



Human Security in West Africa:

Challenges, Synergies and Action for a Regional Agenda

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Workshop

« Human security in West Africa:
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Introduction

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1. Statement by Mr. Charles Goerens, President of Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC)

As an introduction to this debate, I feel I should paraphrase General de Gaulle who said: "Going to the complicated East, I took off with simple ideas."

In analysing all aspects of the problem of security, we could also paraphrase General de Gaulle by saying something like: "Going to complicated Africa, I took off with simple ideas."

Let us glance at the period before the end of the cold war in 1989. The world was not at war, neither was it at peace, but there was rather a balance of terror. Then came the collapse of the Berlin wall, and the advent of a new type of conflict, with the assertion of national identity in countries which again encountered difficulties not long ago.

In 1994, we had the Rwanda genocide; we can still recall the statements of General Roméo Dallaire asking the international community to send a plane to jam the programmes of "Radio des Mille Collines". The international community and the various actors, in particular a well-known human rights organization, answered General Dallaire: "Since Rwanda has obtained freedom of the press, it is out of the question to challenge such freedom."

You see how we can sometimes misjudge situations? Some people said that a plane would cost too much to jam the "Radio des Mille Collines" broadcasts which were inciting genocide. I was already a political actor at that time, and there was talk everywhere of the lack of warning and early-warning systems, as if they did not already know for several years that the worst was yet to come. We knew then that Rwanda could be part of the worst case scenario.

I am saying this to come back to my introductory statements: we are readily caught up in easy problems, just as we are also very easily convinced by rational statements and very easily discouraged by deeper analyses. However, I think we must face the issue, which is real and deep. The causes can be divided into two categories: direct and indirect (or underlying). For example, there are international documents, which are authoritative and guide us in seeking solutions to problems.

What has also changed since the cold war is the nature of conflict. Currently in Africa, and to my knowledge, unlike cross-border conflicts, most conflicts are no longer international but intra-national. I believe this leads us to the heart of the problem: since conflicts are intra-national, we need to find out more about the domestic situation within countries. Do all these conflicts in Africa (I am not going to list them...) not have a common characteristic? I think so: notably that of the Government's incapacity to solve them. This incapacity may be due to several factors: lack of resources, for example. However, there are also well-organised States, which do not want these conflicts to end. In Rwanda, for example, the Government was better organized than some people imagined; whereas, in other States, the lack and absence of organisation contribute to the difficulties we know. One Head of State (I will of course not say who) told me about ten years ago: "I am at the helm of a corrupt State. My State is corrupt because my civil servants are corrupt. My civil servants are corrupt because I do not have money to pay their salaries because there is no money in the budget. I even feel sorry for them because if they do not have money at the end of the month, they cannot feed their families. The economy is doing poorly because no one invests here. When I ask a foreign investor to invest here, he tells me that he cannot because my country is corrupt. So help me change this vicious circle into a virtuous circle..."

In this country, which I will not name, there is a problem of security due to the lack of mechanisms that can be implemented. This example illustrates how we need to be aware of the dangers we may face if the current situation deteriorates. Having said that, there is hope even though we should not lose sight of reality. There is hope because much has happened since the early 1980s and 1990s. Of course, we need to be aware of everything that has contributed to the current situation, without losing sight of the potentials and opportunities on which we can capitalize for sustainable development in Africa, taking into account the smooth development of States, civil society, democracy, relations between States, as well as better integration into the economy and multilateral decision-making system.

I say this with much conviction because I see no future for an autarchic country. Indeed, there is a country whose experience is rather dissuasive – North Korea. This country does not engage in trade, does nothing to be part of the outside world, it offers nothing and it takes nothing, and refuses to implement the give-and-take policy which serves as the basis for world trade. There is little hope for this country.

I know how anxious you are in Africa to open up to the world. In my opinion we cannot take short cuts. I attended the last World Trade Organization (WTO) Summit in Hong Kong, and I must say that Africa's point of view was not adequately taken into account. I think Africa should open up to the world in stages: at the regional level first with ECOWAS. The texts that govern international relations, in particular the Cotonou Agreements, which provide for partnership agreements, should also be development instruments covering all aspects: from poverty reduction to security, promotion of the economy, etc.

It is extremely important for our expectations to be consistent with the guidelines set out in international documents (Cotonou Agreements), particularly on security, where I refer to the international agenda, especially the Millennium Development Goals. If I say that as regards integration of African countries into the world economy, we should not take short cuts. We in Europe also had to go from one stage to the next. So as not to expose ourselves completely to brutal competition in the beginning, we opted for protection clauses. I believe it should be the same in Africa. For example, as regards agriculture, African producers cannot compete with those various productivity levels ranging from 1 to 100. With respect to cereal production, for example, if we compare productive regions in Europe to the Sahel region, the productivity gaps vary from 1 to 500. It seems essential to first increase regional trade between competitors on the same par and then slowly attempt to open up further. Economic openness should therefore comply with this principle of progression. We also need to review the accountability of international institutions, particularly those which are not controlled by national Parliaments, for example the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The IMF has blamed itself, and has today admitted that the national adjustment plans were unsuccessful because while they helped balance public finance, they drained the basic social sectors (access to primary health care, literacy, etc.). Indeed, you cannot spend the same money twice.

If I talk of commercial integration by stages, it is in order to obtain another constant when we have to face the most urgent problems. State governance and regional governance must be developed and there must be investment in basic social structures. Here I believe that development cooperation is appropriate: it can be part of the solution, and not part of the problem. We have only heard strong criticism of development cooperation before, during and after the G8 Summit in Gleneagles on debt relief for the least developed countries (LDCs). I believe it is time to audit well-thought-out and delivered assistance. Indeed, aid can provide intelligent support aimed, for

example, at increasing the absorptive capacity and appropriation of development by recipient countries. There is also the risk that aid can miss its objectives. However, more generally, positive experiences should greatly discourage the temptation to challenge development aid. I believe that here also, we are not starting from scratch; a perspective has been opened, particularly by the European Union, which has committed 0.7% of its GDP to development aid by 2015. This decision is revolutionary, when compared to the effort of the international community as a whole, Europe is a pioneer. The United States, which is not at this level, has even tripled its aid over the last decade (and I am speaking under the control of the American Ambassador present here), which may also be attributed to international cooperation. If I say that the development of basic social sectors is a priority (to change the vicious circle into a virtuous one), it is mainly because of the pressing expectations of the young generations within the context of high demographic growth (as underscored by Mr. Lauzon in his introductory statement). To meet these major challenges, there needs to be massive investment in the social sectors, economic openness must be fostered, and the regional dimension promoted. Otherwise, in ten years, we will still be facing a more alarming situation than today. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) constitute a good reference to guide us in the coming years. However, it should be noted that while poverty is a source of insecurity, the MDGs which aim to improve the situation are only an incomplete response since they only aim at halving poverty by 2015, a goal which we all know will be difficult to achieve. This is, in a way, an admission of failure since we know that we cannot completely eradicate poverty. The goal defined at the Millennium Summit in 2000 will probably not be achieved by a number of African States. That is an admission of failure, and we should now examine what can be done to accelerate the process. I believe that simple solutions will not make us progress. I also think that fate is not a good adviser. For example, the decision in 2000 to guarantee AIDS patients access to anti-retroviral drugs went against any fatalist attitude. Indeed, 5-6 years ago, access to anti-retroviral drugs cost about 10,000 dollars per patient, and I was one of the few optimists who thought that the situation should be improved for the patients, particularly with the creation of a Global Fund. Today, the Bill Clinton Foundation offers treatment at 150 dollars per patient per year, which has divided the initial cost by 70. This type of idea will go a long way: remember the story of penicillin; and that of the demands of Africans to the WTO to which the international community responded. In light of these examples, I believe there is hope. Even though the current situation is a picture of shadows of light, the first should not obscure the second. There is no security without development just as there is no development without security. On this point, I wish to refer to the document prepared by the Commission set up by the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, headed by the former Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Gareth Evans, entitled: "The responsibility to protect". This document sets out two causes of conflict: (i) direct causes, and (ii) underlying causes. Direct causes are those responsible for triggering hostilities and loss of control of situations; here, diplomacy should be initiated to prevent spread of the conflict. As for the underlying causes, they are linked to poverty. On this point, all the diverse panel members (politicians, academics, humanitarians) agreed on the need to distinguish these causes of conflict. This document should inspire and call upon us to reflect on the causes of conflict, which unfortunately are long-standing. We therefore need to develop initiatives that can change the above-mentioned vicious circle into a virtuous circle. I believe the following elements can provide, if not the response, but at least, parts of the solution. I think all the efforts undertaken by ECOWAS to promote civil society are crucial. This should provide societies with more structure which, in the absence of common views and debate on their future, could pull them apart and destroy them. I can only be pleased with ECOWAS contributions, together with those of the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC) to the promotion of civil society. There is a second hope for continental governance. The African Union (AU) today has broken off completely from the cant that characterized the former Organization of African Unity (OAU). Recently, I had the opportunity to visit President Konaré and Commissioner Djinnit who are doing a great job coordinating a remarkable analysis

on conflict. I believe Africa should not be alone in seeking solutions to the problems. This is the first time that we see, at the continental level, a real determination to go forward, even if we have to admit that the process is still fragile. Here, we are making our contributions to strengthen it. Here also, there are some partnerships to which priority should be given, particularly the European Union's (EU) strategy for Africa, without excluding the contribution of other powers and other entities. We are here to make our contribution and produce results. Africa and the AU need them, and can take credit for some positive results, such as the fact of having succeeded, through African mediation, in installing a consensus Prime Minister in Côte d'Ivoire. Second positive point: the prevention and stabilisation process in Burundi as a result of the determination of Southern African countries which were ahead of the United Nations. In Africa, we talk only of failures which are more often reported by the international press. These examples of success finally prove that Africa can do many things on its own, and should only resort to external supplementary support. I made reference to my Luxembourg origins; I should not be here as a free man if the Americans had not freed us in 1944-45. Indeed, we were unable to take our own destiny in hand, and with this in mind I would like to recall an initiative which I still consider as the first and exemplary in contemporary times: the Marshall Plan. We tend to forget the huge sums given to some 16-17 European countries, except when commemorating Marshall's speech. What we know less is that the Plan initiated a completely innovative type of relationship by helping political entities help themselves. It is this type of relationship that I consider exemplary today because the Plan was both a means of reviving the economies of these European countries and pacifying this area, which in the absence of this type of plan aimed at promoting the idea of a common destiny, would always be exposed to danger because tensions were still strong. Without this type of plan, I think we would have been exposed to the worst scenarios.

We therefore have a picture both positive and negative, but I continue to believe, as I indicated in my introductory statements, that we have every interest to agree on the positive which can take us forward. I think we have many things to do together, and the coming years will show us that counting on complementarity, synergy between States – in compliance with a relevant international agenda – will enable us to regain hope for a young generation that is only waiting to be recognized with dignity. We do not have much time to meet this challenge. If we want to achieve the MDGs before 2015, we have to double our efforts and quickly. If you opened prospects to a 20-year old youth in this region in 1990, he would already be 35 years old today. If we have to wait a generation to achieve the first results, some will already have gone beyond the average life expectancy of this region. If we do not have to take short cuts in economic integration, we should, on the other hand, do so in the promotion of basic social sectors, bearing in mind that without a minimum of security, there is no development. I would like to conclude by referring to a representative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) who expressed his views during the Hong Kong negotiations. He asked to know why Africa had such disappointing results in its integration into the world economy, particularly by comparing Niger and South Korea, which about 50 years ago had similar GDPs (today, we know the positions of the two countries). In response, he was told that to succeed on the markets, we need to be flexible, and to be flexible, we need to take risks. However, only those who have a minimum of a safety net take risks. In industrialized countries, there is, for example, social security. However, if you do not have anything of the sort, you are not ready to accept risks. I think that is the best example to illustrate the link between security and development. I think we should be aware of this relationship, which should be taken into account in our strategic thinking if we want to continue to transform this vicious circle into a virtuous circle. I would like you to be aware of the total availability of the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC) which works with a limited but competent team, and which seeks to contribute to the development of all in our common interest. I fervently hope that these three days of strategic thinking will be successful.

2. Presentation by Mr. Normand LAUZON, Director, Sahel and West Africa Club

On behalf of the Sahel and West Africa Club, **I would like to thank Togo for hosting and warmly welcoming all of you who are participating at this workshop on human security:** representatives from the international community, international organisations, in particular UNREC, UNDP, OCHA, UNOWA, UNESCO, regional organisations, notably ECOWAS and ROPPA, West African Governments, organisations and networks working in the security sector such as WANSED, civil society, associations, and finally all of you, development actors.

The President of the Sahel and West Africa Club, Mr. Charles Goerens and my colleague, Mr. Massaër Diallo, will explain to you this morning the objectives of this meeting and the expected results.

For my part, **I would like to address the concept of human security by giving a brief overview of the evolution of this concept since the 1990s.**

- Since the end of the Cold War, the debate on human security has been an integral part of the international development agenda. During the 1990s, a large number of issues related to human security were integrated into the work undertaken by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the OECD's Development Aid Committee (DAC).
- Human security is no longer only a concern of defence and humanitarian actors. It has become an important stake in the fight against poverty and at the heart of civil society's concerns.
- At the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000, the United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, emphasised the need for an approach to security which is focused more on the individual. Security must not only be addressed in terms of defending territory but also in terms of protecting people. The 2000 Millennium Report moreover calls on the international community to react in order to achieve "Freedom from Need" (Development Agenda) and "Freedom from Fear" (Security Agenda). As a prerequisite to sustainable peace, security is considered essential in order to attain the Millennium Development Goals and to develop human capacity to its greatest potential.
- The concept of human security covers a multi-dimensional reality. Thus we speak of economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security from the local level to the global level. We will have the opportunity to come back to these different aspects over the next three days.

- One of the reasons for which we find ourselves here today, is to enable actors of the region to identify specific components of human security in this region while recognising that there should not be any universal “ready-made” or “pre-conceived” answers that would not take into account local, national and regional realities.
- Thus a pragmatic approach is essential to our exchanges which can strike a balance between what can be attained over the medium- and long-term and what can be done in the short-term. Indeed, all aspects of human security presents challenges that we must constantly face with concrete actions at all levels all while knowing that this calls for dynamics of change within the framework of a long-term strategic approach.
- In Africa, and notably West Africa, the challenges of human security are at the same time numerous and specific. We will certainly have the opportunity over the next three days to evaluate the ongoing initiatives as regards human security. For example, I will mention regional initiatives such as NEPAD and those of ECOWAS notably in the promotion of the Supplementary Protocol, which aim to transform the concept of human security into concrete realities to benefit the greatest number of people, notably in the fight against extreme poverty, conflict management and exit from crisis, eradication of pandemics, all these being topics covered by the Millennium Development Goals.
- Over the last decades, the African continent and West Africa, in particular, have developed their own security frameworks through the OAU, then the AU, ECOWAS and the WAEMU. The progress made in the application of ECOWAS’ Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, the Maintenance of Peace and Security represents positive steps forward towards establishing a framework for African security.
- The concept of human security has enabled an important evolution as regards the necessary means in terms of perceptions and implementation while adding the populations’ security to the State security issue, which up to now had been considered crucial. It is not a matter of excluding one form of security to benefit another but to understand the complementarity. Human security is not “in fashion”, whether we call it this or rename it something else within a new paradigm in five or ten years, which is usually what happens. It should be considered as a “public good” of utmost importance as much for State stability as for the well-being of individuals and communities.
- Progress in this area calls for coordination, consultations, negotiations which will continue to generate conflicts of interest and disagreements. But this should not stop us from moving ahead and, in this particular case, to be able to develop an action framework which takes into account simultaneously the various aspects of West African realities such as its achievements so far, its current problems and their potentialities. During the course of this meeting, others will certainly emphasise the

vital role in this area of political parties, civil society, the media, women and youth of the region.

- Similarly, the positive and negative impacts of globalisation on human security in the region must be identified.

Why is the Sahel and West Africa Club interested in human security issues in West Africa?

I would like to rapidly mention four factors that can explain this interest:

1. Our steadfast regional approach and our strategic partnership with ECOWAS, itself committed to these fundamental issues, we are striving to grasp the human security issues at the regional level in its entirety.
2. At the same time, and it is not contradictory, the importance that we give to the complementarity between various levels of action. Indeed, we are convinced that the regional can only be built if the local and national are taken into account. At the same time, we can understand human security as an assemblage of several complementary levels which starts at the basic level the family unit and which evolves as a shockwave to the local, national, regional and international levels.
3. Our network approach which enables us to bring various partners, West African development actors into dialogue but also to decompartmentalise the debates.
4. Our continued interest in all of the issues relating to the medium- and long-term development perspectives of the region, including issues such as food security, future for youth, role of local actors, notably women in situations of exit from crisis, and the utilisation of resources that could ensure better well-being for a rapidly growing population. Indeed we shall not forget that the African continent is still a continent experiencing rapid population growth. Thus in the 18 countries that we cover from Cape Verde to Cameroon via Chad, it is estimated that the population will increase by more than 100 million inhabitants from now until 2025 and that 55% of the population will be under 20 years of age. A fact that adds to the challenges of human security in the region and which we must take into account.

Finally, I think that you will surely address the following questions in your exchanges:

- What interaction exists between human security and democracy?
- How to assure security for individuals without impeding their freedom to act?
- What role can civil society play as regards the challenge of human security with which the States are faced?
- At the regional level, how can policies and regional development frameworks prepared by regional organisations respond more effectively to the stakes of human security?

- How to strengthen the attention given to the issues of human security in the process of developing national policies and strategies?
- What should be the media's role and responsibility as regards human security?

We hope that this workshop will be followed-up by a strengthening of the existing network of exchanges in the region and by concrete decisions towards better security for all.

FIRST SESSION

The Human Security Issue: Significance and Scale

The human security issue: Significance and scale, by Mr. Ivor Richard FUNG, Director, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa.

The human security issue: Significance and scale, by Mr. Ivor Richard FUNG, Director, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa.

I- Definition of the concept of human security

The concept of “*human security*” was first made popular by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its annual Human Development Report of 1994. But the ideas underlying this notion are far from new.

In fact, the doctrine based on the promotion of the safety of individuals was established as far back as in the early 1990s, with the initiation of the globalisation and democratization process as well as the universalization of the issue of human rights.

With the end of the Cold War, new threats to international peace and security emerged. No longer were they so much about the risk of attacks against the territorial integrity of Nations as a subject of international public law, as about threats against the lives and well-being of peoples, seen as a single entity.

Hence, the change in the world geo-strategic and security context induced by the end of East-West bipolarity led to the emergence of new security problems.

The international community is faced with the intensification of phenomena such as mass migrations, armed intra-State conflicts with a strong ethnic overtone, the unbridled growth of organised crime, the resurgence of pandemic diseases such as AIDS, the growth of extreme poverty and marginalisation, as well as immeasurable environmental degradation – all factors that call for new policy responses rather than the traditional national security options.

In the light of an appraisal of the changes underway and the eminently transnational nature of the new threats to international peace and security, on 31 January 1992, the UN Security Council adopted an important statement in which it affirmed that: “*The non-military sources of instability in the economic, social, humanitarian and ecological fields have become threats to peace and security*”. With this perspective, it is vital for the international community to envisage and institute appropriate measures through the UN.

Some of the international organisation’s Member States are following the Security Council’s example by considerably redirecting their foreign policies, with the intention of introducing a systematic consideration of the “*sustainable or collective human security*” dimension henceforth, in particular with regard to humanitarian actions. Canada, for instance, has been especially active in this field.

What does “*human security*” really mean?

In reality, none of the definitions proposed to this day has been accepted unanimously, due to the scale and complexity of the issue. However, there is a meeting of minds over a number of criteria expounded in the definitions provided by Frédéric Mayor, Kofi Annan and Lloyd Axworthy.

For Frédéric Mayor, former UNESCO Director General, human security coincides with the “*protection*” and “*defence of human dignity*” in all circumstances. In this perspective, human security becomes identified with the defence of human rights, which are universal and indivisible in their very essence. Within this framework, according to Frédéric Mayor, it is up to the UN to promote it in all its facets in all five continents.

For Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General, an objective link binds globalisation, international governance and human security. In his 3 April 2000 Action Plan for the 21st century, Kofi Annan asserted that globalisation had to emerge as a positive force for people all over the world. It had to help in building a better world for all of humanity together, one in which the human being was at the core of all policies in order to avoid conflicts breaking out.

The UN Secretary General combined the total fulfilment of three fundamental human rights in his formulation of the notion of human security, i.e.:

1. The right to freedom from want
2. The right to freedom from fear and
3. The right of future generations to inherit a healthy planet.

For Lloyd Axworthy, former Canadian minister of Foreign Affairs, certainly one of the most ardent theoreticians and practitioners of “*human security*”, the latter essentially meant the protection of individuals from threats, whether or not accompanied by violence. In his view, it meant a situation or state characterised by the absence of any attacks upon fundamental human rights, security or life.

The definition proposed by Lloyd Axworthy is directly opposed to the principle of the sovereignty and security of Nations, as it actually places the individual at the core of international life. Viewed this way, security is assessed according to what it finally offers individuals themselves rather than according to the number of arms control agreements signed between States.

Such a perception undoubtedly induces a real epistemological change in the way we deal with international peace and security issues.

Finally, it could be said that the concept of “*human security*” consists in preserving international stability on the basis of the promotion of values such as:

- The primacy of law
- The respect of democracy
- The defence of human rights
- Good public affairs management
- The peaceful settlement of conflicts and
- The protection of the environment, etc.

In the light of these theoretical definitions, let us now look at the legal foundations and political scope of human security, its general field of application and its relevance in West Africa, one by one.

II- Legal foundations and political scope of the human security concept

The notion of human security not only has an objective legal basis, but also an undeniable political impact that needs to be highlighted.

II- 1 – Legal foundation of the concept

It is true that the State, whose security has to be guaranteed at all times, continues to be the principal actor in international relations today and the fundamental subject of classic International Public Law. However, it is no less true that the notion of human security, which places the individual's security at the centre of its concerns, also has the relevant legal foundations.

In this connection, the following may be cited, although this is not an exhaustive list:

- International Humanitarian Law
- The United Nations Charter and
- International Human Rights Law.

II-1-A- Humanitarian dimension

With the 1899 and 1907 Hague Conventions, the four 1949 Geneva Conventions and their two Supplementary Protocols of 1977, it is clear that International Humanitarian Law as it is known today is devoted entirely to the protection of human beings in times of armed conflict.

One of the objectives of IHL, among others, is to provide human security and defend human dignity (whether the humans in question are combatants or not) in times of war. With the irruption of the "*Right to Humanitarian Assistance*" on the world stage, we are witnessing the birth of what is practically a new right that strengthens humanitarian action by looking at the needs of the victims alone. This right, which can also be called the "*Right to Humanitarian Intervention or Interference*", is being strongly promoted today by the United Nations through its resolutions (43/131) and (45/100), adopted respectively by the General Assembly on 8 December 1988 and 14 December 1990. Moreover, since the advent of this new right, several peacekeeping operations decided upon by the world organisation have been conducted in application of its cardinal principle – i.e., defending human security at all cost.

II-1-B- The founding text of the United Nations Organisation

It is true that in spirit, the United Nations Charter was drafted in order to guarantee State security first and foremost, as subject to international public law. However, the text also contains elements whose aims also incorporate the human security dimension.

First of all, the Charter was signed by the Nations in the name of the "*Peoples of the United Nations*", who declared that they were determined "*to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war..., and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women..., and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom*".

Then, the mechanism of the Charter contains binding commitments, in particular: "*To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples (...), to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion*".

Finally, Chapter IX of the Charter needs to be quoted here, which is entirely devoted to “*International economic and social cooperation*” and whose Article 55 constitutes the epicentre that clearly highlights the “collective human security” dimension.

Hence, it is clear that the United Nations Charter, both in its Preamble and in Chapters I and IX, is definitely an unbiased legal source for the human security doctrine, which does not supplant the doctrine of the organisation’s Member States, but is its immediate corollary.

It is true that the human security doctrine places the individual at the core, but the individual’s security can only be ensured if the State’s security is also guaranteed. In this perspective, State security is no longer seen as an end in itself, but rather as a means to guarantee the security of its people.

For in the same way that human security in a given part of the world depends on the security of other people in other parts of the world, the terms “international peace and security” really mean that the security of a State depends on the security of other States – which means the most absolute interdependence.

II-1-C- Respect of human rights

Since the UN was set up, a full-fledged Human Rights Law came into being, internationalised by the Charter itself. Almost 350 treaties have been signed, among which texts devoted fully or partially to human security are fairly favourably placed.

The priority list of the International Conventions that take an interest in the issue of human security includes the following, although this is not an exhaustive list:

- The 1948 Convention on Genocide
- The Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
- The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Convention on the Status of Refugees (for the protection of refugees)

The following may also be cited:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948 and
- The 2 UN Pacts of 1966, one on civil and political rights and the other on economic, social and cultural rights.

With regard to human rights, the UN also attempted to draft a third generation of rights – the “*so-called solidarity rights*”, including:

- The right to peace
- The right to development
- The right to a healthy environment
- The right of access to the common heritage of mankind

Hence, in this collection of texts and in the other standards mentioned earlier, the right to human security finds an indisputable legal significance and origin, by guaranteeing its relevance and sustainability for better implementation.

II-2- Political scope of the human security concept

Taken in their simplest form, which affirms the primacy of human security over that of States, the human security issue has direct consequences for the political actions of States, especially with regard to foreign policy.

II-2-A- Primacy of the individual's sovereignty over the State's

The human security doctrine has a destabilising effect on the fundamental concepts of Human Rights, especially sovereignty, non-interference, international security, the subjects of international law, the sources of law and the role of institutions.

Since the problematics of human security is taken into account, the notion of sovereignty is being reviewed increasingly often. For instance, the UN Secretary General has started making quite a clear distinction between conceptions of sovereignty – State sovereignty and individual sovereignty. For him, *“state sovereignty, in its most basic sense, is being redefined by the forces of globalisation and international co-operation. (...) The state is now widely understood to be the servant of its people, and not vice versa. Individual sovereignty - human rights and fundamental freedoms of each and every individual as enshrined in our Charter - has been enhanced by a renewed consciousness of the right of every individual to control his or her own destiny”*.

The problem then is to reconcile human rights and the rights of and between States, with the latter having to guarantee the former. The legal dilemma is great – between the need to ensure that people fully enjoy their rights, and the just as imperious need to respect State sovereignty. But practice shows that faced with an oppressive State that denies its people their rights, the international community does not hesitate to intervene in the name of safeguarding human security.

In his report to the General Assembly during the Millennium Summit, Kofi Annan said that: *“But surely no legal principle – not even sovereignty – can ever shield crimes against humanity. Where such crimes occur and peaceful attempts to halt them have been exhausted, the Security Council has a moral duty to act on behalf of the international community”*.

This new concept did not fail to raise problems either. Some States have viewed it with mistrust, scepticism and even pure hostility.

II- 2- B- Requirement of cooperation and solidarity

Along with civil wars, armed conflicts are no longer solely a State or inter-State business. As civil populations are generally the primary victims *par excellence* of this type of conflict, the international community has sometimes reacted in the name of humanitarian objectives, through solidarity or compassion, to restore stability and security in warring States. Human rights violations have been thereafter condemned, as witnessed by the establishment of the Ad Hoc International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, both of which opened the door to the establishment of an International Criminal Court.

Moreover, the concepts of Sustainable Human Development and Environmental Protection are now being included among the major concerns of most nations and international organisations. Projects, programmes and even full-fledged policies have been adopted and implemented,

incorporating these important themes for the good of mankind and for human security. Even better, the rights of future generations are being taken into account now, and the international community no longer hesitates to openly examine bioethical issues.

With the birth of a particularly active “global civil society”, States are having to “clean up their act” and reform their foreign policies. The idea of “global governance” and the feeling of belonging to a “global village” are taking deeper and deeper root in people’s minds. All of mankind seems to be becoming aware of the fact that all men are the same and share a common destiny – whence this type of globalisation of law.

III- Scope of the human security concept

The issue of human security is vast and goes beyond the field of Human Rights alone. Indeed, several themes can be incorporated therein. However, it must be pointed out that two major programmes define its scope quite clearly – the UN and UNESCO programmes.

III-1- The UN programme

From the UN’s viewpoint, human security embodies much more than the absence of military threats, encompassing freedom from economic deprivation, the right to a life of dignity, the protection of fundamental human rights, etc. The very first formalisation of the international organisation’s programme on the human security issue can be found in the three “Agendas” drafted between 1992 and 1996 by the former Secretary General, the Egyptian, Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

- The first – the “Agenda for Peace” of 30 June 1992 – was drafted at the request of the Security Council and completed on 3 January 1995 by a “Supplement”.
- The second – the “Agenda for Development” – was presented to the General Assembly on 6 May 1994.
- The third – the “Agenda for Democratisation” – was presented on 18 October 1996.

These three important documents emerged as a full-fledged doctrine for the promotion of international peace and security. In fact, the “Agendas” are based on the principle of support for Development, Democracy and Human Rights – three concepts that have the advantage of incorporating the wide-ranging problematics of safeguarding collective human security within their respective scope, in all five continents.

For the UN, collective peace and security can only really be achieved if the States combine their efforts in order to eradicate any risk or threat to international stability.

After Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Kofi Annan, the current UN Secretary General, has also manifested a strong interest in the human security issue. To this end, he proposed an action plan for the 21st century, in which he said that the “*overriding challenge*” was currently to make the most of the opportunities offered by globalisation, making it mean more than an extended marketplace by giving priority to the “*human dimension*” and that “*we must learn how to govern better, and – above all – how to govern better together*”.

It was to this end that he identified four major constituents in his plan, i.e.:

1. Globalisation and governance
2. Freedom from want
3. A world free of fear
4. For a viable future

Kofi Annan's perspective has the merit of dealing with all these issues – human rights, disarmament and peacekeeping operations, protection and defence of the environment, development aid, democracy, etc. The central idea is to try and humanise or manage globalisation on the basis of the six values that reflect the spirit of the UN Charter, i.e.:

- Freedom
- Equity and solidarity
- Tolerance
- Non-violence
- Respect of nature
- Shared responsibility

As early as in 1994, UNDP developed indicators for promoting “human” and “sustainable development” and classified the various countries in the light of this Human Development Index (HDI).

The three criteria selected by this UN institution were and are:

- People's life expectancy
- People's educational and literacy levels and
- The population's health status

Since 1995, we have witnessed the systematic incorporation of the poverty eradication issue by all UN and specialised institutions – which proves, were it necessary, that the UN places the human security issue at the heart of its current concerns. This is all the more true in view of the fact that one of its specialised bodies, whose mandate is related to promoting peace and culture, has always placed human beings at the heart of its activities.

III-2- UNESCO's programme

In fact, the UN General Assembly proclaimed the year 2000 as the “*International Year for the Culture of Peace*” and the 2001-2010 decade as the “*International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World*”.

According to its Constitution, the primary mission of UNESCO, which plays a vital role in this context, is to “*contribute to peace and security by promoting collaboration among the nations through education, science and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, for the rule of law and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world (...), by the Charter of the United Nations*”.

In 1995, this institution proposed an excellent definition of the culture of peace, integrating three interdependent dimensions:

1. A “*culture of social interaction and sharing, based on the principles of freedom, justice and democracy, tolerance and solidarity*”

2. A *“culture that rejects violence, endeavours to prevent conflicts by tackling their roots and to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation”*
3. A *“culture which guarantees everyone the full exercise of all rights and the means to participate fully in the endogenous development of their society.”*

For UNESCO, democracy, education, human security and the rule of law are, among others, the corner stones for sustainable peace and lasting security in the world.

IV- Relevance of the concept of human security in West Africa

As is the case everywhere else, in West Africa, the defence of human security involves a number of problems – some interdependent, others completely different from each other.

In all cases, it generally concerns issues linked to the fight against:

- Extreme poverty and social exclusion
- Human Rights violations, especially women’s and children’s rights
- Bad political and economic governance
- The proliferation of small arms
- Food insecurity
- Environmental degradation
- Illiteracy
- Endemic diseases, etc.

The prevailing situation in West Africa quite clearly illustrates the problems other African sub-regions face with regard to the respect of all human rights underlying the concept of human security. However, considerable efforts are being made by the ECOWAS States to find suitable solutions to these problems.

We should add to these efforts those made by civil society organisations that share the idea that *“sustainable and collective peace”* can only be achieved in the sub-region by *“fostering cooperation and integration (...) for the economic growth and development of West Africa”*.

IV-1- General overview of the human security issue in West Africa

The collapse of the security system in most West African States – with, on the one hand, civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia and, on the other, armed attacks in Mali, Senegal, Niger, the Republic of Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and recently in Côte d’Ivoire – has worsened the phenomenon of insecurity among the people of this sub-region over the last ten years or more.

It is true that the causes of the insecurity prevailing in West Africa vary according to the countries or contexts. However, there are certain crosscutting problems that link these diverse situations and have a real impact on the human security situation in the sub-region, for example:

- The proliferation of light and small calibre weapons and
- The spread of HIV/AIDS

IV-1- A: Impact of the proliferation of light and small calibre weapons on human security within the ECOWAS area

The instability generated by the civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia, the incursions by rebel movements in Senegal, along the Republic of Guinea's southern border, in Mali, Niger, Guinea-Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire, have led to a considerable spread in the proliferation and illegal circulation of small arms in West Africa.

Due to the porosity of national borders and the strongly intertwined West African population, the accumulation of light weapons in a country prone to internal disputes rapidly takes on a regional dimension, thereby threatening the stability of neighbouring States and the entire sub-region. The availability of small arms reinforces the cycle of violence and compromises the sub-region's chances of development. The ease with which such weapons can be obtained and their misuse contribute to an atmosphere of insecurity, which in turn compromises the socio-economic development of these countries.

Hence, comprising a vicious circle, insecurity and the availability of small arms undermine economic development efforts, increase unemployment and promote violence. This analysis led UN experts to establish the relationship between security and development and define the concept of "*security first*", making the success of development programmes subservient to the establishment of an efficient system guaranteeing the security of citizens and, based on that, the security of the nation – and hence, human security.

The proportional and integrated approach to security and development can therefore be found at the core of the various analyses of human security in West Africa, where almost 8 million light and small calibre weapons are circulating illegally today.

Although these weapons are not in themselves the cause of conflicts in West Africa, their availability extends such conflicts and makes the area fertile ground for them. The damage these light weapons cause West Africa's civil population goes from pure crime under ordinary law to the destruction of infrastructure that is vital for people's well-being.

In Sierra Leone alone, such weapons have led to the death of hundreds of thousands of civilians, destroyed what little infrastructure the country had and contributed to the exodus of hundreds of thousands of internally or externally displaced people.

Sierra Leone's civil war is a perfect illustration of a context where the respect of human security has been damaged most visibly in West Africa.

Children who have been snatched from their families to become war slaves in the case of boys, and sex slaves in the case of girls, have lost their bearings and have been subjected to daily ideological mind-bashing by warlords, whose fundamental concept is nothing but sadism.

But Sierra Leone is not the only West African country in which light weapons pose a serious threat to human security.

Other countries, such as Mali, Guinea-Bissau, Niger, Nigeria or Côte d'Ivoire, have faced the same problem since the end of the Cold War. Organised urban and cross-border crimes have become almost daily fare here.

