

Report Of A Three-Day Regional Workshop On Conflicts And Security Governance In West Africa



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REPORT OF A THREE-DAY REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON CONFLICTS AND SECURITY GOVERNANCE IN WEST AFRICA ORGANISED BY CLEEN FOUNDATION IN COLLABORATION WITH ALTUS GLOBAL ALLIANCE, HELD AT CHELSEA HOTELS LTD, CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT, ABUJA ON 14TH TO 16TH JANUARY, 2014

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Executive Summary

A three-day regional conference on Conflicts and Security Governance in West Africa took place from January 14-16, 2014 in Abuja, Nigeria. The event was organised by Altus Global Alliance and CLEEN Foundation with support from Ford Foundation. The conference had participants from civil society groups, NGOs, security agencies, the police, academicians, and the media from within Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali.

The conference presented academic studies and analyses of the state of security governance in each country with particular emphasis on security governance, its impact on conflict situations, lessons learnt and what could be done to improve security governance. The findings presented were contained in a book, *Conflicts and Security Governance in West Africa*, edited by Dr Abdul Raufu Mustapha, which was contained in each participant's conference bag. Presentations were taken by the researchers that conducted the studies in each country.

The conference identified ways of curbing conflicts in the region, while ensuring that strategic governance is the yardstick for effective security. Participants agreed on 13 recommendations that would form the core of a good practice guide to govern the deployment of security person to areas of violent conflict in West Africa.

REPORT OF A THREE-DAY REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON CONFLICTS AND SECURITY GOVERNANCE IN WEST AFRICA

INTRODUCTION

The CLEEN Foundation in collaboration with Altus Global Alliance held a Regional Workshop on Conflicts and Security Governance in West Africa from the 14th to 16th of January, 2014 at New Chelsea Hotel, Central Business District, Abuja, Nigeria.

The meeting was convened to discuss a study carried out on the role of security personnel in conflict situations testing the hypothesis that security personnel usually aggravate conflict situations. The study was carried out in seven (7) West African Countries namely Niger, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Mali, Nigeria and Ghana.

The workshop, which had participants from civil society groups, NGOs, security agencies, the police, the academia, and the media from within countries studied, also identified ways of curbing conflicts in the region, while ensuring strategic governance as yardstick for effective security.

DAY 1

OPENING SESSION

Opening Remarks

The workshop started with an opening address by the Chairman, Board of Directors of CLEEN Foundation, Prof Etannibi Alemika, who thanked the participants for gracing to the workshop. He highlighted the reasons for the workshop which was to focus on the adoption of recommendations and findings from the research based on the peculiarity of conflicts in seven West African countries. Prof. Alemika urged participants not to feel encumbered by extensive processes before speaking. He explained that Altus was a global organisation with presence in five (5) continents with representation in Africa by CLEEN Foundation. He also acknowledged the presence of the lead researcher for the study, Dr. Abdul Raufu Mustapha of the Oxford University. The CLEEN Board Chair apologized that not everyone invited was present because of the public holiday, but the assured that the programme would go on as planned.

Welcome Address

The Chair of Altus Global Alliance, Dr. Pramod Kumar, welcomed the participants to the conference. Represented by CLEEN Foundation's Executive Director and Director of Altus, Kemi Okenyodo, Dr Kumar acknowledged the presence of representatives of

the Office of the National Security Adviser of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and other distinguished guests. He explained that the workshop would provide an in-depth account of the nature and extent of conflicts in the studied countries and the drivers of these conflicts. “Some of the questions that may arise in the course of this activity,” Dr Kumar said, “include: What are the gender dimensions and the role of non-state actors in the case studies being presented? What specific steps were taken by the security forces in dealing with them? Why did they think one set of measures were successful and others not very successful? And, more importantly, the lessons learnt from them would also be discussed.” He disclosed that a good practice guide would be developed from practices already developed on the field, having identified better ways of curbing conflicts in the region, while ensuring that strategic governance is the yardstick for effective security.

Remarks by Ford Foundation Regional Representative for West Africa, Mr Innocent Chukwuma

Ford Foundation’s Programme Officer, Advancing Public Service Media, Dr Paul Nwulu, represented Mr Innocent Chukwuma, who could not be present. Mr Chukwuma regretted that West Africa has been characterised by great conflict, between and within countries. He expressed hope that all stakeholders would be able to work towards a goal to completely eliminate strife and conflict in the sub-region, and find ways to integrate that into specific countries’ priorities. He expressed the Ford Foundation’s commitment to this goal, adding that its grant making and programming works with this strategic vision. Ford Foundation’s grants, he revealed, are made for promotion of good governance, and promotion of equity in society. He explained that when there is good governance, the incidences of strife in the society would greatly reduce. He concluded that the outcome of the three (3)-day workshop would be hugely beneficial to creating a West African region that is more peaceful, inclusive, vibrant, and devoid of conflict.

Remarks by ECOWAS Commissioner for Political Affairs, Mrs Salamatu Hussaini Suleiman

Represented by Dr Aderemi Ajibewa, the Commissioner for Political Affairs at the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Mrs Salamatu Hussaini Suleiman stated that this conference could not have been held at a more opportune time as West Africa is going through conflict and security governance challenges. She noted a growth in the activities of private military companies (PMC), which if not carefully managed, could undermine peace and security efforts in an already fragile region that has suffered over a decade of violent conflicts and instability. ECOWAS, she said, has the mandate to ensure that the involvement of PMCs in member states, in terms of the provision of military and security services, are regulated at the regional level and integrated to work more with the region. She advocated for a conscious and

well calibrated security sector reform aimed at right sizing these forces, inculcating in them the principles of democratic control and respect for human rights.

The ECOWAS Commissioner for Political Affairs stressed that 2/3rd of the population of West Africa are youths within the age bracket of 20-25, a demographic that constitutes the most dynamic and productive forces, but an age bracket that usually falls victim of marginalisation and lack of opportunities. This makes them serve as the fodder and foot soldiers for entrepreneurs of mindless violence and instability. The key to transformation of these dynamics in favour of stability and progress lies in effective strategies and measures to guide security forces in conflict situations in West Africa, said Mrs Suleiman. ECOWAS, she further explained, plays the role of regional facilitator in this endeavour, and establishes minimum standards to guide member states and creates space to promote the consolidation for accountable, transparent, and tangible participation, a reason for its participation in this conference.

