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**MAKING AFRICA:  
NATIONALISM, DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICS**

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**BACKGROUND TO THE CONTINENT**

**Reforming Africa: Continuities and Changes**

Africans make their own histories, though not under conditions of their own choosing, whether as rulers, subjects or citizens. Africa is central to the histories of civilizations, of world religions and of capitalism. The continent is diverse in culture, religion, ecology, economy, and politics. General observations about Africa can only be partial and do not uncover phenomena peculiar to it. Its past and present cannot be encapsulated by images of a distinctive African civilization premised on communal values. African countries bear the legacies of imperial exploitation and economic dependence; to focus only on the imperial side of the axis absolves Africans from any responsibility for the fate of their countries. Communal conflict and corruption are widespread and some states fail to offer minimal protection to their people; to present all of Africa in this way over-generalizes from particular cases and overlooks the courage and integrity of women and men who find imaginative ways of making their livings and reforming social relations, often under the most difficult of circumstances.

Conquest and trade, in people and commodities, incorporated Africans into a wider global economy. Colonial rule subordinated diverse African polities, marked out territorial boundaries, and redefined forms of state, social identities, gender relations, religious beliefs and class relations. Rail and road networks reoriented the relations of African producers and economies to changing global economic networks. Colonialism subordinated African producers to new and often coercive labour regimes and patterns of cultivation to meet the requirements of railways, mines, plantations, and revenues. It opened new economic opportunities in production of crops for export and African markets, urban employment, commercial activities and Western education. Administrators incorporated African rulers as intermediaries within hierarchies of chiefs. Multiple, and contested, forms of legal administration—civil, shari'a, and customary—attempted to define rules governing access and succession to land and property, and relations of gender and generation.

Since colonial rulers transferred power to their African successors, institutions of rule have been recast by force or negotiation. Political, social and economic arrangements, often of colonial origin, have been reproduced in new guises through periods of dramatic change. States and public institutions defend territorial jurisdictions inherited from colonial boundaries. They have to find ways to establish their authority and carry out their activities with much the same resources and under comparable constraints as their predecessors. The forms of institutions govern the ways policies are implemented. Their agents tend to confirm the validity of their established practices and to go on doing many of the same things, even if they articulate them differently. Political outcomes result from dynamic interactions among processes that may not have been foreseen or foreseeable. Changes are more likely to take place because existing arrangements are unsustainable than they are to conform to the plans of governments or international agencies.

## **NATIONALISM, SPOILS POLITICS AND CLASS FORMATION**

Nationalists sought state power to transfer political and economic resources from foreigners to Africans. They mobilized support to establish their claims to be the sole authentic representatives of all the people. Control of states conferred authority to rule their subjects, to exact taxes and rents from imports and exports, to receive aid and contract 'sovereign' debts, and to decide to whom to allocate public resources. The state would bring development to the people. African governments took over or re-established the decentralized forms of territorial administration through which their predecessors had exercised power. They inherited and extended the centralization of revenues, which are then redistributed directly or via lower tiers of governments. The state, and its resources, were and are the object of the struggle for power and became key to the continuing battle to maintain power.

Prior to colonial rule, people defined their identities primarily by their allegiance to a ruler or their status within a political community. Polities incorporated settlers and slaves to strengthen their productive and military capacities. From the colonial period, political communities were demarcated and defined themselves according to administrative, religious and linguistic lines. Their interests now lay in excluding outsiders from 'their' resources. Today, pan-ethnic groups usually define themselves by a common language. Their dialects were standardized into written forms only in the 20th century. People shaped their own ethnicities out of their varied experiences of migration and urbanization, subordination and competition, religious belief and conversion. These brought people into new relations and differentiated them in new ways. Afrikaner and African nationalist leaders actively imagined new pan-ethnic political identities. They advanced the political and economic ambitions of a bourgeois elite and promised to extend public resources to their wider constituencies. What the multiple forms of ethnicity share are the ways in which identities define people's access and demands for a share of public resources.

Most Africans are Christians or Muslims although many also turn to indigenous healers and beliefs. Mission churches and Muslim foundations funded schools and hospitals. Religious beliefs and practices provide ways to make sense of a wider and uncertain world. Mahdist and millennial movements offered collective deliverance from oppression. Sects may reject or accommodate to the claims of secular authorities. Charismatic religious movements offer to solve private problems and heal social fractures within a new moral and social order. Evangelists bless the prosperity of the rich, offer hope of rewards to the many, and give solace to the poor. Successful preachers attract far greater followings than any political movements and expand their enterprises across continents. Politicians may use religious discourse, associate with the charisma of religious figures and promote religious sectarianism.

After independence, African rulers tended to co-opt their opponents into a single or dominant ruling party, suppress them, or both. In Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Gabon, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, and Zambia, authoritarian single-party governments, led by nationalist leaders of advancing age, maintained themselves in power for three decades. They combined executive presidencies, centralized, bureaucratic direction of policy, decentralized administration and inclusion of élites in the distribution of patronage. The Kenyan African National Union (KANU) incorporated the Kenyan African Democratic Union and excluded the breakaway radical Kenyan People's Union. The Zimbabwe African National Union-People's Front (ZANU-PF) suppressed opposition in Matabeleland, forced the Zimbabwean African People's Union (ZAPU) to join ZANU-PF in 1987 and sustained a dominant-party system for two decades after independence, as Botswana, Namibia and South Africa have done.

Elsewhere, the politics of spoils led to a concentration of declining resources in fewer hands, increased repression and discrediting of politicians. In Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo), Dahomey (now Benin), Nigeria, and Uganda, rival parties proved unable to resolve regional conflicts within an agreed constitutional framework. Wars of secession took place in Eastern Nigeria (Biafra) and Katanga (now Shaba, DRC) and continue in Sudan. Uganda went through two wars of liberation from military regimes. Governments in the Sahel, like the French military administration, had to deal with armed insurrections by nomadic peoples.

Oil revenues concentrated fiscal resources and political power at the centre. Politics was reduced to a battle to control their distribution and appropriate a share of the trickle of resources flowing down the channels of administration and patronage. Military regimes replaced many single-party government across much of Africa, usually to popular acclaim. Coups divided armies along lines of rank and generation, political and regional affiliations. Soldiers proved susceptible to the temptations of office and ill equipped to manage political problems. They often went further than politicians to reduce government to the appropriation of plunder and the allocation of spoils. Public services collapsed, communal conflicts intensified, and civic organization was undermined. The implosion of spoils politics is difficult to reverse. Radical military officers took power with a populist platform in Uganda, Ghana and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso). They soon accepted the economic guidance of the IMF but retained a distrust of representative politics and created the same forms of decentralized rule as successful one-party states.

