE BUYOYA

Introduction

A little more than two years ago the African-American Institute, in collaboration with the government of Burundi, organized a conference in Bujumbura on this same topic: "The Role of the Army in Democratic Transition." Since that time, many things have happened in Africa. Democratization has made much progress, if we are to judge by the number of multiparty elections held on the continent. Overall, African armies have supported the movement in a satisfactory manner. My country, Burundi, has been an unfortunate exception. Scarcely four months after pluralistic elections, the process of democratization was destabilized by an attempted military coup, plunging the country into an unprecedented political crisis.

In my triple role as initiator of the process of democratization in Burundi, initiator of the Bujumbura conference, but also an officer in the Burundian armed forces, I must confess that I am ill at ease speaking to you about Burundi's experience, which may be seen by some as a counter-example. I deliberated for a long time whether I should accept this task.

I am here because I finally resolved—without much satisfaction—that I must consent to bear witness to my African brothers, believing deeply that Africa's progress on the long and painful road to democracy will pass through happy experiences and through some that are less happy, which African leaders owe it to themselves to ponder and study carefully in order to avoid making the same mistakes.

Historical background

In the minds of many foreigners, whether African or not, Burundi's image is one of massacres between Hutu and Tutsi, of interminable inter-ethnic wars.

Therein lies the paradox of Burundi: inter-ethnic conflicts in a country where ethnic groups do not really exist, but where ethnic consciousness has been created and reinforced until it has become the source of all ills.

For centuries, up until 1966, the year that the Republic was proclaimed, Burundi was a strongly unified and centralized kingdom with a population having the same culture, speaking the same language, and practicing the same religion, but divided into three social groups: the Batwa, who were craftsmen (potters and hunters); the Bahutu, who were essentially farmers; and the Batutsi, who raised cattle. Contrary to what we find

in many other African countries, no social group occupied a specific territory or region by itself. The Hutu, the Tutsi, and the Twa lived together pell-mell, on the same hills and in the same neighborhoods throughout the country. With time even the differentiations based on activity and way of life practically disappeared. Nearly 90% of Burundians were farmers and stock raisers.

From that point of view, then, we may conclude that there are in Burundi no ethnic groups in the true sense of the term. The history of Burundi before colonization never included so-called ethnic conflicts in terms of confrontation between the three social groups.

Nevertheless, in the country of Burundi ethnic consciousness was created, to the point that it became the source of all the ills of the society. It was created by the colonial power.

When the first colonists arrived in Burundi toward the end of the 19th century, they tried to understand the structure of Burundian society, and their mistaken reading of it contributed enormously to spreading the virus of ethnic division.

Based on the theories of the European Middle Ages, the Hutu were likened to serfs: oppressed, taxed, and to be pressed into service at will. The Tutsi were thought of as bourgeois noblemen, the oppressors who held power and all property; the Twa were thought of as the outcasts of the society, beneath consideration.

The same colonists, relying this time on the theories of racial inequality which were in vogue at the time of their coming to Burundi, saw the Tutsi as superior beings, more cultivated, more gifted, and more qualified to govern; the Hutu they saw as ordinary people, fit to work the land and be commanded docilely; the Twa they still saw as outcasts, beneath consideration. Such absolutely erroneous assertions were, as you can imagine, spread throughout the world, and when Burundians began to read and write that is what they were taught. Therein lay the seeds of ethnic consciousness.

The colonial power did not stop with interpreting the social structure—it governed, and in its method of governing it masterfully applied the old principle of divide and rule. Based on the theories cited earlier, it at first favored the Tutsi. It made them its assistants in the administration. Tutsi were the first to be sent to school, which in post-colonial Africa was the source not only of knowledge but also of power and wealth.

Later, when the wind of independence began to blow across Africa, the colonial power switched sides. It favored the Hutu, thinking that as the majority in the country they would naturally take the reins of power when independence came. The colonial power kept the Hutu-controlled parties literally at arms length at the time of the first elections preparing for independence in 1960-61.

There is no doubt that colonial policy contributed, as the years went by, to the emergence of ethnic consciousness.

Ethnic consciousness was reinforced by the events in Rwanda in 1959. For the first time in the history of the region there occurred, in 1959 in Rwanda, a bloody confrontation between the Hutu and the Tutsi. The Tutsi, who were in the minority as they were in Burundi, were massacred and forced into exile. The majority Hutu overthrew the monarchy and took power.

Events in Rwanda in 1959 contributed in a decisive way to the crystallization of ethnic consciousness in Burundi. Indeed ever since that time, the history of Burundi can be seen as a battle to the death between the Hutu and the Tutsi, with the first group attempting to achieve at any price what was called in Rwanda the social revolution, which is to say the taking of power by the Hutu; and the second group opposing it at any price, for fear that they would suffer the same fate as the Tutsi of Rwanda, that is to say: massacre and exile.

What are commonly referred to in Burundi as the incidents of 1965-1969-1972-1988 were in reality repeated attempts by the Hutu to seize power by force, and the stubborn resistance of the Tutsi. Beginning in 1965, these repeated confrontations became dramatic and inflamed. They resulted in so-called inter-ethnic massacres. Burundians, especially Hutu, were forced into exile. Since then, ethnic consciousness has reached a crisis point, fed by the fear of the other, the fear of being massacred or exiled; also fed by the after effects of the various incidents.

Little by little, just as we see in other divided societies, there has developed in Burundi what we call ethnic extremism or fundamentalism—that is to say, groups among the Hutu and the Tutsi who advocate the exclusion of the other, politically or even physically. Hutu who advocate the installation of an exclusively Hutu power, and Tutsi who dream of an exclusively Tutsi power.

The various crises that have shaken the country between 1965 and today have not only produced deaths and exiles, but have also created distortions at the economic and social levels. Exclusion and discrimination have appeared in admissions to school, the army, and the administration. The Hutu, weakened by the various unsuccessful attempts to take power by force, have often been the victims. And so from a society without eth-

nic groups, more or less egalitarian, after three decades we have ended up with a divided society, where ethnic consciousness is strongly developed, fed by both groups' fear of being massacred and by more and more glaring social and economic inequalities.

The experiment in unity and reconciliation

All of the phenomena that we have described have regularly brought Burundian society to a complete standstill. That was the case in 1987. The country was on the verge of civil war when the political change of September 3 occurred, as a result of which the policy of Unity and Reconciliation was initiated.

It was an attempt to confront ethnic conflict head-on and resolve it peacefully, having seen that the path taken before then had led nowhere. In concrete terms, its recommendations were:

- the sharing of power at all levels of the government, which in practice meant the entry of massive numbers of Hutu into the government, diplomacy, the central and territorial administrations, etc.;
- the elimination of all forms of discrimination in access to school, the army, the police, and the security services;
- the loud and clear affirmation of equality of opportunity in regard to all economic and social opportunities;
- openness and transparency in all of the government's economic and social management operations.

The experiment in unity and reconciliation lasted nearly six years—six years of peace, stability, and progress. It created much hope—and perhaps illusion—that Burundi was finally going to escape the vicious circle of violence. The move toward unity and reconciliation was supported by the great majority of the population. On the other hand, it was fiercely opposed by the extremists on both the Hutu and Tutsi sides, a very determined minority. I personally was three times the target of attempted coups orchestrated by the Tutsi extremists. The Hutu extremists, for their part, attacked several times from outside the country, to destabilize the process of reconciliation.

The process of democratization

In Burundi, the wind of democratization that blew across Africa beginning in 1989-1990 found us in the middle of our experiment in unity and reconciliation. In 1991, after the referendum on the unity charter, the discussions on opening the country to pluralistic democracy began in a climate of great calm, in contrast to what we saw elsewhere. In March 1992 the new constitution was approved, and a few months later the law on political parties went into effect. Pluralistic elections took place on June 1 and June 29, 1993.

For the purposes of our discussion, we can note certain aspects of the process of democratization in Burundi:

- The extreme ethnicization of the electoral campaign, in spite of all the previous efforts at reconciliation;
- The use of the democratic process by the Hutu to carry out historical revenge on the Tutsi;
- The fact that the Hutu expected everything—and immediately—from democracy; the Tutsi, on the other hand, feared being marginalized by reverse exclusion;
- The demonization of the Army by the Hutu-controlled parties;
- The hasty reforms initiated by the new authorities in sensitive areas such as employment and the management of rural land.

All of these elements gave the Tutsi extremists pretexts as well as a favorable environment to act, to pressure a part of the military into the intrigue of October 20, 1993, which cost the life of the President of the Republic. The Hutu extremists responded tit for tat by devoting themselves to the extermination of the opposition, both Tutsi and Hutu, which plunged the country into a political crisis from which it has not yet emerged.

Evolution of the Burundian Armed Forces

The Burundian Army is a young army. It has had neither officers, nor non-commissioned officers, nor soldiers from the colonial army. It was created by the Belgians beginning in 1961, just a few months before the

proclamation of independence. At the beginning it was composed of a few combat units and a national military police force. The two forces were merged in 1967 to form the Burundian Armed Forces.

The crystallization of ethnic consciousness did not spare the members of the Army. They have always been solicited by civilian politicians, who saw the military as the best instrument for very rapidly carrying out the designs of one group or the other. That is how the Army has found itself at the center of all the crises and incidents that we spoke of earlier. I shall recall only a few of them, by way of illustration.

- In 1965, Hutu officers tried to overthrow the monarchy and take power. They did not succeed. A few days later, they were executed. For the first time in Burundi's history, country people in the province of Muramvya rose up and massacred their Tutsi neighbors. The army intervened to reestablish order.
- In 1966, officers who were for the most part Tutsi overthrew the monarchy, proclaimed the Republic, and established the single political party a few months later. The Tutsi predominance in the Army dates from that period.
- In 1969, another attempted coup by Hutu officers was nipped in the bud. The preponderance of the Tutsi in the Army continued to increase, and that of the Hutu to diminish.
- In 1972, a renewed attempt by the Hutu to take power set off a real civil war. In the countryside, Tutsi were savagely massacred from the very first. The Army then intervened to reestablish order. The repression hit the rebels, but also a good number of Hutu officers, and did not spare the lower ranks of the Army. At the end of the 1972 crisis, the Army had become majority Tutsi at all levels: officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers.

That is why reform of the Army would be a high priority for the policy of unity and reconciliation beginning in 1988. For the same reason, reform of the Army constitutes a focal point of all the current political battles.

The Burundian Army, despite periods of political turbulence, has remained an organized and disciplined force. As in many other African countries, the civilian regime left in place by the colonial power did not function. It was very quickly poisoned by the demon of ethnic division. The Army intervened, overthrew the monarchy, proclaimed the Republic, and established the single political party. The first republic lasted 10 years, and when in 1976 it was worn out by corruption and inefficiency, it was the same Army that carried out changes. As fate would have it, the 2nd Republic ended in the same way, with a military coup—fortunately without bloodshed—on September 3, 1987.

Since 1966, the young Burundian Army has imposed itself as a real force not only on the military and security levels, but also on the political level. In the long run, this has resulted in a false perception of the Army by Burundi's various ethnic components. The Army has been perceived, and is still today perceived by the Tutsi, as on the one hand a safe bulwark against the genocidal ideology that still prevails in the region, and on the other hand as an instrument for the control of political power; thus Tutsi extremists have regularly solicited the Army to put an end to, first, the experiment in unity and reconciliation initiated in 1987, and then to the democratic process, with the attempted putsch of October 1993.

The same Army has been considered, and is still considered by the Hutu, as an instrument of domination by the Tutsi, and one which offers them no security. Hutu extremists, both before and during the process of democratization, advocated the pure and simple dismantling of the Army and the creation of a new force, which this time would ensure control of power by the Hutu. The policy of denigrating and demonizing the Army, by the Hutu-controlled parties, and the fear that hasty reforms of the institution would be announced, probably played a major role in the coup attempt of October 21, 1993.