The politico-military movements emerging in several of these countries have demanded both greater autonomy for their region and a fairer distribution of national resources. These rebel movements, which obtain fresh weapon supplies through unlawful and even Mafia networks, exacerbate the proliferation of light weapons in the sub-region.

Since 1982, the Casamance region in southern Senegal has been the theatre of combat operations between the rebels of the "Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de Casamance" (Casamance Democratic Forces Movement) and the central government. Over 1,000 people – most of whom were civilians – have already lost their lives in these clashes.

In May 1990, following the attack on Tchintabaraden by a group of armed men, northern Niger plunged into an internal conflict that would lead to thousands of deaths over a period of more than eight years. The causes of the "Tuareg uprising" could probably be found in the lack of development efforts in the North, where the nomads live.

The feeling of political and cultural exclusion and isolation due to the lack of participation of Tuareg communities in the management of affairs contributed in numerous armed movements and self-defence militia exploiting the situation in order to gain political power. Clashes with official defence and security forces, the blockading of axial highways, cattle and car stealing intensified. All this constituted an unremitting threat to human security, while hindering any development activities in the region.

In Guinea-Bissau, since it attained independence in 1974 following a fierce struggle by the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde against Portuguese colonisation, tensions stemming from economic problems prepared the ground for the proliferation of small arms.

The proximity of the armed conflicts of Sierra Leone, Casamance and Liberia further intensified the proliferation phenomenon, not to mention the weapons circulating among the people since the politico-military events of 7 May 1998, during which a large part of the army, which held almost the entire weapon stocks of the nation, had rebelled against the regime in power.

To summarise, the general security situation in West Africa, with the phenomenon of the proliferation of light weapons, could still compromise the development of ideals linked to the human security doctrine.

IV-1- B- Consequences of HIV/AIDS for human security in West Africa

At a strictly social level, it must be noted that certain recurrent problems impacting negatively on the promotion of human security in West Africa remain to be addressed.

Let us not forget that the world's Heads of State and Government, meeting in September 2000 at the UN Headquarters within the framework of the Millennium Summit, adopted a number of objectives to be achieved by 2015, called the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Among these were the goals of promoting peace, security and disarmament, along with development and the eradication of poverty, and a commitment to reverse the trend of the propagation of HIV/AIDS.

In West Africa, this pandemic has already caused considerable damage to a particularly impoverished population. Even in normal conditions of peace and security, interventions aimed at reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS have limited chances of success, but the situation becomes far more complex in the context of armed conflicts.

In fact, since conflict situations engender a form of human powerlessness and social disintegration as they are the targets of physical and sexual violence and lead to the forced displacement of people, poverty and the disorganisation of health systems, people are exposed to an increased risk of HIV/AIDS infection and transmission.

During armed conflicts such as those waged in the West African sub-region over the last decade, women and children have been the most vulnerable to all sorts of violence, including sexual violence. The population displacements inherent to armed conflicts in turn constitute an additional factor enhancing the vulnerability of women and girls, who become particularly exposed to rape in such situations, in order to obtain the minimum for survival – food, water or simply a roof over their heads.

In Sierra Leone and Liberia for instance, mass rape has become a frightening weapon used increasingly and systematically by the warring parties, including for the deliberate transmission of HIV/AIDS. Moreover, the break-up of communities and families – also inherent to the armed conflict raging in these countries – often led to the disruption of stable relations due to the lack of mutual aid and the weakening of the moral authority of the family and culture.

The mass population movements following armed conflicts in the ECOWAS area have put a stop to the care and monitoring provided to persons living with HIV/AIDS in their respective countries. With refugee movements, the HIV/AIDS problem has become a transnational issue in West Africa.

Furthermore, given the growing poverty in some West African countries, those who no longer have access to their normal sources of income and are devoid of any means of subsistence are tempted to consider prostitution as a solution for survival. All this has a direct impact on HIV/AIDS propagation and the right to health promoted by the human security concept.

To sum up, due to their disastrous effect on health, education, the economy and human rights, the conflicts that have broken out in West Africa, particularly within the Mano River Union (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) and Casamance, the emerging conflict in Côte d'Ivoire, and the precarious post-conflict situation in Guinea-Bissau, Niger and Mali, etc., have become objective factors for the spread of HIV/AIDS – a factor that has increased human insecurity in the sub-region.

Given all these threats, strong initiatives are fortunately being taken by the States and civil society organisations working towards the promotion of “*sustainable and collective security*” in West Africa.

IV-2- Key achievements of ECOWAS with regard to the promotion of collective peace and security

Several initiatives have been made both in matters of defence and security and for tackling the social scourges that prevent people from fully enjoying their rights. These initiatives have had an impact both on security as such, and at a social level.

IV-2-A: Relevant initiatives in the defence and security sectors

Upon its establishment, ECOWAS set up a global defence and security mechanism. Though this is not an exhaustive list, the mechanism included:

- The 1978 Protocol on Non-Aggression
- The 1981 Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence
- The 1991 Declaration of Political Principles, condemning *coups d'état*
- ECOMOG, "Ecowas Monitoring Group".

Other relevant mechanisms were also created, including:

- The Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution
- The Observation and Monitoring System (Observation and Monitoring Centres)
- The Council of Elders
- The Mediation and Security Council, and the Moratorium on the import of light and small calibre weapons, which is gradually turning into a full-fledged convention at the sub-regional level and
- The establishment of a network of civil society organisations to promote human security in West Africa.

It must therefore be acknowledged that ECOWAS has made considerable efforts over more than ten years, politically, diplomatically and militarily, in order to build lasting peace and collective security both for its Member States and its people.

IV-2-B: Notable achievements in the fight against social scourges

With regard to human security and from a strictly social perspective, it must be pointed out that several programmes were undertaken within the geographic area of ECOWAS, affecting various fields such as the eradication of drought and illiteracy, the promotion of democratic principles and reproductive health, the control of the HIV/AIDS spread, etc.

In the latter case, the main initiative taken in the sub-region is known as the "Mano River Union Initiative on HIV/AIDS". This is a project carried out in collaboration by the three Mano River Union countries. It was initiated and has been primarily supported by UNAIDS since 1998, through the Inter Country Team for West Africa, in order to reduce the vulnerability of displaced populations and host communities to HIV/AIDS.

The approach adopted by the project is to consider HIV/AIDS as a theme binding these three countries together in order to strengthen peacemaking efforts in the Mano River Union. This is an area that has witnessed recurring conflicts for over a decade, bringing in their wake mass population displacements, humanitarian crises, human rights violations, etc.

The project has three primary objectives:

- Reducing the HIV/AIDS transmission rate among the priority population target groups
- Providing a package of minimum prevention and care services for the target population groups

- Harmonising policies, strategies and activities at the sub-regional level in support of national responses to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

The activities undertaken within this framework are therefore extremely important, all the more so as they have to be put into perspective with regard to other more isolated and modest interventions, such as the efforts being made in certain West African countries to control child trafficking, girl illiteracy, early sexuality and its negative consequences, and other major issues.

One must bear in mind that today, most States in Africa and elsewhere conduct their foreign policies while looking for the “*consensus*” most likely to reflect what they deem to be the values and ideals currently upheld by the international community with regard to promotion of human security.

The political actions of States and civil society organisations tend to be increasingly uniform. Indeed, public international law is gradually turning into cooperation and solidarity law. Given this context, the issue of human security cannot fail to find its due place.

SECOND SESSION

Human Security and its Challenges in the West African Context

- 1. Security and human security in the West African context**, by Mr. Antoine Raogo SAWADOGO, ACE-RECIT, Burkina Faso.
- 2. The importance of human security in West Africa**, by Mr. NNamdi K.OBASI, Head of Department, Department of Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Affairs, African Centre for Strategic Research and Training, National War College Abuja, Nigeria.
- 3. Human security constraints and level of integration in the regional agenda**, by Dr. Yao GEBE, Ledia, University of Ghana, Legon.

1. Security and human security in the West African context, by Mr. Antoine Raogo SAWADOGO, ACE-RECIT, Burkina Faso.

I – INTRODUCTION

The State is supposed to be the primary guarantor of human security. Human security is a daily affair and inevitably influenced by causes and effects in and of the locality. It calls for a regulatory State able to organise and distribute goods for public purposes in such a way as to ensure that all enjoy the same life chances and well-being. When discrimination in the access of people to public goods occurs, human security begins to weaken (it even comes under threat in the case of certain social categories).

Human security may be described as an individual or human community's feeling and/or capacity to be free of any dangers threatening their sources of survival: health, food (water and food), the reproduction of the species, the exercise of their rights and duties, etc.

The feeling of being insecure or secure is more or less acute depending on how distant (in time and space) one is from a threat. From this perspective, human security is related to any phenomenon that could affect the environment of an individual or his community.

Thus, we concur with the position taken in the innovative work of Barry Buzan in the early 1980s and that of other academic experts, which tend to broaden the definition of security to include non-military dimensions, from immigration to environmental protection and the economy. Some international institutions and a large number of States have begun to follow this and to make statements aimed at a less restrictive approach to defence, which was limited to military aspects till now. Individual human beings are increasingly considered as the core value, beyond the fact that they belong to a particular State. That is when the issue of human security comes into play[†].

But it was in 1994 that human security started to turn into a value that played a role in redefining State action, by recognising the primacy of individuals and their rights. In relation to West Africa, the subject is all the more topical since the State – the main guarantor of human security – has never been able to play its role as a legitimate and transcendent force vis-à-vis other competing forces.

Before the advent of the rule of law, an individual's life space and relationship to the group he belonged to were the main human security or insecurity factors.

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II - HUMAN SECURITY IN THE LOCAL AFRICAN CONTEXT

"The Case of Burkina Faso"

To really understand human security in the local African context, we can look at various geographical thresholds or levels which help individuals determine whether or not they live in security – bio-level, supra-village, meso-level and regional entities.

1. First level: Micro-level, corresponding to the bio-level

This level corresponds to what is commonly called "the Africa of villages". In pre-colonial and colonial Africa, families organised into districts were found at this level – hamlets that were bound by lineage, tribal and clan relations. The family is the fundamental domestic unit, cementing the community's solidarity. It masks a complex social reality. The members of a given family recognise kinship and marriage links between them, which define economic relations (production, distribution, consumption), legal relations (inheritance, for instance), hierarchical relations (head of family's authority, elders' rights over younger members), etc. (Gruenais, M.E., 1981).

This is the level at which security and insecurity come into play each in their turn. In fact, the individual is closely linked to the community and the latter is also dependent on individuals. This is the level of:

- **"Close proximity hatred"**: The extended family is subject to strong hatreds and rivalries (the flames being fanned by the blaming process used in witchcraft). The village is both an area of distrust and hostility, and of mutual help (the election of village chiefs "for life" leads to a *de facto* opposition "for life" by families deprived of the throne).
- **A perfect command over double talk**: The ability to mean two different things at the same time (in villages, you have to smile every day at someone who wants to kill you), which improved with colonisation (having to speak the colonisers' language), single-party systems (having to speak bureaucratic gobbledegook) and aid (using a language that is consistent with various aid projects).
- **The importance of intermediaries**, whose interests could well lie in fuelling threats (soothsayers and political, ethnic entrepreneurs preferring to worsen disputes), or in artificially softening threats (peacemaking middlemen who do not settle disputes but keep them latent, like a painkiller that works for a while without actually treating the root cause – i.e. without curing the disease; transaction "professionals" – matchmaking, property-related, cattle sale transactions – who know how to lie to both parties).

2. Second level, corresponding to the supra-village level

It is characterised by a certain socio-professional heterogeneity that can be understood on the basis of lineage, the role and place occupied by individuals in the social hierarchy and necessary relations of complementarity (but also dependence or subordination) in the use of natural resources and production methods (let us note that production modes also determine the way in which different social categories access production modes). The supra-village level may cover a radius of 10 to 25 km. In Burkina Faso, during the pre-colonial and even colonial period, this level was designated as cantons and sub-kingdoms. In structured societies at this level, the supreme authority was a canton chief, who represented the moral, political and religious authority for the local population. This level constituted a fairly autonomous community unit in terms of its livelihood. Consequently, it offered individuals greater security than the first level. On the other

hand, the socio-professional heterogeneity at this level was a source of insecurity when competition over land, women and power was exacerbated. When that happened, each social category became a permanent threat for all the others. In pre-colonial Africa, the second level was where the seeds of social exclusion developed: princes against casts, masters against slaves, natives against foreigners, cattle-breeders against farmers, old against young, men against women, etc. Today, these legendary rivalries have crystallised into alliances that are mere window dressing (taboos, kinships of pleasantry, socio-professional heritage, etc.). These rivalries, which are rampant today, poison all modern administrative circles, as well as political and economic authorities (despite being dressed up with documents inspired by the Whites – charters, conventions, constitutions, etc.). The *nouveau riche* or intellectuals, the offspring of former slaves, griots, blacksmiths or foreigners are rarely tolerated if by chance they act as mayor, prefect, deputy, minister, etc.

3. The third level, corresponding to the meso-level or the infra-ethnic area

It may be defined as an area covering several cantons and with a radius of at least 35 km. It is characterised by a considerable heterogeneity of clans and families bound by economic and matrimonial relations, and pure peaceful coexistence. The current administration has carved out provinces at this level, organised into provincial technical departments and with a High Commissioner at their head to coordinate State actions. It is purely by an accident of history (or due to political calculations) that certain provincial administration centres became the capitals of other localities. Their supremacy over the other localities is therefore often hotly contested in many fields (with regard to customs, for instance), except at the administrative level. Hence, it is obvious that they are not viewed as homogenous social entities with which the people identify themselves. Localities falling under this territorial entity compete with each other with regard to control over natural resources and, in particular, land.

Human security at this level is precarious, due to the absence of a transcendent and legitimate authority (acknowledged by all the inhabitants).

4. The fourth level, corresponding to regional entities or the ethnic area

This is an area considered as former kingdoms by structured societies or “living areas” by other (so-called “headless”) societies. Several ethnic groups share the area and enjoy good-neighbourly relations (kinship or alliances of pleasantry). The current administration has divided these large entities into regions. Until recently, the inhabitants considered the area as symbolising harmonious social organisation, providing areas of freedom, individual and collective security. They saw themselves as citizens of the same country within the area and willingly placed themselves under the real or symbolic authority of a king or territorial chief. The administration considers these areas as economic zones and planning regions. Not so long ago, areas of this kind guaranteed people a real chance of survival. Every individual could become well established in these areas. Anyone excluded from the first or bio-level (sold, rejected or scorned) had the right to settle elsewhere within the ethnic area by joining another social category.

The administrative systems imposed on territorial entities, along with deep-seated social changes (lack of acknowledgement of traditional modes of economic management and social regulation), led to the emergence of a new context for the expression and enjoyment of human security.

III - HUMAN SECURITY IN THE CONTEXT OF WEST AFRICA TODAY

1. “Insecure modernity”

With the advent of Nation States, human security “areas” were dismembered. Finally, the State favoured the emergence of a globalised form of modernity, which could provisionally be called “insecure modernity”.

In this time of “insecure modernity”, the weakening of the customary parameters of community life combined with the difficulties States faced in ensuring the survival of some of their population groups in peaceful circumstances (a survival that customary resources had stopped ensuring). It took concrete shape in the changing relationship of individuals with their surroundings, whence the emergence of a strong feeling of distrust of “the other” and confusion between the social production of likeness and difference, whether customary in origin or modern.

Fear, jealousy, alarm, but also distrust and self-censorship intensified and led people to look for protection other than the protection the rule of law should have provided its citizens – such as, for instance, a guarantee of social peace, universal access to education and healthcare, unemployment insurance, pensions, etc.

The environment of “insecure modernity” dates back specifically to the time of the universal implementation of individual property and, in the absence of any real public space guaranteed by the rule of law, the emergence of a form of proto-capitalism capable of regulating – i.e. appeasing – the sometimes very tense relations between people.

2. The multiple crises of change

Traditional societies underwent deep-seated changes (which finally meant insecurity), from a way of life based on the community to one based on society. Society, unlike the community, was the unknown – fear, uncertainty and confusion.

The signs of the current crisis as can be seen in cities and the countryside are the end results of a series of externally and internally imposed factors that have transformed people into citizens of “nowhere”. This has led to a series of crises, each contributing to human insecurity:

Crisis of governance

In the absence of a totally effective regulation mechanism to control the inherent violence of community life, the community’s behaviour has been left to the discretion of a permanent confrontation between individuals, in which real or supposed confrontations between “magical” powers (offensive or protective) become the norm, as there are no other properly established forums (institutions) as such.

Network governance dates back to the debate about the nature of technological development and its control. It also raises the question of the role of States in the development of these networks. Finally, it raises the issue of the control of the contents of the information exchanged. In order to face these challenges, new forms of cooperative and community governance are competing today with traditional modes of control.

Identity crisis

The causes of conflicts, affections, animosities, unrest, are known and knowable. In rural areas, everyone knows more or less who “has it in” for whom, or, to use a customary expression, “who doesn’t know who is who”. But in a more or less anonymous and atomised “urbanite area”, and being unable to put their finger on the person behind their misfortune, everyone is obliged to look for other identity-related principles, i.e. other principles directing their relations with those around them. In our view, these principles translate the dual logic reigning in urban areas.

These crises are nurtured in particular by the fact that their country’s history is largely unrecognised or has been tampered with – reconstructed...

Myths and powers with an inherent legitimacy collapse and thinking patterns in the political, economic and sociological fields are not just narrow, but wrong.

Security crisis

The State, neutralised by the contractors of insecurity – those who promote jungles that favour transactions of all kinds, such as hoarding, crimes, murders – is a State with questionable accountability and very little respectability. For the State evidently seems relatively incapable of establishing its authority over the territory it commands, in a restrictive relational context in which sovereignty is increasingly understood as the State’s margin of manoeuvre for instituting discipline and creating security, while acting within a political territory.

Faced with a **crisis** in the centralised Jacobin model of **security**, States inexorably dispense and perpetuate their authority through “*communities of responsibility*”, which in turn proceed to restructure the States’ sovereignist model. Such “*communities of responsibility*” emerge at the domestic, international as well as transnational levels.

Ethnicisation

“Ethnicisation” is interpreted here as a mechanism for securing one’s identity. Every human group is likely to use this process to protect itself against the encroachments of other groups. Faced with a threat, everyone (whether an individual or group) looks within for a means of defence. The process works like a temporary or final contract signed between the parties involved, within the framework of a relationship of power. Various, fluctuating factors are used to draw up the contract (skin colour, historical and geographic origin, language, clothing and eating habits, lineage, psychological, mental and spiritual sensitivity, etc.).

The principle involves crystallising a maximum of similarities on the basis of which actions can be taken in order to develop individual and group reactions. Their manifestation maintains the individual or group in an atmosphere of security or insecurity. The ethnic group becomes a pool of security-related references to be activated occasionally or permanently. These reactions are brought into play at opportune moments, but the group distances itself from them when they become a source of insecurity[§].

[§] Temporary, permanent, individual or collective emigration is one form of reaction to escape from the overbearing pressure of an ethnic group. “The bush serves as a refuge when the city no longer offers security”.

Ethno-tribalism then reappears in a more exacerbated form and takes over the State's main forums – the office of the President of the Republic, ministries, legislative assemblies, justice and communications systems. Investments are made in the economy by controlling imports and exports, land and natural resources, banks and small-scale industries. Public works are not to be outdone either as a *de facto* monopoly is established, from infrastructure construction to the signing of government contracts and laboratory tests. Cases of bridges and buildings crumbling are legion and everything can be organised – not so much to punish the guilty, but to provide technically plausible explanations for such defects.

IV - FACTORS BEHIND THE BREAK IN THE BALANCE BETWEEN SECURITY AND INSECURITY IN AFRICA

The emergence of new types of hitherto unknown problems has threatened the security system, triggering its malfunctioning. Many factors have led to the disintegration of security regulation mechanisms – the so-called formal education system that imposes new burdens on biological parents; bodily and mental health, now a personal affair; the judicial system, which brings social cohesion into question by enabling individuals to assert their rights in opposition to an entire community or allowing women to do without their families or husbands, or a young person to presume to be teaching elders; the ability of the *nouveau riche* to manipulate decisions and social norms, and so on.

In other words, people become aware of being in a state of insecurity when there is no longer any possibility of retrieving or managing a precarious situation. At such times, only competition and/or predation for the existing resources remain. Such competition may even extend to the resources of other neighbouring communities. That is when inter-community conflicts are engendered. In the absence of regulatory mechanisms, such conflicts spread. This seems to be the stage communities living in West Africa today are witnessing – the break between security and insecurity. In fact, new disturbing factors that grassroots' communities are unable to handle are emerging. The politico-judicial mechanism established by the States is just as powerless when faced with the scale of these conditions of insecurity. Here are some of the factors which disrupt the security/insecurity balance:

1. Climate change

Climate change has distorted the balance between man and nature. With repeated droughts, Sahel's farmers can no longer ensure their food security, which has led to population displacements towards more fertile land. For instance, the Tuareg conflict was partially engendered by this kind of climate change. In fact, northern Mali is facing a serious ecological crisis and marginal land no longer manages to produce enough to meet food requirements, leading to the exodus of young Tuaregs towards Libya and Algeria, returning later to exact vengeance for their parents, killed before their eyes by the colonial army. In other cases, the exodus has been towards some of the major cities, leading to the growth of slums and poverty. Thus, nature's inconsistency (just like the enriching diversity among individuals) has been transformed into distress that has led to social divisions and violence (Robin & Ibrahim, 1998).

2. The deterioration of productive resources and the growing pressure on land and resources

One of the major structural causes of West African conflicts is the deterioration of productive resources and the growing pressure on land and resources. Successive droughts, staggering population growth, the overexploitation of land and extensive urbanisation have resulted in the forced sedentarization of seasonal migrants and an exodus to other countries. These factors have

The West African area "is marked by serious tensions over land (State projects and land acquisition by private promoters, urban expansion) which led to the fragmentation of landholdings (small farms, micro-gardens) and the expropriation of farmers. The crops are essentially based on market gardening for income generation (tomatoes, cabbages, okra, aubergines, watermelons, French beans, melons, carrots, manioc and corn, with a section devoted to floriculture and poultry farming). The farms are fairly well equipped (power supply connections, wells, motor pumps, sprayers, two-wheel tillers and even tractors in agricultural enterprises). Agricultural activities are now becoming both more feminised and more precarious (with farmers turning into daily wage agricultural labourers). Influenced by the proximity of the capital, the youth are turning away from the area. So we are witnessing conversion to craftwork, petty trades (women) and service sector activities – as well as emigration".

Extract from "lire autrement les réalités socio-économiques vécues par les ruraux" (reading the socio-economic realities faced by rural people in different way)

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led to the growth of slums in host cities, with their corollary of poverty and frustration. Migrations have contributed to the dismemberment of family structures and, for the youth, the loss of traditional values and references. Having left their homeland, these young people have been freed from the moral guardianship of traditional authorities and no longer bother to respect the hierarchical rules of traditional society. This identity crisis has given a different dimension to the issue. These young people have disrupted the order and harmony that used to reign

between different communities. They became ignorant of all the values that they had in fact lost during their exile.

3. Changes in production and reproduction methods (economic extroversion)

Social production and reproduction methods have also undergone fundamental changes in the course of their development in the region. As social reproduction is the process by which a society perpetuates itself, in particular with respect to its division into classes and its cultural and ethical values through the education and training it gives its young people, there comes a time when it faces a duality in which individual strategies clash. In fact, contradictions – often leading to fractures – create an imbalance between security and insecurity. To changes in social reproduction modes is added a change in material production modes (production of goods and services). This is the area that witnesses the coming together of diverse phenomena that play a role in producing the

The economy is very monetarised (10% of production reserved for self-consumption), and produce is sold outside the area (essentially in urban centres or exported, in the case of agricultural enterprises). "People produce to sell, and make purchases with the income from their production in order to live". The economy benefits from the presence of major urban markets that are growing further today, but it is doubly **vulnerable** as it is based on the sale of perishable produce and is dependent on market fluctuations, as the same products are produced at the same time everywhere in this area, which leads to a slump in prices.

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material foundations necessary for the existence of the social system and the interconnections between the conditions of the milieu, the technical procedures implemented to use them, the social representations underlying these technologies and the forms of organisation enabling their implementation.

In order to account for the imbalance, we must try to understand the changes that have taken place in the underlying principles of the Sahel's agro-pastoral production system, which is characterised by the ability of producers to maintain a sustainable balance with their physical and natural environment, by using

elements taken from outside their environment very sparingly. Cropping practices and cattle management methods did not aim at the maximisation of yield per surface area unit or per head in the case of satisfactory rainfall, but tended to aim at minimum production levels in case of a drought (C. RAYNAUT, 1989). With the introduction of modern production techniques, year after year, farmers endeavoured to achieve the highest output possible through appropriate management practices by incorporating inputs (fertilisers, ploughs, etc.) purchased from the market. Finally, the very purpose of agriculture changed, gradually swinging from managing men to managing things. Along with changes in cropping practices, all the non-material relationships on the basis of which nature is perceived also changed. The most striking example is the emergence of the private appropriation not only of land, but also the spontaneous vegetation on it. More broadly speaking, the entire attitude vis-à-vis the production system has changed.

4. The intervention of development projects and programmes

After the countries in the region attained their independence, several financial institutions, in particular the World Bank, offered financial assistance to African States to help them build Nation States and strengthen their still archaic economies. While there *are* rural societies for which development is unquestionably an urgent necessity, the intervention of these projects (often prepared without consulting the concerned population groups) changed the symbiosis existing between man and nature. These projects led to a cultural shock, as they came with the logic of their financiers, rather than that of the target population.

New systems were added alongside existing legitimate traditional systems, the former having been created from nothing and nonetheless described as legal, though they had a very limited margin of manoeuvre. The presence of these systems, which emerged with the new projects and programmes, became a factor of insecurity for the systems already socialised within the village space (they could even call into question traditional systems of distributing positions and roles within the community).

5. An increasingly larger population excluded from the fruits of growth and the benefits of modernisation

20% of births are recorded in the civil status records within the statutory period. The remaining 80% run the risk of being "undocumented persons" for life. A school-going child costs ten times as much as his nine other brothers – school stationery, clothing, health cover, contributions, school fees, food, etc. are a drain on the parents' finances. A woman giving birth in a maternity ward costs a family at least two months of its annual income – prenatal monitoring costs, mother and child's toilet-case, baby clothes, hospital costs, prescription for mother and child's vaccinations, change in diet, etc. often force the father of the family to sell a share of his harvest and/or animals to cover the costs.

These three examples show that children and women from poor and increasingly larger families are deprived of most of the goods and services that ensure human security. And to take land as an example (land – to live on or to farm – becomes a very important issue both in cities and rural areas), relocation operations** turn some natives of African capitals into "foreigners" or intruders in the land of their ancestors.

** Development/construction, housing, mining and industry.

The main reason is the imbalance between the supply of public goods and services and the demand induced by a rapidly rising population.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, what demographers call a “Demographic Transition” seems to have been stopped in its very first stages, with a considerable fall in the mortality rate that is still inadequately counterbalanced by a fall in the birth rate.

The scale of this situation – strongly determined by all the socio-economic, cultural and political variables marking the life of African societies today – cannot be denied insofar as it is the outcome of a series of demographic parameters that make Africa an exceptional case in the world today.

In fact, African countries as a whole record the highest birth rate as well as the highest mortality rate in the world. Consequently, they are witnessing the fastest natural population growth rate – a 3% annual growth, for an average growth rate of 1.7% for all continents taken together.

6. Increasingly endemic food insecurity, a source of human insecurity

Undernourishment and malnutrition seem to be linked to three factors: poverty, low agricultural production and erratic climatic conditions, alongside some of the other factors mentioned above. The introduction of new technologies – the “Food insecurity and vulnerability information and mapping system” (SICIAV - *Système d'information et de cartographie sur l'insécurité alimentaire et la vulnérabilité*) – has helped to classify victims of food insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa into the following categories:

- Victims of conflicts: Internally displaced persons or those returning to their countries as disabled veterans, war widows and orphans, etc.
- Migrant workers and their families: Migrant cattle-herders, households headed by women as they are abandoned by migrant workers
- Marginal populations living in urban peripheries: Uneducated youth, new immigrants, informal sector labour, homeless, orphans, persons living alone on modest incomes and street children
- Persons belonging to classes at risk: These are persons in modest-income households in vulnerable livelihood systems – small agricultural and agro-pastoral producers, nomadic cattle-herders, landless farmers, small artisanal fishermen, daily-wage earners and fixed-term contract labourers
- Dependent persons living alone or in low-income households with several children: Senior citizens, pregnant or breast-feeding women, children under five years of age, newborns and handicapped or sick persons.

For the growing number of people belonging to this category, who struggle to find a place within a State that is itself looking for points of reference and legitimacy, finding ways to survive is becoming more difficult.

V - SOCIAL EXCLUSION STEMMING FROM HUMAN INSECURITY

The manifestations and experiences of social exclusion differ from one society to another, as do the mechanisms engendering it. In industrialised societies in which social structuring is based essentially on organic solidarity and the primacy of the economic over the cultural, social exclusion is basically perceived and experienced as a break in the social chain and the failure of relations

between the individual and society. In Africa, on the other hand, social exclusion models centre on the relations between certain elements of social identity (sex, age, ethnic group, geographic origin, etc.) and the right to avail of certain essential resources, goods and social services (land, employment, capital, education, health, decision-making powers, etc.). These models are deemed better adapted to political and socio-cultural realities and to the magnitude of social development shortfalls.

1. Types of social exclusion

A distinction can be made between two types of exclusion, among others:

- Exclusion from sustainable means of livelihood is closely linked to poverty – a phenomenon that is solidly linked to the status of unemployed persons, small farmers and informal livelihood sector entrepreneurs. With less than \$1 per day per inhabitant, West Africa appears to be one of the poorest but also most unequal regions of the world.

Young people do not have access to developed land. They are basically seen as accessible labour on family farms. They are present during the rainy season and move temporarily to the cities during the dry season or turn to emigration in search of additional income.

Women do not have access to developed land either. They manage the family's food requirements (granary management) and their daily work is a heavy burden for them due to the lack of equipment to lighten their chores. They often have small plots that they develop in order to meet their clothing needs. The absence of decentralised funding bodies means that they do not have access to any credit for petty trades. A worsening of their health situation may also be noted due to the absence of health infrastructure.

*Extract from "lire autrement les réalités socio-économiques vécues par les ruraux (reading the socio-economic realities faced by rural people in different way)"
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- Exclusion from access to fundamental social goods and services such as education, health care and drinking water can be seen in the low access rates prevailing, as compared to international standards and planned national objectives. The low rates are partially due to inadequate supply vs. demand, but also the poverty of households, the long distances to be covered and socio-cultural habits and inertia.

2. The faces of marginalised groups: Women, the disabled and children

An analysis of the condition of women and disabled persons, in particular with regard to their social integration and participation in decision-making, shows that wide gaps still remain between the formal recognition of their rights and the respect of these rights in reality. Despite the changes in social norms and their decisive contribution to the daily survival of households and the development of society at all levels, women are rarely included in important decision-making processes, even when the decisions concerned have to do with them (for instance, marriages arranged by men without their knowledge) or their living environment (policy management, administrative and social decisions). Furthermore, there is no multisectoral policy for the inclusion of disabled persons or other vulnerable groups in society.

Social exclusion has become a real blight on all countries, whatever their level of development, and its scale calls for urgent, concerted and effective action on the part of governments. In developed countries, eliminating exclusion is one of the primary objectives of economic and social policies. Measures aimed at insertion and re-entry into the labour force are still the most effective means of guaranteeing access to income that is compatible with the cost of living, during and after the working life. In under-developed countries, particularly those in Sub-Saharan Africa, such measures focus on the improvement of certain social indicators.

VI - CONCLUSION

Human security depends on:

- Access to employment and inputs: land, equipment, financial capital
- Access to basic social services: housing, food (drinking water and food), health care, education, etc.
- Fair redistribution of income, wealth and fruits of growth.

Access to employment calls for human capacity building. The issue of the education and professional training of the labour force in general and the youth in particular, deserves special attention. In this regard, the institutional framework should work towards the implementation of a number of mechanisms promoting the access of the most vulnerable groups to the public sector's training institutions. Moreover, it must be added that, in the past, the long tradition of political monolithism has contributed to a drop in competitiveness on the labour market and has favoured recruitment based on ethnic or regional loyalties; thereby leading to the suboptimal use of the labour force's real potential. This phenomenon persists unto this day, and a great deal of imagination and relentless efforts (which should be translated into concrete terms by a declared political determination to do so, through texts, and actively through courageous decisions) remain necessary in order to ensure equal access to the labour market.

Access to financial capital and a better small enterprise financing policy need to be instituted in order to enable all ethnic groups, depending on their real capacities, to invest in the socio-economic sector of their choice. In particular, the reorganisation of regulatory and legislative frameworks with regard to certain economic sectors should be envisaged, so that they favour women, in order to ensure better participation by the latter in the labour market.

In the rural sector, as land is an increasingly important production factor, the State should favour the settlement of "landless" persons on land developed by it – vacant land (off market) falling under the State's national or private domain.

The redistribution of income and national wealth, with a special emphasis on the most disadvantaged, is also called for. Moreover, vulnerability in the labour market and the scale of poverty probably call for a review of short-term public expenditure programmes [Lachaud, 1994]. Despite the counterweight given by traditional social security systems, the drop in social expenditure has been a contributing factor in the worsening of poverty. Within the framework of today's macro-economic constraints, a series of public expenditure adjustment measures need to be envisaged, which would allow for a better targeting of the most chronically or temporarily disadvantaged groups, while drawing up priorities in the light of interactions between various primary need sectors. In this perspective, while the rural sector remains a priority given its capacity to alleviate national poverty, a substantial share of expenditure should also be directed towards urban areas in several key sectors: infrastructure, housing, transportation, water, hygiene, education (especially access to education by the girl child), health, etc.

Although the implementation of such a safety net for the most disadvantaged would depend on the resources available and administrative capacities to manage them, the lack of political power often proves to be a hindrance. This is all the more harmful since, despite the new orientations of development strategies, the State occupies a key position with regard to investments and since the real impact of poverty and social exclusion call for the reinforcement of its role with regard to the

redistribution of wealth. Hence, while the alleviation of urban and rural poverty depends partially on the implementation of State strategies, what remains to be determined are the forms of State organisation most likely to promote the appropriate policies, irrespective of the immediate economic interests of the elite in power, the concern for survival of different political regimes and the predatory activities of pressure groups [Lachaud, 1994].

Daily experience shows that nascent democracies have neither eliminated pressure groups and their interests, nor improved the income and wealth distribution structure. That is why the establishment of organisational networks representing excluded rural and urban groups should be supported – through legislation, cooperatives, joint initiative groups, economic interest groups or *ad hoc* local or regional associations.

However, several questions remain to be answered:

- Isn't human security a political resource used by average powers lacking legitimacy?
- Isn't human security a double-edged sword, favouring armed interventions in any region of the world in which the interests of the most powerful are involved?
- Is human security really a new value enabling the emergence of a hitherto unknown security system based on true multilateral cooperation between international institutions?
- Can human security finally be reconciled with the exercise of their sovereignty by States and, in legal terms, with the principle of non-interference?
- In any case, are the strategic cultures of Western States affected by this new rhetoric?