Colonialism and the post-colonial state have been engines of class formation. The colonial economy drew Africans into new class relations: as wage labourers on docks, railways, mines and farms; as peasants or artisans producing for local or distant markets; as clerks and teachers; as traders, merchants and professionals. Individuals, families and their kin overlap divisions between town and country; commerce and bureaucracy; and wage- and self-employment. Most Africans find most or all of their livelihoods outside formal institutions. Post-colonial states structured people's relations to markets, legal and illegal, in land, commodities, labour and money.

A distinctive 'political class' emerged from people with professional, administrative, commercial or military backgrounds, who aspire to or control access to state offices and public resources, which allows the avaricious to acquire fortunes and others to accumulate capital. Many successful African capitalists owe their wealth to their entrepreneurial skills but need access to the state to sustain their business activities. Dependence on government decisions limits their capacity to pursue their collective interests. The expansion of education, jobs and commercial opportunities after independence augmented the middle classes. Their modest prosperity was drastically undermined by the economic crises of the 1980s. They created a plethora of associations, focused around communities of origin, churches and mosques, or commercial or professional peer groups, through which they pursue public activities and claim status and respect from their peers and communities. Some are open; others are exclusive or even secret. Middle class professionals have been active in expanding non-governmental organizations (NGOs), acting in the name of civil society. External funders promoted NGOs as an alternative provider of services, independent of and even opposed to the state. This allowed NGOs to offer attractive salaries, but made them dependent on foreign patronage and changing fashions among agencies. Some NGOs defended human rights and created space for democratic political initiatives but most NGOs need to work with governments departments to realise their goals. Governments have sought to co-opt NGOs and to regulate them legally.

Industrial development and state employment expanded the working class. Its gender composition varies by country, region and industry. Access to alternative livelihoods in the local economy strengthens the bargaining power of individual workers. Aspirations to save enough money to leave waged work may accentuate labour militancy. Workers generally strike to demand higher wages or reductions in the prices of food or petrol. Wages generally increased in the period preceding or immediately following independence. Since then, trade unions and workers have been unable to prevent their incomes falling as others claimed the lion's share of resources. Many governments strengthened the funding and organization of trade unions and extended the rights of workers and unions and often incorporated unions into the ruling party, the better to manage industrial unrest. Legal reforms helped unions to protect their own members from unemployment or its costs. When unions proved unable to prevent strikes, governments tried to promote divisions among them and arrested their leaders. Trade unions, in Ghana for example, struggled to maintain their autonomy from parties or government. Unions provided leadership for political coalitions opposed to authoritarian governments in Zambia and, more recently, in Zimbabwe. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was crucial in the anti-apartheid struggle. After 1994, it secured legal reforms by its alliance with the ruling African National Congress (ANC), while organizing strikes against unwelcome economic policy measures. Workers actions have provided a focus for popular discontent with politicians and governments, and even prompted their removal in the Republic of the Congo and Dahomey (Benin) in 1963. Gains from trading autonomy for collaboration with parties and governments tend to be limited and temporary.

Class politics in Africa has taken the form of trade union actions and resistance by rural and urban people to exactions and repression. It has rarely been translated into institutional arrangements, except collective bargaining, to enable people to represent their collective interests. Inherited and reformed institutions failed to achieve most of their objectives or provide the means for people to agree on public goals and work together to bring them about. Spoils politics displaces class politics and prevents any reasoned consideration of and effective implementation public policy. It undermines the authority of states, which in some cases have surrendered their monopoly of the legitimate use of violence to warlords, vigilantes and their own soldiers.

### **DEVELOPMENT, DEBTS AND DEPENDENCE**

Development in Africa was driven by an expansion of state spending and an extension of state regulate of economies to promote industrial growth. Governments initially spread the benefits of 'development' in the form of industrial growth, formal education, hospitals and clinics, state employment and rural development. Rising urban populations increased demand for public services. Governments expanded their activities beyond their fiscal and administrative capacities, and could not sustain the provision of services. School enrolments began to fall and gender, class and rural-urban inequalities to increase.

During and after World War II, the British colonial government used state export monopolies to purchase agricultural exports below the world market price, thereby requiring African farmers to contribute to post-war reconstruction in Britain. African politicians drew on marketing board revenues to finance development spending, political campaigns and their own business investments. When world prices fell, they maintained their revenue streams rather than producer prices. In the 1970s cocoa production in Ghana and Nigeria was diverted to neighbouring countries to evade the low prices paid by the state marketing board. Some African countries were able to

expand their agricultural exports rapidly after independence, increasing their import capacity, state revenues and demand for manufactures. Available forest land and migrant labour from Burkina Faso allowed Côte d'Ivoire to duplicate the expansion of cocoa production which had taken place in Ghana and Nigeria earlier in the century. In Kenya, smallholders gained access to land and the chance to grow coffee and tea, which had largely been reserved to settlers. By the 1980s, Côte d'Ivoire and Kenya could not continue to expand the markets for their exports and prices fell so they could not sustain their imports and service their debts.

In the 1970s the World Bank sought to repeat in Africa the seed-water-fertilizer ('green') revolution that, in very different conditions, had transformed irrigated production of grain in Asia, and to reduce Africa's high rates of population growth. Integrated Rural Development Projects started from the supply of biochemical technologies not market demand, contributed little to agricultural output, and increased government debt. They showed little respect for the knowledge of African farmers and their proven capacities to expand and adapt production to meet changing market conditions or for the varied ecologies of African countries. Following colonial precedent, several governments made rural people live in villages to compel them to grow cotton, to bring them development or to 'protect' them from insurrectionary forces. They found it difficult to persuade rural people to conform to plans for their betterment, and provoked local resistance. Irrigation and rural development projects provided lucrative opportunities to soldiers, politicians, contractors and consultants, disrupted rural people's lives and did little to increase crop production.

Africans, and their livestock, are vulnerable to infection from endemic and epidemic diseases. Most Africans lack access to clean water. Diseases arising from working and living conditions, such as tuberculosis, are widespread and usually uncompensated. Immunization has achieved successes, as with small pox and yellow fever, but as yet offers no answer to trypanosomiasis or the resistance of malaria to successive drugs. Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), causing acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), infects and kills millions of people each year, particularly in east and southern Africa. Transmission is facilitated by prior infection by sexually transmitted diseases. HIV infection spread rapidly during wars, along trucking routes and among migrant workers, but also among professionals. It is more prevalent among women than men and affects girls at younger ages. Children have been orphaned or been born with the disease and young girls have to assume responsibility for the care of relatives. The spread of the disease undermines the public institutions and kinship networks required to cope with its consequences.