The Army and the process of unity and reconciliation

Let us recall that the process of unity and reconciliation initiated in 1987 had as its aim to resolve Burundi's ethnic problem by:

- effective sharing of power between the Hutu and the Tutsi;
- opening of all sectors of society, including the Army, so that all citizens could be admitted under the same conditions.

Overall, the Army, and in particular the officer corps, has supported this path because it is aware that the status quo would eventually lead to stalemate and ethnic confrontation. The Army has, in particular, accepted internal reforms without too much resistance. Hutu military men (officers, non-commissioned officers, and troops) have joined the Army in large numbers.

Nevertheless, there has been no shortage of negative reactions. Twice, in 1989 and 1992, the Tutsi extremists have tried to end this experiment, this time using a new strategy of circumventing military command structures, manipulating the lower structure of the Army (troops, non-commissioned officers, and junior officers), and inciting them to carry out a coup.

The two attempts both failed, but we can draw several conclusions from them:

- The constant solicitation of the Army by extremist forces acting from outside;
- The importance of closely associating the Army with any wide reforms, in order to frustrate actions intended to sabotage those reforms.

The Army and the process of democratization

In Burundi, the wind of democratization found us right in the middle of the experiment in unity and reconciliation. Because of that climate of rediscovered unity—and perhaps illusion that ethnocentrism was a thing of the past—pursuing the process of democratization did not cause problems, including among the military.

Army officers participated heavily in the popular debates that preceded and followed the proposed constitution. A discussion and training campaign was organized so that the members of the armed forces would understand their place and their role in the democratic framework. This was the context of the seminar organized jointly by the African-American Institute and the government of Burundi in February 1993.

The forces of order, in particular the military police, handled the public meetings of the political parties with a great deal of coolness and discipline, despite the Hutu extremists' violent discourse regarding the military.

Although surprised—as many were—by the results of the elections, the military commander spontaneously accepted the verdict of the ballot box and declared his loyalty to the new authority. A real rapprochement between the new President and the officer corps was under way when the events of October 1993 occurred.

When the political parties began to hold public meetings, the Army became the target of the Hutu-controlled parties. Its composition and its history were used to crystallize ethnic consciousness. The military was literally demonized. Reforms ranging from elimination pure and simple to a deep and rapid transformation were announced. Attacks on members of the forces of order by the militants of the parties with an ethnic Hutu coloration took place, although on a relatively limited scale.

The political discourse of the Hutu extremists with regard to the Army produced three effects:

- It frightened the Tutsi and created deep within them a great suspicion toward the parties associated with the ethnic majority;
- It frightened the military and made them uncertain as to their immediate career interests;
- It gave the Tutsi extremists extraordinary arguments with which to play on fears of the Hutu menace.

The meaning of the October 1993 coup attempt

The attempted coup of October 20, 1993, which cost the life of the President of the Republic and set off the massacre of people on an enormous scale, was the work of a group of military men in the service of the ethnic extremism that we described earlier.

A certain number of phenomena associated with the process of democratization created the environment in which the military putschists and their supporters were able to act:

- As we have already noted, the revanchist political statements of the Hutu extremists created fear among the Tutsi; fear for their safety, fear for their property, and fear for their position in the society;
- A certain number of political measures by the new authority, such as the massive dismissals of Tutsi from public jobs, and the attempt to drive the Tutsi and opposition Hutu from their land in order to locate repatriated Hutu refugees there, created great tension.

In analyzing events, it appears that the military high command did not participate in either the conception or the execution of the coup. The majority of officers did not belong to the movement. Had this not been the case, the coup would have been successful, and only minimal security measures would have been taken to forestall the reactions of the population. The Army participated in the reestablishment of constitutional law.

Although only a handful of its members were behind the disaster of October 20, 1993, we cannot say that the Army played its role of protecting democratic institutions. It should have been able to foresee events, and it did not. It should have done everything possible to protect the President of the Republic. The President was killed. It should have done everything possible to prevent the massacre of people. It was slow to intervene. It is in this respect that we can say that the case of Burundi constitutes a counter-example.

The Army during the period following the incidents, until today

The incidents of October 1993 caused a break between the new authority, FRODEBU, and the Army. The distrust that already existed increased to a crisis point. This state of things created a delicate and dangerous situation in the country, where a government that had to reestablish order and security after such a violent shock was in opposition to its Army. In reality this situation explains why the October crisis was so prolonged. It is also behind the phenomenon of civilian militias.

Despite rather difficult relations with the government, the Army little by little recovered from the shock. It was able to reestablish order and spare the country a Rwanda-style genocide. During long months while the government was absent, the Army was the only institution to be seen in the field. It allowed the country to avoid the worst, a sort of rehabilitation at the level of the people. Relations between the government and the Army reached a turning point when war broke out in Rwanda. Those on both sides understood that the potential for war was very great, given the circumstances of the moment.

The months that followed were marked by difficult negotiations between those in power and the opposition, with the goal of restoring national institutions (the President, the Government, and the Assembly). The quarrels between the two political families helped to restore the fortunes of the Army, which eventually imposed itself as mediator. Today relations between the army and the coalition government, while not cordial, are much improved. Each institution is relearning how to play its proper role in a situation where the reestablishment of peace and security is the number one imperative.

Conclusion from the Burundian experience of democratic transition

The majority of the Army adhered to the process of democratization and supported it in its preparatory and implementation phases.

- The preparation of Army officers beginning with the process of unity and reconciliation, while it did not prevent the coup attempt of October 1993, did allow the country to avoid sinking into general chaos.
- The destabilization of the process was less the work of the Army than it was due to ethnic extremism.
- The Army's preparation for democracy should have been deeper and should have affected all ranks of the Army.
- It is true that the Army must be taught its role and its place in the democratic context, but in addition:
- Politicians must be taught to respect the Army's neutrality and to stop soliciting it—but also to stop demonizing it.
- It is a mistake in Burundi or anywhere else to make the Army the target and scapegoat of democratization.
- Reform of the Army must be well timed, and not be directed against a portion of the population or against the military men themselves.

General Conclusion

- Democracy is on the move in Africa.
- African armies are not, despite what people have said and repeated, obstacles to democratization.
- Where democratization has broken down or run into difficulties it is often because of civilian politicians.
- Learning to manage an army in a new, democratic context is a necessary exercise for young African politicians if they desire a smooth transition to democracy.

**CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN SIERRA LEONE, AND THE ROLE OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE MILITARY FORCES IN THE DEMOCRATIZATION
PROCESS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRESENT CONFLICTUAL SITUATION**

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REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

Introduction

Sierra Leone is a small country in the West Coast of Africa, covering a land area of about 28,000 sq. miles and a population of 4.2 million inhabitants (1993). The country has been a British Colony, until its attainment of Independence on the 27th of April, 1961. It practised the British Parliamentary democracy, known in political circles as the "Westminster Model" and inherited most of its democratic institutions, which lasted until the 19th of April, 1971, when a republican system was adopted. With this constitutional development, the final link with monarchial role with Britain was severed and some cherished democratic procedures such as using the British Privy Council as the final Court of Appeal was no longer available. On the 14th of June, 1978, a one-party republican state was declared, with the All People's Congress (APC), as the sole political party, following a referendum on the issue. The APC regime came to an end in April 1992, when the present regime assumed office, following a coup d'etat by The Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF).

Military intervention in politics came less than a decade after Independence in 1967. After a general election, the late ex-president Dr. Siaka Stevens was duly appointed Prime Minister as leader of the victorious APC party on the 17th of March, 1967. The army under the then Brigadier David Lansana, intervened and seized power in sympathy with the deposed Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP). This seizure of power was short-lived when a counter coup of senior military and police officers ensued. The regime was called the National Reformation Council (NRC) and after a year in government, a group of warrant officers in the army and lower ranked police officers, staged another coup and formed the Anti-Corruption Revolutionary Movement (ACRM), which restored the late Dr. Siaka Stevens in office as Prime Minister, on the 26th of April, 1968. On the 29th of April, 1992 a group of soldiers led by young officers fighting in the war against the RUF/NPFL rebels, took over the reins of government, The National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), came into being, with Captain V.E.M. Strasser as Chairman and Head of State.

Civil-Military Relations

The governing NPRC, is a military government per se, with officers who are members of the RSLMF. For the purpose of this paper therefore, the NPRC and the RSLMF are interchangeable. It must be pointed out however, that the on-going rebel war, started under the APC in 1991 has continued under the NPRC. An examination of the civil-military relations in the present conflictual situation, would therefore take into account, approximately one year of the APC regime and two years of the NPRC regime.

The army became highly politicised under the APC regime. Rather than allow the army to be an agent for modernisation in social change, the army was used as an ally for the maintenance of power by the governing regime, rather than being encouraged to give allegiance to the State. Recruitments and promotions were used as political patronage, substituting merit and ability. This state of affairs became firmly entrenched with the adoption of a one-party state system under the APC. Army personnel, particularly in the senior cadre had to be active political party participants in politics. This was characterised by the fact that the Force Commander of the RSLMF was given cabinet rank within government, whilst the President of the Republic always assigned to himself the cabinet position of Minister of Defence. This ensures a close working relationship between the government and the army.

An overriding consideration of this paper, is the ethnicity factor in the composition of the army (That was the reason why Brigadier Lansana intervened in favour of the SLPP in 1967). It must be recognised that

traditionally, certain ethnic/tribal groups have a preference for an army career, establishing cleavages in the army, cleavages on ethnic lines may in turn have a bearing on national politics, with the additional influence of political patronage in recruitment, particularly at Officer Cadet levels, intensifies partisanship. This issue has constantly been contentious in RSLMF-Civilian relations, as a career in the army was viewed by the public, as a passport to material success and societal influence. Competition therefore to embark on an army career is a constant source of tension.

Civil-military relations have gone through both positive and negative periods since the start of the rebel war. The Military take-over by the NPRC on the 29th of April, 1992, must be seen as a low-point in the civil-military relations. The then President J.S. Momoh, an ex-army general himself, had in his cabinet the then RSLMF Force Commander, Major-General M.S. Tarawalli. It should therefore have been conceivable, that a strong link with the army would have been forged to avert any military intervention. The reasons given for the takeover by Captain V.E.M. Strasser were indeed plausible, when in one of the first radio broadcasts to the nation on 30th April, 1992, said of the ruling civilians in the APC government, that they were "an oppressive, corrupt, exploitative, tribalistic bunch of crooks and traitors under the umbrella of the APC". He also criticized the support given to the army in the war against the rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) led by Foday Sankoh, (himself an ex-army non-commissioned officer, dismissed from the RSLMF), when he said:

"Our soldiers continue to sacrifice their lives in the war front, in spite of very poor logistic support provided by a (civilian) government whose leadership sits in Freetown enriching themselves with gross misappropriation of war funds".

One of the first acts of the army in its military intervention was to form a government comprising a number of civilians with position of Chief Secretary of State going to a civilian Mr. John Benjamin, also currently Secretary-General of the NPRC Supreme Council of State, which over-see the work of government. The regime was widely acclaimed with massive demonstration of support when it came into power. The government then set about to reverse the tyranny of APC party demagogues and rampant corruption by instituting Commissions of Inquiry into the conduct of public/state affairs, by the ousted government. This move was generally supported by the citizenry, many of whom volunteered information on the secret assets of corrupt politicians under investigation.

Another general area of good civic-military relations was the zeal of the regime to pursue the IMF Structural Adjustment Programme, which is proving to be a "double-edged" sword. Long queues for the purchase of rice, the staple food, and fuel, features of constant irritation to the public, were eliminated. The national radio and television network was restored, providing recreational and informative programmes to the nation. There was also an increase in the supply of power, a welcome relief from the massive "blackout" in the pre-NPRC era. After two years in office, the list of achievements in various sectors of the economy had created good civic-military relations.

