
21. A view from Africa

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I. Introduction

The attacks of 11 September 2001 introduced a new configuration into the international political economy: they have increasingly shaped issues, interests, alliances, coalition building and the focus of global politics. Some have described the attacks as the most significant and shattering event since the end of the cold war and a watershed in global history.¹ The attacks certainly constituted an epochal event that was to set its stamp on the beginning of the new millennium and on the direction of global politics in the 21st century.

The use of terror or terrorist acts is not a new phenomenon, but a means by which states and groups have sought to pursue their interests when they could not do so through conventional political processes. There are basically three new features of the events of 11 September. First is the site of the attacks. The United States, as the sole superpower, has carried an aura of invincibility and presented an impenetrable wall of security that terrorists were not expected to be able to breach. The attacks thus shocked the entire world and raised the question of security higher on the agenda, even for the most developed countries with sophisticated security technology. As Eric Hershberg and Kevin Moore noted, the USA ‘was suddenly no longer invulnerable, its power no longer unassailable’.²

The second new feature of these events is their significance as signalling that globalization has permeated not only the economy, politics and culture but also the planning and execution of violence, criminality and terrorism. The increasing ‘privatization’ of terrorism, perpetrated with a high level of sophistication and precision, is one of the manifestations and side effects of globalization. Information technology, global finance and integrated networks have become available to both honest and unscrupulous individuals and non-state groups. Globalization is characterized by both progress and subversion.

The third new feature of the 11 September events is the object of attack. The choice of the New York World Trade Center and the Pentagon as targets—clear symbols of the preponderance of capitalism and globalization, and of the global military power of the USA that backs them—reflects a protest against

¹ See, e.g., Debiel, T., ‘Privatised violence and the terror of September 11: challenges to foreign, security and development policy’, eds T. Debiel and A. Klein, *Fragile Peace: State Failure, Violence and Development in Crisis Regions* (Zed Books: London and New York, 2002), p. 191.

² Hershberg, E. and Moore, K. W., ‘Introduction: place, perspective, and power—interpreting September 11’, eds E. Hershberg and K. W. Moore, *Critical Views of September 11: Analyses from Around the World* (New Press: New York, 2002), p. 3, available at URL <<http://www.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/CriticalViewsIntro.pdf>>.

the hierarchy of the global system. This criminal protest may not necessarily reflect a clash of culture, civilization or religion, but it could be a reaction to the spatial dimension of economic dispersion and power in the global arena.

After the attacks, the 'war on terrorism' proclaimed by the USA proceeded on a large scale. Afghanistan and Iraq have been the first two victims of the war, and Africa has been identified as a possible base for terrorism. According to Susan Rice, a former US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, 'Africa is the world's soft underbelly for global terrorism . . . Africa is an incubator for the foot soldiers of terrorism . . . Al Qaeda and other terrorist cells are active throughout East, Southern and West Africa, as well as North Africa'.³ Porous borders, weak economies and poverty are among the factors Rice identifies as qualifying Africa as a site of refuge for terrorist activities. Her prescription is that Africa's security apparatus and economy must be strengthened in order to prevent the continent from becoming a terrorist lair.

The intention here is not to contest Rice's argument, which is indeed contestable, but to address two other issues. First, this chapter addresses the notion of terrorism from an economic perspective. It raises the issue of whether the terms 'economic terror' or 'business as terror' are in fact valid. In other words, can businesses overtly or covertly facilitate terrorism? Second, it raises the issue of Africa's own main security concerns and considers how the war on terrorism is linked to and affects them. It argues that there is another potential agent of political terrorism and insecurity: the activities of business actors. These economic agents may overtly or covertly reinforce the political terrorism perpetrated by state or non-state organizations, thereby exacerbating disorder, instability, conflict and chaos, in Africa as elsewhere. Last but not least, the question of security in Africa also needs to be seen in relation to the notion of human security, for it is human insecurity that provides the context in which terrorist acts can most easily be carried out.