Research into HIV vaccines and anti-retroviral drugs both confront the capacity of HIV viruses to assume new forms. Pharmaceutical companies offer to supply drugs to governments at discounted prices and defend their international patent rights and market monopolies generally against the claims of states, which claim the right to produce generic substitutes or import from lowest cost suppliers. Anti-retroviral therapies reduce HIV transmission from mothers to children. The resources required to administer a rigorous regime of anti-retroviral therapies for the majority of HIV/AIDS sufferers are beyond the capacities of African governments. Attempts to change individual behaviour must confront modern forms of male sexuality and overcome the fatalism, of individuals and institutions, in the face of the lack of any cure or vaccine and the prohibitive costs of treating the symptoms of HIV. Indigenous treatments offer people afflicted with AIDS symptoms an account of their origins in the malign actions of others and a means, however ineffective, of countering them.

Political leaders and governments influence attitudes and actions. Uganda's modest reduction of the prevalence and incidence of HIV suggests that steps can be taken to check its spread, but has been misinterpreted and hugely exaggerated. Its 'success' justifies foreign aid for Uganda, and funds for a global fight against AIDS. International agencies, national governments, NGOs and drug companies will compete for shares of and the capacity to allocate these funds. Governments, doctors and the market will decide which HIV-positive people can be helped.

A number of African governments pursued an economic strategy of import-substituting industrialization. This increased rather than reduced dependence on export markets. Protection secured a market for local industries and monopolies for local and foreign investors. Firms paid more for imported machinery and inputs than they earned from exports. The expansion of industrial production thus imposes strains on the balance of payments. Governments borrowed to pay for imports from the World Bank, foreign governments and commercial banks. In the 1980s, they were confronted with declining prices for their primary exports and high real interest rates for their long- and short-term debts. The ensuing debt crisis both created the need and provided the opportunity for the introduction of structural adjustment policies (SAP) by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

The Ghanaian government under Nkrumah borrowed heavily to pay for the colonial Volta Dam scheme and his plans to industrialize Ghana. Zambia and Zaïre (now DRC) mortgaged their prospective earnings from the copper boom of the early 1970s. Nigerian governments, state and federal, paid for spending from anticipated petroleum sales. Companies, state industries and the government in South Africa raised loans on the prospects of gold exports. South Africa met these import costs by mineral exports, foreign loans and net foreign investments until the 1980s. In 1985 the fall in the gold price, exports of capital and the need to repay loans forced the government to devalue the rand, declare a moratorium on debt repayments and reintroduce the 'financial rand' to subsidize inward capital investments. Following the 1973 rise in the world oil price, most African governments borrowed well beyond from commercial banks beyond their capacity to repay.

Governments attempted to limit inflation by maintaining the exchange rate of their currencies at unrealistic levels and regulating access to foreign exchange and imported goods. These policies penalized exporters and encouraged demand for imports, causing the collapse of export earnings, scarcity of imports, and a pervasive resort to smuggling and corruption. Political competition turned on the ability to dispose of government revenues and of imported goods and foreign currency, thereby intensifying contests to control state office and its perquisites. Most former French colonies retained the CFA franc, aligned with the French franc, which gave them the benefits of a hard currency and prevented them from printing money to pay their bills.

By 1975 the exposure of commercial banks to 'sovereign' debts from African governments focused the attention of the World Bank. Although the IMF provided short-term balance of payments relief and the World Bank funded long-term project loans, neither of them made provision for loans to refinance debts and meet long-term balance of payments problems. In the 1980s, the IMF, with the World Bank extended long-term structural adjustment programme (SAP) loans to governments, arranged the rescheduling of their debts, and secured their access to commercial credit. In return, governments agreed to devalue their currencies, liberalize imports, foreign exchange and agricultural markets, and reduce government spending and subsidies to parastatals. Poor governments have sold offshore fishing rights to European fleets, which will Hoover up West African stocks.

International agencies have not found it easy to enforce all the complex conditions they laid down in their negotiations. Loans are part of continuing negotiations over the adoption and implementation of economic reforms. Governments may meet some conditions, in part or full, but not others. Measures required to satisfy some conditions may obstruct the realization of others. Governments were particularly loath to devalue their currencies and lose control of foreign exchange transactions. Devaluation is key to SAP. It is designed to encourage exports and reduce the demand for imports by raising their local prices. It is necessary to liberalize foreign exchange, imports and agricultural markets. If government spending, and the supply of money and credit, are not kept firmly in check, there will be a rising demand to exchange local for foreign currency, leading to further devaluations or a widening gap between official and parallel exchange rates. The most direct burden of SAPs falls on wage- and salary-earners. Families pay for poor standards of state schooling and health services. The IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility mitigates the consequences of its own policies. Unless governments reduce arms imports and military salaries, spending on health, education, and water must suffer.

Successful SAPs depend on a sustained net inflow of foreign exchange, which may require future transfers of profits or debt payments. Direct foreign public and private investment fell in the 1990s. Oil companies invest in production and pipelines to secure access to oilfields. Firms do not need to invest in production to secure access to unprotected markets. Declining currency values and political uncertainty discourage long-term commitments. South African multinationals have globalized their investments and listed their shares in London. European exporters secured contracts for arms supplies or infrastructural projects. They rely on credit guarantees from their own governments or project funding from the World Bank. They competed for contracts by bribing politicians in Africa and in Europe.

The effects of SAPs depend on the mechanisms adopted to implement them and the extent to which they can be followed through. In Ghana and Nigeria, fixed exchange rates were replaced by foreign exchange auctions. Banks proliferated to recycle their foreign exchange allocations on parallel markets. Sales of government assets and allocation of mineral concessions provide lucrative opportunities for favoured beneficiaries, local or foreign. The falling exchange rate of the naira widened the differences between petrol prices in Nigeria and in neighbouring countries. Unpopular price increases did not remove the discrepancy. The result was smuggling, hoarding against further price rises, and severe fuel shortages. Sharp increases in official prices for cocoa in Ghana and coffee in Uganda attracted export trade into legal channels rather than across borders. Elsewhere, SAPs could not generate such rapid responses. In Zambia, currency devaluation could not, of itself, stimulate increased copper production nor attract the import-intensive investments needed to rehabilitate the mines.

In South Africa, the ANC abandoned any idea of radical redistribution in favour of emulating Afrikaner nationalists and 'Africanizing' capitalism, protecting workers' rights and extending equal access to jobs and public services to the black majority. The ANC government committed itself to fiscal orthodoxy. It reduced budget deficits and foreign debt, liberalized agricultural markets and dismantled import and exchange controls, which facilitated capital flight and a fall in the Rand exchange rate rather than attracted direct foreign investment. It increased access to electricity and piped water, built more houses, and extended access to hospitals but lacks a coherent strategy for addressing poverty. The alternatives offered by crime, the spread of firearms in since the 1980s, and low police morale have escalated criminal violence.