A good strategic move by the NPRC government in improving civil-military relations was the creation of a public relations office. "Suggestion Boxes" were posted in strategic locations in the capital city of Freetown and provincial centres, to collect the views of the public on state affairs which issues the PRO's office will then deal with accordingly. Discussion programmes in the broadcast media and public debate are conducted on a continuous basis to thrash out issues of public interest, some even very critical of the government.

The creation of the National Social Mobilization Secretariat (NASMOS) in the Department of Youths, Sports, and Social Mobilization, has brought out a lot of creativity among the youths, who have embarked on beautification exercises of the city and major townships, with the painting of portraits of national, regional and global personalities, erecting statues and cultivating civic gardens.

The National Cleaning Day has been declared by the NPRC for the elimination or disposal of rubbish, sprucing of public places as well as areas of habitation. It takes place every last Saturday in each month and everybody, both soldiers and civilians, are expected to engage in cleaning activities. This has generally met the approval of the citizenry, as mounting filth posed severe health hazards to the public.

The commitment to civic participation in the military regime is best captured in an address by the Chairman of the NPRC to the nation, at the State House on the 26th of November, 1993, when he stated that:

"The principle of the 'Power to the People' must at all times be paramount and must therefore constitute the pivot on which the entire political, economic and social development of the nation must revolve."

As would be expected, there have been areas of conflict between the civilians and the military. The most serious conflicts occurred in the war where vigilantes of the para-military wing of the army, comprising local hunters and secret societies known as the "Kamajors" and "Tamaboros" respectively, have clashed with regular soldiers of the RSLMF. Many lives were reported lost in two separate incidents in Kenema and Makeni. The origin of these clashes appeared to be distrust by these groups and their tribal authorities of the sincerity of some RSLMF soldiers in bringing the war to an end, with suspicions that these regular soldiers engage in looting and other war atrocities. Reports have been made since the beginning of the war, i.e. even before the coming into power of the NPRC, that soldiers were bullying civilians. The Human Rights organization Amnesty International accused the RSLMF soldiers in their report on Sierra Leone of torture and summary executions as practised by the RUF rebels in the war zone. These accusations have created a crisis of confidence in which soldiers were viewed with suspicion as collaborators if not rebels themselves.

To remedy this, a number of positive actions were taken, both by the government and the army. The most important was the conference of Paramount Chiefs (local authorities) to support the RSLMF and government in bringing the war to a close. The second was the appointment of the new Army Chief of Staff Colonel K.H. Conteh, who, on his assumption of office, immediately issued stern public statements on the comportment of serving army personnel. He made a number of telecasts and radio broadcasts condemning looting by soldiers in the war zone, those engaged in illicit diamond mining, erecting unauthorised road blocs for the purpose of extorting money and other valuables from civilians and unnecessarily involving in civil matters, within the purview of the police. These pronouncements were well received by the public. The appointment of the new Under Secretary of State for Defense, Captain Tom Nyuma was also welcome by the general public because of the public's acknowledgement of his contribution in fighting the rebel war. Captain Nyuma also issued a statement that all soldiers not deployed at the war front should register in his Department. This may have been done in response to public suggestions, that some soldiers may have gone "astray".

Highly publicised Court-Martial proceedings in which stiff sentences and penalties are being imposed by the Judge Advocate, Justice E.A. Thomas, including executions of defaulting soldiers, had restored a lot of confidence by the civilian population who now feel that atrocities committed by renegade soldiers may not likely go unpunished.

The "pinches" of structural adjustment have brought out some civic resentment in the public sector, where redundancies of unproductive workers as well as "ghost workers" were removed from government's payroll in accordance with the IMF reforms. The government has endeavoured to ameliorate the pain of redundancy, by setting up the Social Action for Poverty Alleviation programme (SAPA), to provide re-training for the retrenched and support for income generating activities.

Another source of conflict arose with the "fourth estate". The government whilst amenable to constructive criticism has always condemned irresponsibility in journalism and guidelines for the press were issued to step up the level of professionalism. The government has made several public appeals in the news media for the elimination of rumour mongering. Presently there is no undue tension between the military and the press, particularly since the press has come to realise that the war situation deserves some amount of prudent reporting which is conventional all over the world.

Recently the government of the NPRC showed its positive approach to civil-military relations by engaging in a public dialogue over the closing of the University of Sierra Leone for the purpose of refurbishing its dilapidated infrastructure and the management of a national teacher's strike. In both cases the NPRC government showed flexibility by accepting the suggestion of the University authorities to run the University's activities concurrently with the rehabilitation exercises and also to appeal to the teachers to return to the classroom.

Restriction of movement is a minor irritation to the public, which for security reasons cannot be helped and the public has not complained to being subjected to extra searches when travelling within or without the country. Tensions have only been created when searches are delayed or are personalised as an infringement of personal rights.

The Army Wives Association is a social group formed by the wives of army personnel that seeks the welfare of widows and orphans of military personnel. Their benevolent activities and their interactions with the public in organising social activities have greatly improved civilian-military relations.

The Democratization Process

When the NPRC came into power, the Chairman on behalf of his government stated the following objectives of government:

- i) To ensure the rebel incursion is brought to an immediate end
- ii) To repatriate all displaced people in order to rehabilitate them in their homes
- iii) To sincerely pursue the process of returning the country to true multi-party democracy

In his major speech where the above objectives were stated the Chairman also said:

"We are only patriotic Sierra Leonean fighting soldiers in the war front, who have decided to alter our country's decline and set a mechanism to redeem this country... we shall (then) return to barracks where we rightly belong.."

The commitment by the NPRC government to restore multi-party democracy to Sierra Leone was re-echoed on the first and second anniversary speeches of the Chairman. On the 10th of September, 1992 the Advisory Council (Establishment) Decree, 1992 was promulgated. The Council according to the decree shall consist of fifteen members who though not paid are given allowances as approved by the NPRC. Paragraph 2 of the decree states:

"The function of the Advisory Council shall include:

- (a) Working out the modalities for the return to multi-party democracy with a view to ensuring a broader and equitable participation of the citizenry in the democratization process and reflecting the views and aspirations of the people;
- (b) advising and making recommendation to the National Provisional Ruling Council on any issue of national importance;
- (c) Such other functions as the National Provisional Ruling Council may from time to time specify in writing".

On the 26th of November, 1993, the NPRC government announced a detailed transition programme for returning Sierra Leone to democracy and constitutionalism highlighting:

- i) the launching of working documents on the Constitution
- ii) establishment of the Interim National Electoral Commission

The appointment of Dr. James Jonah former Under Secretary-General of the United Nations as the Chief Electoral Commissioner, lends credence to the international transparency in the democratization process. Preliminary arrangements are being made for compiling the National Voters' Register and Pilot Surveys on voter registration have been undertaken.

Public debates on the working documents of the Constitution before a referendum on the issue manifest the "people's power" approach espoused by the NPRC. Ample time has been allocated for debate and the offering of suggestions within the country and from interested parties abroad. There are not only publicised debates in the news media but encouraged public participation in public forums. For the first time in the history of Independent Sierra Leone, the people felt that they were given a chance to shape their own destiny in the planning process of a new approach to statehood and nationalism.

The fixing of January 1996, as the date for handing over the reins of government put in more concrete terms the commitment of government towards multi-party democracy. The National Commission for Democracy promised the Head of State, in his second anniversary speech on the 29th of April, 1994 "will soon be instituted to complement the work of the recently established Interim Election Commission". This commission is "designed to educate and encourage citizens on the objectives of good governance" and an appeal was made to all concerned "soldiers and civilians alike, to sincerely support and co-operate with the NPRC to ensure that the Transition Programme is not derailed".

Conclusion

In conclusion civil-military relations in Sierra Leone, though it has had its low point, has also had its good times. Even international observers are fair in admitting that much has been achieved under military rule. Mike Butscher in his article "Strasser's Report Card" in the West Africa magazine writes:

"The NPRC has achieved in 16 months what the APC regime failed to for more than two decades, instilling a reasonable sense of transparency, accountability and probity in the body politic". (16-22 August 1993)

What could be said about the NPRC regime with regards to the topic under discussion is its responsiveness and sensitivity to public opinion. It has endeavoured to positively address contentious issues, in order to gain the approval of the majority of the people. Regarding the democratization process, the NPRC government is committed to the people of Sierra Leone as an act of nationalism to ensure good governance, political stability and economic development. It is also keenly aware that for the purpose of external assistance in the development process, the multi-party democratic approach is supported by the major donors.



ETHNICITY AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN WEST AFRICA: THE ROLE OF THE ARMY

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Introduction

During the colonial period, a large number of political parties had ethnic bases. The colonial power itself had encouraged such politicization of ethnicity in its policy of divide and rule. The struggle for independence, however, had made the colonial power the focus of protest or armed struggle. Once independence was achieved, the question became one of how this politicization of ethnicity would evolve.

In most cases the transfer of power was carried out through democratic institutions, that is to say through the existence of a constitution, the organization of multi-party elections, and the creation of a parliament as well as other authorities, each retaining its independence. Once the colonial power was gone, the movements and parties that had lost the elections found themselves faced with a power controlled by former rivals.

One of the principal preoccupations of the new leaders after independence was consolidation of their power. Internally, the opposition was silenced or forced into exile. Internationally, by including the inviolability of borders in the Charter of the OAU, the new African powers hoped, among other things, to remove any threat to their power that might be based on ethno-regional claims.

Thus the democratic experience inherited from colonialism was short-lived. Even before the avalanche of military coups that began in the middle of the 1960s, most civilian regimes had become progressively more authoritarian.

Yet ethno-regional tensions remained—threatening, in many cases, the very survival of the young nations. It was in this context that the first military coups took place in Africa, that is to say as a response to the inability of civilian regimes to overcome their divisions in order to build national unity and consolidate the foundations of the post-colonial state.

Thus for nearly a quarter of a century the army had to manage ethnicity in order to preserve national unity and ensure economic development. Yet since 1990, the wind of democratization blowing across the African continent, while putting an end to authoritarianism, has seen a resurgence of the politicization of ethnicity. Indeed once political life was liberalized, most political parties were founded on ethno-regionalist bases.

The principal question that we seek to answer in this article is whether a new politicization of ethnicity may again engender ethnic tension in the young democracies of the region, and what role the Army should play if necessary.

To answer this question, we shall first analyze the management of ethnicity by the military power in two countries of the sub-region, Togo and Benin. Then in a second part we shall examine under what conditions the African army must cease to be the last recourse and the outside actor in the resolution of ethnic and ethno-regional conflicts, and become an integral part of the collective resolution of this sociopolitical problem.

Management of ethnicity by military regimes between 1960 and 1990: the examples of Togo and Benin

A - The ethnic situation in West Africa

Perhaps because the struggle for space has not been so difficult or ethnic prejudices have not been so manipulated as in Burundi/Rwanda, ethnicity in West Africa has never taken on the genocidal dimension that the Hutu and Tutsi are experiencing today (Lemarchand 1994). Nevertheless, going back to the pre-colonial period we find that relations between the different ethnic groups were already far from idyllic. On the contrary, slave hunting led to ceaseless wars which, in order to be justified, had to be based upon—among other things—ethnic, racial, and/or religious prejudices. Slavery in Africa took two directions: the more ancient one toward the oases of the Sahara, North Africa, and the Middle East; the other, more massive and systematically organized, toward the coast and on to the Americas. Marise Condé has given a detailed and moving account, although in the form of a novel, of these two forms of slavery (Condé 1987).

