West Africa Institute

ZEI
Center for European Integration Studies

REGIONAL INTEGRATION
OBSERVER

Contents

Regional Integration Observer (RIO)

The RIO takes a comparative look at West African and European integration and deals with the relations between the two regions. It is a new platform for exchange.

The EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, and the EU Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides, with the Foreign Ministers of the so called "Sahel G5". © European External Action Service.

The Mali Crisis: Words and their Meanings
by Boubacar N´Diaye *

«Depuis l'indépendance de ce pays, il y a deux peuples qui essayaient de vivre ensemble et qui n'y arrivaient pas bien, qui éventuellement s'affrontaient, ceux du nord et ceux du sud.» (Le Monde, June 23, 2015, p. 14, citing the Jean-Yves Le Drian's interview on Europe 1)

French Minister of Defense, Jean-Yves Le Drian, is reported to have uttered the sentence above. He contends that, the root-cause of the crisis in Mali, which has sup-posedly entered a new phase with the recent signing of the internationally brokered peace accord, was due to the fact that since independence "two peoples," one in the north, and the other in the south, have been fighting. This statement by a French senior politician with a reputation for caution and considered to be a close friend and ally of President Hollande seems to have curiously escaped the scrutiny of all but the nationalist fringe in the Malian political landscape.

If, as the saying goes, "words have meaning …and consequences", this is most uncharacteristic of observers of the Malian crisis; arguably the epicentre of the Sahel security crisis. One has to presume that the choice of words by Le Drian is not fortuitous, but meant to convey something about the French government and political establishment's take on the Malian crisis and the solutions to it. No doubt, one of the enduring consequences of colonialism is the forcing together of various populations in the same territory, and in certain cases (different?) "peoples" were bundled together and forced to cohabitate more or less harmoniously in the same nation-state. However, given its centuries old history, it can be argued that, as the cultural and political heir of the Mali empire, the Republic of Mali is one of the rare cases where Le Drian's point,

Federal Ministry of Education and Research

particularly in the context of this crisis which he knows very well, does not casually apply. Historically, there has never been a distinct "people" from the rest of the political entity called Mali then and today, in a geographical region commonly referred to now as "Azawad."

The context in which these words were stated is the laborious sign-ing of a peace accords heavily influenced by the political rhetoric of autonomy, self-determination, and even outright partition of Mali. This context also included the resentful suspicion of duplicity and accusation by many Malians that the French establishment through its intelligence services, its diplomacy, its influential press and (particularly) audio-visual media such as France 24 and RFI, has contributed to giving the Malian crisis a "dispute between two peoples" character it really does not have. Moreover, that context also includes French troops stopping the movement of Malian troops on the regional capital of Kidal, almost "at gun point" near the conclusion of Operation Serval when the rebel movement MNLA was all but obliterated by its Jihadist and narco-trafficker allies, and constituted no military force at all, its fighters having dissolved within and joined the Jihadists or the numerous drug trafficking groups.

Le Drian cannot ignore the context that led to the current crisis, singularly, the transformation of northern Mali into a vast no man's land of traffic of all sorts controlled by men whose main concern was definitely not the fate of the "people" to whom he seems to be referring. Le Drian cannot ignore that the irredentism of the distinct minority of "people" to whom he seems to refer is far from representing the majority of the "people" living in northern Mali.

Further, because words matter, there is intriguingly a word that has never been used in the context of this crisis supposed to involve a "people" who, according to Le Drian's sentence "just could not" live with the other "people," and presumably aspired to separate existence. That word is "referendum," certainly the most utilised word in situations of near impossible cohabitation between "two peoples." Has it occurred to anyone analysing the Malian crisis as a crisis rooted in the "fighting between two peoples" frame of reference why "referendum" has never been
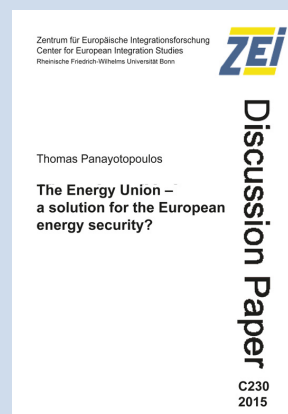
Thomas Panayotopoulos, The Energy Union – a solution for the European energy security?, ZEI Discussion Paper C 230.