Remarks by Ramadan Fabrice of DCAF

Mr Ramadan Fabrice of the Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF) started by stating that while the continent still has a lot of issues to resolve, one of genuine concern was that of conflict prevention and security governance. He explained that DCAF always believed in accountable and effective and efficient security sectors, as a key to promoting development and prosperity. He placed emphasis on the need to keep upholding important treaties especially during difficult times. “The people of West Africa have shown extreme resilience in breaching the gap between communities and narrow differences between civilian and military actors,” he said. Mr Fabrice stated that DCAF was supporting ECOWAS and working on the security sector reform by providing a document which would give guidelines on the importance of security governance.

FIRST SESSION: PANEL DISCUSSION ON OVERVIEW OF COUNTRY EXPERIENCES WITH CONFLICTS--BURKINA FASO AND GHANA

Mr. Ramadan Fabrice of DCAF served as moderator for the session.

Burkina Faso

The team from Burkina Faso comprised of the Technical Adviser Ministry of Security who is also a police officer, Mr. Thomas Dakoure, and Reg. Commander Colonel Tapsoba Bruno Omer, Marie. Col. Tapsoba delivered the paper.

The paper argued that as far of the typology is concerned, Burkina Faso has different types of major conflicts. These include conflicts between the farmers and pastoralists; chieftaincy disputes, and those relating to extractive industries. The paper reported that the state has been showing more interest in chieftaincy and so it is posing a problem, resulting in violent clashes within the populace. Conflicts posed by the mining and exploration of gold exist because gold is being discovered in several parts of the country. The owners of these lands believe they automatically own the gold in these areas as well. The other types of conflict are electoral conflicts, which can also be found in other West African countries. However, even with all these types of conflicts, none has resulted in large scale violence in Burkina Faso yet.

Burkina Faso's borders with six (6) countries have led to some skirmishes, though. These have included disagreements between Burkina Faso and Mali, conflicts with Niger and Benin, all of which have been resolved by the International Court of Justice.

The paper reported that the state makes use of prevention because these conflicts come from issues which have slow onset, with early warning signs. Dialogue, discussions and mediation are employed at this stage. Civil society organisations, chiefs and leaders, contribute and participate in the mediation process by way of negotiation and interactions between the different factions to reach a consensus. As a last resort, arbitration and justice is employed.

With regards to the involvement of security forces, presenters contended that there have been instances where they have worsened or resolved conflict. Usually, these interventions are done under one principle which is the subordination of the military authority to the civilian authority. The military can only come into action with request from the civil authority. As part of their mandates, the armed forces also assist the civilian population whenever there is conflict. When it comes to civilian assistance, there is protection and demobilization whenever their lives are in danger. In military

interventions, the use of force is progressive, implying that other measures are tried before there can be a resort to force. The paper acknowledged that sometimes there are issues with the way the security forces operate on the field. There has been information that force has been used or overused in instances where it was not necessary. They reported cases where lethal arms were used on civilians, including arrests of civilians, and in some cases killing of unarmed demonstrators. In such instances, certain measures have been taken, such as administrative sanctions.

Ghana

The country presentation was made by CP Patrick Eden Timballah on behalf of the Ghana Inspector General of Police

The paper said Ghana only experiences local conflicts, never with its neighbours. He defined conflict and also mentioned the types of conflict existing in Ghana as political, religious, land disputes, ethnic/tribal, chieftaincy disputes, 'galamsey' activities, etc. Some of these conflicts have led to destruction and an atmosphere of security. The paper revealed that the police usually get involved in conflict management, but when it escalates the military is invited. The state's conflict management tools include the use of engagement, negotiation, mediation and facilitation.

Comments/ Questions

A participant from the Nigeria Defence College (NDC) expressed concern about the issue of illegal gold mining known as 'galamsey'. He noted that this bears close resemblance with the context of Nigeria and the illegal extractive activities and asked if there is adequate publicity for this phenomenon in Ghana and how that affects crises management.

Dr. Aderemi Ajibewa of ECOWAS observed that Ghana has had problems with neighbours such as Cote d'Ivoire but that the country has a very good security structure in the name of the Ghana Peace Council. He asked the presenter from Ghana to expatiate on the latter structure.

A Deputy Police Commissioner known as Ifeoma wanted to know when ECOWAS applies sanctions when trying to mediate in disputes. This question was predicated on the understanding that when there is a conflict between two sides, a mediator ensures peace and should not apportion blame because it can inflame the conflict. "When there are sanctions? Who are the people sanctioned?" she asked.

Finally, Mr. Maximillian T. W. Diabe, Representative Liberia Defence Minister asked the Burkina Faso researchers if there is a conflict developing in the system.

Responses

CP Patrick Timbillah of Ghana explained that Ghana is the 2nd highest mining country after South Africa. There are laws governing mining in Ghana, but the laws didn't cover several areas which affect the market for the registered areas. He added that apart from deep shaft mining there is also surface mining. In the law a foreigner cannot mine; only an indigenous Ghanaian can, but now Ghanaians register and go into partnerships with foreigners, especially Chinese, to mine. This causes conflicts, but they have been managed mainly because of the nation's respect for early warning signs. As a result, there have been no clashes with Ivory Coast, as the conflict has not been allowed to smoulder beyond what it is. There are clear cut laws, so no issues with the refugees. As for post-election conflict, he said the Ghanaian constitution tells the country what to do when there is a problem. It is taken to the Supreme Court, and before election there is extensive pre-election deliberation. "There are problems," he admitted, "but no physical clashes. There is respect for the law; this is another thing that helps. Prevention, we believe, is better than cure."

In respect of conflicts over the newly discovered oil, the presenter noted that in Ghana the oil find is off shore, not on anybody's land. This is in contrast to Nigeria where the oil is onshore, and people own these lands and believe it must benefit them directly.