II. Terrorism: the political and economic dimensions

Since the attacks of 11 September 2001, the concept of terrorism has been the subject of considerable debate and of attempts to define it. Most conceptual approaches have focused on the political dimension. What appears to be an official US Government definition of the concept of terrorism is contained in a Congressional Research Service report prepared by Raphael Perl in 2001.⁴ The report defines terrorism as politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by sub-national groups or clandestine agents. A terrorist group is defined as a group which practices—or which has sufficient sub-

³ Rice, S. E., 'The Africa battle', *Washington Post*, 11 Dec. 2001, p. A33.

⁴ Perl, R. F., *Terrorism, the Future and US Foreign Policy*, CRS Issue Brief for Congress, Updated 23 Mar. 2001 (Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service: Washington, DC, 2001), available at URL <<http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/report/crs/IB95112.pdf>>. (The version of this report as updated on 11 Apr. 2003 is available at URL <<http://www.fas.org/irp/crs/IB95112.pdf>>.)

groups practising—terrorism. Some have challenged this view of terrorism, arguing that it does not need to encompass the element of civilians and non-combatants as targets. Terrorist acts can be inflicted on combatants as well.⁵

Achin Vanaik defines terrorism as ‘the calculated or premeditated use, or threat of use, of violence against an individual, group, or larger collectivity in such a manner that the target is rendered physically defenceless against the attack or against the effects of that violence’. It is the political intent implicit in a terrorist act that makes it different from a criminal act such as murder. The ‘defencelessness’ of the target can result from surprise attack outside a battle or war zone, its nature (e.g., a civilian target), the types of weapons used, and the enormous disproportion in the violence exercised between sides within a battle or war zone.⁶ Vanaik’s conception of terrorism is sufficiently elastic to accommodate a wide range of contexts and terrorist acts.

Three factors are central to the notion of terrorism: (a) civilian casualties, (b) the element of surprise and the use of extreme force, and (c) the high level of insecurity that the act engenders.

Political terrorism has a specific agent, context and focus. It may involve state or non-state actors and be domestic or international in nature, as well as overt or covert. In the context of state terrorism, the essential objective is to intimidate the opposition, to promote a sense of fear and to undermine the cause that the opponent may be pursuing. The distinguishing feature is that the state machinery is placed at the service of such actions. Examples include the terrorist acts of the Sani Abacha regime (1993–98) in Nigeria, in which state agents went on a rampage, assassinating political opponents and civil society actors, bombing cars and persecuting groups that did not support the succession policy proclaimed by the dictator. In Angola, the example of the United States’ support during the cold war for groups such as União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA, National Union for the Total Independence of Angola), offering military assistance and logistics to an organization that inflicted heavy collateral damage on the country’s people, represented a covert means of perpetrating terrorism. The bombing of the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 was a non-state manifestation of terrorism. Political terrorism is the continuation of politics by other means through armed force and a culture of fear.

Economic networks may also be linked to acts of terrorism. This may happen when economic or financial networks provide resources for terrorist organizations—for without funds terrorist groups cannot function—or when business firms, in pursuing their own private interests, cultivate or provide support for terrorist groups. Both phenomena could be correctly described as *economic terrorism*. In the former, an economic network is geared towards political purposes; in the latter, the economic or profit motive remains central but is achieved through political processes of terror. Economic terrorism may

⁵ Vanaik, A., ‘The ethics and efficacy of political terrorism’, eds Hershberg and Moore (note 2), p. 27.

⁶ Vanaik (note 5), p. 28.

thus be defined as the conduct of activities by business interests or firms which directly or indirectly inflict large-scale damage and loss of lives in a community or society, or which support political organizations, groups or states that undertake reprisals against defenceless civilian populations, either directly on behalf of the firms or in the indirect pursuit of the firms' interests.

In these scenarios the main features of terrorism are present—civilian casualties, the application of force or violence, and fear and insecurity. Economic terrorism may also be overt or covert, just like its political counterpart. The agency of economic terror may be 'legitimate' or otherwise: that is, it may be a duly registered business organization, or one that exists illegally and operates underground.

Only when a nuanced view of terrorism is conceptualized, taking into account both the political and the economic dimension, can the dynamics of insecurity in the global system be understood from the perspectives of the developed and the developing countries.