The topic of energy security was for a long time left aside in the European Union. However, times are changing. ZEI Research Fellow Thomas Panayotopoulos analyses the current energy dependency situation focussing on its causes and the energy union as a possible solution.

used at all, and certainly not demanded by those who claim to speak in the name of a people (or their backers for that matter)? Just asking the question would certainly lay bare the deceitful argument underlying Le Drian's assertion that Mali's security and political crisis is, at its core, a quarrel between two peoples in Mali.

So, one has to wonder just what the significance of the choice of words by a senior French Defense Minister might well have meant in this context. To put this in perspective, what would have been the consequence of a defense Minister of any country, at the height of the mayhem created by the various Corse or Basque terrorist/nationalist/criminal groups stateing that this was the result of "two peoples" in France fighting? One can bet that there would have been a price to pay for any such a minister and his country. Could any African official have gotten away with such a statement?

That the Malian government has not asked Le Drian to take back, even in the most diplomatic terms, his statement speaks volume about the impossible situation in which the Malian government and political class find themselves because, by commission and omission, they failed to prevent (and manage sensibly) this crisis. Today, this crisis is about everything but the cohabitation between "two peoples," and the Minister of Defense of France, of all people, cannot ignore this fact. A legitimate question therefore is: Why the stubborn and disingenuous "two peoples" narrative? A question any serious analysis of the Malian crisis cannot ignore. Answering this will be a big step toward crafting and implementing solutions to that crisis.

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WAI and ZEI co-organize Symposium on the Regional Dynamics of Peace and Security in West Africa

The event took place from 28-30 April 2015 at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Accra, Ghana and was financially supported by the German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) in the framework of the cooperation between ZEI and the West Africa Institute (WAI). The main partners of WAI and ZEI were the Centre for European and International Studies Research (CEISR) at the University of Portsmouth (UK) and the Chaire Raoul Dandurand at the Université de Québec à Montréal (UQAM, Canada). The purpose of the Symposium was to bring together academics and high-ranking practitioners to discuss current West African security challenges. Among them were the Vice-President of the ECOWAS Commission, H.E. Dr. Toga Gayewea McIntosh and its Political Director. The majority of articles in this RIO reflect the presentations and discussions at the KAIPTC. Furthermore, a West African security blog will be established in the near future.

Migration Challenges in Europe

by Maria Kapiniaris*

The Mediterranean is the border between Europe and Africa/Asia. It divides the rich from the poor, the stable from the unstable and the chance of a better life from a life of poverty. The Street of Gibraltar indicates the shortest distance between Africa and Europe of a mere 13km, yet divides a usual yearly GDP of 3.392,3 USD per person in 2014 in Morocco, a relatively safe and stable country to that of 29.614 USD in Spain, one of the poorer countries in Europe. The highly dangerous and expensive journey for a better life leads thousands of migrants from Africa to the ports of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya as well as from the East via the Turkish-Greek border with the dream of reaching glorified Europe.[1]

Since the latest migrant boat disasters of 2015, which saw thousands drown within moments, the issue has dominated the EU agenda with German Chancellor Angela Merkel referring to it as "the biggest challenge for the European Union that (she has) seen during (her) term in office."[2]

Over time, European migration policies and discourse have shifted from focusing on labour to the three categories of 'securitizing migration: internal security, cultural identity and the crisis of the welfare state.'[3] In securi-

tizing the issue, humanity is the sometimes forgotten essence of the debate and in 2015, with the alarming rate of migrant deaths at sea and rising xenophobia in Europe, this humanity is being tested in the EU. It furthermore challenges the notion of solidarity among members to align their 28 diverging interests to find a common solution to what is a humanitarian crisis.

Many European societies have gradually transformed into multicultural societies composed of multiple linguistic, ethnic and religious groups,[4] which 'stands in opposition to long established state structures founded upon the concept of a single national identity corresponding to a single nation-state.'[5] Claims that immigrants are a perceived threat to peace, to social welfare and 'challenging the myth of national cultural homogeneity,'[6] are what many Europeans are inherently reluctant to depart from. This sentiment spoke volumes in the 2014 EU Parliamentary elections seeing a concerning shift towards far right wing political parties, such as 'the Greek Golden Dawn, who are openly xenophobic'[7] and anti-immigration.

In light of this democratic result however, strengthening border protection may remain an EU policy feature.