These relationships of conflict between ethnic groups, races, or the followers of different religions have led, in many cases, to the appearance of constituent imagination, to borrow Paul Veyne's term, which Lemarchand renders as one's perception of the other (Lemarchand 1994, xv). Thus we can say that the distrust and marginalization which the Tuaregs in the countries of the Sahel experience today from the black populations derive largely from their former reputation as slave-owning raiders, roaming the desert with no fixed roots. In the same way, the mutual perceptions between populations of the coastal region, for example those that exist between Yoruba and Fon, between Ashanti and Fanti, or between Fon and Mahi, are largely derived from the inter-ethnic wars to feed the slave trade.

The colonial system gave a political and economic dimension to ethnicity. Indeed from the beginning, in its policy of conquest and pacification, it sometimes relied on one group in order to subjugate another. Since the colonial logic was above all to subordinate African economies to the economy of the mother country, which resulted in draining the resources of the hinterland toward the coast (Amin 1974), inter-regional inequalities resulted. Thus populations which inhabited regions that had enjoyed a higher level of development found themselves in a privileged position that could arouse the resentment of other regions. It was with such a legacy, then, that the African countries achieved independence.

Analysis of the two examples of Togo and Benin shows on the one hand how the politicization of ethnicity led to an acute political crisis in each of the two countries, and on the other hand the different strategies adopted by the military powers to manage ethnicity.

B - Authoritarian management of ethnicity: the case of Togo

Togo has some forty ethnic groups, none of which exceeds 25% of a total population estimated at 3.2 million in 1992. Although they can be classified into three large linguistic groups (Ewe, Akposso, and Paragourma-Kabayé), the clan organization of Togolese society has not favored the emergence of large identity groups as in Niger with the Hausa and the Djerma. For example in the South the Mina and the Ouatchi, while they both belong to the Ewe linguistic group, consider themselves to be very different from one another. The same is true in the North, where the Kabyè and the Kotokoli regularly clash over land. Under these conditions the problem of ethnicity in Togo has taken on a regional, or even racial, dimension.

Long before colonization, the contact of southern populations—for example the Ewe and the Mina—with Europe, through evangelical missions, had created in that part of the country a developed class who identified much more with Western values than with native ones. In Decalo's terms:

"In the mainstream of outside influence and with a value system conducive to change and adaptation, Ewe society rapidly evolved and modernized under the impact of missionary activity and, later, German colonization. Avid pursuers of education, Christianity, modern life styles, and upward mobility, the Ewe were soon designated future administrators of the German colonial empire in Africa. Selected to be Germany's Musterkolonie (showcase colony), Togo was divided into two: Eweland which was developed socially and economically, and the northern regions treated as a source of cheap labor for development projects in the south." (Decalo 1990, 208)

This inequality between the North and the South was continued by the French under the mandate beginning in 1919. Thus centuries of westernization led to the development, among the Mina and the Ewe, of a contemptuous constituent imagination toward the animist populations of the North. When the latter wanted to enter the colonial administration, they had no alternative but to become soldiers—a career that was, moreover, scorned by the populations of the South. That is the origin of the disproportionate representation of northern populations in the Togolese Army.

Between 1960 and 1963, political debate in Togo continued to be essentially limited to an elite of Afro-Brazilian origin, whose leaders were Sylvanus Olympio, de Tovi, and Anani Santos. The opposing leaders of central and northern Togo, such as Derma Ayéva and Antoine Méatchi, had little influence. Olympio progressively established a personal and patriarchal power that aroused the hostility of several fringes of society, including principally the younger generations of Togolese. To that must be added his refusal to create a true national army as did neighboring countries that were also newly independent. It was his refusal to recruit former Kabyè soldiers demobilized from the French Army that was, among other causes, responsible for the 1963 coup that cost him his life.

Between 1963 and 1967, the North was included in the political management of the country with the naming of Antoine Méatchi as Vice President under Nicolas Grunitzki. At the same time the Togolese Army, whose size had increased considerably, became more and more influential in the political arena. The January 1967 coup ended a difficult and tumultuous cohabitation between the two leaders of the Second Republic. From that time until 1990, General Eyadéma and the Togolese Army became the sole masters of the country's political life.

Authoritarian management of the ethnic tensions that had shaken the country up until that time would rest upon three elements: a/an essentially ethnic army; b/ the single political party; and c/ the intense cult of charisma of the Head of State.

As Toulabor has written,

"Before 1963, one cannot speak meaningfully of the existence of a Togolese army ... According to the Strategic Institute of London, it was composed of 1,500 men divided between a battalion of infantry and a battalion of military police brigades, to which number must be added 300 civilian police. This embryonic army, the most questionable legacy of colonialism, was recruited on a very regional basis in which the northern regions of the country were greatly over-represented." (Toulabor 1986, 40-41)

Eyadéma, then, inherited an ethno-regionalist army, and throughout his twenty-five years in power reinforced that tendency to the point that today, of the 12,000 men of the Togolese Army (other estimates put it at 16,500) 8,000 are from the same ethnic group as the Head of State, including 2,000 from his native village (Kpodzro 1992).

After consolidating his authority over the army, President Eyadéma decided to create a single political party, which was then seen, as it was everywhere else in Africa, as the melting-pot where all political sensibilities would merge. Although he had been supported by civilians, including for example Edem Kodjo and Alex Mivédor, General Eyadéma never hid the fact that the RPT was first and foremost the creation of the Togolese army. As he himself stated in an address delivered on November 27, 1976, before the Second Congress of the RPT:

"The Army, supported by the people, wanted to create a solid and durable work, able to resist hazards, vicissitudes, and challenges. It became obvious that it was necessary to give this country a vast structure, a spinal column poured in a corset of iron, an effective backbone, a bulwark for Togolese of good faith in a nation that was still searching for itself. That was why I decided to create the Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais." (Toulabor 1986, 95)

In any case, from its creation the RPT included senior officers in its ruling body, the Political Bureau. They were also appointed to head vital sectors of the national economy such as Customs, Taxes, and State companies (Togograin, for example).

The cult of charisma as a means of legitimizing political power has its origin in the Sarakawa airplane crash, from which President Eyadéma emerged unhurt. This crash happened shortly after the Head of State had publicly announced that Togo was unilaterally raising to 51% its participation in phosphate mining, which was Togo's principal source of wealth and which until that time had been 99% controlled by French interests.

France was suspected of being behind the incident, and in reprisal the General announced on February 2, 1974, the nationalization of the mining company.

Thanks to an intense propaganda campaign carried out by the agencies of the single political party, the Sarakawa crash and its aftermath allowed President Eyadéma to be elevated to the status of a demigod. National unity, political stability, economic prosperity, and the dream of making Togo the Switzerland of Africa were lumped together as the magical work of the national helmsman, statues of whom were erected in the country's principal centers.

Thus between 1967 and 1990 the military power thought that it could make the old ethnic tensions disappear by making the army the guarantor of national unity, creating a single political party where all sensibilities would merge, and by raising General Eyadéma to the rank of a demigod, a guide, and the father of the nation, to whom all the people owed gratitude and obedience.

C - Ideological management of ethnicity: the case of Benin

Between 1960 and 1972 Dahomey (which became Benin in 1975) was known for its chronic instability, marked by repeated military coups, which gave the country an unfortunate reputation as the sick child of Africa. This instability was due to an economic and political situation marked by ethno-regional divisions, personal rivalries (between Maga in the North, Ahomadégbé on the Fon Plateau, and Apithy in the region of Porto Novo), and a budget crisis that forced the government to always turn to France to see that the bills were paid. The army of Dahomey was also undermined by these divisions and by corruption.

The period when Major Mathieu Kérékou seized power in October 1972 coincided with the emergence of a new generation of African intellectuals broadly committed to the radical ideas born in the movements of May 1968 in Europe and in the United States. This new generation had already, for several years, begun to take control of the country's secondary institutions as well as the leadership of the labor unions. It was also represented in the army.

It involved young officers fresh out of French military schools (Saint-Cyr, for example), who therefore had a higher level of education than the older officers, who came from the ranks of former infantrymen from Indochina or Algeria. They were therefore very close to the civilian intellectuals, and in many cases continued to belong to the same associations, both political and non-political.

President Kérékou very soon found himself pulled between this new radical elite and the old guard, which was conservative and jealous of its privileges. Certainly the purpose of the 1972 military coup was to put an end to the country's client status and submission to the dominant French interests, but Kérékou and his companions still felt too vulnerable to defy the old order.

The next three years (1972-1975) would be marked by a merciless struggle between the radical elite, which was determined to seize the opportunity to wield power for the first time, and the conservative old guard, which eventually understood that the 1972 coup was very different from those that had gone before. But in the country the new radical elite enjoyed wide popular support, especially among the young. In addition, Kérékou shared the nationalism of the new generations and eventually aligned himself with their side. Then began a veritable martyrdom for the conservative old guard, as well as for the political right, especially those thought to be close to the former president, Emile Derlin Zinsou. In civilian society as well as in the army, the right was harassed and its representatives thrown into prison or forced into exile.

With the adoption of the socialist path to development as well as Marxist-Leninist ideology, the new political elite marked the beginning of exclusive control of power. Between 1975 and 1979 we saw an accelerated militarization, with the entire Beninese society falling into step.

How was the ideological instrument able to allow for the management of ethnic tensions that had until then shaped political life in Benin?

In his keynote speech of November 30, 1972, Kérékou had already stated:

"The fundamental characteristic of the history of our country is foreign domination. The history of that domination is one of political oppression, cultural alienation, and the spread of inter-regional and inter-tribal differences . . . we must finally eliminate the old politics by eliminating the men and ideology that represent it."

As we emphasized earlier, this policy of transforming Beninese society had already begun to be put into practice with the repression of the conservative opposition between 1972 and 1975. For example, the three

great political figures of the country, Maga, Ahomadégbé, and Apithy, were assigned forced residence in the North of the country and did not regain their freedom until ten years later. The application of Marxist ideology took the form of a policy of repression of traditional society, whose religious and mythical values (centered around the voodoo cult) remained deeply rooted in the psychic and social practices of most Beninese. The non-traditional religions (Christianity and various religious sects) were not spared either. Witch hunts were pursued within the religious orders, the Catholic and Protestant denominational schools were nationalized, and the number of religious festivals was reduced to a minimum.

According to some analyses, the name change from Dahomey to Benin was part of this same policy of breaking the Adja-Fon political dominance in the country. Indeed the name Dahomey originated with the ancient Fon kingdom of Danhomè. The Adja-Fon group continued to be a majority in the country, and was widely represented in politics and administration. But the new radical intelligentsia, which had for a long time come together in the Patriotic League, was dominated by natives of the Zou-nord, a region inhabited by the Mahi and Nagot peoples. In allying themselves with the political elite of the North, they sought to restore the balance of power. Kérékou himself, who came from a very small minority group, the Yobou, was probably receptive to their arguments.

On the ground, ideological practice took the form of a policy of decentralization that relied at the local level on Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs), veritable slave-drivers of revolutionary purity. To that was added a generalized policy of ideological, patriotic, and pre-military training, whose objective, according to the authorities, was to "make every Beninese man and woman a front-line soldier."

At the beginning the people were truly infatuated by the proposal for a new society, but the corruption that took hold among the political class, and so created a contradiction between political discourse and social practice, brought an end to illusions. In addition, the upheavals that it introduced into the countryside, which generally allowed ambitious young people to wield power, ended up by arousing the hostility, and then the apathy, of rural populations.

Within the political class, the ability to sing the praises of Marxism-Leninism was the public barometer of loyalty to the revolutionary process, and made it possible to obtain a political or administrative post. There then grew up around Kérékou a political patronage class maintained and manipulated thanks to the many "juicy" posts in the different public enterprises, whose number had grown considerably with the nationalization of the country's economy. At the same time, the spectacular growth in the amount of goods crossing into Nigeria provided Benin with substantial financial resources.