And finally,

- Doesn't achieving the human security of vulnerable groups, for whom and on whose behalf dominant groups act and take decisions, pose a threat to the security of the decision-makers themselves?

2. The importance of human security in West Africa, by Mr. NNamdi K.OBASI, Head of Department, Department of Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Affairs African Centre for Strategic Research and Training National War College Abuja, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

1. It is indeed my honour to be here with you this afternoon, and to be afforded this opportunity to make a short intervention on The Importance of Human Security in West Africa, to this very distinguished audience. Before proceeding to the main body of my presentation, I wish to deliver to you all, the very warm felicitations of the Commandant of the National War College, Nigeria and the Dean of the African Centre for Strategic Research and Training at the College, under whom I have the privilege of working as Head of Department of Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Affairs. Human security issues are of great interest to us at the College and the Centre, and we are presently working on a range of those issues, particularly on the control of small arms, transnational organized crime and terrorism as well as disaster management in the West African sub-region. We, therefore, very much welcome any and every opportunity for collaboration with partners in the sub-region and beyond, on the development of knowledge, best practices and action networks on these and other human security concerns.

2. This paper begins by highlighting the concept of human security, and identifying its various components or dimensions. Secondly, it outlines the reasons why the human security perspective is particularly important to the overall analysis of security in West Africa. Thirdly, upon the premise of the great importance of human security to security studies and policy in the sub-region, the paper argues for the review of relevant instruments, at both country and sub-regional levels, towards integrating the human security paradigm more effectively into security policy making and management across the sub-region.

THE CONCEPT AND DEFINITION OF HUMAN SECURITY

3. The concept of human security is certainly not as new as it is sometimes made to seem. However, it has undoubtedly attracted a greater degree of scholarly attention, if not policy recognition, over the last decade. Since the end of the Cold War and the failed promise of a global peace dividend, there has been a growing realization that the insecurities that continually plague human beings and societies in many parts of the world are at once of more diverse and fundamental origins than had been previously understood or acknowledged. The origins of these insecurities, as they have now come to be appreciated, could be traced inter alia to a wide range of political, social, economic, environmental, health and other factors. This more expansive appreciation of the causes and nature of insecurity was aptly captured by the former Costa Rican president, Oscar Arias, when he observed that:

“An individual, or a family, does not experience security if they do not command sufficient resources to feed, house and clothe themselves, or if they have to keep a careful watch on their comments in public for fear of being labeled traitors and resisters (and thus being subjected to the particularly cruel treatment reserved for such people in repressive states). Individuals and families are not secure if crime is rampant in their neighborhoods, if economies spiral downwards out of control, if natural disaster threatens at every turn with no coordinated government efforts at prevention. Security includes all of this.”

While this more expansive conceptualization of security is not exactly new, it has re-emerged in recent years to re-balance debates on security away from an exclusive--and in some cases excessive--focus on the territorial or military dimensions of the security of the state and its institutions, towards a greater recognition of the security of the people whom the state was supposed to accommodate and serve.

In simple terms, the concept of human security emphasizes that in order for people to be secure, their lives must be free from any pervasive threats, violent or benign, to their rights and their safety. It thus encompasses both the traditional and non-traditional threats to people's security, related to political, economic, food, health and environmental factors, as well as issues such as drugs, terrorism, organized crime, landmines and gender-based violence.

4. Over the last decade, therefore, various attempts have been made to articulate and establish a definition of human security. In this process, two major schools of thought have emerged, under which most of the conceptualizations and definitions can be categorized. These we may refer to as the narrow (or Canadian) school and the broad (or United Nations Development Program) school.

5. Within the first school, most definitions tend to focus on the individual as the referent unit of security provision and analysis, and thus incorporate many more threats than the traditional state security paradigm; in doing so, however, the definitions in this school tend to limit the scope of their concerns strictly to those threats against the individual that involve the element of violence. These include the threats posed by small arms, landmines, the drug trade, violent crime, ethno-religious strife and other forms of intra-state conflict. Proponents of the definitions under this school, notably the Foreign Ministries of Canada and Norway, and the very well regarded Centre for Human Security at the University of British Columbia also in Canada, argue that such a clearly focused perspective has great merit, as it properly draws the line between the challenges of human security as distinct from those of human development. In other words, definitions in this school emphasize the focus of human security to centre primarily on freedom from fear, as distinct from freedom from want.

6. Among scholars, diplomats and security managers who subscribe to the second or broader school, human security is seen as incorporating a longer list of possible threats, ranging from traditional security threats such as war and other forms of armed violence to more development-related threats such as disease, poverty, and environmental degradation. Definitions under this school are exemplified by those advanced by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the independent Commission on Human Security (CHS) and Jorge Nef.

7. The UNDP's Human Development Report 1994, which is widely acknowledged as the first significant attempt at articulating the broader perspective of security and its linkage to development, describes human security as having seven basic components, namely economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security. In research and policy making, therefore, the focal concerns arising from this conceptualization are the following:

- a. Economic security threatened by poverty and destitution.
- b. Food security threatened by hunger and famine.
- c. Health security threatened by injury or disease.
- d. Environmental security threatened by pollution, environmental degradation and resource depletion.
- e. Personal security threatened by various forms of violence.
- f. Political security threatened by political repression.

g. Community security threatened by social unrest and instability within and between communities.

8. In 2003, the independent Commission on Human Security (CHS), established as an initiative of the Government of Japan and co-chaired by Amartya Sen and Sadato Ogata, also provided a similarly broad conceptualization of human security. In its final report, titled *Human Security Now*, the Commission noted that while in the past, debates on issues of security had focused largely on state security, the reality in many developing countries along with developments in the international environment, had begun to demand a new paradigm that would shift the emphasis away from the security of states to the security of people—in other words, to human security. The CHS thus defined the purpose of human security as protecting “the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment”. It pointed out that the factors that most often put people’s security at risk include certain threats and conditions that have not always been perceived or classified as threats to state security. It further argued that “Human security is also concerned with deprivation, extreme impoverishment, pollution, ill health, illiteracy and other maladies”. It finally submitted that human security means “protecting fundamental freedoms—freedoms that are the essence of life”.

9. Jorge Nef offers us the third example of the broad approach to analyzing, understanding and managing human security⁷. He perceives human security as being made up of five interlocking components or sub-systems, namely the following:

- a. Ecosystem
- b. Economy
- c. Society
- d. Polity
- e. Culture

He contends, therefore, that in any and every human environment, these five sub-systems are usually in complex interplay, and impact directly or indirectly on the security of individuals within that environment.

10. The spirit of these broad conceptualizations of human security is aptly captured by the United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, when he observes as follows:

“Security can no longer be narrowly defined as the absence of armed conflict, be it between or within states. Gross abuses of human rights, the large-scale displacement of civilian populations, international terrorism, the AIDS pandemic, drug and arms trafficking, and environmental disasters present a direct threat to human security, forcing us to adopt a much more coordinated approach to a range of issues”.

11. Owens fuses the concerns and foci of the two major schools that have been highlighted above into a less dichotomous, if not unified, approach. He thus offers what he calls a hybrid definition of the concept of human security. His definition, therefore, is that:

Human security is the protection of the vital core of all human lives from critical and pervasive environmental, economic, food, health, personal and political threats⁹.

Allowing that individuals and societies may differ as to what they consider to be ‘the vital core of human lives’, this conceptualization seems to capture all the essential elements of human security and is therefore adopted for the purpose of this intervention.

THE SPECTRUM OF THREATS TO HUMAN SECURITY

12. The two schools of thought highlighted above identify several threats to human security, which may be direct or indirect. However, the wide spectrum of these threats can be reduced to the following:

Table 1: Direct and Indirect threats to human security

Direct Violence	Indirect Violence
<p>Violent Death/Disarmament: Victims of violent crime, killing of women and children, sexual assault, terrorism, intergroup riots/pogroms/genocide, killing of government officials agents, war casualties.</p> <p>Dehumanization: Slavery and trafficking in women and children; use of child soldiers; physical abuse of women and children (in households kidnapping, abduction, unlawful detention of political opponents plus rigged trials.</p> <p>Drugs: drug addition</p> <p>Discrimination and Domination: discriminatory laws/practices against minorities and women; banning/rigging elections; subvention of political institutions and media.</p> <p>International disputes: Inter State tensions/crises (bilateral/regional) great power tensions/crises.</p> <p>Most Destructive Weapons: the spread of weapons of mass destruction plus advanced conventional, small arms, landmines</p>	<p>Depravation: Levels of basic needs and entitlement (food, safe , drinking water, primary health care, primary education)</p> <p>Disease: Incidence of life-threatening illness (infectious, cardio-vascular, cancer)</p> <p>Natural and Man-made Disasters</p> <p>Underdevelopment: low levels of GNP capital, GNP growth, inflation, unemployment, inequality, population growth/decline, poverty, at the national level; and regional/global economic instability and stagnation plus demographic change.</p> <p>Population displacement (National, regional, global); refuges and migration.</p> <p>Environmental Degradation (local, national, regional, global.</p>

Source: Kanti Bajpai, "Human Security: Concept and Measurement", University of Notre Dame, Kroc Institute Occasional Paper 19, August 2000. p. 40.

Like in the every other part of the world, the threats to human security in West Africa are both direct and indirect. Following from the schema highlighted above, it is possible to identify some of the most pervasive threats to human security in the sub-region as armed conflict, poverty, HIV/AIDS, environmental degradation, food insecurity, the displacement of population by armed conflict, political repression and exclusion etc. Indicators of some of these threats are highlighted on the table below.

Table 2: Some Indicators of Human Security in West Africa

S/ N	Country	Popn without sustainable access to water	Popn under \$1 per day (2002)	Percent of popn under-nourishd (2001)	HIV Prevalence among popn ages 15-49 (2003)	Infant Mortality Rate (2002)	Refugees and IDPs (2004).
1	Nigeria	38	70.	8	5.4	110	9,845
2	Benin	37	n. a.	16	1.9	93	5,855
3	Togo	46	n. a.	25	4.1	79	11,795
4	Ghana	27	44.8	12	3.1	57	48,063
5	Cote D'Ivoire	19	15.5	15	7.0	102	119,832
6	Liberia	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.	n.a.	603,700
7	S/Leone	43	57.0	50	n. a.	165	91,846
8	Guinea	52	n. a.	28	3.2	109	145,571
9	G/Bissau	44	n. a.	n. a.	n. a.	130	7,677
10	Senegal	22	26.3	24	0.8	79	23,216
11	Gambia	38	59.3	27	1.2	91	7,945
12	B/Faso	58	44.9	17	4.2	107	1,010
13	Niger	41	61.4	34	1.2	156	387
14	Mali	35	72.8	21	1.9	122	12,341

Source: Adapted from Human Development Report 2004 (New York: United Nations Development Programme, 2004); and 2004 Global Refugee Trends (Geneva: UNHCR, 2005).

IMPORTANCE OF THE HUMAN SECURITY PERSPECTIVE IN ANALYSING AND PROMOTING SECURITY IN WEST AFRICA

13. The concept of human security is of great importance in analyzing the contemporary security situation in the West African sub-region. This is so, for several reasons, and eight of these are highlighted below.

14. First, a human security perspective on the subject of security enables us to understand the threats to human livelihood in the sub-region in a far more comprehensive and fundamental sense. It thus helps us to appreciate the fact that most of these threats do not arise from overt, physical violence, but from a wide range of structural and systemic factors, that may be political, economic, environmental or otherwise in their origins, even if not in their manifestations.

15. Secondly, the focus on human security helps us to recognise the fact that the more fundamental and enduring threats to security in the sub-region, may have less to do with any challenges to the territorial integrity of states, but more with the well being of individuals and groups within such states. The fact must of course be conceded that threats to physical security have been a major issue of concern in the sub-region since 1990. Over the last 15 years, nine

ECOWAS member states have experienced civil conflicts which have not only claimed many battle-related casualties directly, but have also generated millions of refugees and internally displaced persons. Even where organised, inter-group hostilities have ceased, as they have in Sierra Leone and Liberia, the conflicts have ruptured the fabrics and institutions of societies, and left living legacies of trauma in the form of ex-child soldiers, rape victims, amputees and many other unfortunate categories that continually wear the badges of pain and insecurity. Beyond these conflicts and their victims, however, several other trends that have not yet matured into full-blown armed conflict also pose serious threats to the well being of peoples in the sub-region. It is a sobering fact that 15 of the 50 least developed countries of the world are in West Africa¹⁰. An estimated 55 per cent of the sub-region's 450million population survive on less than one dollar per day, with the poorest 20 per cent of households scrambling over less than 4 per cent of the sub-region's GDP¹¹. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly difficult to argue against surveys which submit that the sub-region is awash with firearms. Some countries of the sub-region are witnessing a growth or expansion of markets for illegal arms, hard drugs and human merchandise, coinciding with an increase in violent, organised and transnational crime. At the same time, the weakness or illegitimacy of the criminal justice system almost region-wide, hampers state responses to crime. As some countries are just emerging from authoritarian rule, under which the security agencies and the courts were so brazenly used to subvert justice and repress dissent, such state institutions are miserably weak and no longer enjoy public confidence. Arising from this distrust and disillusionment with the security and criminal justice systems in the face of widening insecurity, vigilante groups have emerged alongside political militias that are contesting for political space. In many instances, all these have degenerated into criminal gangs, thus escalating criminal violence and exacerbating public insecurity. Furthermore, the region is undergoing unprecedented environmental degradation, ranging from the environmental pollution in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria to progressive desertification in the Sahelian belt that runs across several countries of the sub-region. While the forests of the coastal states have historically played a vital role in maintaining the ecological balance of numerous communities, as habitats for flora and fauna, anchors for soils and tamers of climates, the sub-region is being deforested at an alarming rate, endangering, in a most fundamental sense, the livelihoods of millions of people across several countries. All these sum up to a comprehensive picture of insecurity in the sub-region, and one that can be properly appreciated only by adopting a human security perspective that allows the necessary room for recognition and consideration of non-military threats to the security of the region, its constituent states and—most importantly---its peoples.

16. Thirdly, the focus on the human security perspective is important, in that it should compel governments to view security beyond maintaining the territorial integrity of states and the stability of governments in power at a point in time. It should help in bringing them to show greater concern with the well being of the people that they govern or claim to govern. In this way, it should compel the objective of state security policy to go beyond the enlargement of security forces, accumulation of military hardware and enforcement of law and order regimes, and to address the many other issues that are actually and persistently nibbling away at the security and dignity of ordinary people. In fact, in some circumstances, it should bring the makers and managers of national security policy to realize that the disproportionate allocations sometimes made by states towards acquiring the instruments they think they need for their defence and security may actually be depriving their citizens the resources they need to improve on their literacy, health, food and environment, the infrastructure and services needed to improve the security, freedom and human dignity of the people.

17. Fourthly, the human security perspective is important in West Africa, as indeed elsewhere in the world, because by no longer regarding the state as the sole referent of security, it allows for the

appreciation of threats to people's well being at various other levels, ranging from the level of the individual to that of the sub-region. This is particularly relevant to us in West Africa, because most of the threats to security in the sub-region are not specific to states but transcend the boundaries of several countries. The human security approach, therefore, offers greater opportunity for the development of regional approaches to these transnational security threats.

18. Fifth, the focus on human security and its many dimensions and ramifications opens up greater room for the participation of more stakeholders in the provision, sustenance and promotion of security. By expanding our understanding of security beyond the state-centred formulations of the past, it also expands the range of actors that must be involved in the provision of security beyond the military, para-military and other state-owned security agencies. In this way, it ensures that all other stakeholders, particularly the civil society, are no longer merely bystanders but become active partners in the identification of security threats, formulation of security policies and implementation of security programmes. By involving this wider cast of actors, it offers greater prospects that the security problems of communities, nations and the sub-region as a whole, may be addressed in a more informed, holistic and realistic sense.

19. Sixth, the human security perspective on security is important because by addressing issues like poverty, environmental degradation and HIV/AIDS, etc as security issues, it raises their political profiles in the arena of public discourse, policy making and policy implementation. In this way, such issues begin to attract greater policy attention from governments, members of the political elite and development partners in the international community. The synergy generated by the greater involvement and more intense policy commitment of these stakeholders at higher political levels, also offers brighter prospects of constructive engagement in addressing the problems.

20. Seventh, a focus on the human security perspective in analyzing security in West Africa, allows for closer appreciation of the security needs of special groups of citizens such as women, children, refugees and the physically challenged, much better than is usually the case under a state-centred discussion of security. Against the background of the usual tendency to gloss over the security concerns of these groups in a state or territorially focused analysis of security issues, the human security paradigm guarantees better attention to those concerns.

21. Finally, the continuing focus on the human security perspective offers the prospect that, in the not too distant future, it may be possible to develop a Human Security Index (HSI), for regular measurement of the levels of freedom from fear and freedom from want, in human societies all over the world. For us in West Africa, the development of such an index for measuring the performance of states, in terms of the security of their citizens and other residents under their territorial jurisdiction, is extremely important. This is so because it would enable us to monitor more steadily, the progress of state development or state failure, and thus alert us to initiate preventive actions before the degeneration of nations into armed conflict. In this way, monitoring the trends in the Human Security Index could serve as a useful input to the ECOWAS Early Warning System for prevention of conflicts in the sub-region.

THE IMPERATIVE OF REFLECTING THE HUMAN SECURITY PERSPECTIVE IN SUB-REGIONAL SECURITY MECHANISMS AND POLICIES

22. In the light of the foregoing arguments on the importance of the human security perspective in analyzing and managing security problems in the sub-region, it is indeed imperative that this perspective be reflected most vigorously in relevant security mechanisms and

policies, both at national and at sub-regional levels. At these different levels, the conceptual frameworks for peace and security need to be further developed or amended, either to take due cognizance or to accord greater recognition and emphasis, to the security of peoples.

23. At the sub-regional level, it is noteworthy that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has already incorporated some human security priorities into various levels in its strategies for the maintenance and promotion of regional security. These are evident under those sections of the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, which address the challenges of conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peace building, humanitarian assistance, control of trans-border crime and control of the proliferation and illegal circulation of small arms¹². Other important provisions can also be found in the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security¹³. These efforts are commendable. However, there is need for a more systematic and coordinated application of the human security perspective and more consistent engagement with civil society stakeholders in the management of security in the sub-region. For instance, the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat, working hand-in-hand with research institutes and civil society organizations in the sub-region, should work towards developing a programme for an annual human security audit, that would apply to all countries of the sub-region. The publication of such an audit report annually, would serve to alert relevant stakeholders as to where human security may be under the greatest threat in the sub-region and where remedial actions may be most urgently needed.

24. Beyond such a regional level initiative, there is also the need for fundamental documents such as the national security policy documents or even the national Constitutions of all countries in the sub-region to be revised, with a view to ensuring that state authorities no longer view the security of their countries from a narrow territorial integrity perspective, but from the wider framework of the security of their citizens and other nationals resident in their countries.

CONCLUSION

25. Mr. Moderator, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I have tried in the last 30 minutes, to offer some thoughts on the importance of human security in the West African context. Given the points that have been highlighted in this presentation and the many more that will be raised in this forum hereafter, it is my earnest hope that this workshop will contribute in a very significant way, to mobilizing actors and influencing decision-makers, at both national and sub-regional levels, towards a more vigorous commitment to the promotion of human security in West Africa. I thank you very much for your attention.

3. Human security constraints and integration level in the regional agenda, by Dr. Yao GEBE, Ledia, University of Ghana, Legon.

Introduction:

The place of human security in the contemporary discourse on international relations has long given rise to much debate and controversy, not because human security issues are of little importance on the international agenda but rather largely due to certain structural constraints that raise stumbling blocks on more than one operational level, thereby impeding progress. Firstly, it is the duty of the traditional security protagonists for the developing world, in particular, to redefine and come to terms with the new dynamics pertaining to security in terms of its new challenges and new stakeholders. Secondly, followers of the dominant school of thought who take part in studies on international and strategic relations are chary of granting human security the place it merits. In the realistic tradition's political theory, the security concept almost exclusively means State or national security, so much so that the person or individual's fundamental role is almost totally overlooked in a State's security calculations.¹ In fact, considering the changes in the post cold war international order and democratic transition and consolidation processes, human security's merits should no longer be a subject for discussion. Rather, the issue of how human security can be incorporated in international and regional actors' activities as well as in government and civil society group programmes and policies should be addressed.

Our aim here is not to embark upon an intellectual exercise to clarify or justify concepts (others have already done so), but rather to deliberate upon the practical approaches political leaders have taken to different degrees at the regional and international levels, in order to incorporate human security in the overall security equation. Further, as this is a developing concept, which has to confront the political class's traditional methods, practices and structures, it is obvious that almost insurmountable barriers and obstacles hinder the achievement of the desired results. Hence, this presentation shall focus on these impediments and the specific approaches adopted so far, as well as those that could be adopted in order to push forward the frontiers of this endeavour.

We shall limit ourselves to saying that human security, as highlighted in several United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) reports, ought to be centred on the individual rather than the State, along with the liberty to lead a life free from fear and want.² In this new paradigm, the emphasis is placed on protection from political oppression, persecutions, and the threat of famine and epidemics. But in order to achieve these objectives, political actors will have to accord less importance to State security and more to human security. However, this would neither impede the State from having the wherewithal to promote these liberties nor from enjoying enough autonomy for this purpose. It does have institutional and constitutional instruments and mechanisms established by its societies to serve this purpose. The government and political elite should then limit their role to that of institutional facilitators and thus recognise their limits as ineffective guarantors of human security. In this respect, current developments towards the

¹ Sagaren Naidoo, *A Theoretical Conceptualisation of Human Security*, Moufida Goucha and Kakkie Cilliers (eds.), Meeting of UNESCO expert group on peace, human security, conflict prevention in Africa, ISS Pretoria, South Africa, 23-24 July 2001, pp. 1-2.

² United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Human Development Report 1994, <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global1994/en/>

institution of good governance practices and democratic governance of security do offer a line of thinking that is fundamental and indispensable. We shall return to this aspect later.

International and regional human security initiatives:

It would be rather pretentious, if not downright unworthy, to fail to mention the initial attempts made by the United Nations to bring human security on to the centre stage of international and socio-political relations through its 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.³ We should especially bear in mind Articles 3, 5, 6 and 9, which declare that:

- Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person. (Art. 3)
- No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. (Art. 5)
- Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law. (Art. 6)
- No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile. (Art. 9).

Amongst other clauses, these four articles spell out very clearly the international community's erstwhile desire to include human security as a priority in its action agenda and constitute a precedent worthy of being followed. Besides, other initiatives at the regional and sub-regional levels are inspired by this global or universal project for the protection of human life, liberty and dignity.⁴

In Africa's case, we should especially call to mind the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights that came into effect on 21 October 1986.⁵ The Charter specifically declares in its Preamble that it drew inspiration from the OAU Charter, which stipulated that "freedom, equality, justice and dignity are essential objectives for the achievement of the legitimate aspirations of the African peoples". The Charter also affirmed that it adhered to the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for human dignity. Article 1 of Chapter I, entitled "Human and Peoples' Rights", invited the signatories to recognise the rights, duties and freedoms it envisaged. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights consists of a total of sixty-eight articles, of which many are exclusively devoted to rights and duties. The Charter's most important clause is undoubtedly the mandate given to the OAU to establish an African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights for the protection of these rights. The Commission would in particular be responsible for the following:

- To promote Human and Peoples' Rights and in particular:
- To collect documents, undertake studies and researches on African problems in the field of human and peoples' rights, organise seminars, symposia and conferences, disseminate information, encourage national and local institutions concerned with human and peoples' rights, and should the case arise, give its views or make recommendations to Governments.
- To formulate and lay down, principles and rules aimed at solving legal problems relating to human and peoples' rights and fundamental freedoms upon which African Governments may base their legislations.
- To co-operate with other African and international institutions concerned with the promotion and protection of human and peoples' rights.
- To ensure the protection of human and peoples' rights under conditions set out by the present Charter.

³ For more detailed information on this issue, see UN's documents on the Universal Declaration on Human rights

⁴ For instance, in Africa, the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981), in America, the American Convention on Human Rights (1969) and in Europe, the European Convention on Human Rights (1989).

⁵ The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights was adopted on 27 June 1981 and came into effect on 21 October 1986.

In fact, several issues need to be raised in this workshop. For instance, what authority does this legal instrument currently have in the human rights sector? How many African nations have ratified it? How does this law influence African countries' behaviour and policies, particularly in West Africa? And finally, has the African Commission, whose establishment was recommended by the Charter, seen the light of the day and is it functional? As early as in 1990, forty African States out of 53 had ratified the Charter, evidently for incorporating its clauses in their respective national laws. However, the governments of many of these countries have been guilty of the worst human rights abuses committed in the continent. In order to consolidate the progress made within the OAU framework, the African Union had granted the Commission a prominent role in its organisational structure by endowing it with a Court of Justice and a Human Rights Court.

Institutional changes and regional initiatives:

Institutional changes in the continent, especially those that led to the creation of the African Union, came with several other initiatives. The African Union's Constitutive Act clearly spelt out its desire to implement and guarantee its erstwhile commitments to human rights and security. For example, the Act stipulated in its preamble that the African Union was determined "to promote and protect human and peoples' rights, consolidate democratic institutions and culture, and to ensure good governance and the rule of law". Inscribed in its objectives, as stressed by the Act in Article 3(h), is the necessity to "promote and protect human and peoples' rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other relevant human rights instruments". The same objective is again laid down in Article 4(h) of the African Union's founding principles, which affirms "the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity". Moreover, the Act also guarantees under the terms of Article 4(o) "respect for the sanctity of human life, condemnation and rejection of impunity, political assassination, acts of terrorism and subversive activities".

Given modern political and social relations in Africa and the changes in the West African situation, some coherence could be said to have emerged between the positions taken by the African Union and sub-regional organisations on the issues of good governance and the respect of human rights. The exception to this was clearly seen in the 1990s when many African nations were caught up in a spiral of civil war and ethnic strife. During this tumultuous period, characterised by the near total absence of any sort of human security, civil rights were abused with all impunity.

The initiatives that actually set the tone and enabled Africa as a whole and West Africa in particular to start on the route to human security were the NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development) and the APRM (African Peer Review Mechanism). Three important protocols adopted by ECOWAS also need to be mentioned:

- The 1999 Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security.
- The Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, supplementary to the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security.
- The Declaration on the Moratorium on imports, exports and manufacturing of light weapons in West Africa.

However, we acknowledge that other regional and sub-regional treaties and protocols that are not dealt with in detail here also greatly influenced the African human security programme and agenda. Special reference must be made to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of

Children, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the Khartoum Declaration on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa.

As for the NEPAD, the project's aim was not directly focused on human security, although it recognised the role and place of peace, security and good governance as prerequisites for higher growth and for meeting people's basic needs. The NEPAD programme hinges upon four fundamental principles: democracy and political governance; economic governance; enterprise governance; and socio-economic development. The most important initiative taken by the NEPAD as regards human security programme objectives is the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), established by the NEPAD Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance. The mechanism's objectives are to help countries being reviewed to fine tune their policies, adopt better practices and respect the established norms, codes and principles and other commitments entered into. Around twenty six countries subscribed to the APRM in December 2005, of which Ghana was the first to be reviewed by its peers on the basis of a number of indicators pertaining to good governance, corruption control, the establishment of democracy, peace, stability and security, the adoption and implementation of meaningful economic policies and the conclusion of productive partnerships, national partnerships and responsibility. Other countries too not only had to join the review mechanism, but also had to open their doors to the process.

Another remarkable step made, this time within the West African sub-region, pertains to the adoption of a Protocol Relating to a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security in 1999. Given the large number of civil and ethnic conflicts that engulfed the region during the 1990s and to which ECOWAS was able to respond only on a case-by-case basis, it is not surprising that the Protocol was adopted to offer a more lasting and pragmatic approach to conflict prevention, management and resolution. The Protocol's success or failure will be measured only in the light of the sub-region's basic problems and realities and the actual human rights situation prevailing not only in Sierra Leone, but also in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire.

The 1999 Protocol very clearly provides for cases in which this Mechanism has to be applied, in Article 25 of Chapter V:

- In cases of aggression or conflict in any Member State or threat thereof;
- In case of conflict between two or several Member States;
- In case of internal conflict that threatens to trigger a humanitarian disaster, or that poses a serious threat to peace and security in the sub-region;
- In the event of serious and massive violation of human rights and the rule of law;
- In the event of an overthrow or attempted overthrow of a democratically elected government;
- Any other situation as may be decided by the Mediation and Security Council.

Other provisions pertain to the institution of an early warning system (Articles 23 and 24); humanitarian aid (Article 40); the establishment of peace (Article 42); restoration of political authority (Article 45); cross-border crime control (Article 46); anti-corruption measures (Article 48); measures against money laundering (Article 49); and the control of light weapons' proliferation and illegal trafficking (Articles 50 and 51). Another important clause for regional peace and security is Article 52 on cooperation between ECOWAS, the African Union, the United Nations and other regional actors.

The Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance additional to the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security was another protocol that advanced the human security cause. According to its preamble, this Protocol was adopted to buttress the 1999 Protocol mechanism. It clearly spelt out in Articles 1 and 2 the principle of free, fair and transparent elections, the right to form political parties, the independence of the electoral system, the freedom of association and the right to meet and organise peaceful demonstrations, the prohibition of all anti-constitutional accession to power, the subordination of the armed and security forces to a duly and legally constituted political authority, and the principle of the State and its institutions' secularism and neutrality in all matters pertaining to ethnicity, geographical origin, race or individual religion. The Protocol's provisions also enabled all citizens to have free recourse to the country's courts (civil or common law) and legal institutions to uphold their legal rights and guarantee gender equality before the law, especially in the political sphere, whether it concerned the right to vote or accession to any public office at all levels.

The Protocol's Articles 24, 26 and 27 are the most likely to have a major impact on the human security issue. Under the terms of these articles, the Member States recognise that poverty eradication and the promotion of social dialogue constitute factors for peace. Consequently, the Member States committed themselves to providing basic services to their people, to fighting effectively against poverty, not only in their country but also at the Community level, to providing the avenues necessary for employment generation and social sector development and, finally, to ensuring a fair distribution of resources and wealth. Articles 32, 33, 34 and 35 under Section VII deal with the rule of law, human rights and good governance. Under the terms of these articles, the Member States agreed that the principles of good governance and press freedom guaranteed social justice, conflict prevention, political stability, peace and the strengthening of democracy. They also recognised that to attain these objectives it was necessary not only to promulgate good laws but also to establish efficient legal and administrative machinery. The task of adopting all the practical modalities for implementing the rule of law, human rights, justice and good governance principles was entrusted to the Member States and the Secretary General.

The provisions of the Protocol's Section VIII deal with the protection of women, children and youth. Under the terms of Articles 40, 41, 42 et 43, the Member States undertook to eradicate all forms of discriminatory and degrading practices against women, respect children's rights, guarantee the right to education, fight against child trafficking and child prostitution by enacting special laws covering all Member States and the Community as a whole and regulate child labour in conformity with the rules laid down by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). They also agreed on the rules to be adopted for the training and development of the youth and the prevention of juvenile delinquency.

One of the main concerns of the international community, civil society groups and the West African sub-region has to do with light and small calibre weapons. Their circulation is not just a threat to peace and human security in the sub-region, but has also contributed to the extension of unresolved conflicts. This extremely worrying situation reminds us of the recent distressing events that took place in several conflict-ridden countries. It was indeed a momentous occasion that raised hopes when the ECOWAS Heads of State or Government adopted the Moratorium on imports, exports and the manufacturing of light weapons in West Africa on 31 October 1998, which was to enter into force in November 1998 for a renewable period of three years.⁶ The Secretary General, along with the African Union, the United Nations External Affairs

⁶ The Declaration on the Moratorium was adopted during the 21st Session of the ECOWAS Heads of State or Government Conference in Abuja, 30-31 October 1998.

Ministers and experts, was given the task of drawing up the basic blueprint for corollary measures to implement the Programme for Coordination and Assistance on Security and Development (PCASED).

Given the growing insecurity spreading across the sub-region, the explosive situation prevailing in some countries, the number of cross-border crimes involving an increasing use of light weapons and armed robberies, car thefts with violence and murders, we may quite rightly wonder what happened to the Moratorium. However, in November 2004, ECOWAS officially launched a new Small Arms Control Programme (ECOSAP) with the support of the United Nations Development Programme's Regional Bureau for Africa, in order to fight against the illicit proliferation of light and small calibre weapons in ECOWAS Member States. The ECOSAP is the successor to the PCASED.

Obstacles and structures for implementing human security measures:

Many an obstacle impeded progress in improving human security. In every country at the sub-regional level, human rights advocacy was rendered ineffective due to discriminatory cultural practices against children, the child soldier phenomenon brought about by the recent upsurge in civil and ethnic violence in the West African sub-region, the issue of child labour and child trafficking, discrimination against women and senior citizens. Within society, there were baseless allegations of sorcery, an increase in the number of refugees and internally displaced persons, problems related to media repression, political confrontation movements and demonstrations, and the lack of individual and group access to justice, especially for those with no financial means.⁹ It would be pointless to add that these are only a few of the problems that call for more sustained action in terms of laws, the application of these laws, civil society's proactive role, and population education and consciousness-raising, in particular about issues regarding health services, the HIV/AIDS pandemic and environmental pollution.

Actions at the sub-regional and regional levels pertaining to human security objectives must be evaluated in the light of the number of legal and political initiatives taken in this regard. The transcription into national laws of the provisions of international treaties and undertakings made in various protocols still remains the basic problem. While the signature and ratification of treaties and protocols is an important stage, it is even more important that there is increased dialogue between governments to ensure that these international agreements are respected. At the same time, not all governments ratify treaties with the intention of working on their application. This actually reveals the governments' and the elites' lack of political will to attain these objectives.

Another source of concern is the lack of coordination between Member States on vital sub-regional and regional issues. A cooperation forum such as ECOWAS and, by extension, the African Union, requires that governments and their institutions and organisations do their part as regards the measures and policies adopted. The lack of coordination between regional and sub-regional programme managers, which is not confined to human security but pertains to all aspects of cooperation in the service of the organisation in question, would certainly have negative fallout on the results.

⁹ Gilliane Cherubin-Doumbia, *African Commitments to Human Rights – A Review of Eight NEPAD Countries*, African Human Security Initiative (AHSI), 2004, www.africanreview.org

As has been noted already, the constant progress made by the sub-region and the entire African continent towards the consolidation of democracy remains a source of hope. The development of democratic institutions is an indispensable prerequisite for the promotion of the rule of law, human rights and liberties and the human security cause. Ten to twenty years ago, either authoritarian regimes or military dictatorships were at the helm in most West African nations, for whom constitutional principles or the rule of law hardly mattered. However, the recent wave of democracy, accompanied by the respect of the rule of law, ought to facilitate the protection of individuals and groups and ensure that their civil rights are respected. Needless to say, other government branches, namely national legislatures, the ECOWAS parliament and the judiciary ought to play a more dynamic role and spearhead the human security cause.