In his own response to the questions on Burkina Faso, Col. Tapsoba Omer Marie Bruno said the nation's border conflicts have benefitted from the support of ECOWAS. In response to the question regarding the sanctions, he noted that during the presentation he spoke about the administrative and judicial sanctions. He explained that the administrative sanctions deal with the security forces, while the judicial sanctions apply to civilian persons responsible for violent clashes and deaths that occur in the process.

Mr Thomas Dakoure, addressing the question of how Burkina Faso has been accused in the Ivorian conflict and the coup, denied the allegation. He asserted that Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire are almost the same people and have almost the same ethnic groups that are linked together. Because of this interaction, he said there is a natural tendency for conflicts. On the second question about the coup attacks in Burkina Faso, he said the allegation was a misinterpretation of the facts. He narrated that in 2006 a misunderstanding between the police and the army resulted in armed clashes, which people assumed could lead to a coup. In 2011, he added, military personnel demonstrated in the barracks, and it also involved some looting and because of those behaviours, some commentators said it could lead to a coup as well. Other actions took place and were qualified as a coup attempt. The researcher said these disputes aren't part of the activities classified as conflict.

SECOND SESSION

Moderated by Dr Paul Nwulu, the presentations were on Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Liberia

This presentation was made by Mr. Cecil Griffiths, Coordinator, Security Sector Working Group, Liberia. He explained that Liberia was considered one of the most peaceful countries in Africa until April 1979 when it experienced a major conflict situation – “The Rice Riot” – in which scores of people were killed. One year later, the government was overthrown by men of the Armed Forces. The president was killed and several cabinet ministers were executed by firing squad by the new regime for alleged rampant corruption, misuse of office, nepotism, etc. At the end of the conflict in 2003 following the resignation of Mr. Taylor, and the signing of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Accord, which ushered a transitional government that would lead Liberia into democratic elections in October 2005, Liberia has experienced a couple of low intensity conflicts some resulting into deaths.

Some of the conflicts that have arisen in post-conflict Liberia include those between the government and motorcycle riders who were banned from major roads; between Muslims and Christians over the death of a student in Lofa County; and between traditional societies and churches.

The police responses to these conflicts were not properly handled and these led to a security sector reform which started in 2004. These dealt with oversight of the security sector and security related bills to enhance the security reform. Civil society groups have been trying to influence the security reform process by developing campaigns to get the government to work on certain bills.

The researcher acknowledged some challenges for the security sector, saying the security sector suffers from poor management, logistical support, low salaries, political interference, among others.

Sierra Leone

Mr Al Shek Kamara’s paper discussed for providing elections security in Sierra Leone. The AIG gave a brief of the country profile and explained the role of the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) in elections security. The SLP was established in October 4, 1894 and has personnel strength of a little over 12,000 and among their various roles; one is the provision of a conducive security environment to enable the National Electoral Commission (NEC) to conduct free, fair, and violence-free elections. Also they ensure that the rule of law and internal security in the state is maintained.

He explained that they held 4 elections concurrently, which was a herculean task. He listed the threat factors in the 2012 elections, including attempts by certain groups to deny people with dual nationalities opportunities for voting, the use of ex-combatants

by the major political parties to intimidate their opponents, and refusal as well of political parties to comply with the rules of the election timelines.

To mitigate the looming violence, some strategies were deployed. According to the presenter, these include: “Planning, planning, planning through every stage of the elections.” A strategic plan and a response process that had clear lines of control and responsibility was developed. He noted greater engagements with CSOs and other stakeholders while the political parties were encouraged to work together with the police, and collaborate more effectively. Media and public relations training for personnel were implemented along with sensitisation throughout the country through face-to-face interactions and via radio and television programmes.

The SLP recruited a number of additional personnel. They also solicited the support of other security agencies to provide the much needed manpower. An election specific training was carried out as well, and the military was removed from manning polling stations and taken to man police stations and key installations used for the elections.

Al Shek concluded that conducting good elections will enhance the country’s image and rebranding efforts, also that providing security during elections should not be considered the exclusive responsibility of the primary security agents alone.

Comments and Questions

Catherine Weiss of the DfID expressed interest in the relationship between the SLP and the OSG now and in the future, and requested the researcher to explain the relationship between them. She also wanted to know, since electoral violence could be linked to combatants, what is being done to transform the combatants for a more peaceful state.

Following in the same vein, Alice Bala, Head of ECOWAS’ Civilian Component, observed that a major ethnic conflict underlies the conflicts in Liberia, but it wasn’t dwelt on in the presentation. She asked whether it had been resolved, especially because it has been a trigger for other conflicts. She requested to know what steps are being taken to manage the conflict. She, however, commended Sierra Leone for the way the 2012 elections was conducted, particularly the restriction of vehicular movement in town or up-country because double registration was eliminated with that.

Mrs Bola Olufe of Department of State Security Services sought to know from the Sierra Leone presenter whether there were challenges in this collaboration and how they were handled. Dr Aderemi Ajibewa of ECOWAS also said people need to be sensitised to know their rights and their roles. How do we ensure that our security agents conform to their roles and confirm that the people are doing right as well?

Responses

Taking the questions addressed to him, AIG Kamara said the relationship between the OSG (Operational Support Group) and the SLP is that the OSG is the armed support. He disclosed that there are about seven (7) such groups, including, but not limited to training, escort, and armed intervention. The SLP is not armed, so the OSG is brought in when there is need for armed intervention.

On electoral violence and ex-combatants, he admitted that the ex-combatants were disarmed but were not properly reintegrated into society and do not have gainful employment yet and are prepared for rogue politicians to exploit as they are already trained in the use of weaponry. Most of them used to be child soldiers and so the government is working on a youth programme to get them employed and engaged.

The presenter noted differences of ideas and opinions were inevitable, especially when the people are from different backgrounds. To reduce the impact of this, he said cooperating with one another and the use of clear communication of roles has helped obviate misunderstandings that could arise when roles overlap. Resources, though limited, were pooled together and shared.

Also responding, Mr Maximillian T. W. Diabe said there has been a peace and reconciliation initiative to reconsolidate some of the issues raised. He acknowledged that the government is working hard on resolution.