But in fact it was only an illusory prosperity, which masked the structural weakness of an economy characterized by a trade balance that chronically showed a deficit, and by the virtual absence of an industrial fabric. In fact the income due to the proximity of Nigeria, and the growth of the informal sector which went with it, remained highly sensitive to fluctuations in the price of oil and to the exchange rates for the naira, the Nigerian currency. Nigeria's economic difficulties, beginning in the early 80s, therefore exposed the structural weaknesses mentioned. Benin sank progressively into an economic stagnation marked by serious cash problems and the bankruptcy of nearly all of the public enterprises, followed by massive layoffs of workers. It was this socioeconomic crisis, along with a series of financial scandals, that formed the basis of the social and political disturbances of the period from 1985 to 1990.

In summary, we can say that the ideological management of ethnicity which corresponded to the period of radicalization of the regime (1974-1985) effectively led to a weakening of traditional structures based on ethnicity and region. Indeed we saw the emergence of a new political elite whose allegiance was essentially ideological. Among the people, it is certain that the militarization of political and social life left its mark, especially among the younger generations who had known nothing other than the seventeen years of the Marxist military regime.

The resurgence of the politicization of ethnicity: What should the Army's role be?

The end of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the resurgence of nationalist demands that followed it demonstrate, better than anywhere else, the link between democratization and ethnic conflicts. Such a situation has led a good number of observers and analysts to conclude that the disintegration of authoritarian regimes leads to the politicization of ethnicity, or even to inter-ethnic explosions. Yet others believe that democratization offers the opportunity for a context for resolving ethnic conflicts by means of a number of mechanisms, such as elections and power sharing, as was the case recently in South Africa.

In the case with which we are concerned in this analysis, that is to say West Africa, the wave of democratization of the last five years was indeed accompanied by the politicization of ethnicity in political life. Thus in Togo the process of democratization resulted in a North-South polarization marked by violence, deaths, and property damage that nearly plunged the country into civil war. In the same way, in Niger the weakening of the government, as well as the demoralization of the army before and after the National Conference in June 1991, allowed the Tuareg rebellion to get back on its feet, while a battle for political power between the Hausa and Djerma began to take shape. Finally, the Côte d'Ivoire, whose former President Houphouët-Boigny was able to manage ethnic tensions in a paternalistic fashion for 30 years, in this pre-election period experienced a potentially explosive politicization of ethnicity.

As if history were repeating itself, we find the African countries, on the occasion of what Huntington calls the third wave of democratization (Huntington 1991), again haunted by ethnic divisions, a real threat to national unity that serves as a pretext for military coups. The military, who in fact have exercised power in almost all of the countries of the sub-region for a good part of the thirty-five years since independence, would not hesitate to return if given the opportunity.

From this point on, the rest of our analysis concerns the nature of relations between civilians and the military, which require that an army which has exercised power for a long time once more returns to professionalism and republicanism and ceases to think of itself as the ultimate savior of a homeland which is in danger of disintegrating.

We believe that two strategies can allow this objective to be achieved: on the one hand the reprofessionalization of the Army, and on the other hand the creation within a democratic framework of mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of ethnic tensions.

A - The strategy of reprofessionalization of the Army

Professionalism, in terms of the Army, means regarding the Army as a bureaucratic and administrative institution quite distinct from the rest of society and possessing its own values, standard operating procedures, and models of behavior. Under those conditions the Army's missions are well defined, as are its relations with the civilian power, which is itself an expression of the popular will through the electoral process. Just as a doctor takes the Hippocratic oath, the officer swears to defend and respect the fundamental values of every army, which are, among others: honor, discipline, the supreme sacrifice for the homeland, and the sense of mission. Overall, then, the army is an instrument of national sovereignty and not an attribute of national sovereignty.

But what about the African armies?

In the literature, political scientists have been asking since the beginning of the 1960s whether African armies were in any way similar to those of Western Europe (Levy 1966, 581; Van der Berghe 1970). For some, African armies, being products of the colonial system, reflected the values of Western armies, including a certain degree of professionalism. For others, the colonial system, in its logic of domination and divide and rule, had instead created repressive armies whose methods of recruitment, often influenced by ethnic prejudices, reflected the contradictions within the society.

Thus the African armies bequeathed by colonialism already carried within themselves the seeds of politicization. From this perspective the speech usually served up after a coup, which consists in saying that the army, as an impartial institution, desires to save the nation from chaos, is often nothing more than a pretext to conceal the struggle for power. That does not, however, mean that African armies are totally lacking in professionalism. Even if that professionalism has been considerably blunted by the wear and tear of power and the politicization of the army, some of it remains and can serve as the basis for reprofessionalization in the context of the democratization of political power.

The process of reprofessionalization therefore consists in eliminating the aftereffects of several years of politicization, which have led to corruption, lack of discipline, and a failure to observe the rules of promotion, which is a frequent source of frustration. The question that then comes to mind is how to proceed without settling of scores or witch hunts. In fact the return to professionalism may require the discharge from the army, through dismissal or early retirement, of officers whose retention would involve huge risks for the cohesion and the image of the military. This is an extremely risky operation, as it was in Argentina when President Alfonsín tried to remove army officers who had been implicated in acts of torture under the preceding regime. The operation set off a mutiny that was very costly in human lives.

Another challenge to reprofessionalization of the army is to be able to provide the army with living and working conditions that will allow it to resist temptations—of coups, among the officers, and of extortion,

among the troops. The example of the behavior of the army of Zaire in recent years, which has consisted of periodically descending on towns to pillage them, well illustrates the condition of moral and material indigence of some African armies.

Finally, the ability of a democratic regime to correct ethnic imbalances within the army so as to make it more representative of the ethnic makeup of the country remains an important condition for the reprofessionalization of the army. Indeed ethnic balance constitutes both a force for deterring coups, and a force for army neutrality in the case of a political crisis. A democratic regime is inevitably the hostage of a mono-ethnic army, when it is not the same ethnic group as the one in power. The current cases of Burundi and Rwanda are examples.

B - The need to create mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of ethnic conflicts in a democratic framework

As we emphasized earlier, it is the inability of civilian regimes to overcome their internal divisions that pushes the military to seize power—in order, they often say, to reestablish order or save the nation. Today the survival of the second wave of democratization in Africa depends on mechanisms that seek to resolve internal tensions in order to remove any justification for military intervention. We will suggest three: a/ power sharing; b/ democratic succession; and c/ decentralization.

1. Political power sharing

The philosophy of power sharing is based on the idea that the political exclusion of an ethnic group is a source of tensions. To the degree that ethnic voting remains a reality in African countries, elections always result in power being controlled by the same majority ethnic group. Power sharing would consist in the formation of a “government of national unity,” where all of the country’s ethnic groups and regions are represented. Outside the strictly political context, power sharing should extend to positions of responsibility in public administration and state enterprises. In the allocation of resources, the central power should have the same concern for inter-regional balance.

2. Democratic succession

From the outset the Constitution should set the number of terms for the Head of State at a maximum of two. Succession can then permit a periodic renewal of the political class. Political tensions, whether between generations or between ethnic groups, also arise when one group has a monopoly on political power for an indefinite period. Even if democratic succession does not necessarily resolve ethnic conflict, it allows each group to entertain the hope of one day coming to power, if only by means of alliances.

3. Decentralization

In recent years people and decision makers, as well as lending institutions, have ended up admitting that the post-colonial state has failed to supply services at the local level, hence the alternative of decentralization as a solution to the problem. In addition to resolving a problem of territorial administration, a policy of decentralization can be directed in such a way as to become a mechanism for the peaceful resolution of ethnic tensions. The first step is to divide the territory in a way that respects ethnic limits. Then it is a matter of moving to a true political decentralization, with fiscal autonomy and the devolution of numerous functions (education, health, etc.) to the local level. Municipal elections will allow people to designate their own representatives and thus take control of their own destinies. Finally, decentralization allows for a dispersal of power, which offers members of the political class the opportunity to exercise a portion of that power.

To summarize, we can say that the reprofessionalization of an army that has held power for a long time, and the ability of civilian regimes to develop mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of ethnic tensions in a democratic context, are important factors in the consolidation of the democratic process.

Conclusion

In the preceding analysis we have shown that the origin of the ethnic situation in West Africa goes back to the pre-colonial period; the colonial Administration made it into a political force, in its strategy of divide and rule. It was therefore not surprising that political activism between 1945 and 1960 was essentially built on an ethnic base. Certainly ethnic identity and discourse were somewhat eclipsed by the rise of nationalism, which served as a rallying point in the struggle for independence, but they were to resurface once the common enemy was gone.

Seen as a threat to the survival of the post-colonial state and the formation of the nation, ethnic identity and discourse were bitterly combatted by authoritarian regimes. Ethnic tensions were in many cases responsible for the military bursting onto the political scene in Africa. Thus for more than two decades the African army had to manage ethnic tensions in a manner either authoritarian as in Togo, ideological as in Benin, or political and administrative as in Nigeria, with the increase in the number of states after the Biafra war.

The new wave of democratization since 1990, by allowing multiple parties, has unfortunately reawakened the old demons of ethnic identity and discourse. In the new struggle for power, African leaders, like those of thirty years ago, do not hesitate to resort to ethnicity to build a political base. In certain cases like Togo, Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger, the Congo, and the Côte d'Ivoire, ethnic tensions have reached such a pitch during the process of democratization as to come close to civil war.

An army forced by democratization to return to the barracks could once again find itself in the situation of the 1960s, in the course of which the inability of civilian regimes to overcome their divisions facilitated the military's intrusion into political life. Today the persistence of the economic crisis, which by coinciding with democratization creates a negative association (between democracy and economic chaos) in people's minds, could add a new pretext for the return of the military to the scene, as it recently did in the Gambia and in Sao Tome.

Thus the process of democratization in Africa, before moving to the new phase of consolidation indicated by new elections, remains fragile and often under a strong threat of the army's return to the scene.

To conclude our analysis, we have suggested the conditions under which this threat of the return of the military could be avoided. It is a matter on the one hand of the reprofessionalization of the army, and on the other hand of the creation by the democratic regime of mechanisms that allow the peaceful resolution of ethnic tensions. We then suggested powersharing on an ethnic or ethno-regional basis, democratic succession, and a true policy of decentralization.

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STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF BURKINA FASO

Historical Overview

Burkina Faso, a former French colony, has gone through numerous political episodes beginning with the breaking up of its territory, which was divided among Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire, and Niger in 1932. Reconstituted on September 4, 1947, the former Upper Volta received its first (colonial) Government on May 18, 1957, and was proclaimed a Republic on December 11, 1958, before achieving independence on August 5, 1960.

A major workers' strike precipitated the fall of the first President on January 3, 1966, and installed an Army Colonel as head of state. He appointed a prime minister beginning in 1971, and organized the first elections in 1978 on the basis of a new constitution adopted one year before. He was elected, and remained in power until the first truly military coup, which took place on November 25, 1980.

Two years later, on November 7, 1982, another military group overthrew the one in power. This new group experienced internal conflicts that led to the advent of the Democratic Popular Revolution (RDP) on August 4, 1983. This group, like other emergency regimes, experienced difficulties despite the strong ideological motivation of its architects, who at the time formed a close-knit team. Those difficulties led to the final coup, which launched the Rectification movement on October 15, 1987.

This Rectification opened an era of rehabilitation in a context of the democratization of political life. As a part of this, a constitution was adopted by referendum on June 2, 1991, and went into effect on June 11, 1991. This constitution, which includes 16 Titles and 173 Articles, is organized around fundamental principles such as:

- the building of a nation of laws;
- the search for African economic and political integration;
- adherence to the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man, of 1948;
- compliance with the African Charter of the Rights of Man and of Peoples, of 1981;
- protection of the environment, etc.

Multiparty elections were then organized, to put into place republican institutions:

- presidential elections on December 1, 1991;
- legislative elections on May 24, 1992;
- municipal elections on February 12, 1995.