SAPs improved access to consumer goods and the use of industrial capacity but small and large firms face competition from imports, including second hand clothes, in the face of reduced trade protection, high interest rates, the fall in the value of Asian currencies and stagnant consumer demand. Rich industrial countries insist on opening access to African markets for their subsidised grain and other exports. They maintain unscalable protective walls against textiles and agricultural products in which poor countries can compete, and allow quotas for 'least developed countries'.

African governments allocate a substantial proportion of their budgets and foreign exchange earnings to service debts, without significantly reducing the principal owed. Export guarantees transfer commercial debts to governments. Several governments converted unpaid loans to grants, and investors and international agencies have bought back some commercial debt at a discount. The Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative launched by the World Bank and IMF Development Committee in 1996 aimed to reduce debts to countries which met strict macro-economic targets to qualify and from 1999, a commitment to poverty reduction' (HIPC II). These dual aims may not be easy to reconcile. Governments that have increased official exports, reduced fiscal deficits, initiated rural poverty strategies and benefited from debt reduction still spend a large share of their budgets and export earnings on servicing debts. Half of the 26 countries receiving debt relief under the Enhanced Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative spend more on debts than health services.

Plans for a Southern African free trade area require mutually convertible currencies. This would, effectively, expand the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and the Rand currency zone northwards. South Africa concluded a bilateral trade agreement with the European Union in 1999. Its integration into the international economy may be inconsistent with the development of regional economic institutions. African governments are reluctant to subordinate their policies to convenience South Africa, which wants to limit immigrants and low-cost textile imports. West African currency and economic integration requires the alignment of currencies and policies between oil-exporting Nigeria and its smaller neighbours.

Presidents Thabo Mbeki of South Africa incorporated the Omega Plan put forward by President Abdoulaye Wade of Sénégal into the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NePAD), with support from Nigeria, Algeria and Egypt. It seeks freer access to developed country markets, increased direct foreign investment, and radical reduction of international debts, to which the G-8 countries show no sign of acceding. It requires co-ordinated international public investment in health, education, international roads and infrastructure, harmonization of currency arrangements and trade policies African notables will involve 'civil' organization in peer reviews of compliance with good political and economic governance.

The debt crisis arose out of the statist and protectionist strategies of development pursued by post-independence government, supported by funding from international aid agencies, profligate spending by governments and lending by banks, and international economic crises. It created the need and the opportunities for international financial agencies to try to impose structural adjustment policies on African governments. They are difficult to impose in full and contradictory in their objectives. They define the conditions under which governments are allowed not to repay their debts. As NePAD recognizes, Africans must address their own political and economic failures but their chances of succeeding are more, rather than less, dependent than ever on international markets and economic conditions and on decisions by governments of developed countries and the international agencies.

## TRANSITIONS, POLITICS AND POWER

Two, and sometimes three, transitions have interacted in African countries since 1980. Economic liberalization, to greater or lesser degrees, has combined with moves towards multi-party elections and peace agreements in war-torn countries, and an end to racist rule in southern Africa. Governments across Africa increasingly have to claim the legitimacy of democratic elections. In the 1980s, those in power appropriated an increasing share of contracting resources. This narrowed their capacity to co-opt élites, pay salaries and maintain public acceptance. They lacked the credibility to persuade their subjects to accept SAP. By 1989, the World Bank had recognised the need to rebuild states and adopted the neutral language of governance, which extended economic to political conditions. Once governments in Benin, Kenya or Malawi no longer appeared able to ensure political stability and fiscal discipline, the Bank joined with creditor governments to demand improvements in human rights and multi-party democracy. In the 1990s, most governments assented to multi-party elections, willingly or reluctantly. International observers declared whether they were 'free and fair' or 'legitimate', i.e. whether their outcomes were acceptable. The state forms of different countries shaped the scope for alternation of rulers and for instituting their legal and political accountability. Newly elected governments have too often excluded rivals, manipulated elections and suppress popular resistance. Opposition parties often refused to take part and defeated candidates rejected results.

Democratic states claim to exercise authority over their citizens and require their laws to be accepted because they are democratic. Democratic politics involves a continuing battle to hold those in power accountable, to protect the liberties of citizens, to secure effective political representation, and give people a say over the ways they are governed and the decisions which affect their lives. Elections enable people to choose who will represent their views and interests. They also allow people to decide collectively who will govern them. These both take place by casting a ballot, but are not the same thing. No procedures for aggregating preferences or securing political consent can be shown to be fairer or more appropriate under all circumstances. Politicians select procedures to favour their substantive goals. Without shared rules and conventions defining the procedures, capacities and limits of elections, legislatures, executives and courts, democratic politics gives way to the unrestrained pursuit of gain.

Constitutions arise from political compromises. They are potentially unstable as new élites consolidate their power and initial balances of power give way to new configurations. Constitution making gives the parties involved the chance to advance their own particular interests and enables political minorities to secure claims which majority votes might override. Hence the length of South Africa's constitution. Presidents have conflicted with prime ministers or legislatures over their respective prerogatives, causing elected governments to come to grief in DR Congo (1960), Western Nigeria and Sénégal (1962), and Niger (1996). 'Sovereign' national conferences facilitated the succession from authoritarian to elected governments in several countries, as did the Multi-Party Conference in South Africa. In 1966, representatives of Nigeria's four regions met to decide on the fate of the country after two coups and ethnic killings adjourned when the East withdrew after renewed massacres in the North. Subsequent conferences have exposed the inability of rival parties to agree on key constitutional issues. Formal and informal arrangements in Nigeria to ensure representation of states at the centre and to rotate national offices among ethno-regional zones exacerbate the displacement of policy issues and of class politics by the politics of patronage and tribute taking.

President Léopold Senghor of Sénégal initiated the move away from one-party politics in 1974 when he licensed two (and later three) opposition parties. His successor, Abdou Diouf opened elections to multi-party participation in 1981. The governing Parti socialiste retained control of political patronage, the electoral machinery and the security services. Divisions among its leadership and loss of support from Muslim religious leaders allowed Wade to defeat Diouf in 2000.