III. 'Business as terror' in Africa

The scenario of instability, conflict and crisis which plagues the African continent has made it a veritable magnet for various types of businesses which rarely adhere to the rules, norms and ideals of responsible corporate behaviour. Indeed, some of these corporate entities thrive on the instability and insecurity of the region and covertly or otherwise perpetrate acts of terror. In conflict situations in Africa, an intricate network of illegal arms dealers and brokers, private military companies (PMCs) and drug traders often facilitates the perpetration of terror. For these businesses, political instability in Africa has become a market indicator which they have positioned themselves perfectly to exploit.⁷ In addition, certain well-established businesses such as the multinational oil corporations also tap into the weak political structures of African countries and the social cleavages inherent in those societies to covertly perpetuate terrorism. Such activities exacerbate insecurity and impoverish the people and society.

The issues of small arms and PMCs resonate in many conflict spots in Africa. 'In July 2001 the US government estimated that small arms are fuelling conflicts in 22 African countries that have taken 7–8 million lives. In Africa, guns are not just the weapons of choice but also weapons of mass destruction.'⁸ In West Africa, over 7 million small arms are circulating in the sub-region and have been central to the conflicts in the Manor River Union of Liberia, in Sierra Leone and in Guinea. In South Africa, there are about

⁷ Harding, J., Transcript of Radio National (Australia) Programme 'Background Briefing', 'The diamond mercenaries of Africa', 4 Aug. 1996, p. 12, cited in Musah, A.-F. and Fayemi, J. 'K. (eds), *Mercenaries: An African Security Dilemma* (Pluto Press: London, 2000), pp. 4–5, available at URL <<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/talks/bbing/stories/s10759.htm>>.

⁸ Fleshman, M., 'Small arms in Africa: counting the cost of gun violence', *Africa Recovery*, vol. 15, no. 4 (Dec. 2001), p. 18, available at URL <<http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol15no4/154arms.htm>>.

4 million small arms in the hands of civilians. In Mogadishu City alone (the capital of Somalia), it is estimated that about 1 million small arms are circulating among a population of 1.3 million people. In Mozambique, with a population of 15 million, an estimated 10 million small arms are held throughout the country. In some African countries small arms, particularly the AK-47 rifle, are as cheap as \$6 and can be bartered for a chicken or a sack of grain.⁹

Small arms are not the root cause of conflict but they exacerbate it. As Abdel-Fatau Musah and Niobe Thompson observed, small arms are a catalyst of violence. They 'transform fragile democracies containing ethnic and communal antagonisms into hollow and administratively ineffective states racked by violence and civil war'.¹⁰ In addition, small arms prolong wars, impose severe suffering on the people, destroy infrastructure and dislocate societies. The end of the cold war was expected to slow down the production and sale of small arms and reduce their availability in the developing countries that served as proxies in the superpower confrontation. However, this did not happen, mainly because of two factors. First was the increasing commercialization and privatization of the arms industry, which compelled the industry to push for higher profit margins.¹¹ Second, after the disintegration of the Soviet Union there was a large stockpile of small arms in the former Soviet bloc. Private interests in those countries moved aggressively and often illegally to market them abroad, especially in areas of conflict. The effect was that a network of arms dealers and brokers, including PMCs, swamped Africa, selling weapons to all the warring parties—both rebels and governments—and exacerbating war and human suffering on the continent. These dealers became allies in the perpetuation of terrorism and focused largely on profit or on obtaining natural resources in return for arms sales.

The business network tied to the arms trade includes the dealers, air cargo companies, financiers and local agents. For instance, in the case of Sierra Leone, air transport firms such as Ibis Air, Soruss, Sky Air and Occidental were involved in the illegal shipment of arms to the rebel forces—the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF)—who perpetrated acts of savage terror on the people.¹² PMCs, such as Executive Outcome (EO), and mercenaries were also involved in the arms deals.

PMCs sell the services of foreign professional soldiers to both state and non-state actors purely for profit motives. They act chiefly in conflict situations and provide consultancy, training, asset protection and combat services to those who can pay for them. Although they project the image of a modern business enterprise that markets technical and military expertise, they are in

⁹ Fleshman (note 8); and Musah, A.-F. and Thompson, N., 'A commonwealth of conscience? light weapons violence and human rights', eds A.-F. Musah and N. Thompson, *Over a Barrel: Light Weapons and Human Rights in the Commonwealth* (Institute of Commonwealth Studies: London, 1999).