Place of the Army in the Political Evolution of Burkina Faso

The Army of Burkina was legally constituted on August 3, 1960, while its existence was only embryonic. In 1962, it was organized and given the traditional missions of any army in a republican regime. Its missions were essentially:

- to ensure the internal and external defense of the country;
- to participate in operations to maintain order;
- to participate in tasks of public service and economic and social development.

Specific missions were entrusted to the National Military Police, which was an integral part of the Army. These were:

- to watch over public safety;
- to ensure public tranquility within the framework of the law;

- to protect persons and property by means of continuous general surveillance;
- to support the administrative, judicial, and military authorities by facilitating their tasks and helping to carry out their decisions.

Until the end of the year 1965, then, the Army of Burkina was absent from the political arena, and played its role as guardian of the peace. Political and legislative powers were in the hands of a political class that had a constitutional framework within which to govern according to the laws of the Republic.

On January 3, 1966, a general workers' strike ended in a popular uprising; the first president of Volta was overthrown and the people called the Army to power, relying on its integrity. The first Republic was now a thing of the past; its constitution and government institutions were too. An Army Colonel was called upon to preside over the destiny of the former Upper Volta. He set up a governing team with seven military men and five civilians. The first emergency regime was in place, and the military set for themselves two goals, to be reached within four years in power:

- guarantee good management of the public welfare;
- organize the return to a normal constitutional life.

This first intervention by the Army, which was demanded by the people, would in fact lead to the creation of institutions, with a vote on the second constitution on June 14, 1970, followed by legislative elections in December of the same year. In accordance with the results of those legislative elections, the president appointed a prime minister who constituted a Government composed of ten civilians and five military men. The second republican regime took a leading role in government affairs, and only a few months after it was in place internal conflicts within the majority party created a political crisis. These dissensions, supported by critical attacks by the Opposition, the labor unions, and civilian society, aggravated the crisis to the point of blocking the machinery of government.

On February 8, 1974, the Colonel who was serving as president appealed to the Army to retake the power that it had handed over to the politicians three years before. The second emergency regime was born from the ashes of the Second Republic. The Colonel dismissed the Government, dissolved the National Assembly, suspended the constitution that he himself had implemented, and formed a National Government for Renewal made up of ten military men and four civilians.

In 1975, the president proposed a single-party system and provoked a strong reaction from the unions, in the form of strikes. A compromise was found two years later, with a constitutional system based on three parties in the presidential elections. The third constitution came into existence on November 27, 1977, through a referendum. Legislative elections took place on April 30, 1978, followed by presidential elections on May 14 and May 28. The General, on leave from active duty with the Army, needed two ballots to defeat his civilian opponent. He appointed to the position of prime minister a man from the majority party—a majority which was not, however, strong enough to avoid crises in the National Assembly that undermined the Third Republic. It was swept away by a coup on November 25, 1980.

This coup, the first truly military one, was well received but from the beginning limited itself to giving the people an illusion of hope. Indeed the Military Committee of Recovery for National Progress (CMRPN), the body in charge of this third emergency regime, very quickly showed its lack of appreciation of the political process and provoked a general discontent that led the country to a new coup on November 7, 1982. One emergency regime replaced the other.

A physician with the rank of Major was chosen to give new hope to the people. The body in charge of the regime was called the Council for Public Safety (CSP). The presence of the military within the Government was as great as in the other emergency regime, and the CSP had a high percentage of military men. Dissensions arose within the Council, revealing the existence of a progressive wing and a conservative wing within the Army. The conflicts between those parties led Burkina to a popular uprising and its sixth coup on August 4, 1983, under the banner of the RDP.

This was led by a National Revolutionary Council (CNR). For the first time in the history of the country, we saw the politicising of the Army. Under the other emergency regimes, only a few military leaders had been called upon to assume high responsibilities in affairs of state or belonged to the group in charge of the regime. For the RDP, "a soldier without political training is a potential criminal." Politics took over the barracks, and the Army, in addition to its traditional missions, had to cope with new tasks:

- military training of the rest of the people;
- participation in national production;
- training each soldier as an RDP militant.

This was the end of political neutrality for the Army, which left its barracks to integrate itself into the civilian population and experience the same realities. The Army, which had long been considered a society within the larger society, united with civilian society to undertake the socioeconomic development of the Nation. Like all levels of society, it experienced intense political activity during this period. Committees for the Defense of the Revolution (CDRs) were created in the barracks. The Army thus underwent a profound reorganization of its structures, in order to better adapt itself to its new missions. The National Popular Service was created and attached to the Army, whose production capacity was thereby increased.

The Révolution was no exception to the rule of political crises within the ruling group. These resulted, on October 15, 1987, in the advent of the Rectification carried out by the Front Populaire [Popular Front].

The Recent Period

The Front Populaire is a group of several political and mass organizations of different and even opposing ideologies. This composition in itself shows democratic progress toward a nation of laws. The Army is once again the architect of this change, but its presence within the Front Populaire is reduced. It has, in reality, begun its withdrawal from the political scene in order to devote itself to its traditional missions. This withdrawal is made considerably easier by the political maturity of the military, and by the absence of ethnic problems in the country in general or the Army in particular. Yet by having been totally involved during the four years of the revolution, the Army is now aware of the dynamic role that it can play in the development of the country by supporting national production. It thus continues today to carry out its mission of participating in socioeconomic development and to be involved, along with civilian society, in the various forums on development in the nation of Burkina.

Thus beginning in 1991, it contributed to the creation of democratic institutions through its traditional missions that seek to guarantee individual and collective liberties and ensure the protection of transition structures.

Speaking of transition, Burkina Faso's is unique. In May 1991, the Front Populaire separated itself from the government and opened the political stage to democratic competition between parties. A month later, on June 12, the parties found themselves at a "Round Table" proposed by the head of state, to consider the creation of the institutions of the Fourth Republic in accordance with the constitution of June 2. This "Round Table" had the participation of all the parties, side by side, who by common agreement made major proposals of which the principal ones are:

- a proposal for a transition Government of great openness;
- amendments to the laws covering public freedoms and the electoral code;
- rejection of the Sovereign National Conference, which has been judged inopportune and unconstitutional;
- authorization of the presence of foreign Observers at elections.

The transition has, as everywhere else, also had its difficulties, which have been handled very patiently by the various political parties, aided by the neutrality of the Army. The Army has done nothing to influence the democratic process.

The short political history of Burkina Faso has been marked by an instability that might appear to be an endlessly repeating story. Yet a careful analysis allows us to see the progressive involvement of the Army in the management of government power, through its repeated interventions. This involvement has given the Army an understanding and wisdom that have led to the reestablishment of the current constitutional framework, allowing democracy to express itself.

In addition to the Army's agreement to leave the political arena and devote itself to its traditional missions, it is important to emphasize the fact that civilian society has been inspired more by a patriotic spirit than by a vindictive one. This has allowed democracy to be embraced fully, with objectivity and insight, which gives people a real hope, crowned by the guarantee of individual and collective liberties that is one of the fundamental principles of democracy. The growth of political parties and the private press is evidence of this.

Everything is now absolutely clear, and according to everyone's wishes: the Army will have its republican responsibilities, and the political class will have the management of the city.

Even more recently, on June 13, 1994, a decree was issued establishing the Code of Military Justice, along with another decree regarding the creation of the Military Tribunal. In the same spirit was Decree 94 159/PRES/DEF, dated April 28, 1994, regulating general discipline in the armed forces.

As for the political will, it was clearly expressed in the adoption of the Constitution of June 2, which in Article 167 specifies: "All power not granted by this constitution, including that resulting from a coup d'état or a putsch, is illegal. In such a case the right of all citizens to civil disobedience is recognized." That is to say, that all segments of the society have resolutely opted for a nation of laws.



STATEMENT OF THE GUINEAN DELEGATION

African nations as a group have been frustrated in their attempts to build prosperous states. Freedom is an empty word without peace and economic development in a democratic framework. This fact is evidence enough that the peace and stability of nations now depend as much on economic potential as on social and cultural harmony within each state, which gives currency to the theme of "Democratization in Africa and the Role of the Army."

Despite historical, sociocultural, and linguistic differences, each country, moved by an abiding desire to preserve national unity and cohesion, takes its own path in the process of democratization. Let us examine the case of Guinea in this regard.

After the country achieved independence, the Guinean Armed Forces were built on a foundation of elements of the colonial troops who, in a burst of patriotism, answered the call of the young sovereign state after the referendum of September 28, 1958.

The Guinean National Army was created on November 1, 1958. In December of the same year, in a brilliant address at Camp Almamy Samory Touré, President Sékou Touré very clearly defined its vocation:

"The Guinean Army is not an army of conquest and domination; it is the army of the building of Guinea's sovereignty, linked to the nation and to its people by the pact of freedom, to which each Guinean soldier has subscribed. Its purpose is not bloody destruction, unjust war, or fierce repression. We want it to remain fraternally linked with the people of Guinea, with whom it will not only have to share burdens and sorrows, pleasures and happiness, but of whom it must also become one of the principal creative forces."

Since its creation, the Guinean army:

- within the country, has always participated in the economic, social, and cultural development of the country, practiced agriculture, taken part in highway, maritime, and air transportation, and created and maintained roads and public buildings;
- outside the country, has supported African peoples struggling for their freedom and their national independence, including: in Zaire from July 20, 1960 until February 1961; in Guinea-Bissau, 1963-1974; in Angola, from January 1975 until September 1975; in Benin, from January until March 1977.

In a peacekeeping role, our military has participated in OAU and UN missions in the Sahara, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, and Burundi.

Following the sudden death of President Ahmed Sékou Touré in the U.S.A. on March 26, 1984, and faced with the threat of imminent civil war, the national army that had remained faithful to the people of Guinea for 26 years was suddenly thrust to the forefront of the political scene because of the bitter struggle for succession waged by the associates of the deceased President; thwarting all the maneuvers aimed at perpetuating the former single-party dictatorial system, the Guinean army took power on Tuesday, April 3, 1984, without any

loss of blood, and set up an 18-member Military Committee for National Recovery (CMRN) , headed by Colonel Lansana Conte.

On April 3, 1984, the CMRN in its communique number 8 set out its intention to create in Guinea a society that respected the rights of man and guaranteed economic and social development as well as the free movement of persons and goods. Thus true democracy was initiated even before the La Baule conference and the fall of the Berlin Wall. Implementation of this vast program was begun on December 22, 1985, with a speech by the President of the Republic defining the order of priorities, which were:

- monetary reform;
- economic and social restructuring;
- administrative reform and decentralization;
- the creation of republican institutions.

In October 1988 the CMRN designated 53 Guinean executives from all professions to draw up a proposed Fundamental Law, which the Guinean people adopted by a 98% majority in the referendum of December 23, 1990. The main points of this law establish:

- freedom of expression and association, including the right to create political parties;
- equality before the law, and the independence of the Judiciary;
- the creation of a supreme court and a high court of justice, and of a superior council of the Judiciary.

In the transitional provisions of this fundamental law, Article 93 created the Transitional Council for National Recovery (CTRN). In application of this fundamental law, the order of January 14, 1991, dissolved the CMRN and set up the CTRN with 37 members, including 13 military and paramilitary men and 24 civilians. On January 8, 1992, by decree of the President of the Republic of Guinea, 8 military and paramilitary members of the CTRN returned to their units. In August 1994, after the last modification, only 3 military men remained in the government.

On June 11, 1995, the people of Guinea will elect their deputies to the National Assembly. Thus the process of democratization of our country will have been completed.

All of this made it possible for the first President of the Supreme Court, on January 29, 1994, at the swearing-in of the President of the Republic of Guinea, to summarize the actions of the army in these terms:

“Through the great door it entered the arena of the administrative and political management of our country, and through the great door it departed with laurels. It set the economy on its feet by liberalizing it, it democratized our country, it made the defense of the Rights of Man a constant preoccupation, it gave our Nation solid and effective republican institutions, and finally, in a supreme act of courage, patriotism, and unselfishness, it handed over power to the civilians while steadily and resolutely withdrawing, until today when it relinquishes power to a democratically elected president. The army that has carried out this work is an army of honor, an army whose name shall be glorified forever because it has accomplished at least one of the works that confer immortality on the actions of Men and of Political Societies.”