The existing political class' inability to adapt itself and accept new methods of organising political and social systems is also a fundamental mental block in the path of change. The one and only concern of certain African leaders and their acolytes is how to maintain the status quo. Structural changes and adaptations are considered either revolutionary or destabilising. Thus, the authorities start targeting civil society groups, looking upon them as public enemies. The African polity has to fight against this phenomenon and gradually establish conditions that are more favourable to change.

Our regional leaders can no longer claim that mobilising resources autonomously is possible, for example, within the NEPAD framework, without any external assistance or support. A large number of important projects and programmes are still on the drawing board due to a lack of funds. While on this subject, reference must be made to the youth project under the terms of the 2001 Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance. As long as the continent loses large chunks of funds through capital evasion and other phenomena, it becomes necessary to generate additional resources to finance development activities and programmes by opting for collaboration with well-intentioned partners. In this respect, the American Millennium Challenge Account and the British Government's initiative in creating a Commission for Africa are valid programmes that must be taken up to achieve human development objectives.

Furthermore, the lack of institutions in most regional and sub-regional groupings is also a major roadblock in policy implementation. Other hindrances are the weakness of existing institutional authorities or the lack of power to enforce decisions, as is the shortage of the technocratic skills necessary to promote and implement decisions taken at the federal level. Hence, the intervention of civil society organisations and institutions becomes necessary wherever their skills and experience can complement and extend governmental and institutional action.

The national legislative and constitutional systems' efficiency also needs to be reviewed. Many African nations have established Truth and Reconciliation Commissions. While this is a laudable initiative that makes reparation available to all those men and women whose rights and freedoms were abused, we cannot but doubt the seriousness and will of the governments associated with this process.

The practice of good governance was nonexistent for a very long time. The recent creation of institutional initiatives under the aegis of the African Union, in particular the NEPAD's APRM process, should certainly open the doors to greater transparency in the region and make governments and the ruling elite accountable. In this respect, the deep-rooted corruption of public authorities, leading to the misappropriation of funds meant for development programmes, has created a real problem that has tarnished many a government's image, while constituting a heavy drain on the external support the region needs so badly.

Conclusion:

The movement for promoting human security should not be limited to governments alone. It calls for increased awareness on the part of civil society, which has to act as a watchdog to protect the human security cause in order to generate greater fervour among the main stakeholders for more concrete actions. The media, legal and university circles, as well as trade unions must turn into defenders of the underprivileged and the forsaken. Since human security is a global process, the various stakeholders – in this case the United Nations, regional groupings and concerned individuals – must work in tandem to demonstrate that a paradigm shift has well and truly taken place, in the sense that it is individual security and not State security that is now at the heart of international policy.

THIRD SESSION

Human Security Challenges in West Africa

- 1. Extreme poverty as a form of human insecurity**, by Mr. Yoro FALL (UNESCO, Accra)
- 2. Health dimensions of security: The challenge of sub-regional pandemics and status of integrated responses in West Africa**, by Prof. Thérèse N'DRI-YOMAN, University of Abidjan, Cocody.
- 3. ECOWAS in the face of the bird flu threat in West Africa**, by Dr. Daniel EKLU, Director, ECOWAS Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Rural and the Environment.
- 4. Minutes of the sub-regional meeting held in Dakar on avian influenza**, by Dr. Serigne Mamadou Bousso LEYE, National Coordinator – PACE/Senegalese Ministry of Livestock, Representative of the Chairperson, Dr. Oumy Khaïry Gueye Seck, member of the Ministerial Steering Committee of the Coordination Mechanism for the Prevention and Response to Avian Influenza in West Africa.
- 5. Natural disasters and food crises: Challenges and current status of responses in West Africa**, by Mr. Thierno Seydou GUEYE, Coordinator – Protection, OCHA Regional Bureau for West Africa, Dakar.
- 6. Pollution and criminality in the environmental sector and Guinea's protection policy**, by Mr. Sékou Gaoussou SYLLA, Director – National Disaster Management and Environmental Emergencies Department.
- 7. Political crisis and humanitarian crisis in West Africa**, Aide et Action, Togo (Text presented by Mr. Tcha Beret).
- 8. Political crisis and humanitarian crisis in West Africa**, by Mr. André Bogui, Assistance Solidarité, Côte d'Ivoire.
- 9. Political crisis and humanitarian crisis in West Africa**, by Ayayi Togoata APEDO-AMAH, Secretary General, Togolese Human Rights League.
- 10. Prolonged crises and security conditions of West African populations**, by Mr. Gilles YABI, International Crisis Group.
- 11. The role of civil society in the resistance to the 1st September 2000 attacks**, by the Honourable Cheick Tidiane TRAORE, Member of Parliament, Guinea.
- 12. The Joola tragedy in Senegal: Governance problems and a disaster's social roots**, by Mr. Nassardine Aidara, Youth and Development, Senegal.

1. Human Security in UNESCO Activities, by Mr. Yoro FALL, UNESCO, Accra

Ethical foundations of human security

UNESCO initiated strategic thinking in 1995, on “*What security?*”, and continued with the question: “*What agenda for human security in the 21st century?*” Other initiatives have led to a series of regional international meetings, bringing together several levels of expertise, to develop ethical, normative and educational frameworks to promote human security.

The development of publications on ethical, normative and educational frameworks at the regional level is an unprecedented approach for UNESCO and all its partners. With these frameworks, UNESCO wanted to stress:

- a) the need for a *solid ethical base*, based on shared values and leading to a commitment to human dignity;
- b) the strengthening of this ethical dimension through *existing/new normative instruments*, which should be made available for human security, while assuring that human rights are protected ;
- (c) the need to reinforce the *education and training dimension*, by focusing on themes such as education for peace and sustainable development, human rights training and inclusion in the democratic agenda for human security.

Within the context of cooperation with African regional and sub-regional organizations, UNESCO intends to organize in 2006, in partnership with the AU and as a follow-up to the expert meeting organized with the *Institute for Security Studies (ISS)*^{††} as well as a conference organized in November 2000^{††}, an expert meeting on “Human Security, Conflict Prevention and Peace in Africa”. This Conference is in line with the general framework of UNESCO’s strategy for promoting human security and peace, AU activities in this area, and African networks’ activities for human security.

Furthermore, UNESCO is fully associated with two key partners: the Human Security Network (of which Mali is a member and South Africa an observer) and the Human Security Commission, which is currently monitored by the Human Security Unit in the United Nations Secretariat.^{§§}

Promoting Human Security in Africa

In terms of promoting human security, the African continent is expecting, in particular, that we explore a number of issues: food security, defence of social, economic and cultural rights, poverty reduction, HIV/AIDS control, support for the democratic process, governance, prevention of natural disasters and conflicts, peace education and peace culture, etc.

However, these basic parameters can be developed only with strong commitment of all the actors. For its part, UNESCO is ready to offer its expertise, by mobilizing its networks of experts, comprising eminent researchers and academics, and specialized NGOs, to help Africa:

^{††} See publication following this meeting: Proceedings of the Expert Meeting on “Peace, Human Security and Conflict Prevention in Africa” (South-Africa: UNESCO -ISS, 2001),

www.unesco.org/securepax/UNESCO_ISSfinal.pdf

^{††} See publication following this meeting: Proceedings of the First International Meeting of Directors of Peace Research and Training Institutions – “What Agenda for Human Security in the Twenty-First Century” (UNESCO, 2001), www.unesco.org/securepax/w_hatagenda.pdf

^{§§} See the Commission report: “Human Security Now”, <http://www.humansecuritychs.org/finalreport/index.html>

- Analyze and examine the root causes of conflicts, so as to better prevent potential conflicts;
- Carry out strategic thinking on the legal and normative shortcomings of some countries;
- Promote human security and the culture of peace through specific activities in peace education, human rights, good governance, etc.

This cooperation, which is essential in the areas of peace and promotion of human security, will also be extended to post-conflict issues: in this regard, UNESCO could make a substantial contribution under the overall strategic framework for countries in post-conflict situations and particularly countries in post-crisis situations.

As part of research on existing forms of violence in Africa, and on the means of preventing them, a partnership has been initiated with the "Institut de Paix de Gorée" (Senegal) on a project entitled "Research/action project on violence in Africa, and for the promotion of human security". The overall goal of the research/action project is to understand the causes of violence in Africa, analyze its manifestations and develop tools to prevent it (or stop it), and thereby promote the protection of human security and persons.

In the long term, a laboratory will be created to examine and act on violence in Africa. This overall goal is divided into three specific objectives. The first specific objective consists of seeking to understand the reasons for resorting to violence in Africa as a way of settling disputes. The second specific objective is to report on certain concrete situations through case studies. The third specific objective is to develop a warning system and a tool for conflict prevention and resolution so as to promote the security of persons.

UNESCO supports a number of sub-regional projects, by seeking non-budgetary resources required for their implementation. In order to strengthen the involvement of civil society in the peace and reconciliation process, a project entitled: "Voices of civil societies for human security and peace in the Great Lakes region" (Burundi, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda) was developed to strengthen the involvement of the local population in the peace and reconciliation process.

This project seeks to identify the human security concerns of the local population through inter-regional dialogue between civil society actors. It will subsequently provide data to governments and development actors so that they can fully integrate the needs expressed by the population, and consequently promote reconciliation and peace.

Concerning the strengthening of women's capacities, UNESCO launched an action programme to promote the rights of women living in the Great Lakes region. Indeed, the General Conference, at its 32nd session, requested UNESCO to reinforce its activities in favour of women and children living in conflict areas, particularly in Africa. This action programme comprises consultations, research on politics, analysis of needs, etc.

The Programme also intends to promote capacity building for women so as to ensure that they participate more actively in the democratization and governance process, in accordance with the Declaration of Dar-es-Salaam on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes region (First Summit of Heads of State and Government, 20 November 2004).

UNESCO has, for the past few years, developed a number of poverty reduction initiatives and projects.

As UNESCO's contribution to the implementation of Goal No. 1 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG): "Reduce extreme poverty and hunger", several projects in Africa, launched in 2002, will be pursued. One of these projects, entitled "Contribution to the elimination of poverty and reinforcement of human security in Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger", was launched on the basis of a publication entitled "*Poverty: a Fate? – Promoting autonomy and human security of underprivileged groups – Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger*" (Editions UNESCO-Karthala 2002).**

As regards capacity building, UNESCO has also launched an international scholarship programme on poverty eradication: this initiative aims to encourage mid-career professionals, as well as their institutions, to contribute to poverty eradication strategies and participatory national action plans for the countries concerned. The UNESCO Office in Bamako coordinates the programme for West and Central Africa; the Office in Dar-es-Salaam coordinates the programme for East and South Africa.

Extreme Poverty, a Form of Human Insecurity

In 2003, the UNESCO Office in Bamako conducted research on "*Human security in international speeches and local realities – the case of Mali*", which summarizes the results of consultations with local populations in urban, periurban and rural areas in Mali. This study identified three (3) assumptions relating to links between poverty and human security:

1) "*Human insecurity experienced by the population in "pacified" countries (such as Mali, for example) is close to the concept of "multidimensional" poverty*". After structuring the concept of Human Security in seven dimensions according to the conception of the UNDP's HDRs in 1994, the results of discussions with the urban, periurban and rural populations in Mali indicated that the "security" concerns of these populations are close or similar to what in international cooperation circles is known as "multidimensional" poverty. Physical and economic access to health care services, food, drinking water, land as well as access to the labour market and education are examples deemed fundamental to the economic, food, health, and environmental dimensions of the concept of human security.

As regards political and community security, the results are also consistent with the discourse on "empowerment" or "capacity building", in development language to fight against the "voicelessness" of the poor populations and to improve the involvement of these populations in debates and democracy.

On the other hand, if individual security is not defined in terms of shortcomings of the other dimensions of human security (such as the lack of food, drugs, etc.), it will fall more within the discourse on physical violence: the results have shown, in particular, forms of violence such as rape and domestic violence.

2) *The main dimension of human insecurity in Mali is the risk of social exclusion*. Within this context, the results of Mali have indicated that the main source of insecurity is actually the fact of being alone and/or without social relations. The absence of the State or the dysfunctioning of

** Sum m ary on: http://publishing.unesco.org/details.aspx?Code_Livre=4006#

State services makes other forms of solidarity, such as the family, friends, and the village, even more important. Indeed, if family and friendly solidarity links weaken along side the process of urbanization of the Malian society, and the State does not want to or cannot provide this form of security, there could be “degradation” of human security in Mali.

3) *The populations most vulnerable to social exclusion/Human insecurity are women and young girls.* Even though awareness of women’s vulnerability is widely shared by the “development community”, this research showed the social exclusion of women and young girls from the point of view of security/insecurity. Indeed, the results of the seven dimensions of human security showed that vulnerability to insecurity in any one of these dimensions increases radically when the person is not integrated into a social network. Within this context, it is mostly single women that is widows, divorcees or spinsters, who are in this situation of exclusion.

In accordance with the initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General concerning *human rights mainstreaming*, this project seeks to examine the relationship between poverty and human rights at the theoretical level, and on the practical implementation through pilot projects.

We are all aware of the efforts that need to be made to fully respond to the challenges posed by human security in Africa. These challenges are not only many, but also new. They are indeed challenges to States, communities and local authorities, and the international community as whole within the context of globalization. They represent, in particular, a challenge to peace and sustainable development, as well as moral and intellectual solidarity, towards which UNESCO is working in its programme in accordance with its mandate and constitution.

Thank you for your kind attention.

2. Health dimensions of security: The challenge of sub-regional pandemics and status of integrated responses in West Africa, by Prof. Thérèse N'DRI-YOMAN, University of Abidjan, Cocody.

INTRODUCTION

Based on the WHO's definition of health as a "state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity", we can clearly see that this concept of health is more complete than many other definitions, for it takes cognisance of the human being's every dimension: body, mind (intellect) and environment. Moreover, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights clearly states that the right to health is one of the fundamental inalienable rights of every human being.

Similarly, the security of the individual and property is also a fundamental right. Thus, "Human security may be defined as the preservation and protection of the life and dignity of individual human beings", so it must include the health aspect.

However, it has to be acknowledged that the world health situation reveals blatant inequities in this field, especially between the North and the South, and more so in sub-Saharan Africa, of which West Africa is an integral part. For example, life expectancy – one of the most reliable health indicators – is 80 years on an average in industrialised countries and 36 years in developing nations. This disparity extends to practically every other health indicator and even goes beyond health alone, as it affects other sectors such as the economy, development, the environment, etc.

A number of health policies have been proposed to bridge this gap:

- The Alma Ata Declaration
- The Bamako Initiative
- The Millennium Development Goals (WHO 2000), with "Health for All by 2015".

Though significant progress has been made in certain countries and for certain pathologies such as poliomyelitis, the health situation in the African region still remains a source of concern, as "the continent is still mired in poverty and is doubly burdened by rising morbidity, social unrest and natural or man-made disasters (deforestation, armed conflicts)".

All these factors thwart any possibility of exploring better opportunities to improve people's health conditions in order to offer them a better future.

Therefore, there are a number of challenges to be met. Africa can hope to meet some of these challenges since it is currently enjoying a "health honeymoon", with African leaders committed to place health issues on a war footing within regional and sub-regional groupings, for example: the NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development), the OSOA (West African Health Organisation), international partners' support for improving the African population's health (the World AIDS/Tuberculosis/Malaria Funds).

Looking at security's health dimension means broaching the health issue from a broader and more global viewpoint; hence, we have to try and adopt a more global vision of health policy

systems and develop strategies in this direction, based upon successful health policies and past experiences.

The current issue in Africa is how to use available resources in order to break all the vicious circles that slow down economic development and consequently lead to ineffective health policies and systems, in order to guarantee the African people better health along with sustained development. But this can only be done if all actors involved unite their energies at the global level to shape a healthier future.

One such example is the response to the pandemics sweeping through West Africa. In fact, the AIDS epidemic is an exceptional crisis that has to be dealt with both as an emergency and a long-term problem to fashion an effective response.

I. HISTORY OF THE MAIN GLOBAL HEALTH POLICIES

For more than two decades, in order to improve people's health in developing countries in general and Africa in particular, several policies and strategies were taken up in the health sector.

Sound principles and guidelines with well-defined objectives were developed to bring down health disparities in the developing world:

- The 1978 Alma Ata Declaration challenged the world "to respect the principles of primary health systems in order to remedy glaring disparities in the health sector between countries and within nations." This system was therefore based on primary health care.
- The District approach: This was a decentralised preventive approach at district level for health sector development based on a three-phase scenario in 1985.
- The 1987 Bamako Initiative underlined the necessity of community participation for the development of health.
- The Millennium Health Goals (WHO) are a corollary to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by the United Nations in 2000. The MDG declaration stated the principles and values that should underlie international relations in the 21st century and identified seven areas in which national leaders had to make specific commitments:

- 1 – Peace, security and disarmament,
- 2 – Development and poverty eradication,
- 3 – Protection of our common environment,
- 4 – Human rights, democracy and good governance,
- 5 – Protection of vulnerable groups,
- 6 – Measures aimed at meeting Africa's special needs,
- 7 – Strengthening the United Nations Organisation.

The WHO's objective was to provide an opportunity for concerted action to improve global health and place health at the heart of development by establishing a new Global Compact, linking developed and developing countries through clear, reciprocal obligations that each entity would undertake to respect.

- Objectives of Section 2: Development and poverty eradication have now been renamed the Millennium Development Goals. Governments throughout the world undertook to do more to

reduce poverty and hunger and to tackle ill health, gender inequality, lack of education, access to clean water and environmental degradation. Here again we find the notion of globalisation in which health is just one of the priority factors.

As regards health as such, the “Strategy for Health for All [HFA Strategy] in the 21st century” or “Health for All by the Year 2000” was adopted by WHO’s Regional Committee for Africa’s 49th session. The Strategy for HFA in the 21st century aims at considerably improving the African population’s health by promoting healthier lifestyles, preventing disease, increasing life expectancy and reducing mortality rates. It also aims at reducing the growing malaria, tuberculosis and HIV related mortality rates. People’s health is indeed a vital aspect of economic and social development.

II. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The world health landscape is a study in contrasts: with respect to health disparities, there is an increasingly yawning gap between peoples. The study of recent trends shows that the gap is growing all over the world.

1. Some health indicators:

In addition, stagnation or a worrying decline can be observed in the performance of health indicators for Sub-Saharan Africa. Let us analyse some of them:

- Life expectancy

Over the past 50 years, the average life expectancy at birth has risen by nearly 20 years in the world as a whole, growing from 46.5 years in 1950-1955 to 65.2 in 2002, that is:
+9 years in developed countries (North America, Australia, Europe and Japan);
+17 years in developing countries with a high mortality rate, particularly African countries and poor nations in other continents;
+26 years in developing countries with a low mortality rate.

But the existing life expectancy has dropped down to 46 for men in Sub-Saharan Africa, largely due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic in adults and in children below 5 years of age and other infectious diseases.

- World mortality rates

The basic criterion for assessing a nation’s health status remains the death risk, which was also used for comparison in 2002. It was noted that:

- There were some 57 million deaths of which 10.5 million (20%) were children below the age of five, 98% of whom lived in the developing world and 50% in Africa.
- Among those above 70 years of age, 60% of deaths occurred in developed nations and 30% in developing countries.
- In the 15-59 year age group, 20% of deaths occurred in developed nations and 30% in developing countries. This is well and truly a public health issue.

Thus, in certain Sub-Saharan regions, the adult mortality rate is higher than 30 years ago. The risk of premature death is high; the risk of adult premature deaths corresponds to a mortality

probability between the ages of 15 and 60. Deaths due to intentional or accidental injuries or “occult epidemics” among the youth (armed conflicts, road accidents, acts of violence or voluntary, self-inflicted injuries) have almost caught up with deaths due to HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa.

- Morbidity burden

This means a state of disability or handicap arising from non-communicable diseases and not leading to death (e.g.: depression, loss of visual acuity or motor functions).

To obtain the aggregate morbidity burden index, the calculation is based on the number of disability-adjusted life years = one “life year” in good health lost; the disability-adjusted life year system measures the difference between the health situation of the population in question and that of a world benchmark population, where life expectancy is high and all the years are lived in perfect health.

The fragile nature of adult health is worsened by social, economic and political instability.

- Infant and juvenile mortality

It still remains rather high in Africa and has increased as compared to the risk factor ten years ago. About 35% of African children remain exposed to a death risk. The main causes are preventable diseases: perinatal conditions, lower respiratory tract infections, diarrhoea and malaria, each aggravated by malnutrition.

Africa therefore suffers from a dual handicap:

- The persistence of communicable diseases and malnutrition, more or less eradicated elsewhere.
- The spread of non-communicable diseases such as metabolic diseases, cardiovascular diseases and emerging infections.

2. Main decisive factors for health

- Poverty

A majority of African countries are still impoverished, despite holding vast reserves of natural resources. Based on the poverty threshold corresponding to minimal consumption per day for one American dollar, more than 45% of the population lives below the poverty line. Poverty is more acute in rural areas where the majority of Africans live. It is a multidimensional phenomenon (diseases, illiteracy, unemployment, insecure and indecent housing, bad governance, etc.).

Moreover, it affects a growing population (rising from 16% in 1985 to 31% in 1998) and is likely to rise dramatically in coming years, bucking the trend in other parts of the world.

In addition, health and development indicators such as the environment, transport, water, energy, urbanisation and employment are interlinked.

The high morbidity burden leads to low productivity, further widening the gulf between potential economic growth and actual economic growth. The diseases responsible for this under-productivity are small in number. They are: malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. Other determinants come after them:

- Environmental degradation
 - Poor quality of the water,
 - Lack of sanitation,
 - Rapid and badly planned urbanisation accompanied by overcrowding, fostering an increase in infectious diseases,
 - Low primary school enrolment rates,
 - Adult and especially women's illiteracy that impacts infant mortality and maternal mortality.

The interrelation between bad health and poverty can be seen in African communities. A survey called "The Ways of the Poor" (Les voies des pauvres) conducted in many countries in 2006 (Ghana, Mauritania, Malawi and Zimbabwe) showed that individuals, families and communities ascribed their capacity to earn a decent livelihood to their state of health.

Thus, health constitutes an optimal entry point for initiating a development approach that is consistent with the stated objectives of poverty alleviation and development.

Sub-Saharan Africa suffers from a very high prevalence of communicable diseases and a high infant and maternal mortality rate.

In addition, the main influencing factors for health, such as the environment, drinking water access, food security, behavioural risk factors, illiteracy and extreme poverty compromise the impact of health interventions.

- Inadequate budget allocations for health

Considerable disparities may be observed in the provisions made for health services. Health and accessibility allocations represent an average 8% in the national budget, whereas the recommended level is 15%.

3. Progress in health policies

The various health policies adopted have not produced the expected results. The situation remains stagnant if it is not deteriorating. Thus, the poor performance of African health systems is evident and the continent finds it difficult to implement health policies.

These failures call for sweeping reforms in policy implementation by Health Ministries, as well as the public and private sectors and civil society.

Moreover, assistance from international partners remains sectarian and does not produce optimal results.

III. CHALLENGES AND KEY ISSUES OF MAJOR PANDEMICS: HIV/AIDS – TUBERCULOSIS – MALARIA

1. *Epidemiological data*

Just 10% of the world's population lives in Sub-Saharan Africa, but it has two-thirds of the world's HIV infected population, which translates into 25 million people and an average of 3 million new cases every year. A larger number of women are infected with the virus than men. They account for 57% of patients (e.g.: there are 45 infected women for every 10 infected men in Mali). Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest prevalence rate in the world.

The disease is mostly transmitted through sexual intercourse, but also through the lack of proper hygiene in hospitals, especially unsafe blood transfusions.

2. *Impact on health indicators*

HIV/AIDS has nullified the progress achieved in lowering the infant-juvenile mortality rate, and put to naught the higher life expectancy achieved over the last three decades of the twentieth century. Life expectancy stands at 47 years. The mortality rate for the less than 5-year old age group is higher than in 1990 in 14 African countries. But other countries have managed to maintain their achievements and even lower the rate by 50% (Ghana, Gambia), despite HIV/AIDS. The mortality rate is much higher in the 20-40 age group, that is, 20 times higher than in industrialised nations. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for 90% of deaths in developing countries due to HIV/AIDS and malaria. It represents 6,000 deaths per day. In the absence of proper treatment, the mortality rate is 100%. HIV/AIDS also aggravates other epidemics across the world, especially tuberculosis, which has turned into a major cause of death not only for virus carriers but also for their family members and HIV-negative kin. Tuberculosis prevalence is at 492 cases per 100,000, i.e. 27% of the world morbidity burden. HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis are considered as a pair of "silent killers".

3. *Socio-economic impact*

HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis are accompanied by serious socio-economic consequences for developing countries. These epidemics have a marked impact on households and communities, translating into an average annual loss of 1-2% of national economic growth.

AIDS has played havoc in these societies: there are 14 million orphaned children in Africa, and high transmission levels in the teaching body, nursing personnel and civil servants have ripped the social fabric apart. This disease impacts on a host of actions and processes and raises a lot of questions.

Can the presence of millions of orphaned children have such impacts as:

- An extension of armed conflicts?
- An increase in social diseases in relation to urban migration and unemployment due to the death of parents?
- An increase in poverty and food insecurity?
- A decrease in household income?

HIV/AIDS in Africa is, indeed, a real threat for people's health and well being.

4. Failure

Given the scale of the epidemic, a number of programmes were initiated to cope with it. But the programmes to fight these pandemics, especially HIV/AIDS, were implemented in a fragmented way, so the figures still remain alarming:

- Number of new HIV infections: 3.2 million.
- Number of deaths due to HIV: 2.3 million.
- Access to anti-retroviral drugs: 8% of 4.4 million persons living with HIV.

Africa bears 66% of the AIDS burden and 60% of the malarial burden in the world. There is disparity in access to anti-retroviral treatment and the progress achieved in modern medicine – in particular anti-retroviral treatments – does not benefit those who need it most. Health professionals suffer from psychological fatigue and are unable to cope with the difficult and inadequate patient care.

HIV/AIDS has created a crisis situation that affects human rights and, in particular, the right to treatment, thus jeopardising human security in Sub-Saharan Africa. The epidemic's growth is compounded by extreme poverty and gender inequality, making women more vulnerable, with the added risk of transmission to their offspring.

5. Main challenges

- v Recognise that AIDS is a global crisis that requires an exceptional response.
- v Change the emphasis of different health policies pertaining to the eradication of pandemics.
- v Encourage national policies to get really involved in assuming the responsibility of major health programmes; everything seems to be vested with external partners currently.
- v Extend access to treatment and to all aspects of this fight.
- v Develop specific strategies for the most vulnerable groups.

IV. MODALITIES OF RESPONSES TO PANDEMICS

HIV/AIDS is an extraordinary crisis. It has to be recognised as a global health emergency and calls for an exceptional response. West Africa fits perfectly in this global dynamic. But a true systemic change is necessary to obtain effective results.

1. Status of integrated responses

The New Vision

The best guarantee for success in this fight would be an integrated prevention and care approach. However, in order to obtain the best results, it is imperative to ensure the absence of disparities in prevention and access to treatment. Above all, maximum efforts ought to be directed towards the most vulnerable groups.

Unfortunately, many patients do not receive proper care and anti-retroviral treatment in Africa. The inadequacy of legislative provisions guaranteeing the rights of persons living with HIV and, above all, their right to effective treatment, must also be noted.

The need of the hour is to promote an approach to AIDS based on human rights principles and the support of civil society organisations, in particular associations of persons living with HIV.

Inter-sectoral approaches to health must be promoted: most West African countries are eligible for and fit into the categories defined for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria Fund.

2. National response

All countries have national programmes for the eradication of pandemics:

- v National Tuberculosis Control Programme
- v National AIDS Control Programme
- v National Malaria Control Programme
- v Capacity building

The shortage of health personnel is a major hindrance to the achievement of national and MDG health targets. The quick and urgent recruitment of personnel is imperative in order to make the most of the funds and drugs available at present. The brain and skill drain aggravates the demand and supply gap.

All nations are now part of the global market for health professionals (sub-regional). It accounts for 25% of the world morbidity burden and 2% of the health budget. The international crisis with regard to health personnel, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, is an issue neglected by both international organisations and national governments.

On the other hand, patient care increases the workload of health care staff.

Therefore, the Training of Trainers, the Training and Development of health professionals' and the development of community helpers' skills need to be emphasised. Efforts should be directed towards the "multiplier" effect of these policies, which would be of benefit not only to HIV/AIDS control efforts, but also actions in other public health and educational fields.

For HIV:

- v Improving HIV/AIDS counselling and screening
- v Improving women's health (Family Planning Services, Mother-Child Transmission and Prevention)
- v Improving integrated prevention and care services by improving tuberculosis screening and treatment.

3. Sub-regional and international response

The main partners working together to implement sub-regional and international programmes are:

- v WAHO for human resource capacity-building.
- v UNAIDS, WHO (African region), UNICEF, ILO
- v NGOs – APP-HIV
- v Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria.

Main results expected:

- v Access to ARVs for all, 3 million patients being treated with ARVs in 2005 or “3 by 5 programme” (target not met),
- v Outreach programme for coverage of patient costs or upgrading of the programme to country-level,
- v Simplified treatment protocol directives under the aegis of the WHO to cope with population mobility in the ECOWAS and the WAEMU region (establishing standard treatment practices) in order to be able to deal with the high population mobility in the West African region.

Prevention and control of infection: Corridor Project on the Côte d’Ivoire–Ghana–Togo–Nigeria axis.

For Tuberculosis: Should the DOTS strategy be extended?

For Malaria: The Abuja Declaration, which recommends integrated multi-sectoral control, taking into account the decontamination of the environment. Prevention by using subsidised, treated mosquito nets and chemoprophylaxis treatment for pregnant women, as per the WHO’s guidelines.

CONCLUSION

Health reforms in the last decades of the 20th century did not bring about any general improvement in health, because of:

- v Inadequate health systems
- v Shortage of funds: inadequate resource mobilisation is an impediment since the cost of controlling epidemics requires abundant resources
- v Management problems
- v Health information gaps
- v Inadequate health infrastructure
- v Inadequate and tardy progress reflected in high disease incidence.

It is necessary therefore to intensify actions that have proved effective: cost-effective, efficient and with efficacious ratios.

It is also important to implement integrated care based on the following fundamental principles:

- v Universal access and coverage of needs
- v Equality in health matters, in order to establish a development driven by social justice
- v Community participation to define and execute health programmes.

Besides, these pandemics ought to be considered “global emergencies” akin to SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) or avian flu, in order to really come to grips with them. If properly implemented, such emergency action could lead to lasting progress.

Striving for equality in prevention and a better access to care would help reduce both social and medical inequalities that threaten peace and the fragile stability enjoyed by the international community.

Let us not forget that there are three other neglected epidemics in West Africa:

- v Cardiovascular diseases
- v Tobacco use
- v Traffic accidents

Thus, the African region is obliged to face a number of challenges. It therefore becomes important to identify priorities and analyse opportunities, and develop strategies likely to implement far-reaching health policy reforms, while promoting an integrated approach, given the scale of the pandemics faced by the region. It is also important to inculcate a healthier and disease preventing lifestyle in the African population.

3. ECOWAS in the face of the bird flu threat in West Africa, by Dr. Daniel EKLU, Director, ECOWAS Department of Agriculture, Rural Development Rural and the Environment

The advent of avian flu to West Africa (Nigeria, Niger), as well as its potential spread has serious implications for ECOWAS.

This new situation puts the sub-region under severe strain as regards livestock development in general and poultry farming in particular, and with respect to the economic growth of several Member States, especially Sahelian countries, where livestock is a major revenue source.

In fact, the attendant psychosis has reduced poultry consumption, which in turn gives rise to nutritional problems and revenue losses for producers, curtailing the success of poverty alleviation strategies.

This presentation is aimed at highlighting the threat of animal epidemics in human security terms. It will include the health, economic, social, nutritional and environmental aspects of such threats.

Preventive and bird flu control measures as well as the actions taken by ECOWAS since the emergence of the animal epidemic in West Africa have already been circulated to the participants. ECOWAS has announced a regional ministerial meeting on avian influenza on 9-12 May 2006 in Abuja. The meeting will discuss two aspects:

- A technical aspect, leading to the formulation of a regional action plan to complement national strategies, as well as the definition of the stakeholders' role within the framework of a technical platform, coordinated by ECOWAS through its regional agricultural policy, the ECOWAP – mainly through its "Prevention and management of food crises" component.
- A political aspect, which should result in an undertaking by the ministries directly concerned by this crisis, as well as the collective appropriation of the prevention and control process.

4. Minutes of the sub-regional meeting held in Dakar on avian influenza, by Dr. Serigne Mamadou Bousso LEYE, National Coordinator – PACE/Senegalese Ministry of Livestock, Representative of the Chairperson, Dr. Oumy Khaïry Gueye Seck, member of the Ministerial Steering Committee of the Coordination Mechanism for the Prevention and Response to Avian Influenza in West Africa.

I would like to commend the SWAC/OECD for organising this timely meeting for sharing and exchanging our views on the burning issue of “Human Security”. On behalf of Doctor Mrs. Oumy Khaïry GUEYE SECK, the Senegalese Minister for Livestock, I would like to express heartfelt thanks to the SWAC/OECD for associating the Ministerial Steering Committee of the Mechanism for Coordinating the Prevention and Response to Avian Influenza in West Africa, that she presides over, in your work, and present the Dakar meeting’s proceedings.

I would like to begin by recalling the context in which the ministers met at Dakar.

As you are all aware, the persistent spread of avian influenza from South East Asia into Africa, passing through Europe, has pushed most African countries to adapt various measures to prevent the spread of this disease and/or cope with contamination.

Despite our countries’ internal mobilisation right from the time the first case of avian flu was identified in Nigeria, we have not been able to obtain any conclusive results.

But this is absolutely normal in an impoverished continent already trying to cope with other scourges that have greater priority (AIDS, malaria, famine, etc.) and/or we can fear the worst. If we do not act swiftly, this situation could lead to another new tragedy.

Nevertheless, we are fully aware that when dealing with a cross-border disease such as avian flu, which furthermore could be spread by migratory birds, any cloistered national actions would be in vain unless effective and efficient coordinated action is taken by the sub-region’s countries.

This would mean that the only practical alternative available is synergy in control efforts.

This is what His Excellency, Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal, realised very early. He invited the Ministers of Livestock, Health, Environment and Commerce from the ECOWAS countries and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania for a joint action meeting.

The Ministers met on 22 and 23 February 2006, and adopted a Declaration, named the **Dakar Declaration**, and agreed to establish a sub-regional coordination mechanism for avian flu prevention and response, called the Sub-Regional Mechanism for the Prevention and Response to Avian Influenza, under the auspices of a Ministerial Steering Committee presided by Senegal.

The mechanism now offers a framework to translate political will into concrete actions and also facilitates our nations in their efforts to fulfil their commitments in a coherent and consensual manner.

It also constitutes an operational framework that will help improve, strengthen and optimise the existing apparatus, drawing from the expertise available at the national, sub-regional and international levels.

Finally, the Ministers decided to establish a rapid action fund within the mechanism: the Sub-Regional Emergency Fund, deposited with the African Development Bank (AfDB), with flexible mechanisms for mobilising financial resources. They also launched an appeal for the international community to express its solidarity through an emergency contribution to this Fund as well as sustained support for the rehabilitation of the poultry sector.