Uniform mechanisms addressing the large numbers of asylum seekers at the regional level under the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), can be seen as disproportionately thrusting responsibility on certain states unable to manage it. This results in inadequate human rights protection available to entrants.[8] The EU dilemma in the Mediterranean is the 'unresolved tension between (using) a national security and human security approach.'[9] Italy was compelled to launch the Mare Nostrum humanitarian operation to help the boat people in need, after the tragic numbers of lives lost close to its shores.[10] Whereas Belgium, an inland country 'announced that it would not participate in any future (such) operations,'[11] in order to deter people taking the journey. Frontex[12] was established by the EU directly in response to this need for assistance in patrolling the Mediterranean external borders when the issue clearly became that of security. It has provided

and Transit: Refugee Women and the Journey to the EU, Journal of Refugee Studies Vol. 27, No., Oxford University Press 2013, p. 339

4 Dimitrakopoulos, Ioannis N, Analytical Report on Education National Focal Point for GREECE ANTIGONE -
Information and Documentation Centre, Athens, 2004, p. 3.

5 Ibid.

6 Huysmans, Jef, The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, migration and Asylum in the EU, Routledge 2006, p. 73.

7 Gergely, Olivier and Gautier, Stephanie, The Rise of Eurosceptic Right-Wing Parties and the 2014 European
Parliament Elections, Mhp Communications, Accessed 22 Feb 2015.

1 Dahm, Karl-Heinz, Wirtschaftsdaten kompakt: Spanien, Germany Trade and Investment, Nov 14, Accessed 28 Feb 15.

2 Mahony, Honor, EU leaders spend ill-tempered evening on Greece, migrants, EU Observer, 26 June 2015, Accessed 26 June 2015 < https://euobserver.com/political/129312>

3 Gerard, Alison and Pickering, Sharon, Gender, Securitization

8 Frantziou, Eleni, Staiger, Dr Uta, and Chaitor, Sarah, Refugee Protection, Migration and Human Rights in Europe, Policy Briefing, London's Global University, May 2014, p. 2, Accessed 20 Feb 2015.

9 Wohlfeld, Monika, Migration in the Mediterranean, Human Rights, Security and Development Perspectives, Grech, Omar (ed.), MEDAC 2014, p. 74

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 Frontex (French: Frontières extérieures for „external borders") is the agency of the European Union (EU) that manages the cooperation between national border guards that is undertaken to secure the external borders of the union.

manpower and material support to countries like Greece for enforcement of border security and patrol, but this doesn't deal with the issue on a policy level to distribute migrants among countries, to increase integration programs, increase awareness and understanding of the migration and refugee plight as well as improve facilities. Hence, this could be perceived as a 'band aid' approach when structural reforms and a proper policy framework is needed. In this case, 'EU policy is blind to the lived realities of those who seek refugee protection in the EU, and urgently needs to address the structural contradictions exacerbating violence.'[13] It is only now that the EU Commission is pushing for change by introducing a proposal to redistribute asylum applicants among member states to share the so called "burden" often referred to in the EU. However, current talks have

not been smooth and highlight their opposing views and interests. The French and German ministers have both stated since, that they are "strongly attached [to the Dublin regulation], because it is an essential element of the balance of the Schengen area without internal borders,"[14] which is convenient only for those member states not at the EU frontline.

To solve the crux of the problem to prevent human beings from entering non high-sea suitable boats and paying thousands of euros to the slave traders seeking a better future, is only achievable if the quality of life improves in their home countries, in which Europe could play a major role for its own benefit[15], by building relations with countries of origin and tapping in to the potential of migrants themselves and how they can contribute to the solu-

tion. It is difficult to negotiate with so called 'failed states' but the EU cannot wait to reach out to the Arab world until the Arab transformation is consolidated.[16]
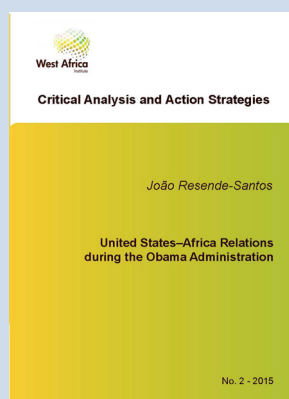
Thus, these security issues entail a juggling act between national security and international protection with all EU member states politically aiming to serve their own interests, leaving the Euro-Mediterranean in the midst of the migration crisis and vulnerable to the surrounding security threats and most crucially, leaving human lives at risk.

16 Calleya, Stephen and Khünhardt, Ludger, How to ride the Revolutionary Arab Lion, World Security Network, 7 Jan 2013, Accessed 1 March 2015.

* Maria Kapiniaris is a Fellow of the ZEI Master of European Studies Class of 2015.

13 Gerard, Alison and Pickering, Sharon, Gender, Securitization and Transit: Refugee Women and the Journey to the EU, Journal of Refugee Studies Vol. 27, No., Oxford University Press 2013, p. 338.