¹⁰ Musah and Thompson (note 9), pp. 8–9.

¹¹ Sköns, E. and Weidacher, R., 'Arms production', *SIPRI Yearbook 2002: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2002), pp. 323–53.

¹² Musah, A., 'Small arms and conflict transformation in West Africa', eds Musah and Thompson (note 9), p. 124.

fact modern forms of mercenaries who have merely changed their nature and mode of operation. These firms have been established or are run mainly by retired military personnel with extensive networks in the state establishment, and some of them enjoy covert diplomatic and political backing from their home states. Among them, Military Professional Resources Incorporated (MPRI), based in Alexandria, Virginia, has a database of over 2000 soldiers and officers who are available for contract work, and wields political leverage in the USA.¹³ In the UK, ArmorGroup has close links to the British military establishment.¹⁴ As Kevin O'Brien noted, 'many of the PMCs operating out of western countries today were, and in many cases continue to be, closely aligned with and supported by the intelligence services of the countries in which they originate. This can clearly be seen today in the cases of the United States, Great Britain and France'.¹⁵

The logic of globalization and the market ideology has given rise to the increasing commercialization of security and privatization of war. PMCs are regarded by many as more efficient, better organized and able to deliver security services more promptly than the state. Just as extreme market ideology tends to delegitimize the state, private and non-state actors are seen as the answer to state failure as they increasingly take on the state's traditional roles.

The striking characteristic of these modern mercenary activities is that they often enmesh themselves in war-torn economies and engage in the expropriation of the natural resources of those countries. These firms have interlocking relationships with natural resource companies and sometimes trade their services in exchange for mining concessions or oil contracts. For example, in the case of Angola, the contract signed by the government with EO 'is believed to have included a diamond concession awarded to their subsidiary, Branch Energy. In total, the contract is said to have been worth US\$40 million'. Similarly, in Sierra Leone, the Government of Valentine Strasser was said to have awarded contracts to EO worth \$50 million in cash and mining concessions.¹⁶ On the side of the rebels, contracts with PMCs are not documented since they are essentially 'secret deals' and are generally more extensive than contracts with governments. Angola and Sierra Leone were reputed to have been major business centres for PMCs which offered their services to the warring parties, to private companies seeking protection and security, and to international agencies operating in conflict regions. By far the most profitable part of their activities is the assistance offered to warring parties. By mid-1997 it was esti-

¹³ Musah and Fayemi (note 7), p. 18. On the MPRI see URL <<http://www.mpri.com/channels/home.html>>.

¹⁴ Fayemi, J. 'K.', 'Africa in search of security: mercenaries and conflicts—an overview', A.-F. Musah and J. 'K. Fayemi, *Mercenaries: An African Security Dilemma* (Pluto Press: London, 2000), p. 18. ArmorGroup formerly operated as Defence Systems Limited (DSL); see URL <<http://www.armorgroup.com/services/security.htm>>.

¹⁵ O'Brien, K., 'Private military companies and African security 1990–98', Musah and Fayemi (note 14), p. 44.

¹⁶ Fayemi (note 14), pp. 23–24.

ated that no fewer than 90 PMCs were operating in Africa, most of them in Angola.¹⁷

Essentially, PMCs have transformed conflicts into markets and supported terrorist groups in perpetrating horrendous crimes against civilian populations in Africa. Conflicts in Africa have taken a debilitating human toll, retarded economic and social progress, destroyed institutional capacity, perpetuated poverty and increased human suffering. The World Bank estimates that civil wars currently lower per capita income by 2.2 percentage points a year in Africa.¹⁸ The 1999 Report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Use of Mercenaries established a clear linkage between the mercenary phenomenon and terrorism.