In fact, the rehabilitation of the poultry sector in Africa is rather important, given the socio-economic consequences of avian flu, namely:

- The collapse of poultry farming
- Inadequate revenue for the actors involved
- Farmers' pauperisation
- Loss of employment
- Lower nutritional intake (decrease in meat consumption)
- Pressure on other meats (which could bring about inflation and even economic dislocation)
- Free movement of people and goods (poultry) hampered
- Health fallout (risks encountered by farmers, consumers, etc.).

And this list is far from exhaustive.

In addition, we would like to share with you certain aspects of this sub-regional mechanism, which shall come up for final validation during the meeting of the ECOWAS and Mauritanian Council of Ministers in April 2006.

In fact, acting at the suggestion made by Madam President of the Ministerial Steering Committee, Dr. Oumy Khaïry Gueye, Minister for Livestock, Senegal, the expert committee met at Bamako and gave its opinion on this mechanism, the Emergency Fund's operational regulations, the Fund's/AfDB's internal functioning, and a draft road map for the Committee.

Conclusion

We firmly believe that today, States, Civil Society, International and Sub-Regional Organisations, the International Community and the people should work shoulder-to-shoulder in order to defeat this terrible disease and, consequently, limit its negative impact on our countries' health and economy, in order to further human security.

May the SWAC/OECD be the spokespersons for this Mechanism and carry its message to donors on behalf of the West African People.

Thank you very much, indeed, for your kind attention.

5. Natural disasters and food crises: Challenges and current status of responses in West Africa, by Mr. Thierno Seydou GUEYE, Coordinator – Protection, OCHA Regional Bureau for West Africa, Dakar.

Introduction

For the past several years, Sub-Saharan Africa has faced a series of either man-made or natural crises that seriously set back the region's development. These enduring and multiplying crises pose a serious threat to human security in this part of the world. West Africa has already been severely affected by armed conflicts or a post-conflict economic slump, and has also suffered losses inflicted by natural calamities due to drought, floods or locust plagues. The Sahelian countries of Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and Chad were the worst affected in the sub-region, as was Senegal, to a lesser extent. The responses to these crises were either short-term or structural – short-term if they concerned an emergency, and structural if they had to do with development. With respect to the latter, the OCHA (UNOCHA) Regional Bureau for West Africa jointly organised two crucial consultations on the Sahel with the UNDP in Dakar in November 2005 and with the CILSS and the UNDP in Ouagadougou in March 2006. These meetings led to important resolutions and recommendations. We shall return to these later.

1. Situational analysis

The food and nutritional emergencies that affected some of the Sahel's countries in 2004 and 2005 once again exposed the extent of peoples' vulnerability in the region. They could also potentially increase the risks of new diseases emerging, the increase in contagious diseases and, lest we forget, problems in the peoples' psychological development in the region, especially in the case of women and children. This vulnerability is itself the result of a combination of both short-term and structural factors.

Measures to find long-term solutions to these problems are being taken. But the perspective of a fragile food situation in certain Sahel regions during the lean period in 2006 necessitates a short and medium-term response, in an effective and well-coordinated manner. Despite bountiful harvests in 2005/2006, the situation in certain Sahel regions is a serious cause for concern. Joint assessment missions revealed in early December that the population would once again face a major problem in accessing food by March/June 2006 at the latest^{†††}.

The abundant 2005/2006 harvests cannot hide the heavy burden the people had to bear since last year's crisis. With very limited food production, a high livestock mortality rate and record high prices of millet and other cereals, 2004 had long-term effects on household savings, debt levels and the health and nutritional status of the people.

The record cereal prices in 2005 had a negative effect on the incomes of already impoverished families, representing a very heavy debt repayment burden in 2005/2006. For example, in Niger, a

^{†††} 21 October to 4 November: the Niger Government, the FAO and the PAM (Regional Bureau and National Bureaus), the CILSS/AGRHYMET, and FEWSnet. An observer from United States' State Department's Humanitarian Affairs Bureau published a preliminary assessment of food stock and food security. This was followed by a High Level visit to the Diffa, Zinder, Maradi, Tahoua and Dosso regions, focused more specifically on the location and number of vulnerable communities (risk-prone villages). This report is available on www.fao.org. See also FAO/GEWSS Global Watch 'Niger Assessment – Putting the 2005/06 Season in Proper Context' of 7 December, available on (<http://www.fao.org/giews/english/shortnews/niger051207.htm#11>)

bag of millet borrowed at the end of spring 2005 had to be repaid with at least 2.5 to 3 bags of millet in October this year. If the high and widespread 2004 debt factor is taken into account (see chart), there will be a considerable reduction in available food stocks at the start of the 2005/2006 season.

One of the most important factors of the 2005 crisis was the critical nutritional status of young children, which worsened to such an extent that it was recognised as an “unprecedented childhood nutritional crisis”. From September to November 2005, UNICEF conducted a series of quick nutritional assessments in Burkina Faso, Mali and Mauritania, as well as an in-depth review of national surveys conducted by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. The results of these evaluations and reviews showed that a severe infant nutritional crisis that knew no national frontiers was prevalent in these countries. Malnutrition accounts for 52% of infant mortality. In other words, half of the infant mortality rate is due to malnutrition (i.e. 280,000 children die every year due to infant malnutrition).

According to UNICEF, severe malnutrition rates among infants between 6 and 59 months prevail in Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad, higher than the WHO-defined emergency threshold of 15%. Severe malnutrition rates are higher than 10% in Mali and Mauritania, and the WHO considers a rate above 10% as the threshold characterising a serious situation. The global prevalence of severe malnutrition for these 5 countries is 15.2%.

2. Challenges to be met

These very significant challenges depend as much on prevention, management, as on State support to respond effectively to the expectations of people facing natural disasters. Both emergency and structural measures need to be implemented in order to face these challenges. The most important tools used by the OCHA to meet the challenges posed by natural calamities are government aid for the rapid assessment of humanitarian needs, the development of emergency or contingency plans and consolidated appeals for funds to finance humanitarian projects proposed by the United Nations System (UNS) agencies.

In order to prevent calamities, States would have to find effective means for disaster prevention and management. But most of the time, our State partners need the support of strategic partners or development partners to strengthen their technical know-how and augment financial resources to deal effectively with natural calamities that take a heavy toll on their citizens. That is why the OCHA works as much as possible towards coordinating humanitarian assistance activities within the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) framework or with national teams, also involving donors and international humanitarian organisations (apart from the UN) to a large extent. This synergy towards which the OCHA strives can be seen in the responses to humanitarian crises.

3. Current status of responses in West Africa

Food crisis response plans are based on three scenarios, priority strategies and response plans.

3.1 Scenarios

Most probable scenario

Malnutrition emergency levels will reappear in localised zones in Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and Mauritania during the 2006 lean period. However, the mortality rate is not expected to reach

emergency levels. Another locust plague is not anticipated. If economic and trade practices remain unchanged, prices will probably continue to remain high. Another factor that can aggravate the situation is the rising household debt burden, which can bring down cost coverage capacities during the lean period. Hence, the humanitarian cost of food insecurity in Niger, Mali, Mauritania and Burkina Faso could affect 3.7 million people, who would require different levels of aid in terms of food and nutrients during the 2006 lean period.

Best-case scenario

The best-case scenario for Niger, Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Mali would be a bountiful harvest of the main crops, adequate seeds and sufficient water for dry season production, to fill national food security stocks and household stocks, and reduce the debt burden. Market standardisation, and the increased capacity of national governments to respond to crises, thanks to debt reduction, is also an integral part of a better scenario for the Sahel. Generally speaking, a greater awareness of food insecurity and of the importance of preparedness would also be a part of this scenario.

Worst-case scenario

The worst-case scenario would involve unfavourable livestock and cereal trade conditions, with a larger number of families recorded as being affected by the avian flu than in February in Nigeria and Niger, and with no suitable responses to food insecurity during the 2006 lean period. All of the above would lead to increased protectionism and depleted food stock for the most vulnerable families. Moreover, this macro-economic situation would result in the sealing of borders, the restriction on the movement of people and goods, the upsurge of animal and human epidemics and, finally, social tensions due to food insecurity.

3.2 Priority strategies for a humanitarian response

The basic strategic blueprint for West Africa’s humanitarian response was created within the framework of the 2006 consolidated appeal process.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	1. Protection and assistance for the most vulnerable population groups affected by crises and natural calamities
CORRESPONDING OBJECTIVES	1.1 The responsibilities of governments to guarantee protection and assistance for West African people affected by multifaceted crises and natural disasters, supported by humanitarian aid agencies.
CORRESPONDING OBJECTIVES	
	1.1.1 Protection and registration: Guarantee the affected population’s legal and physical protection, such as identification, registration and guaranteed access.
	1.1.2 Aid: Ensure that crucial aid reaches the affected population: food, nutrition, health, psychosocial care, water, sanitation and shelter.
	1.1.3 Repatriation, Reintegration and Restoration: Facilitate the affected population’s return and/or reintegration, and the host community’s rehabilitation.
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	2. Better implementation of Regional Coordination, Information and Advocacy Mechanisms to reduce vulnerability
CORRESPONDING OBJECTIVES	2.1. Humanitarian aid in West Africa to be mobilised and granted to the most vulnerable population groups, as decided in a coherent, timely and case-by-case basis.
CORRESPONDING OBJECTIVES	
	2.1.1 Early warning and advocacy: Strengthen and adapt Early Warning and Monitoring systems to meet the needs of appropriate advocacy for people’s rights, if need be.

2.1.2 Coordination: Strengthen coordination mechanisms associated with the IASC at national and regional levels in order to ensure complementary action.
2.1.3 Information: Establish regional information systems to help decision-making and provide appropriate responses.
2.1.4 Preparedness and preventive measures: Strengthen preparedness and preventive measures, including the preparation of contingency plans.

3.3 Response plans

For **Niger**, in order to reduce the risk of a subsequent food and nutritional crisis, the government has established a programme to support its people through a food crisis cell, which would reinforce the vulnerable populations' capacities as well as provide aid and assistance. This programme, presented to the partners by the Prime Minister on 7 February 2006, emphasises in particular the need for stakeholders to incorporate their emergency aid or developmental activities within the National Food Crisis Prevention and Management Mechanism, and the poverty reduction strategy.

In this perspective, the United Nations System's agencies in Niger have lent their support to government schemes and have created a common action plan appended to the consolidated regional appeal for West Africa.

The UN system's common action plan for Niger consists of strategic intervention areas as well as project sheets instrumental in designing the section related to Niger within the sub-regional appeal's context. It was prepared after a consultative process that especially took into consideration the research and surveys carried out on last year's crises. The common plan's project implementation will enable the UNS to work closely with its governmental and NGO partners to meet the major challenges in the short and medium term, in order to:

- Improve food availability in households considered very weak by several surveys
- Reduce the extremely high malnutrition rate in certain zones
- Have a positive impact on basic cereal prices that still remain higher than the average over the last 5 years
- Make fast progress in reducing the household debt burden, which is increasing by the day
- Reduce number of deaths due to both malnutrition and infectious diseases – deaths that can be prevented – and prevent the negative effects of acute malnutrition on mental development.

3.3.1 Niger: Objectives for 2006

- Help improve the health conditions of children, mothers and other vulnerable groups (UNICEF, WFP, PAM, WHO, UNFPA, UNDP)
- Protect the means of livelihood in crisis situations and strengthen resistance to crises (WFP, PAM, FAO, UNDP, UNICEF)
- Improve the food security of vulnerable households by producing quality crop seeds, distributing food and vegetable seeds, rebuilding herds (small ruminants and poultry) and lending veterinary and zoo-technical support (animal feed) (FAO, PAM)
- Help rebuild the national security stock (SNS or *stock national de sécurité*) and strengthen national and regional capacities in the sphere of food and nutritional crisis prevention and management (all UN agencies)
- Improve the vulnerable groups' access to health (WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA)

- Support the National health information system (the SNIS or *Système national d'information sanitaire*) in nutritional and health emergency monitoring, early screening and quick response (WHO)
- Reduce the number of deaths due to both malnutrition and infectious diseases – preventable deaths – and prevent the negative effects of acute malnutrition on mental development.

3.3.2 Niger: Support strategies

- Develop integrated response plans based on priority strategies defined by the Government for malnutrition, health and food security
- Reinforce synergies and complementarity with other partners (Government, Donor groups, NGOs, Civil Society, projects) and ensure activities are integrated with national structures
- Support preventive actions in high risk zones and risks defined by the early warning system and select beneficiaries in consultation with field partners
- Provide health centres with “HAM radios”, for weekly malnutrition and notifiable disease data collection and transmission
- Incorporate the DNP-GCA in order to strengthen the existing coordination machinery’s capacities
- Ensure better linkages between emergency, transition and development activities
- Bring the communications plan pertaining to the prevention and management of subsequent crises and post-crisis activities in line with that of the Government’s
- Strengthen the nutritional and disease monitoring systems, information management and sharing, as well as local capacities.

3.3.4 Niger: Expected results

- 500,000 malnourished children covered by nutritional emergency programmes
- Improvement of staff skills and health services’ capacities
- Reduction in the morbidity and mortality rates related to malnutrition and communicable diseases
- Ensure good confinement conditions for women affected by food crises
- Revitalise nutritional monitoring at community level
- Two small-scale nutrition surveys to be conducted in each region between June and November 2006
- Two food security surveys to be conducted in collaboration with the Early Warning System – the first one during the lean period and the second during the post harvest period
- 3,310,210 persons covered under nutritional programmes, additional food supplies (blanket), food for work, food for training and emergency stock schemes
- Technical, material and financial support given to strengthen national and regional capacities (SNIS, CCA, early warning system, DNP-GCA, SIM livestock, Government)
- Stronger partnership and availability of basic documents for the prevention and management of possible crises (Contingency Plan, CAP, United Nations Development Assistance Framework)
- 95,000 agricultural families benefited from food crop seeds on 87,500 ha for a production of 42,750 tonnes of cereal. And 75,000 families will work on 4,300 ha in market gardening, to produce 53,000 tonnes of vegetables
- 12,000 cattle breeding families will be given 15,000 small ruminants, 20,000 fowls and 500 tonnes of animal feed

- Monitoring and availability of data on notifiable diseases and malnutrition cases
- Timely treatment of infectious diseases, namely malaria, diarrhoea-related diseases such as cholera, and acute respiratory infections treated sufficiently early among the malnourished.

For **Mali**, the Strategic Framework for Poverty Alleviation (the CSLP or *Cadre stratégique de lutte contre la pauvreté*) forms the basis of the government's policy and strategy. The Government's food policy's main focus is based on the following points: 1) developing a strategy for greater coverage of the country's food requirements; 2) reconstituting national food security stocks to meet possible future food crises; 3) creating and applying strategies to strengthen the production capacity of vulnerable groups. This action would be based upon the Ministry of Health's (2005-2009) Enhanced Food Security Programme and National strategic plan for nutrition.

In response to the 2005 crisis, the government developed a National Response Plan for Food Difficulties and submitted it to technical and financial partners. It is through this scheme, supported by strategies developed by the government, that the United Nations System in Mali identified actions to be incorporated in the addendum to the consolidated regional appeal and developed an action plan.

The UNS action plan is structured around two strategic axes defined on the basis of a consultative approach. It is founded upon the Strategic Poverty Alleviation Framework (CSLP2), the National Response Plan (PNR) for 2005 and 2006, the Cereal Market Restructuring Programme (PRMC) and the National Food Security Programme (PNSA). It contains a certain number of projects, which, when implemented, would allow the UNS, in close collaboration with the Commissariat for Food Security and NGOs, to meet major challenges and provide real time responses to all the economic difficulties provoked by the 2004/2005 crisis and related to the condition of vulnerable groups, and to create conditions in order to strengthen food and nutritional security.

Mali: Objectives for 2006

- Take measures to reduce food shortages and thereby improve the nutritional status of vulnerable population groups (UNDP, PAM, UNICEF, UNFPA)
- Help reconstitute productive assets so as to create conditions for the 2006-2007 season's success (UNDP, FAO, PAM)
- Support the re-establishment of the national cereal bank (PAM, UNDP).

Mali: Support strategies

- Focus support on strategies defined by the government: National Response Plan (PNR), National Food Security Plan (PNSA), National Food Security System (SNSA)
- Strengthen the CSA's capacity in order that it plays its role as coordinator effectively
- Strengthen coordination and synergies between all partners in order to optimise support
- Ensure better linkages between emergency and developmental activities to make them complementary.

Mali: Expected results

- Strengthening the CSA's and communes' capacities
- 1.5 million persons covered under nutritional programmes, food for work and food for training schemes, cereals banks and stocks
- Market gardening and cultivation of off-season crops by 38,700 individual farmers and 6,370 households
- 150 animal breeders' groups given veterinary products and animal feed

- National security stocks reconstructed to their optimal level (34,000 tonnes)
- Cereal banks inventoried, available stock evaluated and other cereal banks constituted
- Development of a Communications Plan and implementation in close collaboration with the Commissariat for Food Security and NGOs.

RELEVANT SECTOR-WISE ASSESSMENTS FROM JULY 2005:

The following assessments were done from July 2005, apart from those carried out by national and international early warning systems in the Sahel:

Food Security:

1. FAO/WFP/CILSS/FEWS Food Security Assessment in Niger

From 4 October – 14 November 2005. Final report awaited.

2. WFP/VAM Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA) – Data collection and analysis from secondary sources. Niger.

Report published in 2005, available on www.wfp.org

Nutrition:

1. GoN/CDC Atlanta/UNICEF Survey in Niger

Conducted in September and October 2005.

2. Action against Hunger and Nutritional Survey in Maradi and Tahoua, Niger.

Available with ACF Spain: clambert@achesp.org

3. Quick Nutritional Evaluation by the CDC and USAID in Burkina Faso in September 2005.

Agriculture

1. The CILSS/Government Joint Harvest Assessment Mission in nine CILSS member states, carried out in October/November 2005. Results available on www.fao.org.

6. Pollution and criminality in the environmental sector and Guinea's protection policy, by Mr. Sékou Gaoussou SYLLA, Director – National Disaster Management and Environmental Emergencies Department.

INTRODUCTION

The 20th century, which has just come to an end, was marked by an unprecedented rise in natural or man-made disasters, both in terms of frequency and scale. The events taking place every day have shown that man is unable to control the forces of nature, master scientific applications or even overcome environmental damage. Technological development may have eased our lives in these modern times, but it has also brought certain risks, added to the threat of natural disasters. We should also mention the sudden increase in both individual and collective violence, now taking the form of attacks, kidnapping, blackmail and organised crime, while armed conflicts continue to rage.

Furthermore, technological progress often puts us on the horns of a dilemma with respect to the choice and management of these technologies, as the latter may lead to pollution and environmental damage that are difficult to control. The toxic waste trade (see Guinea report), the transfer of polluting technologies, lack of control over new situations brought about by use of new consumer products are major human security challenges (ozone, POPs, carbon dioxide, etc.).

In order to deal with these situations, different States have developed appropriate national planning and action mechanisms that are most suited to their specific conditions, so as to define the scope and nature of the relief measures necessary. These national protection, defence, civil security and disaster management systems have now assumed increasingly wider responsibilities given the scale of the threats they face.

Apart from national systems, some international, governmental and non-governmental organisations too intervene in disaster management and cooperation.

With the large number of actors both at the national and international levels, there is now a greater need for exchange of information for better collaboration and experience sharing.

That is why we would now like to share information that could prove helpful in deliberations on the environmental security sector.

This presentation includes:

- I- Guidelines on the development of civil protection systems, giving a general overview of one example of a civil protection system development
- II- Institutional disaster management development in Guinea, highlighting the experience of a country in the West African region
- III- Major challenges in Guinea's environmental history: The example of Kassa's toxic waste.

I- GUIDELINES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

Within the framework of its fundamental mission, the International Civil Defence Organisation (ICDO) is duty-bound to help States build their civil protection systems at the national level. The guiding principles of this international organisation serve as an inspiration.

A- STATE RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE FACE OF DISASTERS

Given the dangers States and their inhabitants may face, political authorities at all levels (local, national and regional) need to formulate a concept of protection, with the establishment of an adequate system as its cornerstone. This is a political responsibility, rooted in the notion of the State itself, calling for the organisation of the community of individuals and meeting some of their vital needs, including the protection of life, goods and environment, above all.

States have to formulate this concept in accordance with the following principle:

a) Principle of legality

The respect of the rule of law means that the disaster prevention and mitigation mechanism should be instituted in accordance with national and supranational legislations. This presupposes the existence of domestic laws and regulations that take the risks and dangers the country may face into consideration.

B-STATE STRATEGY

A State's disaster prevention and mitigation strategy consists of establishing a system for protecting people, goods and the environment, based on the analysis and assessment of the dangers the country faces. In fact, it is essential for the State mechanism to be developed on the basis of a systematic and periodic assessment of the risks involved.

The protection system should be based on the following:

1. Risk assessment

a) Prevention:

Risk prevention consists of:

-Forecasting; based on the knowledge and surveillance of natural or technological phenomena that could lead to disasters (hydro-meteorological phenomena leading to floods, drought, etc.)

-Warning the public by giving the relevant authorities the responsibility of raising a predetermined nation-wide alarm signal

-Risk mitigation measures

- Standard measures to ensure compliance with administrative and technical rules relating to the security of persons and goods, and environmental protection
- Regulatory town planning measures ensuring control over land use rights in hazard-prone areas
- Protective measures for reducing the vulnerability of persons and goods (land development projects, etc.)

- Public information, both on the dangers and risks to which the country is exposed and on the plans formulated to deal with them
- Planning of measures to be taken and means to be deployed in case of imminent or sudden natural and technological calamities, including:
 - The preparation of various national, regional and local plans – general plans, relief organisation plans and special intervention plans to deal with different types of disasters, by drawing up the measures to be implemented and the necessary coordination between the various rapid-action forces of the various departments called upon to intervene within the framework of these plans.

b) Crisis management:

It includes:

- The initiation of relief plans by the relevant State authorities at the local, national and regional level
- The execution of relief plans under the supervision of the relevant authorities

c) Post-crisis management:

It includes:

- The return to normalcy
- Lessons learnt

2. Civil protection: A State service for coordinating public protection

Many States have set up different mechanisms in order to assume this responsibility. On the one hand, they are aimed at dispelling dangers that could threaten the lives of people, developing the necessary facilities to protect people and goods, as well as the environment, and on the other, at saving human lives.

Bodies bearing different names, depending on the country, manage these mechanisms: civil safety, civil protection, civil defence, disaster or major risk prevention and control departments. It may be recalled that several UN Assembly resolutions call upon governments to set up an appropriate national planning and action mechanism that is best suited to their specific conditions for the purpose of defining the scale and nature of relief required and centralising the management of operations.

3 – Disaster mitigation: A key concern

Mitigation implies actions whose purpose is to tone down the effects of calamities even before they occur. Today, disasters are seen exactly as diseases were in the early 19th century, i.e. unpredictable, a misfortune and an integral part of day-to-day life. Extensive population concentration and growth on the earth's surface have enhanced the risks of disasters and increased the consequences of natural calamities when they hit. However, their "epidemiology" or the scientific and systematic study of what happens when disasters hit has shown that disasters can be prevented to a large extent. There are many ways of reducing a disaster's impact and mitigating the consequences of a risk or accident.

Like disease control, disaster control too is a battle all have to wage together. To do so, both the public and private sectors have to invest themselves, social attitudes have to change and individual behaviour has to improve. Just as the "health revolution" took place because of a

“safety culture” that promoted public health, disaster mitigation has to develop on the basis of a similar “safety culture” aimed at public security. Governments can use public investments to create more resilient infrastructure and a physical environment in which there are fewer chances of a disaster occurring, but individuals too must take their safety into their own hands.

Just as public health is dependent on personal hygiene, public protection is dependent on personal safety precautions. Putting out the fire in all the homes in the savannah region before going to the field and realising that the breeze or children could set the entire village on fire is essential for reducing fire hazards in villages.

The type of dwelling a person builds and the choice of sites each individual considers suitable for living have a much greater effect on a community’s disaster potential than large civil engineering projects intended to reduce flood risks or stabilise unstable land, or even sophisticated typhoon warning systems.

Disasters are a serious problem in development. For the most part, developing countries or the poor are those who suffer the most devastating or fatal effects of calamities.

Indeed, a calamity can wipe out the benefits of development and reverse the development and economic growth process in one go. Promoting the integration of disaster mitigation in development projects and their planning can help protect development benefits. It can also help protect people against unnecessary blows.

**COMPREHENSIVE REPORT OF THE INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF KASSA’S WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITY
CONAKRY, August-September 1988**

In accordance with State Security Secretariat’s Circular no. 68/SES dated 11 June 1988, a series of meetings of the Inter-Ministerial Committee entrusted with identifying and assessing the Kassa waste disposal facility’s impact was held on 16, 18 and 20 June, and 5, 16 and 18 July 1988 at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

The following Departments participated in the different meetings:

1. Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment
2. Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources
3. Ministry of Public Health and Population
4. Ministry of the Interior and Decentralisation
5. Ministry of National Education
6. State Secretariat for Scientific Research
7. State Secretariat for Fisheries
8. State Secretariat for Tourism
9. Ministry of Justice.

The first three (3) sessions focused on the examination of available documents.

The fourth session took stock of the situation and proceeded to set up the following working sub-committees:

- Sub-committee on the chemical analysis of the waste
- Sub-committee on agricultural impact assessment
- Sub-committee on fisheries impact assessment
- Sub-committee on tourism impact assessment
- Sub-committee on wildlife impact assessment
- Sub-committee on health impact assessment.

In accordance with the tasks prescribed, the sub-committees visited the site for reconnaissance, investigation and sampling.

In the sixth (6th) plenary session, some sub-committees submitted their reports and their analysis continued till the seventh (7th) session, which then set up a Synthesis Committee.

I- Nature of waste material

1) General:

The problems the City of Philadelphia (United States of America) faced in disposing off municipal incinerator ash were due to their toxic chemicals and heavy metals content.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reported that:

- 1) These ashes were a potential hazard for human health and the environment because of their very high concentration of dioxins
- 2) Several American government agencies analysed the Philadelphia ash and found the presence of heavy metals and toxic chemicals (dioxins), with concentration levels exceeding the admissible limits set by the European Economic Community (EEC)
- 3) A cautious policy on dioxin contamination in residential areas would aim at prohibiting exposure to contaminated soils with concentration levels of 2, 3, 7, 8 TCDD equivalent exceeding 75/10^{12'}.

The US government's tests on Philadelphia's ash revealed 23 times the level of 2, 3, 7, 8 TCDD equivalent.

Faced with this situation, Bulkhandling (a consortium of Norwegian shipping companies) offered its services to the Philadelphia municipality to rid the city of its toxic waste.

To do so, Bulkhandling signed a contract to deliver 250,000 tonnes of waste for a road-building project in Panama.

While the first ship was being loaded, the Panamanian authorities were informed of the hazards presented by these waste products on their territory and cancelled the contract. So Bulkhandling had to look for a new dump to unload the 30,000 tonnes of waste it had loaded aboard its ship, the BARK. Half of this cargo was dumped in the USA and the other half in Kassa (Republic of Guinea), for the Société Internationale Aluko-Guinée (SIAG).

II. Analysis results

The examination of the analysis results provided by the University of Conakry, the Paris Institute of Applied Chemical Research and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has revealed that the ash dumped in Kassa by SIAG and its accomplices were an essentially inorganic solid

amalgam containing toxic chemicals (dioxins incorporated: phthalates, polychlorobiphenyl, hexachlorobenzene, lindane, etc.), fats, oils and heavy metals (arsenic, mercury, lead, cadmium, nickel, zinc, barium, chromium, copper, cyanide etc.).

Dioxins and heavy metals are extremely harmful to people's health and to the environment due to concentration levels sometimes exceeding admissible thresholds.

In addition, they are biocumulative, non biodegradable and soluble in atmospheric precipitations.

Heavy metals have been found in well water. Thus, the waste dumped in Kassa is obviously toxic.

III. The Kassa waste disposal facility's impact assessment

Three (3) of the sub-committees set up to assess the waste disposal facility's impact each submitted a report. They are:

- v The sub-committee on the impact on health
- v The sub-committee on the impact on fisheries
- v The sub-committee on the impact on tourism

A-Impact on Health:

Many of the subjects observed present pleuro-pulmonary, oto-rhino-laryngological, dermatological, osteo-articular, cardiovascular, digestive or genito-urinary disorders.

The report prepared by the occupational medicine department indicated 112 disorders diagnosed in 102 workers, of which 48 were occupational in nature.

It is difficult to say with certainty that this waste was the causal agent for these occupational disorders. However, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) maintains that:

- 1) Philadelphia's ash is hazardous for the health of whosoever comes into contact with it without appropriate protective equipment
- 2) Human health was at risk by the spread of toxic substances in the air and water.

Local waste management conditions leave much to be desired from the perspective of:

- The site, which is a quarry with a 30% gradient, 20 meters from the sea, on permeable soil
- Bulk ground bulk storage with no surface sealing
- Handling by workers wearing no protection while unloading
- Transportation by fully laden vehicles from which waste material fell while crossing the city.

The presence of heavy metals and the probable presence of dioxins in Kassa's well water point towards a possible epidemic in the short or middle term.

That is why the Occupational Medicine Department recommends regular medical examinations for Kassa's entire population and for all those who handled this waste.

B-Impact on Fisheries:

It has now been established that the waste dumped in Kassa contains heavy metals and soluble toxic dioxins that have undoubtedly reached the groundwater and surface water and have certainly contaminated the aquatic flora and fauna.

Indeed, during the storage period, 293 mm of rain were recorded in the waste disposal site and analyses revealed the presence of heavy metals in the water table.

It goes without saying that the consumption of fishery products from the waste disposal area's immediate vicinity is hazardous.

This state of affairs has caused considerable upheaval in Guinea:

a) Traditional fishing

Fishing is the main activity in the Loos Islands and their vicinity.

The waste disposal facility in Kassa led to the following damages, among others:

- Isolation of the island's population, causing injured feelings
- Rejection of fish and other seafood products from the islands in markets
- Fall in income, loss of 146,860 tonnes produced, representing a value of GF 44,058,000.

Other losses cannot be assessed in monetary terms.

b) Industrial fishing

According to the statistics provided since socio-economic activities restarted in our country, the State Secretariat for Fisheries sells 50 permits on average between the start of each year and the end of May.

According to the same statistics, a drop in sales of 17 permits was noted during the period under consideration. The annual value of a permit, including other benefits (fishermen's salaries and taxes) amounts to US \$ 150,000.

Thus, the Fisheries Department noted revenue losses to the tune of US \$ 2,550,000.

c) Tourism

Since July 1984, tourist activity had received considerable impetus in Guinea and the Loos Islands were a special centre of attraction for both domestic and foreign tourists.

The fresh thrust given to this sector had led to a real craze for seaside holidays.

The outcome can be seen in the following turnovers:

- GF 2,952,650 in 1985
- GF 4,462,420 in 1986
- GF 5,588,750 in 1987
- GF 3,518,700 for November, December and January 1988.

The increase in sales was as follows:

Base Year:

1985	: 100%
1986	: 151.13%
1987	: 189.28%
1989	: 318.79%

The growth showed above indicates a definite rise in tourism in the Loos Islands.

On the other hand, since the second week of February 1988 when the waste was dumped in Kassa, there was a premature drop in the number of tourists visiting the beaches despite the promotional campaign and pleasant weather.

Tourists who had made reservations simply cancelled their vacations there.

The statistics provided by the State Secretariat for Tourism and Hotels indicated revenue losses of GF 15,485,000.

In conclusion, the present data are merely indicative in nature. Many other consequences must also have taken place, but the means available do not allow them to be elucidated.

7. Political crisis and humanitarian crisis in West Africa, Aide et Action, Togo (Text presented by Mr. Tcha Beret).

The African context is marked by long-standing conflicts (Angola, Burundi, Chad, etc.), sometimes with extreme violence, which led to thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of refugees pouring into neighbouring countries, condemned to vegetate in hastily erected makeshift camps. We shall first endeavour to present the crises (both political and humanitarian) that have marked Africa in general and West Africa in particular. Subsequently, we shall try to highlight the central role played by education as a means of prevention and resolution of political and humanitarian crises and Aide et Action's role in this context.

1. An attempt at clarifying concepts

According to the French sociologist Henri MENDRAS, a **political crisis** has two main functions – one is latent, and one is obvious. For instance, for jurists and constitutionalists, the political crises under the IVth Republic in France were aimed at forming a new government. In that sense, these were bad crises as they stood in the way of much-needed government stability – a national decision-making political mechanism. The other more positivist function of a political crisis was to make political protagonists take decisions, while a government's real function was to execute them.

Africa is witnessing a variety of crises: identity, ideological and ethnic crises or crises following an electoral process.

A political crisis should enable debate leading to an agreement on a decision. It should not lead to instability – less so an open conflict.

As for **humanitarian crises**, we agree with **Human Rights Watch** when it claims that these translate the discomfort of a population when it is threatened by a natural disaster, an armed conflict or a political crisis. In the political sector, it often reveals itself in the non-respect of citizens' fundamental rights to express themselves, harassment, rape, kidnapping, detention, famine, disease, trauma leading to atrocious suffering and sometimes even death.

It is not easy to separate the two concepts, as the latter often stems from the former. In fact, political crises stem from an attempt to take over power either by force or electoral fraud. The ensuing violence forces people into the bush and forests, weakened by hunger and thirst, depressed by threats and killings, leading to humanitarian crises.

What exactly is the situation in West Africa in the light of these two types of crises – political and humanitarian?

2. The West African socio-political context against the background of crises

Several crises have marked West Africa over the last fifteen years in the aftermath of the democratisation process of the regimes in power, following the Baule Summit and the collapse of the Berlin Wall. The infinitely variable democratisation process unfolded without too much upheaval in some areas and with strong repressive measures in others. Willy-nilly, the multi-party system, an expression of democracy, finally gained ground in all West African countries. Apart

from a few countries such as Benin, Burkina, Ghana, Niger, etc., others such as Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Senegal and Togo witnessed open and tragic conflicts, following electoral, ethnic or ideological conflicts.

However, political crises led to human suffering everywhere, the socio-economic fabric's destruction, the disintegration of societies and consequently, mass internal and external displacements, stamping misery and death on thousands of faces in a context of mutual lack of understanding. They ripped former educational systems apart, thereby creating a challenge and a need for education and teaching in the face of a fresh upsurge of violence and the emergence of a trapped, disturbed, traumatised and anguished populace, with no civility or ideals.

How can education be provided in times of violence and conflict? What strategy or strategies can be adopted and what educational contents can be provided in such a situation, characterised by the negation of others and of all values, and even the destruction of public wealth and infrastructure erected at the cost of hard labour and true deprivation, against a backdrop of hatred? What can be done to carry out fruitful educational activities in a context of conflict and therefore, structural degeneration?

A consultation conducted by "Aide et Action" on the theme of "violence and education" offered a differing view of the situation in various West African countries.