14 Maurice, Eric, Germany and France criticise EU migration plan, EU Observer, 1 June 2015, Accessed 29 June 2015 <https://euobserver.com/justice/128913>.

15 For more details in prevention and fighting against human trafficking, see Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, OSCE - Enhancing Co-operation to prevent trafficking in human beings in the Mediterranean Region (2013), especially pp.19–34.

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The Reconciliation Process and the Governance under Alassane Ouattara since the End of Post-electoral Crisis in 2011

by Maxime Jean Paul Ricard*

Who is Ivoirian? The Ivoirian State for whom and for what? These were the questions, which tore apart the country during the 1990s and 2000s. Côte d'Ivoire´s post-electoral crisis from November 2010 to April 2011 led to the death of at least 3000 individuals and the violent removal of then president Laurent Gbagbo, who refused to recognize the internationally certified results of the election. Legitimacy[1] is indeed a key issue in any discussion on the reconciliation process. The word "reconciliation" is in itself a problem, as well as the word "post-conflict", as they carry the risk of a teleological progress toward pacification[2]. Reconciliation however is understood as a process, not a permanent state that could be reached[3]. How has the Ouattara presidency dealt with the issue of reconciliation in the post-conflict context?

First, in short, it can be argued that President Ouattara tried to circumvent the issue of reconciliation by focusing mainly on economic growth and, to a lesser extent, on diplomacy. To reconcile ivoirians after these decades of divisions, economic and social conditions must improve. As an inheritor of Félix Houphouet-Boigny, Alassane Ouattara stressed the need for Côte d'Ivoire to regain his place in West Africa as the economic hub of the region. Therefore, most of his efforts have been on raising money from international institutions to bolster public and private investments, stressing the need to develop "entre-

1 Even if his victory at the presidential contest in 2010 was certified by the United Nations, it is undeniable that from the get go his presidency lacked legitimacy, as an important share of the citizens -Laurent Gbagbo received 46% of the votes in his runoff against Alasanne Ouattara- felt he was installed in power by the International Community, especially France.

2 Banégas, R., 2012, "Reconstruction 'post-conflit'", Dossiers du CERI, pp.1-10.

3 Charbonneau, B., 2013, « Côte d'Ivoire : possibilités et limites d'une réconciliation », Afrique Contemporaine, n° 245, p. 111-129.

Key Factors in Mediating Conflict - How to forge a peace deal?

1. A mediator has to be convinced that there is a solution. Pragmatism, independence, financial means are crucial.

2. The conflict parties have to be convinced that mediation makes sense.

3. The language of mediation has to be understood by all parties. The mediator has to take into account the religious and cultural sensitivities of the parties and find out where their propensity for violence stems from.

4. The parties have to be willing to ban the past.

5. The role of various segments of societies (also refugees) have to be integrated in a peace deal.

6. The different groups of mediators have to build up trust among themselves as well.

7. The mediators need local supporters. Mediators have to find out who are the friends of mediation.

8. What are internal pressures on the parties that the mediator might use or might neutralize?

9. The mediator needs political will and courage to overcome pressures.

10. Peace agreements are not to be perceived as the end of the debate but as their demilitarization.

11. Dialogue with potential spoilers depends on the specific circumstances, the consent of governments and the opportunities to hedge them.

12. The mediation might start with a humanitarian dialogue but not by negotiating ransoms for hostages.

* Jean-Daniel Biéler, Ambassador, Swiss Peace Policy Programme for West Africa.

preneurship", and improve the "business climate". Undeniably, this strategy worked from a macroeconomic standpoint, as since 2012 the country is getting close to double digit economic growth, in a context of rising prices of agricultural commodities. However the economic and social conditions of a large share of the population did not improve.[4] Ouattara's diplomacy is also focused on the economy.[5] The president became president of the ECOWAS from 2012 to 2014. Due to the Malian crisis, the ECOWAS presidency was also a way to bolster Côte d'Ivoire's status in the region.