Strikes against Matthieu Kérékou's military government in Benin led in, 1990, to the convening of a national conference, which declared itself sovereign and elected its own prime minister, Nicephore Soglo, who defeated Kérékou in presidential elections held in 1991. The pattern of national conferences, representing multiple parties and personalities, was repeated in the Republic of the Congo, Mali, Niger, Togo (1991), DR Congo [then Zaïre] (1992), and Chad (1993). In Togo and Zaïre, Gnassingbe Eyadéma and Joseph-Desiré Mobutu Sese Seko, respectively, maintained control of the presidency and armed forces against the national conference. In a number of countries—Cabo Verde, Saõ Tome and Príncipe, and Zambia opposition parties and , Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, (1990), Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Kenya, Mauretania, (1991 Central African Republic (1992), Malagasy, Tanzania (1992), Malawi (1993)—government responded to internal opposition, external pressure and the proven risks of national conferences by initiating constitutional revisions to allow competitive elections.

In several countries, a broad tripolar division emerged among the main parties, none with a majority of seats. Where a ruling party establishes itself, unsuccessful parties and factions tend to fragment, making it easier for new, or old, incumbents to hold on to their positions. The Benin legislature was dispersed among 12 parties after the 1991 elections. Fiscal stringency and the devaluation of the CFA franc in 1994 weakened Soglo's support. Kérékou won the presidential elections in 1996 and 2001 but he too lacked a secure majority of the deputies elected in 1995 and 1999. In Niger, Mahmane Ousmane was elected with the support of a multi-party alliance in 1993, but he could not command a majority in the national assembly, which he dissolved in 1994, rather than accept its choice of prime minister. This created an opportunity for Col Maïnassara to seize power in January 1996, and to contrive his own election to the presidency. Maïnassara was himself assassinated in 1999 and succeeded by a military junta, which transferred power to an elected government in 2000.

Henri Konan Bédié, Felix Houphouët-Boigny's successor, retained power in Côte d'Ivoire from 1993 to 2000. He excluded Alassane Ouattara from the 1995 election under new nationality rules and Laurent Gbagbo withdrew. Brig.-Gen. Robert Guéï removed Bédié in 2000, arguing that he was preventing Ouattara from standing for the presidency and then used a constitutional court decision to invalidate Ouattara's and Bédié's candidacies. Finally, he refused to accept the election of Gbagbo until he was forced out by popular protest. Gbagbo appealed to a narrow 'ivoirité, which marginalised Muslims and northerners, provoking a resort to civil conflict to decide issues of political power.

In Ghana, political loyalties originating in the 1950s transcend numerous changes of regime and the reformation and renaming of parties. Rawlings drew on the gains of his economic strategy and his control of administration and patronage to win elections in 1992 and 1996 against a regionally based opposition. The experience of electoral disputes, political violence and civil war in Liberia persuaded the political elites to engage in discussions of constitutional, social and economic issues. In 2000, John Kufuor of the New Patriotic Party built up a sufficiently broad regional coalition to defeat John Evans Atta Mills, of Rawlings' National Democratic Congress. Yoweri

Museveni, who led the National Resistance Movement (NRM) to power in Uganda in 1986, defeated his rivals in the 1996 elections, in which non-party candidates revealed older divisions of party, region and religion. A referendum majority out confirmed the no-party system in 2000. In 2001, Museveni defeated Kiiza Besigye, a fellow leader of the NRM, in the presidential election.

In Nigeria, parliamentary government was replaced by military rule in 1966 and an elected presidency from 1979–83. The military centralized control and allocation of mineral oil revenues and created new states and local governments to meet the claims of ‘minorities’, in turn creating new ‘minorities’ and confining full citizenship to ‘indigenes’ of each state. Generals Ibrahim Babangida (1985-93) and Sani Abacha (1993–98) personalized military rule, manipulated civilian politicians and accentuated communal conflicts. Babangida managed the election of June 1993 and then refused to recognize Chief Moshood Abiola’s victory. The sudden deaths of Abacha and Abiola opened the way to new elections. Olusegun Obasanjo, military head of state from 1976–79, was elected president with support from the political and military establishments in 1999 and again in 2003, when the incumbent People’s Democratic Party consolidated its dominance by fair means and foul. Nigeria continues to be riven by conflicts over the allocation of state resources, constitutional arrangements, the rival claims of religious and ethnic groups at federal, state and local levels and the activities of politicized vigilantes. Politicians form coalitions to claim pan-ethnic support across state boundaries. Demands for Muslim-majority states to adopt *shari’a* law or for changes to local government boundaries mobilize communal and religious sentiments to advance political and economic interests. Politicians continue to pursue spoils by electoral, legislative and violent means.

The rulers of one-party states in Zambia, Kenya, Malawi resisted multi-party elections. Fiscal crises led governments to narrow the beneficiaries of patronage. This brought a broad range of overlapping groups into opposition: former members of the ruling party and government; businessmen; regional interests; trade unionists and workers; students; church leaders, human rights activists and political radicals. Each of these looked to multi-party elections as a means of gaining, or regaining, access to government.

In Zambia, the Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD) united behind Frederic Chiluba, a trade union leader, won the 1991 presidential election. In Kenya the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy split into two as soon as President Daniel arap Moi announced that multi-party elections would take place at the end of 1991, and Mwai Kibaki, a former vice-president, left KANU to found the Democratic Party. In power in Zambia, the MMD began to repeat many practices of Kaunda’s United National Independence Party (UNIP) government. Like UNIP, the MMD initially achieved national support and restricted the previously dominant party to a single province. Chiluba was accused of concentrating power, failing to ensure adequate representation for all ethnic groups, and of tolerating corruption. His vice-president and other senior ministers resigned to join other parties or form their own. The MMD disqualified Kaunda from standing for the presidency in the 1996 election, on the grounds that he was not a Zambian citizen. The 2001 election prompted new divisions within MMD over Chiluba’s unsuccessful bid to change the constitution to seek a third term. Levy Mwanawasa, the MMD candidate, won the 2001 election with 28% of the votes cast thanks to the inability of rivals, each with regional support, to ally behind a clear alternative. In Malawi, three parties are divided among their regional strongholds, thus denying President Bakili Muluzi a parliamentary majority – and a further term.

In Kenya, Moi warned that a plural political system would exacerbate ethnic tensions, and then fostered ethnic conflicts. In 1992, rivalries dividing two Kikuyu and one Luo candidates prevented the formation of the Kikuyu-Luo alliance, which had been the basis of KANU's victory in 1962. Rather than uniting opposition, defeat encouraged new divisions. Moi defeated five rival candidates for the presidency with 41% of the vote in 1997 and the number of parties continued to expand. The 1992 and 1997 elections were followed by attacks on Kikuyu and Luo farmers by Kalenjin and Maasai supporters of KANU. Moi co-opted into government key figures in a divided opposition. In 2002, to favour his own preferred successor, Uhuru Kenyatta, he played potential candidates off against one another. Rivals crossed over to join opposition parties in support of a National Rainbow Coalition, whose candidate, Kibaki, Moi's former Vice-President, won the elections.