The major challenge facing our countries is unquestionably that of development—a balanced development that relies on all of the people and that takes into account our cultural values and our specific histories.

After several decades of setbacks and challenges, each of our countries realizes that the strategies tried have neglected or underestimated certain decisive factors such as democracy, the permanence of institutions, national cohesion, etc.

Today the international context everywhere favors taking democracy into account as a necessary step on the road to development. But democracy alone will not be enough to allow our countries to make the leap of development, because the democratic process is unfolding in a period characterized by disorders and a growing instability resulting from internal and external causes. Our nations are suffering essentially from internal implosion under the pressure of factions, frustration, and exclusion.

Faced with such a situation of instability, sub-Saharan Africa has only one recourse: the army, which remains the only component that is organized, motivated by a collective spirit, by the uniform and uniformity. Beyond the traditional functions of combat, maintenance of order, and deterrence, the army performs an ideological

and political function through its role in the continuity of the state and the cohesion of the national community. An African army, as distinct from one belonging to one of the countries of the North, must strengthen its sense of continuity and its attachment to the consensual idea of service, and increase its allegiance to the nation and not to a regime. Through its permanence and its methods of conscription it can become a powerful factor for national integration in our countries, where political societies include peoples from various cultural traditions.

The dichotomy between Army and Society cannot be valid for Africa, where the army is and must be an essential component of the society. The guarantor of territorial integrity, the African army must also be the guardian of republican institutions, to guarantee their permanence in the interest of general progress.



STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF NIGER

From 1950 until 1974, Niger was under a Single Party regime. Then in 1974 a military coup occurred that put Niger under an emergency regime until 1989, when a new constitution was adopted. However the democratic nature of the regime that arose from that constitution was disputed from the beginning, because for many it reincarnated the existence of a single party in the political arena, as in the past. It was then necessary to wait until the year 1990 for Niger to fully enter the process leading to true democracy, with the proclamation of a multiparty system and the appearance of the first independent private newspapers.

The following account, before addressing the role of the Armed Forces of Niger in the process of democratization, will give the history of the various stages that have gone into making today's Niger a nation of law and liberty.

History

Niger's constitution of September 24, 1989, enacted by Order No. 89-14 of October 1989, was revised by Law No. 91-002 of April 24, 1991, so that laws could be adapted to new economic and social realities. This revision came about under pressure from the democratic forces that had struggled to achieve their demands, including the institution of a multi-party system and the holding of a National Conference. We will first look at the reasons for choosing a multi-party democratic regime, before addressing the results of that choice, and finally looking at the progress of democracy since the advent of the Third Republic.

After the military came to power in 1974, Niger lived under an emergency regime (with the 1960 constitution suspended and the National Assembly dissolved) until 1989, when the National Movement for Society and Development, a sort of State Party, was created.

The Constitution of September 24, 1989, then, endorsed a single-party regime, and the institutions of Niger's Second Republic were unprecedented in that they associated all sectors of political life with the National Armed Forces, which exercised political and administrative responsibilities along with the other segments of the Nation (Article 79 of the constitution of September 24, 1989).

It must be said that making the army's political role constitutional did make the law conform to the facts. But after the changes which came about in the countries of Eastern Europe that resulted in the abandonment of a single-party system in those states, and after the La Baule statement, many citizens of Niger who advocated political pluralism began to demand the adoption of a multi-party system in Niger. This phenomenon is not limited to the countries of Eastern Europe alone. It now extends to several countries on the African continent. That being so, Niger cannot be seen as an isolated case in this general movement advocating political pluralism. But it has not been accomplished without setbacks.

For example during a demonstration by the Niger Students' Union (U.S.N.) on February 9, 1990, which included secondary school and college students, intervention by the forces of order ended in the deaths of three students and many injuries. At the 1990 May Day celebration, the trade union confederation, the Niger Trade Union Association (USTN), through its General Secretary officially demanded the establishment of a

multi-party system. Several strikes followed, and under this pressure President Ali Saibou announced, before the Deputies of the National Assembly on November 5, 1990, the decision for democracy and a multi-party system in Niger.

To comply with that decision, the National Assembly, by a constitutional majority of four fifths of its members, adopted Law 91-002 of April 24, 1991, which revised the constitution. Continuing their pressure on those leaders, the democratic forces with the unions in the lead succeeded in having the National Conference convened.

The Sovereign National Conference (CNS) was held in Niamey from July 29 to November 3, 1991. At its opening, the 1,204 delegates proclaimed the supreme authority of the conference. Act 21 of the CNS provided for government services during the Transition, whose duration was set at fifteen months.

A legislative body the High Council of the Republic was created, and its members were elected by the Conférence Nationale. A Prime Minister was also elected to carry out the directives of the CNS. The Government set up by Prime Minister Cheffou Amadou had as its mission the development and adoption of the fundamental laws (Constitution and Electoral Code). The Constitution was adopted by the people of Niger in a referendum on December 26, 1992.

Organized under the aegis of the commission for the supervision of elections (COSUPEL), an independent body, the legislative elections of February 1993 and the presidential elections of March 1993 were free and open. International Observers (some 300 persons) were present to vouch for the validity of the vote counts.

A coalition of political parties formed the Alliance of Forces for Change (AFC), with fifty Deputies in the National Assembly. The former single party, the MNSD (now NASSARA) thus found itself in the opposition (33 Deputies). A Prime Minister from the AFC, Mahamadou Issoufou, was appointed by the elected President Mahamane Ousmane.

Nevertheless, the head of the Government had to resign in October 1994 after a disagreement with the other leaders of the AFC, which arose following the withdrawal of the Niger Party for Democracy and Socialism (PNDS) and its thirteen Deputies. A rapprochement was formed between the MNSD-NASSARA and the PNDS-TARRAYA (46 deputies) in the National Assembly. They demanded the appointment of a new Prime Minister from their ranks. But the Head of State appointed a man close to him, Mr. Souley Abdoulaye, to the post of Prime Minister. The National Assembly censured the Government under pressure from the MNSD-NASSARA and its ally the PNDS-TARRAYA. In reaction, the President of the Republic dissolved the National Assembly. New legislative elections were organized for January 12, 1995, and brought victory to the MNSD and the PNDS (43 Deputies versus 40). Cohabitation became necessary.

Since the appointment of Prime Minister Hama Amadou (of the MNSD-NASSARA) and the election of Mahamadou Issoufou as President of the National Assembly, Niger is experiencing one of the great democratic experiments on the African continent, with the cohabitation of a President of the Republic from the minority party in the National Assembly, and a Prime Minister from the parliamentary majority. This new experiment shows the vitality of democracy in Niger, a country which is cited as an example of democratic progress.

But it must be added that this has only been possible because the Army, in power since the coup of April 15, 1974, did not oppose the democratic process. Instead it bowed to the choice of the people of Niger, as the only supreme authority, to which it owes its existence—in contrast to what has happened in other places, as we shall see in the second part.

Role of the Army

The decision for democratization was a fundamental choice by the dynamic forces of the Nation, a choice that the Armed Forces of Niger honored. Thus it was that at the opening of the CNS the Armed Forces of Niger solemnly affirmed their republican nature, and as a consequence their total neutrality in partisan struggles. Yet they did make their contributions, presenting a document entitled "Contribution of the Armed Forces of Niger to the National Conference."

From the CNS until now, the young democracy of Niger has gone through areas of turbulence, among which we may cite the climate of tension that prevailed between the Transition Government and the Haut Conseil de la République. (a legislative body). There was also the protest movement by soldiers and other security forces, known as the "troop incident." Even more recently, major differences have arisen between the Presidential faction and the new majority in the parliament, and to all this unrest must be added the frequent demonstrations, in the capital as well as in the cities of the interior, of the unions and other social and professional organizations, with all that entails in destruction of public property and the obstruction of traffic and of the functioning of public services.

In such a context, in other places the armed forces would have intervened under the usual pretext of being the people's last recourse. In Niger the armed forces, faithful to their commitment, have let events take their course while at the same time remaining vigilant. Today, we must say that the democratic process has made reassuring strides in our country.

In Niger, a nation of laws, the Army respects the principles of the constitution and works to maintain a democratic government. Republican and subject to the orders of the executive, it remains under the political leadership of the Government and is subject to parliamentary and judicial controls.

The Armed Forces of Niger, while carrying out their traditional missions, participate actively in development actions. For instance, the involvement of the Military Engineers was crucial in the construction of rural runways and airfields to open up certain regions.

In 1988 the armed forces, like the other strata of society, took an active part in clearing sand from the Niger River. The same was true when the government embarked on a struggle for food self-sufficiency. The armed forces then devoted themselves to the production of rice on areas laid out along the river.

In addition, they still carry out actions in a number of sectors. The principal ones are:

- Distribution of free food to needy populations;
- Organization of rescues in case of natural or man-made catastrophes;
- Fighting organized crime, smuggling, and illicit traffic of all sorts;
- Recovery of illegal weapons;
- Providing military aircraft to civilian administrations for special transportation needs;
- Providing military health services to civilian populations, even where public health services exist.
In addition, a number of military physicians are detached to civilian health facilities;
- Construction of classrooms to augment the capacity of primary schools, clinics, and food warehouses;
- Fighting desertification;
- Military air transport for use by civilian populations;
- Border marking (Algeria and Burkina).

It actively contributes, along with the Ministry of Public Health, to the improvement of the health of the population by participating in the expanded vaccination program (PEV) and dispensing care to urban and rural populations on all of its trips (more than 70% of those cared for in our health facilities are civilians). It is currently participating in protection of the environment and in improving health and sanitation in urban centers.

Conclusion

This concludes our presentation on democracy and the role of the Army in a nation of laws. The building of a democratic society, as you know, is a long-term project. It is the type of struggle engaged in by our peoples for their personal development and their economic, social, and cultural liberation. In Niger, this social transformation is being experienced intensely, with the first experiment in political cohabitation on the African continent. Whatever institutions are created here or elsewhere, the success of the democratic system will depend above all on the determination of political leaders to ensure that success.



STATEMENT OF THE TOGOLESE DELEGATION

Introduction

The Togolese Army, like all of the world's armies, is an INSTITUTION of the State.

Before the country's independence, there was no army. Nevertheless the trust power had, based in Lomé, a company called the 2nd Company of the Autonomous Battalion of Dahomey, whose 1st Company was stationed at Ouidah.

Since Togo was not a colony, enlistment was voluntary; the trust power set up its CP for recruitment at Kara in the North, where there were many volunteers for the profession of arms, in contrast to the South where people were little inclined to join the Army. The Togolese Army at independence in 1960 reflected this reality.

After independence this 2nd Company of the Autonomous Battalion of Dahomey was transferred to the Togolese authorities and took the name Togolese Infantry Company (C.I.T.). Beginning in 1963, the national authorities undertook to rectify this historical situation by instituting recruitment according to prefecture.

Despite the reluctance in the South to embrace the profession of arms, the national commission for recruitment, on the instructions of General Eyadéma, succeeded in making recruitment representative of all segments of the Togolese Nation. At all levels of command, officers as well as troops, the Togolese Army has a national composition. Moreover, from 1960 to 1990, no one ever said that this was a tribal Army. According to its charter, "the Army of the Republic is at the service of the Nation. Its mission is to be prepared to defend by force of arms the homeland and the higher interests of the Nation."