THIRD SESSION

The session was moderated by Catherine Weiss, DfID Governance Adviser in Nigeria.

Nigeria

This presentation was made by Freedom C. Onuoha of the National Defence College (NDC). It gave an overview of violent conflicts in Nigeria, especially the nature and manifestation of violent conflicts since the return to democracy in 1999. It mentioned the various religious conflicts in the North as well as the domestic terrorist group Boko Haram, and the ethnic militancy in the South-South. It also went on to elucidate on communal conflicts across the country which occur due to disputes over land, water formations, traditional ruler ship, location of amenities, herder-farmer clashes, electoral violence and indigene-settler conflicts.

The paper itemised the various consequences of violent conflicts, including destruction of social capital, undermining of civil-military relations, bodily injury and death, disruption of daily living, and smearing of the nation's image.

Dr Onuoha recommended the overhauling of Nigeria's electoral system, raising the cost of violence for perpetrators of conflicts, promotion of peace, and education

addressing the underlying factors of violence, strengthening the nation's intelligence and security networks, and a mop up of small arms and light weapon (SALWs).

Supporting Onuoha's presentation, Prof. Etannibi Alemika talked about problems that exist with roles of the state, the rules that govern the government, and how the members of government should be penalised. He explained how governance influences the kind of governments and the behaviour of citizens as well. He expressed concerned more about intra religious violence than the inter-religious ones.

Speaking further, Assistant Inspector General of Police, Mr Solomon Arase, implored the participants to examine the trends and patterns of crime which will help to understand it and thereon how to handle it. He went on to state that during the military rule, the military took over the function of the Police Force, thus the police were unable to develop the capacity to deal with issues arising. He said the advent of democracy opened a door to the pent up anger and issues of individuals and the ad-hoc bodies created to handle crime make the police redundant, as instead of collaborating to work together, a competitions is created. He explained that the security forces are being trained to work alongside the communities they police.

Niger Republic

This presentation by Adamou Moumouni also gave an overview of conflicts in Niger Republic. Mr. Adamou informed that Niger has been known with two major conflict situations within the last two decades. These include the rebellion in the early 1990s and another of 2007-2009. Both rebellions were resolved in very different ways despite their similarities and connections. The first rebellion lasted for about five (5) years and involved several actors. There were the Tuareg armed groups from regions across Niger and Mali, and the Niger's security and defence troops. There were also the Tubu rebels who were connected to rebels in Chad. The area of conflict was therefore stretched across northern Niger and involved chiefly nomad groups fighting against the government and fighting against other rebel groups, which were not unified.

In resolving this conflict, an agreement was developed in 1995 in which the government made extensive concessions. The principle of decentralisation was adopted, and a large amount of political power was devolved to locally elected politicians and Tuareg leaders got to run the affairs of regions where the majority of the population was Tuareg. Implementation of this was very problematic, nevertheless.

In the case of the second rebellion, Mr Adamou narrated that the resolutions of the first rebellion did not lead to full and complete security in the North and as such in the early 2000s, new, small armed groups emerged, seemingly propped up by prominent drug traffickers in the area. These groups attacked public transportation

buses and set up remote posts to help traffickers. Labelled by the government as “residual insecurity” that would eventually die down, it flared up into a new insurgency in 2007 and the army was boldly attacked. In the resolution of this conflict, after defeat of the rebels, their leaders fled to Tripoli where they met a Nigerian delegation and agreed to lay down their arms. The Niger government maintained that this was not a rebellion but only gratuitous attacks, and so did not provide any formal peace agreements. The former rebel leaders holed up in Libya were called back years later by the transition regime at the time and given plum jobs in Niamey. Other ex-rebels continue to attack vehicles plying northern roads and drift back into drug trafficking.

Comments and Questions

The comments began with Dr Raufu Mustapha, who thanked both teams for their presentations. Addressing AIG Solomon Arase, however, Dr Mustapha expressed disappointment that a method of sanctioning errant uniform men and women who refuse to operate by the rules was not mentioned because without that all intelligence gathering will be of no use. “What is being done to ensure the police obey their own rules that they effect on people? How does civil society play a part? Vigilante has increased as the police have decreased. What is your attitude towards that?” he demanded of the Nigeria Police Force representative.

To the Niger Republic paper, Dr Mustapha noted that some requirements were relaxed to accommodate some people in the police. But he asked if in they are made to comply with rules and regulations once they enrol in the service, and whether any community partnership been initiated.

Responses

Mr Mahamadou replied for Niger, saying the army demands that their recruitment be made on the same requirements for everyone. No concession made for former rebels who wanted to get in with the same rank they had in the rebel army, but the army wanted things to be done in systematic manner.

For Nigeria, Prof Alemika posited that there is a need to ask what type of police is needed and desired, who should be a police officer, and what kind of training they should be given. He said some people actually think the police should be compared to the vigilantes and ethnic militias, but answering that question is a starting point.

Responding, Mr Solomon Arase said: “We are an organisation that has a self-cleansing function for these issues. With policing it doesn’t have to be announced every time a policeman is dismissed for misdemeanour. We also have the Police Service Commission that handles this. A number of police officers who have been dismissed

still have their cases before the high court.” He said for reporting emergencies and complaints, relevant phone numbers are present in the public domain. He lamented that the numerical strength of the police force is not enough to handle every situation on ground, so the police rely on the vigilante but insist that they are subject to the rules of the police in their local area. He also reported collaboration with the military in the Joint Task Forces which are governed by strict rules of engagement. Mr Arase, who heads the intelligence arm of the Nigeria Police Force, disclosed that the Force has started the professionalism of the intelligence department from its roots. “CSOs have also been ensuring that, in the Police curriculum, we deemphasise the less important and focus on human rights, sociology, psychology, so the security forces recognise that they owe the citizenry a duty,” Mr Arase added.

In the context of Nigeria’s elections, Dr Freedom Onuoha said the problems encountered in 2011 could be used as a base to plan for 2015. He noted that the military set up a special response called Operation Safe Conduct which is commendable. It was their responsibility to first identify the flash points, and then follow up.