Prime Minister Robert Mugabe became executive President of Zimbabwe in 1988. He won elections from 1980-1996 and bought off political discontent with the costs of structural adjustment and corruption by spending money on war veterans. In 1998, Zimbabwe sent troops to support President Laurent-Desiré Kabila in the DRC, to the profit of key soldiers and politicians and their business associates. A by-election victory by Margaret Dongo, an independent, in 1996 and the formation, in 1997, of the National Constituent Assembly, initiated by the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, opened new political space. The government set up its own Constitutional Commission but did not accept its key recommendation: to abandon the executive presidency. In 1999 the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) launched the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), a disparate alliance of businesspeople, white farmers, trade unionists, NGOs and academics. In February 2000, the government lost the referendum on its constitutional proposals. Mugabe promised to transfer white-owned farms to 'war veterans'. They attacked MDC supporters, black farm workers and white farmers and disrupted national and regional maize supplies in a period of sustained drought. ZANU-PF politicians and businessmen and military officers acquired farms. Mugabe forced judges to resign and suppressed independent media. In 2000, ZANU-PF was able to win enough rural seats in Mashonaland to secure a narrow majority of elected seats and to arrange a majority for Mugabe in the unfree and unfair 2002 presidential elections. Neither sanctions by the European Union, suspension from the Commonwealth nor African diplomacy have resolved the crisis, but Mugabe may not be able to survive Zimbabwe's worsening fiscal crisis.

President Botha's National Party (NP) regime sought to reform the apartheid system in South Africa to retain white control of political power and exclude the ANC. It persecuted its opponents and brought the military challenge of the ANC and the threat of popular insurrection under a degree of control but was unable to solve the country's economic problems or its own lack of internal legitimacy and international acceptability. The ANC realized that it could obtain by negotiation what it could not achieve by armed struggle. Political reform could only proceed when President de Klerk released Mandela in 1990 and opened formal negotiations with the ANC. From 1990-94, the NP government retained firm control of state institutions, while negotiating the terms on which it would transfer power to the ANC. Internal violence escalated. The struggle between supporters of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the ANC for paramountcy in KwaZulu/Natal intensified and spread to the workers' hostels and black townships of the Rand. The ANC withdrew from political negotiation in 1992 following killings in Boipatong by IFP activists, acting in collusion with the police. When negotiations were resumed, the ANC agreed to form a government of national unity after democratic elections.

The negotiation of a new constitution depended upon an agreement between the NP and the ANC. The closer this accommodation appeared, the more unacceptable it became to Buthelezi, the IFP leader, who wanted a confederal constitution to ensure IFP control of KwaZulu/Natal. Faced with the loss of access to elective office, he consented at the last moment to take part in the 1994 elections. The NP's ambition to lead a conservative coalition, able to offer an alternative to the ANC, was thwarted by its alienation from the IFP and lack of African support. The new constitution established independent commissions and public offices, a constitutional court and a land court. Voters cast their ballots for closed party lists. MPs who resigned or are expelled from their parties would lose their seats and be replaced by party nominees, thereby limiting the independence of MPs and of parliament itself.

The ANC won 63% of the vote in the 1994 national elections and legislative majorities in seven of the nine provinces. Coloured and white voters enabled the NP to win the Western Cape. The IFP were accorded a majority of votes in KwaZulu/Natal and included ANC in a provincial coalition. In 1996, the New National Party (NNP), but not the IFP, withdrew from the government of national unity, within which it had exercised hardly any influence. In 1999, the ANC received 66% of the vote. The other parties were confined to their ethnic bases of support. The Democratic Party (DP) and the NNP formed the Democratic Alliance (DA), which was able to retain control of the Western Cape. In 2002, the ANC and the NNP, with the agreement of the Constitutional Court, changed the rules, on which they had insisted in 1993, to allow the NNP to breakaway from the DA, and realign with the ANC to gain control of the Western Cape and of Cape Town and other key councils..

There is a tension between the historic commitment of the ANC to non-racialism and the claims of Africans for preferential access to the resources from which they were excluded under apartheid. The ANC has made appointments from all races to government and promoted affirmative action in the private sector. Black investors have acquired a share in the control of major corporations in finance, insurance and mining. The ANC has itself become an extension of the patronage system of a centralized state, devolving resources to the provinces and deploying its nominees to positions in parliament, the civil service and national, provincial and local administrations. It distrusts independent commissioners, office-holders, MPs and journalists and has resisted probes into the details of arms and other contracts. It is easy for the ANC, like the NP, to benefit their friends among the political, bureaucratic and commercial elites, but more difficult to meet the claims of the many when, unlike the NP, it cannot impose the costs on others.

The timing, politics and outcomes of calling multi-party elections have varied considerably among African countries. Voters took the opportunity to replace incumbent rulers in Cape Verde (1991, 2001), São Tomé and Príncipe (1991, 1996, 2001) Benin (1991, 1996), Zambia and the Republic of the Congo (1992), Mali (1992, 2002) Burundi, the Central African Republic, Niger and Lesotho (1993), Madagascar (1993, 1996 and 2001), Malawi, and South Africa (1994), Sierra Leone (1996), Guinea-Bissau and Nigeria (1999), Sénégal, Ghana, and Côte d'Ivoire (2000); Kenya (2002). Elections enabled civilian rulers to perpetuate their political hegemony in Botswana (1965-1999), Gambia (1965-1994) Sénégal (1978-1996), Zimbabwe (1980-2002), Namibia (1989-1999), Côte d'Ivoire (1990, 1995), Angola (1992), Equatorial Guinea (1992, 1996), Cameroun and Kenya (1992, 1997), Gabon (1993, 1998), Mozambique (1994, 1999), Tanzania (1995, 2000), Uganda and Zambia (1996, 2001), Mali (1997), Lesotho (1998, 2000), Malawi, Central African Republic and South Africa (1999) Benin (2001, Sierra Leone (2002), Nigeria (2003). Military rulers

succeeded in getting themselves elected in Burkina Faso (1991, 1998), Ghana (1992, 1996), Mauritania (1992, 1997), Guinea and Togo (1993, 1998), Guinea-Bissau (1994), Gambia, Chad and Uganda (1996, 2001), and Liberia (1997), the Republic of the Congo (2002) New constitutions generally, but not always, limit presidents to two further terms or even one. Several have tried to change this; Samuel Nujoma in Namibia, Blaise Compaore in Burkina Faso and Lansana Conté in Guinea have succeeded. Swaziland retains an authoritarian monarchy. Elected governments have not been immune from military coups, as in Gambia in 1994, Burundi (1996), Sierra Leone (1996), the Republic of the Congo (1996), Niger (1996, 1999), Guinea-Bissau (1998) and, briefly, Côte d'Ivoire (2000).