The Ivoirian government also focused on mitigating the security challenges related to a post-conflict environment. Indeed, radical supporters of former Laurent Gbagbo, especially militaries of the former power who were exiled in Ghana, fomented attacks to destabilize the regime.[6] There is also still unrest in the west. These attacks are fueled by local grievances and tensions. However, overall, there is a consensus to say that Côte d'Ivoire´s security situation has largely improved. This focus on security gave less results in terms of security sector reform. The numbers of reintegrated combattants announced by the government and the quality of reintegration are questionable. The government also tried to "institutionalize" the reconcili-

ation process through the creation of the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, but the sincerity of this move can be questioned. The results were very disappointing. The president of the Commission (Charles Konan Banny) is suspected of having used the Commission as a springboard to run for the highest office. Furthermore, the Commission never had a sufficient budget.[7] Since December 2014, a National Commission for Reconciliation and Compensation for Victims (CONARIV) is more focused on victim compensation, although some fear that it is a political move before the presidential election in 2015.

Retributive justice was certainly the most contentious issue of the last 4 years. Laurent Gbagbo was transferred to the International Criminal Court (ICC) in 2011. 83 individuals close to Gbagbo were trialed in 2015, as hundreds of them were jailed. During these trials that were criticized as biased, the wife of Laurent Gbagbo was sentenced to 20 years. However, former rebel commanders who backed Ouattara during the post-electoral crisis, have been accused of committing serious crimes as well.[8] What is called a "victor justice" is certainly a major impediment to reconciliation. Moreover, these actors could be in the years to come a threat to the stability of Côte d'Ivoire, as they have stockpiled arms for more than a decade. In conclusion, this analysis of the answers of Alassane Ouat-

tara to the post-conflict environment demonstrates that the reconciliation process has not really started. For Ouattara, the answer to the question of reconciliation is mainly the "emergence" of Côte d'Ivoire. However, the results of the security sector reforms are scarce. The initiatives of transitional justice did not launch a real process of reconciliation. Indeed, two camps in the Ivoirian Popular Front (FPI) are arguing as to whether the party created by Laurent Gbagbo should participate in the presidential election of 2015.[9] As Gbagbo might never come back to Côte d'Ivoire, it is unclear if the FPI will remain a dominant political party. The alliance of the political parties of Ouattara and Henri Konan Bédié (respectively RDR and PDCI) will very probably disappear when these individuals retire.[10] Therefore, one of the most difficult issues for Côte d'Ivoire beyond the election of 2015, which Ouattara will probably win easily, is how the younger generation will deal with political divisions. If re-elected, Alassane Ouattara will have the opportunity to make the reforms that could be decisive to starting a real political and social process of reconciliation.

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Utilizing Arts as a Paradigm for Cultural Intervention in Conflict and Peace Building Processes in Modern Africa

by Essien Daniel Essien*

The complex reality of contemporary conflict scenarios requires a scrupulous understanding of the relationship between culture, conflict and peace. This is evident from the reality that culture has been identified as a driver as well as a major conflict transformer in all societies. However, the biggest challenge confronting societies in Africa today is not about how conflicts occur, but how conflicts are completely resolved whenever they occur. This argument's corollary is that, given the curious datum that culture is implicated in nearly every conflict in the world, culture can also be an important aspect of efforts toward the transformation of destructive conflicts into more constructive social processes. Yet, what culture is and how culture matters in conflict scenarios is often ignored, contested and regrettably unexplored.

Amidst the great challenges facing Africa today lies the unabated aspiration for peace, which implies the necessity of finding a way of living together harmoniously. Societies are witnessing growing complexity and uncertainty that all too often develop into outbreaks of different forms of violence. The different forms of violent conflict in Africa range from border conflicts, militancy, insurgency, electoral/post electoral violence, ethnic and religious violence to mention just a few, clearly demonstrate that the presence of peace can nev-
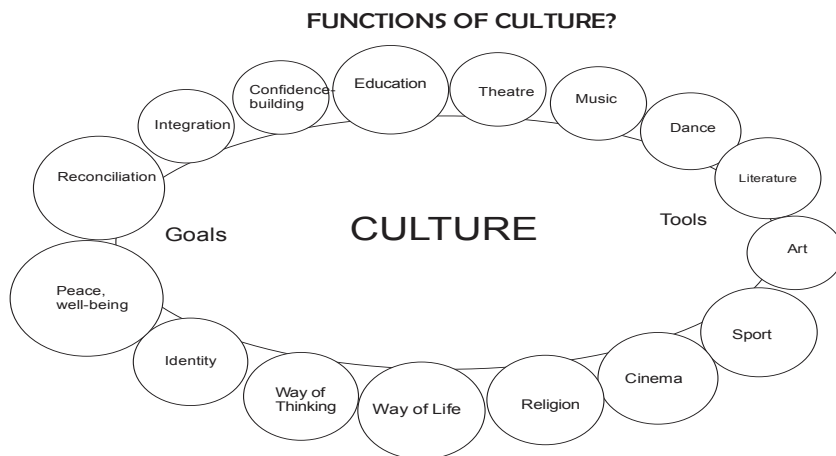
er be taken for granted. Practically speaking, negotiating for peace implies commitment and a long-term vision, which entails a blend of traditional and contemporary ways of understanding the roots of conflicts, ways of mitigating violence, and paths towards reconciliation and healing. Nevertheless, culture as a source of identity, meaning and belonging, can both facilitate social cohesion and justify social exclusion. A good example is the recent xenophobic attacks in South Africa.