A mercenary is a criminal; he acts not out of altruistic motives, but to earn money in exchange for his tactical and strategic skills and his handling of weapons and explosives. In this regard, the material connection between a mercenary's activity and the commission of terrorist acts has been established through many terrorist attacks in which the perpetrator was proven to be one or more mercenaries hired to commit the crime. . . . It must be remembered that terrorism is also a criminal activity in which mercenaries participate for payment, disregarding the most basic considerations of respect for human life and a country's legal order and security.¹⁹

Attempts to regulate the activities of the 'merchants of death' (PMCs as well as arms dealers and brokers) have so far proved rather futile owing primarily to the reluctance of the home countries of these firms. Mercenaries have been prohibited in several international agreements: for example, 1977 Protocol I Additional to the 1949 Geneva Conventions outlaws the use of mercenaries;²⁰ and the 1977 Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa.²¹ Nonetheless, mercenaries are still thriving today. The same scenario of futile attempts at regulation applies to the problem of small arms proliferation and trafficking. These are clear instances where businesses have aided terrorism in Africa, thereby obstructing the continent's development process.

Private firms have also aided local terrorism in Africa through the activities of the oil multinational corporations (MNCs), especially in the Niger Delta

¹⁷ O'Brien (note 15), p. 51.

¹⁸ World Bank, *Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?* (World Bank: Washington, DC, 2000), p. 57, available at URL <<http://www.worldbank.org/html/extdr/canafricaclaim.pdf>>.

¹⁹ United Nations Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, The Right of Peoples to Self-determination and its Application to Peoples under Colonial or Alien Domination or Foreign Occupation, Report on the question of the use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination, UN document E/CN.4/1999/11, 13 Jan. 1999, paras 56 and 57.

²⁰ 'A mercenary shall not have the right to be a combatant or a prisoner of war': 1977 Protocol (I) Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts, Article 47, para. 1, available at URL <<http://www.hri.ca/uninfo/treaties/94.shtml>>. Mercenaries were also banned by UN General Assembly Resolution 3314, 14 Dec. 1974, on the Definition of Aggression (Article 3), available at URL <<http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/29/ares29.htm>>.

²¹ This convention was opened for signature by the Organization of African Unity (OAU)—now the African Union (AU); see URL <http://www.africa-union.org/Official_documents/Treaties_%20Conventions_%20Protocols/Convention_on_Mercenaries.pdf>.

region of Nigeria. Apart from the poor environmental standards and ecological disaster that their activities have brought to the area, destroying the livelihood of the communities and their health—leading to ‘death by instalment’ for the people—some of these oil firms covertly support state terrorism against the people of the area. During the military regimes of Generals Ibrahim Babangida and Sani Abacha (1985–98) the Nigerian state, on behalf of the oil MNCs, unleashed tremendous terror on the people. The entire Niger Delta was militarized, with an army of occupation based in the area to protect the operation of oil firms. The oil companies, especially Shell, supported the government’s actions by providing ammunition and logistics for these repressive activities of the state: in the words of Claude Ake, this was a case of the ‘militarisation of commerce’.²² In a report released in 2001, Sokari Ekine captured it succinctly: ‘Shell and the other oil companies, especially Elf and Chevron, have shown their open hostility and disregard for local communities by working hand in hand with the Nigerian military, providing them weapons, transport, logistical support and financial payments in order to commit acts of violence against people and property. In return the military serve as a personal security force to oil workers’.²³

The high point of the terror against the Niger Delta people was in 1994, when an Internal Security Task Force led by Major Paul Okuntimo was established and stationed in the Delta, mainly in Ogoniland. Its task was to occupy the area and maintain the conditions for unfettered exploitation by the oil MNCs. Shell was reputed to have supported the task force with arms, finance and logistics.²⁴ The Task Force imposed a reign of terror on the people, in which communities were raided, burned and destroyed, hundreds of people were killed and maimed, a large number of people were detained indefinitely, and women and children were attacked repeatedly. The Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO), a prominent human rights group in Nigeria, described the episode as ‘terror in Ogoni’,²⁵ while Ken Saro Wiwa called it ‘genocide’.²⁶ The activities of the oil MNCs in the Niger Delta still anger the people and have led to a movement of counter-militarization among the youth of the area. The cycle of violence, militarism and insecurity is thus being perpetuated in the area.

Several issues arise from the above discussion of businesses engaged in the covert or overt support of terrorism in Africa. First, it raises the issue of the use of terror as a political and an economic resource. Second, it touches on the international conception of what a business is and what its standards should

²² See ‘Shell’s promises and practice’, Interviews by Andy Rowell, *DELTA* no. 3 (Oct. 1997), URL <http://www.oneworld.org/delta/3_news6.html>, p. 8.