The most effective governments in Africa have tended to recreate the decentralized forms of territorial administration characteristic of colonial 'indirect rule'. They incorporated regional and ethnic interests within an unequal system of political patronage. The political and economic bankruptcy of authoritarian regimes created openings for democratic politics and wider freedom of expression and limiting arbitrary action by governments. Political transitions increase uncertainty. This may be resolved by the election of new, or existing, rulers to political office. The prospects and outcomes of elections may exacerbate communal conflicts and political violence, often initiated by the incumbent governments. Elections have often been marked by disputes over procedures, the eligibility of candidates and the legitimacy of outcomes.

The 'political class', whether in opposition or in power, has been primarily concerned to retain or achieve political office and its perquisites. They have mobilized support from ethnic and regional constituencies without creating stable political coalitions. Rivalries among political élites have prevented them from uniting against the resort to arms to decide struggles for power and they often aligned with armed factions or military rulers to pursue their sectional goals. They have rarely shown concern for issues of public policy. New governments inherited the institutions and problems of the old and often repeat their predecessors' practices. Economic strategies have generally been directed from without.

## **WAR, POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Throughout the Cold War period, the policies of the contending powers were shaped by their perceptions of strategic alignments, their commitments to their client states, and the scope for arms exports. In the 1980s, the USSR realised that it had nothing to gain from its commitments in Africa, which had become a costly impediment to *détente*. Soviet and Cuban withdrawal from Africa facilitated negotiations for a partial Angolan settlement, the independence of Namibia, democratic elections in South Africa, the fall of the Dergue in Ethiopia and the independence of Eritrea. In 1992 President George Bush committed US forces to lead a UN military intervention to restore civil order in Somalia. The USA withdrew ignominiously in 1994, followed a year later by the remaining UN contingents, who failed to disarm the warlords or broker an agreement among them. That experience ended the enthusiasm of the US government to extend the 'new world order' to Africa. It relied on others to resolve the civil war in Liberia, which the USA itself had brought into being as a state.

The United Kingdom has tended to do business as usual with the government in power in its former colonies. It tolerated breaches of sanctions against the illegal government of Ian Smith in Rhodesia by British petroleum suppliers. It resisted demands to implement economic sanctions against South Africa during the apartheid period. In 1995, following the executions of Ogoni activists by the Nigerian military regime, Britain re-imposed its own 1993 ban on arms exports.

France retained close political, economic and military links with its African ex-colonies and extended its sphere of interest to include former Belgian territories. It supplied arms to Biafra, provided troops to protect favoured governments, and secured arms contracts and oil concessions for French companies. Presidential appointees and the security services directed French military and economic policies in Africa, often at variance with the wishes of the foreign ministry. France provided privileged access to its markets to the tropical agricultural exports of its former colonies with. After Britain joined the European Economic Community (now the EU) in 1973, these relations became multilateral and were extended to former British colonies and to the Caribbean and the Pacific under successive Lomé agreements. Most former French colonies continued to use the convertible CFA franc. The devaluation of the CFA franc by 50% in 1994 led to sharply increased prices throughout francophone Africa and a loss of trust in France by African leaders who had not been consulted.

The end of the Cold War, and the failures of UN peace-keeping missions in Somalia and Rwanda, created a need for African governments to resolve conflicts in Africa. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) lacked the legal, political, financial and logistic capacity to act collectively. States directly affected by the flow of refugees, trafficking of arms and armed incursions across their borders are more likely to support regional initiatives to deal with the conflicts. The most visible examples were the interventions by ECOMOG, the Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau, which brought about partial and, in Liberia, temporary settlements to civil conflicts. The ANC government has been reluctant to commit the South African army outside the country but acted as mediator in Burundi and, with Botswana and Zambia, the DR Congo. In 1998, troops from South Africa and Botswana went to Lesotho, following conflicts between security forces and contending political factions. This initially led to looting and killings but opened the way to constitutional reform.

In Zaïre (DR Congo), President Mobutu was noted for his extreme profligacy and lack of fiscal discipline, his appropriation of the country's wealth, and the indiscipline of his army. He facilitated support for the USA and apartheid South African for the insurgent União Nacional para a Independência Total (UNITA) in its conflict with the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) government in Angola. He was able to call on Western military support and, until 1991, rely on funds from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, despite his consistent failure to abide by their conditions. In 1990, Mobutu announced plans for a transition to a multi-party government. For seven more years, he retained plenary powers while manipulating opposition politicians and exacerbating tensions among ethnic groups.

In May 1997 Laurent-Désiré Kabila arrived in Kinshasa at the head of a rebel army and declared himself president of the renamed DR Congo. A year later, he was in conflict with his former allies, and seven African countries had committed troops to one or other of the contending armies. Kabila's original army was drawn from opponents of the central government in the Shaba (Katanga), Kasai and Kivu regions. At its core were Tutsi militias and troops drawn from the Banyamulenge (from the DR Congo) and Banyarwanda (from Rwanda), supported by Burundi and Uganda, as well as Angola, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Zimbabwe. They were provoked to take up arms by an order to the Banyamulenge to leave the country. This gave the Rwandan and Burundian governments the opportunity to act against Hutu militia groups in the eastern DRC and to install a sympathetic government in Kinshasa.

Kabila's accession to power followed the examples set by his principal sponsors, Uganda and Rwanda. The Front patriotique rwandais (FPR), drawn largely from exiled Tutsi, took power in Rwanda in 1994 and set up a coalition government in Kigali in the aftermath of the genocidal massacres of Tutsi and of moderate Hutu by the Interahamwe militia. Pasteur Bizimungu, a Hutu became President; Paul Kagame, the FPR's Tutsi commander, vice-president. Belgian troops, under UN auspices, failed to halt the killings. The French government created a 'neutral zone', protecting some Tutsi and facilitating the flight of Hutu refugees and of *genocidaires* into the DRC. Kagame had served with Museveni in the Ugandan NRM. Military government and massacres of Hutu in 1965 and 1972 consolidated Tutsi political supremacy in Burundi. Pierre Buyoya relinquished the country's presidency in 1993 when he was defeated in an election by Melchior Ndadaye, Burundi's first Hutu president. In 1996, following intense ethnic conflict, and the violent deaths of Ndadaye and his successor, Buyoya resumed power in a *coup d'état*. The transitional government formed in 2001 is weakened by rivalries among Tutsi politicians and among Hutu politicians and militia. In Rwanda and Burundi, Tutsi-dominated armed forces, facing armed militia, have killed civilians and forced rural people into concentrated settlements.