Evidently, contemporary studies in peace and conflict studies have revealed that there is an increasing recognition that arts, symbols, and rituals, and other cultural elements may play a very vital role in building peace processes and reconstructing relationships within divided societies. In recent years, arts-based approaches to conflict transformation have gained increasing attention and prominence from a range of disciplines. There is an ever increasing number of individuals and civil society organizations utilizing the arts for the positive transformation of societal conflicts. Art is considered a tool that allows people to find each other's humanity, release and share emotions, heal personal and/or collective trauma, communicate their version of the truth, appreciate the narrative of the other, deal with identity issues, and, in general, transform relationships and

bring people together (Robertson, 2010). Against this backdrop, available data identifies cultural conflicts in African societies not as those triggered by culture itself, but as those ignited by a cultural element, such as religion, language, sport, rituals and literature. The figure below integrates the variables that explain cultural elements in the society. (see page 9)

From the figure, culture is a compelling apparatus which engages existing cultural tools such as education, theatre, music, dance, literature, arts, sports, cinema, and religion to shape the ways of life, ways of thinking and identity of the people in many societies in order to achieve peace and well-being, reconciliation, integration and confidence building. It is pertinent to note that not only are the arts carriers of culture, resilient in the midst of devastation, they are arguably the most reliable conduit for reconciliation and healing in the aftermath of any massive damage.

Notwithstanding these potentials, culturally induced conflicts have steadily been increasing since 1945. Not only outpaced non-cultural conflicts, but exceeding them significantly. According to the CONIS database, of the 762 political struggles recorded between 1945 and 2010, a total of 334 (almost 44%) can be classified as culture-related conflicts. Given these facts, and the large number of conflicts

FUNCTIONS OF CULTURE?

CULTURE

Confidence building · Education · Theatre · Music · Dance · Integration · Reconciliation · Literature · Goals · Tools · Art · Peace, well-being · Sport · Identity · Cinema · Way of Thinking · Way of Life · Religion

that have been recurring in recent decades in many African societies, it is obvious that conflict resolution in the 21st century requires a cultural slant in addition to the conventional political, military and economic approaches.

Contributions of the Arts to Peace Efforts

The arts in contemporary Africa have been seen and heralded as a panacea for all kinds of problems. For instance, in the education sector, arts-integrated school curriculum is viewed to supposedly improve academic performance and student discipline. Arts also revitalize neighborhoods and promote economic prosperity. Participation in the arts improves physical and psychological well-being. Similarly, arts provide a catalyst for the creation of social capital and the attainment of important community goals. And finally, art is vital for conflict resolution, restoration of peace and healing of wounds in a divided society as exemplified in the use of performative and expressive arts.

The Nexus between Arts and Peace in Contemporary Africa

Contemporary Africa is ridden with conflicts that have deprived her of development, sustainable growth and peace. It is evident that art is a creative, proactive, meditative and constructive apparatus, responsible for restoring societal peace when the society becomes ruptured in the pitiless grip of political, ethnic, religious or economic disaster. Many scholars are of the view that conflicts in Africa all follow a similar pattern and can be traced to issues of identity. Therefore, it has become clear that identity plays a great role in effecting conflict resolution (UNESCO, 2005). When it comes to the issue of conflicts in Africa, cultural diversity and the expression of different identities must be addressed as important factors that must not be ignored in peacemaking and nation building.

Conclusion

There is a close affinity between art and society. That is why contemporary researchers and practitioners have been able to use arts tools such as poetry, theatre, music, dance, sport and religion as a vehicle for political mediation, social control and peace-building. By engaging the senses and cognitive capacities, art can reach beneath people's defenses, circumventing the incompatibility of existing approaches. Art involves people in reciprocal relationships of sensitivity toward others. A work of art is inherently other-regarding in a way that is rarely the case in political discourse or debate. The ability to "see the world with fresh artistic eyes," or imagine new configurations of the arts elements, needs strengthening in virtually every society, especially in societies where the sense of possibility has been blunted by violence.