Indeed, the study shows, for instance, that the advent of democracy in Togo led to recurrent socio-political instability since the 1990s against the background of electoral dissent (1993, 1998, 2003, 2005). Victims of multifarious acts of aggression or their perpetrators have either been (internally) displaced or have sought refuge in Benin or Ghana, leading to a hike in the morbidity/mortality rates of teachers, students, other children ready to start school (and therefore, the Togolese education system's 'nursery'), as well as parents, in addition to the break-up of families, the manipulation of students and insecurity for girls, leading to their dropping out of school. The tragic fate of orphans needs to be stressed here, as they are often exploited and forced to work as domestic and rural workers.

In short, these displacements have led to the decline in schooling observed in Togo in conflict areas, as well as overcrowded classrooms in host areas.

The Côte d'Ivoire crisis had many repercussions on its neighbouring countries, especially Burkina Faso, Mali and Senegal. These countries were the hardest hit by the Côte d'Ivoire tragedy, as they were forced to suddenly absorb repatriated countrymen who had settled in Côte d'Ivoire. Indeed, at the end of the 1990s, unrest surfaced in Côte d'Ivoire over the concept of the Ivorian identity, General Robert Guei's *coup d'état* (24 December 1999) and the New Forces' rebellion, which divided the country into two. Many foreigners bore the brunt of Côte d'Ivoire's failure to peacefully resolve the conflict, especially those from Burkina Faso and Mali. A massive return of these sons of the soil, who had left in search of an El Dorado that they did not expect to have to leave in such a hurry ensued, under precarious and often dramatic conditions.

This misadventure had negative repercussions on the educational system, families and children. Basically, the return of migrants to their native country turned tragic because governments and international organisations failed in their efforts to settle the returnees appropriately, by helping in their socio-economic integration, with land redistribution being one of the most difficult problems.

In Senegal, two forms of violence were rife: the Casamance conflict on the one hand, fuelled by modern extermination techniques, and daily acts of violence on the other (acts of physical violence, threats, intimidation, absence/lack of communication, etc.), which today have taken root in the entire Republic more tragically than in the past. They were due to numerous factors such as personal histories (trauma, stress induced by conflicts witnessed or in which the individual may have participated), close relations, various challenges (demographic, socio-professional, etc.), problems in school, the ever-rising circulation of firearms, social inequalities (undermining the status of children and women), excessive police force, etc.

3. Humanitarian consequences and challenges

Political crises give rise to really difficult conditions and innocent people mostly bear the brunt. Manipulated, they rise up to form a shield in defence of an ideological or political cause – sometimes legitimate, sometimes far-fetched – at the expense of their lives and dignity. All the while, the leading lights of the party in power and opposition parties who issue the orders remain entrenched in their citadels. In this context, men and women were humiliated, arrested and even killed. The enlistment of child soldiers became commonplace in the sub-region’s major conflicts. Some who managed to flee found themselves living in intolerable conditions: food insecurity, lack of clothing, lack of shelter, the ill treatment of children, etc. The upshot of all this was trauma, deviance and marginalisation. The most “fortunate” were those taken in hand by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

In this context, several challenges need to be taken up:

- The physical and psychological security challenge
- The food security challenge
- The educational challenge
- The health challenge
- The resource mobilisation challenge, etc.

Faced with all these challenges in terms of basic needs, strategies need to be developed both within the States beset by political and humanitarian crises as well as in the States taking in refugees. In several situations, “Aide et Action” has played a proactive role, along with other international organisations. We shall present the case of Benin and its Togolese refugees, Senegal during the Casamance crisis and Burkina Faso with the return of deportees from Côte d’Ivoire.

Aide et Action’s strategic responses

Taking this diversity (of contexts and types of conflicts) into consideration means adapting one’s attitude and behaviour to each case and, therefore, understanding and approaching different situations differently. This enabled us to develop an understanding of the specificity of each case, thereby avoiding the use of ready-made solutions unrelated to the ground realities.

Togo

Within the framework of concerted action by Aide et Action’s Togo and Benin programmes, an Early Childhood Project was set up for Togolese refugees in the aftermath of the April 2005 crisis:

- The identification of persons to provide childcare.

- The development of sites providing better care and support for children: mats replaced by appropriate tables and chairs. In partnership with UNICEF, very young children were also regularly provided with a snack.
- Financial support (by the Togo programme for the Benin programme) for the schooling of Togolese child refugees in Benin.
- The supply of school stationery, food and clothing by organisations such as the HCR and CARE.
- Specific training in hygiene for the staff, to prevent the risk of diseases due to overcrowding.

Senegal

Within the framework of GRA-REDEP, the following achievements were made in partnership with Aide et Action:

- The development of the following educational tools: A methodological and practical guide book on Citizenship, Rights and Peace Education, a facilitation and training guide for school administrations and an activity book for pupils.
- Training of 260 teachers and principals of 65 Swiss schools on implementing a culture of peace and dissemination of teaching aids.
- The establishment of school administrations that would make significant achievements possible: Supervision of weak students, close watch over absenteeism and latecoming, school conflict prevention and management, care for the injured, awareness-raising about certain diseases, development of hedges as school enclosures, installation of a gate.
- Establishment of solidarity funds among students, organisation of cultural days on peace and health.

In terms of impact, a proactive solidarity developed in the schools, along with the strengthening of skills levels and a systematic control of truancy, the respect of children's rights, mediation within the framework of the culture of peace, etc.

Sierra Leone and Liberia

Thanks to Aide et Action's intervention, thousands of children in Liberia and Sierra Leone received schooling in the Forécariah and Forest Guinea region's camps (Guéckédou, Kissidougou, etc.) in over 1,000 schools. Some children entered rural trades (agriculture, livestock farming, forestry, etc.) and some even urban or semi-urban trades (administrators, technicians, teachers, nurses, etc.).

Burkina Faso, Mali and Ghana

A study conducted under the guidance of Yacouba YARO and Marc PILON on the impact of the Côte d'Ivoire crisis on the neighbouring countries came up with the following results:

- A good understanding of what has to be done, by whom and how. The purpose was to prevent and/or cope with the Ivorian conflict's consequences better in the educational sector by providing information to enlighten different actors.
- An assessment of the quantitative and qualitative dimensions of the repercussions of the Ivorian crisis on the schooling of young repatriates, educational wastage, etc., based on the data available.

These events had a negative impact on the schooling of Burkina Faso and Malian children, who remained in the country. The return of immigrants led to overcrowded classrooms because of the schools' low capacity. With the loss of the manna from Côte d'Ivoire, the lack of income became a crucial issue.

4. Perspectives

In the light of these sub-regional events, preventive action must be undertaken, in order to limit the political and humanitarian crisis from spreading – such as:

1. Strengthening solidarity and increasing consultations among the various programmes within the contexts of ECOWAS and the WAEMU
2. Identifying, formulating and implementing cross-border projects in the education for peace and citizenship education sectors
3. Exerting influence on political decision-makers so that education for peace and citizenship education are incorporated in teaching curricula.

Thank you.

8. Political crisis and humanitarian crisis in West Africa, by Mr. André Bogui, Assistance Solidarité, Côte d'Ivoire.

Democracy is a system based on people's freedom and equality. At the political level, it is based on the representative regime principle. For the past several decades, the democratic model has spread all over the world. All countries have been trying to embark resolutely on the path to democracy, which can lead to the entire population's overall development if it is followed properly. But it is in the name of this same democracy that certain African citizens have decided to move to the fringes of society and away from its choices, for reasons best known to themselves, mostly using destructive means and thereby leading to regional crises.

As the theme of our presentation enjoins us to do, our presentation will deal with the West African situation. We will try to understand the tragic reality of the political crises in this part of the world in as much depth as possible and to outline solutions for the dangers induced or aggravated by these crises.

What exactly is a crisis?

In current terms, a crisis is an often decisive, favourable or unfavourable, sudden and often violent change. It is also a decisive or dangerous period, marked by scarcities or shortages of some kind.

At the political and international level, it constitutes a break in stability, an intermediary period marked by a brief, sudden and violent reaction with a specific history and origins.

Like any other crisis, a political crisis can be latent, often carried out through rudimentary media such as the press. In this regard, it must be stressed that the print media in Côte d'Ivoire is in the pay of political parties and forces whose purpose is to destroy the image of politicians by publishing articles that are totally devoid of constructive, educational or awareness-building information. In addition, the role of disinformation and misinformation at the international level, which is essentially the work of some foreign radio and television chains, must also be noted.

Social events too play a role, especially if you look at the latest events in Liberia and Togo, which turned into riots and almost into a bloody war, not unlike the 19 September 2002 conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

We would like to refer to what Professor Abdoulaye Bathily had to say in a speech, to illustrate our statements: "In Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, the democratisation process is taking place in a context of civil war with devastating consequences in all aspects of people's lives". However, we cannot overlook the case of Casamance in Senegal either, which witnessed a rebellion initiated in 1982 whose flames have not fully died out.

A highly important and recurring situation in conflicts and political crises in Africa is the involvement of the international community at regional and global level, which has not played its role of mediator or manager correctly in the event of dissent. This has been observed in Côte d'Ivoire and, very recently, in Togo.

Unfortunately, these extreme cases are the ones observed in the march of humanity over time, particularly in the African continent. These threats have a name: humanitarian crises.

A humanitarian crisis is one wherein a major section of a given population finds itself in a situation of distress, and its government is unable or refuses to provide succour. In the case of Africa in general and West Africa in particular, the issue stems more from a problem of inability and less from the lack of willingness to provide relief to its endangered or threatened peoples.

The displacement of people, health problems (pandemic diseases or epidemics), famines, desert locust plagues, to mention but a few, are all different aspects of humanitarian crises caused or aggravated for the most part by the political crises in West Africa.

Given this summary presentation of a dying sub-region whose only echoes to humanity at large are cries of misery, what needs to be done?

Indeed, neither the States, nor the various international institutions can overlook the need to re-examine their modes of intervention, instruments, methods of work and financial means or the political, economic and social transitions they need to initiate. All in all, they have failed to openly accept their share of responsibility and their vested interests in the crises that are rife in Africa.

This is what conditions crisis management and resolution today, especially since their trajectories are never linear. But to provide solutions aimed at eradicating the humanitarian crises in West Africa, we need to identify the causes behind the political crises leading to them. These are many and varied. However, they can be categorised into major groups: the lack of democracy in governmental measures as well as in their opponents' reactions; poor governance; the rule of law, which remains unheeded; large-scale organised corruption, etc.

All these factors keep the people in a state of extreme poverty and utter destitution, which leaves them with a feeling of deep injustice that is not incorrect. Unemployment is on the rise and the youth, which is losing all hopes of a better tomorrow, is consequently turning into the most fertile breeding ground for all sorts of insurrectionary adventures. The entire working population is being manipulated and used as a mere tool in the financial power-holding political class's hands. And all this for ambitions that it does not always have the intellectual means to understand, thereby allowing itself to lean towards the easy way out and closing its eyes to the (material and human) damage caused by its choices.

All this is a summary recipe for a disaster that could be triggered at any time. Unfortunately, such a cocktail explodes very often, leading to an avalanche of armed conflicts in the sub-region. As of now, no State can consider itself safe from the immediate danger of wars, or from the humanitarian crises that they engender or accentuate, given the sub-region's highly porous borders. In this regard, reference may be made to the situation prevailing in Liberia and Sierra Leone just a few years ago, when combatants moved along with the conflict between them, waging a war across both countries.

It is therefore important for the sub-region's States and the International Community as a whole to rethink the strategies used so far and show much greater willingness in terms of international solidarity and charity.

To conclude, we are very pleased with the organisation of meetings such as the one bringing us all together on Togolese soil. It is a sign that in the tears we shed today lie hopes that may see the light of day in the near future.

This day and this event is a testimony to the maturity of Africa's youth, which is becoming increasingly aware of being a marginalised section of society at all levels, but nonetheless bears great hope for a developed and conflict-free Africa.

May the contributions made here ring the bell that awakens our conscience, the conscience of our politicians and of our peoples – in other words, Africa's conscience as a whole. And may the latter remain awakened and alert forever more.

Insofar as we are concerned, it is up to us to ensure that our thoughts, our words and our deeds come together to establish peace through justice and happiness, through good deeds and solidarity throughout the world.

Youth of Africa! Politicians of Africa! People of Africa!

Let us all take up this challenge together – the challenge of living in PEACE, of providing ASSISTANCE to each other, and of promoting SOLIDARITY amongst each other so that a New Africa is born, free of political and humanitarian crises.

9. Political and humanitarian crises in West Africa, by Ayayi Togoata APEDO-AMAH, Secretary General, Togolese Human Rights League.

A country in crisis is a country plagued by threats whose dangers have a negative impact on its political, social and economic stability.

Governing a State calls for the ability to manage it by anticipating crises, thereby preserving its independence, social cohesion, peace, security and justice.

In Africa – more specifically West Africa –, political crises and humanitarian crises are intertwined so closely that the latter's dependence on the former is glaringly obvious. Having said that, we need to examine the causes of the political crises that lead to humanitarian crises whose intensity compromises millions of human lives, regional security and stability and the future of people who only wish to live in a peaceful environment free of injustice and respectful of human rights.

We shall examine this distressing issue through two points: the legitimacy of political power and manipulation by a lawless State.

1. Legitimacy of political power

Since their illusory independence in the 1960s, pseudo-African nation-States – adorned with a flag, a national anthem and a Head of State generally chosen by their colonisers – were unable to transform themselves into real States with all that this implies in terms of regalian prerogatives in the people's service.

When the Marxists used the slogan that a State was a form of organisation by the people, they were not wrong. The State cannot be organised by handymen claiming to be political leaders playing things by ear, on a day-to-day basis.

A State cannot be organised without a proper plan for the development of the entire society, in economic, social, cultural and industrial terms, among others. This is true irrespective of the nature of the political system governing a State. By making this assertion, we wish to refute the myth that democracy equals development.

China's economic and technological development today and that of South Korea yesterday, two countries with totalitarian regimes, clearly speak for themselves and should eliminate any scepticism.

But no people can be content with material and technological development that fails to consider the human dimension in all its noblest aspects, such as freedom and dignity. Their failure in this regard constitutes a crisis in all dictatorial States, in which Human Rights are scorned in the name of the so-called singular principle, which is actually a pretext to exclude people from control over affairs in order to confiscate the already usurped power forever.

When political power does not come from the people, it is usurped and illegitimate.

In the context of West Africa's democratisation experience since the 1990s, following the dramatic and bloody failure of single parties and their poorly enlightened Guides, political crises have persisted because we have had to deal increasingly with "*democratures*", i.e. regimes assuming a mantle of democracy while acting in the manner of dictatorships rather than true democracies.

How could it have been any different, because democracies cannot be built without democrats. That is blazingly obvious when we look at countries that were able to organise reasonably democratic elections. Since democrats do not emerge spontaneously in a given generation, a country's citizens, political parties, civil society and leaders must undergo education for democracy.

Thus, it is through education that democracy has a chance of becoming a tradition in our African countries, which are too accustomed to arbitrary power. Tradition is a form of transmission of knowledge that predisposes the subject to certain attitudes and behaviour in society, in relation to the dominant values.

In young African States without a shared past, where everything had to be built by the State and nation, leaders were unable to develop proper development projects capable of building a consensus.

The single party had a single ethnic group as its corollary, i.e. tribalism. Since segregation of any kind is a form of marginalisation, in the entity that is the State, too many ethnic groups, social groups and interest groups get ostracised and face injustice – all obstacles in the path towards the idea of a national conscience. Almost half-a-century after independence, ethnic groups are still the foremost reality in our States.

Indeed, even the leaders have no national conscience, as they conceive of the State as a private business that generates personal benefits and income.

In the absence of a consensus on the core issue – I mean the State, which citizens see only through the type of regime and governance that prevails – the State is considered an obstacle, a danger for those who feel excluded when it comes to the distribution of wealth and enjoyment of rights. So the State is likened to those who profit from it because they belong to a particular ethnic or partisan group, to a network of wheeler-dealers and nepotism.

Vote catching, corruption and discrimination combine to enhance social disparities, to the detriment of the underprivileged – the pauperised masses left to their own devices in their quest for survival.

It is when a crisis reaches bursting point that the underprivileged masses, really dangerous classes, are manipulated to serve political ends by those who wish to cling to illegitimate power or those who wish to take the place of those in power.

In West Africa, political crises, while extremely significant given their impact on society as a whole, are the most serious and the most frequent when they are not downright permanent.

Countries where eternal dictators are the rule or those where small-time sergeants who quickly proclaim themselves generals throw other small-time sergeants out of power in a dramatic and grotesque cycle, amply illustrate the case of permanent political crises.

The refusal to submit themselves to people's control in the management of public interests, the disregard for the general interest and the lack of consideration for the interests of different population sections, regions, ethnic groups, civil society, workers, etc. are all cause for dissension and profound divisions, which undermine the State's foundations.

The civil wars tearing Africa apart are not being waged in the name of ideologies or values, but are merely vulgar acts of organised crime and gratuitous massacres. They are a hideous reality in certain African States. When its neighbour's soil is burning, a country that has not yet reached the same crisis stage begins to wonder whether its turn will come.

Fraudulent elections – which have become the speciality of those in power, as is the case in Togo, for instance – are occasions for raging acts of violence. In this country, the 24 April 2005 presidential election's toll as established by the Togolese Human Rights league*, which was an occasion of carnage, is between 900 and 1,000 dead, more than 5,000 injured and 40,000 refugees in neighbouring Benin and Ghana, in addition to displaced persons, material destruction and rape.

Rigged elections are so much an integral part of the Togolese political landscape that the expression "elections à la Togo" tends to be emerging in the sub-region as an anti-model.

Every election in Togo went hand-in-hand with a period when massive and repeated violations of human rights hit the high point. The obvious conclusion is that armed violence is an expression of political crisis if a military dictatorship confiscates power by violence and intends to hold on to it by violence – the only option possible outside of any legitimacy.

That is the case in Côte d'Ivoire, where the advocates of the tribalist and xenophobic ideology of "Ivorianness" have been proclaiming that it is now the "West's turn" to govern the country after General Guei and Laurent Gbagbo. Guinea, the Gambia and Togo are illiterate dictatorships that can plunge into armed confrontations capable of degenerating into civil wars or genocides at any time.

Forces excluded from illegitimate power, aware that it is by the force of arms that despots rule, are increasingly tempted to take recourse to armed struggles, thereby creating a balance in terror before overthrowing unpopular regimes.

In these deeply divided countries, holding elections to solve a political crisis is a delusion, insofar as combatants do not wage war to lose elections. Arms gave them power – the power conferred by terror, in the face of an empty-handed population. A gun can be used for extortion. A gun spares you the effort of courting a woman – you can rape her instead. If a house or car catches your eye, you can just take it. If someone thwarts your wishes, a shot in the head puts an end to the quarrel...

Life seems so simple when you have a gun in your hand, but unfortunately, you cannot build anything with a gun. Wherever it is guns that speak, there is nothing but death, ruin, chaos, hunger and a vale of tears.

Political crises are the consequences of manipulation through State lawlessness.

2. Manipulation by lawless States and humanitarian crises

Lawless States are not the outcome of fate or an "African specificity" as some would like to have us believe when they make statements such as: "In Africa, you can't change your chief, they die on the throne".

Such words from uncultured sycophants are aimed at justifying the confiscation of power as if by divine right by pseudo-men of providence, who act as monarchs, with succession a family affair for their innumerable offspring, despite their titles as Presidents of the Republic.

As has been said earlier, the institutions set up by anti-democratic regimes are empty shells whose legal structure, though established by the Constitution, is a mockery or simply imposed on protestors from democratic forces, depending on the regime's opportunistic interests.

In a lawless State, arbitrary power is the rule because the government does not want the law to apply to all citizens. Justice itself is subverted to settle accounts.

Those who are above the law make the most of the impunity they enjoy, thereby enriching themselves in unlawful ways, by devoting themselves to all sorts of trafficking like the Mafioso.

The non-respect of legal instruments does not favour foreign investment, because investors do not want to risk their money, given the legal insecurity that is the norm in the event of any litigation. The justice system – a vassal to the Executive, compounded by the rampant corruption among magistrates and the entire judicial system – reserves only injustice and frustration for poor subjects brought to trial.

The State at the citizens' service is more a slogan rather than a reality in Africa. Institutions are a State's cornerstones, with the army as the most important organised force at the State and people's service for guaranteeing external and internal peace.

However, the army is the first institution to be manipulated by dictatorships – not to execute its traditional missions but to protect illegitimate power and repress the people.

Resistance then builds up against the illegal suppression, eventually leading to increased violence by the army and humanitarian disasters.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the controversial presidential election from which certain candidates were excluded in 2000 was the catalyst that cut the country into two, between the rebels and governmental forces. Mass graves and racial tribal attacks are a testimony to the conflict's savagery. In Togo, fraudulent presidential elections in 1993, 1998, 2003 and 2005 were marked by

assassinations, destruction, the imprisonment of opponents, massive human rights abuse and refugee flows into neighbouring countries.

During the Togolese presidential election on 24 April 2005, when machetes and rifle shots replaced ballot papers, the country experienced a grave humanitarian crisis: over 40,000 refugees, more than 5,000 injured, numerous raped women and thousands of houses and vehicles destroyed.

When a country is invaded by large numbers of refugees, it has to organise their reception and work on the logistics to accommodate them, feed them and provide education.

Often suffering from a lack of funds, host countries appeal to the High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR) and other humanitarian organisations in order to fulfil their duties in accordance with international instruments concerning refugees*, signed under the United Nations' aegis (UN).

Even if they find refuge and care, refugees* live a life of suffering, both in material and psychological terms. The suffering is physical too, because some of those fleeing massacres and manhunts still carry the scars of violence on their bodies.

Children separated from their parents, though not orphaned, are also among the refugees.

For those injured by clashes and repression, Togo's public hospitals were often inhospitable. Deliberately breaching their oaths, activists on the medical staff obeyed criminal orders by refusing to treat those injured due to military suppression. When they were obliged to treat them, they did so negligently, and heaped abuse on them when they did not ill-treat them. Sensing that they would not find salvation at these inhospitable and criminal hands, the injured ran away, either to die at home or to find treatment in private clinics in the more fortunate cases.

According to a UN mission's fact-finding report covering the period before, during and after the 24 April 2005 Togolese presidential elections, 2,500 soldiers were deputed by the Togolese Armed Forces to help the militia in the dictatorship's pay to break the democratic opponents.

In African countries given over to institutionalised violence, with the army as the main actor, people often despise soldiers, looking upon them as aliens.

This is understandable since we know that Africa's neo-colonial armies have merely taken the place of colonial armies. Their specificity is that they do not have an external enemy. For these Praetorian armies, the enemy is always an internal one. And the people are the internal enemy, according to political sociology analyses.

Once the people are designated as the neo-colonial army's historical enemies, there is no further need to demonstrate the army's responsibility for humanitarian crises, for it is a machine producing refugees, exiles, prisoners and corpses, establishing a reign of terror and ensuring peace for the reigning tyrant and the pack of profiteers in his service.

Liberia and Sierra Leone's armies behaved exactly like the rebel forces during the civil wars that wrecked these countries. Armies of hoodlums, junkies, psychopaths and vandals clashed with each other without any ideals or principles. It was a matter of who could rape and plunder the most.

Among the villagers whose arms were cut off and who were left "half-sleeved" or "long-sleeved", even babies were not spared in these brutal wars.

When political crises turn into humanitarian crises, the main values serving as the foundation for societies disappear, in favour of a state of anomie – a primitive condition in which hordes of armies fearing neither God nor man reign supreme.

After the national army's fashion, rebel forces too look upon the people as their enemies, subjecting them to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

Indeed, the warring camps are concerned only with power for the sake of power, for the advantages it offers.

Humanitarian crises are a characteristic of the political instability of African States.

When the constituents limited Presidents to two terms in office in the 1990s, it was to avoid past transgressions when Heads of State remained in power forever, from which they could only be dislodged by coups d'état or assassinations.

But unfortunately, former dictators who resumed power in democratic systems and even former democratic opponents who came to power legitimately by means of the polls are revising or trying to revise constitutions, in order to overcome the obstacle of two terms and take their countries back to square one, despite the political class's frustration, too accustomed to the travesty of elections.

Gnassingbe Eyadema is the instigator of this monarchic vision of political power, despite his commitment to the people in the French President Jacques Chirac's presence. His "word as a military leader" was worth no more than the promises of a drunkard. The Togolese people paid a heavy price for their President's perjury. They paid with their lives and liberty in 2003 and again in 2005, when the son, Faure Gnassingbé, succeeded his father in purely dynastic style, with France's blessing.

In Benin, the temptation would have been too strong for President Mathieu Kerekou, were it not for civil society's and the political class's mobilisation. President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria has also been tempted by such a venture in a country known for chronic instability. The selfishness of leaders devoid of principles is criminal, given the dangers of political turmoil in their States.

President Blaise Compaore managed to pull off a political hold-up in Burkina Faso without much difficulty, but how long will it last, as he has opened the doors to remaining in power life-long by holding "Togo-style elections" regularly?

The negation of laws and then Constitutions is one of the causes of political instability in African countries, where the opposition is seen as an enemy to be brought down by power.

Political stability in West Africa will depend on a consensus over the type of State and political system to be established.

Can anything apart from development projects take all sections of society, all the regions and all the ethnic groups into consideration and unite a State's people, devoid of all hopes of development and prosperity?

When the fruits of joint efforts benefit only the ethnic group of the Head of State and his gang of kleptocrats, nation building becomes an impossible task due to the affirmation of different identities. Under these conditions, the people see the State as merely the Head of State's kleptocracy and ethnic group.

Doesn't institutionalised tribalism lead to massacres and genocides, or even secession attempts? From Senegal to Liberia, including Mauritania, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Nigeria, political crises tend to turn into trials of strength between different ethnic groups attempting to monopolise the State as if it were spoils to be shared amongst themselves to the detriment of others. Tribal clashes that leave the people traumatised are the manifestation of rips in the social fabric.

After using tribes as scapegoats, African leaders look to foreigners to play this unrewarding role.

Poor governance stems from political crises. African States are poorly governed and gangrenous with corruption. When economic problems deteriorate, engendering unemployment and destitution, leaders point at foreigners. They convince the people that if they do not have work, it is because foreigners have stolen their work. Even insecurity is placed on their head: they are thieves, assassins and corrupters. Consequently, they must be expelled or imprisoned so that nationals have more employment opportunities, for security to be restored and for corruption to cease.

That is how over two million West Africans were chased out of Nigeria in the 1980s. It was during the same period that Ghana took recourse to this odious method.

The xenophobia fostered by African leaders has become a political weapon. Gabon regularly expels West African nationals accused of all the wrongs in Gabon. In Libya, mass expulsions of African foreigners are an integral part of the political landscape, insofar as they stem from the Libyan President's whims and fancies whenever an African Head of State thwarts his foreign policy.

Xenophobic expulsions are carried out regardless of human dignity. Foreigners are robbed by the indigenous population and the law and order forces. Women and girls are often raped. Powerless, foreigners suffer all kinds of inhuman and degrading treatment without any possible recourse.

In West Africa, the Lebanese are often targeted as scapegoats. In Togo, in the last ten years, Nigerian nationals of Ibo origin have been accused of being the root cause of insecurity, drug trafficking and Internet fraud in their host country.

Perhaps the targeting of all these scapegoats was done purely in preparation for future arbitrary mass expulsions of foreigners in the whole of West Africa?

The tragedy in our continent is that all these Human Rights violations provoked by leaders and their security machinery take place with complete impunity.

If humanitarian crises have a tendency to recur or persist, it is because of their perpetrators' continued impunity.

What we call the international community – which generally consists of Europe and North America's developed countries alone – is often a party to these humanitarian tragedies, insofar as it first lets them happen, then tries to doctor the dead.

The European Union is a good illustration of the cynicism of the mighty of this planet. In Togo, it has claimed to impose sanctions on the Gnassingbe clan's dictatorship since 1993. But, in reality, France – a pillar of this organisation – has kept the dictatorship afloat along with elections decided by the machete and the gun. The lessons of democracy are regularly forsaken in the name of sordid interests.

In fact, after the massacre that it condemned, the European Union even recognised the late General Gnassingbe Eyadema's dynastic successor.

CONCLUSION

The political crises and humanitarian crises in West Africa are the outcome of illegitimacy and poor governance.

The African elite and leaders seem oblivious to the notion of public interest: access to power and important posts does not oblige the beneficiaries to fulfil their duties in the general interest. Selfishness, nepotism, tribalism, xenophobia, dictatorship, poor governance and corruption are the causes of the humanitarian crises that often reduce the African masses to barbarism.

Africa is totally helpless before humanitarian crises, because those causing them are in power and cannot be both pyromaniacs and firefighters.

Holding on to power for the sake of power makes African leaders manipulate the neo-colonial armed forces, whose enemy has always been an internal one, historically, i.e. the people.

The political crises tearing Africa apart need people and civil society to control the exercise of power. This calls for reliable republican armies and democratic institutions that can act as counterweights and put a stop to abuses of power by the executive, which may believe that it is not answerable to anyone. Accountability makes leaders pay attention, but it also presupposes the respect of people's sovereignty through its power to freely elect its leaders.

10. Prolonged crises and security conditions of West African populations, by Mr. Gilles YABI, International Crisis Group.

After the 1990s, when West Africa was marked by devastating conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the region faced another political and military crisis in a country that had till then been considered a centre of stability, peace and relative economic success. Even before the armed conflict broke out after the attempted coup on 19 September 2002, political violence had entered Côte d'Ivoire insidiously through the power struggles following the death of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, the "Father of the Nation", leading to the first military putsch in the country's history in December 1999.

The dual impact of a prolonged crisis

In six years, Côte d'Ivoire witnessed a transitional military and presidential regime, legislative elections marked by unprecedented violence, an attempt at political normalisation, followed by another coup, a civil war, territorial division and an interminable peace process intended to lead to the country's reunification and the organisation of fresh elections. Côte d'Ivoire's civil population saw their security conditions change along with these political upheavals. Côte d'Ivoire is a typical example of the tragic dual impact of a prolonged crisis on human security: serious, brutal and localised infringement of fundamental rights following a civil war on the one hand, and a gradual but steady rise in commonplace human rights violations associated with a state of "neither peace, nor war" on the other.

The human toll of a limited-duration war

Unlike the civil war in Liberia and Sierra Leone, to take examples from the region, the war in Côte d'Ivoire only lasted a few months, basically from September 2002 to April 2003 – in the sense of a confrontation between armed groups leading to a significant number of victims. Peace negotiations initiated from the start of the conflict, followed by the peacekeeping role played by foreign forces, established the protagonists' military positions fairly soon. This made it possible to ensure the respect of the cease-fire signed by the three rebel movements that controlled the country's north and part of its western region, and Côte d'Ivoire's regular army. The most barbaric acts against civil populations were perpetrated by two armed movements that emerged in the west in November 2002 (MPIGO – Ivorian Popular Movement of the Greater West and MJP – the Movement for Justice and Peace)*, which included a number of Liberian and Sierra Leonean mercenaries in their ranks, well accustomed to civil wars and used to perpetrating the worst of acts of violence on civil populations in occupied zones. The battles between the loyalist army and the MPCJ or Patriotic Movement of Côte d'Ivoire's rebels for the control of Bouaké, a city in the heart of the country, in October 2002, were also punctuated by deliberate attacks on people's security.

But since April 2003 and the effective establishment of a national reconciliation government, which is supposed to ensure the application of the Peace Agreements signed between the warring factions and the Ivorian political class, no major ceasefire violations have taken place, save for the air attacks launched by the Ivorian army between 4 and 6 November 2004. In Côte d'Ivoire, the peace process and international intervention succeeded in putting a

quick end to military hostilities and limiting the loss of human lives. According to the *Human Security Report 2005*^{*}, political violence in Côte d'Ivoire led to 626 deaths in 2002 and 121 in 2003, i.e. 3.7 and 0.7 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants respectively^{*}. For purposes of comparison, the number of deaths was 700 in 2002 and 1958 in 2003 in Liberia, i.e. 21.2 and 59.4 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants respectively^{*}.

A situation of “neither peace, nor war” – a factor of permanent insecurity

The relatively limited human toll of the Ivorian conflict should not make us overlook the permanent and lasting impact of such a prolonged crisis with regard to human security. The backward march of the peace process and national reconciliation, with one step forward and two back, has maintained political tensions, frozen the territory's physical division and the internal fractures within Côte d'Ivoire's society, prevented disarmament and the demobilisation of all warring factions and sanctioned the use of all sorts of violence in the struggle to maintain or gain access to political power. These conditions of “neither peace nor war” created three territories within the country, all characterised by heinous human security conditions: the zone under the control of the former New Forces (NF) rebellion, the confidence zone that failed to live up to its name, and the south, administered by the Abidjan government. A prolonged crisis of the Ivorian type profoundly undermines societal values and institutional mechanisms that combine to create minimal security conditions for a country's inhabitants.

Extracts from reports on human rights commissioned by the United Nations Organisation, proposed hereafter, provide an overview of the sequence of attacks on Human Rights in Côte d'Ivoire at different “times” of the crisis. Exposing the facts seems not only necessary to describe the deterioration of human security as a consequence of a prolonged crisis, but also and especially to reopen the debate on the effectiveness of conflict resolution strategies that tolerate impunity.

Sequence of the security condition's deterioration through United Nations reports

Extracts from the International Inquiry Commissions Report* on allegations of serious human rights and international humanitarian law violations in Côte d'Ivoire committed between 19 September 2002 and 15 October 2004:

"As for international humanitarian law violations and crimes against humanity, the report makes special reference to cases that occurred in the course of combat, especially in the country's North, Centre and West... The Commission was also able to establish serious breaches of the 12 August 1949 Geneva Conventions, especially by the acts following the helicopter attacks on civil populations in Vavoua, Pelezi, Menakro, Danane, Mahapleu, Zouan-Hounien and Bin-Houye, Monoko-Zohi, the execution of ninety gendarmes, their family members and other persons detained in Bouake in October 2002, and the massacres that occurred during the events in Korhogo on 20 and 21 June 2004... The Commission identified a certain number of exceptionally serious crimes such as killings, torture, rapes and other inhuman acts committed during a widespread or systematic attack on civil populations in areas like Toulepleu, Monoko-Zohi, Daloa, Bangolo, Bolequin, Man, Bouake, Korhogo and Abidjan. In the eyes of the Commission, these acts constitute

crimes against humanity by their very seriousness, in the meaning of Article 7 of the International Criminal Court's Rome Statute..."

Extracts of the Report* of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) on the Human Rights situation covering the period between May and July 2005:

"In the part of the territory under government control, the Human Rights situation has deteriorated seriously in the country's West. In the rest of this area, it is characterised by general insecurity, especially in the cities of Abidjan and Yamoussoukro. This state of affairs has led to politically motivated arrests and detentions. Members of the Defence and Security Forces (FDS) have often used deadly force against presumed bandits within the framework of security operations in these cities. Other people have been arrested and detained for their alleged membership of the New Forces, presumed to have infiltrated them in this part of the territory. The attacks on Anyama and Agboville by armed men towards the end of July have contributed to the deterioration of the human rights situation.

In the part of the national territory under the control of the New Forces, NF members continued to arrest and detain people presumed to be patriots or infiltrators in the pay of the Government and transferred them to different places of confinement (Bouake, Korhogo, etc.). Armed individuals as well as certain "Dozos" (traditional hunters) apparently eluding the control of the New Forces distinguished themselves by committing atrocities of all kinds, from kidnapping and ransom demands to summary executions. It was also noted with concern that a group of "Dozos" close to the New Forces had established *de facto* jurisdictions to judge cattle-related cases exclusively.