In the DR Congo, Kabila assumed plenary authority. He rejected politicians who had opposed Mobutu and appointed people who would depend on him. He multiplied security agencies and suspended the national reconstruction conference. He granted concessions to foreign mining and construction interests and business associates of his allies' political and military leaders. He thus emulated Mobutu's mode of operation, while inheriting a bankrupt government. When his erstwhile Banyamulenge allies sought to remove him with Ugandan, Rwandan and Burundian support, the governments of Angola, Zimbabwe, Chad and Namibia sent troops to assist him. Armed conflicts have taken place among and within the national army, local militias, rebel forces, and their sponsors in the Ugandan and Rwandan armies, killing vast numbers of civilians as well as combatants. Congolese armies depend on their unpopular foreign patrons. Kabila was assassinated in 2001 and replaced by his son, Joseph, who opened the way to a UN presence and to negotiations, which have not resolved the struggle for territory, trade and mineral resources. The promised withdrawal of African armies has been slow and incomplete and the commitment of U.N. forces limited in numbers and capacity.

In 1989, Charles Taylor led an invasion force, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), initially supported by the governments of Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Libya. The instability that followed the withdrawal of US support for Master-Sergeant Samuel Doe, who was deposed and murdered in 1990, facilitated Taylor's advance. In 1990 troops from Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Guinea, were sent to Liberia under the auspices of ECOMOG. They established uneasy control over Monrovia, but left Taylor in charge of most of the interior. Nigeria assumed the direction of ECOMOG and provided most of its arms and troops. Successive attempts to negotiate peace agreements and establish a national government failed because of the tensions between the Nigerian government and the NPFL, conflicts between political factions, and the determination of rival warlords to gain territorial control over the natural resources, which paid for their arms and armies. The Nigerian government eventually reached an accommodation with Taylor, which opened the way to his election as president in 1997. ECOMOG withdrew from Liberia in 1998. Taylor's regime was marked by plunder, smuggling, repression of political rivals and human rights abuses until he was besieged in Monrovia by rebel forces, supported by Guinea and Sierra Leone.

The Liberian civil war dispersed refugees and caused instability in Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Sénégal. In 1991, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), launched attacks from Liberia into Sierra Leone, whose government had committed troops and airports to ECOMOG's offensive against the NPFL. In 1992, a military coup cut short arrangements for multi-party elections in Sierra Leone. Elections were finally held in 1996, when voters defied violence by the RUF to cast their ballots. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah's elected government depended for its security on the assistance of Guinean troops, hired Gurkhas, and mercenaries. Local Kamajoi militia resisted RUF attacks but attracted the resentment of the army. The withdrawal of mercenary troops from Sierra Leone in 1997, in accordance with the 1996 Abidjan peace agreement with the RUF and because the government could no longer afford their services, led to a further coup. The military set up the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, which in turn allied itself with the RUF.

Kabbah's return from exile in Guinea to a hero's welcome in Freetown in 1998 by the Nigerian military and a British mercenary company was not an unqualified victory of democratic principles or an African solution. Nor did it prove to be very secure. In 1999, the combined forces of the AFRC and the RUF invaded Freetown, looted the city, abducted young men and women, and maimed and killed people. Kabbah's government had failed to secure effective control of the country's diamond diggings. It could not reconstitute an effective army of its own, distrusted the Kamajoi militia and had to rely on ECOMOG to restore it to power again. Under international pressure, the government negotiated a power-sharing agreement with the RUF in 1999, which gave Foday Sankoh, the RUF leader, ministerial control over the diamond fields. The RUF renewed its military activities in 2000 with support from Taylor in exchange for control of smuggled diamonds. UN peacekeepers were taken hostage and only the deployment of British and Nigerian troops prevented another RUF attack on Freetown. Civilians captured Sankoh in Freetown. Voters rejected armed factions and their leaders in electing Kabbah in the 2002 elections, demonstrating their commitment to democratic government. Guinea has faced incursions from Sierra Leonean and Liberian rebels and intervened to support successive governments in Freetown and, with Sénégal, in 1998 in Bissau.

No regions, and few countries, in Africa have been free of the ravages of civil wars, conflicts between African countries, dictatorial governments, and the intervention of outside powers and other African governments. Political compromises—as in Zimbabwe in 1988, Mozambique in 1992, or South Africa in 1994, and armed insurgencies—as in Uganda in 1986 or Rwanda in 1994, have brought civil conflicts under some sort of control. External interventions protected Ange-Félix Patassé, the elected president in Central Africa until 2003; in the Republic of the Congo, Angolan troops overthrew Pascal Lissouba, the elected President, in 1997 and restored the former military ruler, Denis Sassou-Nguesso without ending conflicts among political militias. In Angola, UNITA access to diamond fields enabled it to evade compliance with successive peace agreements while the MPLA leaders enriched themselves from oil revenues and arms contracts. The death of Savimbi, UNITA's leader, in 2002 has ended the war but not its legacy of rural and urban destitution. Civil war continues in Sudan, as do factional and regional conflicts in Somalia and Sénégal. Insurgents continue to attack civilians and governments in Liberia, DR Congo, northern Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. Hostilities ceased in 2000, with occasional resummptions in the border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia.

Wars may be politics by other means. The converse may also be true: negotiations are a means to secure military gains. Wars have been extremely costly to African

people and to national economies. They are highly profitable for rebel forces, and their leaders, arms manufacturers and salesmen, foreign mercenaries, and traders in diamonds, timber and ivory. In the DR Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Angola, exports of natural resources sustained rebel movements and enabled government to pay for foreign mercenaries and troops. The need to control the territory from which resources are extracted makes it more difficult to reach peace agreements and less likely that belligerents will abide by them. Rebels operate from neighbouring countries. Control of power in francophone Africa once depended mainly on French intervention or the lack of it. It may now depend more on military interventions from neighbouring countries. In west and in central Africa, conflicts in one country cannot be resolved unless they are settled in all. African rulers have variously supported fellow governments and harboured and assisted rebels forces. They are unlikely to require adherence to standards of good governance or democratic principles of themselves or others. External powers have colluded with oppressive regimes and profited from arms sales and diamond purchases. They have been reluctant to act effectively or to take responsibility for outcomes when they have intervened. International peace-keeping activities did not always protect civilians from harm, whether by armed militias, government troops or, indeed, the 'peace-keepers' themselves. Financial and logistic difficulties, divisions among African states and the weakness of governments exposed the limitations of regional approaches to security. The new African Union has set up arrangements for the Union or 'lead' governments acting with others to intervene in crisis situations but they cannot ensure the conditions for successful action. Divergent aims and conflicts of interests among governments and economic interests within and outside Africa make international or inter-African co-operation to bring peace to war-torn countries difficult to achieve.