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Gender and Security in West Africa

by Nana Asantewa Afadzinu*

One of the main themes of focus for ECOWAS's regional integration vision 2020, is ensuring peace and security. This cannot be done without taking into consideration the gender specific experiences of insecurity.

In times of conflict, women suffer disproportionately. They are the primary care givers and are often left to take care of the wounded and the family that's left behind. They suffer sexual assault and rape. They form the highest percentage of internally displaced persons and refugees. As violent extremism escalates in certain parts of West Africa such as Northern Nigeria and Mali, women and children are captured and forcibly taken to serve the terrorists in different roles; the Chibok girls being a case in point.

In times of peace, the security of women is threatened by a violation of their rights and dignity in the private sphere as well as the public. They are the main victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and sexual harassment. Women and girls are the main victims of human trafficking. The vulnerability of women, especially in West Africa is heightened due to the patriarchal nature of the society. Women, generally, have little access to and control over resources, they have limited space to participate in key decision making and they are less educated. By addressing the gendered experience of both women and men in provid-

ing, managing, implementing, monitoring and providing oversight to security programming and reform, and giving them an equal opportunity to participate, greater benefits will accrue to the State and the society as a whole. Information, legal and normative frameworks and institutions related to security need to be gender mainstreamed and this needs to happen when there is no conflict, pre-conflict, during conflict and post conflict.

Information: It is important to ensure that there is gender-disaggregated data to inform policy formulation, implementation and monitoring.

Policy: Laws, policies and regulations within the security sector must not be gender blind or gender insensitive but take into consideration the needs of all the sexes and ensure equal treatment and security for both. Domestic legal frameworks should accord with international legal and normative frameworks on gender and security[1]. Though 14 West African countries have gender policies and some have national action plans for implementing UNSCR 1325, there remains a challenge with implementation[2]. In Ghana, for example, the Domestic Violence Law was passed in 2007 but the legislative instrument to make

it fully operational has still not been fully endorsed by Parliament. These gaps exist in other countries as well.

Institutions: The security sector: 'structures, institutions and personnel responsible for the management, provision and oversight of security in a country… as well as actors that play a role in managing and overseeing the design and implementation of security…[including CSOs]'[3] have to ensure that their policies and operations treat both men and women with equal dignity, enhance equal participation and benefits and increases women's representation and participation. These institutions must collaborate more with women's groups.

Though the three ECOWAS Centres of Excellence, Kofi Annan Peacekeeping and Training Centre (Accra), EMP (Bamako) and the National Defence College (Abuja), all have within their curriculum specific trainings on gender for multi dimensional personnel in peace support operations, there still remains a gap in relation to gender training for immigration and other border management officials. West Africa's borders are very porous and whilst this may facilitate economic and social integration, especially at the borders, it also facilitates cross border crime such as human trafficking. Gender sensitive and responsive border

1 Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) (1979), Beijing Platform for Action (1995), UNSCR 1325 (2000), UNSCR 1820 (2008), UNSCR 1888 & UNSCR 1889 (2009), UNSCR 1960 (2010), UNSCR 2106 (2013).

2 The Security Sector Gender in West Africa – A Survey of police, defence, justice and penal services in ECOWAS States - Miranda Gaanderse and Kristin Valasek (Eds), (2011).

3 DCAF. Gender and Security Sector Reform: Examples from the Ground. Geneva: DCAF, 2011.

management personnel will be more effective at ensuring security for women at the border.

Traditions and religions determine the social mores that influence society's attitudes, behaviours towards women and the value systems. If we want to make security more gender sensitive and responsive in West Africa, we have to engender the traditional and religious institutions. Inspite of their relative powerlessness, women in West Africa due to their primary care giving and nurturing role have a connection and reach within communities and can gather intelligence and broker peace using innovative strategies. Security policy and programming in West Africa, needs to increase the role of women in conflict prevention, peace building and post conflict reconstruction, to maximize this influence. Women are not only victims, but can be agents as well.

There must be a conscious effort to enhance their role as agents of peace and security.

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African Migration to the EU: Between Securitization, Indifference and the Interdependence of two Zones of Free Movement
by Ablam Benjamin Akoutou*

The issue of migration and the heated debate about the sharing of migration burdens between the EU member states is challenging the domestic policies of the EU and putting the unconditional principle of free movement of people within the Union into question. Right-wing populist parties and protest movements have called upon the EU to review the Schengen Agreement. But their ideas for more restriction to free movement are simplistic and as far from reality as the EU migration policy itself, which is unable to ease migration pressures, meet the needs of its labor market and at the same time respect the human rights. There is need to democratize migration policy, to find an alternative and innovative approach to the current issue of migration.