DAY 2: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS OF THE STUDY BY COUNTRIES IN THE REGION

FIRST SESSION

Ghana

This presentation was made by Dr Seidu Mahama Alidu, representing Dr Ziblim Iddi of the University of Ghana. It was a comparative study of two conflict situations, the Yendi and Hohoe conflicts. The presenter said these two cases were selected because of the contrasting nature of the security response to them.

The Yendi conflict was an intra-ethnic chieftaincy conflict that led to communal violence in 2002. It happened as a result of the tussle for who will become the Yendi chief between two royal families (Abudu and Andani) in Dagbon Kingdom in Yendi. Research showed that chieftaincy tussle in Yendi dated back to colonial times, and even the colonial masters tried to mediate to no avail. However, in 2002 it took another dimension. Findings reveal that the immediate cause of the conflict surrounded the celebration of Eid-ul-adha and Fire festivals in 2002. A second cause was the absence of a codified succession plan in the kingdom. The King and thirty (30) others were killed with several properties destroyed beyond recognition.

Unlike the Yendi case, the Hohoe conflict was an inter-ethnic conflict between indigenes and settlers in 2012. It was caused by the exhumation of the corpse of the Chief Imam for the settlers upon the instruction of the paramount chief of the traditional area that prevailed that the corpse should be allowed to be buried in that land. The settlers retaliated by vandalising the palace and destroyed personal properties of the paramount chief. Several properties were destroyed in the town and the two parties in the conflict were bracing for a showdown. Dr Alidu expressed that best known to the authorities was that both acts were deemed as sacrilegious, and tantamount to a declaration of war.

The paper compared the security responses to the two conflicts. In the Yendi case, the researcher revealed that there was slow response by government in sending police/military reinforcement to the area and the security forces failed to prevent warriors entering Yendi from other towns and villages. There was an observable lack of logistics such as vehicles, equipment and manpower, which greatly undermined the capacity of the security forces to intervene in the conflict. Also, political interference by the regional Minister revoking a curfew in Yendi undermined the security situation in the area.

Security response for Hohoe was however markedly different. In this case, the security agencies acted promptly to avert a full scale civil war. The NSC deployed enough personnel to protect life and property in the town. A curfew was enforced and the military conducted searches while the police secured properties and mounted barricades. The Volta Regional House of Chiefs; the National Chief Imam and the

National Peace Council met; and non-state actors played a significant role in managing the conflict promptly and a combination of the effort of state and non-state actors defused tensions and deescalated the conflict.

The research enumerated the lessons learned from the Yendi and the Hohoe cases as follows:

- i. Timely and commensurate response to conflicts makes a difference between success and failure;
- ii. The deployment of 300 military and 200 police in Hohoe as against 60 military and 90 police in Yendi is very instructive in terms of results;
- iii. The security forces were logistically more equipped in Hohoe than the forces in Yendi. The Police had no protective gear to intervene and the only armoured car in Yendi had faulty battery and dysfunctional firing pin;
- iv. High level political intervention by the presidency and the regional minister helped the security effort in Hohoe, but was lacking in the Yendi conflict.

Liberia

The lead researcher, Dr Abdul Raufu Mustapha presented the paper on behalf of Dr Thomas Jaye. The presentation commenced by mentioning that from findings it was observed that the nature of implementation of any security policy was built on the security presence or strength. Liberia experienced a lot of settlers so could also be termed a settler state, hence built a home guard to contain and deal with insurgence from indigenous population. Findings reveal that security institutions were built on dominance and control through coercive force. Under Samuel Doe it continued in addition to continued impunity which grew worse and extra judicial killings. It was part of what led to the civil war from 1989- 2003.

Research findings also reflect that in spite of democratisation in 2005 which saw the coming of an elected President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, mixed result have been produced in the sense that some progress has been made but some problems such as impunity, weak civil society and obsolete legislation still linger. According to the paper, the situation today shows that some non-statutory security agencies tied to commercial interest are in existence.

Burkina Faso

This research presentation was made by Dr Leon Sampana on behalf of Dr Abdoulkarim Saido. By way of introduction a brief historical background of Burkina Faso was laid. Burkina Faso is a former French colony which got her independence on the 5th of August 1960. Since her democratisation weak public institutions remain weak, with strong influence of the military, especially on executive powers. Security governance still experiences a challenge with control as there is a set of established norms but there is still a big gap between the established norm and the reality.

With respect to conflicts, the paper related that Burkina Faso has experienced several conflicts such as herdsmen-and-farmers disputes, and border disputes. There has been

no record of crisis or conflicts on religious ethnic lines. Civil-military relation is notably poor, resulting in conflicts between police and soldiers.

Concluding, the study reported that mediation mechanisms have been employed to resolve clashes. He stated that currently the control of the armed lies absolutely on the president and there is a confused control of the armed forces amidst growing insecurity and terrorist threats.

To wrap the session, Dr Abdul Raufu Mustapha summed the findings of presentations of the case studies as showing that the president continues to dominate and control security agencies and generally the sector; that legislative, judicial processes and the civil society remain very weak; and that there is the lack of professionalism in the police force.

SESSION TWO

Sierra Leone

Dr Osman Gbla of the Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone made the presentation. He prefaced his presentation by asserting that the country has had a good head start in many crucial areas, especially in governance and education, boasting the oldest university in West Africa which was opened in 1827. The 1991 constitution of Sierra Leone subjects the oversight of the armed forces to a civilian body, and the head of defence shall be a civilian. In the real case the President is the head of the military.

The paper noted factors affecting democratic control of the security forces to include misunderstanding of oversight function of parliament, constitutional limitations on parliamentarians, and opportunity to improve the situation on democratic control. However, it disclosed that a major impact of security sector reform has been transparency in most processes, one of which is the budgeting system for all ministries, department and agencies.

The major findings from the research showed that general law and order has been maintained in the country. Resurgence of violence in Sierra Leone has been prevented and peaceful, free and fair elections were conducted in 2012.