In the Zone of Confidence, road blockers, local militia as well as infiltrated New Forces members continued to hold sway, committing increasingly violent atrocities against the civil population and disrupting economic life in this region by their harmful blockages of axial roads. In addition, inter-ethnic confrontations, mainly between the Guérés and Dioulas in the southern part of the Zone of Confidence, involved the intervention of APWE (Patriotic Alliance of Wé), UPRGO (Union for the Resistance of the Grand West) and FLGO (Forces for the Resistance of the Grand West)* militia in favour of the Guérés and of "Dozos" or infiltrated New Forces members in favour of Dioula populations."

Extracts of the Report* of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) on the Human Rights situation covering the August-December 2005 period:

"In the zone under Government control, the political environment was extremely tense due to the uncertainty over what would happen 'after 30th October' and the heightening of general insecurity. In this respect, members of the Ivorian Defence and Security Forces (FDS) and Security Operations Command Centre (CECOS)* often made use of deadly force to control individuals alleged to be bandits and armed robbers. The local press was concerned about the bandits' ability to procure war weapons to commit crimes. Persons suspected of collaborating with the "rebels" or of being "rebels" themselves were tortured and placed under detention. Some cases of forced disappearances were reported. Lifeless, bullet-riddled bodies were regularly discovered, with no possibility of attributing responsibility either to bandits or the regular forces.

The widespread insecurity encouraged several cases of summary executions. Several people or groups of people were threatened, intimidated or subjected to acts of violence. The Defence and Security Forces, as well as often-identified armed gangs were the main authors of these crimes.

In the northern zone controlled by the New Forces, the human rights situation remained disturbing during the period under review. In addition to violations of the right to life and the bodily security of persons and goods, cases of torture and dissatisfactory confinement conditions were noted, followed by deaths, especially in Sakassou and Korhogo. While arrests due to infiltration reduced in number, impediments to the freedom of movement of impartial forces and people, followed by racketeering, increased considerably..."

Shared responsibility

These extracts show how the conflict's immediate effects on human security developed into a permanent and long-lasting impact on people's lives by turning into a prolonged political and military crisis. Although they were reported and documented, these serious attacks on people's lives did not lead to any strong reactions, which only made them more commonplace. In March 2006, the crisis is far from over in Côte d'Ivoire and the security of its inhabitants is threatened daily. The current easing of tensions at the political level should not induce passivity within the West African community in particular and the international community in general. The responsibility to protect is a shared responsibility and a breakdown in people's protection in one of the country's regions constitutes a threat for the others, as we are all well aware.

11. “Civil society’s role in the resistance to the 1st September 2000 attacks”, by the Honourable Cheick Tidiane TRAORE, Member of Parliament, Guinea.

I- Historical background of events

After more than a decade of war in the sub-region through its participation in peacekeeping activities in Sierra Leone and Liberia at its own expense, the Republic of Guinea itself fell victim to rebel activities on the night of 31 August to 1 September 2000 by armed gangs from these two countries, which attacked localities along the southern and south-western borders, i.e. Pamalap, Kola khouré, Madina Woula, Koyama, Yendémilimou, Guékédou and Macenta.

The attacks were carried out simultaneously through the press and over more than 1,000 km of land borders, causing thousands of deaths among innocent people and considerable material damage. Harvests were devastated and burned, granaries were plundered, and social symbols and other values were disrespected.

Several injured persons from among those who survived and managed to miraculously escape were forced to lead a life of uncertainty, most indelibly and for ever damaged by physical abuse. Such a situation during the month of Lent was perceived by the People of Guinea as a provocation, an affront to which the entire nation was determined to respond as best possible.

II- The Nation

Assessing the danger hovering over all Guinean institutions and peoples, civil society, with the youth in the forefront, spontaneously mobilised to defend itself with its natural strengths and the means it had at its disposal.

It took its courage and determination from its history and its past – a history marked by the resistance its worthy sons put up against colonial invasion and for their country’s freedom, but especially by its refusal to fall under foreign domination.

This was not the first experience of an attack of this nature since the country’s independence, which was itself a difficult ordeal. The 22 November 1970 incursion and the victory recorded then foreshadowed the 1st September 2000 incident.

Having witnessed the realities of Sierra Leone and Liberia, the Guinean people were prepared to avoid similar destabilisation on their soil. So they did not take long to react, despite their faith in the army and the respect in which it was held.

III- Mobilisation

The public service media and independent press editors played a vital role in mobilising civil society. Information and consciousness-raising played a part in galvanising the public conscience of all Guineans.

The same enthusiasm swept through mosques and churches, in different localities, families or schools. Political parties and women set the best examples. They each expressed their desire to promote national unity and gender equality in defence of their fatherland.

For its part the nation's youth mobilised strongly and without reservation in Conakry and in the country's interior to reassure the elders that it would be in the forefront of the legitimate struggle to safeguard its future and destiny. The young, proud of their education, were ready to shed their blood in the ultimate sacrifice.

In Conakry, a "Demonstrators' Collective against the Attack and for Peace", consisting of young leaders representing all the Nation's loyal forces, was formed and managed to mobilise more than 21,000 young persons to respond to their country's call.

Clear-sighted and seasoned young volunteers formed watch groups to guard their localities and ensure peace in the city. Others followed the example all over the national territory in less than 72 hours.

For their part, the country's artists issued innumerable messages alerting people, urging Guineans to demonstrate greater courage, unity and pride in being Guinean. They lambasted the attacks and their sponsors in all languages, glorified Guineans' bravery, recalled the historical steps Guinea had undertaken and the place the country occupies in Africa.

The Solidarity Caravan which was created and which travelled all over Guinea, is worth mentioning as a unique example in the sub-region.

The business and industrial sector made invaluable contributions to cover the Guinean armed forces' initial expenses. National solidarity had never reached such a height over the last two decades.

IV- Special role played by the Youth

Given the readiness of Guinea's youth to fight for the country's defence, the Head of State, General Lansana Conte, recalled former combatants and retired servicemen to inform, train and educate the youth in the military arts, whilst also preparing them for post-conflict management. In this way young soldiers took an active role alongside the regular army, at times on the frontline, in an effort to repel the enemy beyond Guinean borders.

With national solidarity playing its part, the hunters' community placed its wide-ranging skills at the disposal of training programmes and secretly protected young volunteers.

V- Forest Guinea's special case

The history and culture of Forest Guinea, as its name indicates, is based on mythology. The youth in this part of Guinea share the language, culture and sometimes even the same family and land with people in the rebels' countries of origin – for instance, the Kissi community, which can be found in three countries (Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia).

The youth, surrounded by elders and retired servicemen, placed their knowledge of the land at the disposal of Guinea's armed forces. They laid several successful ambushes with the advice of the servicemen.

Theirs was a simple motto: "The rebels are basically young like us. The only difference between us is that they are drugged and we are lucid. With the blessings of our parents and the grace of God, the final victory belongs to us."

It must be pointed out that Yomou Prefecture was the only border locality where no rebel attacks took place, because of a hundred-year-old pact uniting the people of border villages. This non-aggression pact showed itself to be inviolable.

This kind of pact deserves to be widened and maintained among the inhabitants of border villages everywhere in Africa in order to guarantee peace and tranquillity for these societies.

VI- The role played by the press

The public and private media played their respective roles fully. At the invitation of "the Young Demonstrators' Collective against the Attacks and for Peace", a debate was organised over lunch between the Guinean armed forces and communications professionals to decide on the role and attitude everyone should adopt in the national war effort.

It was agreed that the armed forces would initiate press releases to provide official information on all the events. On this occasion, the military delegation's head said, and I quote: "A journalist's pen or microphone has a much greater impact than a ballistic missile. You must know that the hardest battle is fought in the press, because each media must create, instigate and maintain a state of psychosis in the adversary's camp".

This activity further galvanised the media professionals' patriotism and their commitment had many positive and immediate consequences – among others, the arrival of young refugees, former warlords living in the country, ready to join "the Young Demonstrators' Collective against the Attacks and for Peace".

Their valuable support helped the country learn that more than 80% of the press releases broadcast by international channels, announcing the annexation of towns and villages in the country's hinterland and in the capital city's periphery, were pure disinformation.

That is how the youth in the localities mentioned began to broadcast press releases themselves, announcing their determination to wipe out the intruders.

One group of young executives used the genius of the Internet to broadcast their daily reactions to the false allegations being broadcast by a section of the international press.

VII- *The international community's support*

I would like to take this opportunity to greet and thank the international community for the invaluable technical, material and diplomatic support provided to Guinea. That is why “the Young Demonstrators’ Collective against the Attacks and for Peace” was able to collect more than 10,000 signatures soon after Guinea’s victory to thank the international community through the UNDP’s Resident Representative and the United Nations System Coordinator in Guinea.

Conclusion

One of the immediate effects of the September 2000 rebel attacks against Guinea, associated with the decade-long war situation it had experienced through the presence of its troops in Sierra Leone and Liberia, was that Guinea had to interrupt all its investment programmes in favour of the war effort and to safeguard its territorial integrity. This was further aggravated by the influx of almost a million refugees and displaced persons, which completely disrupted the economy and the people’s lifestyle.

Today, my country no longer benefits from any formal programme with international financial organisations and its deficit is estimated to stand at around two billion US dollars.

In order to prevent the country from collapsing, it is urgent that the international community depoliticises its cooperation with Guinea in order to maintain social peace in the country and safeguard peace in the sub-region.

12. The Joola tragedy in Senegal: Governance problems and a disaster's social roots, by Mr. Nassardine AIDARA, Chairman, Youth and Development, Senegal.

I. The Joola tragedy

The ferry "Le Joola", which connected the cities of Ziguinchor and Dakar, sank in the Atlantic Ocean off the Gambian coast on the night of Thursday 26 to Friday 27 September 2002. It is not known how many people were on board during this last, fateful round trip. However, the final count, revised upwards several times, proved that the greatest maritime catastrophe of all time had occurred. There were 64 survivors and almost 2,000 dead or missing, for a ferry designed to transport just 550 passengers.

The timing and the context contributed a great deal to the increase in the death toll. It was the end of the school vacations and hundreds of young students and school children were returning to Dakar for the start of the academic year. Moreover, the acknowledged lack of security on the roads due to hazardous and dangerous blockades resulting from the armed conflict long raging in the country's southern region drove the people to take the sea route.

This catastrophe was truly a tragedy for the people: families were broken up, citizens traumatised, children became orphans from one day to the next, people unexpectedly found themselves alone in the world, etc. The trauma was greatly increased due to the chaotic management of the shipwreck which exacerbated the feelings of horror and injustice among the people. One of the psychologists who was a member of the crisis cell set up after the tragedy described the scenes observed as "collective madness". Dreams were shattered, hopes destroyed and futures became suddenly uncertain. All were of the opinion that, in terms of human resources, Ziguinchor would necessarily suffer the effects of the annihilation of a generation of young people who would have taken over from the earlier generation in all sectors (social, economic and political).

The first official information mentioned the storm and the ferry's technical defects in addition to some individual "accumulation of faults". In fact, the causes ran much deeper. The scale of the malfunctioning observed and the extent of the damages implicated the way institutions functioned as well as individual and collective attitudes and behaviours. *In hindsight, we can definitely say that "the Joola tragedy" has shown that our societies are not sufficiently prepared (either individually or collectively) to prevent or manage this type of catastrophe. That is why it is important to conduct a thorough analysis of the origins of the tragedy to draw the required lessons from it.*

II. Origins of the tragedy:

1. Governance issue

An analysis of the disaster shows that several governance aspects explain the scale of the tragedy.

1.1 Implementation of development policies fair to all

In our social and economic development policies, the capital city takes precedence over the rest of the country. Peripheral regions are landlocked and difficult to reach. The Casamance region,

despite its enormous potential, is no exception to this rule. The main road that connects it to the rest of the country crosses through the River Gambia basin, which is synonymous with an obstacle course with intolerable congestion at the riverside. At the time this event took place, and bearing in mind the lack of security on the roads and the limited availability of air transport, it may be said that the ferry was the only transportation available, connecting Ziguinchor to Dakar. This explains the rush to the Joola.

1.2 Political vote catching

The decision to put the ferry back in operation after a stoppage of almost a year was essentially political in nature. Politicians, including the Minister for the Armed Forces, a native of the southern region, made this one of their priorities in their strategy for the recruitment of campaigners. As often happens, the technical problems already identified were relegated to the background.

1.3 Negligence of safety/Absence or non-compliance with norms

The Joola, which started operations in 1990, had deteriorated considerably over the years. Ever-increasing problems led to its being immobilised for almost a year. Was it sent out to sea prematurely without really being in a seaworthy state? Was it technically fit to operate between Dakar and Ziguinchor?

If the numerous technical defects are considered, it becomes clear that the authorities had neglected safety aspects.

- The refusal to invest in the purchase of a second engine that could have ensured greater stability.
- It was the Merchant Navy's legal obligation to deliver safety certificates, assess the Joola's state of seaworthiness and prevent its departure in the event of lack of safety. Since June 1999, when the last seaworthiness certificate expired, the Merchant Navy had not renewed the Joola's safety certificate, issued every year after technical inspections.
- The life-saving rafts did not work during the shipwreck, as the hydrostatic jettisoning system was defective. Moreover, the rafts were tied to the ferry and strapped to each other.
- Overloading had become the norm in the ship's operations.
- Round trips continued even after several incidents had occurred during the inaugural journey.
- The passengers manifest had not been updated.
- Etc.

1.4 Lack of transparency in the allocation and management of public funds

The authorities did not invest in the purchase of the second engine required to better stabilise the boat. This was not for any lack of resources. The Ministry of Transport simply had other priorities. Finally, we learnt with bitterness that much larger sums had been invested in the presidential plane's renovation. As the problems the boat faced were known well before it was immobilised, one may well wonder why the funds required for its repair were not budgeted.

1.5 Inadequate assistance and intervention capacity

Unfortunately, the safety procedures, set up with great delay, did not save anyone. The means deployed were derisory considering the scale of the catastrophe. Moreover, the army and police force were ill prepared to receive and take charge of the victims' families. In the Joola's case, they

did exactly the opposite of what should have been done: they tried to push them away as far as possible.

No reception procedure was set up within the first few hours. A psychological cell was formed after the tragedy. However, its activities were limited on account of its late formation, the scale of the tragedy and the lack of medium or long-term follow-up.

1.6 Civil society's role

The boat's inaugural journey was punctuated by a number of incidents related by journalists and the civil society in the press. But these did not meet with a sufficient response from the people to have a positive impact on the events that followed.

Nevertheless, the private press and civil society played a very important role after the shipwreck. They were able to give correct information to the people and start open forums that made the government put an end to its silence and review its positions several times over.

1.7 Impenetrable management (lack of means, lack of communication)

Victims' families were forced to organise a march to the President of the Republic's office to insist on greater transparency and more viable information. The authorities' first reaction was to filter information, not communicate with families, thereby leaving them at the mercy of rumours. It was impossible to connect to the toll free number. We also noted some attempts at disinformation on the State media's part. In order to prove that a storm was the only possible cause of the shipwreck, the authorities encouraged a former ship's commander to come and convince television audiences that the ferry could carry more than 800 persons. "It was truly a paradox. I had the impression that the whole world was demonstrating its solidarity, except for our country's political and military authorities. They had chosen to ignore us, to chase us away as if we were just lowly spectators, and to deprive us of basic information".

1.8 Justice

How could citizens be told that the ferry's commander alone was responsible for a disaster that caused around 2,000 deaths? The courts instituted no enquiry.

- The Joola's commander was declared solely responsible!
- The shipwreck's case was closed without any penal action.
- Only some administrative penalties were levied.
- Most of the accused returned to even more profitable posts.

The judicial system may be very complicated for ordinary citizens like us to understand. But we all have what is called a feeling for justice. We are convinced that the entire fault cannot be held to lie with a single person. In a modern State, a judicial enquiry is conducted, errors are punished and victims or claimants are compensated on the basis of existing laws and regulations. That is what the law ordains. The case must be tried to establish the facts, even if a pardon is subsequently granted.

1.9 Lack of statistics

The debate over the number of passengers on board calls for further thought about our statistics collation. This issue is raised each time an accident takes place.

2. Social roots

2.1 Incompetence

The Joola's shipwreck has brought a certain number of failures to the fore, which call the concerned actors' competence into question:

- **Overcrowding:** Overcrowding and lack of safety on board the Joola have always been decried. The Ministry of Transports has always sounded the alarm, though without ever putting its legal obligation to prohibit the ferry from setting sail into practice. It must be noted that the Armed Forces, which were in charge of the ferry's management, along with the police, are still incapable of ensuring compliance with the standards on authorised capacity. Overcrowding was the most visible and most terrible mistake that was made. Even today on the country's roads, both in cities and in rural areas, overloaded vehicles continue to ply without any trouble! Is there perhaps a lack of political will to fight against this scourge?
- The captain, a naval officer, was not entitled to operate as the chief skipper of a merchant ship, at least if we go by international conventions.
- The Army Headquarters were incapable of gauging the scale of the disaster. On the day following the shipwreck, the Chief of Defence Staff and the Chief of Air Staff chose to do other work rather than supervise the coordination of emergency relief operations.
- During their technical inspection on 23 September 2002, three days before the disaster, the Merchant Navy's Committee in charge of the annual inspection failed to note any anomalies in the functioning of the system's hydrostatic jettisoning system or the astonishing fact that the rafts were strapped to each other. Who knows how many people could otherwise have been saved?

2.2 Laxity

The all-round laxity to be observed in the entire country took shape in the Joola's shipwreck in the form of:

- The lack of passenger checking, on a ferry managed by army personnel in an area known for its security problems. This is incomprehensible and inadmissible.
- Vehicles on board that had not been tied down.
- Freight that had not been weighed. There are many accounts of the crew being forced to get rid of some of its cargo on the high seas because of overloading, on several occasions. Personal baggage was not weighed as charges were imposed on baskets of goods on a per unit basis.
- Etc.

2.3 Greed and corruption

Officially, 1,143 passengers were registered, whereas the final tally mentions almost 2,000 dead or missing. How did the others get on to the ferry? Was it black-marketing in tickets, cronyism or corruption? No serious investigation has determined the role played by each of these eventualities.

2.4 The influence of religion

In a highly religious country such as ours, the art of consoling families facing misfortune is very highly developed. Everyone urges you to strengthen your belief in God and bear the situation as an additional ordeal that will enable you to cross into paradise, even if you are already convinced of this. Any possible means are sought to leave everything in God's hands and to accept the event. The consequences are that the pain and anger that might otherwise be felt are repressed, as is the lack of punishment for the errors made.

2.5 Compromise

The lack of rigour and discipline observed in Senegal can partly be attributed to the "Massla", that is to say, the ability to smoothen rough edges, to make compromises even if it means trivialising problems. The chaos at the ship's halt in Carabane, which was broadcast all over the world by television, is a perfect illustration of the lack of strictness. You could call it complacency or even compromising with principles.

2.6 Fatalism

Fatalism is very prevalent in Senegal. The expression "Ndogal yàlla" or the ability to shift all responsibility to divine will is frequently used. It's always God's will or fault in our country. All our stupid mistakes and all our talent for evil can be laid at His feet. Individual responsibility is often drowned out in religious, parental or political considerations. "Ndogal yàlla" camouflages our incompetence, our lack of will and our irresponsibility. It could be compared to resignation or irresponsibility.

2.7 Ignorance

Generally, safety norms are unknown to the people, many of whom are illiterate. Laws are not well known either.

2.8 Respect for public welfare

The transition between traditional and modern societies has taken place to the detriment of the respect for public welfare. The need to maintain public welfare is therefore ill perceived. One of the consequences is un-citizen-like behaviour.

2.9 The lack of risk perception /Risky behaviour

Our society is not sufficiently aware of the notions of risk and safety. Markets that catch fire, traffic accidents that cause deaths, buildings that collapse – all these constantly place people in danger of dying.

Other Documents

* Presentations not made at the workshop due to the absence of their authors for reasons beyond their control:

1. **Human Security and trafficking in persons in West Africa**, by Mrs. Marie-Thérèse Keita-Bocoum, Principal Advisor for Human Rights at the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA)

2. **Presentation by Mehrnaz Moustafavi**, Programme Head, Human Security Division, UNOCHA

* Additional presentations:

1. **Human security and the implementation of strategies, mechanisms and policies to promote the concept**, by Mr. Mahamed MAIGA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mali.

2. **The Dakar Declaration**

1. Human Security and trafficking in persons in West Africa, by Mrs Marie-Thérèse Keita-Bocoum, Principal Advisor for Human Rights at the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA)

INTRODUCTION

According to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, the expression “people trafficking” means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or reception of persons by means of the threat of use or the use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, the abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person exerting control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. At the minimum, exploitation would include exploiting the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

Trafficking or trade in persons⁺⁺⁺ therefore consists of transporting men, women and children from one place to another and placing them in a situation of forced labour. This practice covers forced prostitution, domestic servitude, and hazardous agricultural work, work in clandestine workshops, on building sites or in the catering sector and various other modern forms of slavery. Trafficking may also cover other aspects such as adoption.

People trafficking is a violation of human rights to which many other violations are connected. It poses a problem of individual and collective human security as well as social progress. It is a threat to peace in the sense that it leads to greater poverty, unemployment in the young and illiteracy rates. It makes it easier to recruit the young into criminal activities. It is difficult to estimate the phenomenon’s scale reliably. However, according to some sources, 700,000 to 2,000,000 persons are affected by cross-border trafficking every year, the majority of whom are women and children (35% reportedly of less than 18 years of age).

People trafficking is very lucrative. It is apparently the third biggest source of profit in organised crime, after drugs and arms, generating billions of dollars every year.

I/ PEOPLE TRAFFICKING IN WEST AFRICA – A SOURCE OF INSECURITY

Numerous studies have been conducted on people trafficking at the sub-regional or national levels. These studies have examined the trends and scale of trafficking, as well as its origin, destination and transit areas. They have also underlined the causes of the fight against trafficking, the victims’ protection and the perpetrators’ punishment. These studies have led to policies, action plans and legislations at the national and sub-regional levels. However, it has also been noted that while the phenomenon is better understood, denounced and often even repressed, much still remains to be done to make it recede. In fact, trafficking in persons is expanding, promoted by conflicts, bad governance, economic crises, poverty and unemployment. Indeed, it has affected all the sub-region’s countries and a large number of them are destination or transit points of trafficking from other countries. Thus, trafficking has assumed a sub-regional dimension and in

⁺⁺⁺ The expressions ‘trafficking’ or ‘trade in persons’ are frequently used to mean the same thing; however, in French, the word ‘traite’ or trade is more correct.

many cases, it takes place between countries of the same sub-region. The causes, extent, diversity, number and status of the actors involved influences the way it operates.

I.1. Trafficking in persons: Triggering and contributing factors

These are numerous and various. However, it is important to note that these factors may vary depending on the countries and areas concerned. In some countries, it is the conjunction of several factors that explains trafficking and most analyses lay greater stress on the factors that trigger and contribute to the trafficking in persons in West Africa.

Poverty is undeniably the most obvious factor. But it is not the only one. **Armed conflicts, situations of social and economic precariousness, oppression, discrimination, traditional practices and ignorance/misunderstandings also promote trafficking in persons.** The growth in the **sexual and economic exploitation** market as well as in the **demand for children for adoption** are factors that act as incentives.

Moreover, several reports explain that women and children are the most exposed to such trafficking because of their economic and social vulnerability. Women and young girls specially fall victim to it in view of the inferior position they hold as well as their poverty and lack of education or work opportunities. Promoting equality in law between women and men can therefore be a means of attacking the problem. Women with better access to education, shelter, food, judicial and political systems and who are not subjected to numerous acts of violence appear to be less vulnerable^{sss}.

Poor families who find it difficult to raise their children properly sometimes agree to or are tempted to sell them or give them out on hire; little girls and young women are the first to be sacrificed for purposes of exploitation. In some cases, traditional practices such as forced or early marriages or the placing of young children as servants in families contribute towards human trafficking. Practices arising out of supposedly religious beliefs, such as using children for begging, are also to be noted.

Early marriages of young (nubile) girls, particularly with elderly men, sometimes viewed as a way of meeting the family's needs, are also extremely dangerous. The link between forced marriages and human trafficking also prevails in the families of migrant workers living far from their communities. Conflicts and conditions of insecurity further reinforce the relationship between early marriage and human trafficking^{****}. The failure or refusal of a forced marriage and the trauma or vulnerability arising from it can cause immense stress for young women, making them flee towards imaginary paradises. They then fall easy prey to traffickers and dream merchants.

The pernicious effects of HIV/AIDS exacerbate the links between poverty, violence and human trafficking. Young girls and women who fall victim to trafficking for purposes of prostitution are among the most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS infections, because most of them, being insufficiently informed, are seduced, abused or forced to have unprotected sexual intercourse, and

^{sss} On p5 of a report published in 2003, entitled "Trafficking in human beings, especially women and children, in Africa", UNICEF pointed out the relationship between the combination of traditional practices, poverty and trafficking in persons as well as the relationship between trafficking and violence against women.

^{****} According to the same report, the proportion of early marriages of girls below 19 years of age was 49% in West Africa. It also mentioned that the average age at which girls had their first marriage was 15 years in Niger, 16 years in Mali and Chad and 17 years in Nigeria.

left uncared for once they get infected. Moreover, AIDS orphans too are among the most exposed to people trafficking because of their vulnerability and the discriminations they suffer.

Another factor is the attraction of living standards considered better and more comfortable, which are promoted by the media and by those seeking to con the gullible. Indeed, traffickers sometimes use migrant returnees to deceive and trap would-be clandestine immigrants. They live in style, own dream houses and flaunt their wealth. Young people without decent jobs and who are often well qualified may be tempted to seek their fortune abroad at any cost. Sometimes they fall prey to unscrupulous traffickers with even the collaboration of their parents. The promise of a better education forms part of the same enticement that leads young people living far from their countries as illegal immigrants, without protection, and ashamed to return home without degrees and without success to become willing or unwilling victims of such trafficking and exploitation.^{††††}

For many women, emigrating or looking for work abroad not only meets economic concerns but also fulfils the desire for freedom, security, advancement and the search for better living conditions. However, most of the time, women are insufficiently informed of the risks involved, their rights or means of self-protection. This is how trafficking is organised, with its market of supply and demand.

Clandestine migration and illegal goods smuggling, in themselves illicit practices, lead migrants into situations of illegality that weaken them and, after they have braved death, often at a high price and many times over, push them into becoming victims of traffic and exploitation, if they do not themselves become traffickers in turn.

Furthermore, child trafficking is also promoted by the lack of a civil status or by the length of the procedures required to obtain identity papers. During the workshop held in Sikasso in September 2005 by the Sahel Club and its partners, including UNOWA, numerous speakers highlighted the issue of granting identity papers to persons and the extensive implementation of civil status procedures as a means to fight against child trafficking. Moreover, the lack of information on the exact age and origin of children makes the return to civilian life difficult for child soldiers, who for the most part, are victims of forced recruitment and trafficking and are devoid of legal identity papers.

Increased trafficking is associated with a greater and diversified demand. Traffickers are attracted by the growing demand in the following sectors:

- Sexual exploitation: Prostitution is the most “in demand” sector, both within and outside the region, particularly as regards women and child trafficking in West Africa. It is closely related to the expansion of tourism and the European market where, in the majority of cases, victims are used purely as sex slaves.
- Domestic work, work in stores and agricultural work in cotton, cocoa, coffee, oil palms, banana, pineapple and other plantations.
- Elderly men who marry very young girls because they want to be sure of their purity, particularly to avoid HIV/AIDS infections.
- Organ trafficking associated with “mystical” beliefs in order to obtain wealth or power.
- Adoption: Little is still known about the link between demands for adoption and child trafficking in West Africa. Further studies need to be undertaken.

^{††††} These patterns have been described in several reports, including: International Organisation for Migration, *Trafficking of Women and Children for sexual exploitation in Southern Africa*, Pretoria, April 2003; Human Rights Watch, *Borderline Slavery. Child Trafficking in Togo*, April 2003.

- The spread of conflicts and civil wars: The demand in this context is for participation in armed conflicts, strictly speaking, but also for the use of women and children as sex slaves, domestic servants and/or carriers of arms and various other goods. Armed conflicts can lead to this demand and increase it. For instance, traffickers supply victims to warlords. A conflict's persistence and extension increases demand, but can also give rise to supplies. To flee conflicts and the resultant insecurity, young boys or girls might fall prey to traffickers who dangle the temptation of a better life or a stable job abroad before them. They can also make parents entrust their children to traffickers pretending to be relations or friends.
- The employment of children on the pretext of their being apprenticed in some trades and the fictitious adoption of young children are the most pernicious forms of exploitation.

1.2. The actors

Victims, traffickers and users are the actors involved in this traffic. Trafficking in human beings is a real challenge to human security in the sub-region. It is a threat to life, to survival and to the dignity of persons falling victim to this traffic. The victims suffer after-effects for their entire life, particularly when conditions for their proper reintegration into society are not met.

◆ **The victims:** The victims can be forced or lured by promises of a good job or a good degree and they often pay heavily for it. They never reach Europe, and even if they do, it is to serve as prostitutes after having been forced to practice the same profession in one or several of the countries they have crossed. Although some women sometimes know that they have to work as prostitutes, they rarely know that they will be in a near-slavery situation and unable to break out of their exploiters' clutches. Most human trafficking victims suffer considerable violence, including rape and other sexual brutalities, apart from physical and psychological health problems. They are often cut off from the outer world, unable to speak the language of the country in which they find themselves, with no identification papers or other documents. In extreme cases, they do not even know where they are. They live in fear of their illegal status, of being pursued for the money that they still owe to those who smuggled them in, or simply due to the failure or shame of the profession they have been forced into to survive. They are often penalised and even brought before the courts as criminals, whereas what they need is help to extract themselves from this cycle and to ensure that their rights are defended and protected.

◆ **The traffickers:** The traffickers are the intermediaries between supply and demand. They use several means to attract their victims: misleading advertisements in newspapers or on the Internet, personal relations and offers of child adoption. They use various methods to keep their victims in a state of servitude: for fictional or real debts, confiscation of passport or other identity papers, physical or psychological abuse, rape, torture, the threat of arrest, deportation or death. Traffickers act alone or within a well-structured and organised network of criminals. There are both men and women among the traffickers. They may act as a husband and wife team to recruit domestic servants, for instance. It can never be stressed enough that traffickers may hide under the mask of trusted friends, relatives or neighbours.

◆ **The users:** They are at the other end of the chain. They represent the demand. It is important to distinguish users from traffickers, although the two may interact. Users may act alone, in groups or even in networks. Their concern is to have access to cheap labour that is malleable and can be exploited to the hilt, or for illegal sexual activities or again for adoption

through easy procedures. In several cases they are not involved in trafficking and are unaware of the means and procedures being used. They do not consider themselves to be a part of the human trafficking process, although they form an integral part of the exploitation chain as users. Therefore, it is important to make people aware of human trafficking and give them the maximum information in order to preclude the possibility that some persons, moved by various motivations, find themselves involved in the exploitation of other human beings against their wish.

1.3. The trafficking organisation

Numerous studies provide figures that indicate the phenomenon's scale in West Africa. All admit that trafficking is a major problem in Africa and that the sub-region is one of the areas most affected by this phenomenon. Trafficking in human beings begins in the country of origin and is organised all the way to the destination country, including several transit countries, all located in West Africa. Some countries may be the origin, transit and destination country at the same time, depending on the type of trafficking.^{****} In many countries, trafficking is organised for European and Middle Eastern countries. East, Central and South Africa are some other destinations. During the week of 20 to 25 March 2006, for instance, the press mentioned an accident of an improvised boat in the high seas that was fraudulently transporting some migrants from West Africa to Central Africa. More than a hundred people, particularly women and children, were reported missing in this accident. According to the survivors (around twenty only), the boat was carrying several hundred people. Similar accidents that have taken place off the Mauritanian coast have often been reported in the press. Then there are those who "try their luck" through the desert, only to meet with death there instead. Those who manage to overcome the desert still have to obtain entry through Europe's "doors", before reaching their objective. Once there, they still risk being treated as criminals, deported, imprisoned or falling prey to traffickers because their status remains illegal. All this points to the strong links between the smuggling of migrants, clandestine migration and trafficking in human beings. Trafficking in human beings is by itself a chain of violations that can lead to another cycle of violations of victims' rights.

As regards transportation, traffickers often use circuitous routes, but they also use normal paths and roads. This proves that there is a nexus between the traffickers and transporters, the security forces, the customs and others who guard the numerous road barriers at the borders and within countries. Transporters and road checking forces are under-equipped, uninformed or negligent. However, they could also be part of the trafficking process or traffickers' accomplices. Keeping them informed and training them also helps in fighting such trafficking effectively, particularly cross-border trafficking, which is widespread in West Africa.^{ssss}

^{****} UNICEF, 2003, *Trafficking in Human Beings*, UNESCO, March 2005, *Searching for Best practices to Counter Human Trafficking in Africa: A Focus on Women and Children*; UNESCO, 2006, *Poverty, Gender and Human Trafficking in Sub-Saharan Africa: Rethinking Best practices in Migrations Management*; Human Rights Watch, April 2003, *Borderline Slavery, Child Trafficking in Togo*; WILDAF/FeDDAF-West Africa: July 2004, *La traite des êtres humains et en particulier celle des femmes, des enfants en Afrique*.

^{ssss} See the recommendations of the Sikasso Workshop (Mali), 27-29 September 2005, organised by the UNOWA, the SWAC and the MDP (Municipal Development Partnership), at the Government of Mali's invitation, under the auspices of ECOWAS and in collaboration with the CILSS and the WAEMU, on the subject: Security, development and cross-border activities in the Mali and Burkina-Faso regions bordering Côte d'Ivoire.

II/ HUMAN TRAFFICKING CONTROL

Human trafficking control is the subject of several international instruments. Some measures have been initiated at the national and international levels to control trafficking and protect people.

II. 1. Legal and institutional instruments and mechanisms to control trafficking in persons

◆ At international level:

There are several international instruments for protection against the trafficking and exploitation of human beings, particularly:

- Convention no. 29 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on Forced Labour – 1930
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights – 1948
- The United Nations Convention on the Abolition of Slavery – 1956
- Convention no. 105 of the International Labour Organisation on the Abolition of Forced Labour – 1957
- Convention no. 138 of the International Labour Organisation fixing the Minimum Age for Admission of Children to Employment – 1973
- The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women – 1979
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography – 2000
- The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect to Inter-country Adoption – 1993
- Convention no. 182 of the International Labour Organisation on the worst forms of Child Labour and immediate action for their Elimination – 1999
- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime and supplementary Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children – 2000 (Palermo Protocol).

◆ At the regional and sub-regional levels

In Africa and in the sub-region too, there are some instruments that enable human trafficking control, particularly:

- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights – 1981
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child – 1990
- Convention of the Economic Community of West African States on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters – Dakar, 1992
- Convention of the Economic Community of West African States on Extradition – Abuja, 1994
- Constitutive Act of the African Union – 2000
- Cooperation Agreement on Criminal Police between the countries of the Economic Community of West African States – Accra, Dec. 2003
- ECOWAS Declaration and Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons in West Africa (2001), (2002-2003).