The EU´s actual migration policy towards Africa is equal to securitization, which is in line with the logic of "keeping the crisis at a distance" by increasing the use of classic military means to fight irregular migration and human traffickers. The securitization, however, misses the goal of controlling migration and furthermore drives the migrants into the hands of smugglers and increases their vulnerability. A recent example is the replacement of the Operation Mare Nostrum (coast guards, search and rescue), claimed to have saved

thousands of lives, but politically unpopular and extremely costly (€ 9 Mio. per month for Italy alone), through the cheaper Operation Triton (€ 2,9 Mio. per month for almost 17 countries), which earns the critic of being "a face-saving not a life-saving" operation. The last 20 years of EU migration policy have shown, that the way of controlling can't be to illegalize migration by limiting the legal ways. As those, who want to immigrate, will find a way. Also the funding of "stay-at-home policies" in the countries of origin and the cooperation between the EU and the Maghreb as well as the war in Libya did not stop immigration, they have only delayed, dislocated and kept it out of control. It may sound contradictory, but the EU could ease the migration pressure by facilitating and simplifying the process of legal and refugee migration. The effects of the EU strategy to "keep

the crisis at a distance" are more complex than they seem and are hardly in concordance with the EU principles of coherence, complementarity and coordination in its foreign policy. Indeed, in the context of externalizations of EU border controls in the South in terms of airport transit visas, readmission agreements or bilateral accords on migration management, West African countries at the crossroads to Europe are faced with contradictory requirements: ECOWAS, which puts intra-regional mobility at the center of its regional integration process and the agreements, which force these countries to reinforce border controls. In other words, the externalization of EU border controls in West African countries weakens the integration process in the ECOWAS region and is fundamentally opposed to the efforts and the ECOWAS Vision 2020, to move from "ECOWAS of STATES" to "ECOWAS of PEOPLE". This transition should allow ECOWAS citizens who possess an ECOWAS ID to work and reside everywhere they want in the region. The African Union (AU) should be inspired by the ECOWAS ID for free movement across the whole continent.

As far as the AU and African leaders are concerned, their deafening silence regarding the drowning of African migrants in the Mediterranean Sea and deaths in the Sahara desert is becoming more and more unbearable and questionable: Is it helplessness, discomfort or joint guilt? Is it indifference or they just really don't care about the lives

lost? The Civil Society on both continents should act to avoid further loss of lives and give a voice to the voiceless victims, pushing African leaders to action, because "the migrants dying in the Mediterranean Sea are not unwanted trespassers. They are human", tweeted Kofi Annan, the former United Nations secretary. Consequently, they deserve the same sympathy expressed by the African leaders to the victims of the attack on the French satirical weekly magazine Charlie Hebdo.

In the era of globalization, there is nothing more difficult than controlling or even stopping migration flows. It is rather the migration policy that should be adjusted. The right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are inalienable human rights and cannot be criminalized. Far from willing to plead for a world without borders, there is reason to take a step back from the thought, that open societies are at risk in times of extensive migration. This way of thinking completely ignores social and economic contributions of migrants, be it from North-South or South-North migration.

The fact is, the number of migrants and displaced persons worldwide is constantly increasing and a shift in these trends is not to be expected in the near future. Consequently, overcoming these challenges requires a long-term and joint approach which includes the countries of origin, transit, and destination as well as the migrants themselves. If there is a real will to

stop the tragedies in the Sahel and Mediterranean Sea, the migrants should be taken as key actors and be involved in the formulation of migration policy. The latter should undertake a shift from a one-dimensional, to a multidimensional perspective of migration, whereby political, economic, social, psychological and security aspects are considered in the whole migration process.

It might sound a simplistic idea, but a sustainable approach to ease the migration pressure on the EU is the demystification of Europe. Indeed, the latter should look and be different from the "stay-at-home policies" and rather underline the fact that Europe cannot be the only alternative for youth in economically and politically hopeless countries. African youth leave their countries in busses every week, fleeing the prevailing poverty, massive unemployment and governance systems that stop one to hope, to dream of a better future. If the youth are the greatest wealth of any nation, African leaders have to give hope to their youth via good governance and transparency, strong institutions and accountability. Ignoring African youth means a lack of appreciation of these needed resources in the planning of the continent's future.

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