In conclusion, the paper recommended the strengthening of weak parliamentary and civil organisations in order to monitor the activities of security forces, and embarking on a constitutional review, which is already being mooted.

Mali

Ms Chigozirim Okoro of CLEEN Foundation made this presentation. She cited the fact that issues in the security sector governance in Mali is hinged on the budget, a part of which is published and thus known, but other elements are more opaque since they are spread over the budgets of other government bodies and policy areas. No single

institutional framework governs all security sector actors in Mali, she argued; each actor therefore has to be assessed in their specific context.

Some security governance challenges observed in the study included lack of legal entity to define and enforce standards and values of good governance in the security sector, and the security vacuum in northern Mali. Ms Okoro said fighting is continuing in some parts of the north, but the Malian army lacks significant presence in Kidal, the last town in the desert north that is yet to fall under government control where the MNLA Tuareg separatists have a stronghold.

In conclusion, the paper presenter posited that the vast sums of aid pledged to the recovery plan in Mali will only be effective if the root causes of the conflicts are addressed. This includes reconciling the informal governance and social structures of ethnically diverse Northern groups with the formal structures of the Malian state. This proved difficult when decentralisation was attempted as part of the National Pact Accords in the 1990s. Reform of the security sector will be important for combating Islamic extremism and stabilising the country.

Niger

The presentation was made by Dr Abdulramane Idrissa.

Dr Idrissa opened his presentation by highlighting some factors that determine security which may include good national security strategy, rule of law, democratic participation and adequate resources. He also gave some very useful statistics of Niger saying that there are about 40,000 security personnel in the country out of which about 68% of them have military training. He also highlighted part of his findings on democratic participation in Niger. The study observed rising activities of civil society actors in Niger citing that about 15% of them are engaged in rights and democracy while others are engaged in developmental work. Democratic activities in Niger which in turn is making democracy popular and acceptable has influenced or impacted the military, despite the fact that discussion in state owned institutions has not included discussions on military issues. The Nigerien researcher added that security was of less concern in the early years but now is the darling of the government of Niger.

The paper identified the core of Niger's security governance challenge as follows:

- i. Absence of a clear national security strategy;
- ii. No fit between Niger current security system and risk environment;
- iii. In the absence of a functional security cooperation framework, Niger accepts protection from international forces like the United States and France;
- iv. The regional and international dimension of security is really overwhelming to Niger.

Nigeria

The research presentation titled “When Protectors Become Aggressors” was made by Dr Hussaini Abdu of Action Aid Nigeria. It studied three cases from Nigeria: the Military invasion of Odi in Bayelsa State; the massacre of Zaki Biam in Benue State; and the state response to the insurgence in the north-eastern part of Nigeria, Yobe and Borno States.

According to him, history shows that from 1963 the military have been involved in mismanaging internal conflicts. Nigeria’s constitution, he said, clearly states the roles of the police and the military in conflict resolution but this prescription according to him is far from the practice. He blamed this situation on the long military governments that placed the military in strategic positions and undermined the role of the police in resolving conflicts. The emergence of General Olusegun Obasanjo in 1999 gave birth to reforms both in the military and in the police first of which was a five strategic plan for the police by the then Inspector General of Police Musiliu Smith. Since then other reforms have followed including some committees being set up. According to him about 120 recommendations have been made and several white papers have been produced by government, but the situation had remained unchanged. One of the important recommendations rejected by government is the case for more inclusive method of appointment of the Inspector General of Police.

Findings from the three cases studied were:

- i. Military and police responses remained the same;
- ii. General crisis of governance was noticed;
- iii. Over centralisation of decision-making which also undermines most reforms being intended;
- iv. Increase of militarism culture among civilians; that is, a tendency towards quick-fix;
- v. Failure of having an acceptable or systematic process of doing things right; and
- vi. Personalisation of security which brings about reactions based on individual influence.

Questions and comments

Mr Charles Alkali of the Nigeria Defence College asked to know the greatest challenge facing the reform of security agencies in Nigeria.

In response, Dr Abdu Hussaini explained military reform is supposed to come from the political class but it has since been hijacked by the Head of State and Commander In Chief and military institutions are not carried along. Secondly, he said, Nigeria has no national security policy, though several drafts have been made.

Mr. Collins Adeyanju, also of the Nigerian Defence College, observed that the presentation done on Mali made no mentions of the activities of the Touareg rebels in the north side of Mali.

Prof Alemika asked if there is a framework to have a progressive security sector in Sierra Leone which will be controlled democratically. He said question should be asked about civilians controlling the military democratically. He advised further that the real need is to police different facets of life instead of having the police force as an institution policing all spheres of life.

SESSION THREE

The session was moderated by Dr Ben Nickles.

Before the commencement of the presentation Dr Ben Nickles highlighted the basis for the presentation by ECOWAS, which to how they have deal with conflicts in West Africa with tools and structure mechanism put on ground.

ECOWAS

Representing ECOWAS were the Head of Police Component, ECOWAS Commission Mrs. Veronica Omofonma, Police Public Relations Officer Operations, Col Ollo Alain Pale, Head Civilian Component ECOWAS Commission, Mrs. Alice Balla Conteh.

A paper was presented to show analysis of how ECOWAS has promoted dialogue and preventive diplomacy and how it has provided leadership in the strengthening of the democratisation process in West Africa, particularly in Guinea, Niger and Guinea-Bissau. More importantly, the paper sought to highlight the structures and tools established for structural conflict prevention, mainly the adoption of the Mechanism and Supplementary Protocol as well as the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF).

The Head Police component of the ECOWAS Standby Force, Mrs Veronica Omofonma, made presentation, which began by highlighting the major function of ECOWAS that is central to the advantages of member states. The paper brought to fore the fact that the birth of ECOWAS on 28th May 1975 in Lagos with the signing of the ECOWAS Treaty was in itself a response by Member States to the challenges of incipient globalisation at the time. The vision of the founding fathers of ECOWAS was to create a single regional economic space as a prelude to the continental one, through integration and collective self-reliance; an economic space with a single market and single currency capable of generating accelerated socio-economic development and competing more meaningfully in the global market of large trade blocs and uneven patterns of trade between the industrialised global north and raw material-based economies of the south.