From 1963 to 1990, the Togolese Army lived in perfect harmony with the people. While devoting itself to its traditional missions, the Army participated actively in the socioeconomic development of Togo by working with equipment, sanitation, and infrastructure, as well as building communications facilities. Our Army also took a very active part in humanitarian missions, such as the distribution of food, the evacuation of disaster areas, medical assistance to people in need, and assistance to those expelled from Ghana and Nigeria in 1970 and 1983. Of course, it also carried out its missions of protecting people and property.

Several times, in the context of its traditional missions, it has had to repel aggressions directed from outside, aimed at destabilising the Togolese people and their institutions.

Outside the country, the Togolese Army has participated in peacekeeping missions. All knowledgeable observers of Togo's political scene unanimously recognize that the Togolese Army is a republican and disciplined Army. An integral part of the Togolese people, the Army contributes to the formation of the national unity of which it is the guarantor.

The Togolese Armed Forces During the Transition Period

The charter of the Togolese Army specifies that:

"The military profession requires in all circumstances discipline, loyalty, and a spirit of sacrifice. The duties that it includes and the obligations that it imposes deserve the respect of the citizens and the gratitude of the Nation."

We must recognize, unfortunately, that during Togo's transition this was not the case. For not only was the military treated with suspicion, it became a thing to be destroyed by any means available. All those means were orchestrated by the National Conference to break the Army; that is why we saw powerful political figures appeal to the soldiers to disobey their commanders. Since that did not succeed, soldiers were brought forward to give false testimony. At the height of the Togolese National Conference, military men were pursued by EPKEMOGs, a sort of pro-Fascist militias that looted and destroyed everything in their path.

Faced with this horde of drugged bandits, which completely overwhelmed the traditional forces for keeping order, the Army was required to help reestablish order. The military were armed only with batons, facing well equipped activists using every sort of missile including firearms. A new stage was passed when attacks were committed against soldiers in the streets of Lomé. The defenseless soldiers were mutilated, and many lost their lives and others their sight. As was to be expected, the soldiers were seized by unrest. For in the end no

soldiers in any country can stand idly by when they are faced with barbaric practices carried out by bands of thugs; whether it was soldiers emasculated, decapitated, and assassinated, or a soldier necklaced in the public street in Lomé, our country had crossed the red line.

In our country's case, manipulations and interferences disrupted peaceful political change. It was this attempt to destabilize the country that led the forces of order and the Army to be designated as public enemy number one. Soldiers and policemen were burned alive in our country by drugged and fanatical militiamen. Forest wardens' barracks, police stations, and military police squadrooms were attacked, looted, and destroyed. The Army was accused of committing hideous crimes, substituting bodies, and falsifying evidence. The ultimate goal was to disorganize our Army and open the country to anarchy. Fanatics who proclaimed themselves representatives of the people broadcast everywhere that the RPT was supported in Togo only by the Army. And yet open legislative elections held on February 6 and February 20, 1994, in the presence of foreign observers, showed that the RPT remained Togo's leading political party, with 37 deputies out of 81 in the National Assembly.

The Army, which remained in its barracks, did not in any way interfere in the elections, during which foreign military observers assigned to Togo for the purpose were able to confirm the Army's political neutrality. After 12 months of violence, our country pulled itself together, but the damage was already done. The days of reconciliation between the Army and the Nation, organized by the government following an appeal by the President of the Republic on April 23, 1993, had a positive impact on our national life and opened the way to continued pursuit of the democratic process.

The Army proved once more on this occasion that it comes from the people and that it serves only the interests of the people. Our Army is not a putschist army but a loyal one, subject to the orders of the legally established authority. Certainly, some incidents of loss of control—which were severely punished by the hierarchy—led some people to doubt the republican character of our Army. But Togo does not have a monopoly on such incidents. We need only recall that even in democratic countries, not so long ago one could see groups of soldiers take over neighborhoods to avenge a fellow soldier who had been molested. This attitude, which must be condemned, should not be attributed to the entire military. The Togolese Army is not an army of privileged people. It includes all segments of the Nation. It asks only to make its contribution to the tasks of economic development. It is also ready to contribute in the most loyal way to consolidating the process of democratization in our country. With this in mind, we will make three observations by way of conclusion.

The first is that the Togolese Army is, because of its composition, an integral part of the Togolese people. It would therefore be unfair to identify this Army with an ethnic group.

The second observation is that we must integrate the Army as a factor in Togo's progress in the democratic process. In order for this to happen, the Army must regain its dignity, accept its share of responsibility, and accompany and support the movement for democratization.

The third observation: Non-Africans, and foreigners in general, should publicly affirm that they will no longer depend on armed factions to impose their views on African countries. African military men have understood their role perfectly, and we need only encourage them in it.



PARTICIPANTS

THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN INSTITUTE

“DEMOCRATIZATION IN AFRICA: THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY”

**Benin Sheraton Hotel
Cotonou, Benin
May 10-13, 1995**

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Commandant des Forces Aériennes

Franck-Arthur Akanni
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National Assembly Deputy of the President's RPT Party*

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Military Physician

Lt. Col. Assani Tidjani
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*Resident Representative/Cotonou
The World Bank*

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Former President of Burundi

Dr. James O.C. Jonah
*Chairman, Interim National Electoral Commission,
Sierra Leone*

Dr. Moussa A. Okanla
Democracy and Governance Specialist, USAID/West Africa

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U.S. Ambassador to Benin

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*Professor of African Studies and Political Science,
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CONFERENCE AGENDA

THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN INSTITUTE

"DEMOCRATIZATION IN AFRICA: THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY"

BENIN SHERATON HOTEL
COTONOU, BENIN

MAY 10-13, 1995

TUESDAY, MAY 9

Arrivals and Hotel Check-in

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10

9:00-10:30 hrs

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

11:00-12:30 hrs
Salle Vivo

OPENING CEREMONY

Steve McDonald
Executive Vice President
The African-American Institute

H.E. Ruth A. Davis
U.S. Ambassador to Benin

H.E. Desiré Vieyra
Minister of State
Republic of Benin

12:30-14:00 hrs

LUNCH

14:00-15:30 hrs
Salle Vivo

FIRST CLOSED PLENARY

DEMOCRACY AND CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

Professor William J. Foltz
Professor of African Studies and Political Science
Yale University

Col. Bryant P. Shaw, PhD
United States Air Force;
Chairman, Department of National Security
Studies, Air War College, Air University
Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

Brig. Gen. Alain Faupin
Deputy Director for Strategic Affairs
Ministry of Defense, France

15:30-15:45 hrs

COFFEE BREAK

15:45-17:30 hrs.

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Group A - *Salle Vivo*
Group B - *Salle Atlantic*
Group C - *Salle Mono*
Group D - *Salle Evasion*

- How can the military be made accountable to civilian authorities in a democracy?
- Do elected civilian authorities have special responsibilities toward the military?
- Should the military represent the nation as a whole in its recruitment and composition? How can this be accomplished?
- What is the appropriate military mission in a democracy? Protection of borders versus internal maintenance of order?
- Is there a role for the military in elections; in protecting and defending democratic institutions?

18:30 hrs.
Poolside

COCKTAIL RECEPTION

THURSDAY, MAY 11

9:00-10:30 hrs
Salle Vivo

SECOND CLOSED PLENARY

THE MILITARY AND THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Matthews
Commander, 353rd Civil Affairs Command
United States Army

Michael Azefor
Resident Representative/Cotonou
The World Bank

10:30-10:45 hrs

COFFEE BREAK

10:45-12:30 hrs

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Group A - *Salle Vivo*
Group B - *Salle Atlantic*
Group C - *Salle Mono*
Group D - *Salle Evasion*

- What should the role of the military be in civic action or nation-building programs and emergency relief?
- What are the benefits and costs of involving the military in "civilian" talks like building roads, running medical clinics and so forth?
- How does the army accomplish defense, peacekeeping, and nation-building objectives in an environment of limited resources?
- How can military budgets be managed most efficiently?
- If military budgets are cut, what should happen to the money saved?

12:30-14:00 hrs

LUNCH

14:00-15:30 hrs
Salle Vivo

THIRD CLOSED PLENARY

THE MILITARY, JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Dr. Claude E. Welch, Jr.
Distinguished Service Professor
State University of New York at Buffalo

Capt. Guy R. Abbate, Jr.
International Training Detachment
Naval Justice School, Rhode Island

15:30-15:45 hrs

COFFEE BREAK

15:45-17:30 hrs

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Group A - *Salle Vivo*
Group B - *Salle Atlantic*
Group C - *Salle Mono*
Group D - *Salle Evasion*

- What are the military's responsibilities for protecting human rights in a democracy?
- What special obligations for protection of human rights arise in time of war or internal conflict?
- Can the protection of human rights be made compatible with effective military operations?
- What should be the relationship of the military to the civilian justice system?
- What are educational strategies to prepare the military for its responsibilities toward civil society?

18:30 hrs

RECEPTION HOSTED BY GOVERNMENT OF BENIN

FRIDAY, MAY 12

9:00-10:30 hrs
Salle Vivo

FOURTH CLOSED PLENARY

PROBLEMS OF TRANSITION: THE BURUNDI CASE

H.E. Pierre Buyoya
Former President of Burundi

Professor William J. Foltz
Professor of African Studies and Political Science
Yale University

10:30-10:45 hrs

COFFEE BREAK

10:45-12:15 hrs
Salle Vivo

PROBLEMS OF TRANSITION: WEST AFRICAN CASES

Dr. Moussa A. Okanla
Democracy and Governance Specialist
USAID/West Africa

Dr. James O.C. Jonah
Chairman, Interim National Electoral Commission
Sierra Leone

12:15-13:30 hrs

LUNCH

13:30-15:00 hrs

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Group A - *Salle Vivo*
Group B - *Salle Atlantic*
Group C - *Salle Mono*
Group D - *Salle Evasion*

- What lessons can be learned from the experience of Burundi's attempted transition toward democracy?
- What does it tell us about issues of:
ethnic composition of security forces;
the role of political leadership;
role of the military in the transition process;
role of neighboring states and the international community?
- How have different armies reacted to widespread challenge by civil society to manifestly unpopular regimes?
- What moral and ethical dilemmas are posed for the military by transition toward democracy?
- How do regime changes in West Africa affect neighboring states? Is democracy contagious?
- Do democracies have special responsibilities in their relations with other democracies?

15:00 hrs

Depart for *TOUR OF GANVIE FISHING VILLAGE*

18:00 hrs

Return to Hotel

19:30 hrs

RECEPTION AT U.S. AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE

SATURDAY, MAY 13

9:00-10:30 hrs
Salle Vivo

FIFTH CLOSED PLENARY

THE ARMY AND THE CHALLENGE OF THE FUTURE

Maj. Donald (Pete) Jordan, USAF
Assistant for Policy and Planning
Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense

Elizabeth Morris-Hughes
The World Bank

Col. Basile Dadelé
Chief of Staff to the President of the
Republic of Benin

10:30-10:45 hrs

COFFEE BREAK

10:45-12:30 hrs

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Group A - *Salle Vivo*
Group B - *Salle Atlantic*
Group C - *Salle Mono*
Group D - *Salle Evasion*

- What new roles and challenges will African states and armies confront in coming years?
- What are the implications for the size and composition of the military?
- Can regional peacekeeping forces make it possible to reduce (or eliminate) national armies?
- What are the requirements of effective demobilization programs?
- What military roles should the OAU and ECOWAS play?

- What can the outside world do to help African armies confront new challenges?

12:30-14:30 hrs

LUNCH

14:30-16:30 hrs
Salle Vivo

SIXTH CLOSED PLENARY

REPORTS FROM DISCUSSION GROUPS AND CONCLUSIONS

Professor William J. Foltz
Professor of African Studies and Political Science
Yale University

Rapporteurs

16:30-18:00 hrs

CLOSING CEREMONIES

18:30 hrs

PRESS CONFERENCE

SUNDAY, MAY 14

DELEGATE DEPARTURES