²³ Ekine, S., *Blood and Oil: Testimonies of Violence from Women of the Niger Delta* (Centre for Democracy and Development: London, 2001), p. 19.

²⁴ Ekine (note 23); see also Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO), *Ogoni: Trials and Travails* (CLO: Lagos, 1996).

²⁵ Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO), ‘*Terror in Ogoni*’, *Action Report* (CLO: Lagos, 1 Aug. 1994). See also Civil Liberties Organisation (note 24).

²⁶ Wiwa, K. S., *A Month and a Day: A Detention Diary* (Spectrum Books: Ibadan, 1995).

be. Third is the linkage between business, terrorism and insecurity; and fourth is the issue of international law, sanctions and their enforcement to ensure minimum standards of good business behaviour. Finally, the discussion raises the issue of corporate responsibility and business ethics.

IV. Prioritizing security in Africa

Since the attacks of 11 September 2001, the war on terrorism has captured world attention and redirected international policy. The foreign and domestic policies of many countries are now judged largely by the extent to which they support the war on terrorism. Countries are compelled to pass anti-terrorism legislation, reform their security machinery and be on the alert for terrorists on their territory. Erstwhile 'pariah' states are reclassified as allies, while those that do not conform to the United States' standards are regarded as 'enemies' or as part of an 'axis of evil'. International economic support and aid, especially for developing countries, are now determined by where a nation stands on the war on terrorism. The USA has pursued the war on the basis of a maximalist ideology of 'you are either with us or against us'. Defence budgets have been increased in many developed countries, and special financial allocations are being made to prosecute the war on terrorism. The US defence budget for fiscal year 2003 was proposed to increase by \$48 billion, or by 14 per cent. A special financial allocation called the Defence Emergency Reserve Fund (DERF), for which \$20.1 billion was requested for 2003, is dedicated to the counter-terrorism campaign. This includes \$9.4 billion to cover costs for the war on terrorism, and \$10 billion as a contingency reserve fund for future wars on terrorism in other countries. The financial allocation for internal security in the USA, now called 'homeland security', has also increased as a response to the war on terrorism, and over \$37 billion was earmarked for this in 2002.²⁷ Other countries, such as Canada and Germany, have reoriented their budgets to respond to the war on terrorism. The military industrial complex has resurfaced.

Countries such as Georgia, Pakistan and Uzbekistan have benefited economically from the war on terrorism. Pakistan, which was a ready ally of the USA in the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan, has been handsomely rewarded. The flow of economic aid to Pakistan as a result of the war was estimated at \$1 billion, primarily from the USA but also from the European Union (EU) and Japan.²⁸ In Africa, countries that supported the US military campaign against Iraq, such as Ethiopia and Uganda, are also expected to benefit from US economic aid.

What are the implications of this for Africa? How does it affect security priorities on the continent? First, given the linkage between the war on terrorism, security and economic aid, African countries are likely to reorient their secur-

²⁷ Sköns, E. *et al.*, 'Military expenditure', *SIPRI Yearbook 2002* (note 11), pp. 242–43.

²⁸ Sköns *et al.* (note 27), p. 241.

ity policies and spending patterns to conform to the requirements for the war on terrorism. The pressure for them to do so is all the greater because organizations based in Africa now rank high on the US Terrorist Exclusion List (TEL).²⁹ The pressure and incentive for African countries to redesign their security policies to address this problem are therefore enhanced. Second, and related to this, defence and security spending is likely to rise in this region as elsewhere. Military budgets in Africa have been increasing since 1996 in response to internal armed conflicts, the threat of new conflicts and national defence modernization programmes.³⁰ The war on terrorism is likely to lead to further increases in military and internal security spending.

The third implication for Africa is that security sector reform, currently advocated mostly by civil society and grudgingly pursued by a number of states, will suffer a significant setback. These reforms are centred on accountability and the democratic control of security forces. The pressures of the war on terrorism mean that secrecy, off-budget spending and poor accountability are likely to continue in the security sector.³¹ Fourth, the war on terrorism may induce internal repression as civil liberties are increasingly curtailed through new security legislation. It may be convenient for governments to simply classify any internal opposition as a terrorist act to be ruthlessly dealt with. Fifth, the disproportion between spending on security and on social welfare is likely to be exacerbated. As more resources go to the security sector, education, health and agriculture are likely to receive less funding. This will increase poverty, slow economic growth and exacerbate the upward spiral of conflicts on the continent.