The paper identified some major factors that formed the background for setting up a structural mechanism for resolving conflicts among Member States. In West Africa, there were conflicts arising from forceful overthrow of elected governments, bad governance, disputed elections and unbridled struggle for political power. Examples given in the presentation included Liberia (1989), Sierra Leone (1991), Guinea Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire in (2002). Poverty, underdevelopment and state fragility created fertile conditions for violent conflicts and the emergence of new security threats, including cross-border crimes such as proliferation of small arms and light weapons, mercenaries and non-state armed groups, the phenomenon of child soldiers, drugs, arms and human trafficking as well as terrorism. This resulted to the setting up of what became known as ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to enforce peace in the war affected countries of Liberia and Sierra Leone. The success of this action and the awareness of the possibilities of further outbreak of wars in the region compelled West Africa's leaders to think of a more structured way to prevent conflicts to enable ECOWAS implement its basic objective of economic development and integration in the region.

Mrs Veronica Omofonma explained that following the establishment of ECOMOG was the putting together of critical normative documents for conflict management in the region. These include the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) and the Convention on Small Arms. In addition the paper enumerated certain mechanisms for managing and preventing conflicts as adopted by ECOWAS. They include: Early Warning Signs, and Council of the Wise an institution that comprises eminent personalities who on behalf of the ECOWAS, can use their experience and good offices to play the role of mediators, or conciliators.

In conclusion, the paper contended that ECOWAS has achieved remarkable success in accomplishing its mandate by containing violent conflicts in the region through preventive diplomatic initiatives, fact-finding missions, quiet diplomacy, diplomatic pressure, and mediation. The paper argued that ECOWAS has maintained the momentum in the promotion and consolidation of democracy and security, strengthening international cooperation, and the conduct of credible elections in Member States. The researchers observed that if institutions that promote democracy and good governance are strengthened, there will be little need to worry about conflict prevention, resolution or management.

Comment and questions

One of the participants expressed gratitude for the quick intervention in Niger. But some participants expressed dismay at the way the crisis in Mali was handled by ECOWAS and asked why an external body took the glory during a crisis in Mali.

Response

The response by the ECOWAS delegates was that it is untrue that another body took the glory but that Mali was unwilling to cooperate with ECOWAS. In spite of call for meetings and interaction, the Mali authorities showed less concern. According to the ECOWAS team, the Malian authorities apparently they thought the intergovernmental agency was incapable of handling the crisis, so when the crisis escalated they called on their French colonial masters to come to their aid.

DAY 3

Discussions: Prof. Alemika, Dr. Abdul Raufu Mustapha and Kemi Okenyodo

CLEEN Foundation's Executive Director, Kemi Okenyodo, noted that this session examined some of the good practices that had been highlighted in the two previous days of discussions, and validate them. Dr Raufu Mustapha stated that one of the strong points about the approach that has been taken is that the principles are based on experiences from West Africa, not on abstract concepts brought from elsewhere.

The discussions were led by the bullet points on page xxxvii of the book, *Conflicts and Security Governance in West Africa*, edited by Dr Abdul Raufu Mustapha, which was shared to the participants at the workshop.

Bullet Point 1 observed that "*the Quality of Governance in the Security Sector is linked to the Quality of Democratic Governance in the Various Countries*". According to the lead researcher Dr. Mustapha this point commits the participants to have a wide focus in discussing conflict and security governance within the West Africa sub region.

There was a general agreement that this point is valid. Some participants added that there should be serious awareness campaigns in order to gain peoples' participation in security governance. Other comments urged security agencies to look beyond the interests of the rulers to the general security of the masses and that civil society actors were asked to dialogue more and regularly with security agencies. A participant from the Department of Security Service (DSS), Mrs Bola Olufe, observed that in the case of Nigeria, an improvement in the interfacing of security agencies with civilians is noticeable. Prof Alemika underscored this point further by saying that security governance is furthered in settings where democracy has been deepened with cordial relationship between the security agencies and the civilians.

Bullet Point 2 "*Gradual Institutionalisation of Constitutional Oversight*". Dr Mustapha explained that this oversight is not just about operational concerns but also about financial transparency and accountability. Participants agreed that there needs to be a gradual building of democratic institutions to give oversight functions not just focusing on operational concerns but on transparent financial budgeting and planning.

A participant from the Department of State Security Service, Nigeria, reminded participants that since 1999, the security sector in Nigeria has been reformed progressively with emphasis on rule of law, rules of engagement and conduct of security operations. She echoed her colleague's earlier remarks that an improvement in the interface between the security sector and CSOs in Nigeria is noticeable. The service has also improved its relationship with the media. She urged CSOs to refrain from rushing to make judgments on security operations as the Service has made available a number for the public relations department which the media could call for information. In the same vein, a participant from Burkina Faso admonished CSOs to be neutral and stop politicising their actions so that some of the principles being agreed upon can work.

Kemi Okenyodo, The Executive Director, CLEEN Foundation observed that the discussion seemed to be disempowering the local community and wanted participants to examine how to bring them into the discourse, as accountability should be both bottom-top and top-bottom in approach. A participant from ECOWAS suggested that since heads of states are commanders of chief of their security forces, member states should be responsible for the conducts of their security forces, and that there should be a code of conduct training. She proposed that in conjunction with oversight responsibilities, a code of conduct training for security forces be conducted as well. Another participant however held the view that as long as a President of the country continues to be Commanders in Chiefs of their security forces; it would be difficult for the security forces to act independently of the government's influence because these people are in charge of their appointment and dismissal.

Adams, of Nigeria's National Defence College, pointed the impact of social media on the exposure of abuse within the security forces and the opportunities provided parliamentary oversight. But his colleague from the NDC, Charles Akale drew attention to the alleged bribery of members of security and defence committees in the National Assembly. "The problem is that those doing the oversight are also corrupt," Akale said. "Senators are bribed by DGs. How can we stop this from happening? Do we create an independent body that carries out their own oversight apart from the National Assembly?"

Bullet Point 3 – *“Decentralisation of Security Institution and Civil Society Participation”*.