Some bilateral and multilateral agreements confirm the West African States' commitment to human trafficking control:

- Examples of bilateral cooperation: Bilateral agreement between Mali and Senegal, Mali and Burkina-Faso, Mali and Côte d'Ivoire, Benin and Côte d'Ivoire, Togo and Ghana, Benin and Nigeria. These agreements deal with cooperation to control cross-border trafficking of children.
- Multilateral Cooperation Agreement to combat Trafficking of Children in West Africa – Abidjan, 2005 (Benin, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Burkina-Faso, Togo, Guinea, Niger, Nigeria).
- Nigeria has also started cooperating with some European destination countries, for example with Italy.

◆ **At the national level:**

At the national level, international instruments have been ratified, special legislations have been promulgated, particularly for children and women, and numerous cooperation agreements have been signed. However, some national laws are inadequate or even incomplete. They need to be supplemented or further clarified for more effective control and incorporate the human rights approach, particularly victims' rights.****

II. 2. The initiatives

Trafficking in persons is undoubtedly an acute problem in West Africa. Several measures have been taken to check trafficking flows and take remedial measures. The Organisation of African Unity's Council of Ministers, meeting in July 2001, estimated that child labour and trafficking issues were extremely worrying and that it was essential to intervene, particularly in terms of legislations. As far back as in February 2001, Nigeria had hosted the first pan-African conference on trafficking in persons. In October of the same year, a meeting on human trafficking was held under the auspices of ECOWAS, in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC/ODCCP). The Declaration and Action Plan were adopted in December 2001.

◆ **The ECOWAS Declaration and Action Plan******

The ECOWAS Action Plan is already being implemented. The experts entrusted with coordination in French-speaking and English-speaking countries have already started their work in a large number of countries, with the support of the UNODC. The ECOWAS central Coordination Unit, provided for in the action plan, has been set up, but its coordinator has not yet been appointed.

The action plan's effectiveness will be further strengthened by cooperation with Central African countries as provided within the framework of the next conference in Libreville (Gabon), which is to take place in May 2006. This conference is expected to lead to the adoption of a common platform to combat people trafficking in Central and West Africa.

◆ **Nine-country initiative to combat child trafficking**

This agreement encompasses nine West African countries. It was signed in Abidjan on 27 July 2005. It provides specific definitions of child trafficking and the agreement's scope of application. It associates the notions of prevention, protection, repatriation, reunification,

**** See Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking, O H C H R , Geneva, 2002

***** See appendix for the Declaration and Action Plan

rehabilitation, re-integration, repression and cooperation with child trafficking control. Thus, it appears to be quite specific and takes the dimension of the victims' rights, particularly the right to human dignity, into consideration.^{####} It would be desirable for this agreement to be rapidly implemented and extended to the other West African countries.

◆ Other initiatives

It should be emphasised that numerous international, governmental and NGO organisations are making efforts to develop effective control measures against trafficking in human beings, particularly women and children, including trafficking for purposes of armed conflicts. The control measures and strategies may be individual or collective.^{sssss}

Some UN agencies have combined their efforts with those of the European Union and international NGOs to support and develop ECOWAS's and sub-regional NGOs' competencies in the fight against child trafficking.^{*****} Representatives of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA), the Sahel and West Africa Club, institutions within the United Nations system, ECOWAS, the CILSS, the WAEMU, Mali, Burkina-Faso and Côte Ivoire, as well as civil society, met in a workshop in Sikasso in Mali in September 2005. The workshop aimed at suggesting capacity-building measures for people living in the cross-border areas of Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Mali, in the sectors of security, development and child trafficking control. The workshop's objective was to launch a pilot cross-border cooperation operation. It suggested an Action Plan and a follow-up mechanism. Paragraph V and Proposal 17 of the action plan deal with child trafficking.⁺⁺⁺⁺⁺ After making a few factual observations, the participants suggested the setting up *"of a trilateral framework bringing together the three countries that already have bilateral cooperation systems. The body could meet in the concerned region and not in one or other of the capitals in order to work with local institutions (NGOs and services) that have been dealing with this matter."*

III/ CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the Secretary General's report E/CN. 4/2002/80, presented before the Human Rights Commission's 58th session: "The problem of trafficking and the web of human rights violations it embraces present some of the most difficult and pressing issues on the international human rights agenda. Complexities include different political contexts and geographical dimensions of the problem; ideological and conceptual differences of approach; the mobility and adaptability of traffickers; different situations and needs of trafficked persons; the inadequate legal framework and insufficient research and coordination on the part of actors involved – at the national, regional and international levels. The link between trafficking and migration presents another complexity presenting both political and substantive obstacles to resolution of the trafficking problem." ⁺⁺⁺⁺⁺

⁺⁺⁺⁺ Text appended.

^{sssss} The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), the UNICEF, the UNDP, the ILO, the UNHCR, the IDM, the UNFPA, the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) all undertake activities aimed at controlling human trafficking.

^{*****} Cooperation between ECOWAS and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the trilateral Action Plan between ECOWAS, the UNOWA and the European Union, also including promotion of the ratification of international instruments, their integration in national legislations and public awareness raising about the necessity to adhere to them.

⁺⁺⁺⁺⁺ Sikasso Workshop, op.cit.

⁺⁺⁺⁺⁺ Integration of the human rights of women and the gender perspective, Traffic in women and girls, Report no. E/CN. 4/2002/80 dated 25 January 2002.

It is undeniable that despite difficulties, progress has been made to better grasp and understand human trafficking mechanisms and process in West Africa. The fight against this scourge has also intensified, combining the efforts of several actors, in particular those of political leaders and decision-makers within ECOWAS. But numerous challenges have yet to be taken up. Responses have been limited.

Thus, it is at the national rather than the local level that most resources have been mobilised and actions undertaken. Initiatives are generally appropriated by intellectual experts and limited participation in the decision-making process or the control programmes' implementation is noted from the people, families and sections of society that are potential victims of trafficking.

To fight against human trafficking, our action must be directed at the process itself, particularly the actors involved: potential victims, traffickers, intermediaries and users. We must also develop control strategies in origin and destination areas, but above all at the grassroots level, so that actors who are unaware or ignorant get involved in the struggle as well.

Human trafficking control measures call for real cooperation at local, national and international levels between NGOs, social organisations, law enforcement officers, the judiciary and the authorities responsible for migrations. Together, these groups can counter the traffickers and build the potential victims' capacities to resist them. They can also influence laws, policies and programmes in order to help punish traffickers and lend support to victims. It is true that adequate means should be provided for national structures, but more so for local structures, to enable them to get a proper grip on this problem.

The public needs to be sensitised, informed and trained to develop its own resistance against such trafficking. This also means children and young women. People must learn to take trafficking control measures into their own hands, within the framework of strategies developed at the local level. Education, vocational training and human rights training must form a significant part of these strategies. The opportunities provided by the initiatives developed within the cross-border framework or among the border countries, which are often the most sensitive regions, must be fully utilised. Local actors have to be encouraged to change their attitude and to integrate the human rights protection issue, including women's and children's human rights, within their economic, social and cultural relations.

It is important to identify the victims' areas of origin to facilitate their reintegration and to set up vocational training centres at the sub-regional level in the affected areas. These centres would be meant for the child victims of trafficking, before they return home. They would enable them to learn a trade, in order not to return home empty handed.

The procedures for registering births, establishing one's civil status and obtaining identity documents should be standardised and made easier. These should be provided at a place as near as possible to the individual's place of domicile and at an affordable cost.

The fight against human trafficking should take into consideration the fact that clandestine migration, including in the context of trafficking, is due to the immense gap between the number of persons wishing to immigrate or forced to immigrate, and the limited possibilities available through legal channels. It is also necessary to admit that human traffickers feed a market that has both buyers and sellers, demand and supply. The fact that trafficking has intensified is not merely the outcome of an increase in factors that force people to leave their home country, but is also due

to the great attraction of unmet demands for manpower, particularly in the informal sector. Indeed, in order to ensure the effectiveness of anti-trafficking strategies, we need to analyse and deal with the demand issue in destination countries, which makes human trafficking a particularly lucrative activity.

Those subjected to trafficking are by definition human rights abuse victims. Any form of migration that undermines human beings, such as trafficking, constitutes a violation. Moreover, trafficking in human beings should be dealt with as a human rights issue and not reduced merely to an issue of migration, law and order or organised crime. It is true that these aspects are important and relevant, but victims of trafficking should not be systematically considered as criminals. On the contrary, their rights and needs should be borne in mind.

As we have seen, human trafficking rises because of factors that force people to leave their country. Insecurity, unemployment and the major disparities that exist both between countries and within countries are the underlying causes that incite people to take risks to improve their living conditions or for sheer survival. It is in order “to live free from fear or want” that people who want their most basic needs to be met embark upon clandestine immigration adventures or fall prey to traffickers. Paradoxically, once they get to their destination or even on the way, they find themselves once again subjected to what they were attempting to flee. It should also be remembered that a very large number of women and children become trafficking victims because of insecurity.

It is easy to say that it will take time for these factors to decrease and that as long as they persist, traffickers will always find victims as there will always be people who will throw themselves into their arms because of poverty. In other words, human trafficking will continue to prosper for some time. But in the meantime, we must all work twice as hard to find a solution to these problems, promote good governance, open up the sub-region’s poorest areas economically, educate and train people, try to generate employment, create conditions for long-lasting peace, and so on. Above all, we must help develop resources and build capacities in the areas of origin, for a better consideration of victims’ rights and step up information and awareness-building in the concerned regions.

Intervention by Mehrnaz Mostafavi, Programme Head, Human Security Unit, UNOCHA

Mr. Chairman,

Honorable delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Government of Togo and the representatives of OECD for arranging this timely and important workshop on the significance of human security for all in West Africa. It is indeed an honor to exchange views with such a distinguished audience of government officials, civil society organizations, and research institutes, as well as colleagues from other multilateral and regional institutions, and to find ways in which we can work together to promote a comprehensive regional approach in the promotion of human security in this very important region.

Since the end of the cold war, despite enormous progress made in the realms of technology, communications and commerce, the majority of the world's population continue to find themselves in extreme and vulnerable circumstances. Threatened not only by international war and conflict but also by civil violence, organised crime, chronic poverty, environmental degradation, and deadly infectious diseases, the human and social capital lost to these situations continue to exact a devastating toll on the well-being of large numbers of individuals and communities, many of whom are from the developing world, and in particular, the African region. Today, the main challenge to national and international security is the plight of millions of people facing life-threatening dangers as a result of civil wars, natural disasters, health crises and abject poverty.

Meanwhile, we are also living in an age where the lethal interaction between the lack of development, security and human rights pose grave threats not only to the immediate victims but also to the collective security of the international community. Inter-ethnic conflicts, regional instability and terrorist attacks have forcefully demonstrated that States no longer hold the monopoly over security issues. National borders are permeable, and no State alone can cope with these realities through traditional state-centered mechanisms.

It is within this complex context that an independent Commission on Human Security was created in January 2001. The Commission's overall objective was to develop a new understanding and consensus on security, one that focuses on the evolving security issues of the new century. Assisted by ten distinguished Commissioners, and chaired by Sadako Ogata and Amartya Sen, the Commission recognized human insecurity as a critical security challenge faced by the contemporary world and proposed a new framework of security that centers directly and specifically on individuals and communities.

As defined by the Commission, human security is "to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment." As such, human security requires both "protecting people from critical and pervasive threats" and "empowering them to take charge of their own lives." Neither protection nor empowerment can be dealt with in isolation as they are mutually reinforcing. Needed are integrated policies that focus on people's survival, livelihood and dignity.

Today, human security is increasingly included in the agendas and the policy debates of intergovernmental and regional organisations. At the same time, a growing number of governments, NGOs and civil society groups have also incorporated human security into their programme and policy priorities. Most recently, at the 2005 World Summit, the Security Council adopted a resolution on conflict prevention in Africa^{ssssss} addressing some of the core concerns of human security - specifically, that peace, security and development are mutually reinforcing, and that a broad strategy is needed to address the root causes of armed conflict, political and social crises. In a related action, the General Assembly also agreed to further discuss and define the notion of human security, as outlined in para 143 of the Summit Outcome document.

At the Human Security Unit, we see the added value of human security for several reasons:

First, it is an integrative approach that brings together the multiplicity of challenges faced by individuals and communities and as such recognizes the inter-linkages between security, development, and human rights. Moreover, by providing a framework to address interconnected issues and multi-sectoral demands, human security complements state security, enhances human rights, and strengthens human development.

Second, by making the individual the center of analysis, it focuses the attention of all countries, both developed and developing, on finding solutions that focus on improving the lives of peoples and communities both inside and across borders. As such, human security recognizes the borderless and potentially crippling effects that emerging threats can have on societies worldwide and provides a framework for regional and multilateral cooperation.

Third, by identifying the importance of freedoms from basic insecurities and by making no distinction between civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, human security gives equal importance to all these rights and thereby addresses threats in an integrated, multi-dimensional and comprehensive way. Furthermore, human security seeks to establish a threshold below which no one's survival, livelihood and dignity should be threatened and as such offers a practical framework for identifying specific rights and obligations that are at stake in a particular situation.

And fourth, human security is based on notions of protection and empowerment. That is, to find solutions to specific threats, there are roles and responsibilities that different parties can take - thereby building on each other's initiatives and capabilities. In this sense, human security not only promotes a framework under which people are protected and empowered and are therefore in a far better position to actively prevent and mitigate the impact of insecurities, but it also helps in

^{ssssss} Security Council resolution 1625 (2005).

establishing a social contract among the various sectors of a given society and in this way it cultivates public discourse, promotes local ownership, and strengthens social capital.

In our work, we try to translate these ideas into projects that are funded under the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security. To date, a total of 137 projects have been implemented in over 104 countries. Projects are selected based on whether they:

- Provide concrete and sustainable benefits to people and communities threatened in their survival, livelihood and dignity;
- Implement the "protection and empowerment" framework by including both top-down protection and bottom-up empowerment measures;
- Promote partnerships with civil society, NGOs, and other local entities; and
- Address the broad range of interconnected issues that take into account the multi-sectoral demands of human security.

Based on these parameters, the key thematic areas that have been supported to date include:

- Rehabilitation and reintegration of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and economic migrants;
- Integration of humanitarian and development assistance;
- Enhancement of health care services and improvement of educational opportunities and training, especially for girls, women and the most vulnerable;
- Strengthening of economic and food security; as well as Community development, disaster response, and civic engagement.

Looking at our activities in the field, perhaps a key contribution of human security has been its emphasis on the interface between poverty, conflict and human rights. With so many threats interlinked and people's insecurities interconnected, it is our belief that policies and institutions will be far more effective if they refrain from fragmented responses and instead integrate their efforts in a more holistic and comprehensive way. What this means is that by taking on a human security approach, we must work together to adopt policies that respond to the broader social, economic and political causes of instability and aim to address the full range of factors affecting people's wellbeing; including, not only physical safety, but also the sense of security that comes from having enough to eat, a place to live, employment, access to health care, and educational opportunities.

To give you a better flavor of the application of the human security approach, allow me to share with you a few examples of the types of projects we are currently funding under the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security. In the Great Lakes Region in Northwestern Tanzania, for example, we are addressing the human security challenges in a post-conflict situation as faced by refugees, IDPs and the host community. In this regard, the project focuses on multiple entry points that seek to break the cycle between conflict, poverty, loss of education, infectious diseases and environmental degradation. Among the interventions included are capacity building of local government; reduction of small arms and light weapons; enhancement of education and enrollment of out of school youth; strengthening of agricultural production; and advancement of life-saving skills and knowledge on HIV/AIDS and malaria.

Meanwhile in Peru, we are in the process of finalizing a project located in the Southern Andes region where natural disasters including landslides, earthquakes and forest fires have generated an unstable situation in terms of food, income and health security. The project as such works to mitigate risks, reduce vulnerability and develop local preventive capacities. A multi-agency intervention, the project is based on the protection and empowerment framework. Several UN agencies in collaboration with community networks, non-governmental organizations, as well as regional, local and national authorities will be working together, to among others, implement low-cost early warning and monitoring systems; improve environmental management and local agricultural and livestock practices; and strengthen community awareness and knowledge of practical preventive measures in response to natural disasters.

Finally, in West Africa, where a growing number of our projects are located, we are currently funding thirteen projects in Liberia, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Nigeria and Senegal. Of these, two are regional projects focusing on disaster response and poverty reduction while the rest are country-specific projects in support of post-conflict reintegration, poverty reduction, food security, health, and community development. In one of our regional projects, for example, UNDP is working in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Ghana on a community-led rural development programme that seeks to address poverty reduction by focusing on capacity development at all levels of society through strengthening community involvement and empowerment; increasing and diversifying income generation; enhancing delivery of energy services; improving access to education, in particular for girls; and advancing the integration of community level initiatives with national development plans.

In all these cases, our focus has been on multi-sectoral responses that address human security challenges in a holistic and integrative manner and develop programmes that build on local capacities and strengthen local responses.

Let me close by saying that while the promotion of human security is indeed an ambitious goal, but it is also commensurate with the needs and aspirations of our century. By putting individuals at the center of both analysis and action, human security not only serves as a means to understand and foresee the root causes of instabilities, but it is also a social contract that can play a significant role in making people everywhere more secure, more prosperous, and better able to enjoy their fundamental human rights.

Thank you.

Additional Presentations

1. Human security and the implementation of strategies, mechanisms and policies to promote the concept, by Mr. Mahamed MAIGA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mali.

2. The Dakar Declaration

1. Mali within the Human Security Network and the implementation of strategies, mechanisms and policies to promote the concept, by Mr. Mohamed T.F. MAIGA, Official Representative, Focal point of the Human Security Network for Mali.

Overview:

This presentation aims at contributing to the sharing of lessons drawn from human security-related experiences at the national, regional and international levels.

In this instance, it is not possible to speak of the Malian case without first shedding some light on the Human Security Network, a small, informal forum of thirteen (13) to fourteen (14) States, not including South Africa.

The Human Security Network (HSN) is a group of countries from all the world's regions, represented by their Ministries of Foreign Affairs, who work together to promote human security as a new international action programme.

The Human Security Network arose out of a bilateral agreement between Canada and Norway called the "Lysoen Partnership", named after the Norwegian archipelago where the idea originated from.

Founded in May 1999, the HSN brings together the following member States: Austria, Canada, Chile, and Costa Rica (the most recent to be admitted, in May 2005), Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Netherlands, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand. South Africa attends as an observer.

The HSN's activities consist of:

- Promoting the respect of human rights and International Humanitarian Law
- Consolidating the Rule of Law and the good governance of public affairs
- Promoting the culture of peace through the peaceful resolution of conflicts by controlling the instruments of violence and by putting an end to impunity in cases of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law violations.

In terms of objectives, human security essentially concerns the civilian population. It is rooted in the protection of the people and the community in which they live as against State security, which tends to be directed more towards risks and threats to the State's security.

The idea of human security is the most advanced stage of the concept of security and it henceforth has a bearing on State security measures, insofar as it obliges actions and policies to be assessed in terms of their repercussions on individuals.

Thus, it questions the legitimacy of certain means employed to ensure State security, such as the use of landmines.

It takes into consideration all forms of threats prejudicial to the life, dignity and security of human beings, whether these threats are of a military nature, taking the shape of war, local violence or the proliferation of light weapons, or of a non-military character such as human rights abuses, famine or infectious diseases, for example.

In this respect, human security is defined as freedom from fear and want, as well as in terms of the protection of human beings from all kinds of threats, whether associated with violence or not.

Thus, it encompasses three dimensions:

- . The judicial approach, based on the primacy of human rights
- . The humanitarian approach, based on “tranquillity” and freedom from fear
- . The developmental approach, based on freedom from want

I. Mali and the Human Security Network:

There is a distinctive African identity within the HSN, which since the Malian presidency of the HSN came into effect, has been more fully expressed and asserted through choices and priorities.

I.1- Early membership in the Network:

Mali was invited to become a member of the HSN at the same time as Greece, in 1999. It is the only African country to be a full member.

Its membership came into effect during the second Ministerial Conference, held on 11-12 April 2000 in Lucerne in Switzerland.

Since then, Mali has participated regularly and actively in the Network’s different activities and in its statutory meetings, such as the Ministerial working lunch on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly’s deliberations, the Network’s two annual Senior Officials Meetings, as well as the annual Ministerial Conference.

Mali’s presence in this small group is justified in view of the young democracy’s recent socio-political development.

Indeed, the Third Republic took significant measures, which have become embedded in the core of human security priorities, as defined by the Network’s objectives.

These measures include:

- . An exemplary transition to democracy in 1991-92
- . Consensus-based management and the peaceful settlement of the Tuareg rebellion
- . Initiation of significant legislative reforms for the consolidation of a constitutional State and good governance
- . The institutionalisation of aggressive and novel initiatives such as the *Espace d’Interpellation Démocratique (EID* – a democratic space where the public can question the authorities)
- . Quality commitment in Africa concerning small arms and landmines as well as the setting up of an International Criminal Court
- . A pre-eminent role in conflict prevention, management and settlement in the West African sub-region and the continent as a whole
- . An eloquent plea for the promotion of the Rights of the Child.

Following the example of other HSN member states, the Human Security issue is handled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in Mali. The Advisor in charge of Human Security affairs in the Cabinet is the focal point for Mali.

It was during the 3rd Ministerial Conference in Petra, Jordan, in May 2001, that Mali was designated the HSN President for the period 2003-2004.

By way of the activities undertaken by Mali within the HSN during the earlier period, it may be noted that Mali was the first to uphold the inclusion of the Human Rights Education theme in the 3rd HSN Ministerial Conference, held in Petra in May 2001.

Similarly, Mali, Canada and Switzerland, with the support of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue in Geneva, jointly initiated a project entitled "The Human Security Network and small arms: consolidating an action programme".

This project, which began in November 2002, resulted in a publication called "Putting People First: Human Security Perspectives on Small Arms Availability and Misuse". The publication was released on 8 July 2003 in New York, on the sidelines of the 1st biannual conference of the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms.

On 10 May 2003, in Graz, Mali succeeded Austria as President of the Human Security Network for a one-year term ending with the 6th HSN Ministerial Conference held in Bamako from 27 to 29 May 2004.

But, in the interim, the Malian presidency stood out because while it was an honour, it was also a formidable challenge in terms of the choices to be made and directions to taken.

I.2- The Malian presidency of the HSN and its priorities:

The Malian Government organised a national Workshop on Human Security on 14 and 15 April 2003, in Bamako, with the support of Canada and Switzerland.

The Workshop, which brought together Government and civil society representatives, sought to promote the appropriation of the human security concept by national actors as well as to determine the priorities for the Network's Malian presidency.

Based on the Workshop's recommendations, the Government gave priority to the following themes: Human Rights Education; the situation of children in armed conflicts; small arms' proliferation; gender and peace-keeping operations; food security.

Apart from these priorities, set out in what has come to be called the "road map", the Network's Malian Presidency got down to the task of promoting the Human Security concept in Africa, especially in West Africa, within the regional framework.

What were the promotion strategies, mechanisms and policies implemented within the framework of this presidency, and beyond?

II. Promotion strategies, mechanisms and policies implemented by Mali

These strategies and mechanisms deal with the activities conducted during HSN's Malian presidency or those underway, as well as policy formulations and the call for new partnerships.

II.1- The Malian presidency's road map

The Malian presidency's road map represents the 'performance indicators' for its priority activities, which themselves drew inspiration, at least partly, from the HSN's mid-term work plan for the 2003-2005 period.

In this road map, the Malian presidency's objectives have been stated in the form of different themes:

- Consolidation of the Network's gains, particularly in the choice to further develop the Human Rights Education theme
- Strengthening of micro-disarmament initiatives: small arms proliferation control
- Non-State armed groups and the issue of children in conflict situations
- The gender issue in peace-keeping operations, and finally
- "Food security, the pillar of human security" – an innovative theme.

II.2- The Malian presidency's activities

By way of its road map and the activities undertaken, the Malian presidency adopted a human security approach based on freedom from both fear and want.

These activities are listed chronologically or subject-wise:

- Statement on behalf of the Human Security Network at the 1st Biennial United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms conference (New York, 7-11 July 2003)
- Presentation on Human Security in the Common African Policy on Defence and Security, at the 2nd Conference of Heads of State and of Government (Maputo, 10-12 July 2003)
- Establishing contact with sub-regional African organisations (ECOWAS, the SADC, the CEN-SAD and the CILSS) in order to promote the human security concept in Africa
- Plea in favour of Human Security at the Symposium on Conflict Prevention in West Africa (Dakar, 22-23 July 2003)
- Statement on behalf of the Human Security Network to promote the universalisation of the Ottawa Convention at the 5th Assembly of States Parties (Bangkok, 15-19 September 2003)
- Statement on behalf of the HSN, at the UN Special Session's High-Level Debate on HIV/AIDS devoted to the pandemic diseases (New York, 22 September 2003)
- Formulation of criteria for the expansion of the Human Security Network (September 2003)
- Launching of the international campaign on arms transfers (Bamako, 09 October 2003)
- Organisation of a Human Security Sensitisation Day as a framework for the fulfilment of the Millennium Goals on the sidelines of the 58th United Nations General Assembly Session (New York, 28 October 2003)
- Presentation at the International Symposium on the Information Society and Human Dignity (Geneva, 3-4 November 2003)
- French translation of the Human Security Network's Manual on Human Rights Education, "Understanding Human Rights", and the publishing of 5,000 copies (November 2003)
- Organisation of the 1st International Meeting "Human Rights Cities" (20-22 November 2003)

- Organisation of the Human Security Network's Senior Officials preparatory meeting for the 6th Ministerial Conference (Bamako, 23 November 2003)
- Co-sponsoring of two workshops at the 28th International Red Cross Conference (Geneva, 02-06 December 2003)
- Technical conference for drafting the provisions of the Human Security Network's Declaration on Food Security: A Pillar of Human Security (Bamako, 26-27 April 2004)
- Organisation of a regional Civil Society Forum on the theme, "Responsibility to Protect" in Bamako (20-22 April 2004)
- The Human Security Network's Sixth Ministerial Conference (Bamako, 27-29 May 2004).

Among the many activities undertaken, Human Rights Education is both an area of intervention and a means for the collective appropriation of the human security concept.

II.3- Human Rights Education as an area of intervention and a means for the concept's collective appropriation

Mali has chosen to reinforce the Network's gains by undertaking activities and initiatives that ensure continuity with those begun by Austria. Indeed, the Network owes Austria the theme of Human Rights Education: "Understanding Human Rights".

Mali proceeded to launch the manual in Bamako, in November 2003, and undertook its translation into French, publishing 5,000 copies.

As part of its strategy to disseminate and popularise the Manual, the government involved civil society by organising seminars and workshops, the last to date being the International Workshop for the Training of Trainers in Human Rights, held on 14-18 February 2005 in Bamako.

Mali also proposed to promote the experience of "Human Rights Cities" on a large scale, in partnership with the Peoples' Movement for Human Rights Education (PDHRE/MALI) and the African Institute of Learning for Human Rights Education (INAFED).

What is a "Human Rights City"?

A "Human Rights City" is an urban or rural community in which all citizens, whether male or female, are engaged in learning about human rights, in order to know them better and enjoy them for their own benefit, while at the same time making it their duty to guarantee their enjoyment for all.

The strategies to be implemented for this purpose are based on:

- . Capacity-building
- . Social mobilisation
- . Social negotiations
- . Advocacy
- . Information Education Communication (IEC).

The human rights dimension is important in the Network's life, as it is felt that human rights abuses that go unpunished today contain in themselves the seeds of tomorrow's conflicts. Hence, the idea is that there should be no slackening of preventive measures and that cases of abuse should be condemned.

II.4- Initiatives for new partnerships

To make the human security concept operational in Mali, its sub-region and Africa as a whole calls for cooperative and multilateral responses, and also multidimensional solutions placing an emphasis on preventive measures and new partnerships.

Human security is not only a conceptual framework, but also offers scope for international cooperation.

While speaking of Mali's specific contribution to promoting international cooperation, it must be stressed that the International Francophony Organisation asked Mali to be a part of the working group formed to undertake the preparatory work for the Ministerial Conference on "Conflict Prevention and Human Security", to be held in Saint Boniface (Winnipeg), Manitoba (Canada), on 12-14 May 2006.

It is in line with the same drive for multilateral cooperation that in December 2005 in Paris, UNESCO included Mali in discussions on drafting a publication aimed at making the concept operational.

Many international treaties, norms and agreements that have come into force recently, if not long before, provide the consensual basis required for ensuring and promoting human security. The following may be mentioned, in particular: the Geneva Convention and its supplementary protocols, the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Ottawa Convention and the Rome Treaty establishing the International Criminal Court.

Moreover, during the last few decades, some approaches and objectives have been incorporated, aimed at applying human security perspectives to action plans arising out of various world conferences: Environment (Rio 1992); Human Rights (Vienna 1993); Population and Development (Cairo 1994); Social Development (Copenhagen 1995); Women (Beijing 1995).

But the measures required to make human security operational will take different forms, depending on the context.

At any rate, Mali, within the Network's regional activities' framework, has set itself the task of promoting the human security concept in Africa and more particularly in West Africa.

In West Africa, it adopted ECOWAS as a strategic partner during its presidency and undertook a mapping exercise, within the framework of a Census of Non-State Armed Groups in the ECOWAS Region, with the cooperation of ECOWAS and of the Small Arms Survey, an organisation based in Geneva.

Later, this document was published and presented at the 7th Ministerial Conference in Ottawa under the title "Armed and Aimless: Armed Groups, Guns, and Human Security in the ECOWAS Region".

It is by way of the same strategic partnership that during the Malian presidency, ECOWAS had given support to the expert in charge of conducting a study entitled: "Gender and Peacekeeping Operations in the ECOWAS Region".

As a representative of Africa, the Malian Government is involved in advocacy work in African and sub-regional forums through political and diplomatic discussions.

Thus, the 3rd African Union's Executive Council's Ordinary Session (Maputo, 06-08 July 2003) was perceived as being a wonderful opportunity for the Minister of Foreign Affairs to advocate the Human Security perspective to be applied in the African policy on defence and security.

In his own words, it was Mali's wish "to give a fresh impetus to the Human Security Network so that this concept receives the widest possible support in the African continent".

The fact that the President of the Republic attaches special importance to the Human Security issue and its integration within policies and strategies needs to be pointed out.

In his letter containing a framework statement dated 22 October 2003, addressed to the Prime Minister, he recommended that the Government should "integrate the armed forces and security forces within the overall proactive human security environment and build their intervention, humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping capacities".

2. The Dakar Declaration

At the initiative of His Excellency, Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal, the Ministerial Meeting on Prevention and Response to Avian Flu was held in Dakar from 22 to 23 February 2006, under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

The meeting was attended by Ministers and top-level officials responsible for Livestock, Health, Environment and Trade from the following countries:

- **Benin**
- **Cape Verde**
- **Côte d'Ivoire**
- **The Gambia**
- **Guinea**
- **Guinea Bissau**
- **Mali**
- **Mauritania**
- **Niger**
- **Nigeria**
- **Senegal**
- **Togo**

Also present were representatives of the following international and sub-regional organisations: OIE, FAO, WHO, EU, UNDP, UNICEF, AU-IBAR, ECOWAS, WAEMU, AfDB, CIRAD, APHIS-USA, Wetlands International, as well as operators in the poultry farming sub-sector.

The speech of the President of the Republic of Senegal at the opening ceremony and the different presentations made by the OIE, the AU-IBAR, the FAO, ECOWAS, the WAEMU and WHO on the avian flu situation led to intense discussions at the end of which the Participants agreed to adopt a declaration called the **Dakar Declaration**.

We, the Participants in the Ministerial Meeting on the Coordination of the Prevention and Response to Avian Influenza;

Considering the threat of a pandemic and the concern expressed by public opinion, poultry sector actors, scientific circles and governments;

Aware of the necessity of preventing the appearance of this epizootic disease in countries free from it, of containing and eradicating the disease in countries where it has emerged, of preparing to manage the risk of a pandemic and the serious socio-economic and environmental harm that its emergence could lead to and the operations to respond to it;

Recalling the resolutions of the Ministers in charge of Livestock of the African Union (AU), adopted in Kigali on 02 November 2005, and the recommendations of the countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), which met in Ouagadougou on 16th February 2006, and which expressed the need to pool their resources for the immediate implementation of emergency measures;

Bearing in mind the recommendations of the international and regional meetings on avian flu, particularly those held in Nairobi on 14-16 September 2005, Geneva on 07-09 November 2005, Brazzaville on 12 January 2006, Beijing on 17 January 2006 and Bamako on 23-26 January 2006;

Convinced of the necessity of giving concrete expression to the commitments made at various levels by the scientific community, partners in development and political decision-makers;

Considering the cross-border nature of this emergent disease and its recent spread in Nigeria and Egypt;

Convinced of the necessity of harmonising prevention and response plans and of coordinating State methods and means in order to fight effectively against this scourge;

Determined to develop and intensify relations of cooperation between the sub-region's countries in the avian flu prevention and control sector;

Willing to share information and experiences in the matter of diagnosis, training, awareness raising, prevention and control;

Appreciating the encouragement and renewed availability of our partners in development in continuing to support the efforts of the States in the definition and implementation of concerted and coordinated strategies with a view to preventing and controlling avian influenza effectively;

Conscious of the urgency of acting together and rapidly;

1. Reaffirm our commitment to work for the protection of public health, the safeguarding of food security, the protection of the environment and poverty alleviation within the framework of a multi-disciplinary and multi-dimensional approach;

2. Hail the initiatives taken by the West African sub-region's countries and those of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) to strengthen their surveillance machinery or to immediately implement their prevention and response plans;

3. Encourage the efforts deployed by the States in the fight against the disease despite their limited means;

4. Commit our States to guaranteeing perfect transparency of information to the public, the OIE and the WHO regarding matters of health, particularly by the immediate declaration of pockets where outbreaks occur;

5. Underscore the necessity of a concerted and coordinated approach to the implementation of national response plans within the framework of the **Sub-regional mechanism for coordination, prevention and response**;

6. Agree to the immediate establishment of a Ministerial Steering Committee composed of one representative per country and presided over by Senegal for a one-year period to ensure the mobilisation of all the actors concerned (national and regional level) as well as liaison and coordination with our partners in development;

7. **Propose** the appointment of a Group of Experts entrusted with reflecting on the tasks and the modalities of work of an operational mechanism, taking note of the existing machinery;
8. **Invite** the States to appoint their representatives to this Group of Experts, which will meet before end March 2006, in Bamako, under the coordination of the AU-IBAR. The Group of Experts shall submit a report to the Ministers of the ECOWAS and of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania during a meeting to be organised by the ECOWAS in Abuja in April 2006;
9. **Propose** the creation of an **Emergency Sub-regional Intervention Fund** managed by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and endowed with flexible mobilisation mechanisms;
10. **Launch** an appeal for the international community to express its solidarity through an urgent contribution to this Fund, as well as its firm support for the rehabilitation of the poultry sector.

Dakar, 23 February 2006