While it is important to combat terrorism, Africa's own security problems and priorities lie less in the realm of military and more in the realm of human security. Human security entails ensuring the fulfilment of the basic human needs of education, health, employment, food and infrastructure, which in turn facilitates development. At the heart of all the conflicts, wars and instabilities in Africa is the problem of underdevelopment and poverty, which engender marginalization, political agitation and grievances. Africa's development challenge is its major security concern. Among all the regions of the world, Africa represents the poorest of the poor. Its socio-economic indices rank as the lowest in the world. In 2000, the World Bank reported that in 1997—despite the signs of progress in many countries in the early 1990s—average per capita income for sub-Saharan Africa (excluding South Africa) was \$315. 'The region's total income is not much more than Belgium's, and is divided among 48 countries with a median gross domestic product of just over \$2 billion—about the output of a town of 60 000 in a rich country. More than 40 percent of its 600 million people live below the poverty line of \$1 per day,

²⁹ See US Department of State, Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, 'Terrorist Exclusion List', 15 Nov. 2002, URL <<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/fs/2002/15222.htm>>, which lists 39 organizations designated on 5 Dec. 2001 and 9 new ones designated on 18 Feb. 2003.

³⁰ Sköns *et al.* (note 27), p. 245.

³¹ See Omitoogun, W., *Military Expenditure Data in Africa: A Survey of Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda*, SIPRI Research Report no. 17 (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2003).

with incomes averaging \$0.65 a day in purchasing power parity terms.³² Infant mortality is very high: in many countries, 200 of every 1000 children born die before the age of 5; over 250 million Africans do not have access to safe drinking water and 200 million have no health care services.³³ This grim picture of underdevelopment is a major source of insecurity on the continent. It fuels crime, violence and inter-communal conflicts, and aids corruption.

The best approach to addressing the security and terrorism question in Africa would therefore be to invest not in armaments but in the people and the future of the continent. Economic development creates popular empowerment, allays resentment against regimes—local and international—and creates legitimacy for both local and international political and economic order. It is when people are hungry and frustrated that they see the gun as the only alternative for protection of their social livelihood. It is then that they can be enlisted for suicide missions, hijackings and other terrorist acts. It would be strategic and expedient for the USA and other developed countries to invest a large part of the resources they earmark for the war on terrorism for the eradication of poverty and underdevelopment in the developing countries. This would achieve two things. First, it would create a new partnership between the developing countries, especially Africa, and the developed world—one that would change the negative stereotype of ‘imperialist and exploitatively ruthless’ countries which dominates popular perceptions and images of the Western world in Africa and many other developing regions. Second, it would keep those whom Susan Rice calls the ‘foot soldiers’ of terrorism—children and youth engaged as soldiers—out of the reach of terrorism.

V. Conclusions

The linkage between the economy, security and terrorism points in two directions in Africa. The first connection is related to how business firms facilitate acts of terrorism on the continent, either overtly or covertly. The ‘merchants of war’ include arms dealers and brokers as well as private security companies and their auxiliary agencies, which regard areas of conflict and war as profitable markets. Their activities often prolong wars, increase human suffering and devalue life, as well as blocking the process of development and deepening insecurity. In a sense, they constitute an agency of terrorism. The second connection is related to how security itself should be defined and pursued in Africa in order to deter terrorism. Security in Africa must be conceived largely in human terms: in terms of the basic needs of education, health, food, infrastructure and decent standards of living, all of which are intimately connected with the process of economic development and social redistribution.

³² World Bank (note 18), p. 7.

³³ World Bank (note 18), p. 10.

There are two ways in which human security can be promoted. The first is to redirect a significant part of the funds allocated to support of the war on terrorism to the development of African countries. The second is to re-examine the neo-liberal economic policies of market economy which tend to disempower the state and privatize social welfare. The state must play a role in the world of business and be made functional and effective in the promotion of social welfare. A weak or failed state perpetuates insecurity.