All participants agreed and validated this point about delegating some function to lower level institutions.

Bullet Point 4- *“Coordination and Control of various arms of the security sector important”*.

Dr Raufu Mustapha highlighted that coordination is essential to forestall the creation of small pockets of powerful empires. According to him, coordination should be built systematically over time.

Participants agreed with this point and it was validated.

Nonetheless, Paula from the Department of State Security Service said the National Intelligence Agency should be at the heart of the coordination of other Nigerian agencies but inter agency friction seems to increase by the day despite all efforts. She was of the view that this means there could be coordination but no control. Part of the problem, she said, is role conflict and advised that there be clear distinction of roles.

Further to this comment, the moderator proposed that points 4 and 5 should be merged because of their interconnection- **Bullet Point 5** deals with “*clear jurisdictions and protocols of collaboration between services*”. The moderator noted that the issue of role specification in conflicts when an agency is created out of an older one, instead of collaboration, there will be competition. To this end Mr. Ramadan Fabrice of DCAF proposed the implementation of a performance based budget as a possible way of solving the challenge of mandates and roles specification for security agencies within the sub-region.

Bullet Point 6: “*Presidential Commissions can be frequently used to evaluate reform needs*”. Participants suggested that, beyond reforms the implementation should be monitored, including training, equipping, improvement of welfare, recruitment, etc.

Bullet Point 7: “*Use Truth and Reconciliation Commissions to draw a line under the authoritarian past and set new human rights standards*”: In Nigeria and some other West African countries, there was also the establishment of commissions of enquiry to investigate past human rights abuses and set the proper tone for the future. This recommendation is aimed to tackle impunity within the security sector in Africa.

Dr. Seidu Mahama Alidu thinks TRCs are inadequate as naming offenders alone is sometimes punishment enough as victims relive the atrocities committed in their lives. Beyond finding loved ones, or justice, or healing, he proposed that TRCs should include material compensation.

Bullet Point 8: “*Training for Parliamentarians in Oversight Functions was adopted*”.

The technical capacity of most of our parliamentarians needs to be continuously improved to be able to understand technical issues. Rapid turnover of parliamentarians was noted as reason why continuous training is needed. In response, Kemi Okenyodo said that CSOs should be involved in developing the curriculum used

for the training for the parliamentarians including owning a website that offers periodic trainings, even for those aspiring to join the parliament.

Bullet Point 9 – *“Need for constitutional reforms and the resolution of constitutional disputes over who controls the Police”.*

In most countries, tension over the control of the police force makes it easier to politicise police. It is necessary to address this through adequate and clear cut constitutional provisions. This point was validated.

Kemi Okenyodo of CLEEN Foundation said it would be important, before embarking on advocacy for review of the constitutions, to examine existing structures for democratic control of policing. Using the case of Nigeria as example she said the clamour by Governors for amendment of the constitution to allow for establishment of state police would be baseless if they took advantage of the Nigerian Police Council, of which they are all members. She explained that the Council rarely meets, except to ratify the unilateral appointment of a new Inspector General of Police by the President of the Federal Republic. Nevertheless, the elected Governors should be able to request for the Council to meet when they need to. If the Council was meeting regularly, a lot of thorny issues would not come up, she added.

Bullet Point 10 – *“Create formal platforms for civil society-security sector interactions”.*

This point was validated, and participants noted that new technologies have made such platforms easier to set up.

Bullet Point 11- *“Adequate and transparent budgeting for the security services”*

Adequacy and transparency are the two important attributes of budget consideration for security forces. A security budget has to be adequate to the function of the various agencies. It also has to be transparently controlled and managed. In most of our countries the budgets are never adequate or transparently managed. This point was validated.

Al Shek, the Assistant Inspector General from Sierra Leone observed that resources and time for policing are never enough. Sierra Leone gives the police too many functions and roles,” he said. “Sierra Leone Police review its strategic plan yearly, and plan her objectives. It is not all of the time that SLP meet all of our needs, but they meet us at some point.”

Dr Abdul Raufu Mustapha underscored the point on budgeting by admonishing civil society and the media to take more interest in the budgetary processes of the security forces.

Bullet Points 12 and 13 were merged. 12 proposed for the “*comprehensive reform of the military and police might be necessary*” while 13 recommended that “*trade-off between professionalism and democratic control is unnecessary*”

Participants agreed that the point was valid, adding that both post conflict states in West Africa and democratic countries that haven't experienced violent strife need to review their security sector. Ms Aissatou Fall of WISPENT Africa underscored the point further, saying that some countries have included in their constitution mandatory security sector reform every 10 years. However, there are no monitoring bodies to ensure that this is done when the time comes. She proposed that for countries that have this constitutional provision, mechanisms should be established to ensure implementation. Aissatou Fall was also of the opinion that gender mainstreaming in the security sector is also a part of efforts at improving it.

Closing Remarks

The conference came to an end with participants expressing satisfaction with the quality of organisation and deliberations. Mrs. Kemi Okenyodo, the Executive Director, CLEEN Foundation on behalf of Altus Global Alliance and CLEEN Foundation thanked the Ford Foundation for its generous support to implement the project activity, the lead researcher, Dr Abdul Raufu Mustapha, the researchers from the seven focal countries, the ECOWAS team, and the participants drawn from various countries. She also thanked Chigo Odinkalu-Okoro, the coordinator of the project and CLEEN Foundation staff in the Abuja office for a work well done. She wished participants safe trip back to their respective countries. The workshop ended on this note.

Next Steps

1. Altus and CLEEN Foundation to develop draft of Good Practice Guide for Security Intervention in Violent Conflicts;
2. Altus/CLEEN to share outcome of conference with relevant stakeholders within West Africa for action

Altus works to improve public safety, security and justice in countries around the world, bringing empirical and multicultural perspectives to that work and promoting greater participation of civil society in security and justice reform. Altus places special emphasis on accountability of security forces in domestic and regional justice systems. Please visit www.altus.org for more information on its activities.



26 Bamenda Street, Off Abidjan Street
Zone 3, Wuse Abuja.
Tel. No: 09 7817025

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